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BARODA INTRIGUES

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BOMBAY KHUTPUT;

BEING AN EXPOSITION OF THE FALLACIES, ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS, AND  
PARTIAL QUOTATIONS, RECENTLY PROMULGATED BY

MR. LESTOCK ROBERT REID;

IN A

“LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.”

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BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL OUTRAM, C.B.

*Late Resident at Baroda.*

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PRINTED (*for private circulation.*) BY

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## PREFACE.

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THE Letter to the Chairmen of the Honorable Court of Directors of the East India Company, placed at the commencement of the following pages, explains the circumstances under which they were written. It will also suggest an explanation of the fact that four-fifths of the present Pamphlet have been in print for many weeks.

Conscious of his own literary imperfections, the Author has freely availed himself of the readily accorded aid of several of his friends; but for all that is stated in the following pages he, and he alone, is responsible.

TO

J. RUSSELL ELLICE, ESQ. AND MAJOR OLIPHANT,

CHAIRMEN OF THE HONORABLE COURT OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
EAST INDIA COMPANY.

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ORIENTAL CLUB, June 15th, 1853.

SIRS,

I respectfully solicit your acceptance of the accompanying printed document, containing a refutation of certain statements and insinuations to my prejudice, promulgated by Mr. Lestock Robert Reid, late of the Bombay Civil Service, in a Letter addressed by him to the Editor of the Daily News.

Soon after the publication of that Letter, I intimated to Mr. Reid my intention to publish a vindication of myself from its allegations. But the representations of several friends to whose judgment I deemed it my duty to defer, induced me for awhile to forego my original intention. They urged—and it appeared to me with much reason—that only those who had already studied the Parliamentary Papers relative to Baroda, were likely to peruse the effusions either of Mr. Reid or

myself; and that no one who *had* studied the Parliamentary Papers would deem a reply from me necessary

There were, however, others entitled to my respectful attention, who held that I should act unfaithfully to myself, and to those interests of which I was formerly the official guardian, and which I can never view with indifference, if I failed to meet Mr. Reid's Pamphlet with a full and satisfactory refutation. In conformity with their views—which were identical with my own—I resolved on printing. And being solicitous to avoid aught that could possibly be construed into disrespect to my Honorable Masters, I solicited the permission of the Court of Directors to search their records, with a view to carry out my resolution with certainty and precision. Free access to the Record Room of the India House was promptly accorded; but I was informed that the Honorable Court could not *officially* sanction or give their countenance to the *publication* of a controversial work on official topics. This intimation I conceived to imply that the Honorable Court did not desire to interfere with my individual liberty of action, in a matter closely affecting my personal feelings. And those who at first dissuaded me from replying to Mr. Reid, taking the same view, not only ceased to urge their dissuasions, but encouraged me in the prosecution of my task. They, however, suggested that my object would be effected, and at the same time a token of my respect to my Honorable Masters be afforded, if, instead of *publishing* my reply to Mr. Reid, I simply submitted it

to the Chairs and the Court, and such friends as had kindly taken an interest in my own case, in its relations to the subject of Mr. Reid's Pamphlet.

Influenced by these representations, I have completed, and now beg respectfully to submit to you, my reply to the statements affecting myself, contained in Mr. Reid's Letter, and as I could not expect you to read it in a manuscript form, I have put it into print: solely, nevertheless, for the purpose of vindicating my own character as a public servant, and of placing the service to which I had the honour to belong, in a light due to itself, and I hope useful, when occasion may require, to the public, both Indian and English.

I have the honor to be,

SIRS,

With unfeigned respect,

Your obedient humble servant,

JAMES OUTRAM, Lieut. Colonel,

*Late Resident at Baroda.*



## CHAPTER I.

### PRELIMINARY EXPLANATIONS.

On the 30th of June 1852, the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Anstey, ordered a return of—

“Copies of all Correspondence and Papers on the subject of Colonel Outram's removal from the office of Resident at the Court of the Guicowar; or on the alleged corruption of Officers of the Bombay Government with bribes from Baroda.”

Late in October, the Return was published.\* On the 23rd, 24th, and 25th December its contents were subjected to analytical and critical notice in the “Daily News.” And, on the 31st of January 1853, these Notices, revised, enlarged, and corrected throughout, were republished in the form of a Pamphlet, bearing the signature of “Indus.”†

The original critiques contained very severe strictures on the conduct of several high Indian functionaries. The Pamphlet of “Indus” was still more specific in its charges, and copious in its illustrations. Foremost amongst those on whom judgment was passed, stood Mr. Lestock Robert Reid, late Member of the Bombay Council. And on the 2nd of March that gentleman put forth a “LETTER” to the Editor of the “Daily News,” in

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\* Parliamentary Paper, No. 560, of Session of 1852.

† BOMBAY BRIBERIES, a Tale of the Present Charter. Inscribed to the Right Hon. Sir C. Wood, Bart., M.P., President of the Board of Control. By “Indus.” Effingham Wilson, 11, Royal Exchange, London.

which he professed to prove that the allegations of "Indus" were "the result of mingled ignorance, rancour, and mendacity." \*

How far Mr. Reid has justified those assertions—whether his Pamphlet contains an "Answer" to "Indus," or supplies a satisfactory vindication of himself, are questions with which I have no concern. And had he not gratuitously assailed my character while professing to defend his own, I should gladly have abstained from adding to the discomforts of his present position. As it is, I am compelled to notice, repel, and demonstrate the unwarrantable nature of his attacks. Not because they *are* attacks—for I have neither inclination nor the pecuniary means requisite for entering the lists with ordinary assailants—but because they are the attacks of Mr. Lestock Robert Reid,—of a gentleman enjoying high reputation as an able Indian administrator—of a *ci-devant* Governor of Bombay—of a candidate for a seat in the East Indian Direction, whose allegations cannot fail, if unrefuted, to find acceptance with the Proprietary Body and the public at large—and of one whose known position at the India House is calculated to impress his readers with the erroneous belief that he would not have ventured to assail me as he has done, without the secret concurrence of my honorable masters.

If in the performance of a duty, which Mr. Reid has imposed on me, I am constrained to enter into details which may embarrass himself and distress his friends, with him, not with me, rests the blame. He has himself announced that he could only vindicate his own character by casting reflections on mine. And if, in disposing of these, I shall chance to leave him in a worse position than that in which "Indus" found him, I shall at least not be amenable to the charge of unprovoked assault, from which *he* will find it difficult to relieve himself.

Mr. Reid's attacks on me are scattered over the whole of his

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\* Letter to the editor of the "Daily News," in answer to certain remarks contained in three chapters on Baroda affairs, which appeared in that journal on the 23rd, 24th, and 25th December, 1852, and have since been re-published in a pamphlet signed "Indus;" by Lestock R. Reid, Esq., late member of council, Bombay.—London, Smith, Elder, and Co., 65, Cornhill.

Pamphlet. Thus, at page 9, he describes me as wantonly, or through ignorance, libelling an intelligent, and withal estimable race of men; and as having been, from my entire ignorance of the vernaculars of Guzerat, placed entirely at the mercy of interpreters. At page 10 he accuses me of an injustice towards himself, involving "folly and unfairness." At page 14, he cites, as a fact which "should be especially remarked," that though in my official reports to Government I made "sweeping assertions of *rumours* in Baroda" to his disadvantage, none of these were made till after he had left India. At page 18 he charges me with having made, in my Reports, "unfair" allusions to a letter which he admits to have received, and in which it was intimated to him, that it would be for his advantage to procure from the Government of which he was a member, decisions in favour of a notoriously corrupt and fraudulent banking house at Baroda. At page 19 he declares that I did not hesitate to use this letter "tortuously." At page 20 he attributes to me an "observation that the Government ought to have assumed" the authorship of that letter "without a shadow of proof"; and other observations "too absurd to require further comment." At page 25 he credits me with an "extraordinary partiality" to anonymous petitions. At page 30 he *implies* that I was on terms of intimacy with the corrupt clerks in the Secretariat, whose malpractices I at length induced the Government to acknowledge; and that I sought and obtained from them that illegitimate information which I afterwards convicted them of selling to the Baroda corruptionists. At page 33 he accuses me of being constantly in the habit of resorting to "a species of the very 'Khutput' which I have been since so earnest in denouncing." At page 36 he pronounces me guilty of having failed to communicate to Government knowledge of which I was in possession, "on an occasion when it was most essentially my duty to do so." At page 41 he attributes to me "disappointed ambition, wounded vanity, inordinate self opinion, honest though perverted views, &c., &c." At page 47, he accuses me of having described a certain individual to have been his confidential clerk, notwithstanding that I knew the statement to

be false. At page 45, he affirms that I suffered myself to be guided by a native who "had little difficulty in inducing me to believe anything:" and at page 64, he reproduces this charge in another form, *insinuating* that the native referred to was permitted to "wield my influence as Resident." At page 61, he describes me as considering that "it was the sole duty of the Bombay Government to carry out my wishes and obey my suggestions to the letter; and that it was a crime to hesitate to act as I desired, even if my desires might seem opposed to all law and justice." On the same page, he charges me—not, indeed, in direct terms, but by implication—with "credulity, prejudice, want of temper and discretion;" and with the far more serious moral turpitude of complicity with "a strong and violent party, who have not hesitated, *in his absence*,"\* to resort to all means short of actual accusation of corruption, including appeals to the local press, to cast a slur on his character." At page 63, he attributes<sup>f</sup> to me the disgrace of having made official use of information of the untruth of which "I must have been well satisfied." And at page 67, he characterises me as a "disappointed" man, indulging in "excited, and often unjustifiable, expressions."

These are tolerably strong expressions and imputations for one officer of the E. I. Company to apply to another, who, in his own humbler sphere, is, equally with Mr. Reid himself, in the enjoyment of "a reputation which is founded on two and thirty years of laborious, successful, and unblemished public usefulness." But, though the expressions are strong, Mr. Reid is quite prepared to justify them. And he *does* justify them. His justification, however, is *sui generis*. It consists, not in proving their propriety, but in maintaining their expediency:—not in showing that they are true, or applicable, or generous, or gentlemanly, but in explaining *why* they have been employed. Thus at page 66 he intimates that in his "Answer" to "Indus," he was—

"Compelled, in his own vindication, not only to expose the malice of his assailant, but to go further, and point out where Colonel Outram and other

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\* Italicised in the original.

parties, whose statements and opinions (however perverted) have been made the groundwork of attack, are wrong in their facts, and mistaken in their conclusions; *and as far as lies in his power TO ACCOUNT FOR, and EXPLAIN THE CAUSES of their errors. In this process a reference to PERSONAL CHARACTER, and FEELINGS is \* \* \* unavoidable.*"

Mr. Reid, however, confidently hopes that in giving effect to this peculiar "process" of rebutting an antagonist,—(which consists in meeting the specific charges, based on specific *facts*, preferred against himself by one man, by allegations regarding, not the public acts only, but the moral character and inner life of another, who has already had the misfortune to have his statements and opinions "perverted,")—he has "in no instance carried it beyond legitimate bounds." Perhaps not. In politics legitimacy is very variously defined. In polemics, possibly, a still greater latitude of opinion may prevail respecting its elements and limits. And Mr. Reid must be allowed to be a competent judge of the mode of controversy and style of language best suited to the exigencies of his own case. But he can hardly expect that I shall kiss the hand that unjustly smites me.

Had he possessed any grounds for suspecting that I was the author or inspirer of the original "Chapters" which evoked his "Letter," or that I was in any way connected with what he terms the "greater scurrility and falsehood" of the Pamphlet in which they were reproduced, his attacks on me would not have been one whit more relevant to his own vindication, than they are at present. But they would at least have had the plea of vengeance to palliate them; and I might have hesitated to return his fire, though conscious that I had done nothing to provoke it. Not only, however, does he not venture to insinuate that I had any connection or complicity with his assailant, but he very unnecessarily takes the trouble of vindicating me from the suspicion of such complicity; a suspicion which never could have entered the mind of any one, who had not read Mr. Reid's Pamphlet, and seen how constantly he brings my name into contact with that of "Indus." At page 66 he adduces certain circumstances, which, in his opinion, incontestibly prove

that I "could have been no party to the disgraceful attack." This is kind—but superogatory. For even if misled by the manner in which Mr. Reid makes use of my name, some stray recipient of his Pamphlet had, for a few minutes, suspected me of complicity with "Indus," the suspicion must have vanished, when, in the progress of his researches, he discovered the "inaccuracies," of which, Mr. Reid makes much use,—not, I would fain believe, for the purpose, but certainly with the effect, of diverting the reader's attention from the real questions at issue.\* These inaccuracies, (such as they are, and most of them are not very important,) clearly prove that the writer of the "Chapters" had never been in the Bombay Presidency; and that in their preparation he had not taken counsel with any one conversant with the local politics of that dependency. Lest, however, it should occur to Mr. Reid in his "process" of "accounting for, and explaining the causes of errors," and in the "unavoidable reference to personal character and feelings" which that process involves, that I may possibly be suspected by others, of having suggested to the author of the "Chapters" the introduction of a few inaccuracies, with a view to conceal my complicity with that able writer:—and lest he should deem it necessary, in a second edition of his Pamphlet, to vindicate me from this supposititious suspicion, I beg to assure him, on the honor of an officer and a gentlemen, that I am not "Indus;" that I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with him; that I knew not who

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\* It is a pity that Mr. Reid, in replying to the allegations of "Indus," should have thought it necessary to draw an *ex uno disce omnes* sort of argument, the unsatisfactory nature of which must be obvious to all, from unimportant errors, which, though they appeared in the original newspaper articles, did not occur in the Pamphlet he professed to answer. The second, and still further amended edition of that Pamphlet was published on the 14th of February; Mr. Reid's Letter not till the 2nd of March. Yet Mr. Reid saw fit to criticise only the original "Chapters," dating his criticism on the 10th of February; and, in a dateless postscript, simply acknowledging that he had seen the corrected and amplified Pamphlet edition after having written—he does not say after having *printed*—his remarks.

the author of the "Chapters" was, till after *the whole* of them had appeared in the "Daily News;" that till they appeared, I had no cognizance or foreknowledge of them whatever; and that when they did appear, they were as much a matter of surprise to myself, as they could possibly have been to Mr. Reid;—inasmuch as, till they did appear, I feared that the peculiar mal-arrangement of the Blue Books, (which even Mr. Reid cannot affect to believe was designed to injure him or to favor me,) had effectually deterred the English journalists from attempting to grapple with the subject of Baroda and Bombay corruption.

I make these declarations, because, however little I may relish being assailed by Mr. Reid, I experience less inconvenience, and am likely to sustain less injury from his assaults than from the vindications he sets up in my behalf. These, certainly, are not numerous, but they are extremely disagreeable, and, what is worse, they are inconsistent with the facts of the case. Thus, to prove "incontestibly" that I could have been no party to the attack made on him by "Indus," he declares that I "disavowed, in every page of the Blue Book, all belief that his *character* for purity was in any degree compromised, though anxious to prove that his name had been scandalously prostituted by a wicked party." If by "character," Mr. Reid means, as the context implies, *reputation*, I beg, most emphatically, to deny an impeachment, the admission of which would stultify those labours which, detrimental as they have proved to my own personal prospects, have resulted in advancing the public interests. I never made any such disavowal as is attributed to me by Mr. Reid. On the contrary, the burden of my reports to the Bombay Government was, that the name of Mr. Reid had come to be associated in the public mind "with the foulest of deeds and the vilest of men." I detailed several of the facts and coincidences on which the natives of Baroda justified their belief that Mr. Reid was himself corrupt, and the patron of the corrupt; and I showed that this was of so startling a character as to render it the solemn and bounden duty of the Government to institute a stern and rigorous inquiry into the subject.

I did not myself believe Mr. Reid to be corrupt. If I had, I should have adopted a very different mode of procedure from that which I pursued: some mode of procedure which would have forced inquiry, and have superseded the necessity of making those earnest appeals and remonstrances, which ended in my being driven from office, after having been compelled to record against myself censures and condemnations which my honorable masters have pronounced to be unjust. I knew Mr. Reid; I respected his talents; I, moreover, regarded him as a man of incorruptible integrity; and—though I considered him not devoid of the *esprit du corps* of his service, nor free from prejudice, nor inaccessible to certain weaknesses and bureaucratic maxims which in India, as in England, occasionally operate on men in office—I could as soon have believed him capable of cannibalism as of bribe-taking. But I felt that, (to quote the words in which Mr. W. E. Frere subsequently endeavoured to impress views similar to my own on the authorities), “though the integrity of the members of the Bombay Government is not to be doubted, yet, if the belief exists that they are accessible to corruption, the evil is almost as great as if the Government was corrupt, and too strong measures could not be adopted to remove that idea.” Confident in the purity, not only of Mr. Reid, but of his colleagues and successors, I believed that the further inquiry was pushed, the more completely would his character be rescued from the unhappy association into which it had fallen. And I never doubted but that we should obtain a solution of the apparently strong evidence to his prejudice, which should not only exonerate him, but enable us to bring to justice all the principal actors in that deep and widely ramifying scheme of corruption and treachery, by which the character of the Bombay Government had been brought so low in native estimation. The Government, however, took a different view of the matter. They were very indignant at my placing on record the facts which had tended to the prejudice of Mr. Reid’s character, and for insisting on the obvious conclusions to which those facts must lead in the minds of all who were not, like them and myself, well assured of Mr.



Reid's integrity. But they did not afford me the aid and countenance I required, for removing these conclusions by effecting a satisfactory solution of the facts on which they rested.

How calculated the proceedings of Mr. Reid's successors were, to satisfy the natives that my investigations were viewed with disfavour by the Government, simply because their tendency was towards a solution of matters different from that which I anticipated, and prejudicial to Mr. Reid, shall hereafter be shown. It will then be seen that while I *did* persist in asserting my belief of Mr. Reid's integrity, I did *not* hesitate to say, not only that his reputation was damaged, but—as regarded the native mind—most seriously damaged. And it will further be seen, that Mr. Reid, in his zeal for the honour of a convicted criminal, has deliberately rejected the argument on which I based my assertions that a strict inquiry would result in disconnecting his name from the intrigues with which it had become associated in the popular mind.

There is yet one subject to which I would fain advert before closing this chapter. Mr. Reid distinctly states, at page 14 of his Pamphlet, that of "*all the rumours to his prejudice in Baroda,*"—"not one was known to him until, AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE CHAPTERS, he read them in the *Blue Book!*"

Of course I do not for a moment presume to doubt Mr. Reid's word. I accept his statement. But, in accepting, I must comment on it. For it immediately follows the complaint that not one of these "rumours," were noticed by me till after Mr. Reid had left India.

The *rumours* (and *facts*) regarding Mr. Reid, detailed in my reports, are mainly in reference to events which had occurred during my absence in Egypt, from November 1848, till February 1850. I did not resume my duties at Baroda till May in the latter year. And it can hardly be a matter of accusation,—and ought not to be one of insinuation—against me, that I did not report these "*rumours*" (and *facts*) till after the departure of Mr. Reid from India, which (at page 6) he informs us took place on the 3rd of

I was not honoured with being on the list of Mr. Reid's correspondents. Duty did not require, and good taste forbade, that I should open a correspondence with him in order to apprize him of the rumours and facts to his prejudice, of which I was labouring to effect a solution compatible with his honor. But amongst the members and secretaries of Government, Mr. Reid had many friends. All in fact were his friends; some I *know* to have been his correspondents. And unless Mr. Reid had thus solemnly pledged his word of honor as a gentleman, that not one of these correspondents had ever suffered any precise allusion to my labours at Baroda to escape their pens, I should have regarded the circumstance as utterly incredible. As it is, I can only assume that if they had thought Mr. Reid's interests were to be subserved by making any such communication—and in writing to a retired Councillor there would have been no official impropriety—they would have made it. At all events, on them, not on me, must rest the blame.

Again, Mr. Reid informs us (at page 61), that during his absence from India, a strong and violent party had been casting slurs on his character, through the local press. Surely these newspaper articles must have excited his attention, and awakened his curiosity, when reinforced by the declaration which he admits having received from myself, "on my return to England" in April 1852,—that he "ought to be thankful to me for bringing to justice the scoundrels who had made so infamous an use of his name." Not only would most men feel desirous in such a case to ascertain some particulars on the subject, but there were especial reasons why Mr. Reid should have been more than usually solicitous on that head. For he was a candidate for the East Indian Direction; and it behoved him to be in a position to explain the real facts of his case to such of his constituents as might have chanced to hear his name "infamously used," even at second hand. Had he desired to see them, Mr. Reid's position at the India House would have secured for him a perusal of my manuscript reports, immediately on their arrival. But he practically pledges his honour, not only that he never took the trouble of

asking for them, but he did not deem the Blue Books worthy of examination till (two months after their publication) an Analysis of them was given in a London newspaper. It is a curious fact, and worthy of being noted, as evincing in a striking manner Mr. Reid's superiority to a species of sensitiveness which even greater men have not been ashamed to avow. And it is the more curious and noteworthy, inasmuch as *I know*, that long prior to the appearance of the "Chapters," Mr. Reid was informed, by at least one gentleman, of whom he will not feel inclined to speak lightly, that my reports contained matter of which it was absolutely necessary he should be able to give a satisfactory explanation. At all events, it is hardly generous, and barely equitable, in one who has displayed so little curiosity regarding "*rumours*" which he had been told deeply concerned his honour, to imply a charge of unfairness against me, on the ground that I did not communicate to Government, prior to March 1849, information affecting himself, which I did not receive till after May 1850.

## CHAPTER II.

### MR. REID'S FAITH AS IT IS IN NURSOO PUNT.

In refuting the accusations and insinuations levelled at me by Mr. Reid, I shall take the liberty of discussing them in the order of their importance, rather than in the sequence, they assume in his own Pamphlet. And as upwards of three-fourths of Mr. Reid's *brochure* (with the animadversions on myself therein contained,) hinge on a difference of opinion between that gentleman and the public at large, respecting the character of a dismissed public servant, named Nursoo Punt, that individual appears to me to possess undoubted claims to a priority of notice. His latter history is painfully instructive; and it shall form the subject of future chapters. In the present one, I shall limit myself to an exposition of the discrepancies of opinion regarding his character which exist between Mr. Reid and those who have qualified themselves to form an opinion on the subject.

I have already stated that the Bombay Government failed to afford me the aid and countenance I required in the conduct of investigations designed to vindicate their own and Mr. Reid's integrity. In justice to an esteemed and honoured friend, I am bound to state that one of their number—Mr. J. P. Willoughby—invariably expressed himself in favour of full and unrestricted enquiry, and applauded the objects I had in view. But a different policy prevailed. The proceedings of his colleagues tended to rivet more powerfully than ever, in the native community of Baroda, the belief that certain influential and wealthy criminals, whose evil deeds it was my duty, at that time, as Resi-

dent, to investigate, enjoyed the secret favour, sympathy, and support of those in power. And my difficulties were, of course, immeasurably enhanced by the prevalence of this belief. The evil-doers were emboldened; their agents acquired increased audacity; men who at one time had hesitated to become their allies, no longer objected to perjure themselves in a cause which was supposed to be backed by an authority higher than my own; and the witnesses through whose aid, alone, I could hope to arrive at the truth, shrunk from giving testimony which would assuredly expose them to the vengeance of the local magnates, and might, they feared, entail on them the displeasure of government.

Conspicuous amongst the offenders who profited by this state of matters, were Baba Nafra and Nursoo Punt: the former the spoliator of the bank of which he was the appointed guardian, and the foul conspirator against the widow of his benefactor; the latter the corrupt public servant whom I regarded as mainly responsible for the sad circumstance of Mr. Reid's name having "come to be associated with the foulest of deeds and the vilest of men."

Despite, however, the denial to me of that aid which I solicited from Government, I was eventfully enabled to expose the turpitude of both these bad men. On the 31st of March 1851, I forwarded to Bombay an elaborate report on the conspiracies by which Baba Nafra had compassed the ruin of Joitabhae Settanee, (Parliamentary Papers, 560 of 1852, pp. 319—392).\* On the 10th of April, I transmitted a "Statement of Facts" relative to Nursoo Punt, in which I detailed several of the circumstances which had led the natives to regard Mr. Reid as the patron of that unfaithful servant. And in paras. 48, 49, and 52, of the latter document, I made the following observations. (B.B. 1064.)

"When due weight is given to the cumulative effect of the various facts

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\* When I have occasion to quote from this "Paper"---consisting of two ponderous volumes---I shall, hereafter, refer to it as the "Baroda Blue Book," or more briefly indicate it by the letters B.B.

recited in the foregoing pages, it will, I think, be conceded by the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, *not only that Nursoo Punt has prostituted the name of Mr. Reid, but that the votaries of 'Khutput' (illicit action) have PLAUSIBLE ARGUMENTS wherewith to justify their belief that that gentleman was improperly connected with Nursoo Punt, or his wealthy relative Baba Nafra.*"

"And when to the facts recited, is added the conduct of Nursoo in the case of Joitabhae Settanee, conduct which shows that my first suspicions were correct, and that, from first to last, he was in collusion with Baba Nafra, I think I have said enough to show that the late native agent has not only forfeited all claims to the consideration of Government on account of former services, but that he has merited the severest punishment in the power of Government to inflict; *and that any CLEMENCY shown to him, will be regarded by the natives of Baroda, as ADDITIONAL AND CONCLUSIVE PROOF THAT THE REPUTATION OF MR. REID, AND OTHERS, IS SO COMPLETELY AT HIS MERCY, THAT HE DOES ENJOY THE IMPUNITY OF WHICH HE WAS WONT TO BOAST.*" \* \* \*

"For the want of *more DIRECT and COPENOUS proofs of the guilt of Nursoo Punt*, I have to plead as my apology, the all but insuperable difficulties I have had to contend with in my investigations. These difficulties arise in part, from the fact that the leading men in the city, and in the durbar, (the sovereign's court) are more or less criminally connected with Baba Nafra, and his kinsman Nursoo Punt; and in part, from the fact that *all* are more or less interested in perpetuating the system of 'Khutput' (illicit action) which it has been the object of my investigations to upset. *But the PRINCIPAL SOURCE of the difficulties I have had to overcome, is the conviction, deeply rooted in the minds of all, that I am working against the Government, OR RATHER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS WORKING AGAINST MR.*"

Under the influence of representations which were never justified, (B. B. 1427-28), I was induced to modify "this Statement of Facts," and to erase several of the passages in which I had shown how plausible was the evidence wherewith the natives justified their belief in Mr. Reid's corruption. No sooner had I done so, and thus authorised the Government to submit to the Court of Directors a much weaker case than that originally sent in, than I was ordered to prosecute Nursoo Punt before a legal tribunal, hampered and fettered by "Adawlut" rules and technicalities, on seven distinct charges, framed out of my Report. Some of these did not appear to admit of LEGAL proof, though of

their truthfulness no moral doubt could be entertained. The establishment of others, was, to some extent, contingent on true testimony being borne by the dependents of those very men who boasted, and whose assertions were believed when they boasted, that they and the Government were in league to defeat my enquiries. In respect of nearly all the charges, my own testimony was most important; yet by making me act as prosecutor, the Government excluded me from the witness box. And the improbability of my obtaining a verdict against Nursoo Punt was still further increased by certain proceedings on the part of the authorities which are fully detailed in my Khutput Report. (B. B. 1428-1445). These I shall not weary my readers by reciting: but I may be excused for observing, that though the Government saw fit to afford to Nursoo Punt all the advantages derivable from an enquiry conducted on strict "Adawlut" rules—rules of which I was necessarily ignorant, and my ignorance of which led me to play unconsciously into the hands of the defendant—the Commissioner, to whom the investigation was confided, exercised no criminal jurisdiction whatever. He could pass no sentence. He was not even empowered to suggest one. His proceedings constituted a mere *Enquiry*. He had simply to report. And on the Government it devolved to disallow his Report, in whole or in part—a privilege of which they were not slow to avail themselves; and to pass "such orders as might appear just, and consistent with their powers"—a range of action from the first open to them without recourse to the intervention of a Commission.

Despite, however, the disadvantages under which I was placed, and which I believed must necessarily ensure the acquittal of the accused, the prosecution was, on the whole, successful.

Two of the charges involved bribe taking. In reference to one, though the Commissioner could not pronounce Nursoo's guilt to be legally established—"the case being from the first scarcely susceptible of judicial proof"—he had "*painful suspicions*" that the defendant HAD, in November 1845, received a bribe of £2000

from Baba Nafra. (B. B. p. 1050). In regard to the other, he recorded that, though full legal proof was wanting, "*the strongest suspicions were left on his mind*" (B. B. p. 1051) that, in October 1848, Nursoo Punt received from the same Baba Nafra, the sum of £2807, being, as the Charge specified, "in part payment of a sum of £7807, promised to be paid to Nursoo Punt by Baba Nafra, for the exercise of his influence in Baba Nafra's favour, in the enquiry respecting the alleged abduction of the child Joitabhae Settanee.\*" In respect of the third charge, Nursoo Punt was found guilty, to the extent of having endeavoured to mislead me, to the advantage of Baba Nafra, and to the detriment of this very Joitabhae Settanee.† A fourth charge was, that he had, in 1848, allowed a false claim to the extent of nearly £30,000, set up by Baba Nafra, to be pro-

\* In respect of these bribery charges the Court of Directors intimate that they "entirely agree" with Mr. Frere's opinion that "*the strongest suspicion rests on him in respect to both.*"---B. B. p. 18.

† B. B., p. 1011-1050, Mr. Frere was compelled to acquit Nursoo Punt of having deceived Captain French, (who officiated during my absence in Egypt from November 1848, to April 1850,) to the detriment of Joitabhae, that officer having taken on himself the entire responsibility. "But," observe the Honourable the Court of Directors, "it is certain that Capt. French "did not obtain an accurate knowledge of the facts of the case, and that, "consequently, he misled the Government, and enabled the persecutors of "Joitabhae to commit gross injustice. And if his assumption of the whole "responsibility could be held to acquit Nursoo Punt, it must do so by throw- "ing the whole weight of the blame on Capt. French. *It is, however, evident "that having only just arrived at Baroda, Capt. French was in a great measure "dependent for his information and impressions on others, AND PARTICULARLY "ON HIS NATIVE AGENT. And even on the supposition that Capt. French, "acting on his own judgment, adopted a wrong view of important matters of "fact, IT WAS THE DUTY OF NURSOO, himself perfectly acquainted with the "case, TO REPRESENT THE TRUE STATE OF IT TO HIS SUPERIOR. Instead of "doing this, there is ample ground of moral conviction, that HE MISINFORMED "CAPT. FRENCH, as he has been clearly proved to have misinformed Lieut.- "Col. Outram.*"---B. B. p. 18.



secuted in my office without expressing to me the slightest doubt of the justice of the said claim, though he knew it to be unjust: and that he culpably withheld from my notice, documents in his custody, which proved the injustice of a considerable portion of the amount claimed. On this charge Nursoo was found guilty, notwithstanding that Mr. Reid had, in December 1848, in an elaborate vindication, acquitted him even of negligence,—declared it to be unnecessary to ask explanations “on a single point” connected with the case,—and severely censured myself for presuming to cast reflections on so immaculate a public servant. In this conviction the Court of Directors fully concurred. In regard to a fifth charge it was determined that the conduct of Nursoo, as regarded one of my predecessors, “appeared in a very unfavorable light;” and that, as regarded myself he had been “negligent”—the charge even of “negligence” having been indignantly repudiated by Mr. Reid in 1848, as utterly devoid of foundation.\* The sixth charge was to the effect, that, in September 1847,† Nursoo Punt instigated Baba Nafra to depute an agent to Bombay to bribe Mr. Reid; and the Commissioner determined that Baba Nafra “*did* depute “a person to Bombay, who spent large sums ostensibly for purposes of corruption, AND THAT NURSOO PUNT WAS AWARE OF THE PERSON BEING SO DEPUTED, AND CONNIVED AT IT: *but that it is not proved that he INSTIGATED Baba Nafra to depute the man, or that he was deputed with the SPECIFIC object of bribing Mr. Reid.*”‡

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\* B.B. p. 1050. The Honourable Court decided that in this case “*very strong suspicions rest on him.*”---B.B. p. 18

† In framing my charges, I gave the year 1848 as the date: the mistake occurred in consequence of my ignorance of the fact, that the local commercial differed from the ordinary year, as given in the Hindoo calendar. The Commissioner was, I believe, at first, as much puzzled as myself.

‡ The Court of Directors agree in the opinion expressed by the Bombay Government, that “even this degree of criminality was not proved against Nursoo Punt, *though very strong suspicions rest on him* with regard to the mission in question;” as well as in regard to the third Charge, that of withholding information in the case of Gorajee Pol. B.B. p. 18.

I may add, however, that the Blue Book contains evidence that a portion of the money "spent ostensibly for purposes of corruption," was *intended* by Baba Nafra's agent to reach the hands of Mr. Reid. Of the seventh charge, which attributed to Nursoo Punt the "making an improper and unauthorised use of Mr. Reid's name, he was found guilty. It was established to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, that, on at least two occasions, once in November 1848, (while the cases in respect of which Mr. Reid wrote his vindication of Nursoo were before Government,) and again, in January 1849, when the decision of Government (based on that vindication) reached Baroda, Nursoo Punt "made an improper use of Mr. Reid's name;" and Mr. Frere further determined, that, "about the same time, with a view to the "further promulgation of his boast,\* he had a copy of a letter "he had received from Bombay, purporting to come under instructions from Mr. Reid, made by Muncherjee Nusserwanjee, "an intimate friend of his rival, Baba Fudky;—and that Nursoo "Punt had not attempted to show that he was in any way "authorised to make this use of Mr. Reid's name." †

It can hardly be a matter of surprise that Mr. Reid should be annoyed, to find a patient judicial enquiry, extending over several months, and under the conduct of a judge selected by the Government itself, had resulted in proving the untenability of the defence of Nursoo which he himself penned in 1848. But, as that result has been attained; as the point has been conceded even by the Bombay Government; and as it has been made a special subject of reproachful comment by the Court of Directors, (B. B. p. 18;) it does seem strange that Mr. Reid should evince such continued regard for a convicted culprit,

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\* That he enjoyed the "*secret friendship*" of Mr. Reid.

† In respect of this charge the Court of Directors acquiesce in the judgment given by Mr. Frere; "but" they observe, "it is not shown that he did more than boast in general terms of the protection of Mr. Reid." These general terms, however, as will be seen, were all in reference to specific cases in which he vaunted (with many plausible arguments in support of the vaunt) that the protection of Mr. Reid secured impunity to himself and his corrupt and wealthy relative, Baba Nafra.

who, as I more than once reported to Government, in despatches which Mr. Reid has himself perused, encouraged the belief that he, and his relative Baba Nafra, held the reputation of Mr. Reid and others at their mercy. And this tenderness to the individual through whom his name has come to be associated with "the foulest of deeds, and the vilest of men," is the more remarkable, inasmuch as it was on the strength of my conviction of Nursoo's falsehood and treachery, that I continued, in my official reports, to reiterate my belief, that a full enquiry would establish Mr. Reid's freedom from corrupt practices.

This, however, is a matter in which Mr. Reid has an undoubted right to judge for himself. And if he had limited himself to the expression of the opinion *implied* at page 65 of his pamphlet, to the effect, that the "matters" affecting Nursoo are "still involved in a deep shade of darkness and doubt," I should have left him in undisputed possession of a dogma which I feel assured he will find few readers of the Blue Books ready to embrace. I should have been content to marvel, in silence, at the displeasure he evinces when his critic "Indus" applies to Nursoo the epithet "miscreant." But Mr. Reid has overstepped these limits. The whole of his allegations (attack on myself)—co-extensive nearly with his attempts to answer the accusations of "Indus"—*hinge on the assumed innocence of Nursoo*. Writing in February, 1853, he persists in pronouncing me guilty of injustice to that corrupt servant, because in 1848 I preferred against him, in a mild and modified form, a charge of which (clothed in stronger terms) he was formally convicted in 1851. He deliberately reproduces the censures and insinuations against myself contained in his original and *now* judicially refuted defence of that bad man. He accuses me of having in my reports evinced "unfairness," "tortuosity," and other base qualities, with the view of damaging his own character, while invoking punishment on the corrupt servant, who had boasted (falsely as I believed) of a "secret friendship" with Mr. Reid. He denies that I was justified in reporting that his character stood in need of that vindication which could only come of stern and searching enquiry. And he couples this denial with the grossest imputations in respect

of the motives which influenced me to make these reports. I am, therefore, compelled—unwillingly, and with pain, but unavoidably—to enter at considerable length into the history of Nursoo Punt, and to detail some of the very plausible grounds on which, as I repeatedly informed Government, the natives justified their belief that in Mr. Reid both he and Baba Nafra had a friend and ally—bound to their interests not only by ties of “secret friendship,” but by the knowledge that his character was completely at their mercy. Nay more; I must avail myself of information which I did not possess when my reports were written, but which has since been made public property by the authority of Parliament, and which shows, not only that my reports were devoid of exaggeration, but that the belief in Mr. Reid’s corruptibility was based on still more plausible arguments than those of which I was cognizant. For the peculiar style of controversy adopted by Mr. Reid, justifies the suspicion that he would not hesitate to indulge in fresh and equally baseless and ungenerous attacks on me, if from a misplaced delicacy, I were, on the present occasion, to leave unexposed and unrefuted, any considerable number of the fallacious and contradictory statements with which his pamphlet abounds.

In the prosecution of the disagreeable task which Mr. Reid has so unnecessarily imposed on me, I shall endeavour to avoid aught that even he himself could consider unfair. And with this view I shall confine myself as far as possible to a chronological treatment of my materials. By the adoption of this plan I shall be compelled to be more prolix than I should wish,—and to give fuller details and comments in the earlier portions of my narrative, than would be necessary under a different treatment of my subject: but the reader may rest assured that though at times he may consider me diffuse, and unnecessarily minute, he will eventually discover that I advance nothing which is not more or less necessary for a satisfactory elucidation of those melancholy scandals of which so ample a share has fallen to the lot of Mr. Reid, and to demonstrate the utter falsity of the arguments by which that gentleman endeavours to prove that his protégé, Nursoo Punt, was in no wise responsible for the prevalence of those scandals.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE HISTORY OF NURSOO PUNT, IN RELATION TO MR. REID.

The office establishment of the Baroda Resident consists of two departments—the European, and the Native. And at the head of the latter is an officer, who, under the designation of “Native Agent,” is invested with the functions and responsibilities of confidential native assistant to the Resident. In 1843, a vacancy occurred in this appointment; the last incumbent having been, like several of his predecessors, dismissed for corrupt practices. And amongst the candidates for the post was Nursoo Punt, at that date Dufturdar in the office of the Revenue Commissioner at Poonah, in which capacity he had served for many years, and achieved, as Mr. Reid tells us (page 23), “the high and honourable reputation of being the most distinguished native revenue servant the Bombay Presidency has produced.”

As Dufturdar, Nursoo Punt enjoyed an income of £480 per annum in the salubrious climate of the Deccan. The salary of the situation for which he applied, was only £360 per annum; and the scene of its duties was proverbially one of the most unhealthy stations in Western India. But it was a notorious fact that, for a series of years, the native agents at Baroda had amassed enormous wealth by betraying the confidence of their superiors, and by engaging in and promoting the foulest corruption. This source of illegitimate income was still unexhausted; and Nursoo enjoyed facilities for turning it to account equal to those possessed by the most fortunate of his predecessors. For he was related by family ties to several of the more eminent of the Baroda corruptionists.

These relationships, indeed, were not known to his European superiors at the date of his application. But the mere fact of his applying for an office in all respects less desirable, for an honest man, than that of which he was in possession, was well calculated to excite their suspicions. Nursoo accordingly thought it necessary to offer a solution of the suspicious fact, which he endeavoured to render less suggestive of suspicion, by going through the farce of requesting that the salary of the office to which he aspired might be raised to an equality with that he proposed to relinquish. The request he knew to be inadmissible; and his explanation he must have felt to be unsatisfactory. It was (Mr. Reid tells us at page 24) that his health had been undermined by his "wandering mode of life"—which consisted in annual jaunts in the suite of the Revenue Commissioner; and that he desired to enjoy "ease and quiet in his native country of Guzerat!"\* The view taken of his application, and of the cogency of the reasons on which it was based, is now no longer dubious. Even Mr. Reid admits that HE, and "MANY OTHERS," "warned Nursoo of the danger of taking "service in a place which was known to be so vile a sink of corruption as Baroda; and pointed out to him that he would incur "THE RISK EITHER OF BEING HIMSELF CONTAMINATED BY A RESIDENCE "in such a nest of villainy, or of losing his present well-earned "reputation, though he might be as virtuous as an angel."

The remonstrances and cautions of his European friends failed to influence Nursoo. He persisted in his application. And this *facile princeps* of native revenue servants, the respected of many Revenue Commissioners, and of Mr. Reid, the Revenue Secretary, was, in December 1842, unfortunately for himself, and unhappily for others, permitted to leave the department in which he had earned such distinction, and to proceed on a reduced

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\* When, in 1851, Nursoo Punt was ordered to proceed from Ahmedabad (his native city) to Baroda (from which he had been removed about a year before) to stand his trial on charges of corruption, he addressed a piteous petition to Government, in which he described himself as "A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND!" B.B. p. 1000.

income to the unhealthy climate of Baroda, that late in life he might enter on his noviciate in a widely different department; one in which there was a risk, obvious even to his friends, of his becoming corrupt; and in which, though his friends were not then aware of it, he had more than ordinary temptations and facilities for prostituting his functions, and betraying his trust!

He had not long been settled in his new appointment, ere a petition was sent to government, accusing him of having accepted bribes, eleven years before, when visiting Baroda, in the suite of Lord Clare. The petition further intimated that Nursoo was related by family ties to more than one of his predecessors, who had been dismissed for corrupt practices, as well as to the notorious Baba Nafra, who had, on former occasions, been denounced by the local officers, for his systematic corruption of government servants, and who was specially prohibited, by Sir G. Arthur, from access to the Baroda Residency, on account of his complicity with the attempt made in 1840, to bribe the government of Sir J. Carnac.\*

The petition was received in March 1844. In April it was sent to Mr. Remington, the officiating Resident, to have its allegations investigated: and on the 1st of May that gentleman reported that Nursoo *was* related by family ties to the corruptionists named. As regarded the bribe taking, he observed, that as no complaints had been previously made on the subject, it was "rather too late in the day to commence them now."

Mr. Reid tells us that though he was in council when the petition was received, "it certainly made no impression on his memory." And, though he does not state, he implies, that equally unproductive of "impression on his memory," was the official report made by Mr. Remington, that this same Nursoo, whom he had so strongly dissuaded from going to Baroda, and whose

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\* The papers relating to this---the Dhakjie Dadajee---intrigue, have been ordered by the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Otway, M.P. for Stafford.

application to be sent thither, was itself so suggestive of suspicion, was allied by ties of caste and kin, to dismissed and degraded corruptionists, and to a man who had been an accomplice of the Guicowar in the design entertained by that Prince to administer to Mr. Reid himself, a bribe of £6,000. It is the more remarkable, that Mr. Remington's report should have left no impression on Mr. Reid's memory, inasmuch as he himself signed a "minute," in which, in common with Sir G. Arthur and Mr. J. H. Crawford, he distinctly implied, that had the Government received timely notice of Nursoo's relationship to the leading Baroda corruptionists, they would not have sanctioned his appointment. This "minute" was written on the 24th of May 1844, barely six months after Mr. Reid had addressed his dissuasions to Nursoo. (P. 946, No. 7.)

Such were some of the antecedents of the individual, whom, on my assumption of office as Resident, in May 1847, after nearly ten years' absence from Guzerat, I found in the post of native agent at Baroda. But I was wholly ignorant of them. I had never heard a word whispered to the man's disadvantage. His quiet and unobtrusive manner impressed me strongly in his favor. His industry, his intimate knowledge of all that pertained to his office, the care and regularity with which he kept the records, and the familiarity with the most trivial of them which he displayed, attracted my attention, and commanded my admiration; and I regarded him as an invaluable public servant, not less trustworthy than useful.

As time wore on, however, I had occasion to doubt his honesty. I discovered him endeavouring to prejudice me against the widow Joitabhae, by a representation which I had good reason to believe untrue. Other little traits of disingenuousness were, from time to time, displayed; and at length, in the summer of 1848, though I still remained ignorant of his family connection with Baba Nafra—of his pecuniary transactions with that individual, as subsequently elicited—and of his having "connived" at the mission of the bribemaster whom Baba Nafra sent to Bombay in the previous September—I was reluctantly compelled to suspect



him of infidelity, in consequence of his conduct in two cases, in one of which the Baba's interests were directly and deeply concerned. These were the cases of two Mahratta chiefs, named Gorajee Pol and Govind Row Guicowar. The former case displayed a conspiracy to defraud the Pol, on the part of the agent to whom the management of his estates had been confided by a previous Resident. In the latter, a false claim, to the extent of nearly £30,000, supported by the fraudulent substitution of a cancelled for a valid bond, had been preferred by Baba Nafra, the sole manager of the Baroda banking house of Hurree Bhugtee. Both, but more especially the former, were cases involving very intricate details, which none but a native, skilled in native finance questions, was competent thoroughly to unravel. I accordingly called in the aid of my native agent. I soon, however, had reason to suspect that he was resolved, not only not to render me honest and cordial assistance, but to embarrass my enquiries and conceal the truth from me. It therefore became necessary to invoke other aid. I applied to an individual named Fudkey, who had in 1837-38 rendered valuable services to Mr. Malet and myself in bringing to light the corrupt practices of those days. His assistance was obtained, and those frauds and conspiracies were exposed, in the investigation of which, as Mr. Frere has since judicially determined, Nursoo had failed to render me the assistance he was competent, and in duty bound, to afford; in the one case, through "negligence;" in the other, through corrupt collusion, and by the wilful suppression of documents in his possession.

About the period when my first suspicions were awakened, Nursoo Punt intimated to me his desire to resign the service; and ere long, he requested me to forward his resignation, and with it a request that he might not only receive the Government pension to which his length of service entitled him, but an equivalent for the extra allowances which he could have claimed had "Warden's Official Fund" not been abolished. I agreed to do so. For I recollected more than one instance of a native servant, who had for long maintained an unblemished reputation, falling before the temptations which beset him on his transference to the political department; I knew Baroda to be such a sink

of iniquity, that few natives could long breathe its atmosphere and remain pure; and my compassion far outweighed my indignation. I could not, indeed, have submitted to Nursoo remaining longer as my native agent. It was due to myself, and to those interests of which I was the guardian, to rid my office of his presence; and had he wished to retain his appointment, I must have sent in and supported, specific charges against him. But as he had tendered his resignation, and as he had undoubtedly rendered long and eminent services to the state, it did not appear to me a case which demanded severity; and on the 9th of September, 1848, I forwarded his application, with the usual routine "recommendation," to be disposed of by Government as they should see fit, after taking into consideration the unfavourable reports which I had deemed it my duty to make.\*

These reports I could not have avoided making had I felt inclined to do so. For in handing up the cases of Govind Row and Gorajee Pol, dated respectively the 21st August and 7th September 1848, it was necessary that I should explain why I had been compelled to call in other native aid than that of Nursoo. This, however, I did in no hostile or vindictive spirit. In respect of the first of the two cases, I observed, that Nursoo Punt had "neglected to point out to me causes of suspicion which he now "acknowledges to exist, and others I have indicated, which, "although he does not admit, could scarcely otherwise than have "occurred to so shrewd a native as he is." And in reference to the second case, I mentioned with "regret," that "my native "agent, instead of exerting himself to arrest the evil which he "must have known was going on, has not aided me to the extent "that he ought to have done, in bringing the real state of Gorajee "Pol's affairs to light. Whether caused by apathy and most "blameable carelessness, or culpable collusion with the Paruck, "in the fraud the latter had been carrying on, I am unable to

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\* And I had the less reason to object, inasmuch as, in his application, he alluded to the fact of his having "*some time back*" intimated, both to the Government and myself, his intention of retiring on his pension, on the very day on which he should have completed the prescribed service of thirty years—that is, on the 11th September 1848—two days after I forwarded his

• application.

“ say, and must leave Government to form their own judgment  
 “ on the evidence I have submitted. *But in this case, as in that*  
 “ *which I had reported on the 31st ultimo, I venture to express*  
 “ *my hope, that, in consideration of his long services, the most*  
 “ *lenient view the circumstances admit will be taken of the native*  
 “ *agent's conduct.*”

Yet Mr. Reid, writing in February 1853, with the Blue Books before him, and aware of the results arrived at by Mr. Frere, the Baroda Commissioner, in October 1851—of the admissions of Nursoo's guilt, made by the Bombay Government themselves—and of the still stronger opinions on the subject expressed by the Court of Directors—endeavours to enlist sympathy in behalf of a convicted criminal, by insinuating that I had no definite ground of complaint to prefer against Nursoo, and that I merely wanted to drive him from office, in order that I might bestow his situation on another. Such are the more than insinuations in which Mr. Reid indulges at page 22. And he cites (strangely enough) page 1056 of the Blue Book, in support of the insinuation.\*

\* *Mr. Reid's imputations, at page 22 of his Pamphlet.*

“ When, on the 9th September 1848, Col. Outram forwarded Nursoo's application for permission to retire, and, in consideration of his eminent services, for some pension beyond what the ordinary rules awarded to him, he did so with his ‘ recommendation.’ Not a word was then said about suspicion; not a word of warning to the Government not to decide on the request for extra pension till the case of the Pol had been disposed of. It is clear that at that time Col. Outram had no very strong opinion of Nursoo Punt's guilt. *He brought against him no distinct charge of criminality; and admits that all he desired was to get rid of him from his office---this, no doubt, was all that his protégé, Fudky, cared for also.*”—Mr. Reid's “ Letter.” n. 22.

*The passage in the Blue Book which Mr. Reid marginally cites as justifying his imputations.*

“ In handing up my reports of these cases to Government (dated 31st August, and 7th September, 1848), it became my duty to notice those traits in the conduct of Nursoo Punt which had compelled me to seek assistance from the Fudky. *But as Nursoo Punt had served for 30 years, and was, in respect of that service, entitled to a pension, I did not seek to press hardly on him.* WHAT THE INTERESTS OF MY OFFICE DEMANDED, *was, that I should be relieved of his presence; AND AS HE HAD ALREADY APPLIED FOR PERMISSION TO RETIRE ON HIS PENSION, I was in hopes that this object would be speedily effected. I, THEREFORE, recommended no punitive measures; and even conceded that what I believed to be the result of dishonesty might possibly be only chargeable to neglect.*”  
 —Baroda Blue Book, p. 1056.

Hardly more fair, and somewhat inconsistent with this and other charges which he elsewhere makes, is the taunt which he flings at me, in page 21, where he says:—

“ His (Colonel Outram’s) letters contain no allusion to the fact, since so prominently adduced, of Nursoo Punt’s family connexion with Baba Nafra, the manager of Hurree Bhugtee’s bank, and others at Baroda; of which, indeed, he tells us, he was not cognizant till the middle of October 1850. It is somewhat strange that though Col. Outram was Resident from May 1847, he had not, till nearly three and a half years subsequently, ascertained that there was any connection between his native agent and any parties at Baroda, although a former Resident, in reporting to government on the anonymous petition of March 1844, to which so much importance has since been attached, had stated the full particulars of such a connection.”

It may possibly occur even to less able and clear headed readers than Mr. Reid, that had I been, as he insinuates in more than one place, a tool in the hands of Nursoo Punt’s rival; and, as he more than insinuates at page 34, “ prejudiced against Nursoo”—unreasonably “ suspicious ” of him—“ credulous,”—and easily “ worked upon,”—I should soon have been made aware of the previous history of the native agent, and might possibly have devoted to a search of the records, for facts damaging to the object of my dislike, a portion of that time which I consecrated, in its integrity, to the more useful, and more legitimate duties of my office—to securing redress for the oppressed, and invoking punishment on the fraudulent.

My two Reports were, as I have already said, dated the 31st August and 7th September, 1848. Mr. Reid lays much stress—with what advantage to himself will speedily appear—on the fact that the latter was not delivered at the Secretariat till the 18th of the month. But as neither he nor Mr. Malet pretends that any delay took place in the transmission of the former, which contained my allegations respecting Nursoo Punt’s conduct in the Govind Row case, I may assume that it reached Government about the 4th of September,—several days, that is, prior to the receipt of Nursoo’s petition for permission to retire on his pension. Whether it did so or not, is, however, quite immaterial to the real

questions at issue. That on the 18th of September both Reports were before Government even Mr. Reid does not pretend to call in question.

On the 17th of September, I myself reached Bombay *en route* to Egypt, whither I had been ordered to repair for the benefit of my health. And on my arrival at the Presidency I lost no time in urging the speedy consideration of my Reports; in order that before I left India, one, at least, of my suggestions, might be considered by the Government. The suggestion was, that advantage should be taken of the frauds committed by the firm of Hurree Bhugtee (that is, by Baba Nafra, the sole manager) to annul the "guarantee" enjoyed by the house. These "guarantees" are pregnant with embarrassment and mischief. Many of them, and this among the number, are only secured during the good behaviour of the holders. Their annulment, whenever opportunities occurred, had often been enjoined on the local Government by the Court of Directors. The continuance of the guarantee to the firm of Hurree Bhugtee, in spite of its many grievous sins, had tended to injure the Government in the eyes of the natives, by confirming their long-cherished belief that the highest Bombay functionaries had corrupt dealings with this house, and with its unprincipled manager Baba Nafra. And I deemed it, therefore, of paramount importance that the guarantee should be withdrawn, as I had preferred against Baba Nafra the double charge of having attempted extortion to the extent of nearly £30,000, and of having supported this extortion by the fraudulent substitution of one bond for another.

The matters treated of in my reports were intricate; in many respects obscure; and while investigating them I had laboured under serious indisposition. I feared that I might not have stated the cases with sufficient minuteness and lucidity: and I was particularly anxious that the cause of justice should not suffer through the imperfections of my despatches: for in both cases unhappy results were to be apprehended, should the Government display leniency to the guilty parties. I accordingly deemed it my duty to offer such additional information as they might deem necessary;

pledging myself to substantiate all the allegations contained in my Reports. These offers I many times repeated. And I frequently expressed my readiness to postpone my departure until the cases were disposed of, should, any further explanations be desired at my hands. As it was, I remained in Bombay from the 17th September till the 3rd of November, ready and anxious to complete what might be deemed defective in my Reports, and to clear up all that might seem obscure. But my offers were not accepted. The only answer I could get was "YOUR REPORTS ARE STILL IN MR. REID'S HANDS." (B.B. 1405.) And, as will be hereafter seen, their long detention in Mr. Reid's hands, forms an important element in the mass of circumstantial evidence, on which the natives of Baroda justified their assertions, that that gentleman maintained a corrupt alliance with Nursoo Punt, and "his wicked and wealthy relative," Baba Nafra.

With singular good taste, a good taste which will be better appreciated as we proceed, Mr. Reid declares, at page 33 of his Pamphlet, that, by making these repeated offers of further information, I "*was practising that very species of Khutput (illicit action) which I have since been so earnest in denouncing.*" And he informs the reader, that the "proper answer to my representations would have been, that, as I had, doubtless, made the cases as complete as I could, they would be decided on their merits; and that, if further information in regard to any points seemed to Government to be requisite, the acting Resident would be instructed to furnish it."

Such sentiments Mr. Reid would have been ashamed to avow in reference to an officer in the position of Resident, who, having devoted several months to arduous investigations, the results of which deeply affected the interests of British wards, and not very indirectly the honour of his Government, and fearing lest he should have failed to do justice to the subject discussed, had, in his zeal for what he regarded as the cause of justice, made considerable sacrifices rather than leave the country till assured that no further information was required from him. But Mr. Reid escapes this embarrassment. He represents me as having waited

in Bombay, at a time when my health demanded my immediate departure, not from any public or honourable motives, but *from a desire to obtain some decision against that Nursoo Punt, whom he had previously accused me of having endeavoured to drive from office, that I might bestow his post on another!* And he leads his reader to infer that some private squabble, arising out of very unsubstantial and indefinite complaints against that native subordinate, having come before government for final settlement, I sought to obtain undue advantages over the man whom, with a fine perception of propriety and delicacy, he calls my "ANTAGONIST." He cannot, he says, (p. 33)—

"Uphold Colonel Outram's claim to the right of using his personal influence with secretaries and members of government, in any case after he had made his official report on it (a mode of proceeding to which, I observe, he was constantly in the habit of resorting), and especially after he had, as in the present instance, given over his office to his assistant, when proceeding on a very long leave of absence. *Had any English officer, civil or military, been his ANTAGONIST, would such a proceeding have been tolerated? WHY SHOULD IT BE SO WHEN NATIVES, WHO ARE ENTITLED TO AT LEAST EQUAL JUSTICE, ARE CONCERNED?*

Mr. Reid's position as a gentleman, forbids the supposition that he could have deliberately intended to make statements and implications which he knew to be, not only not true, but diametrically opposed to the truth. I am, therefore, bound to assume, that, the agitation he experienced on reading the animadversions of "Indus," had not subsided when he penned his thirty-third page; and that it caused him to forget the real facts of the case, and to overlook the documents in the Blue Books which proved his assertions to be erroneous. But as no man is entitled to take advantage of his own wrong—even if it arise from a mere error, the result of agitation—I may be permitted to express a hope, that, should his pamphlet ever reach a second edition, Mr. Reid will purge it of at least *this* inaccuracy. Nursoo Punt had sent in his resignation. I never contemplated the bare possibility of his being (through the persuasive influence of Mr. Reid), invited to recall it, and to remain in the confidential post he had already

betrayed. The only doubt that could have occurred to me was, as to whether he would be allowed to retire on a pension, or be dismissed. I had done my best to promote its solution in the manner most advantageous to Nursoo, by suggesting that conduct which I believed (and which has since been judicially proved) to have arisen from corrupt collusion, might possibly be the result of culpable negligence—an offence which did not justify the refusal of a pension to a servant of thirty years' standing. And my only object in expressing my readiness to substantiate all that I had advanced regarding him in my Report, was to prove how very urgent was the necessity for annulling the bank's "guarantee," by showing that there was reason to fear that Baba Nafra had succeeded in maintaining that improper influence over the native establishment of the Residency which ten years before he was proved to have established.

At pages 34, 35, and 61, Mr. Reid reiterates the same inaccuracies, either in direct terms, or by implication. And it is peculiarly unfortunate that he has done so. For his statements would, if true, or at all resembling the truth, afford something like a palliation of what otherwise can hardly be palliated.

How long my Reports remained "IN MR. REID'S HANDS," I am not in a position to determine. But I had the assurance of Mr. Secretary Malet, up to the date of my departure for Egypt on the 2nd of November, that they had been in Mr. Reid's possession since my arrival in Bombay on the 17th of September. To that assurance I referred in plain and most explicit terms in more than one of the official reports which I addressed to the Bombay Government. And though Mr. Malet and Lord Falkland have both endeavoured to explain away many of my allegations, neither of them has even hinted that my Reports were *not* in Mr. Reid's hands during, at all events, the six weeks that I remained in Bombay. Mr. Reid, writing in February 1853, and "arguing from dates and official documents," avers that there is some mistake, and professes to prove it. (p. 31.) But he admits, (p. 32,) that his "previous impressions were that the papers had been some time by him." And I shall hereafter show that his "impressions"



were correct, by proving that his "arguing" is fallacious. In this place I shall merely express my regret that, in respect of this, as in respect of the motives to which he attributes my prolonged sojourn in Bombay, his mistakes regarding the real facts of the case should be such as an unscrupulous hired advocate might be supposed willing to hazard in defending him from the charges levelled against him by "*Indus*."

In illustration of my meaning I may mention, that the day after my arrival in Bombay, Nursoo Punt (still at Baroda,) in violation of official usage, and the rules of the service, forwarded, through MR. REID, a petition to the Bombay Government, in which he expressed the great "mortification" he felt at hearing that I had recently made "two unfavourable reports to Government" respecting him. \* He represented that I had, for a long time, "had a kind regard towards him," but that, "unfortunately, on the misrepresentation of his enemies, a sudden change took place in my mind." And he begged that he might not be condemned without being heard in his defence.

By sending a petition of any kind, more especially one relating to my official reports, otherwise than through the Resident or his assistant and temporary *locum tenens*, the native agent, a man of thirty years' service, was well aware that he was guilty of an irregularity which, had it been committed by myself, or any other European or native officer, would have drawn down on us a severe censure. The petition, in such a case, would have been returned with orders to "transmit it through the prescribed channel." And if, as in the present instance, the irregularly transmitted petition had reflected on the petitioner's superior, and attributed his official acts to the influence of misrepresentations, made by interested parties, Government would have afforded some manifestations of their displeasure, more emphatic than a mere censure.\*

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\* Mr. Reid himself practically admits, at page 41 of his "Letter," that the petition *was* sent to him, when alluding to a petition from another individual received by Government in November 1848. In that petition it was stated, (and the statement has been judicially confirmed,) that Nursoo

But the petition was *not* returned to Nursoo. It was received on the 22nd of September; and on the 26th it was "circulated" along with his application for pension, which had only the day previous been returned from the office of the "civil auditor," to whom it had been "referred," and who had reported that Nursoo's application for extra pension was "*inadmissible.*" No hint of its existence was breathed to myself, during my sojourn in Bombay, notwithstanding that, on the 7th of October, nearly a month before I left for Egypt, the Governor had been induced to append his signature to the following extraordinary minute. (B. B. p. 1245.)

"HAD Nursoo's application to retire from the public service ARISEN from his feeling it impossible to serve under Colonel Outram, *after what he may consider the unjust treatment he has met with at his hands*, IT WOULD BE BUT JUST TO ALLOW HIM TO RECONSIDER HIS APPLICATION, NOW THAT COLONEL OUTRAM IS NO LONGER AT BARODA.\* BUT I find on reference to our records that his intention to retire on the completion of his 30 year's service had

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vauntingly predicted that through the "*secret friendship*" of Mr. Reid, *he would be permitted to recall his resignation, and thus bring sorrow on all who had been gladdened by the prospect of his retirement.* And it was mentioned that (apparently to give an increased air of probability to a prediction which seemed so wildly improbable), Nursoo had intimated his *having sent a petition to Mr. Reid, accompanied by a letter of PRIVATE ADVICE.* Mr. Reid indignantly denies having received the private communication; but he does not deny having received the petition. This is not the only reason I have for stating that the petition was sent through Mr. Reid; though it is the only one I desire at present to assign. If I be in error, Mr. Reid can correct me by distinctly assigning to Lord Falkland, Mr. Willoughby, or Mr. Malet,—the only persons through whom the petition could have been laid before Government—the honour of having put it into "circulation." If these gentlemen accept the compliment I shall admit that I have been deceived. I shall not only regret my mistake, but apologise for it to Mr. Reid; and I shall publicly record that apology; though at the same time I shall be unable to add (the sequel will show why) that the confession of my error would tend in any very perceptible degree to improve the general aspect of Mr. Reid's case. The petition is "*quoted in extenso*" by Mr. Secretary Malet, B. B. p. 1244.

\* I WAS STILL the "RESIDENT AT BARODA." My life may have been deemed precarious. I believe it was. But my sick leave had been granted only for *one year.* The appointment was still mine. Captain French was only my

*been PREVIOUSLY brought to our notice.* And I presume, therefore, that he has now no desire to continue in employment.\* STILL, IF CAPTAIN FRENCH, WHO CAN AS YET HAVE ACQUIRED BUT LITTLE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, SHOULD REQUIRE NURSOO PUNT'S SERVICES, I WOULD PERMIT HIM THE OPTION OF WITHDRAWING HIS APPLICATION. IF HE PERSIST IN HIS INTENTION TO RETIRE, he will of course receive his pension according to existing rules; but considering how his services in the revenue department have been rewarded, I DO NOT THINK THAT WE CAN ENTERTAIN ANY PROPOSITION FOR A FURTHER PENSION."\*

Lord Falkland had not seen my Reports at the date of this minute. In the 12th par. of a minute dated 15th February 1850, (one of those about to be published in the return called for by Parliament on Mr. Otway's motion) he distinctly implies that the first of my two Reports had not come under his consideration till I had left for Egypt—that is, till after the 2nd November 1848. We have the declaration on the part of his Lordship, to the effect that when he *did* see my Reports, he regarded Nursoo Punt's conduct in an unfavorable light, and that he was only influenced to change his views by the councils of his civil colleagues, and "ESPECIALLY BY THE COGENT ARGUMENTS OF THE HONOURABLE MR. REID," contained in the very minute written by that gentleman "as if for himself;" (at some date not determined) and adopted and signed by his Lordship on the 29th of December. It is clear, then, either that this minute was written for Lord Falkland by some one who had seen my Reports, or that his Lordship was induced to write it on the representations of such a person.

That individual could hardly have been Mr. Willoughby. For Mr. Reid takes especial care to draw attention to Mr. Malet's declaration that my Report on the case of Gorajee Pol did not reach Bombay till the 18th September; and from that date till the 2nd November, I continued to receive Mr. Malet's assurances that my Reports "*were still in Mr. Reid's hands.*"

Was it Mr. Reid? The tone of the minute bears a marvellous resemblance to certain passages in the Pamphlet under notice, in

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*locum tenens.* The native establishment over which Nursoo was invited to continue to preside, was the native establishment of *my office.*

\* The writer of this minute did not require to search "*the records*" on the subject. *Vide* note to page 26.

which that gentleman, unmoved by subsequent revelations, does not hesitate to avow opinions which, *if correct*, would have justified the minute of the 7th of October; though they would *not* have justified it until their correctness had been placed beyond doubt, by a reference to myself. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Reid made no use of my Reports during their long detention in his hands. And he himself informs us (at page 34) that "Colonel Outram's Reports AT ONCE showed him that the affair was "one of a very ordinary nature—that it was simply A STRUGGLE, "such as are constantly occurring in every office in India where "natives are serving, for mastery!" At page 35 he again tells us that his scrutiny of the papers "established in his mind the conviction, that this was—an attempt to make Nursoo a victim of an ordinary party struggle." While at page 49, with a full knowledge of all that has since been established, he takes credit to himself for having been the means of "*preventing Nursoo being driven from his office unjustly.*" If Mr. Reid DID express such sentiments to his colleagues on or before the 7th of October, it can hardly be a matter of surprise, that they should have accepted the representations of one who had enjoyed such unusual facilities for making himself acquainted with the minutest details of my reports. If he DID NOT express such sentiments to his colleagues, if in fact he was not the virtual author of the minute of the 7th of October, that minute becomes an unfathomable mystery. For though, as afterwards appeared, Nursoo had boastfully predicted that he would, through the "secret friendship" of Mr. Reid, be permitted to recall his resignation, his petition did not even remotely insinuate that his retirement had been accelerated by my suspicions of his collusion with Baba Nafra. *It did not even in the most indirect manner imply a wish to recall his resignation.* It simply begged that he might not be condemned unheard. And the only reasonable interpretation of which that request was susceptible, was that his application for pension might not be prejudiced by my reports, until he had had an opportunity of explaining his conduct.

Whether, along with Nursoo's irregularly received petition was

circulated some "memorandum" or other document from the pen of Mr. Reid, or whether Mr. Reid made a verbal communication to Lord Falkland on the subject, or whether, as in a case we shall presently notice, Mr. Reid (p. 30,) "*wrote, as for himself, a draft minute which formed the ground-work of that finally adopted by the Governor,*" and which, "*having met his approbation, was taken by the Chief Secretary, or delivered to his officer in order to be worked up in its present form, as the minute of the President,*"—I cannot pretend to determine.

But I feel assured, that no one, taking the entire circumstances into consideration, will accuse me of venturing on an unwarrantable liberty, if (until Mr. Reid shall have solemnly asserted the contrary) I surmise, that to him belongs, exclusively, the honour of this notable minute: a minute in which, without being called on for a single explanation, or being afforded an opportunity of vindicating myself, I was virtually accused of having done such injustice to an unimpeachable subordinate, as would have afforded an adequate explanation of his resignation: and a minute in which, though it is admitted that Nursoo's resignation was *not* caused by the "*unjust treatment he had received at my hands,*" this since convicted betrayer of my confidence was invited to recall his resignation; while my *locum tenens* was stimulated not only to sanction, but to urge, the recal, by every consideration most likely to be influential over him—by allusions to the valuable, and almost *indispensible* aid he might calculate on receiving from Nursoo—by the natural sympathy which every upright man must feel for persecuted worth—by an intelligible hint that the Government to whom he owed his own recent preferment wished him to retain Nursoo—and by the intimation that if Nursoo "**PERSISTED**" in retiring he would do so under disadvantageous pecuniary circumstances.

If it be so, that Mr. Reid was the real author of the "Minute" of the 7th of October, the reader will not marvel that the Baroda corruptionists who, as Mr. Reid himself admits (p. 54), obtained from the secret department of the Secretariat all the information they desired, should have found credence for their boasts that Mr. Reid was their friend, when addressing men already thoroughly

satisfied in their own minds of the corruptibility of high functionaries. But even were Mr. Reid to prove that he was *not* the real author of the "Minute" in question, the fact would in nowise tend to weaken the plausible grounds on which, as I reported to Government, the natives justified their belief in Mr. Reid's corruption. For when I made those Reports, I was ignorant of the manner in which my Reports, taken into consideration in November, had been virtually prejudged in October. I have, however, the less hesitation in recording a surmise that Mr. Reid was the author (virtual or real) of the "Minute," inasmuch as that gentleman's declarations, in reference to the share taken by him in the disposal of Nursoo's case, stand in such singular antagonism to each other, and to the statements of Lord Falkland, that only on the hypothesis adverted to, can aught in any way approaching to even a partial reconciliation be effected. Thus, at page 61, he declares that he had "*no more concern*" with it "*than any other member of the Government*"; though at page 30 he admits that he was himself the sole and exclusive author of the elaborate vindication afterwards penned, in which Nursoo's reinstatement was justified—an admission completely borne out by the declaration of Lord Falkland, that he believed Nursoo to be guilty till induced to change his mind by the views of his civil colleagues, and especially by "*the cogent arguments of Mr. Reid.*" How thoroughly confused Mr. Reid's ideas on this and kindred subjects are, and therefore how cautiously his assertions must be received, has already been shown in more than one instance. And a striking illustration of the same fact is given in the subjoined note.\*

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\* I subjoin two passages, in which Mr. Reid endeavours to prove that my Reports could not have been detained in his hands.

Mr. REID

versus

MR. REID.

"It is IMPOSSIBLE to suppose that the Governor *could* have written this (minute of the 7th October) or that his council *would* have concurred in it---it does not appear *when* they concurred---*had they not*

"After the foregoing exposition of dates and facts, how is it possible to uphold Colonel Outram's declaration, so far as this letter of the 31st August is concerned, that any delay whatever originated with me? *The Go-*

About, or soon after, the period of my departure for Egypt, the papers would seem to have been released from Mr. Reid's

ALL had under their consideration THE WHOLE OF THE PAPERS connected with the charge of misconduct BROUGHT against Nursoo Punt in the two cases submitted by Colonel Outram. This, be it observed, was about a month before Colonel Outram left for Egypt. WHAT THEN BECOMES OF THE DELAY ATTRIBUTED BY COLONEL OUTRAM, SO OFTEN AND SO POINTEDLY, TO ME ALONE?"

Mr. Reid's "Letter," P. 31.

vernor's minute of the 20th November MUST have been framed BEFORE I SAW THE PAPERS AT ALL. BECAUSE (!) its views as to the settlement of the debt differed from mine. AND, AS MY MINUTE IS DATED the 24th November 1848, I MUST have been rapid, rather than dilatory, in coming to a decision."

Mr. Reid's "Letter," P. 29.

In his minute of the 15th November, 1850, Lord Falkland declares that up to the date of my departure for Egypt, (2ND NOVEMBER 1848) "the decision of Government as to the guilt or innocence of Nursoo Punt could not be anticipated." And in another minute, as we have seen, he declares that the first of my Reports had not come under his consideration when I left for Egypt. Couple these declarations with his Lordship's admission that, till convinced by the "cogent arguments" of Mr. Reid, the effect of my Reports on his mind was "unfavorable to the native agent;" and we have, I think, tolerably strong grounds for assuming that when he appended his signature to the "Minute" of the 7th October he must have been led to believe (what Mr. Reid's perusal of my Reports "AT ONCE" satisfied that gentleman) that I had preferred some trumpery and unjust charges against Nursoo, the object of which was to make him "the victim of an ordinary party struggle." To these considerations add the fact, that neither Mr. Malet nor Lord Falkland offer the faintest suggestion, that in attributing the long detention of my papers to Mr. Reid, I did, or possibly might be doing, injustice to that gentleman. Let due weight be given to the strange misconceptions which Mr. Reid evinces in his Pamphlet regarding the real nature of the questions that came before him, in the autumn of 1848. Let his extraordinary repudiation of all that has since been established against Nursoo Punt be kept in view. Let regard be had to the singular self-contradictions, within the compass of three pages, which stand at the head of this note—and to the illustrations already given of the loose manner in which Mr. Reid refers to official documents—and a mass of presumptive evidence is afforded, which will I think satisfy the reader, not only that my reports *did* remain in that gentleman's hands till my departure for Egypt, but that to him belongs the honour of the "Minute" of the 7th of October.

custody. And on the 20th November Lord Falkland's signature was appended to a minute on my report of the 31st August—that on the case of Govind Row—and as the ultimate decision on this, as well as on the case of Gorajee Pol, was attributed to the influence of Mr. Reid, I crave the reader's attention to the details about to be given.

The claim which Nursoo Punt's relative, Baba Nafra, had preferred against Govind Row, amounted to £30,313; and of this exorbitant demand, by far the greater portion was, as has been already stated, based on the fraudulent substitution of one document for another—a fraud, Nursoo Punt's collusion with which has now been established to the satisfaction of Mr. Frere, the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors.\* After consultation with the ablest accountants I had it in my power to consult at Baroda, I estimated the debt justly due at £8315. And Lord Falkland—or the writer of the draft of the minute bearing his signature—still further reduced my estimate by £1438, giving £6877 as the *bonâ fide* obligations of Govind Row. His Lordship was, at the same time, in favour of annulling the bank's guarantee; even though the writer of his "minute" does not seem to have brought to his notice the charge which I had preferred, of fraudulent substitution. As, however, "the whole question" was one requiring Indian knowledge and experience, he desired to have

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\* In the correspondence both documents have been called "bonds;" I therefore retain the term, though somewhat inaccurate. The transaction was this. In 1820, Govind Row passed to the bank a bond for rupees 9001, on which he agreed to pay 12 per cent. interest. In 1830, the Resident, having been called upon to put Govind Row's pecuniary affairs into order, called for a statement of his debts. Amongst others was one item for rupees 9000. Twelve years after the arrangements made for the liquidation of the debt of which this was an item---the Resident who made the arrangement being dead---the bank produced the old and invalid bond of 1820, and pretended that it was the acknowledgment of the debt of rupees 9000, referred to in the accounts of 1830, and that the Resident had recognized its validity. In other words, it was alleged that the debt of rupees 32,000, recognized in 1830, and of which one item was rupees 9000, was, in reality, a debt of that amount PLUS the amount compound interest, at the rate of 12 per cent., which had accrued on the sum of rupees 9001, since 1820.



the "opinion" of his colleagues before pronouncing a definite judgment.\*

From Lord Falkland the papers passed to Mr. Reid; and on the 24th of November that gentleman minuted as follows:—

"I quite concur in the expediency of withdrawing our 'Bhandaries,' (guarantees) when their duration depends on the conduct of the parties holding them, and when that conduct shall be such as to justify our adopting that extreme measure. *But I cannot think THAT THE MERE DEMAND FOR A DEBT, however exorbitant, is a sufficient breach of good conduct.* The firm is not without *some ground* for all its demands. We may not admit them, *but we have no right to punish it for having advanced them.* There have been no forgeries, no denials of payment made to the firm, and NO FRAUDS, if *we except the abstraction of the correspondence from the Residency Records,* for which, on the absence of all proof, we can have no right to make the firm responsible. Commercial morality is, I fear, not at so high a standard among our countrymen in India that we could, with any reason, visit so severely the offence committed by a native banker for trying to exact from his creditor every pie which he thought might be screwed out of him, by the widest interpretation of his bonds. IN THIS CASE I WOULD CERTAINLY ABANDON THE IDEA OF INTERFERING WITH THE BHANDARIE."†

\* Mr. Reid does not in his Pamphlet avow that Lord Falkland was in favour of annulling the "guarantee" till induced by his colleagues, and more especially by Mr. Reid himself, to change his views. In fact, Mr. Reid's remarks would seem to imply that his Lordship had not bestowed a thought on the subject. I therefore subjoin, in parallel columns, Lord Falkland's remarks, and Mr. Reid's allusion to them.

Lord Falkland's Minute, 20th November 1848.

"Mixed up with this question is the behaviour of the firm of Hurrce Bhugtee, who have advanced a claim on the bonds I have above considered to a sum amounting to Rs. 303,130 : 9 : 9. The amount I consider now due sufficiently marks the view I take of this transaction; and I am disposed to adopt Colonel Outram's recommendation to cancel the guarantee formerly extended to the firm. But, ON THE WHOLE OF THE QUESTION, I should wish to be favoured with the opinion of my colleagues."

Minute of the 20th November 1848, ordered by Parliament, on the motion of Mr. Otway, M.P. for Stafford.

Mr. Reid's version thereof in 1853.

"Lord Falkland's minute bears date 20th November, 1848, that is, seventeen days after Colonel Outram had gone to Egypt. *He proposed the reduction of the above sum to Rs. 68,777, and requested the opinion of his colleagues on the question of withdrawing the guarantee.*"—Mr. Reid's Letter, p. 27.

† I had, in my report, alluded to the fact that most of the documents

After what has been already detailed, it is hardly necessary to point out, that in the passage of his minute just quoted, Mr. Reid promulgated an *entirely erroneous view of the facts of the case*. The offence on which I justified my recommendation that the guarantee should be annulled, did *not*, as Mr. Reid officially recorded, consist in the fact of Baba Nafra having made a "*mere demand for an exorbitant debt,*" or in the fact of his having "*tried to exact from his creditor every pie which he thought could be screwed out of him by the widest interpretation of his bonds*"—though even the admitted extortions, coupled with the previous character of the house and of Baba Nafra, would, in my own opinion, as in that originally held by Lord Falkland, have justified the abrogation of the guarantee. But the charge, on the strength of which I had urged that measure, was, that Baba Nafra, taking advantage of the silliness and improvidence of his debtor, had substituted for a bond given in 1830, an old (and invalid) bond which had been assigned to him in 1820; and that, *on this FRAUDULENT SUBSTITUTION he had based certain UNJUST AND MONSTROUS DEMANDS*. This was the charge. And this charge Mr. Reid utterly passed by when he declared that *NO FRAUDS* had been committed.

These errors on the part of Mr. Reid are the more extraordinary, inasmuch as he had long been conversant with native accounts, and was singularly well qualified to appreciate the value of those features in the substituted bond on which I based my arguments. And they become still more remarkable when it is borne in mind that (as he tells us at page 27,) he "*entered minutely into the case,*"

referring to the case of Govind Row, and calculated to prove the iniquitous nature of the demands made by Nafra, *had been abstracted from my office*; and as their abstraction could not possibly have been for the advantage of any one save Nafra (and the bank of which he was the manager); and as Government were well aware that the bank had before been convicted of tampering with the native officers of the Residency, I conceived that there were good reasons to suspect the bank people of having secured the abstraction of the missing documents. These remarks are necessary to explain one of Mr. Reid's allusions.

and that (page 35,) "*deeming it his bounden duty to enter into a careful scrutiny of all that was laid before Government, he did so as he would have gone into a judicial case.*"

Mr. Reid did not, in this minute, enter into any formal vindication of Nursoo Punt. He intimated that he would defer his remarks till he came to minute on the case of Gorajie Pol. But at the same time he pronounced the most satisfactory practical exoneration of him from all blame that could possibly have been afforded. For as NO FRAUDS had been attempted, it was obvious that the "apathy and culpable negligence," which the conduct of Nursoo Punt, in reference to the alleged fraud, had led me to record against him, could have no existence except in my own "credulous" and "easily worked upon" mind. And not satisfied with this negative demonstration of the injustice I had done to that immaculate public servant, Mr. Reid implied a triumphant proof that Nursoo could have had no "corrupt collusion" with Baba Nafra, by basing his award to the latter of a still smaller sum than even Lord Falkland had proposed,—on an *alleged* "SUGGESTION" of the native agent.

After Nursoo had become aware that the frauds of his relative, Baba Nafra, were no longer susceptible of concealment, I addressed to him a series of interrogations, as to why he had failed to point out to me the suspicious features of Nafra's claims. And, with a view to exculpate himself, he pretended that he had all along contemplated the adoption of the Hindoo rule of "*dam-dooput*,"—which prescribes that the interest payable on a debt should not exceed the amount of the principal—a pretext transparently and impudently untrue. (B.B. p. 970.) Yet Mr. Reid fell into the mistake of citing as a laudable and sagacious "suggestion," this fear-extorted equivocation, by which Nursoo endeavoured to extricate himself from a scrape, when he saw that, in spite of all his efforts to deceive me, I had discovered the frauds, and meant to disallow the extortions of his kinsman! After enumerating the embarrassments that beset the Government, in determining the sum that ought to be allowed to the bank, Mr. Reid thus wrote—

"But I think a way is open to us of reducing the demands to a reasonable amount, without apparently infringing our 'guarantee,' that is, by not allowing the interest to exceed the principal. '*Dam dooput*' is a native rule in such transactions, and considering the nature of the case, and the attempt made by the firm to secure such usurious profits, I think we should be quite justified in adopting it. NURSOO PUNT, in his answer to *the second question in the accompaniment D*, SUGGESTS THIS MODE OF SETTLEMENT."

And strange to say, Mr. Reid—proof against evidence which appears conclusive to all who have studied the matter, save himself and Lord Falkland's colleague Mr. Bell,—does not hesitate to adduce this "suggestion," in 1853, as a proof that Nursoo could not possibly have been in collusion with Nafra in 1848. At page 56 of his "Letter," he parades as a fact, inconsistent with any hypothesis save the one which assumes that Nursoo acted "*on a right sense of duty*," that "*he SUGGESTED a mode of settlement by which the firm was to receive even a smaller sum than Colonel Outram awarded.*"

It is nothing to Mr. Reid that Mr. Frere had judicially determined that Nursoo's so called "SUGGESTION"—"*had come too late to save him, when his report, which ought to have exonerated him, had been condemned, and he had been compelled to produce papers which showed that the claim for interest then urged, was, to some extent, fraudulent.*" (B.B. p. 1050.) It is nothing that Mr. Frere convicted Nursoo, either legally or morally, of other offences, involving a corrupt and mercenary collusion with Nafra, and an improper use of Mr. Reid's own name. It is nothing that the Bombay Government (Mr. Bell excepted) have felt compelled to acknowledge the truth of most of Mr. Frere's judicial affirmations. It is nothing that the Court of Directors and the Board of Control have adopted Mr. Frere's decisions more unreservedly than the Bombay Government. All these considerations are valueless in the estimation of Mr. Reid, when opposed to his own unerring intuitions of Nursoo's immaculate purity. True, Nursoo's self-transfer from Poonah to Baroda in 1843 was suggestive of suspicion.—True, Mr. Reid was at that date oppressed with anxiety lest Nursoo should acquire "*contamination*" from breathing the

political atmosphere of that "*sink of villainy.*"—True, he found in 1844 that the object of his solicitude was actually related by family ties to some of the vilest of the Baroda corruptionists.—Yet will he not suffer such trumpery reflections to influence the unbounded confidence he reposes in the unsullied purity of that public servant through whom his own name came to be associated with "the foulest of deeds and the vilest of men," and who had contrived to make the people of Baroda think that he and his wealthy kinsman held the reputation of Mr. Reid and others at their mercy. And while endeavouring to find converts to this generous faith, he charitably abstains from mentioning the considerations which, if submitted to his readers, might militate against their acceptance of so wonderful and mysterious a creed.

To return to matters more immediately connected with Mr. Reid's minute. It did not escape the notice of the Court of Directors, that the fraudulent substitution of one document for another, on which I had based my recommendation of the annulment of the bank's guarantee, had not been specifically alluded to (if indeed considered) by the Secretary who drafted Lord Falkland's minute; nor by Mr. Reid, who bestowed a judicial investigation on the case; nor by Mr. Willoughby, who was induced to concur in Mr. Reid's exposition of its merits. A reference on the subject was accordingly made by the Court to the Bombay Government; and that body were subsequently rebuked, not only for having evaded the reference, but for having, in evading it, made an assertion inconsistent with fact. The despatch in which this censure was conveyed bore date the 13th February 1850. And Mr. Reid, extracting half a sentence from it, applies the garbled quotation to a useful controversial purpose at page 46 of his "Letter." It is made to do duty both in vindication of Mr. Reid and in disparagement of myself, in a passage in which he summarizes what, according to his own statement, he had previously proved. In order to display to full advantage the felicity of the arrangement, I take the liberty of subjoining, in parallel columns, the words of the Court of Directors and Mr. Reid's ingenious condensation of their disagreeably prolix remarks.

## MR. REID'S WORDS.

I have already shown \* \* \* that the Government did not, in that case, solemnly ignore a charge of forgery well supported by proof. The most that Colonel Outram himself has ever tried to make of the case, even when his feelings had been excited to the utmost, after his return from Egypt, is to call it a charge of "constructive forgery;" and though the Court of Directors, in their letter of the 13th February, 1850, DIFFERED IN OPINION from the Government, SO FAR as to think that the substitution of one bond for another would, if proved, be an offence which ought to involve the withdrawal of the guarantee; yet, in directing that further investigation should be made, THEY SPECIALLY OBSERVED that "the case was not brought very clearly before Government, in Colonel Outram's letter.—Mr. Reid's "Letter," pp. 45-6.

## THOSE OF THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

"We HAD called your attention to the opinion of Lieutenant Colonel Outram, that the firm of Hurree Bhugtee had substituted a false bond, bearing interest, for Rupees 9,001, in the room of a mere acknowledgment of a balance of debt, an act which, if committed, would amount to forfeiture of your Bhandarie. You now, after a reference to Captain French, report that NO PROOFS EXIST IN SUPPORT OF LIEUTENANT COL. OUTRAM'S SUSPICIONS. This is more than is borne out by the report of Captain French, who merely stated that he was "not aware of any grounds beyond those stated by Lieutenant Col. Outram, for supposing, "&c.;" having previously stated that "NO FURTHER STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO ASCERTAIN THE TRUE STATE OF THE CASE."

"The grounds adduced by Lieutenant Colonel Outram were STRONG, and in his opinion conclusive. HE DISTINCTLY STATED, in par. 49 of his Report, of the 31st August 1848, that the soucar (banker) had substituted for the receipt passed in 1830, a former bond of 9,001 rupees, dated 4th February, 1820, not indorsed by the Resident, and produced it as having been confirmed by the Resident in this item. The case certainly was not brought very clearly before Government in Lieutenant Colonel Outram's letter. BUT we should have expected that if his conclusion was not admitted, the insufficiency of his reasons would have been shown, or the subject referred to him for further explanation. We desire that the question be taken into the deliberate consideration of your Government, in order that in the event of Lieutenant Colonel Outram's opinion being found correct, you may annul the Bhandarie.\*—Dispatch of the 13th February, 1850, ordered by the House of Commons, on Mr. Otway's motion.

\* In obedience to this mandate, the Bombay Government (of which Mr. Reid had ceased to be a member in March 1849) referred to me for further information. On the 30th July 1850, I forwarded my reply—which was

The excuse made by Lord Falkland for not having adopted the course which the Court of Directors "should have expected," was that I had left for Egypt before the case came before him. But as

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not transmitted to the Court of Directors till the 17th September 1851. In transmitting it, the Bombay Government admitted that my original charges were well founded. And in noticing their dispatch, the Court thus commenced their remarks. "On receipt of our letter dated 13th of February 1850, *previously to which you had ENTIRELY PASSED OVER the grave accusations brought by Lieutenant Colonel Outram against the firm of Hurree Bhugtee, you called on that officer, &c., &c.*" The reason assigned by the Government for withholding from the Court of Directors, for thirteen months and a half, my second report on the subject, was that they waited till the other charges against Baba Nafra, in connection with Joitabhae, should be disposed of. How far this long delay tended to increase the difficulties I had to surmount in prosecuting Nursoo Punt is shown at pages 1436-40 of the Baroda Blue Book. And how far it was necessary to defer replying to the reiterated references of the Court on the subject of the ignored fraud, till five and a half months after the receipt of my report on the case of Joitabhae, is a matter on which it is not my province to offer an opinion.

But, while on this subject, I may draw attention to the fact, that in his minute of the 11th November 1850 (transmitted to London, as I have said, only the 17th September 1851), Lord Falkland seems to attribute to Mr. Reid any blame that might be supposed to rest on the Government, for having "entirely passed over" my charge against the bank, made in 1848: inasmuch as that gentleman, in recording that "NO FORGERIES" had been committed, confused his colleagues as to the real nature of my charge. This, his Lordship admits, was "not that a claim was made on a forged bond, but that a false charge was made on the bond for rupees 9001. It is (continues his Lordship) expressly stated in Mr. Reid's minute, that there had "been NO FORGERIES; the term forged bond has therefore been improperly "used in our resolution \* \* \* The actual accusation made by Colonel "Outram in the 4th paragraph of his Letter of the 31st August 1848, "was, that the firm, to justify their claim for having interest on the sum of "rupees 9000 inserted in the document signed by Mr. Williams on the 29th "October 1830, produced a bond for rupees 9001, dated 4th February "1820, which Colonel Outram, for the reasons adduced in his 4th paragraph, "stated COULD NOT have reference to the item of rupees 9000, above alluded to, "as entered on the document signed by Mr. Williams. On the whole trans- "action, I was much disposed to adopt Colonel Outram's recommendation "to cancel the guarantee; but my civil colleagues, Messrs. Reid and Wil- "loughby, did not consider this measure advisable, and to their opinion I "deferred."

his Lordship's "minute" was written within 18 days after my departure, it is not unreasonable to infer that, had my report dated the 31st August, instead of being detained "in Mr. Reid's hands," been put into active "circulation" as soon as it was received—or even on the 18th of September—the case might probably have been taken into consideration before the 2nd of November, the date on which I sailed for Egypt. Not only, however, were my own offers to "complete what was defective, and clear up what might be obscure" in my reports, unheeded, but, (till the Court's despatch compelled it) no reference was made to the Acting Resident, to whom (and not to me) Mr. Reid says (p. 33) the Government would have chosen to apply, "if further information in regard to any point seemed to be requisite."

From no desire to do so, I am ready to believe, but with the undoubted effect of mystifying and deceiving the reader, Mr. Reid appears inclined to claim credit for certain beneficial results which subsequently flowed from maintaining the guarantee in 1848. At page 28 he thus writes:—

"Colonel Outram, throughout the Blue Book, denounces the Government for the iniquity of its decision in not carrying out his suggestion of withdrawing the guarantee. It did not apparently occur to him that had his advice been followed, the "atrocious" case of Joitabhae could never have come under the cognizance of any British authority. It was solely as widow of a member of a firm possessing the guarantee that she could claim the interference of the British Government; and the cancelling of the guarantee would at once have abandoned her to the tender mercies of the Baroda Durbar. Colonel Outram cannot say that he desired to punish Baba Nafra only; for in his letter of the 31st August 1848, par. 8, he particularly alludes to the widows and children of the late Soncar (banker), as having, in conjunction with the firm they carry on in his name, fairly forfeited the protection, &c., 'by dishonesty in their pecuniary transactions, through their managing partner and representative, Baba Nafra.' Is it not a fair deduction from these facts, that up to the date of the letter in question, Colonel Outram did not think Joitabhae the injured person he has since declared her to be."

Mr. Reid ought to be aware, that, from beginning to end of the Blue Book, I never once "*denounced the iniquity*" of any one of the decisions of Government,—though I deemed it my duty to show that many of their decisions were intrinsically erroneous,



and calculated to promote the popular belief in their own corruptibility, and in that of Mr. Reid. He ought to be equally well aware, that, as my Report shows on its very face, it was not till July 1850 that the revelations were made to me on which I drew up my Report of March 1851—a Report which completely satisfied the Court of Directors that Joitabhae *was* the injured person I declared her to be, and that, in spite of Mr. Reid's sneer, her case *was* an "ATROCIOUS" one.\* A slight mental effort would have brought to his recollection that in ignoring the fraud on which I recommended the annulment of the guarantee, neither he nor his colleagues ever alluded in the most distant manner to the probable consequences of the annulment, on the fate of the "widows and children of the late banker." A moment's reflection would have satisfied him that if the continuation of the guarantee was intrinsically "iniquitous,"—the guilt of those who continued it could not possibly be rendered less by the fact that their crime had resulted in certain beneficial consequences, not contemplated by themselves at the date of its commission. And he might, moreover, have perceived, that the passage above quoted from page 28, affords something very like a refutation of the passage at page 56 of his "Letter," in which he endeavours to prove that there could not possibly be any collusion between Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra. The passage is this—

"Colonel Outram assumes, in many parts of his proceedings, a simulated hostility between Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra. BUT SO FAR AS I CAN DISCOVER THIS IS A MERE ASSUMPTION. And it is opposed by two facts which at the moment occur to me: first, that in the case of Govind Row Guicowar, instead of supporting Baba Nafra's claim to the exorbitant sum of about three lakhs of rupees, Nursoo Punt suggested a settlement by which the

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\* It is a curious coincidence, that this expression, sneeringly applied by Mr. Reid to the persecutions of a sorely injured lady, is the very one made use of by Colonel Sykes, when, along with other Directors, he protested against the insufficiency of the censure addressed by the Court to the Bombay Government, for the manner in which my investigations had been treated. For the protests of Colonel Sykes and his brother Directors, designated by the "Times," "elaborate and eloquent," see Mr. John Chapman's work, "Baroda and Bombay—their Political Morality:" Published by Mr. J. Chapman, 142, Strand.

firm was to receive a smaller sum than Colonel Outram awarded; and, secondly, that Captain French, whom Colonel Outram describes as a mere tool in his native agent's hands, recommended to Government the entire withdrawal of the guarantee. *These facts are irreconcilable with simulated hostility, and real friendship, and are in truth only to be accounted for on* WHAT IT IS NOT IN EVERY MAN'S NATURE TO ADMIT TO AN OPPONENT, *viz.,* A RIGHT SENSE OF DUTY."

A few words will enable the reader fully to understand how completely Mr. Reid, in the one passage, destroys the arguments which he advances in the other. As both Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra professed feelings of hostility one against the other, this hostility was necessarily real or simulated. So at least it appeared to my own humble perceptions. And I was rash enough to conclude, that the hostility of Nursoo to the man with whom he was in collusion, not in my own opinion only, but in the opinions of Mr. Frere, of the Bombay Government, of the Court of Directors, and of the Board of Control, was more likely to be simulated than real. Under these circumstances, and possibly being, as Mr. Reid with his wonted courtesy, implies, incapable of harbouring sentiments of honor, generosity, or even justice, towards "AN OPPONENT," I DID venture to assume, and on this assumption to report, that the professed hostility of the two worthies whom Mr. Reid appears anxious to take under the shelter of his protection, was a piece of simulation. But I did not, as Mr. Reid has fallen into the mistake of asserting, describe Captain French as "a mere tool in his native agent's hands." In common with Lord Falkland, and the Indian authorities in this country, I did, and do believe, that he was grossly deceived, and his confidence shamefully abused by Nursoo Punt; and that, giving credence to Nursoo's reports, as it was natural he should, (after the tribute to Nursoo's worth which Mr. Reid had extorted from his colleagues in the government,) he was led into the adoption of measures, which, but for that "domestic treachery," as Lord Falkland calls it, he never would have adopted. And, with the Indian authorities in this country, I hold that our common belief ought in no wise to be shaken by the generous and chivalrous readiness of Captain French, to take on himself the sole and undivided responsibility of the course pursued towards Nafra's

victim Joitabhae. That generous readiness afforded a measure of his own magnanimity; it was no test of his servant's fidelity.

Having premised these observations, and referring the reader to what has been urged at pages 43 and 44 in reference to the first of the two "FACTS" adduced by Mr. Reid in the foregoing passage of his "Letter," I beg him to understand that at the period when Captain French recommended the annulment of the guarantee, the position of affairs rendered it of the utmost importance to Baba Nafra, that the case of his victim should not come under the cognizance of the British authorities. The recommendation was made on the 22nd February 1849, when the powerful and affecting appeals of the persecuted widow became too strong to be altogether unheeded; and when those appeals, but for the "domestic treachery" with which the acting Resident was surrounded, would have satisfied both him and the Government, that the representations on which alone the British interference in her behalf was withheld, were contrary to the facts of the case. Baba Nafra was then rioting in unrestrained control over the enormous wealth of the Bank; the Guicowar authorities were in league with him; the only danger with which he was menaced consisted in the possibility of the case being, in spite of all his manoeuvres, dragged in appeal before the Resident; and only in virtue of the "guarantee" hitherto so cherished, could such an appeal be made. Its abolition, therefore, became an object to him; and in my Report on the case, in alluding to Captain French's recommendation, I wrote the following remarks, somewhat incongruously cited in the margin of Mr. Reid's "Letter," (p. 56), as bearing out this opinion, that Nursoo's anxiety to see the guarantee annulled in February, 1849, afforded proofs that he could not have been in collusion with Baba Nafra.

"Though Captain French and myself have ever been as one in our general condemnation of 'guarantees,' yet I feel assured that that officer would not have written as he did, *had not his mind been poisoned by the erroneous information and interested suggestions of his native agent, who while cunningly professing to desire to see a blow struck at the house of which Baba Nafra was manager, recommended a measure which, if carried out, would have afforded him impunity for all his past misdeeds, and have rendered him irresponsible for his after conduct as manager of the bank.*" B.B. p. 350. So completely did Captain French promote the objects of Baba Nafra, and destroy the prospects of Joitabhae, by urging his recom-

mendation at that particular juncture, that, as will be seen hereafter, Joitabhae regarded the recommendation as *virtually a sentence of death against herself*. If, she argued, Baba Nafra's power enables him with impunity to abduct his master's orphan; imprison, defame, insult, and plunder, his widow, in spite of the British guarantee, what will prevent him murdering the widow when the guarantee is abrogated. And she argued not badly.\*

I have paused longer than I intended on Mr. Reid's share in the consultations and "minutes" relating to my Report of the 31st August, 1848, and on his subsequent rather curious allusions to these matters, because his very peculiar controversial tactics render it necessary, not only to show the fallacious nature of his reasoning, and the inconsistency with fact of his statements, but to do this so effectually as to prevent his being able to reproduce the one or the other,—so effectually, at all events, as to save myself from the necessity of noticing any publication he may put forth of the character of the "Letter" now under notice.

From Mr. Reid my Report passed to Mr. Willoughby, who on the 28th of November again sent it into circulation, without comment. It reached him a second time; on the 2nd of December he entered a minute in which he concurred in the views of Mr. Reid; and on the 5th of December the matter was finally disposed of in the following minute, under the signature of Lord Falkland, and "concurred in" by his colleagues.

"As my colleagues concur in opinion that there is nothing in this case which ought to induce us to deprive Hurree Bhugtee of the advantages of the Government guarantee, I defer to their opinion. And I also assent to the mode of settlement which they suggest, and which is detailed in Mr. Reid's minute."

On the 15th of December the results of their deliberations were communicated to my *locum tenens*, in a letter in which not the most remote allusion was made to my recommendation of the annulment of the guarantee, or to the alleged misconduct of the native agent in this case.

On the latter point, as I have already stated, Mr. Reid, (though in his minute of the 24th November he had practically exonerated Nursoo Punt from all blame,) deferred his formal vindication of

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\* The painfully interesting case of Joitabhae Settane will be found fully detailed in the Blue Books, pp. 319-392, followed by the minutes and correspondence connected with, or arising out of it.

the native agent till he should come to "minute" remarks on the case of Gorajie Pol. And when the time had arrived for the performance of this duty he prepared an elaborate exposition of the unjustly assailed probity of the immaculate Nursoo, so ingenious as almost to tempt one to regret that it was based on gratuitous assumptions, fallacious arguments, and the non-recognition of important and somewhat obvious facts. Whether modesty, or some other motive, influenced him, I am not in a position to determine; but so it is, that Mr. Reid, satisfied with the consciousness of its authorship, resigned in favor of Lord Falkland the honor of having prepared this ingenious vindication of the now judicially-convicted culprit, and contented himself in 1848 with "simply subscribing" his own minute, after it had been adopted by and "put forth by the Governor."

Mr. Reid's account of the transaction is thus given, at page 29 of his "Letter:"

"The Governor's 'minute' on this letter is dated the 28th of December, 1848. *Of that minute, so far as it disposes of the allegations against Nursoo Punt, I am most willing to take on myself all the responsibility. The views contained in it were my views.* THERE IS NOT ONE LINE WHICH, ON RECONSIDERATION, I SHOULD DESIRE TO ALTER. It was written on the advice which I gave in perfect honesty and good faith. If my memory serves me right, *I wrote, AS FOR MYSELF, a draft of minute which formed the ground-work of that finally adopted by the Governor.* I have discovered no record of the date when my draft was submitted to the Governor; or, when the views in it having met his approbation, *it was taken to the Chief Secretary, or delivered into his office, to be worked up, in its present form, as the minute of the President. It must, however, have been well known to many clerks in the office, AND THROUGH THEM to COLONEL OUTRAM and his informants, that the Governor's minute was framed on my original draft. HENCE THE ANIMOSITY OF THE WHOLE PARTY AGAINST ME IN PARTICULAR.* For the reasons above detailed, I simply subscribed the minute, as put forth by the Governor. Mr. Willoughby recorded a separate minute on the 31st October 1848. The decision on these minutes was sent to the acting Resident on the 12th of January 1849."

Mr. Reid's undeviating adherence to his elaborate defence of Nursoo, of which a categorical refutation will be found in the Blue Books (pp. 962-978), and which has since received a more practical refutation in Mr. Frere's decision, and in the punitive measures of the Court of Directors, is a psychical phenomenon which I am not required to explain. Nor, save by a flat and indignant denial, is it necessary for me to meet his insinuation

that I was on terms of intimacy with, or would have consented to receive information from, the corrupt clerks in his own secretariat, whom I afterwards convicted of selling the most secret minutes and consultations of Government. But I may mention, that not till I read Mr. Reid's Pamphlet had I any conception of the extent to which he appears to have exercised those functions ostensibly vested in Lord Falkland. I did, indeed, imagine that he must have influenced the decisions of his colleagues, for I did not believe that Mr. Secretary Malet, whose duty it was (according to the exposition given by Mr. Reid, p. 5,) to draw out the Governor's minutes, would have recommended the continuance of a guarantee to the bank, from whose shameful misconduct he had himself experienced so many official annoyances and embarrassments. I did not think that Mr. Willoughby would have acquiesced in such a decision as was arrived at, unless influenced by the opinions of others; and I knew that my Report had been in Mr. Reid's hands for a length of time, which justified the conclusion that he had taken them under his special control. But I never conceived that the business of Government was conducted in the manner now revealed by Mr. Reid—a manner as remote as possible from that scheme of procedure which Mr. Reid himself, at page 5 of his Pamphlet, details as adopted "*in all cases.*"\*

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\* Mr. Reid devotes a few pages at the commencement of his "Letter" to an exposition of the mode in which the consultations of Government are conducted; as he considers these "remarks necessary to the elucidation of what follows" (page 8). And he thus commences his exposition—"The Governor is the President, and the first of a council of four members; the Commander-in-Chief being the second; and two civil servants the third and fourth. Resolutions are passed on the vote of the majority, the Governor having a casting vote. These usually take the form of minutes. **IN ALL CASES THE INITIATIVE IS WITH THE GOVERNOR.** He either prepares his own minutes, *OR they are brought to him in draft for his consideration by the Secretary of the department, either in his hand-writing, or copied in his office from his rough drafts.* **THE LATTER IS THE USUAL PROCESS IN ALL EXCEPT CASES OF EXTRAORDINARY IMPORTANCE, OR CASES IN WHICH A GOVERNOR HIMSELF POSSESSES THAT INDIAN OR PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE WHICH ENABLES HIM TO PROPOSE MEASURES WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH ANY OTHER PARTY.** From these minutes, if concurred in by a majority of the Board, orders are promulgated, &c." It is a notorious fact that Lord Falkland does not pretend to that "Indian knowledge which, &c." Mr. Reid has himself told us ("Letter," p. 34) that far from these cases

In the next Chapter will be found the narration of certain circumstances which tended powerfully to increase the belief of the natives that the continuance of the guarantee to the bank under Baba Nafra's control, and the Government vindication of Nursoo Punt, were mainly due to the corrupt influence of Mr. Reid. In this place it is only necessary to observe, that, having before him the anticipatory exculpation of Nursoo, to which his signature had been obtained on the 7th of October, and the *practically* complete exoneration contained in Mr. Reid's minute of the 20th November, it ought not to excite surprise that Lord Falkland accepted as valid the elaborate vindication which Mr. Reid caused to be submitted to him on or before the 28th December. It is in nowise wonderful, that the impressions regarding Nursoo's guilt entertained by a nobleman who was more than justified in allowing himself to be guided by those who possessed that Indian experience to which he felt it would be absurd in him to prefer any

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being of "extraordinary importance," my Reports "AT ONCE SHOWED HIM THAT THE AFFAIR WAS ONE OF A VERY ORDINARY NATURE." Yet he offers no explanation of the fact that, in respect of at least one of my two reports affecting Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra, the USUAL PROCESS was departed from, and the "initiative" practically taken out of the hands of the Governor and Mr. Secretary Malet, and transferred to Mr. Reid, whose draft, "written as for himself," was submitted to the Governor. This singular subversion of the routine system, as laid down by Mr. Reid, was the more remarkable, inasmuch as he informs us, at page 7, that "in the political affairs of Guzerat he never took the least interest, until his accession to council obliged him to consider those which came before him." The "political affairs of Guzerat," it is not unnecessary to explain, were almost wholly of the character of those discussed in my Reports,—they were the miscellaneous questions (frequently involving charges against corrupt servants) which, occurring in the offices of the Resident and political agents of that province, were submitted for the consideration of Government). And these (the political affairs of Guzerat) Mr. Reid tells us (page 7) "THROUGHOUT HIS WHOLE CAREER AS SECRETARY AND MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT, were conducted, under the Governors and their Councils, BY "MR. WILLOUGHBY." To those who have done me the honor of following me thus far, it will occasion no surprise to be informed, at page 10, Mr. Reid recollecting that this is a mistake, admits that at one time (and that the most important portion of the period to which Mr. Reid had been referring) Mr. Willoughby had been "specially permitted to hold himself aloof from the disposal of those cases." This, however, is a topic that will be more fully discussed in a subsequent Chapter.

claims, should have given way before the opinions of his "civil colleagues," and, "ESPECIALLY THE COGENT ARGUMENTS OF THE HONOURABLE MR. REID!" And as little wonderful is it that his Lordship should have agreed to inform my *locum tenens* that it was quite "UNNECESSARY TO REQUIRE HIS (Nursoo Punt's) EXPLANATIONS ON A SINGLE POINT IN THESE TRANSACTIONS! For if Mr. Reid's defences were valid in any manner or degree, there seemed reason to believe that they were valid in all respects.\*"

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\* Of the many incomprehensible matters connected with the proceedings of the Bombay Government, as detailed in the Baroda Blue Books, one of the most difficult to be understood is the circumstances under which, and the objects for which, Lord Falkland's signature was obtained to the minute of the 7th October. This minute, Mr. Malet informs us (in the second of the "two memorandums" which he wrote on the 22nd of January, 1852, to be found respectively at pages 1044 and 1082) "was no doubt purposely detained in circulation until the decision on the charges against Nursoo Punt "on the Gorajee Pol case had been disposed of; AS UNTIL THAT WAS DECIDED, "IT WAS NOT CERTAIN THAT THE MINUTE ON THE PETITION WOULD STAND;"—a form of words which seems to imply that the minute written before Lord Falkland and Mr. Willoughby had ascertained its justice, was kept in circulation to carry its own weight with it, till it was seen whether Mr. Reid's "*cogent arguments*" would induce Lord Falkland to adopt in detail, on the 28th December, a vindication to which he had, in ignorance of the merits of the case, antecedently committed himself in the gross, on the 7th of October.

In reference to this subject, there is one point to which I would solicit the reader's attention. Though Mr. Frere could not legally convict Nursoo Punt of having received the bribe of £28,000 from Baba Nafra, on the 19th or 20th of October, 1848,—"*the case from the first being hardly capable of "judicial proof,"*—the "*strongest suspicions*" were left on the Commissioner's mind, that "*the money was paid to Nursoo Punt, AND THAT HE HAD IMPORTUNED BABA NAFRA ON TWO OCCASIONS FOR IT.*" It may readily be supposed that the one rogue should have wished to break his compact with the other, *when the approaching departure of Nursoo threatened to incapacitate him from rendering those services for which the money had been promised.* We shall hereafter find that there were those in Bombay, who sent Nursoo most authentic intelligence of the proceedings of Government affecting himself. And if we suppose (and the hypothesis is no violent one) that Nursoo received a copy of the mysterious minute of the 7th of October, which *could not* have reached him before the 10th, and probably did not reach him for some days after, *we can easily understand why Baba Nafra should, on the 19th or 20th have implimented the compact, for which he had been twice vainly importuned.* Whatever was the origin of the Minute, or whatever the view with which it was written, there is every reason to believe that it was a GOD-SEND to Nursoo, and as such, could hardly fail to strengthen, if not the popular belief, at least the belief of the Bank people, in Nursoo's influence at Bombay.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE IGNORED PETITION.

Before I proceed to detail some of the circumstances which I officially reported to the Bombay Government, as having more especially tended to satisfy the natives that Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra enjoyed the corrupt friendship of the senior member of Lord Falkland's council, I would request the reader to ponder, for a few brief moments, on the facts and considerations adverted to in the preceding Chapters. I would beg him to recollect that the natives of Baroda had, for a succession of years, been firmly convinced of the corruptibility of the highest Bombay functionaries.\* I would remind him that they were thoroughly acquainted with the character and career of Baba Nafra; with the disgraceful nature of his alliance with Nursoo Punt; and with the terrible and unredressed wrongs which, as the result of this alliance, Joitæbhae and his other victims had been doomed to sustain during my absence in Egypt—wrongs which, though sneered at by Mr. Reid, are admitted to have been alike fearful and lamentable, as well by the Bombay Government as by the Court of Directors, and to have been due to the corrupt conduct of Nursoo Punt—after he had been thrust back, through Mr. Reid's intervention, into the post which he had previously betrayed.

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\* For a few of the reasons assigned by the men of Guzerat for this belief, *vide* the earlier portion of my "Khutput Report" (BB. pp. 1340 to 1379): or the summaries given by "Indus." ("BOMBAY BRIBERIES."—Effingham Wilson, 11, Royal Exchange;) and by Mr. Chapman. ("BARODA and BOMBAY, THEIR POLITICAL MORALITY."—John Chapman, 142, Strand.)

Due consideration having been given to these points, I would request the reader's attention to the fact stated in my Khutput Report (BB. p. 1408), that—

“ Though on the 25th November,\* 1848, Government received a petition from Baroda, in which Nursoo Punt was accused of having openly boasted of the impunity which he and his friends enjoyed through Mr. Reid's favor ; this petition was not sent to the acting Resident to have the authenticity of its allegations investigated, until the day after that on which Government had forwarded its invitation to Nursoo to remain at the head of the native department of my own office—an invitation which implied that the charges I had made against him were quite unfounded, and which thus involved a heavy censure on myself, and the most unmitigated manifestation of its displeasure in the power of Government to display.† And (I continued) in estimating the effect on the native mind of the detention of the petition, it should be remembered that twenty days after it had been in the possession of Government, and twenty days before it was sent to Captain French, Government had (15th December, 1848) communicated to that officer its decision in the Govind Row Guicowar case, *which took no notice of the charge of constructive forgery brought against Baba Nafra, whom, as alleged in the petition, Nursoo boasted of screening in other matters, through the agency of Mr. Reid.*”‡

I subjoin portions of the petition; and the reader will, I think, admit that I by no means exaggerated the real state of the case, when, on the 10th of April, 1851, I officially recorded my belief, that the allegations of the petition, when viewed in connexion with

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\* By a misprint given as the 5th (for 25th). Mr. Frere declares the petition to have been received in Bombay on the 20th.

† “ Both the letter permitting Nursoo Punt to withdraw his application, “ and that forwarding the petition against him, bear date the 4th January (1849); but the office register proves that while the former was despatched “ so as to reach Baroda on the 8th, the latter did not arrive till the 9th.” Such is the note appended to the above quotation in my Khutput Report (BB. p. 1408.)

‡ The “ constructive forgery ” alluded to, was the substitution of one bond for another, discussed in the preceding Chapter. To Mr. Reid's declaration, that the Bank had been guilty of “ NO FORGERIES,” is probably due the introduction of the term. In my early appeal against the decision of Government, I described the substitution as an act “ *morally, if not legally, equivalent to forgery.*” And afterwards, not being a lawyer, I ventured to characterize it as “ constructive forgery.”

the entire proceedings of Government, and with the popular conviction in the corruptibility of high functionaries, afforded the natives of Baroda ground for believing that "some influence had been exerted to keep it (the petition) back till Government had, by its censure on myself, and its compliment to Nursoo, effectually deterred the author from avowing himself, and thus placed the native agent in the position of a deeply injured and cruelly maligned man." (BB. p. 1060.)

"About two months ago, Colonel Outram discovered some rogueries of his (Nursoo Punt's) treacherous acts; and he, being afraid that all would come to light and prove his ruin, begged pardon, and applied for a pension. This rejoiced all the people of Baroda, except a few who gave him bribes, and got him to do their business. However, he now openly says '*I have the support of Mr. Reid the Councillor. I HAVE FORWARDED TO HIM A PETITION, WITH A MEMORANDUM OF KULLUMBUNDEE, &c., (paragraphs of instructions, or information). As my friendship with him is of a secret nature, he will protect me from the consequences of my crime. Even Outram's father cannot injure me. What can others do then? I shall apply for a pension whenever I like; no one can read the further representations of those I have injured. Although the charge of murder was proved against Baba Nafra, I did not allow a hair of his head to be injured. On the contrary, I have made the widow of Hurree Bhugtee (the unhappy Joitæbhae) go about begging. IN LIKE MANNER I WILL RUIN THE PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN REJOICED BY THE HOPE OF MY LEAVING THIS SITUATION. Gurnesh Punt and Baba Nafra are my relatives, and consequently I have full means (to work) with the Guicowar Government. Therefore I am not afraid of anything, I shall spend as much money as may be necessary to secure the assistance of European gentlemen in Bombay. AND I SHALL CONTINUE TO HOLD THIS SITUATION.*' These proceedings of his have frightened the people. I am fully confident that Mr. Reid will not stain his character for uprightness, known throughout India, by supporting such a corrupt man. *I beg to assure Government that if this native agent be suspended from office, and an enquiry instituted, his fraudulent and corrupt conduct will be proved.*"

It now appears—from an explanation given by Mr. Secretary Malet, in a "memorandum" dated 22nd January, 1852 (BB. p. 1044)—that, owing to some peculiarly unfortunate "arrears of business at that time existing" in the Persian department, whither the petition was sent on the 25th November, 1848, to be rendered into English, the "translation," as it is called in one of Mr. Malet's

“memoranda,” or the “translated substance” as it is styled in another, could not be sent back to the political department till the 20th of December. Mr. Malet informs us that this translation was put into “circulation” next day; but he does not say, what Mr. Reid unhesitatingly affirms apparently on no better grounds than his personal recollections, (page 35)—that it was submitted to the GOVERNOR on the 21st December. And but for the declaration of Mr. Reid—implied rather than asserted—in the same page, that he himself did *not* see the document till the 28th or 29th December, I should have arrived at a different conclusion. I should have thought it most probable that Mr. Malet had sent the translated petition in the first instance to Mr. Reid, not only because it made mention of that gentleman’s name, but because (by his own account) Mr. Reid had, in the disposal of the charges against Nursoo Punt, superseded the functions both of Lord Falkland and Mr. Malet, by writing the most important of those “*drafts*” which, as we learn from himself (at page 5), but for an inversion in this particular case of the “usual process,” it would have fallen to the Secretary to prepare.

“The Governor,”—writes Mr. Reid, p. 38—“minuted on it (the petition) on the 28th December—the date of his minute on Colonel Outram’s letter of the 7th September, 1848. It must have reached me on the same or the next day, and have been passed *at once* to Mr. Willoughby; FOR HIS MINUTE is dated the 31st December, 1848.”—P. 30.

I confess my inability to appreciate the syllogism here propounded. But admitting its cogency, I can only express my regret that Mr. Reid should, in 1848, have so lightly treated such a document as to “*pass it on at once*,” and my still deeper regret that, in 1853, he should, by denying, compel me to repeat that, (giving all due weight to the “*arrears of business at that time existing in the Persian department,*”) the manner in which this petition was treated tended powerfully to increase the belief in his own corruptibility, entertained by the natives of Baroda.

• It is true, as Mr. Reid tells us, that the “minute” in the case of Ghorajee Pol, was signed by Lord Falkland on the 28th of December—the day on which his Lordship’s signature was

obtained to the minute on the petition under notice. But it is no less true that, according to Mr. Reid's own admission, (p. 30) the former of these minutes was a triumph of his own pen. And even if we assume that the second minute had not, like its predecessor, been originally written by Mr. Reid, "*as if for himself*," the natives of Baroda, (whose corrupt intercourse with the secretariat, as Mr. Reid admits,) cannot have failed to know that he "concurred" in it; in other words, that he wished the petition in which his own name was so specifically mentioned, to be slurred over, *in a manner contrary to official precedent and usage!*

"THE USUAL MODE of disposing of petitions," writes Mr. Malet, (B.B. p. 1047)—"is to send them for OPINION AND REPORT." *This petition, however, was simply sent to Captain French "that he might discover whether it was a bona fide petition from—A PERSON!"—"It will be observed"*—continues Mr. Malet, in the same "memorandum," elicited by Mr. Commissioner Frere's comments on what he designated "*an unhappy concatenation of circumstances*"—"that the difference in the order, on this occasion, is quite sufficient to show that it was considered pseudonymous, and that the unsupported accusations it might contain, could not affect any decision of Government ON OTHER MATTERS, while the date of its receipt from the Persian Secretary's office, was five days subsequent to the communication to the Resident, of the decision on Hurree Bughtee's case, issued on the 15th December."

The precise bearing on Mr. Frere's strictures of the latter portion of Mr. Malet's remarks is not very obvious. Mr. Frere had simply drawn attention to the fact, that "*the petition was received in Bombay on the 20th November; but that no notice appears to have been taken of it till the 4th of January following, when it is sent to the Resident, to enquire whether it be genuine, AND IS ACCOMPANIED BY ANOTHER LETTER PERMITTING THE RESIDENT TO RETAIN THE ACCUSED PERSON IN HIS SITUATION.*"—Mr. Frere, no more than myself, accused Mr. Reid, or any other member of Government, of corrupt practices. On the contrary, like myself, he declared that no doubt could be entertained by their European officers, of their perfect integrity. Like myself, Mr. Frere was

ignorant of the very unfortunate arrears of business in the Persian department, which had caused this short but not unimportant petition to be detained from "circulation" for such a length of time. And, like myself—and I will be bound to add, like the natives—he never, for a moment, expected or desired that "the *unsupported accusations*" against Nursoo, contained in this or any other petition, should be allowed "to influence the decisions of Government IN OTHER CASES!" He simply intimated to Government, that the natives, pondering on a long and "unhappy concatenation of circumstances," *reasoned* on the FACT, that no notice had been taken of this petition for forty-nine days, according to his opinion, and for forty according to Mr. Malet's and my own account, after it had reached Bombay; that when eventually sent, it was, contrary to all usage, sent *not* for investigation into the truth of its allegations, but that Captain French might ascertain whether its signature was that of "a person;" and that it was accompanied by a letter calculated to deter the author from avowing himself.\*

In reference to Mr. Malet's observations in January, 1852, that "the difference (from usage) in the order on this occasion, is quite sufficient to show that the petition was considered pseudo-donymous," I beg to subjoin the following remarks forwarded by me to Government in April, 1851:—

"The petition from which the above extracts are taken bore a fictitious signature. But though this may have been suspected, *inasmuch as natives very rarely give their names in such cases, till they see that the authorities are likely to take up the case in earnest*, Government could not have known

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\* What made the matter worse in native estimation, or, at all events, was calculated to do so, was the fact, that though the invitation given to Nursoo to retain his appointment was dated the 4th January, the letter containing the "*cogent arguments*" of Mr. Reid was only dated the 12th. Thus, Capt. French was aware of the practical exoneration, and more than exoneration, of Nursoo, on the 8th January—while he could not form any opinion on the cogency of Mr. Reid's arguments till the 16th—not until nine days after the first letter had been acted on. And *then* he was not very likely to go over a wearisome case to ascertain whether he had done wisely in inviting Nursoo to remain.

“ that such was positively the case, when it ignored the petition—*till after Nursoo's honorable acquittal. AND EVEN HAD GOVERNMENT BEEN DULY APPRIEZED THAT THE SIGNATURE OF THE PETITION WAS A FICTITIOUS ONE, THIS CIRCUMSTANCE WOULD NOT, IN NATIVE ESTIMATION, HAVE AFFECTED THE CASE. For it is not at all unusual to investigate charges conveyed in anonymous or fictitious petitions.* The petitioner had volunteered to substantiate all his allegations, were Nursoo Punt suspended from office; that he really intended to do so is apparent from his having come forward when Nursoo had ceased to be native agent; and while Nursoo remained in power, he might well have dreaded the wrath of that individual, and of his powerful and corrupt friends, both in the City and in the Durbar.” BB. p.1060.

These remarks I re-produced in my Khutput Report, forwarded to Government in October, 1851. And in a note, I drew the attention of Government to the fact that a very different plan had been pursued in 1846, when a pseudonymous petition in the native character was received, containing accusations against the Fudkey, who (as the Court of Directors have not hesitated to express their opinion) had incurred the bitter hostility of the entire gang of Baroda corruptionists on account of the valuable services he had rendered in the detection of roguery. I reminded the Government that, on that occasion, ere the petition had been ten days in the Secretariat, it was sent for “REPORT” to Mr. Andrews (the officiating Resident), by whom its allegations were carefully investigated.\* While, to enable him to determine whether the signature of the petition against Nursoo was that of “a person,” Captain French was of course compelled to apply to NURSOO HIMSELF; or at least to one of the members of that native establishment over which Nursoo had been invited to continue to preside. And, under these circumstances, as I reported to Government, it is not very wonderful that in twenty-four hours the acting Resident was enabled to report that out of an immense population, there was no one bearing the petitioner's name.

At page 39 of his “Letter” Mr. Reid falls into the singular mistake of saying of the petition that “*its very substance AT ONCE proclaimed it to be fictitious—AS IT FINALLY PROVED TO BE.*”

Its very substance proved it to be truthful. At all events, as

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\* And found to be untrue.

I officially reported to Government, "*its allegations bore on their surface a strong air of verisimilitude.*"

The petitioner was fully aware of Nursoo's character. He was aware that, ceasing to repose confidence in Nursoo, I had called in other aid. He was aware, to use his own words, that I had "discovered some of Nursoo's treacherous acts." He was aware that Nursoo had sent in his application for permission to retire on his pension. And the last idea that was likely to have spontaneously occurred to him, was, that the man whose pension ought in strict fairness to have been withheld, would, *contrary to all usage*, be invited to recall his resignation. Yet his petition was avowedly, and as the context shows, exclusively, inspired by the alarm created in his own mind, and in the minds of others, lest Nursoo might possibly, through the "*secret friendship*" of Mr. Reid, be permitted to recall his resignation. From whom but Nursoo was such a suggestion likely to have come? Again, though Nursoo had not at that time withdrawn his resignation, or expressed to GOVERNMENT the slightest hint of a wish to recall it, *he had in a most irregular manner, sent in a petition. This petition, however, not only Nursoo, but the Government, had kept from Mr. Battye and myself; NOT A TRACE OF IT REMAINED ON THE RESIDENCY RECORDS.* How then was the petitioner to know of its existence unless Nursoo had vaunted of it? The allegations of the petitioner, as to the relationship subsisting between Nursoo and two of the leading Baroda corruptionists, were consistent with the official report of Mr. Remington, on which, in May, 1844, Mr. Reid had himself concurred with Sir George Arthur in recording a minute. A slight exercise of memory would have enabled Mr. Reid to recollect that Nursoo *had*, as the petitioner mentioned (in a part of his petition not quoted) made a considerable pecuniary sacrifice when he left the revenue for the political department; though only half of what the petitioner imagined. And Mr. Reid could hardly have forgotten that when, in 1843, Nursoo did seek to make this sacrifice, he himself "*and many others*" had warned him of the risk he ran of becoming "*CONTAMINATED BY A RESIDENCE IN SUCH A SINK OF VILLAINY.*"



As regards Mr. Reid's assertion that the substance of the petition has been proved to be fictitious, I have only to oppose the judicial results arrived at by Mr. Frere. In reference to his declaration of readiness to "join issue with Colonel Outram on the subject of anonymous petitions," I have to observe, that this petition was *not* anonymous—that there was nothing (beyond the well-known native usage) to justify the belief that it was even pseudonymous. I would further remind him, in the words of his able and clear-headed critic INDUS, that though he *may* have "always contended that anonymous petitions ought to be treated with contempt," "*the question is, not what Mr. Reid has always contended, but what has always been the practice of the (Bombay) Government.*"\* And I would suggest to him the propriety of explaining what steps he took, in 1846, to mark his "contempt" for the pseudonymous petition against the Fudkey, which was sent to Baroda within ten days after its receipt;—and sent, not that it might be ascertained whether its signature was that of "A PERSON," but *whether its allegations could be substantiated.*

At page 40 of his "Letter," Mr. Reid writes :

"So far as the petition concerned me personally, I deemed it utterly unworthy of notice; notwithstanding the just appreciation of my character at which the writer had arrived. I placed no faith in anything it contained as to Nursoo Punt's sayings and doings, and their effect at Baroda. I believed, and still believe, the whole to be a complete fabrication, and to have its origin, if not in Furké himself, at least in one of his faction."

"Mr. Reid will not stain his character for uprightness, known throughout India.—Page 951. —Fas est et ab hoste doceri.

Mr. Reid can of course best tell, what he deemed worthy, and what unworthy, of his notice as member of a government held in the slender moral estimation indicated by the Dhackjee Dadajee

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\* *Vide* p. 47 of the fourth edition of "Bombay Briberies, a Tale of the Present Charter, by Indus, greatly enlarged, and containing the Author's Reply to Mr. Lestock Robert Reid, together with a Suppressed Dispatch from Colonel Outram. London: Effingham Wilson; 11, Royal Exchange."

conspiracy, and by the letters which he and Mr. Willoughby had received in April, 1848, intimating, that it would be for their interest to give a decision in favor of the bank conducted by Baba Nafra. He, too, must be allowed to be the best judge of the value of the formal declarations of confidence in his integrity, made by a man whose petition evinced intense apprehension lest, through Mr. Reid's "secret friendship," Nursoo Punt should, in defiance of right and decency, be permitted to remain in the post he had so long betrayed. And as Mr. Reid *does*, apparently, attach very considerable importance to this testimonial, from one whose representations he declares to be "unworthy of notice," I deem it but fair to quote another passage in which (p. 62) he endeavours to turn it to good account.

"Our characters will, I trust, defend us from any imputation of criminality because natives are corrupt; and we must be content with lamenting that our purity could not protect us from the belief, even among the dupes of the corruptionists at Baroda, that any English gentlemen holding the high positions that we did, could be corrupt. I will quote one sentence from Colonel Outram's favorite anonymous petition, which, so far as I am concerned, shows that my name did not always stand low in that sink of iniquity. 'Mr. Reid will not stain his character for uprightness, known throughout India, &c., &c.'"

I do not pretend to blame Mr. Reid for refusing to place any "faith" in the allegations which the petitioner made in reference to Nursoo Punt—or for believing that the whole was a "fabrication." Nor do I mean to insinuate that the members of Government did not act conscientiously on this as well as on all other occasions, in which I thought myself bound to tender a respectful appeal against their measures. But I do repeat that the proceedings of Government consequent on, or in harmony with, these mental conditions on Mr. Reid's part, did tend very powerfully to meet the popular belief in his own corruptibility."

At page 40 Mr. Reid thus prosecutes his argument—

Vide page  
31 of this  
letter.\*

"I have explained above, that on the 7th October, 1848, the Governor had recorded an opinion, that Nursoo Punt should be allowed to withdraw his resignation (though this was not communicated to the acting Resident

until the cases of Govindrao Guikwar and Guorojee Pol were disposed of), and that, in his minute of the 20th November 1848, the Governor had referred to his civil colleagues the question of withdrawing the guarantee from Hurree Bhugtee's firm. This minute, doubtless, had been copied in the Secretary's office, after its preparation by the Chief Secretary; so that there was ample time, and ample matter, before the accomplice in the secretariat, who communicated all that transpired in the department to Baroda, to enable the petitioner to frame and dispatch his petition, having for its object to poison my mind, and those of my colleagues, against Nursoo Punt; and to induce us to recommend the withdrawal of the guarantee from the firm." Vide pag 27 of this letter.\*

The confusion into which Mr. Reid's mind has been thrown by the Pamphlet of Indus is well illustrated in the foregoing passage.

In the first place the argument based on the ignored petition with which the natives of Baroda justified their belief in Mr. Reid's corruptibility, was derived from the fact that though the petition was, according to Mr. Reid himself, received in Bombay on the 25th November, 1848, no notice was taken of it until, on the 4th of January, 1849, measures had been adopted, the tendency of which was to deter the writer from coming forward. And this argument is in no manner or degree affected by any speculations regarding the motives of the petitioner. But even if it were, Mr. Reid goes somewhat out of his way in search of an hypothesis, when he assumes that the real motive of the writer was less (what the whole context of the petition proves it to have been) to prevent Nursoo's boastful predictions being fulfilled, than to induce the Government to withdraw the guarantee from the Hurree Bhugtee bank. If, as Mr. Reid says, the petitioner had received intelligence of the contents of the minute of the 20th November, which Mr. Malet drafted for Lord Falkland, he would have seen that at that date the annulment of the guarantee seemed extremely probable, without his interfering in the matter. And a less skilful calculator than Mr. Reid might have discovered, that even if the petitioner had written immediately on the receipt of the assumed

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\* The references are Mr. Reid's, and are made by him to his own "Letter."

communication from Bombay, that communication must have been made to him on the 18th of November, at the very latest, to enable the petition to reach Bombay on the 25th. If we adopt the judicially-recorded opinion arrived at by Mr. Frere, that the petition was received in Bombay on the 20th November, we must assume that Lord Falkland's minute of that day must have reached the petitioner on the 13th! For in the cold season letters passing from Bombay to Baroda, and *vice versa*, do not reach their destination till the fourth and fifth days. Further, Mr. Reid might, on reflection, have discovered the improbability of an hypothesis which assumed that the corrupt and lucre-seeking clerks of the secretariat, proved to be in alliance with Baba Nafrā, Bhow Tambekur, and other of Nursoo's friends, should have volunteered information to a poor man, as the petitioner was,—and one opposed to the men to whom their corrupt services had been sold. And whether Mr. Reid perceives it or not, the reader will not fail to recognise the fact, that even if his untenable hypotheses were correct, it is perfectly irrelevant to the point which he professes to elucidate—viz., the reason why, contrary to usage, no steps were taken to test the accuracy of the petition, and why it was altogether ignored till after measures had been adopted to deter the author from avowing himself. Mr. Reid will hardly pretend that he was, in December 1848, aware of the treachery of the secretariat clerks. If he was so—then why was the official exposure of the scandalous system left to be achieved by myself in 1851? If he was not—then what is the value of the ingenious hypotheses he indulges in?

In continuation of the passage in which these hypotheses are promulgated, Mr. Reid says:—

“The story told in this petition of Nursoo Punt's having sent me ‘a memorandum of Kulmbundee, &c.,’ is utterly false. I do not recollect having had, throughout the whole of these proceedings, the slightest correspondence with, or communication from him, either directly or indirectly; and it is my belief, that a short note which Mr. Williamson Ramsay recently (on the 29th December 1852, delivered to me from him,—in which he briefly tells me that he has forwarded a memorial to the Hon. Court of Directors (which, however, I have not seen),—is the first letter I have received from him,

since I committed the unpardonable offence (in his rival Furke's eyes) of preventing his being driven from his office unjustly. Writing, as I do, on a matter which occurred more than four years ago—which then I deemed one of the most ordinary nature—and which has now only acquired an importance by being mixed up in discussions fomented, if not created, by *disappointed ambition, wounded vanity, inordinate self-opinion*, honest though perverted views, and other motives—some good, some bad, as the part of each agent in them is considered—I may be liable to error, and I must claim a latitude in my disavowments. Indeed, had I seen Nursoo Punt, or any one interested in him, after I had made up my mind that in the only two accusatory letters which I had seen from Col. Outram, there were no just causes of complaint established against him, I should not have had the least hesitation in mentioning to him my opinion. There was, then, no particular call for secrecy; and I cannot doubt, therefore, that whether from my minutes, or from what might have fallen from me in conversation, my sentiments were not long concealed.”—p.p. 41 and 42.

Mr. Reid's simple assertion is quite enough to establish any point in which he has not the misfortune to contradict himself in official documents. His straight-forward and unqualified denial of having received the “ memorandum of Kullumbundee,” which Nursoo boasted of having sent to him, along with the petition of the 18th September, completely disposes of that allegation; made by the corrupt native agent. And it is a pity, therefore, that he should, in some degree, have weakened the effect of this denial by his subsequent amplifications. For the “ memorandum ” referred to, was alleged to have been written *prior to*, and not “ *since* Mr. Reid committed the unpardonable, &c. &c.” That gentleman does not deny that ( as the petitioner represented Nursoo to have boasted ) the petition was sent to himself for submittal to Government. And it seems strange, that aware of this fact—aware that no official record of it existed—he should at once have rejected as “ *unworthy of notice*,” a document which, by supplying *prima facie* evidence that the petitioner *had* received certain communications from Nursoo, afforded presumption that his allusion to the private “ *memorandum* ” was at least based on some of Nursoo's expressions.

In continuation of the remarks above quoted, Mr. Reid thus proceeds at page 42;—

“The mention in this petition of Baba Nafra and Hurree Bughtee's widow, is, I may observe, in advance of Colonel Outram's information at that time; for until after his return from Egypt, long after I left India, he never informed Government that he had any suspicion of any grievous wrong having been inflicted on this lady; and if this case (Joitabhae's) was not previously brought in a proper manner before the Government, Colonel Outram himself is to blame.”

Mr. Reid is right. The allusions in the petition to what Colonel Sykes so truly characterizes as “*the atrocious proceedings in the widow Joitabhae's case,*” were very considerably in advance of “my information at that time.” But as Mr. Reid might have been aware, if he had read my report on that case,—and he ought to have read it, before in this and in another passage already referred to, he ventured to offer opinions on it—the petitioner's allusions were subsequently proved to be only too true. Such being the case, it will, I hope, occur to Mr. Reid, when preparing a second edition of his Pamphlet, that the fact which he cites as if it tended to better his case, serves only to damage the irrelevant arguments which he has brought to bear on the subject of the petition. And his Pamphlet would lose neither in moral dignity or logical value, if, in his second edition, he were to venture on a small act of justice. He might examine the allusions to the case of Joitabhae, which appear in more than one part of his “Letter” by the light—I wont say of my own Report, but—of the Dispatch from the Court of Directors, in reference to that Report, which he will find at page 9 of the Baroda Blue Book. If he does so, he will discover that the Honourable body into which he himself now seeks admission, far from admitting that “Colonel Outram is himself to blame” for any of Joitabhae's sufferings, declare that “the ultimate success of the investigations instituted with a view to the redressal of her wrongs,” “*is wholly attributable to that officer's exertions.*” And if, in prosecuting his researches, he will turn to page 18 of the same Blue Book, he will discover that the Honourable Court determine, that for those measures which “*enabled the persecutors of Joitabhae to commit gross injustice*”—the principal blame is due to Nursco Punt, who owing to the “*cogent argu-*

ments" of Mr. Reid, was thrust back into the post he had betrayed, and of whom the Court observe that "*there is ample ground of moral conviction that (when thus thrust back) he misinformed Captain French, as he has been clearly proved to have misinformed Lieutenant Colonel Outram.*"

From page 42 to page 45 Mr. Reid gives what he calls the subsequent history of the petition under notice. His ostensible object is to prove that the man who came forward to avow the authorship of the petition in September 1850,—after Nursoo had exchanged the Baroda Native Agency for the post of Dufturdar in the office of the Ahmedabad collector—was unworthy of credence. But the propositions which he seems most desirous of establishing, or rather of *hinting* in such a manner that they shall be at once accepted by his readers, are

1st—That, either from mental imbecility or moral obliquity, I was induced to accept, if not actually to suborn and dictate, evidence designed to prove that Nursoo had made use of the expressions attributed to him in the ignored petition.

2nd—That the Fudkey (a man who, as will be hereafter seen, I did not even admit to the Residency) and his friends (amongst whom Mr. Reid classes Nursoo's successor, who entertained very unfriendly feelings towards the Fudkey) had "*little difficulty in inducing me to believe anything.*"

3rd—That "all my other investigations,"—"if carried on in a similar spirit," are not to be "depended on."

But for the extraordinary confusion which his present position seems to have created in Mr. Reid's mind, he might have perceived that, even were his assertions and insinuations as unassailable as they are easy of refutation, the fact would not be in the slightest degree relevant to the question, of which he professes to dispose. That question is; whether I was justified in reporting that the manner in which the petition had been treated, in November and December 1848, and in January 1849, was calculated to confirm the persuasion of Mr. Reid's corruptibility, which prevailed amongst the natives at Baroda. And the question can

hardly be affected by the validity, or otherwise, of examinations held in September, 1850.

Mr. Frere, a gentleman whose name, in respect either of talent or uprightness, does not stand second even to that of Mr. Reid—whose judicial experience is considerably greater than that of which Mr. Reid can boast—and who carried on an entirely independent enquiry into the subjects adverted to, arrived at a conclusion regarding the value of the result of my “investigations,” and the actual nature of the points investigated, very different from that implied by Mr. Reid.

Mr. Frere’s conclusions have received the almost unqualified assent of the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors; and these bodies have pronounced my own investigations which Mr. Reid is so anxious to disparage, to have been in themselves “important,” and to have been carried out with “zeal, energy, ability, and success.”

As Mr. Reid’s insinuations are all *inferentially* implied in the course of a brief but inaccurate account of certain examinations held by me in 1850, they are not susceptible of direct disproof. I beg, however, to give them an emphatic contradiction. And to enable the reader to determine whether more credit is due to Mr. Reid’s insinuations, or my repudiation of them, I subjoin a few illustrations of the fairness of my assailant.

In September 1850, I handed to Government, “for such notice as might be deemed necessary,” certain depositions, tending to show that “Nursoo Punt, late Native Agent, had been in the habit of taking most unwarrantable liberty with the name of a late member of council.” These depositions had been given by the writer of the petition which has just been discussed—by the four men who were present when Nursoo made his prediction, that through Mr. Reid’s influence he would be permitted to remain in the post which he had betrayed—and by the Peons, who had summoned these witnesses. In forwarding these documents, I observed:—

“From the circumstance of this person, Jeyrow Hyputrow, having appended a fictitious name to his petition—bearing a notoriously bad character



—and even avowing enmity to the late Native Agent, I should not have regarded the representations in his petition as worthy of a moment's consideration, had not they been borne out to a considerable extent by the evidence of the four persons who were present on the occasion of the dispute therein referred to, with whom it does not appear possible he could have collusion; *and had I not OTHER CAUSES FOR BELIEVING that most of what he has advanced is susceptible of proof?*" BB. p. 950.

But Mr. Reid complains that,—

"Colonel Outram omitted the fact (which was ascertained from other quarters, and which his informants must have known) that Jeyrow had been in the Government service; had been dismissed, and declared incapable of re-employment; and that since his dismissal, various other of his malpractices had been discovered."

It would have been no more than candid, had Mr. Reid mentioned that *the fact of the man's having been dismissed the Government service was stated in the face of the deposition*. He might have added, that the information which he says was obtained from other quarters, and which he implies that I withheld, was information which the records of my own office did not supply.\* He might have taken the trouble to inform his readers, that the fact "ascertained from other quarters," was ascertained by Mr. Secretary Malet on a reference to the Government records, made in consequence of the information which the deposition afforded him. And he might have explained, what he knew to be the case, that all the light which Mr. Malet threw on the subject was that afforded by the following words :

"Jeyrow Hyputrow was dismissed from his appointment as Thaanadar of Jambooghora, on the 3rd April 1847, and was afterwards declared by Government incapable of re-employment. Subsequent to his dismissal, various other of his malpractices were discovered, as reported by Mr. Mansfield on the 10th December 1847." BB. p. 957.

It might have occurred to Mr. Reid, that the fact of ~~my~~ "informant"—that is, my new Native Agent—having brought to my notice that Jeyrow's character was bad, rather militated

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\* Jeyrow was a subordinate in the Rewakanta office; an office entirely independent of the Baroda Residency.

against the supposition that he wished to impress me with a false estimate of his trustworthiness. Mr. Reid would, moreover, have been fully justified in assuming that the Native Agent, who had been only a few weeks in Baroda, was dependent for local information on the clerks in my office. And as he was well aware that no less than four of these (and those among the most highly trusted) were subsequently dismissed for treachery, and collusion with the corruptionists, he would not have erred in supposing, that had they been in possession of anything specific to allege against the man, they would hardly have failed to mention it.

At page 43 Mr. Reid continues :

“ On the 11th July 1850, Colonel Outram took this man's deposition ; and—in answer to a question whether any one was present when Nursoo Punt had said that Mr. Reid, the councillor, was a friend of his, &c., he elicited the reply : ‘ There were four persons present, two Banians and two Brahmaus, who live in Baroda. If I saw them I should recognize them.’ No further inquiry was then made, and the man returned to his village. ‘ Two or three days after,’ it seems to have been suggested to Colonel Outram (*a sufficient time having elapsed to enable Jeyrow and his friends to find out two Banians and two Brahmins, and tutor them to their purpose*), to resume the investigation ; but being told that Jeyrow had left Baroda, and ‘ not wishing ‘ unnecessarily to harass the man,’ the Resident deferred the enquiry, and we hear nothing more till the 31st August 1850, when Jeyrow again appeared upon the scene. He was again interrogated. He deposed that, having been a week previously at the Residency, on some other business, he had been told to produce his witnesses ; that he then returned to his village, and on again coming back to Baroda, on the 29th August 1850, he ‘ saw two, whom he followed to ascertain their houses ;’ that he desired them to come to the Residency ; that they declined ; that he informed the native agent Soorujram, who, ‘ after informing the Resident,’ gave him a peon, to whom he showed the houses of the two witnesses ; that one, a Brahmin, came with them to the Residency ; that the other, a Banian, promised to do so on the morrow ; that he did not know the names of the witnesses, ‘ by seeing them only could I make them out ;’ that he knew the second Brahmin by sight, and also the second Banian, whose house he had found out.”

Mr. Reid *might* have explained to his reader that Nursoo was in the habit of holding a kind of morning levee at his own house, at which he enacted the great man ; that the petitioner attended

one of these levees, with a view to expedite some business he wished to have transacted; that having "angered Nursoo," he elicited from him his boastful, but too true prediction; and that the miscellaneous character of the attendants at Nursoo's levees afforded a plausible solution of the statement of Jeyrow, that, though not personally acquainted with the names of the men who were present when the irate Nursoo made his memorable prediction, he knew them perfectly well by sight, and could point them out in the street. Nor would it have derogated from the moral dignity of Mr. Reid's Pamphlet, if he had informed his reader that Mr. Frere, after carefully weighing, analysing, and collating the evidence before him, came to the conclusion that Jeyrow's allegations regarding Nursoo were true.

In explanation of my not having taken immediate steps to test the accuracy of Jeyrow's statement, made to me on the 11th July, Mr. Reid might have mentioned that my time was then completely occupied with the very important investigations into the case of Joitæbhae, which commenced on the 5th of July.\* (BB., p. 372). And in explanation of its having occurred to me "*two or three days after*" to resume my enquiry, he might have stated, (what as we shall see he was fully aware of,) that I had, *on the 12th of July*, discovered that Baba Nafra had sent an agent with a large sum of money to Bombay, in October or November, 1848—the very time that Nursoo was accused of having made an improper use of Mr. Reid's name.† (BB., p. 1216).

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\* Jeyrow having come to my office on business, on the 16th July entered into conversation with my native agent. The conversation having turned on certain revelations recently made respecting Joitæbhae's persecutions, Jeyrow observed that he had, in November 1848, forwarded in a petition on the subject of Nursoo's complicity with Baba Nafra, of which no notice had been taken; he was asked if he would repeat the statement to myself. He expressed his readiness to do so, and made the deposition recorded at page 951 of the Baroda Blue Book.

† As has been explained at page 16, there was a mistake in the year, which proved to be 1847. This was the mission for bribery purposes of which Mr. Frere determined that Nursoo was cognizant.

Mr. Reid, however, has not seen fit to mention these and many other of the circumstances of the case, and has therefore imposed on me the necessity of offering a few additional explanations. And first I would observe, that, though I thought it my duty, under the circumstances, to ascertain how far Jeyrow's allegation, that Nursoo had boasted of his being in possession of funds to secure the services of "English gentlemen," was true; and if true, how far it tallied with this mission of Nafra's, I was not very solicitous on the subject. On being told that Jeyrow had gone to his village—some twenty miles off—I simply directed that when he again came to the office, he should be desired to search out, and bring to the Residency, the men whom he declared to have been present when Nursoo's boasts were made. In about a week, that is about the 18th of July, Jeyrow came back to the office, when the native agent communicated my instructions to him. But so far from imperative were these instructions, that Jeyrow, having on his return to the city of Baroda, received an announcement that his nephew had been removed from the appointment he held at Borsad, hastened off to that village, where he remained till the 29th of July. On his return (such was his story) he went through the bazaars in search of the men. He succeeded in finding two of them. These he followed till he ascertained their abodes; and then calling on them, requested them to accompany him to the Residency. They declined. And in the afternoon he came to the Residency and mentioned these circumstances, which, after his departure, were reported to me by the native agent. I directed that a Peon should be sent to his house next morning, with instructions to accompany him to the residences of the two discovered witnesses, and to summon them before me. They came, and gave their evidence. After these explanations, the reader will be able to appreciate the value and delicacy of Mr. Reid's assertion, that "two or three days after" the first deposition of Jeyrow, (that is, about the 13th or 14th of July)—"*it seems to have been suggested*" to Colonel Outram, (A SUFFICIENT TIME HAVING ELAPSED TO "ENABLE JEYROW AND HIS FRIENDS TO FIND OUT TWO BRAHMINS

“AND TWO BANIANs, AND TO TUTOR THEM TO HIS PURPOSE,) to “*resume the investigation.*” And it may perhaps occur to the reader, as rather odd, on Mr. Reid’s hypothesis, that Jeyrow was not ready with his “*tutored*” witnesses on the 13th or 14th July, when the “*suggestion*” emanating from himself was made to me. Still more odd will it probably appear, that when, about the 19th, he *did* come to the Residency, instead of immediately fetching the men whose “*tutoring*” had been complete some days before, he should have gone off, on nepotic cares intent, to Borsud.

In continuation of his remarks just commented on, Mr. Reid proceeds:—

“Next comes the examination of the first Brahmin witness, commencing with a leading question, instructing him at once, *even had he not been previously tutored, as to the answer required from him*, and for which Colonel Outram is constrained to make an apology, (*vide* note appended to this man’s deposition). He *of course* deposed to all that was wanted. On the 2nd, 4th, and 6th September, we have the evidence of the three remaining witnesses; all certifying, *with wonderful similarity*, facts which occurred nearly two years back; all their statements being taken down by one and the same karkoon (clerk) (*vide* Col. Outram’s Statement of Facts of 6th April 1851, par. 47), and, if we may judge from the explanation given by Colonel Outram in the note above alluded to, taken perhaps in the presence of the Resident, but while that officer was ‘otherwise engaged.’” p. 44.

There is a zeal which outruns discretion; a devotion to the cause of his client which sometimes prompts the advocate to “*prove too much.*” And here Mr. Reid—though he cannot be said to *prove*—decidedly *asserts* too much. For if the Brahmin had been “*previously tutored as to the answer required from him,*” where was the necessity, where the wisdom, where the most remote probability of a leading question being put to him? In complete oversight, or in superb contempt of the Blue Books which were before him when he wrote, Mr. Reid assumes that the Fudkey whom he represents as the very prince of intriguers, got up all the evidence. Yet he does not hesitate to attribute to him a clumsiness of execution of which the veriest tyro in conspiracy

and intrigue would be ashamed. And, inaccurate even in the simplest allusions to matters of fact, he talks of my having been “*constrained to make an apology*” for the puerile blunder of the conspirators against the honour of that convicted criminal for whom he exhibits so mysterious a regard and sympathy. I made no apology. None was requisite. I simply, in handing up the depositions “for such notice as Government may deem them deserving of,” thought it my duty to add the following *nota bene* :—

“The first question put to this witness was written in my presence, but being otherwise engaged at the time, and not contemplating that the karkoon would commence the examination otherwise than in the usual general style, I was not aware of the leading nature of the first question put, until the whole deposition was read over to me at the conclusion of the examination; although the leading nature of that question is calculated to weaken the value of the testimony given in this deposition, yet from the straightforward way in which the witness answered all my subsequent questions, I have no reason to doubt the truth of his entire statement.”

At the time when this deposition was taken, I was working sixteen hours per diem. And even with this devotion to business my time was incessantly encroached on. If my memory serves me right, I was answering a note when the Brahmin was called before me. At all events, I was employed on something only momentarily occupying my attention. I directed the native clerk to proceed with the deposition, intending him merely to fill up the usual heading as to name, profession, age, &c.—and to ask what he recollected about meeting Jeyrow at Nursoo’s house. It was the same clerk who had taken down Jeyrow’s deposition. He was thus aware of the nature of the statements I was prepared for; and he committed the error of putting the leading question adverted to, before I had finished the matter to which my attention was for the moment directed.\*

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\* It might have occurred to Mr. Reid that if I had been half as unprincipled as Mr. Reid in more than one place insinuates, I would have simply caused the Carkoon (represented as in the conspiracy) to re-write the opening question, and thus have superseded the necessity of adding what he calls “an apology.”

As regards the wonderful uniformity in the statements of the witnesses, I may observe, that they were all testifying to one fact. And no man in England knows better than Mr. Reid that it is utterly impossible to extract a direct sententious answer from a native; that in recording native evidence it is necessary to abbreviate their periphrastic language; and that, therefore, when one clerk takes down the depositions of several witnesses to a single point, there necessarily is a strong similarity in the phrases employed in conveying the deponents' statements. On this subject Mr. Reid refers to a passage in my "Statement of Facts," as if it bore out his insinuations. To enable the reader to judge how far it does so, I subjoin it; simply premising that a passing remark in a private letter from a friend high in office in Bombay, had led me to infer that Government, in declining to take any notice of the depositions, had been influenced by a suspicion that there was some collusion between the deponents.

"As Government did not assign any reasons for so summarily disposing of the Appendix (J.) of my letter of the 7th September 1850, I am of course unable to explain away their objection to it. I am, however, inclined to think that an idea of collusion was suggested by the similarity of the depositions of those who declared they had heard Nursoo Punt speak, as was alleged in the petition referred to above. Should such a view have been taken by Government, I would beg to observe, that the men all deposed to a simple fact, and that their depositions were all taken down by the same clerk—circumstances fully accounting for a close approximation of language, if not for identity. Further, the depositions of the different peons sent with Hybutrow to summon the parties, and the difficulty he had in pointing them out, with other circumstances detailed in their examinations, tended to show that there was no collusion or even previous acquaintance between them; and I would respectfully beg to observe that the depositions contained in the unnoticed appendix (H.) of the same letter, referring to Nursoo Punt's complicity with Baba Nafra in the Craig affair,\* bore no trait of having been in collusion with the men whose depositions were given

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\* Craig had received a large sum of money to be given to Mr. Reid. And this appendix (H.) Government did not do me the honour of even acknowledging.

in Appendix (J.) I would also beg to remind Government, that I professed to have other causes for believing 'that most of what the petitioner had since advanced was susceptible of proof.' These causes I was prepared to assign, had Government told me they considered the evidence submitted to them unsatisfactory; and these causes I should have stated in my letter of the 7th September, had it for a moment occurred to me that Government would consider my despatches insufficient justification for instituting a rigorous enquiry into a matter so painfully connected in the public mind with one of its own members, and with the late native agent; such an enquiry was all I wanted, and I abstained, from motives of delicacy, from saying more than I thought was necessary to induce it." BB. p. 1063.

Mr. Reid thus proceeds:—

"Will any one pretend to say that this was an honest and fair enquiry? Yet Colonel Outram believes it so; thinks it impossible there could have been any collusion, and treats the whole case as most satisfactorily proved! By unprejudiced parties this can be viewed only as convincing proof of the little difficulty that Furké and his friends (Soorujram, the native agent, being of the number,) must have experienced, in inducing the Resident to believe anything; and a question will necessarily arise in their minds, how far, if all Colonel Outram's investigations have been carried on in a similar spirit, they are to be depended on. The Government, as might be expected, at once declined to take any steps in such a matter, for which proceeding they are severely censured in the "Statement of Facts" of the 6th of April 1851, par. 47."—pp. 44, 45.

As I have already said, the Fudkey was not even permitted to pay me formal visits of ceremony. Still less was he admitted to private audiences. And Nursoo Punt's friends had contrived to create a bitterness on the part of Sooruzram towards the Fudkey, by insinuating that so soon as the latter had emerged from the cloud (of Government displeasure) under which he then was, he would endeavour to obtain the native agency. If by this time reflection has not made Mr. Reid regret the delicate insinuations here and elsewhere indulged in against myself, it were in vain to attempt to show him that he ought to do so; if he does, then there is no necessity for the attempt. And as little necessary is it to notice the conclusions which he bases on the "IF" he so ingeniously introduces. The commendation of the Board of



Control and Court of Directors, would have amply compensated me for any disapprobation expressed by Mr. Reid, even while I held that opinion of his character, to which I have given expression in the Blue Books; and now that Mr. Reid chooses to identify his cause with that of the convicted criminal Nursoo Punt, to imply doubts regarding the guilt of the infamous Nafra, and to attempt to *sneer away* public sympathy from the persecuted Joitabhae, his disapprobation I feel not to be uncomplimentary.

The Government *did* refuse to pay any attention to the depositions I forwarded regarding Nursoo's boasts to Jeyrow, just as they refused to notice the depositions relative to the money intended for Mr. Reid's hands. But how far Mr. Reid is justified in saying that I "*severely censured*" them for refusals which impressed the natives of Baroda with the belief that his colleagues and successors dreaded an investigation, as certain to lead to a full exposure of the practices imputed to him, the reader may judge for himself. The paragraph cited by Mr. Reid in support of his assertion, is that given at pages 79 and 80.

Having now noticed, and I hope disposed of, the unwarrantable allegations and insinuations of Mr. Reid, I have only to repeat that, had I failed to dispose of them, the circumstance would in no degree have been relevant to that gentleman's defence. The facts, which Mr. Reid has so bemystified, would have been left as they originally stood. And these facts are—that no steps were taken in respect of Jeyrow's petition, until measures were adopted calculated to deter him from coming forward to avow it; that when it *was* sent, it was—in violation of official usage—sent, not for report, but to ascertain whether its signature were that of "a person;" and that, as Mr. Reid must acknowledge, the individual through whom it was Captain French's duty to ascertain this point was—**NURSOO HIMSELF.**

In conclusion, I have simply to reiterate the statement previously made by me, that Mr. Frere, who carried on an independent, careful, and prolonged investigation, decided that Jeyrow's statements were substantially correct. He determined that Nursoo

*did* make an improper use of Mr. Reid's name; that he boasted of his secret friendship with that gentleman; that he still further endeavoured to clench his argument, by giving all the publicity in his power to the extraordinary and melancholy document which forms the subject of the next Chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE MAURRICE LETTER.

On the 9th of January 1849, Captain French received the instructions of Government, to ascertain whether the signature of the petition discussed in the preceding Chapter was that of "*a person.*" On the preceding day a letter bearing the same date as these instructions, had not only authorized, but practically urged him to invite Nursoo to recall his resignation. And the same post which brought the latter of these communications, (or, as I am inclined to believe, the post of the previous day,) conveyed to Nursoo a missive dated "Bombay, January the 3rd," which he lost no time in displaying to friend and foe.\* It was as follows:—

"The Honourable Mr. Reid desires me to inform you that your petition,† dated the 18th September last, has been received by Government, and after carefully reading it, and taking into consideration your services for thirty years, MR. REID WROTE A MINUTE STRONGLY RECOMMENDING YOUR CASE TO THE MERCIFUL CONSIDERATION OF GOVERNMENT. Accordingly an order will be issued in a few days to Captain French, desiring him to tell you, that—as Colonel Outram is gone from Baroda—if you wish to continue as native agent, Government will have no objection to your withdrawing your application for pension. Captain French will also be informed that Baba Fudkey is not to be allowed to have anything to do with Government business.

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\* This letter was posted on the 4th, and it is my belief, (as it is that of Mr. Reid himself, p. 50,) that it reached Baroda on the 7th. If I recollect right, however, Mr. Frere saw reason to accept Nursoo's assertion that it did not arrive till the 8th. So the 8th be it.

† Not alluded to in the official documents, though it had been "*circulated.*"

"Mr. Reid says, when he goes out of Council *he will recommend you to the protection of Mr. Willoughby*, BUT THAT YOU SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL HOW YOU CONDUCT YOURSELF; you must not, on any account, allow your private feelings of enmity against Baba Nafra to interfere with the business of the house of Hurree Bhughtee, at the Residency. That firm is an old firm, and in consideration of the services which that firm rendered in former years to the Gaekwar Government, the Bombay Government treats them with respect. *And though Colonel Outram strongly recommended that their Bhandaree ("guarantee") should be cancelled, still, BY THE FAVOUR OF MR. REID AND MR. WILLOUGHBY, this has not been done*, therefore you must not try from bad feelings to injure that firm. \*

Yours, &c.,

"3rd January 1849.

(Signed) J. R. MAURRICE."

P.S.—Keep the contents of this letter secret, and as soon as you read it write an answer to me, and thank Mr. Reid for his kindness to you. Address me by post, Mr. John R. Maurice, at Mr. Reid's house, Bombay."

I may have erred in representing to Government that this letter, viewed in connection with antecedent occurrences, was calculated to foster the belief, that in Mr. Reid both Baba Nafra and Nursoo Punt had a secret ally. But if so, I, at all events, committed no greater error than that of which Mr. Commissioner Frere was guilty, after a pains-taking investigation of the whole of Nursoo's proceedings. When that gentleman, on the 22nd October, 1851, submitted his Judicial Report to Government,

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\* As regards the well simulated mutual hostility enacted by Nursoo and Baba Nafra, *vide antea*, pp. 49, 50. That Nursoo, when writing to his friends in Bombay respecting my suspicions of his collusion with Baba Nafra, should have endeavoured to enlist their sympathy by a denunciation of that man, and by words and menaces expressive of hostility towards him, is more than probable. And, though we have Mr. Reid's assurance, that no "*memorandum of Kullumbundee*" ever reached himself, we may legitimately suppose, that some such document, breathing unfriendliness to Nafra, reached the writer of this letter, and that he either was beguiled into believing the hostility real, or feared lest Nursoo might overact his part and damage the interests of the Bank. And, as has already been stated (*antea* p. 56, note), Nursoo and Baba Nafra seem to have had a misunderstanding about the £28,000; which, TWICE IMPORTUNATELY DEMANDED BY NURSOO, was not given till there had been ample time for Nursoo and Nafra to be made aware of the mysterious minute of the 7th of October.

he remarked that the information contained in the Letter just given "*could only have been obtained from one of the members of Government, Mr. Secretary Malet, or some clerk in Mr. Malet's office.*" And he proceeded to observe that—"We cannot then be surprised if the ignorant, unable to discriminate between unprincipled subordinates and the heads of Government, are misled by ideas so prejudicial to our own personal character, as well as to the character of the Government in general."

But though I deemed it my duty to point out to Government the unhappy tendency of this Letter, I systematically expressed my conviction that Mr. Reid had no more concern with it than myself. I regarded and treated it as one of the artifices of that widely spreading conspiracy amongst Baroda corruptionists and corrupt Government servants, by which Mr. Reid's name had, (unjustly I believed,) become associated in the public mind with "the foulest of deeds and the vilest of men." Mr. Reid, however, not satisfied with defending those on the assumption of whose guilt I based my faith in his own integrity, has, in reference to this particular Letter, seen fit to make certain unfounded assertions regarding myself; and these intermingled with so many irrelevant and bewildering remarks, that I am compelled, much against my will, to enter at some length into the features and fortunes of the document, the real bearings of which he has obscured, by a series of the most extraordinary mistakes that ever fell from the pen of a gentleman professing to be in search of the truth.

This Letter formed a portion of the evidence on which I rested my charge against Nursoo, of having made an improper and unauthorized use of Mr. Reid's name, with the view of persuading the people of Baroda that he enjoyed the corrupt friendship and support of that gentleman. Nursoo, of course, vehemently protested that he had never endeavoured to create any such belief. He supported these protestations by asserting that, from the first, he regarded the Letter as a "hoax," practised on him by some enemy. And he professed to have made every effort in his power to discover the writer. Mr. Frere, however, decided, that

“Nursoo Punt’s conduct does not justify the idea that he believed “the Letter to be a hoax—or that he treated it as such—or that “he tried to discover the author of it.” And if the reader will favor me with his attention for a few minutes, I think I shall be able to show that Mr. Frere’s decision is more worthy of acceptance than Mr. Reid’s assumption of the truthfulness of Nursoo’s protestations—an assumption on which he is seemingly inclined to risk his own reputation for integrity.

The Letter, received on the 7th or 8th of January 1849, Nursoo lost no time in despatching by the hands of a trusty messenger to Muncherjee, a Parsee shopkeeper at Baroda, and the intimate friend of the Fudkey. His ostensible object was to get Muncherjee (who writes English) to make a copy of it. His real motive, as judicially determined by Mr. Frere, was to effect “*the further promulgation of his boast*”—that he enjoyed the secret friendship of Mr. Reid. (B.B. p. 1051.) And when it is borne in mind that Muncherjee’s friend was the man through whose honest efforts the rascality of several of Nursoo’s friends and predecessors had been brought to light; that by his aid I had been enabled to trace out the frauds which Nursoo had failed to assist me in investigating; and that it was he whom I had suggested as Nursoo’s successor, it must be allowed, that the native agent could hardly have selected a happier medium for giving publicity in the desired quarter to the facts by the promulgation of which he hoped to dishearten, and humiliate, those whom he regarded as his foes. Muncherjee’s shop, moreover, was the great gossip mart of Baroda.

Muncherjee made the desired copy for Nursoo, and sent it to him with the original, by the hands of the messenger. But while ostensibly engaged in making Nursoo’s copy, he took the unjustifiable liberty of quietly retaining a duplicate for himself. And this unauthorized copy it was which afterwards fell into my hands, and enabled me to bring the subject to the notice of Government.

The original, having served its purpose at Baroda, was forwarded by Nursoo to his son Keshow, who held an appointment at Bhansda, near Surat. And Keshow, having gone down to

Bombay on the 3rd or 4th March, "for the purpose of paying his respects to Mr. Reid, who was then on the eve of leaving India," (BB. p. 1485,) proceeded to call on the person "from whom the letter purported to come." This individual expressed great anxiety to obtain possession of the document. Keshow having "unfortunately" left it at Surat, his wish could not be immediately complied with. A reluctant promise was, however, given, that it should be sent. After much delay it was eventually forwarded on the 20th of June 1849; and from that date till the 29th of April 1851, when (in consequence of some inquiries which it was thought fit to institute after I had brought Muncherjee's copy to the notice of Government) the original was secured by Mr. Secretary Malet, its career was marked by a series of extraordinary and not unamusing adventures.

To these I shall hereafter refer. But, in the meantime, I must request the reader's attention to one or two curious facts, a full appreciation of which is requisite to enable us to see our way through the mass of absurdities and falsehoods with which Nursoo and his son have laboured to obscure the subject, and which Mr. Reid, with a touching confidence in the veracity of a convicted criminal, desires us to accept.

The person from whom, in the opinion both of Nursoo and his son, the letter "*purported to come*" was not any *Mr. John R. Maurice*, but a *Mr. James Morris*, Assistant Registrar of the Court of Sudder Adawlut.

This opinion was not based on investigations which had resulted in proving that there was no *Mr. John R. Maurice* in Bombay; for we have it on Keshow's own authority, that no inquiries of any kind had been instituted up to the date of the visit which on the 3rd or 4th of March, he paid to *Mr. James Morris*, under the conviction that the letter "*purported to come*" from that individual.

Nor did this conviction rest on the handwriting of the letter; for both Nursoo and his son knew that the handwriting was NOT that of Mr. Morris.

Neither was it suggested by an erroneous belief that Mr. Morris

resided in the house of Mr. Reid; for it was known to both father and son that Mr. Morris was a *pater-familias*, rejoicing in the dignity of an independent domicile.

On what ground their conviction was based, I do not pretend to determine. For though the admission that such was really their conviction was made in 1849, when, to quote Mr. Reid's own words, (p. 52) "nothing had been discovered—no investigation " was going on—Nursoo Punt had apparently gained his object—" and was in favor with the acting Resident;"—their subsequent explanations and allusions were put forward in 1851, when Nursoo was on his trial before Mr. Frere, and when Keshow, as we shall see, was not very scrupulous as to what he swore to so long as he could improve his father's case. All I can positively affirm is, that Mr. Morris *was* the man from whom Nursoo and his son considered that the "Maurrice" letter "*purported to come*;" that the individual so promptly fixed on had commenced his career in the Revenue, then Mr. Reid's department of the Secretariat; that thence he was advanced to a situation under the Revenue Commissioner at Poonah, which caused him to become the office companion of Nursoo; and that in 1845 he was promoted to the honorable and well-paid appointment of Assistant Registrar of the Sudder Adawlut, of which Mr. Reid was, *ex officio*, chief judge.

If the assumption on the part of Nursoo and his son, that the letter professing to be written by *John R. Maurrice* "*purported to come*" from *James Morris*, be a somewhat curious circumstance, still more strange is the fact that Muncherjee, thoroughly impressed with the correctness of the assumption, changed *Maurrice* into *Morris*, when appending the signature to his own surreptitiously taken copy. How was this?—Muncherjee knew little or nothing of Bombay. He had been born and bred in Guzerat. His visits to the Presidency, I am assured by one who knows him well, had been few and very far between. While making his private copy of the letter, it was utterly impossible that he could have had time to institute the extended enquiries on the subject which would have been required to satisfy him that, while there was no Mr. Maurrice in Bombay, there was a Mr. Morris on such terms



of intimacy with Mr. Reid as to justify the belief that the letter was his. If there *had* been time to make the enquiries, it was highly improbable that, amongst his acquaintances at Baroda, there was any one familiar with the history of a person like Mr. Morris, whose name has only gained Indian notoriety through subsequent events. And even if Muncherjee *had* learned from some of his own acquaintances that Mr. Morris was on such terms with Mr. Reid as to render it probable that he would be employed by the latter in communicating confidential messages, he could only, Mr. Reid tells us, have derived such information from the Fudkey, or some reckless and mendacious enemy of himself and Nursoo. Whereas, as we have seen, Muncherjee's opinion regarding the person from whom the letter "*purported to come,*" was coincident with that of the object of Mr. Reid's laudatory advocacy of the pure-minded Nursoo himself; and it was arrived at while copying the letter under instructions from Nursoo.

One hypothesis, and one only, appears to me adequate to the explanation of the remarkable coincidence that existed between the views of the immaculate Nursoo, and those of the "intimate friend of his rival, the Fudkey." It is, that, either in reply to some enquiry on the part of Muncherjee or "*with a view to the further promulgation of Nursoo's boast,*" the messenger had not only recounted Mr. Morris's antecedents, but had volunteered the information which, for upwards of two years, not Muncherjee alone but many others at Baroda regarded as authentic, viz., that Mr. Reid had been in the habit of making use of Mr. Morris as a private secretary or confidential amanuensis. IF Nursoo's messenger *did* make such a communication, nothing could be more natural than that Muncherjee, availing himself of the temporary absence of his visitor, should have turned up the "Bombay Calendar" to ascertain how far the tale was probable; and that, finding Mr. Morris to be assistant registrar to the court of which Mr. Reid was chief judge, he should, in making his own private copy, have substituted "Morris" for "Maurrice."\* That such a communication

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\* It appears in the evidence that the messenger *did* go away while Muncherjee was making the copy.

was made, is intrinsically and, *a priori*, probable. The object of Nursoo, when anxious to secure "*the further promulgation of his boast,*" was to create more than an ephemeral prestige. So clever a man could hardly have anticipated that the no less clever Fudkey would fail to institute inquiries, with a view to ascertain something of "Mr. Maurice." And he must have foreseen that unless he afforded an explanation of the unreal address given in the letter, the discovery that there was no "Mr. Maurice" in Bombay, would soon do more than merely throw discredit on the document.

Such a communication as I have hypothetically assumed, coupled with the nature and antecedents of the letter which elicited it, would have afforded Muncherjee a satisfactory explanation of Mr. Morris's reasons for disguising his name (and employing an amanuensis) when corresponding with a rogue like Nursoo, on whose fidelity to himself he could place no reliance. While the similarity of the assumed to the real name, may reasonably be supposed to have appeared to Muncherjee sufficiently great to authorise Mr. Reid to take in, and hand over to Mr. Morris, any letter presented at his house to the address of Mr. Maurice.

The hypothesis I have hazarded is fully adequate to explain the very curious circumstance of Muncherjee having substituted the one name for the other, in his own copy of the Letter. And on no other hypothesis does the substitution appear to me susceptible of explanation. But it is only an hypothesis. Whether it be correct or not is, to myself, a matter of indifference; for I am no longer called on to fathom that "mystery of iniquity" which has resulted in placing Mr. Reid in his present disagreeable position. To the best of my ability I endeavoured to do so while at Baroda; and my reward has been defamation at the hands of Mr. Reid's friends in India, and calumny from his own pen in this country. His vindication has long since passed out of my hands into his own. And on him, not me, it rests to suggest the hypothesis he deems best calculated to explain the mysteries which surround this Letter in a manner consistent with his own honour. But no hypothesis can be accepted as satisfactory which

does not account for the fact, that Nursoo and his son at once recognised the Letter as "*purporting to come from Mr. Morris;*" that Muncherjee arrived, *per saltum*, at the same conclusion; and that, not merely Muncherjee, but the clerks in my office to whom Nursoo, on receipt of the Letter, vaunted of Mr. Reid's support,\* and many others in the city of Baroda, continued for upwards of two years to believe not only that the Letter in question was written by Mr. Reid's order, and through the intervention of Mr. Morris, but that Mr. Morris was Mr. Reid's confidential clerk or secretary in the transaction of this business. But to resume.

Muncherjee's copy of the Letter came into my possession in January 1851, while I was engaged in framing a Report on the circumstances which had tended to create the belief, so general at Baroda, in the corruptibility of the Bombay Government. Pre-eminent amongst the auxiliaries to this belief were those strange incidents in the career of Nursoo Punt which had taken place during my absence in Egypt. And when treating of these, I of course introduced the episode of the "Maurrice Letter"—pointing out its bearings on the general question. Long prior, however, to the completion of my Report, the proceedings of the Government compelled me (in my own view of the case) to appeal against the manner in which my representations regarding Nursoo Punt had been treated. I accordingly prepared a "Statement of Facts" (B.B. p. 1054), into which I introduced most of what I had drafted for my Report. And amongst other topics, I of course adverted to the "Maurrice Letter,"—or, as I then called it, the "Morris" Letter—having before me only Muncherjee's copy, and being ignorant of the alteration which he had made in the name.

My "Statement" I despatched to Bombay on the 10th of April 1851. On the 29th, Mr. Secretary Malet summoned Mr. Morris to his office, and interrogated him respecting the letter, which, as I have already said, Keshow had forwarded to him on the 20th of June 1849. Mr. Morris had a second interview with Mr. Malet on the morning of the 30th. And on the afternoon of that day he

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\* As Mr. Frere has judicially determined.

transmitted the following communication to the Secretariat, to give Mr. Malet "a clearer view of how he got the letter, and what he did with it," than what he was able to afford during his two interviews, the proceedings of which are not recorded.—

"Keshow must have first mentioned the letter to me on the 3rd or 4th March 1849, as on the same occasion he told me he had come to Bombay for the purpose of paying his respects to Mr. Reid, who was then on the eve of leaving India. The use of my name in such a transaction made me desirous to know more about it; and I asked him to let me have the letter, in view to detecting the writer, and punishing him, if possible, and he promised he would, which promise he fulfilled in his note from Bansa, dated 20th June 1849. On its receipt, it occurred to me to show it first to Mr. Rouget, but he failed to recognise the handwriting; but before I could show it to others in the Secretariat, as I intended, I missed it, and could not account for its disappearance, UNTIL IT TURNED UP IN THE POCKET OF AN OLD WAISTCOAT WHICH HAD LAIN A LONG TIME DISUSED. I then made it over to Mr. Showell, and again lost sight of it for a considerable time, in consequence chiefly of his having to give it to the magistrate in evidence (!) of a robbery that had happened in his house. From him I learnt that he had shown it to Mr. Thomas, and that neither of them could detect the writing.

"I said yesterday I thought it bore the signature of 'J. Maurice;' but it turns out, as you stated, that it is subscribed J. R. Maurice. After sending it to me, Keshow once or twice asked for it back, and his father also asked me to return it, during his visit to Bombay, in the suite of the Gaekwar; BUT OWING TO ONE OR OTHER OF THE ABOVE ACCIDENTS, I WAS UNABLE TO DO SO AT THE TIME.

"On further consideration of your question of this morning, as to whether I ever wrote to the father or son on the subject of the letter, I can safely say that I never wrote to the father on any subject since I left the Revenue Commissioner's Office; but as regards the son, whose application or applications for the return of the letter were in writing, I cannot make so sure that I did not write in reply, to tell him that I could not then put my hand on it. My impression is, however, that I never did.

"Trusting that this account will give you a clearer view of how I got the letter, and what I did with it, than perhaps I was able to convey in my interviews yesterday and this morning. I beg, &c." (B.B. p. 1270.)

Mr. Morris expresses neither surprise nor indignation at Keshow and his father having taken for granted that the letter "purported to come" from himself. Yet one might have reasonably looked for both on the part of a man of whom Mr. Reid knew

nothing personally, and who could not legitimately have been in possession of the information which the letter communicated. And though "the use of his name in such a transaction made him anxious to know more about it," his anxiety was of a very mild and patient character. There was no demand that Keshow should accompany him to the presence of Mr. Reid, with a view to apprise that gentleman of a foul imposture affecting his character, and clearly denoting rascality on the part of some highly trusted individual—there was no chafing under three and a half months delay, that occurred in the transmission of the letter—no indignant remonstrance addressed to Keshow—no earnest representation on the subject made to his own or Nursoo's superiors. And when, at last, the letter came, the equanimity of Mr. Morris was unaffected. So little importance did he attach to it, that when, in August 1851, he was examined on oath, at the instance of Mr. Frere, he thus expressed himself—"I gave it (the letter) to Mr. Malet, two or three months ago, at his request. *Had he not asked me for it, it is probable I should not have given it to him, as I saw nothing in the matter that required me to do so.*" Even to Mr. Malet's head clerk, Mr. Thomas, it had been shown not by Mr. Morris but by Mr. Showell. And, as we shall presently see, the perfunctory nature of the examination bestowed on it by Messrs. Rouget and Showell were worthy of the indifference of the person most concerned.

Both Mr. Morris and Keshow were, as I have already said, examined on oath during Nursoo Punt's trial—the former in Bombay, by a commission appointed by Mr. Frere; the latter at Baroda, by Mr. Frere himself. And the value of the testimony afforded by Nursoo's son, may be best appreciated by collating portions of it with the evidence given by Mr. Morris on the same subject.

*Mr. Morris.*

*Keshow Row.*

"I got this letter (the original) from my father, in about January 1849, and he directed me to try to find out the writer thereof; and as I intended to go to Bombay myself, I

Mr. Morris.

Keshow Row.

did not write to anybody on the subject until I went. It was about March 1849. My servants unfortunately left; the Duffer was at home;\* I learned this only upon my arrival in Bombay, when looking for the paper; and as the letter purported to come from Mr. Morris, I went to that person in the Sudr 'Adawlut, and informed him of the purport of it, and told him, as I suspected some of my father's enemies had played that trick, I would be much obliged by his discovering the author of it.'—Keshow's examination on oath before Mr. Commissioner Frere, on the 15th August 1851.

"I went to Bombay in March 1849, for two or three reasons; to see friends to the Grant Medical College for advice" \* \* \* "I went chiefly to Bombay to see old school-fellows. I went particularly to see Mr. Reid, at his place, but could not see him. I met him accidentally at the Secretariat. I went to and came back from Bombay within about a week. I only called once at Mr. Reid's, but could not see him. I did not mention to Mr. Reid, at the Secretariat, anything about this letter of Mr. Morris, NOR TO MR. MALET." † \* \* \* "I am quite confident that I went to Mr. Morris to speak to him on the subject of the letter, and that IT WAS I ASKED HIM TO DISCOVER ITS AUTHORSHIP, NOT HE ASKED ME ABOUT THE LETTER."

"Our conversation was cursory, but it related principally to his wish to see Mr. Reid who was living with Mr. Bell, and to his having failed to obtain an interview that morning, (3rd or 4th of March.) He also spoke of the letter, which I pressed him to show me, and he promised he would do so, after consulting with his father, when he returned to Goozerat.

"HE APPEARED TO HESITATE ABOUT LETTING ME HAVE THE LETTER AT FIRST, BUT I URGED HIM TO DO SO, WITH THE VIEW OF DISCOVERING WHO MADE

"The main object I had in going to see Mr. Morris in Bombay was to speak to him about the note. I do not exactly remember whether I told him

\* Probably a clerical error, for "my servants unfortunately left the Duffer (or bundle of papers) at home."

† This, be it recollected, was the man who was panting to discover the author of what he and his father profess to have regarded as a disgraceful libel on Mr. Reid, written by an enemy of Nursoo, with a view to "entrap" him;—a document, moreover, which, if not written by the man from whom "it purported to come," clearly proved foul treachery in Mr. Malet's department of the Secretariat!

*Mr. Morris.*

*such a use of my name. HE THEN SEEMED TO FALL INTO MY VIEWS AND PROMISED TO SEND IT."*

"IT WAS SENT TO ME BY KESHOW ROW, THE SON OF NURSOO PUNT, THROUGH THE POST OFFICE."

"As far as my recollection serves me, he asked for it twice back, by letter."

"Nursoo Punt asked me to return the letter, and I told him that I could not put my hands on it, and that I was afraid it was lost. I promised to search for it, and send it to him when I found it. His manner more than his language induced me to believe he was anxious on the subject, i.e. the return of the letter."—(Mr. Morris' examination, on oath, at Bombay, 28th August, 1851).

*Keshow Row.*

how I came not to have the note with me. MR. MORRIS DID NOT ASK FOR THE NOTE; I OFFERED TO SEND IT. I did not say anything to him about consulting my father before sending the note." \* \* \* "I am certain that the note was the principal subject of my conversation with Mr. Morris, NOT THE WISH TO SEE MR. REID."

"I am quite certain that the three months (and no part of it) that elapsed between my return to Surat and sending the letter to Mr. Morris, was employed in consulting my father whether to send it or not."—(Keshow Row's examination of 8th September, 1851, on oath, before Mr. Commissioner Frere).

"After my return to Surat, I SENT THE LETTER, WITH A NOTE, TO MR. MORRIS, BY A MERCHANT GOING TO BOMBAY, by name Dyaram Pitamber. I told him it was an important paper, and that I should feel obliged by his personally delivering the same to Mr. Morris, and bringing it back to me again, with Mr. Morris' answer. I was in Bansda when the merchant returned; AND ON MY RETURN TO SURAT (about two months after sending the letter), HE GAVE ME MR. MORRIS' ANSWER, to the effect that Mr. Morris had been unable to trace the author; and writing from office, the letter was at home, so he would return it by some future opportunity." \* \* \*

"I never wrote again to Mr. Morris for the note, or sent for it; but when my father was in Bombay with the Guicowar, he told me he had asked for it."—(Keshow Row's examination on oath, before Mr. Commissioner Frere, 15th August 1851).

"On my return to Surat, I went to Bansda, I think, immediately, and there fell sick, and could not return to Surat till about June. The note was in my papers at Surat, but I think I left that evening. I took the note with my papers to Bansda, BECAUSE I DID NOT LIKE TO SEND IT BY POST, SO LONG AS I COULD SEND IT BY

*Mr. Morris.*

*Keshow Row.*

A PRIVATE HAND. I cannot say why I did not mention the reason of the delay to Mr. Morris."—(Keshow Row's examination on oath, before Mr. Commissioner Frere, 8th Sept. 1851.)

"The impression on my mind that I actually sent extracts C. and K.\* to Mr. Morris, with Dyaram, was so very strong, that the word 'paid' did not shake my belief.† But when I observed in Mr. Morris' answer that he got my letter from Bansda, THROUGH THE POST, I referred to a copy of exhibit K., and found it dated from Bansda; AND EVER SINCE I HAVE BEGUN TO THINK WHETHER, ON FINDING THAT I COULD NOT THEN RETURN TO SURAT, or rather that Dyaram, or any friend, was not going over to Bombay, I MAY NOT HAVE MADE UP MY MIND TO SEND IT TO MR. MORRIS BY POST, to avoid further delay, and done so accordingly. At the same time, I feel so certain of having asked Dyaram to take my letter on the subject to Mr. Morris, whenever he went to Bombay, and of having at least sent it with him, that unless I subsequently wrote to Mr. Morris with that man, (inquiring whether the letter I had already sent by post had reached him, and if he had succeeded in tracing the author), my first impression of having sent K. with Dyaram should be correct."—(Keshow Row's Letter to Mr. Frere, ‡ dated 9th September 1851, when on Mr. Morris' evidence (taken in Bombay) being produced in Court, Keshow saw how he had committed himself.)

\* Exhibit C. was the original Maurice letter; K. Nursoo's letter of 20th June 1849.

† Deposition of the 28th August.

‡ N.B. Written in consequence of seeing Mr. Morris' letter, subsequent to his examination on the previous day. It is as follows:—

"Bansda, 20 June 1849.

"I beg to enclose herein the *secret note* of which I spoke to you when I last met you in Bombay. My father is very anxious to find out its author.



That one or the other, or both, of these witnesses must have given false accounts is, I think, hardly to be doubted. And it rests with Mr. Reid to select the one on whose testimony he conceives most reliance is to be placed. For though he has, in defending himself from the charge of Indus, and in his allegations against myself, *assumed* the veracity both of Mr. Morris and Nursoo, he can hardly persist in claiming the testimony of both, after such an exposition of the conflicting nature of their Statements.\* For my own part I have no hesitation in still adhering to the following remarks made by me on the subject, in October 1851 :—

“The conviction will, I believe, force itself on most impartial minds, that the letter of the 3rd of January 1849, was actually written at the instance of Mr. Morris; that Mr Morris, in his conversation with Keshow Row,

If you succeed in tracing him out you will very highly oblige us by informing me of the same. When you are done with it, be pleased to return me the note. You will perceive that the envelope bears the post-office stamp, but on inquiry in the Bombay post-office I learnt that its records could furnish us no clue to find out the rogue, for the names of the parties sending bearing letters through post are not registered, as we supposed. Pardon my not having written to you earlier on this subject, as I had promised to do.

“I have got another note of the same description, but it is anonymous, and purports to come from an old school friend of mine, *while the one I now send you purports to come from you though in the signature your name is not properly spell.* If you like, I can send you the other note also; but I must at the same time inform you that the handwriting of both the notes is not the same.

“The object of the anonymous note was to alarm my father, *while that of the other was to entrap him;* and the mis-spelling of your name is certainly a clever trick, which I think must have been purposely done by the writer, (partly) with the view of escaping punishment, should he be detected. \* \*

“Excuse the trouble I give you. I could not stop in Bombay to make myself acquainted with your son, yet I wish you will present him my best salams.

“Hoping to hear from you soon.”

\* It is very remarkable that though Mr. Reid more than once alludes to the appendix to my Khutput Report (BB. pp. 1448-88), from which I have extracted the foregoing comparison of the testimony of the two witnesses, he utterly ignores this demonstration of the untrustworthiness of at least one of them.

finding that the letter had been shewn about, was anxious to get it back into his possession ; that it was agreed that Keshow Row should send such a letter as that which he actually addressed to Mr. Morris on the 20th of June ; that Keshow Row and his father had been with difficulty induced to implement the promise of the former ; and that, when the letter was obtained, Mr. Morris showed it to one or two of his friends, merely that in the event of any future discussions regarding it, he might be in a position to say he had taken measures to discover the authorship of the document."

We have seen the nature of the measure which Mr. Morris himself professes to have adopted with a view to discover the writer of the letter. Let us now see what light is thrown on these measures by the statements of those to whom Mr. Morris showed it. And this will enable us to determine how far Mr. Reid's language, to be afterwards cited, is calculated to give his readers a correct idea of the merits of the case.

The first person to whom Mr. Morris showed the letter, was not any of his own superiors in the Sudder Adawlut—nor Mr. Secretary Malet, whose department it more immediately concerned—but Mr. Rouget, the head clerk of the general department of the Secretariat. The conduct of Mr. Rouget and the other clerks whom Mr. Morris professed to have consulted, in not having brought to the notice of Government the existence of "a letter which seriously affected the reputation of an ex-governor and ex-member of council, and which distinctly proved that somewhere or other there were traitors in the Government employ," appeared to me highly censurable. And in my Khutput Report I alluded to it as "indicating a lamentable state of morality in the Secretariat;" and as calculated (in connection with antecedent and subsequent discoveries,) to give the Honourable Court some faint idea of the extra-official difficulties with which their political officers have to contend.

As I had been officially described as a "monomaniac"—"credulous"—and ignorant of human nature,—for having thought it perfectly possible to eradicate the belief that the higher Bombay functionaries were corrupt, it was hardly to be expected that my remarks would have much weight with the authorities. But it

happened that Mr. Frere had, in his judicial report, expressed exactly similar opinions. He had thus written:—

“ The conduct of Messrs. Smith, Rouget, Showel, and Thomas, in not having instituted some immediate enquiry and denounced the wrongdoer, appears most inexplicable; *and unless the breach of trust herein indicated is considered a very venial offence in Bombay*, one would have thought their first impulse would have been to have tried to discover who he was, or at any rate that they would have informed you of the fact, and thus put you on your guard; but the evidence in this case goes to show, that though the letter was in Bombay, in June 1849, you were not made acquainted with the fact till April last. Mr. Morris also appears to have evinced a degree of apathy not to be expected from a person either jealous of the honour of the Government he serves, or anxious to discover who had misused his or a similar sounding name. *Had I, while inquiring into Nursoo Punt's conduct, made any enquiry into the conduct of those mentioned above, I should have evidently gone beyond my commission; BUT I SHOULD AS CERTAINLY HAVE NEGLECTED MY DUTY TO GOVERNMENT, DID I NOT BRING THE SUBJECT THUS PROMINENTLY TO YOUR NOTICE.*” B.B. p. 1014.

Prior to the receipt by Government of Mr. Frere's communication, I had thrown still further light on the “*morality of the Secretariat,*” by intercepting, during their passage through the Baroda post-office, minutes and other documents obtained on behalf of the Guicowar's minister and Baroda corruptionists, from traitors in the secret department. An enquiry was, therefore, resolved on. And on the 24th of December 1851, Mr. Rouget was called on to explain the extent to which he had been mixed up with the letters. His statement was as follows.—

“ With reference to Mr. Frere's mention of my name as being cognizant of the existence of a note or letter, purporting to have been addressed by Mr. Maurice to Nursoo Punt, I beg to state, that all I know of it is this: some time (perhaps about two years) ago, Mr. Maurice showed me the note alluded to, and (*I think*) asked whether I knew the handwriting. I replied in the negative, *having no knowledge of the handwriting; and never having for a moment supposed that it contained anything worthy of notice, I gave the matter no further thought, and it passed from my mind altogether*, until a short time ago, Mr. Morris told me that some inquiries had been made, or were making, after the said note. The above is stated on recollection, which, however, is *very faint* on this

subject, as I paid no attention to the note. I CANNOT SAY WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY WHETHER I READ THE NOTE THROUGH, BUT RATHER THINK NOT. So far from concealing the existence of the note, on which Mr. Frere seems to lay such great stress, it never occurred to me that there was anything to conceal. The note was not in my possession, it was not addressed to me, nor is it likely to have been written by me; I therefore never gave it a second thought." B.B., p. 1048.

So much for the "efforts" made to discover the authorship of the note through Mr. Rouget.

It was next, as Mr. Morris informs us, shown to Mr. Showell, after the long unused waistcoat had been again taken into wear. And here follows the account of his share in the investigation, given by Mr. Showell on the 5th of January 1852, twelve days after Mr. Rouget and Mr. Thomas had recorded their explanations.

"With reference to paragraph 21 of a letter from W. E. Frere, Esq., 'Special Commissioner, Baroda,' dated 22nd October 1851, shown to me by you this day, and which relates to a letter, signed by 'J. R. Maurice,' purporting to have been addressed to 'Nursoo Punt,' I beg leave respectfully to state, that on the occasion, as well as I can now recollect (perhaps two years ago,) of calling on Mr. Morris, *in the course of a morning walk*, he mentioned to me that he had received from Nursoba a letter, bearing the above signature, which he showed me. *After reading it, I asked him*, as I could not myself identify the handwriting, *to allow me to take it to Mr. Thomas*, to see if he could trace the writer. Mr. Morris gave me the said letter for the above-stated purpose, and I believe I took it to the office the same day, and showed it to Mr. Thomas, who kept it for, I think, not more than three weeks, when he returned it to me, saying, he had not been able to discover the writer.

"Serving, as I do, in a different department, I was, of course, totally ignorant of every proceeding on the records of Government, *a knowledge of which would have enabled me to attach importance to the letter in question*. I neither had, nor could have had, any other motive in taking the letter from Mr. Morris for the purpose I have stated, than that of helping in the discovery of the author of SUCH A DOCUMENT. *And the indifference with which Mr. Morris mentioned the circumstance to me, left on my mind the impression that he also did not think much of the matter*.

"It will thus be seen that my first impulse, and on which I acted, was the identical one which Mr. Frere considers should have actuated me; and solemnly assuring Government of the truth of what I have stated,

I earnestly hope that so far from allowing my conduct in the affair to be condemned in the terms used by Mr. Frere, his Lordship in council will be pleased to accord his approval of it." B.B., p. 1048.

On the 24th of December, Mr. Thomas, the chief clerk in the secret department, and the head of the uncovenanted servants of the Secretariat, had been called on for *his* explanation, when he recorded as follows:—

"With reference to the mention of my name, made in paragraph 24 of Mr. Frere's letter to Government, dated the 22nd October last, in connection with a letter which was addressed, in the early part of the year 1849, to Nursoo Punt, native agent to the Resident at Baroda, in the name of "J. R. Maurice," I beg to state, that I have a *recollection* of the letter in question having been shown to me a long time since, by Mr. Showell, uncovenanted assistant to the Secretary to Government in the Revenue Department, who, *as far as I can remember*, told me, that it was *suspected* that it had been *intended* by the writer of the letter, that Nursoo Punt should be *led to suppose* that it proceeded from Mr. J. Morris, 1st Assistant Registrar, Sudder Adawlut, and that *Mr. Morris had requested Mr. Showell to show the letter to me*, supposing it possible that I might be able to recognize the handwriting.

"At my request, Mr. Showell left the above letter with me, and I lost no time in showing the same to the Chief Secretary; if the Chief Secretary was in the office at the time, I can safely state that I showed it to that gentleman on the same day; but if not, on the day following, on the Chief Secretary coming to office.

"At this distant period I cannot positively state when the letter in question was shown to me on the above occasion, by Mr. Showell; but I believe it to have been in the Monsoon of 1849. My reason for fixing upon this date is, that I remember remarking to Mr. Showell that the letter was several months old when he showed it to me, and I remember that the windows of my office-room were, in consequence of its raining, closed at the time. I am able thus to charge my recollection, as Mr. Showell is not in the habit of frequently visiting me in my office, and probably has not done so more than a dozen times since he has been in the Secretariat.

"On the 19th July 1850, I proceeded to Ceylon on sick leave, and remained away until the end of December following, and I am confident that the occurrence took place before my departure, and my impression is as above stated, that it was during the previous Monsoon (1849)." B.B. p. 1047, 8.

It will be seen that the recollections of Mr. Thomas were not

quite identical with those of either Mr. Morris himself, or of Mr. Showell.

Mr. Smith's explanation, also taken on the 24th December 1851, was very brief. I subjoin it:

"I remember having a long time since seen a Letter called the "Maurice" Letter, and as Mr. Thomas had informed me that he had brought it to the notice of the Chief Secretary, I did not consider it necessary that I should do so likewise."

In a second of two "Memorandums," both dated the 22nd January 1852, Mr. Secretary Malet thus disposed of the subject:

"Mr. Frere, in thus bringing to the notice of Government what he considered to be facts, might have spared his animadversion; for the matters he has thus touched on, not having been judicially before him, he should naturally have supposed that some explanation might be afforded which would divest the behaviour of those gentlemen whom he has named, of the criminality he would attach to it; and the Chief Secretary begs here to quote the thirteenth and following paras. of a memorandum, *dated this day*, explanatory of certain portions of Colonel Outram's paper, intituled "Certain Facts relating to Nursoo Punt." This quotation contains all that has yet been discovered concerning the Letter signed J. R. Maurice, and shows that it might have been written by any one, whether in or out of the Secretariat, cognizant of the result of the deliberations of Government, and that as soon as the Letter was received, inquiries were set on foot to discover the author. These inquiries were, the Chief Secretary regrets, unsuccessful at that time, and even since, with many other sources of information not at that time available, no certain evidence as to the authorship of it has been obtained. The statements of the assistants in the Secretariat, whose names are mentioned by Mr. Frere, are also appended, marked Nos. 1 to 4." B.B. p. 1045.

The "Statement of Facts relating to Nursoo Punt," was the document previously referred to by me as having been forwarded to Government on the 10th of April 1851. The "Statements of the Assistants," alluded to by Mr. Malet, are those which I have just given. The 13th and 14th paras. of Mr. Malet's other memorandum I subjoin:

"In the year 1849, sometime between March and June, the Letter in question, signed J. R. Maurice, was sent by Nursoo Punt, as he states, for discovery of the writer, to Mr. J. Morris, the Assistant Registrar

in the Sudder Adawlut, who brought it to the notice of the assistants in the General (Mr. Rouget) and Revenue Departments (Mr. Showell) of the Secretariat, that they might try to trace the writing. Mr. Showell took it to Mr. Thomas, the assistant in the Political Department, who brought it to the Chief Secretary, who in vain endeavoured to trace likeness in the writing to any in the political branch in the Secretariat, *and the other assistants were equally unsuccessful in the departments to which they belonged.* The Chief Secretary could not discover by whom, at the date of the letter, the minutes might have been seen, as there had been no particular secrecy used nor enjoined; but they must have been seen by Mr. Craig, by whom the minute-book and Bengal abstract entries were always prepared. It is not clear from the Letter what minutes were before the writer when he penned it; but as that of the Right Honorable the Governor, dated the 28th December, was copied fair in the office by a sectioner, it must have been known to Craig, who registered the sectioner's work; and, from the Letter, it is evident that any one in the office who had seen the minutes, *or any one out of it*, who knew the results of the deliberations, might have written the letter in question. In short, although there was ample reason to infer that the letter emanated from some one who had an opportunity of knowing what was the result of the inquiry into Gorajee Pol's and Huree Bhugtee's cases, there was no ground to fix it on any one person in particular.

"14. Increased vigilance had been about that time exercised in the Political Department, in consequence of the detection of Bhasker Bhaesett in the act of returning a letter which had been taken away over night, and who was dismissed in consequence. *The principal part in this discovery was taken by Mr. R. D. Craig*, the person above-mentioned, who was superintendent of sectioners, and who the Chief Secretary now believes to have been the chief person through whom information was obtained from the Political Department; a man who, having been employed for twelve or thirteen years, and during nearly the whole of that time confidentially so, in the Secret Department, had the means of procuring almost any information he pleased; a man of a reserved disposition, belonging to the Free Church of Scotland, strict in the performance of religious formalities, and whose conduct in his official duties, even after the detection of his immorality, was apparently so guarded and steady, that no suspicion ever attached itself to him." B.B. p. 1043, 4.

Mr. Malet's censures are as applicable to myself as to Mr. Frere; and as Mr. Reid, who has throughout his whole Pamphlet ignored Mr. Frere and his representations, accuses me of having done

great injustice to the Secretariat clerks, I think it right to solicit the reader's attention while I offer a few remarks on this point.

On my return from Egypt in the beginning of 1850, I had many conversations with Mr. Malet about Baroda affairs, yet he never once alluded, in the most remote manner, to the existence of such a document as the Maurice Letter. And when, in April 1851, he asked me to furnish him with the original of the document which had been returned with his cognizance to Mr. Morris, in 1849, he never hinted to me that he knew anything about it. Neither did he tell me that he had instituted "enquiries" with a view to the discovery of the author. He himself practically admits that the letter was not brought to the notice of Government in 1849; that the reference on the subject was not made to Mr. Morris at that time; and that when in April 1851, Mr. Morris *was* referred to, no questions were put to the Secretariat clerks whose names appeared in Mr. Morris's letter. The "explanations" subsequently given by these gentlemen were as little satisfactory as could well be conceived. And even Mr. Malet's letter does not accurately describe their contents—for neither Mr. Rouget nor Mr. Showell profess to have taken any pains in trying to trace out the hand writing.

The hypothesis that Mr. Craig was the author of the letter, may or may not be correct. The man who received large sums from the emissary of Baba Nafra under pretence of handing them over to Mr. Reid, would probably have shrunk from no villainy. But it is difficult to conceive what object he could have had in writing such a letter. It is more likely that he would have endeavoured to secure to himself any tribute of gratitude that Nursoo might have felt inclined to bestow on the supposed medium of communication selected by Mr. Reid. It was *not* his interest to do anything calculated to cause an enquiry which was likely to result in proving that the sums of money annually remitted from Baroda failed to reach the hands for whom they were intended. And the course he is supposed to have adopted, if not completely objectless, was calculated to lead to such an enquiry. Nursoo was invited to reply to the letter of the 3rd of January. The probability



was that he would,—as the *probability is that he did reply*. The reply would either reach Mr. Morris, or it would go to the dead letter office and be returned to Nursoo. If it reached Mr. Morris, the chances were that that gentleman, conscious of having written nothing to elicit it, would have sent it to Mr. Reid, when enquiry must have been instituted; and that enquiry would not have tended to the prejudice of Mr. Morris. If the letters were returned to Nursoo, he would either have submitted the matter to his superiors, when investigation must have followed; or he would have held his peace, when nothing would have been gained by Mr. Craig.

Whoever it may have been who wrote the letter, he must have known more even than was contained in the Governor's (that is Mr. Reid's) minute of the 28th December. For though the information contained in the letter in reference to the prohibition against employing the Fudkey was perfectly true, it was not true, as the letter implied, that for *this* triumph over his hated rival and exposé, he was indebted to Mr. Reid. The prohibition was based on the minute of Mr. Willoughby, dated the 31st December: and Mr. Malet "is nearly certain that the papers (of which this " was one) were returned simultaneously with the proceedings on " Nursoo Punt's petition to be allowed to retire on his pension, " *which reached the office on the 3rd of January 1849,*" (B.B. p. 1047,)—the day on which the private letter was written—and the day previous to that on which the Government dispatch was dated.

The grounds on which Mr. Malet based his hypothesis that the then fugitive Craig was the author of the letter, are thus stated:—

" It may not perhaps be irrelevant to remark, that though the Chief Secretary believes that Craig was the author of the letter signed J. R. Maurice, and of those addressed to Messrs. Reid and Willoughby, there has not, even since his departure, been discovered any clue to the hand-writing of the body of the petition; the suspicion being chiefly founded on the discoveries subsequently made concerning Craig's *character, his connexion with Hurree Bhugtee*, as shown in the evidence received from Colonel Outram, and *the opportunities which he had of*

obtaining the information WHICH HE WISHED<sup>o</sup> TO GIVE,\* the only similarities in the writing in the petition being the word "secret" on the envelope, which is like his writing, and that the signature J. R. Maurice is corrected with a different kind of ink, exactly in the same manner as the signature attached to a letter known to be Craig's,† which he forged as the 'death-bed confession' of a man on whose memory he wished to fasten the charge of having seduced his wife's sister, an incestuous crime of which he was himself guilty!" BB. p. 1046.

I have already traced out the history of the "Maurice Letter" with a minuteness doubtless wearisome in the last degree to the reader; but not more minutely than the extraordinary, erroneous, and utterly irrelevant allusions made to it by Mr. Reid, render indispensably necessary in a Pamphlet which professes to dispose, once and for all, of his multiform misconceptions. And as he might possibly accuse me of evading his charges and insinuations if I did not grapple with them individually, I proceed to notice them in the order in which they appear in his Pamphlet; though it is, perhaps, too much to expect that the reader will have patience to follow me in the execution of my task. Those, indeed, who seek only a knowledge of the facts of the case, and do not wish to ascertain how far Mr. Reid has succeeded in mystifying them, may, if they please, pass over the remainder of this long Chapter.

At page 46 Mr. Reid thus writes:—

"I now come to the 'Maurice' letter, bearing date the 3rd January 1849. Mr. J. Morris never was my confidential clerk. I never had a confidential clerk, or private clerk of any kind. Whilst Revenue Secretary, in any confidential business I employed the head clerks, Mr. Blowers, now deputy Postmaster-General, and Mr. F. Hutchinson, now Collector of Bombay; and them only. Whilst in Council, I recorded my minutes in my own handwriting; or had them transcribed from my rough drafts, by a copyist of the Secretariat. But I need scarcely do more on this point, than refer you to Colonel Outram's own words (par.

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\* But the same opportunities have been shown to have been enjoyed by others after Craig left.

It is not very likely that a man who had taken such precautions to prevent detection, would have committed himself by writing on the envelope a word which his amanuensis might have written.

† The meaning of this is not quite obvious.

34 of his Statement of Facts of 6th April 1851), where he observes, speaking of Mr. Morris, 'who, I had been told, though I now find erroneously, was a private clerk or secretary to Mr. Reid.' I conclude Furké or some of his party had told him so. He might have learned from this that such authority was not always sure. HOWEVER, THE POISON DID ITS WORK. *He had once stated the fact of Mr. Morris being my private clerk, and (as in the case of your correspondent) few would take the trouble to search for a disavowal,* AND, MOREOVER, SUBSEQUENTLY TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THAT MR. MORRIS WAS NOT MY CONFIDENTIAL CLERK, HE ALLUDES TO HIM AS IN THAT CAPACITY."

Mr. Reid is well aware not only that I never accused him of corruption, or of complicity with the corrupt, but that I persisted in declaring my belief that if the Government would only aid instead of thwarting my investigations, the result would be such a solution of the painful Baroda mysteries, as would completely vindicate his impugned character. And Mr. Reid is as well aware as myself, that in alluding to the relation in which Mr. Morris was "*supposed*" or "*understood*" to stand to Mr. Reid, I spoke of what was "*supposed*" and "*understood*"—and believed—by the natives of Baroda, and considered by them to be confirmatory of their views regarding Mr. Reid's corruptibility.

When in April 1851, I sent in my "Statement of Facts relative to Nursoo Punt," I mentioned what was the prevalent idea at Baroda; and as some inquiries led me to believe that the idea was an erroneous one, I stated so—modifying in that respect the portion of my Khutput Report on which my "Statement" was framed. Subsequent information, however, led me to infer that the general impression at Baroda regarding the relation in which Mr. Morris stood to Mr. Reid was not so erroneous—that he *had* been made use of as an amanuensis or confidential clerk. It was to myself a matter of supreme indifference whether he was so or not; for I continued to retain my original belief in Mr. Reid's purity. But I could not state that to be erroneous which, despite certain assurances made to me, I thought might possibly have been true; and there was no earthly reason why I should. The correctness or incorrectness of the popular idea was quite irrelevant to my subject, which was to convey to Government and the Court of Directors the views, impressions, and feelings of the natives of Baroda, in

respect of the corruptibility of high functionaries. In my Report (formally transmitted in October 1851,) I accordingly allowed it to stand as it was originally. And in an Appendix, for which, I "respectfully bespoke a careful perusal," I thus adverted to Mr. Morris:—

"He was Nursoo's friend, and had been his office companion; and, as I have said, was, whether correctly or not, supposed to have been employed by Mr. Reid in the capacity of confidential clerk."

In continuation of the observations on which I have just commented, Mr. Reid proceeds:

"I believe Mr. Morris was, many years back, in the Revenue department of the Secretariat, before he entered the office of the Revenue Commissioner. He was then appointed uncovenanted assistant to the Register of the Sudr Adalut. I was, ex-officio, Chief Judge of that Court, but, under its constitution, I had no judicial functions to perform, except in cases of very rare occurrence, wherein the Puisne Judges required the attendance of the Chief Judge on any difference of opinion which could not otherwise be adjusted. I had no concern whatever with the appointment of the subordinate officers of the Court; and I never interfered, either publicly or privately, in order to obtain the office of Assistant Register for Mr. Morris, of whom, personally, I knew nothing. I find no allusion to the "Maurrice" letter by Col. Outram in any part of the Blue Book before his "Statement of Facts" of 6th April 1851, par. 34. Copy of the letter is there given, signed "J. R. Morrice." The original letter we find signed "J. R. Maurice." The object of the copyist from whom Colonel Outram obtained the document, in thus falsifying the signature, must be left to conjecture. *Nothing could be found in such falsification criminatory of Nursoo Punt, and, THEREFORE, this point is passed over by him in silence.* P.P. 47, 48.

Mr. Reid's inclination to impute dishonorable motives to others is now undeniable. But even HE must now admit that the less he ventilates the subject of the "*falsification*" of the signature of the Maurice letter, the better it will be for his own cause, which he has in so incomprehensible a manner seen fit to identify with that of the immaculate Nursoo. If Mr. Reid will suggest an hypothesis consistent with the known and established facts of the case, which shall explain the "*falsification*" in a manner *not* criminatory of Nursoo, I shall be happy to accept it. And if he attempt any such dialectic feat, he will, perhaps, at the same time, have the kindness to explain why, if the substitution of "Morris" for

“Maurrice” was in no wise criminatory of Nursoo, it should be treated by himself as indicating a conspiracy either against that high-minded servant;—or against Mr. Morris, of whom Mr. Reid knew nothing personally—who had not been employed by him in the transaction of any business—who was not connected with the Secretariat or the Government—and who, therefore, was not in a position to excite the hostility of a Guzerat shopkeeper.

Mr. Reid thus proceeds:—

“In par. 15 of Appendix A. to Part II. of the Khutput Report, we find an account of how this copy was obtained. Col. Outram there says, ‘in my Statement of Facts, relative to Nursoo Punt, which was dispatched from Baroda on the 10th of April, 1850, I reproduced the letter under notice, a copy of it having been placed in my hands by an individual to whom Nursoo had caused it to be submitted, knowing him to be a friend of Baba Fudkey’s.’ *He says re-produced, but I cannot find on what previous occasion he had produced it.* Again, in his letter of 29th April 1851, to Mr. Malet, Col. Outram states, ‘I have not the original of the letter referred to; a copy only had been taken by a person at Baroda, to whom Nursoo Punt had shown it, as he did to several, with the view, I suppose, to discourage his enemies, and especially the author of the anonymous petition (received from Government at the same time by Capt. French), from appearing against him, as indeed it effectually did. Dreading, as the people of Baroda do, Nursoo Punt’s power and influence, the party who furnished the copy would, of course, rather not come forward, but, if absolutely necessary, he is ready to substantiate the fact of having made the copy from the original, and that the original was shown to him, as well as to others, by Nursoo Punt.’ P.P. 48, 49.

For what object, or to serve what purpose, the second of the above quotations from my correspondence is given, I am at a loss even to surmise. The letter was a private note written by me, when in Bombay in April 1851, in reply to a private note from Mr. Secretary Malet, asking me if I had the original. The statements in that note are unimpugnable. Muncherjee would of course rather not have come forward—fearing those measures of vengeance on the part of Nursoo’s friends, in the Baroda Durbar, *which have since overtaken him.* But, as Mr. Reid full well knew, he *did* come forward when required by me to do so; and the testimony he gave forms part of the evidence on which Mr. Frere convicted Nursoo.

Mr. Reid continues:—

1023. "Doubtless Furké, or Furké's intimate friend—the copyist who falsified the signature—was the party who falsely informed Colonel Outram that Mr. Morris was my confidential clerk.

It is a singular fact, that when Colonel Outram, on the 7th September 1850, sent his two letters to Government, No. 207 A., and No. 207 B.—the first, re-opening the cases of Govindrao Guikwar, and Guorojee Pol; the second, regarding the anonymous petition, the authorship of which Hybutrow came forward to claim;—he says nothing of the "Maurrice" letter, which would have strengthened greatly the point he desired to establish, and which, he would lead us to believe, was known throughout Baroda since January 1849! The only reasonable conclusion from this silence is, either that Furké had concealed from Colonel Outram the existence of this letter, (although Muncherjee, his intimate friend, had seen, and made a copy of it, about the latter date;) or that the story about Nursoo Punt's having paraded it, and Muncherjee's having copied it, is untrue. That the copy was in Colonel Outram's hands on the 11th January 1851, is stated by him in his Khutput Report, Part II., Sec. III., par. 69. He had it, therefore, at least three months in his possession before he communicated his knowledge of it to Government." P.P. 49, 50.

As I shall have occasion to show in a subsequent Chapter, Mr. Reid has throughout his Pamphlet stated and implied that an intimate intercourse subsisted between the Fudkey and myself, (*though the very Blue Books from which he was quoting proved his statements and insinuations to be DIAMETRICALLY THE REVERSE OF TRUE*). I cannot believe that this mistake was intentional. I attribute it, as I do all his other departures from fact, to the agitation under which he wrote, and to the embarrassments which he unavoidably experienced when linking the vindication of his own character with the defence of a convicted criminal. But as the misstatement has been made, I have simply here to observe that so far from consulting or obtaining information from the Fudkey, I did not, during the whole of the period adverted to, even permit him to visit me.\*

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\* *Vide postea*, Chapter VIII. To that Chapter I would respectfully beg the reader's especial attention, as it relates to one of the ablest and

But Mr. Reid's logic is not more satisfactory than his "*facts*." He represents the Fudkey as having sought by intrigue and conspiracy to effect the ruin of the virtuous Nursoo. He represents me as the Fudkey's tool, consulting with him, and receiving from him all manner of false information to the prejudice of Nursoo; and yet he brings it as a charge against that very Fudkey that he "*had concealed*" from me one of the most damaging of the incidents recorded of Nursoo in my Reports! Nay, so bent does he seem on the stultification of his own argument, that he clenches the absurdity by urging as the alternative of its rejection, the necessity of assuming that Muncherjee took no copy of the Maurice letter; though there is the fact that he *did* take a copy—that he *did* "*falsify*" the signature—that the original was sent away to Surat the day after its receipt—and that, from that day forward till the date of Nursoo's trial, it remained in the hands of Nursoo's son—in the waistcoat pocket of Mr. Morris—and in sundry other curious places and predicaments, which utterly exclude the supposition that it could have been again seen by Muncherjee, till, in August 1851, Mr. Frere presented it to him for identification in open court!

Nor is this all. Mr. Reid, who had assailed me in no mild or courteous terms throughout the preceding forty-nine pages of his Pamphlet, for having endeavoured to show to Government that his character had been aspersed, no sooner reaches his fiftieth page than he coolly turns round, and finds fault with me for allowing Muncherjee's copy to remain three months in my hands before I formally submitted it to Government. Mr. Reid well knows that I had little inducement to multiply my references to his friends in power. He knows—for he professes to have read the Blue Books—how my former representations had been treated. He is as well aware as I am, for it is detailed in the very passage cited by him, that on receiving Muncherjee's transcript of the

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most deserving native gentlemen that ever was sacrificed for unflinching honesty; and one whose case will, I understand, soon be brought to the notice of Parliament.

letter in January 1851, I applied to Government for a copy of the irregularly transmitted petition therein alluded to, on the ground that "*it could only have had reference to my official proceedings in the investigations of the cases referred to.*" He knows that Mr. Willoughby ineffectually attempted to obtain compliance with my request. And he knows that I received the following laconic reply, not altogether accurately describing the document in which I had been accused of *being imposed on by the misrepresentations of interested individuals.*

"I am desired to state, that AS it was not at the time considered necessary to forward a copy of the petition to you, and as the petitioner merely requested that he might not be condemned without being heard in his defence, his Lordship in Council considers it unnecessary to furnish you with a copy of the petition."

The letter was quoted *in extenso*, in my Report on Nursoo. To have sent it in advance would have simply been absurd.

Mr. Reid resumes:—

"The letter bears date the 3rd January 1849, and has the Bombay post mark of the 4th. Nursoo Punt must have received it on the 7th January 1849. HE NEVER ANSWERED IT. His son Keshow came to Bombay in March 1849. He then spoke to Mr. Morris on the subject. Mr. Morris denied the authorship, and desired to see the original letter, in order to discover the writer. Keshow sent him the original letter from Bansda on the 20th June, 1849. Mr. Morris produced it to Mr. Thomas, Mr. Rouget, and Mr. Showell, the head clerks of the political, judicial, and revenue departments. Mr. Thomas laid it immediately before the Chief Secretary. Enquiry was instituted, but the writer remained undiscovered." Page 50.

Mr. Reid cannot take it as a personal offence if I say that I utterly disbelieve the statement *to the effect that NURSOO "NEVER ANSWERED" the letter.* On such a point I decline to take the word of a convicted criminal—that of his son, whose prepared evidence I have recorded above—or even that of Mr. Morris. And unless Mr. Reid is prepared to boast of very intimate relations indeed with Nursoo and Mr. Morris, nothing can justify his making so bold an assertion—to be used in the next page as a well-established fact! But it is quite as well authenticated as the majority of Mr.



Reid's "facts;" and the reasoning is not weaker than the majority of his logical exertions.

How correct an idea of the "enquiry" actually adopted, Mr. Reid's description is calculated to convey to the mind of his readers, no one who has read the official documents previously quoted by me can fail to discover.

In continuation of the last quotation, Mr. Reid proceeds:—

"Colonel Outram, (*vide par.* 27th of his Supplementary Khutput Report, of the 13th January 1852, and the Appendix,) makes a strong accusation against the subordinates of the Secretariat for not having brought forward the case of this letter, as soon as it became known to them. A reference to the pages I have above cited will show that his accusation is entirely groundless. The letter was shown to Mr. Malet, the Chief Secretary, in the Monsoon of 1849, (*vide Mr. Thomas' statement.*) Mr. Malet states, 'As soon as the letter was received, enquiries were set on foot to discover the author. Mr. Thomas in vain endeavoured to trace likeness in the writing to any in the political branch of the secretariat, and the other assistants were equally unsuccessful in the departments to which they belonged.' It is to be regretted that the matter was not then laid before the Council Board. Still, had it been so, it is probable that the result would have been merely to record the facts of the Chief Secretary's unsuccessful enquiries. It must be remembered that in the Monsoon of 1849 there was no agitation, such as has subsequently arisen, and this would have been considered one of those cases (of which I am sorry to say there never has been a want of instances) wherein the proceedings of the Government had improperly transpired, without any clue being found to the delinquent." P.P. 50, 51.

One would have fancied that Mr. Reid had quite enough on his hands in attempting to meet the accusations of Indus, without going out of his way to fight the battles of other people. But he is of course the best judge of that mode of vindicating himself, which was best suited to the particular condition and exigencies of his own case. And had he not accused me of having levelled "*entirely groundless charges*" against the subordinates of the Secretariat, I should have taken no notice of the error into which he falls regarding Mr. Thomas. As it is, I am compelled to state that he MISQUOTES Mr. Malet—I don't say with the object, but with the effect, of making it appear that Mr. Thomas concerned himself

about the letter to an extent which that individual never pretended that he had. Mr. Malet's words at page 1045, are—"Mr. Thomas, the assistant in the Political Department, who brought it to the Chief Secretary, *who* in vain endeavoured to trace, &c."

The very complaint made by both Mr. Frere and myself was that there had been "*no agitation*;" that the betrayal of the deliberations of Government, and the alleged complicity of Mr. Reid with Baba Nafra and Nursoo Punt, were not deemed of sufficient importance to be referred to council, and made the subject of such a stern enquiry as would have corrected the misconceptions regarding Mr. Reid's character which then existed at Baroda. The hand-writing of the letter was a matter of comparatively little importance. If not that of any one in the Political Department, or of any one confidentially employed by a Member of Council, the circumstance only proved that the virtual author had made use of an amanuensis. The question to determine was, WHO INSPIRED THE LETTER? And this question would in all probability have been sharply enough answered if every individual in the Secretariat, from Mr. Thomas downwards, had been suspended until the traitor was discovered.

The plan adopted was *not* calculated to disabuse the native mind of its belief in the corruptibility of Mr. Reid and other functionaries.

Mr. Reid proceeds:—

"Colonel Outram has not, in any part of the Blue Book that I can discover, succeeded in showing that Nursoo Punt was convinced that Mr. Morris was the writer of this letter, or that it was a communication from Mr. Reid. Had he so believed, why was the letter not answered at once? If anything was to be done by Mr. Reid, no time was to be lost; for Nursoo Punt well knew that Mr. Reid was to proceed to England in March. And why did he take no steps whatever till his son Keshow visited Bombay about that period? and even then, none which showed that he entertained such an impression? And in regard to Mr. Morris's complicity in this matter, it is to be observed, that in March 1849, nothing had been discovered; no investigation was going on; Nursoo Punt had apparently gained his object; he was in favor with the acting Resident. The same state of things existed in June 1849. Why, then, should Mr. Morris, if the author of the letter, have hesitated to

declare himself, and to claim his reward for the service he had rendered, instead of voluntarily (for there is nothing to show that he was driven by circumstances to this course,) laying the original letter before the head clerks of the Secretariat, and, through them, before the Chief Secretary." P.P. 51, 52.

Whether "Colonel Outram" has "succeeded in showing" that Nursoo regarded the letter as coming from Mr. Reid, through Mr. Morris, is a question upon which Nursoo's counsel might be supposed anxious to take issue, were that culprit placed at the bar of the Old Bailey; and even in such a case I think the jury would decide in the affirmative. But were it otherwise, it seems strange that an English gentleman, who has held the position of an Indian Governor, and aspires to a seat in the East India Direction, should so utterly disregard the results arrived at by one of the ablest and most upright of the Company's judicial officers, and concurred in by the Board of Control, and by that very Directorial body into which he seeks admission. And it is hardly worthy of a gentleman in such a position to endeavour, at page 51, to sustain an opinion opposed to Mr. Frere's finding, on an *assumption* made at page 50. Still less worthy of him is it to imply, in behalf of the opinion thus unwarrantably supported, what, however unintentionally indulged in, practically amounts to a *SUGGESTIO FALSI*. "*If any-thing was to be done by Mr. Reid no time was to be lost; for Nursoo Punt well knew that Mr. Reid was to proceed to England in March.*" Mr. Reid ought to have seen that the very terms of the letter, and the very circumstances of the case exclude the idea that "*anything was to be done by Mr. Reid.*" Everything *had* been done. Nursoo *had* been reinstated in the office he had betrayed, owing to Mr. Reid's "*cogent arguments.*" He *had* got a triumph over the Fudkey for which it was implied he was indebted to Mr. Reid. He *had* been informed that the departing Mr. Reid had handed him over to the protection of Mr. Willoughby. "Nursoo Punt," to quote Mr. Reid's own words, "*HAD APPARENTLY GAINED HIS OBJECT.*" Except to manifest his gratitude to Mr. Reid, nothing remained to be done. And all that the letter suggested to him was an expression of gratitude.

That he did send a letter, if nothing more, though the missive never reached Mr. Reid, I shall continue to regard as probable, despite the assertions of Nursoo and Mr. Morris. And we know that he *did* send his son to Bombay to pay his respects to the departing councillor.

In reply to the latter portion of Mr. Reid's remarks, I refer to my preceding pages.

Mr. Reid goes on to say:—

“In any unbiassed mind there cannot be a doubt that, by whosoever this letter was written, Nursoo Punt—who had never in his life received a communication from me—was, from the first, perfectly satisfied that the communication did not come from Mr. Reid, and that Mr. Morris was not the writer; and that, whatever use he may have made of the letter, (and this is a point resting, so far as I can discover, on very doubtful testimony) he knew no more than that it was sent by either an unknown friend or an unknown enemy.” P. 52.

After the style of argument previously adopted by Mr. Reid, such a statement as the above can hardly excite surprise—and perhaps barely deserves notice. But perhaps I may be permitted to suggest to Mr. Reid, that it would be convenient if, in the next edition of his Letter, he would explain to us the interpretation that “*any unbiassed mind*” would put on the facts that have been established as to “*the use Nursoo made of the letter.*”

To resume our quotations from Mr. Reid:—

1411. “I commence my remarks on the letter itself, by distinctly and peremptorily declaring, that I never caused any communication to be made to Nursoo Punt; and that I know nothing whatever of the letter in question—notwithstanding Colonel Outram's insinuation in paragraph  
1146. 53 of his Khutput Report, Part II., Sec. 3, which can scarcely bear any other construction than that I must have been cognizant of the transaction; a view which is directly at variance with the whole tenor of his usual observations, and particularly with his remarks in para. 5 of his letter of the 11th November 1851, in which he distinctly cites the Maurice letter, not as a proof of my having communicated with Nursoo Punt, but as a strong instance of the corruption of the Secretariat.” P. 53.

Mr. Reid's “distinct and peremptory declaration” is of course satisfactory. It is the declaration which I myself made on my own responsibility to those who believed Mr. Reid to have

caused the communication to be made to Nursoo Punt. And I made it quite as peremptorily and distinctly as Mr. Reid now has. But this, like all my other indignant declarations in respect of him and others, believed by the natives to be corrupt, fell on incredulous ears. Nor could I wonder that it did so; the circumstances of the case being considered. And as it was of unspeakable importance that the matter should be thoroughly investigated, and that the Court of Directors should know the nature and sources of the popular belief in the corruption of their highest functionaries, I stated the arguments on which the natives based their belief that the letter had *really* been sent by Mr. Reid's directions. And, as I *did* then really believe that Mr. Morris was the writer, and that he had betrayed a confidence reposed in him by Mr. Reid, I did not hesitate to express myself thus:—

“There was no Mr. J. R. Maurice, but there was a Mr. J. Morris, who was understood to have been a confidential clerk of Mr. Reid's when that gentleman was Secretary in the Revenue Department, and to have been subsequently transferred to a high appointment in the Sudder Adawlut, of which Mr. Reid was *ex-officio* Chief Judge. The letter was not in the handwriting of this individual; it was evidently written by a *purvoo*, but, as the phraseology shows, at the dictation of an Englishman: it bears not a trace of native composition; and on the assumption that Mr. Morris, mindful of the maxim, ‘*Litera scripta manet*,’ got a native clerk to copy his communication to Nursoo—the erroneous orthography of the signature is susceptible of easy explanation. It may have been an accidental blunder of the amanuensis, who was guided by his ear; or, and this is far the more likely supposition, it may have been designedly adapted with a view to create a loophole for escape, should Nursoo not ‘keep the contents of this letter secret,’ and thus hereafter imperil his correspondent. The similarity of the two names was sufficiently great to justify Mr. Reid in taking in any letter to the address of ‘Mr. J. R. Maurice,’ and handing it to Mr. J. Morris; and it is difficult to conceive that any one, save Mr. Morris, or some one having a secret understanding with him, would have taken the trouble to write such a letter to Nursoo Punt, and to have directed him to send a reply, which the writer of the letter was not destined to see. It is difficult to suppose, as Mr. Morris now alleges, that the letter was written without his cognizance; there was no conceivable object to be attained by such an artifice. The reply which Nursoo was invited to send was almost certain to reach Mr. Morris. That individual, if innocent of the letter which had

elicited the reply, would naturally have submitted the letter to Mr. Reid; an investigation would have taken place, and an investigation instituted at that early date would most probably have resulted in the detection of the writer of the letter; for those in a position to write it, must have been few, and easily identified. The investigation would, at all events, have exonerated Mr. Morris and Mr. Reid, and thus have frustrated the objects of the writer, if in writing the letter he was inspired by any sinister design against these persons; a supposition irreconcilable with the entreaty to keep the contents of this letter secret." B.B. p. 1411.

If there be one word in that extract which is not true, or not pertinent, or which it was not my duty to write, let Mr. Reid point it out. In the meantime I proceed with his arguments—

- “The letter is dated the 3rd January 1849. The decision of Government on Nursoo Punt’s application to retire, which he was permitted to withdraw, is found in the Governor’s minute, signed by Mr. Reid and
1245. Mr. Willoughby, of the 7th October 1848. The whole proceedings of the Government in the cases of Govindrao Guikwar and Guorojee Pol were completed by Mr. Willoughby’s minute on the latter, of the 31st December 1848, when, or immediately after which date, the papers returned to the Secretariat. The “Maurrice” letter must have been written after Mr. Willoughby’s minute, because it contained matter not to be found in the Governor’s and my minute of the 28th December. I allude to the reference made to Furké, as ‘not being allowed to have anything to do with Government business—for this is to be found in Mr. Willoughby’s minute only. It is clear, then, that the Secretariat was in possession on, or immediately after, the 31st December, 1848—and that no one could have been in possession before—of
1109. all the information which enabled some person in the office to write the letter, or to cause it to be written. And when we find that the actual
1110. minutes of the members of the Government are freely communicated to
1160. those who will pay for them, are we to wonder that such a communication as the ‘Maurrice’ letter should find its way from the Secretariat; and to think that it could not have been sent without the privity of a member of the Government?” P.P. 53, 54.

I have already (*antea* page 105) shown that, according to Mr. Malet’s own statement, no clerk in the Secretariat could have seen Mr. Willoughby’s minute till the 3rd of January, the date of the “Maurrice” letter.

Mr. Reid proceeds—

“Suspicion attaches to a Mr. Craig, then a clerk in the Political

Department, whom your accurate correspondent describes as "now a collector or magistrate in the Mofussil." He would, had he taken the trouble to search, have found this man's history in pages 1045, 1083, 1240, 1260, and 1272, and probably in many other places; and he would have learnt, that instead of being "now a collector or magistrate in the Mofussil," he is a denounced fugitive; that he quitted Bombay on leave of absence on the 12th February 1849; that he has not since returned; and that the efforts of the Bombay Government to obtain intelligence respecting him from the other presidencies have failed. He had previously borne a high character, and Mr. Thomas, the head clerk, seems, from the account which he gives of him in his memorandum of the 19th January 1852, to have placed the greatest confidence in him. I confirm Mr. Thomas' statement, and the remark in par. 6 of the Committee's Report, that Mr. Craig was not personally known to me. He never, to my knowledge, was at my house; or had any employment under me; or the slightest intercourse with me. I cannot say I never saw him; because, as he was in the Secretary's office from October 1838, and I was at the head of the same office, though in a different department, till March 1844, he must have passed some time or other before me; but I am not aware that I ever spoke to him in my life. It is surmised—and, considering what has since transpired, with some probability—that he was the author of the anonymous letters sent to Mr. Willoughby and myself in April 1848. P.P. 54, 55.

1272.

1272.

1261.

This elaborate notice of an error of "Indus" committed in his first newspaper articles—but not occurring in the Pamphlet before the public at the date of the appearance of Mr. Reid's "Letter"—does not, so far as I can perceive, materially affect the case which Mr. Reid professes to elucidate. But it is decidedly calculated to convey a wrong impression to the reader, by leading him to suppose that Craig was a fugitive, in consequence of the energetic measures taken by Government to bring him to trial. And, in illustration of the unjustifiable manner in which Mr. Reid professes to base his bold assertions on the parliamentary papers, I may mention, that in not one of the five pages cited by him, is there one single syllable to lead "Indus" to assume that Craig was "A DENOUNCED FUGITIVE" WHOM THE GOVERNMENT WERE IN SEARCH OF.\*

\* The passage at page 1045 of the Blue Book, cited by Mr. Reid, has been already quoted (*antea* p. 104), and it testifies to the fact of our

At page 55, Mr. Reid proceeds:—

“ In addition to imparting information from the Minutes of Council, of the communication to be made to the acting Resident regarding Nursoo Punt, the ‘Maurrice’ letter goes on to warn Nursoo Punt

traitor in the Secretariat having been detected and expelled through Craig's exertions. *The citation at page 1083 is precisely the same passage occurring at another part of the Blue Book.* The contribution to Craig's “history” at page 1260, is from the Report of a Committee (of Government Secretaries) appointed to investigate how far the subordinates in the Secretariat were censurably concerned in the Baroda intrigues, and in appropriating the money designed for Mr. Reid's hands by Nafrā, in 1847. But far from bearing out Mr. Reid's implication, the Secretaries specially tell us that—“*He was never dismissed from his employment, but, in February 1849, permitted to proceed on leave to Calcutta; and eventually his name was struck off ONLY BECAUSE HE HAD NOT RETURNED TO BOMBAY WHEN THE TERM OF HIS LEAVE EXPIRED.*” The citation at page 1272, is a similar testimony from Mr. Thomas, who says that even after it became known that Craig had maintained an adulterous connection with his wife's sister, he “never once had reason to suspect that he had been guilty of the slightest betrayal of the confidence reposed in him.” And the passage referred to at page 1240, is simply a circular letter from Mr. Malet to the Governments of Madras, Bengal, and Agra (dated February 1851), intimating that Mr. Craig's name had been struck off the Secretariat lists on account of his not having returned on the expiry of his leave; and informing them *in case of Mr. Craig applying for Government employment*, that “since his departure, “certain accusations, supported by credible evidence, have been laid “before Government, to the effect that, shortly before leaving Bombay, “he had received a bribe of rupees 10,000, on pretence of being able “to influence certain high official functionaries, &c.”

The rupees 10,000, as the reader already knows, had been sent in 1847—not 1848. So it was not on account of *that* transaction that Craig failed to return to Bombay on the expiry of his leave, on the 12th of May, 1849. And his departure and prolonged absence cannot be attributed to any fears about the Maurrice letter, even on the supposition that he was the writer; for he did not leave till the 12th of February, by which time the letter had been upwards of a month in Nursoo's possession, without a word being said of it in public. The exposure of his relations with his sister-in-law, with whom he had been conducting an adulterous intercourse, would account for his failing to return to Bombay.



against enmity to Baba Nafra, and Hurree Bhugtee's firm. This your correspondent terms 'a figment of the Bombay Government and its 'European underlings.' From what part of the Blue Book he obtains this impression, I have not discovered. But it is difficult to comprehend why, if Nursoo Punt and Baba Nafra were in alliance, and if the letter were the production of a friend of the former—of one who knew his tactics, and whose object was merely to communicate intelligence which might be of use to him—any such allusion was made." P.P. 55, 56.

The letter stands to answer for itself. And I think the hypothesis made by me in the note to page 84, affords the only reasonable solution of the difficulty. Mr. Reid states he did not receive a private letter from Nursoo—that statement would have been enough had I ever accused him of being the author of the Maurice letter, which I never did. But that the writer of the letter had been led to fear that the simulated hostility of Nursoo and Baba Nafra was real, is obvious. And, in keeping with his customary style of logic, Mr. Reid, in the next paragraph, proceeds to the two "*facts*" (already disposed of *antea*, p. 49) which he deems irreconcilable with "simulated hostility and real friendship." And then continues—

"But, having disclaimed all knowledge of the letter, it is needless for me to pursue this part of the subject, or to do more than state that, till I saw the Blue Book, I never had an insight into the state of parties at Baroda, and therefore, had no knowledge of what individuals were friends or enemies of each other.

"There is one mystery in this 'Maurice' letter which I am quite unable to unravel, consistently with the assumption that it was written by a friend of Nursoo Punt. I allude to the directions given to send the answer 'by post' to 'Mr. J. R. Maurice, at Mr. Reid's house, Bombay.' Such instructions involved either a probability of the answer never reaching its destination, or a certainty of discovery. All letters coming to my house from the post office were delivered to my peons, none of whom could read English, and by them to me; had a letter so addressed been brought to me, I should, having nothing to excite my suspicions, have simply returned it to the post office as a misdirected letter. It would have lain in the dead letter office until claimed by some party interested. If, on the other hand, anything had occurred to raise my suspicions, I might have deemed it right to open the letter; when the intrigue would at once have been discovered." PP. 56, 77.

There is indeed a mystery about the letter and the instructions it contained, which did not for long present itself in full force to my mind. When it did, I sought its solution in the belief that Morris, or some one in league with him, had betrayed Mr. Reid's confidence. That solution Mr. Reid denies me. I therefore abstain from approaching the subject. And I would fain say no more about the letter. But Mr. Reid's next paragraph compels me to point out another of those singular misapplications of the Blue Books, of which I have already furnished more than one instance. Thus he writes in continuance of the words above quoted:—

“Colonel Outram disposes summarily of this view of the question by saying that, ‘to suppose that the letter was written out of enmity to ‘Nursoo is simply absurd.’ He seems to have found it difficult to admit a view which would have told so much in favour of an opponent. He knows, in his heart, that I had no more to do with the ‘Maurrice’ letter than he had himself. How then can he reconcile the directions given as to the address, with the assumption that they were given by a friend of Nursoo Punt? And has he not had sufficient experience of Indian intrigue to have learnt, that there is no artifice, however deep, to which a wily Brahmin (a class to which Furké, as well as Nursoo Punt, belongs, and whose character he himself well describes in p. 965,) will not resort in order to gain his object? And what would have been more damning to Nursoo Punt's character than the discovery that he had answered a communication, such as the ‘Maurrice’ letter, in such a way as to show a disposition to enter into a base intrigue?” P.P. 57, 58.

To enable the reader to judge of the accuracy of the assertion hazarded by Mr. Reid, in the opening sentence of the foregoing quotation, I subjoin what “Colonel Outram” *really did say*:—

“To suppose that the letter was written out of enmity to Nursoo, as that individual has since pretended, is simply absurd. *The letter was a kind one; it combined early and authentic information with sound advice. Nursoo took good care to have it displayed in quarters where it was his object to create a belief that his influence in Bombay was paramount; and he never submitted it to any of his superiors, as he undoubtedly would have done, had he regarded it as an invention of the enemy.*” B.B. p. 1411.

The fine sense of propriety which prompts Mr. Reid to describe Nursoo Punt as my “OPPONENT” (as he has elsewhere called him my “ANTAGONIST”) requires—at least it shall receive—no comment at my hands. Nor shall I attempt to deprecate the delicate

insinuation which the sentence conveys. And as I have before said, the peculiar line of argument which Mr. Reid has adopted as necessary to his defence—his unflinching faith in Nursoo's honesty—his bold assertion of Mr. Morris' purity—his unqualified declaration that no reply was sent to the Maurice letter—and the statement which I accept, that Mr. Morris never was in a position to betray his confidence, invest the question with personal embarrassments which I do not choose to encounter. I did my best to solve the mystery. Its solution is now in Mr. Reid's hands, and affects him, and him only. But I may be permitted to observe, that Mr. Reid displays his usual infelicity of citation in referring with applause to page 965 of the Blue Book. The cited passage is one in which, in the course of the first of my fruitless appeals against the measures of 1848, founded on Mr. Reid's cogent arguments, I pointed out considerations which should have made the Government ponder ere they assumed, that because Nursoo had never been convicted of dishonesty as a Revenue servant, he must necessarily have remained pure after his transference, in a political capacity, to so vile a sink of iniquity as Baroda.\*

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\* I subjoin the passage:—

“ The distinction which Nursoo Luxmon had gained in the service of Government, and the high reward of the village grant for three lives, which had been conferred on him by the Honourable the Court of Directors, might well be considered a guarantee for a continuance of upright conduct; and this integrity might probably have been preserved, had he not in an evil hour been tempted to abandon the Revenue Department, where little opportunity for lawless gain is offered, and greater risk is incurred, for a political office at Baroda, which affords so wide a field for corruption, and from which it was notorious that his predecessors had reaped a rich harvest of illicit gains. With my own countrymen, and I hope with some classes of the natives of India, a sense of honour, gratitude, and pride of character, would, under such circumstances, deter an official servant from yielding to temptation, *but I reluctantly allow that my long acquaintance (32 years) with the Brahminical class, to which Nursoo Luxmon belongs, has taught me that few indeed among them are swayed by such feelings. And it is my opinion, derived from the long experience referred to, that there are few of the class*

Mr. Reid's next paragraph contains a rather melancholy wind-up to his bold and uncompromising advocacy of Nursoo, and to his reiterated assertions as to the light in which that upright servant regarded the letter.

"I do not contend that Nursoo Punt acted as he ought to have done in respect to this letter. It was his duty, the instant he received it, to have laid it before the acting Resident, or to have sent it to me. His having adopted neither of these courses exposes himself to the imputation of not possessing that honesty and straightforwardness which his long intercourse with English gentlemen of honour and education *ought to have instilled into him.*"\* I am surprised to find that when, in the mon-

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*of whom I speak in whose minds such considerations would preponderate against the gratification of their avarice; for this is a gratification incapable of enhancement in Brahminical estimation, save by the excitement of the intrigue by which it is obtained.* Of the moral depravity and want of principle charged upon this class of natives, I am in a position to furnish many instances. Suffice it for the present to adduce the case of one, also in the service of Government, *who having like Nursoo Punt, been raised, trusted, and rewarded, is an apt illustration of the degrading fact I have alleged.* Sarabhaee, who for 20 years held the same post in this office which was recently vacated by Nursoo Punt, retired from the service in high honour and favour. Not only did he receive a handsome pension, and possess the esteem and friendship of the European gentlemen under whom he had served, to fully as great an extent as Nursoo Luxmon boasts of, but, like Nursoo, he was further rewarded by the grant of a village, conferred on him by the British Government, and through the special favour of the latter, was permitted to retain similar favours bestowed upon him by the Guicowar and other native chieftains; *yet some years afterwards, it was found that he had been grossly corrupt and dishonest throughout the period of his supposed faithful service.* Proofs of this were furnished to Government, in 1837, by Mr. Malet, then Officiating Resident, and similar proofs even at this day, I have no doubt, I could furnish, if required to do so. Of his guilt Mr. Sutherland, Political Commissioner, had no doubt, and that gentleman, in his letter of the 5th April 1838 (256), proposed to establish it by legal evidence, in one at least of the several cases in which Sarabhaee's treachery seemed to him more than presumable."

\* Why! Mr. Reid, throughout, assumes that Nursoo was honest from the very first, and so honest that five years residence in that "sink of iniquity" failed to contaminate him, despite his own anticipations that it would.

soon of 1849, the 'Maurrice' letter was laid before the Chief Secretary, Nursoo Punt was not asked for an explanation of his motive in so long concealing it; and, when making it known at all, *doing so by referring only to Mr. Morris, instead of to the superiors of his own department.* His conduct on this occasion affords an apt illustration of native character." P. 55.

Comment would be superfluous.

The next two pages are occupied with a condensed iteration of the "arguments" I have just disposed of, and which are reproduced in the form of a rejoinder to some of the allegations of "Indus." Having to this extent given additional mistification to the real questions at issue, Mr. Reid proceeds to sum up his own proceedings in the case of Nursoo Punt.

"I have above fully explained my own part in interfering (the only case in which I ever did so) in supporting Nursoo Punt against what I then \* deemed (and a careful perusal of everything relating to this point has in no way altered my opinion) unjust treatment. I cannot assent to Colonel Outram's view,—which gives a colour to his correspondence throughout page after page of the Blue Book,—THAT IT WAS THE SOLE DUTY OF THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT HIS WISHES AND OBEY HIS SUGGESTIONS TO THE LETTER; AND THAT IT WAS A CRIME TO HESITATE TO ACT AS HE DESIRED, EVEN IF HIS DESIRES MIGHT SEEM OPPOSED TO ALL LAW AND JUSTICE. I had no reliance on his infallibility; and believed it my duty to weigh every case which he thought fit to lay before the Government, as I would those of any other subordinate officer. I had seen many *similar cases* wherein native servants had been ruined by cabals fostered by the *credulity, prejudice, want of temper and discretion, of European officers*; and (as I have already stated) there was nothing apparent, at the time, to lead to the belief that this was other than an *ordinary case of this nature*; differing in fact from others only in that the native officer, whose conduct formed the subject of discussion, was a man hitherto of extraordinarily high character. By my *imputed* interference in this case, and my not consenting to leave Furké in undisputed sovereignty over Baroda affairs, when Colonel Outram proceeded to Egypt (THOUGH, IN FACT, I HAD NO MORE CONCERN IN THIS THAN ANY OTHER MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT,) I have drawn down upon myself the enmity of a strong and violent party, who have not hesitated

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\* The only case in which he ever had an opportunity; as it was the first time Nursoo's conduct had been impeached by an official superior.

*in my absence*, to resort to all means short of actual accusation of corruption, including appeals to the local press, to cast a slur upon my character." P.P. 60, 61.

After what has been detailed in the preceding pages, to attempt to show that my views were as widely dissimilar from those attributed to me by Mr. Reid, as his elaborate vindication of Nursoo was from the merits of the case, would be to insult the understanding of my readers. I confine myself, therefore, to a flat and emphatic denial of the accuracy of his assertions, and to a declaration of my belief, that Mr. Reid will not find any three gentlemen of the Athenæum Club, who will not tell him that his allegations are as devoid of foundation as his assertion that he, whose "cogent arguments" overcame Lord Falkland's belief of Nursoo's guilt, had no more to do with the invitation given to him to remain in the office he had betrayed, than any other member of Government. As flatly do I deny that I bore Mr. Reid any "enmity"—that I leagued myself with any party, whether "strong and violent" or feeble and forbearing—that I directly or indirectly took part in, sanctioned, or was privy to, a single "appeal to the local press," or, that I in any way, or at any time, or under any circumstances, attempted to cast a slur on his character. That character I had sought to vindicate; for I believed it to have suffered from a series of events for which Mr. Reid was little responsible. From first to last I expressed my belief in Mr. Reid's purity. And as Mr. Reid knows, I have been held up to ridicule by his critic "Indus" for maintaining that belief.

Mr. Reid's present disagreeable position entitles him to great latitude. And I am willing to believe that his erroneous assertions are not deliberate misstatements. But their denial and refutation are required of me. Mr. Reid must consent to submit to both the one and the other. And it rests with him to show, by the prompt acknowledgement and withdrawal of his epithets, insinuations, and charges here and elsewhere noticed, that the concessions I have volunteered in his behalf are not unworthily bestowed.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE LETTERS RECEIVED BY MESSRS REID AND WILLOUGHBY.

I have already alluded to certain letters already received by Messrs. Reid and Willoughby, in April 1848, intimating to them that it would be to their advantage to secure a Government decision in favor of the bank of Hurree Bhugtee (that is Baba Nafra), in a case then pending, or about to come, before them. And to these letters I devote my present Chapter, with the view of enabling the reader to determine how far Mr. Reid is justified in accusing me of having made a "tortuous" use of them.

The man in whose favor an interested decision was thus boldly solicited, had been denounced in former years for his disgraceful (and unhappily too successful) attempts to corrupt the native establishment of the Baroda Residency. He had been concerned in the design entertained by the Guicowar, in 1840, to buy up Sir James Carnac's Government, and to administer a bribe of £6,000 to Mr. Reid himself. From him it was that Nursoo Punt (according to Mr. Frere, the Court of Directors, and the Board of Control,) lies under the "*painful suspicion*" of having received a bribe of £2,000 in May 1845, to influence the Resident's judgment, in a case in which the Bank was interested.\* The same man it was who, in July 1847, with the cognizance of Nursoo Punt, sent to Bombay the agent who is proved to have given away large sums of money, ostensibly intended for Mr. Reid's hands. It

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\* Bechur Samul, the principal partner of the bank, did not die till September 1845; but Baba Nafra had been long the Moonim, or chief manager, of the bank. Through him all bribes were paid, and in his house were found the papers which exposed the transaction.

was the frauds and extortions of this very man that Nursoo Punt was convicted by Mr. Frere of having criminally endeavoured to conceal, in August 1848—convicted be it remembered, in the teeth of those “cogent arguments” by which Mr. Reid had previously secured him a more than honourable acquittal. It was from this same man, that Nursoo Punt labours under “*the strongest suspicions*” of having, about the 19th or 20th of October 1848, received a reward of £2,800, for aiding and abetting in the persecutions of Joitabhae. And it was with a view to promote the same nefarious plot, of the same nefarious man, that, according to the judgment of the Directors and the Board of Control—“*there is ample ground of moral conviction, that*” this Nursoo Punt, whose reputation is dear to Mr. Reid, “*misinformed Captain French, as he has been clearly proved to have misinformed Colonel Outram.*”

The fact of such letters having been addressed both to Mr. Reid and Mr. Willoughby, was communicated to me by the latter gentleman, soon after my return from Egypt, in the beginning of 1850. Before I left for Egypt, in November 1848, Mr. Willoughby, or his son-in-law Mr. Malet, had informed me that an agent of Baba Nafra had presumed to offer “*Poshauks,*” that is, presents of cloths, &c., to the ladies of the family. In both cases, the circumstances were mentioned to me as indicating “*the impudence*” of Nafra. And the impression left on my mind was, that the letters had been smuggled in amongst the “*Poshauks.*” In this it appears I was wrong.\* The letters were sent through the post, in addition to the “*Poshauks,*” which had been sent by an agent.

When, in July 1850, on my examination of Nafra’s accounts, I discovered that money had been sent to Bombay, and that there

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\* My mistake was not pointed out till after Mr. Chapman had, in his “*Baroda and Bombay,*” stated the circumstance in conformity with my impressions. As Mr. Willoughby still retains the letter sent to him, I solicited permission to examine it, and should have wished to incorporate it in this Pamphlet. Mr. Willoughby, however, declined to place the letter before me, on the ground that by so doing he would constitute himself a partizan.



was a likelihood of a clue being found as to its distribution, if a prompt seizure were made of the papers of Nafra's Bombay agent, I wrote a private and confidential note to Mr. Malet, requesting him to take steps to secure so desirable an object. This note (dated 13th July,) is published in the Blue Book as a "*demi-official letter*"—and is to be found at page 1216. I take the liberty of subjoining it.

"The delay which Baba Nafra's people managed to interpose before his Highness could get the chopras from them, was made good use of in falsifying many items; but though the names of the parties to whom the money was given had thus been obliterated, the business was so hastily and clumsily done as to leave no doubt as to the object of those debits; and from first to last between three or four lakhs of rupees, belonging to Hurree Bhugtee's firm, have been made away with by the Baba, to defeat enquiry into the Joetabhaee affair, during the four years the tukrar has been going on. Among other items are two for a lakh of rupees given in September or October 1848 (one of 85,000, the other of 15,000), the latter of which is supposed to have been given to Nursoo Punt, and the former to have been sent to Bombay, with a view to defeat my exposure of the Govind Rao Gaekwar and Gorajee Pol frauds, on which I reported at the end of August and beginning of September of that year. The agent employed in Bombay is now here, whose examination I took yesterday, a rough translate of which I enclose. The fellow admits only to have had 22,000 rupees, but is believed to have taken the whole 85,000, which doubtless he made appear to have been expended much in the same way the rascals did in the Dhakjee Dadajee affair of 1840; and I think a complete exposure of their villainy would be effected by securing the papers which he left with his brother-in-law in Bombay, which I should hope there would be no difficulty in doing, if you were to put the police magistrate on the scent without delay."

"I recollect either you or Willoughby telling me, shortly before I went to Egypt, of an agent of Baba Nafra's having had the impertinence to endeavour to present Poshauks to the madams, for which the fellow was sent to the right-about with a flea in his ear. I dare say it will be found that he pretended to have expended the money in that manner, if so, we now, I hope, have an opportunity of exposing the rascally contrivances by which such fellows have made people up here believe in the efficacy of 'khutput in Bombay.'

"I write in haste to save the post."

This letter reached Mr. Malet on the 17th of July. He

immediately put it into circulation, recommending that "if it be determined to comply with Colonel Outram's suggestion, orders be immediately given, as without doubt Bulwunt Row will have been written to from Baroda on the subject, so that any delay will defeat the chances of success." Lord Falkland was in the Deccan, and Mr. Willoughby lost no time in writing the following minute :

"THERE can be no doubt that it is highly desirable that malpractices of the kind alluded to by Lieutenant-Colonel Outram should be exposed, and if possible punished, but it is exceedingly difficult to effect this in Bombay. I think the Chief Secretary should be authorised to communicate confidentially with the Advocate General, and obtain his advice, as to whether any, and if so, what measures can be adopted to secure Bulwunt Row's papers. As calculated to throw some light on the subject, and in corroboration of Lieutenant-Colonel Outram's surmises that the firm of *Hurree Bhugtee*, OR RATHER I SHOULD SAY *BABA NAFRA*, have sent money to Bombay under the pretext of bribing men in authority, I circulate an anonymous note which I received, dated the 10th April 1848, and which, if I recollect right, I mentioned at the time in Council, and ascertained that my late esteemed colleague, Mr. Reid, had received an exactly similar communication. It will be observed that this letter addressed to me was enclosed under a cover addressed to my daughter, and I think it must have been drawn up by some unprincipled and corrupt European, in league with the party at Baroda." B.B. 1217.\*

As we shall see in the next Chapter, the only light I was able to throw on this subject, was that obtained through the exertions of my able and excellent friend, Captain Barr, the Paymaster General. In the meantime, it will be observed, not only that Mr. Malet and Mr. Willoughby acquiesced in—for they questioned not—what I had said about the "Poshauks;" but that the latter

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\* In the Blue Books the minute is mispunctuated, and runs thus:—"I think the Chief Secretary should be authorized to communicate confidentially with the Advocate General, and obtain his advice, as to whether any, and if so, what measures can be adopted to secure Bulwunt Row's papers, as calculated to throw light on the subject, and in corroboration, by Lieutenant-Colonel Outram's surmises, &c." I think my reader will admit that the punctuation given in the text is the reasonable one; and that I am as fully authorized to adopt it as to alter the "by" which precedes my own name into "of."

circulated, in corroboration of my surmises regarding Nafra's attempts at bribery, the letter which he had previously mentioned to me as illustrating the "*impudence*" of that man.

This minute was recorded on the 17th of July 1850. But it was in vain that Mr. Willoughby recorded, from time to time, the importance and duty of assisting my enquiries. All assistance was withheld from me; and as the minutes of Government prove—*minutes unseen by me till the publication of the Blue Books, but duly communicated to the Baroda corruptionists by the traitors in the Secretariat*—my investigations continued to be regarded by the Government with displeasure. Every proceeding of that Government tended more and more to confirm the belief of the natives that Mr. Reid's friends in power viewed my enquiries with alarm; and I was daily more and more embarrassed by the daily increasing conviction of those among whom I had to exercise my functions, that they could not more effectually secure the favour of the authorities than by throwing difficulties in my way. In April 1851, deeming it necessary to make an earnest appeal to Government, with a view to induce them to alter a policy which had produced such melancholy results, I sent in my "Statement of Facts, relative to Nursoo Punt" (BB. p. 1054); and in that document, while avowing my firm belief in the integrity of my superiors, I deemed it my duty to show them that they could hardly expect the natives to recognize that integrity in the face of the very "unhappy concatenation of circumstances," as Mr. Frere has termed it. After reciting many of these circumstances, and pointing out the very sad effects produced on the minds of the natives by the "Maurrice letter," I thus proceeded:—

"The intimation thus conveyed by Nursoo's correspondent, that Mr. Reid was the author of the minute on which the Government decision had been founded, must have received ready credence from those who found that the decision of Government was in exact accordance with the terms of his letter. And there is nothing, as Government are well aware, relating to Baroda matters, that takes place in the Secretariat, that does not find its way to this place, just as there are no matters of importance transacted in my own office that do not find their way to the city of Baroda, and to the Bombay friends of the Baroda traders in corruption.

“From the turn which matters have now taken, it will, I think, be matter of regret to Government that there was no condemnatory allusion to the letter which I have previously alluded to as having been sent to Mr. Reid, intimating to that gentleman that it would be to his advantage to secure decisions in support of that firm; *such an allusion would have greatly facilitated my recent inquiries, and would have enabled me to assure the natives, with some chance of being believed, that the decision of Government was arrived at in spite of, and not in consequence of, the absurd but wicked attempt to corrupt a member of Council.*

“Another circumstance calculated to strengthen the belief that it was through Mr. Reid’s agency that the Government decisions under allusion were obtained, is the fact, of which Government have long been aware, that Nursoo’s relative, Baba Nafra, did actually send an emissary to bribe that member of Council, and that the emissary in question actually paid away large sums, which he believed, or pretended to believe, to have reached Mr. Reid’s hands.” B.B., p. 1062.

In October 1851, I forwarded my report on the circumstances which had tended to create the belief, so universal at Baroda, of the corruptibility of the highest functionaries. In framing that report I deemed it my duty to leave nothing untold which was requisite to enable the Court of Directors (from whom the Bombay Government had withheld my appeals) to judge of the nature and propriety of those official obstructions which had been thrown in my way. And in summarizing the circumstances which induced the natives to believe, that the retention of Nursoo as native agent, and the refusal to annul the Hurree Bhugtee guarantee, in 1848, were the results of corrupt influence in the Council chamber, I thus expressed myself:—

“How long they remained in that gentleman’s hands, I cannot, of course, say. But, on my departure for Egypt, they had been in the possession of Government, the first exactly eight, the second seven weeks; and six weeks after my departure Government promulgated a decision, which, while it admitted that the house of Hurree Bhugtee had attempted to defraud an individual enjoying the British protection, to the extent of nearly three lacks of rupees, passed over in perfect silence the charge which I had brought against the firm, of constructive forgery; took no notice of letters which had been sent to the two members of Council intimating that it would be for their benefit to promote the interests of the bank; and withheld the only punishment in the power of Government to inflict, for the attempt at extortion of which the bank

had been guilty, viz., the annulment of the mischief-working guarantee." Para. 37, Sec. III. Part II. of Khutput Report, B.B. p. 1406.

And to this I appended the following note:—

"What the particular case was to which those letters referred, I am not in a position to state; but I know, from the written statements of Mr. Willoughby, that such letters were sent both to himself and his brother councillor, Mr. Reid. Mr. Willoughby duly recorded this insolent proceeding, and, doubtless, Mr. Reid did the same; but it is unfortunate that no reference was made to these letters in the Government despatches of the 12th and 4th January, to satisfy Baba Nafra, the manager of the bank, and those who were aware of the letter he had caused to be written, that the gentleness displayed by Government, in reference to the bank's proceedings, was manifested in spite of, not in consequence of, these letters.

I cannot at present lay my hands on other references to the same letters, though probably there are several in my other despatches; for I deemed it my duty, not less to the Government and its former member, Mr. Reid, than to the impugned honor of my country, to have all these painful matters cleared up so effectually as to satisfy the natives of Baroda, that their British rulers viewed any attempts to influence their judgment by improper means, with indignation and loathing. Yet Mr. Reid, who should have been the first to thank me for bringing to the notice of my superiors aught tending, however unjustly, to compromise his own character in the eyes of the natives, accuses me at page 18 of his Letter, of having referred to these letters "*sometimes not very fairly.*" And at page 19 he proceeds to illustrate his meaning by a partial quotation from the passages I have just given *in extenso*. He thus writes:—

"These letters, and more particularly that addressed to me, are frequently alluded to in the proceedings subsequent to Colonel Outram's return from Egypt; and all the use that can, however tortuously, be made of them, has been so. Colonel Outram says, in his Khutput Report, Part, II. Sec. III., par. 37, that he procured information of their existence from Mr. Willoughby's 'written statements,' and again (in p. 1406, note) 'Mr. Willoughby duly recorded this insolent proceeding, and doubtless Mr. Reid did the same.' To what written statements of Mr. Willoughby Colonel Outram had access, (for his minutes as a

member of Council could not have been legitimately known) I cannot find. Mr. Willoughby did not, any more than myself, place anything on record at the time of the receipt of these letters, contenting himself, as I did, with mentioning the fact at a subsequent meeting of the Board. But on the 17th July 1850, long after I had left India, I find that he circulated the original note he had received, with a minute alluding to the fact of my having received a similar note, and my having mentioned this in Council at the time when he did. An account of this transaction will be found in the Chief Secretary's memorandum of the 22nd January, 1852." P. 19.

Mr. Reid's charge of "tortuosity" I simply deny;—emphatically—and without qualification. The "written statements" of Mr. Willoughby were contained in his replies to some queries I addressed to him on the subject of the letters, when my discoveries at Baroda induced me to think I was on the eve of throwing light on the subject. Mr. Willoughby's minute, as cited by Mr. Reid, has been already given; and the reader may judge for himself how far its purport is faithfully condensed by Mr. Reid. And Mr. Secretary Malet's "account," though professedly written to elucidate the "Statement of Facts" which was received by Government in April 1851, was not prepared till the end of January 1852, some weeks after Government had been in possession of the report in which Mr. Frere had deplored the "unhappy concatenation of circumstances" that had marked the proceedings in Nурсoo's case, and in which he had intimated that the natives of Baroda were "*so distrustful of the higher, or indeed the highest, officials in Bombay, that they send agents there, and allow themselves to be persuaded that these men obtain corrupt influence over, and information from, men high in office in Bombay.*"

Mr. Malet's account I subjoin:

"The Chief Secretary is aware that, as stated by Colonel Outram in his 80th para., both Mr. Reid and Mr. Willoughby received anonymous letters sent to them, addressed *through* the ladies of their families, requesting their support for Hurree Bughtee's claim in the dispute between that firm and the sons of the late Gungadhur Shastree. The Chief Secretary can also state, from personal communication with those gentlemen, that so far from there being, as Colonel Outram states, "no doubt from whom it came," there was no clue whatever at the time to

trace the letters. The Chief Secretary now believes that Craig was the author of these letters; *but this belief arises from the discovery of the baseness of that man's character and actions, made subsequently to that period.* It will be in the recollection of the Right Honourable the Governor, that Mr. Willoughby *produced in Council the letter which he had received,* and that Mr. Reid mentioned at the same time that one of a similar nature had been sent to him, and that no clue to the writer of them could be discovered." B.B., p. 1082.

When Mr. Malet wrote that there was "*no clue whatever at the time to trace the letters,*" he states a complex proposition, *viz.* : that the letters were anonymous, and that the handwriting was not recognised by himself, Mr. Reid, or Mr. Willoughby. But to the careless reader the words might suggest a meaning inconsistent with truth. They suggest the idea that *some* efforts were made to trace the writer. And they are likely to convey the erroneous impression that Mr. Willoughby doubted the source whence his letter derived its inspiration. But as either he or Mr. Malet told me about the "Poshauks" in 1848; as Mr. Willoughby told me of the letter in 1850; and as in both cases the circumstances were mentioned in illustration of Nafra's impudence, it is obvious that Mr. Malet could not have intended to convey what would have been an untrue impression. And the supposition is the less tenable, inasmuch as he refers to the minute in which Mr. Willoughby cites the letter received in April 1848, "in confirmation of Lieut. Colonel Outram's surmises that *the firm of Hurree Bhugtee, or rather Baba Nafra, has sent money to Bombay under the pretext of bribing men in authority.*" But even were it otherwise, it is evident that Mr. Malet wrote his memorandum in haste, or in too great reliance on a treacherous memory. Mr. Willoughby, whose retentive memory, methodical habits, and careful preservation and docketing of papers, &c., are well known to his friends, merely says that he "*mentioned*" in Council the receipt of such a letter. And the whole context of his minute implies that he submitted the original to his colleagues for the first time, on the 17th of July 1850. In this view of the case Mr. Reid concurs at page 19 (previously quoted), where he says that Mr.

Willoughby "*contented himself as I (Mr. Reid) did, with mentioning the fact.*" Yet Mr. Malet represents him as having produced it in Council at the time.\*

Who the individual was that acted on Nafra's behalf on this occasion, forwarding anonymous letters to Messrs. Reid and Willoughby, under cover to ladies of their families, is a matter of minor importance. It *may* have been, that Mr. Craig, who had in 1847 received money to give to Mr. Reid, or it may not. But that the letters were sent, and that the letter addressed to Mr. Willoughby was regarded by him as coming under instructions from Nafra, there can, I think, be little doubt. At all events, it is plain that I had adequate reasons, for supposing that no doubt existed on the minds of those most nearly interested in the matter. Yet Mr. Reid, writing in 1853, and with all the revelations of the Blue Books in painful plainness before him, does not hesitate to express a very different opinion. At page 19 he writes, in continuation of the remarks previously quoted:—

1082 "Under the view which I have ever taken of anonymous communi-  
cations, I deemed these letters at the time to be of not the slightest im-  
portance, knowing them to be utterly powerless in influencing our deci-  
sion in any matter that might come before us. There was, as stated by  
the Chief Secretary, no clue whatever to trace their origin. To Col.  
1058 Outram, however, nothing was impossible. He at once "had no doubt  
from whom it came,"—that is, the letter sent to my house;— and he  
probably had no greater doubt in respect to that sent to Mr. Wil-

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\* At page 19, Mr. Reid says "both Mr. Willoughby and myself mentioned the receipt of those letters at a subsequent council. Mr. Willoughby produced (and now has) that sent to him. *Mine I afterwards destroyed as useless.*" I find that in an earlier minute, Mr. Malet (27th August 1851, B.B., p. 1249) "ventured to recall to Lord "Falkland's recollection that the Honourable Mr. Willoughby received "an anonymous letter, requesting his interest for the firm of Hurree "Bhugtee, which that gentleman brought to Council, and that Mr. Reid "at that time stated, that he also had received a similar anonymous "letter." But at this date he hints no doubt of the accuracy of my assumption that the letter came, and was recognized as coming, under the instructions of Nafra.



loughby; although my name is here, as elsewhere, for obvious reasons, prominently brought to notice. He decides peremptorily that Baba Nafra had "caused it to be written," and treats this throughout as an indisputable fact.

1406  
(note.)

The "obvious reasons" which induced me to make more frequent allusion to the name of Mr. Reid than to that of Mr. Willoughby, were, that the decisions complained of—subsequently proved to have been decisions that should never have been given—were supposed by the natives to have been obtained through the corrupt influence *not* of Mr. Willoughby, *but* of Mr. Reid. Mr. Willoughby, it is true, is my friend—a kind and much valued friend. He long has been, and, I hope, will long continue to be so. But, as the Blue Books show, no considerations based on our private friendship, have ever induced me to slur his name over when it appeared my duty to give it prominence. And, as Mr. Reid was well aware, I never intimated, for I did not believe, that the anonymous letters influenced, or could have influenced, his judgment any more than that of Mr. Willoughby; but I did think, *and I still think*, that they should not have been forgotten when, six or eight months afterwards, the guarantee question came before Government.

In continuation of the remarks above quoted, Mr. Reid proceeds to express his belief that, *even in 1853, there is no ground for assuming that the letters were written under instructions from Baba Nafra*. He thus writes:—

"Now, even on this point, it is just as likely that he may be in error, as that he may be right. If the Shastree's son, or any opponent of the firm, wished to prejudice the members of the Government, or others with whom the ultimate decision of a dispute rested, against the firm, he could not do so more effectually than by sending such letters; for their obvious effect would be to create in the minds of such parties a feeling of indignation at the attempt made to corrupt them. On my guard against such a trick, I cared little whether the letter came from the one or the other party; satisfied that, when any case came before me, I could judge it on its merits, with strict impartiality, and without reference to the artifices of either disputant." P. 20.

Had the Baroda Blue Books not been published, Mr. Reid might have had some excuse for arguing on the hypothesis that

the natives of Baroda, firmly assured of the integrity of himself and his colleagues, must have been aware that the "obvious effect" of such letters would be "to create in the minds of such parties a feeling of indignation at the attempt made to corrupt them." But Mr. Reid has been made aware, on other authority than mine, that the natives of Baroda did not believe in the integrity of himself and his colleagues; that they considered the highest functionaries open to corrupt influences; and that they regulated their procedure accordingly. Nay, he himself admits (p. 64), that "no one would attempt to deny \* \* \* the belief in 'KHUTPUT' which Colonel Outram has striven with so much zeal to expose"—that "KHUTPUT" being illicit influence over high Bombay functionaries. He is well aware, that the belief in "Khutput" has been greatly fostered by the fact that neither he nor his colleagues took any steps to show that they viewed the intrigues of the corruptionists with "indignation." And he knows that in the opinion of Mr. Frere, the Court of Directors, and Board of Control, Nursoo Punt lies under "painful suspicions" of having accepted a bribe from Nafra of £2000, to influence the judgment of the Resident in this very case of the Shastree's sons, in those preliminary investigations which preceded by three years the letters that were sent to himself and Mr. Willoughby.

Mr. Reid thus winds up his remarks on these letters:—

406  
note)

"Col. Outram's observation, that the Government ought to have assumed (without a shadow of proof, be it remarked) that Baba Nafra had caused these anonymous letters to be written; and that, when it passed a decision not adverse to the firm (though I have shown elsewhere that in the case to which he alludes, that of Govindrao Guikwar, the decision of Government was adverse—more so than Col. Outram had himself proposed in some points, although it did not withdraw the British guarantee), it should have informed the firm that such decision was passed "in spite of, and not in consequence of," certain anonymous letters received many months before, and having reference to a totally different case, is too absurd to require further comment." PP. 20, 21.

vide page  
7 of this  
letter.

I have already placed before the reader the passage in which Mr. Reid professes to have found the observations "too absurd to require further comment." And on a reference to them it will be

seen that the "observations" are indebted for their existence to the fertile imagination of Mr. Lestock Robert Reid. I did *not* observe that Government "ought to have assumed" that Baba Nafra had caused these letters to be written. In April 1851, I alluded to the letters as having been sent by Baba Nafra, because Mr. Willoughby's communications left on my mind a strong conviction that he regarded them as coming from that man. And in October of the same year, I alluded to them as coming from Baba Nafra with all the more confidence, as neither Mr. Malet nor Mr. Willoughby had, after the perusal of my April report, hinted to me officially or privately that any doubt existed, or ever could have existed on the subject. In April 1851, I believed that the letters were written in reference to the Govind Row case. I had not, however, been informed of the case to which they did relate; and, as the reader has seen, I stated in the "Note" from which Mr. Reid professes to quote, that "I was not in a position to state the particular case to which the letters referred"—adding, however, that as such letters *had* been received, "it was unfortunate that no reference had been made to them in the Government despatches of the 4th and 12th of January 1849." As regards Mr. Reid's extraordinary parenthesis, I have simply to refer the reader to a preceding portion of this Pamphlet (p.p. 43, 44), where I have fully disposed of his allegations.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE BRIBE INTENDED FOR MR. REID.

The next of Mr. Reid's allegations and insinuations to be noticed, are those in which he indulges when endeavouring to rebut the charge of "Indus," based on the fact that a large sum sent by Baba Nafra to Bombay, was represented by Nafra's agent to have been paid to Mr. Reid.

In the foregoing Chapter, I have given the confidential note which I addressed to Mr. Malet on the 13th of July 1850, so soon as I had obtained the first clue to this transaction. I have stated that Mr. Malet lost no time in "circulating" my note, and that Mr. Willoughby, with equal promptitude, wrote the minute given at page 132. Mr. Blane "had no objections." And the reference was made to the Advocate General, whose legal opinion I subjoin:—

"The papers referred to cannot be legally seized except under civil process; if the transactions relate to mere money demands and accounts, or if any crime is involved by any criminal falsification of accounts, or the like, then under criminal process on information on oath laid before a magistrate.

(Signed)

A. S. LE MESURIER,

"Malabar Hill, 17th July, 1850.

Advocate-General."

—BB. p. 1218.

On receipt of this "minute" Mr. Malet intimated to me that the Advocate General had "given it as his opinion that this seizure cannot be legally effected"—an unfortunate mistake, as I could have furnished information on oath both as to the falsification of accounts, and other matters, which would have justified the seizure.

In the meantime, I had procured further disclosures from

Joteshwur, the agent that had been sent to Bombay. He avowed that he had given £1,000 to a Mr. Craik (subsequently identified as Mr. Craig) to be given to Mr. Reid. When asked if he pretended that he had any personal transactions with Mr. Reid, he said that he had called at Mr. Reid's house, but distinctly denied that he had spoken to him about the money which was afterwards given on his account to Craig, and mentioned that his conversation had been confined to personal enquiries, &c. When interrogated as to the case for which money was sent, his reply was—  
 “There were at that time several cases pending connected with the firm, viz., regarding Joitabhae's child, and the Shastree's dispute, and four or five other matters; and the money was given with a view to gain favor.” When asked if a man named Bhanabhae, who had also, it appeared, been sent to Bombay to give presents to ladies and gentlemen, was associated with him in his mission—he replied:—

“Bhanabhae was sent to Bombay a year before me, but as he was not depended upon, I was sent in his place, and he recalled to Baroda. *Baba Nafra taxed me with having expended ten thousand rupees to no purpose, but I replied, that the Guarantee case had been settled, at any rate.*”

To this man's testimony I attached considerable importance. For I had got possession of certain of his papers, sent to me by the Durbar. On telling him that I intended to examine them in his presence, to see what light they threw on his mission to Bombay, he became greatly agitated; declaring that they contained nothing relative to that point, but admitting that they referred to the interests of the corrupt Nagurs who had been expelled from office in 1837-38, and whose “Gooroo,” or spiritual adviser, he had been. I told him that they should be sealed up and returned to him unopened, should subsequent investigations prove that the deposition he was about to give was true. His deposition I forwarded on the 22nd July to Mr. Malet, along with the following confidential letter:—

“Here is translate of a further statement by Iboheram, in which he gives further particulars of his proceedings in Bombay, which, if true, shows that some rascal has been pretending to influence with Reid, and making money on that pretence. The deponent pronounces the name

indistinctly Craik or Clerk? it may, however, have been a false name given to deceive the man; or if Reid had any European clerk, it may be him.

“I shall have the fellow up again to-morrow, to examine him more particularly regarding the place of Mr. Craik’s residence, which is indistinctly pronounced in the deposition, and I do not know whether it means Mazagon or not. But the best chance of tracing the transaction will be in the books of Vrijlall Doolub, in which the bank notes for 10,000 rupees, said to have been given to Mr. Craik in October 1848, ought to be recorded.” B.B., p. 1219.

On receipt of my communication another reference was made to the Advocate-General, who, of course, adhered to the opinion he had previously given. And, on the 1st of August, Mr. Malet, in acknowledging my letter of the 22nd July, with its enclosures, sent me M. Le Mesurier’s notes. On the 16th of August, I forwarded the translation of an anonymous communication received from Bombay, professing to give a clue to the matters I was investigating. And in forwarding it to Mr. Malet, I observed as follows:—

“As Government was debarred by legal forms from adopting at the time, the steps which I took the liberty to suggest for obtaining the papers left in Bombay by Joteshwur Echaram, or for tracing the notes said to have been paid by him to Mr. Craig, I fear there is no hope now of satisfactorily proving the transaction, and I regret that I was not honoured by the communication, with your first letter, of the Advocate General’s opinion forwarded with your second, as I should have done myself the honour to forward such information on oath as might yet perhaps have enabled you to effect the object. After the further delay, however, of 14 days, which had intervened between your first and second communication, there could be no hope of finding the papers, which will of course have been secured long ere this by Baba Nafra’s agents, who it appears from the accompanying revelations are at work in Bombay to counteract the investigation on which I am engaged.” B.B. p. 1221.

At the same time that the anonymous letter was sent to myself, another of the same nature was forwarded to Mr. Malet, who laid it before Council, but Lord Falkland “saw no use in taking further notice of this petition.” When, however, three days after this minute was recorded, the anonymous petition sent to myself was

laid before Council, Messrs. Willoughby and Blane thought it of sufficient importance to be sent to the Deccan after Lord Falkland. His Lordship left it to the Chief Secretary "to make any enquiries, and take such steps as he may deem necessary." Mr. Blane recommended that Ragoba, a clerk in the office of the Paymaster General, whose name was mentioned in both anonymous letters as mixed up with the transaction, should be interrogated. But to this Mr. Malet objected, on the ground that "as it is not improbable that trustworthy information may be had from Baroda on which enquiries may at a future time be based, any investigation on information received anonymously might, by forewarning the parties, defeat future enquiry, while the nature of the information at present available precludes any satisfactory investigation at present."

Kept in ignorance of the proceedings and views of Government, and my past experience having taught me to expect no aid or countenance to my enquiries, I put myself in communication with Captain Barr, the Paymaster General, and asked him to interrogate his clerk, Ragoba. He did so. A very exaggerated idea of the extent of my discoveries at Baroda had got abroad. I was supposed to have got to the bottom of the prolonged system of corruption which linked together Bombay and the Guicowar capital. And Ragoba, who was impressed with this erroneous view, was in great terror when called on by Captain Barr to explain his share in the business. His statement was distinct, and confirmatory of that of Joteshwur; though there was reason to believe that neither the one nor the other told the entire truth. And Captain Barr, acting on the information thus obtained, proved that a sum of £1000 (in notes) *had* been taken by Joteshwur at the time specified. The numbers of the notes had not been noted; so they could not be traced.

The enquiry at this stage was embarrassed by the fact of the papers referring to this matter having been placed in the hands of Mr. Smith—*Craig's brother-in-law*. And soon after, on learning this, Captain Barr gave up the enquiry as fruitless. On the 7th of January 1852, the "Secretaries" were formed into a Com-

mittee to report on the conduct of those subordinates in the Government offices whom Ragoba's statement seemed to implicate in these transactions. The result of their deliberations, so far as concerned the money destined for Mr. Reid, was, that *probably* Joteshwur, Craig, Ragoba, and another individual, divided the money between themselves.

The logical force of their arguments, or the legitimacy of some of their assumptions, is not quite obvious; but that is unimportant. They admit that the money was obtained from Nafra's agents, and that Nafra was led to believe that it reached Mr. Reid. And this was all that I myself had ever stated, or attempted to prove.\*

The reader who has done me the honour to peruse the foregoing observations, will I think admit, that in prosecuting my enquiries, I evinced no want of faith in Mr. Reid's integrity, and was guilty of no unfriendly spirit towards him. What then does he think of the following attacks on me from the pen of that gentleman, who thus writes at page 62.

"Col. Outram's account (Khutput Report, Part II. Sec. VI.) of the conduct, before Mr. Frere's commission, of the only witness who declared that he had seen me, viz. Joteshwur Eecharam, is characteristic. 'It was Joteswhur, the man who had been sent by Baba Nafra to bribe Mr. Reid, and in the following year had been the confidential bearer of a letter to Mr. Willoughby. He perjured himself deliberately, &c.' The evidence of this man, taken before Col. Outram, is a specimen of the mode of conducting such business at Baroda. There is no cross-examination in order to ascertain whether he could ever have seen me at all (which of course he never did). He might have been questioned as to the date on which he saw me; the place; my appearance; the language of conversation; and a hundred other particulars, which might at once—and probably, if asked at the time, would at once,—have proved either that his whole story was a fabrication, or that he had been deceived. Col. Outram must have been satisfied of the untruth of this man's story in this particular, or

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\* The Committee's Report is given at p.p. 1260, 1269. At page 1263, the Committee remark on the "irregularity" of my having sought from Captain Barr that assistance which it seemed to me vain to look for at the hands of Government. And yet with some inconsistency they admit that Captain Barr was aiding me with the cognizance and sanction of Government.



he would have followed up his enquiries on the points I have noticed. If Furké or his friends drew up the examination, all that was wanted possibly was the mention of my name. That obtained, nothing beyond was sought for. Further questions would have broken down the witness' credibility." PP. 62, 63.

It were well if Mr. Reid would inform us what he finds exceptionable in this remark made by me in my Khutput Report, when adverting to the difficulties which surrounded the prosecution. Joteshwur had been sent to Bombay "*with a view to corrupting certain parties there.*" (B.B. p. 1051.) And though Mr. Frere did not consider it legally established, that he was deputed "*with the specific object of bribing Mr. Reid,*" he DID find it proved that "*he had spent large sums of money, ostensibly for purposes of corruption.*" And the Secretaries—all of them personal friends of Mr. Reid—admit that this money was accounted for to Nafra, as having been given to that gentleman.

How far Mr. Reid, knowing all this so thoroughly well as he does know it, could have found in his heart or his conscience to pen the remainder of the paragraph, is to myself utterly incomprehensible. If I did not cross-question Joteshwur about Mr. Reid's appearance, &c., it was simply because the man did not even pretend to have spoken to him on the subject of his mission. And if I *had* cross-questioned him, they who know what hard things Mr. Reid's friends in the Government were "minuting" in regard to me, simply because I sought to vindicate their late colleague's character, may readily guess what would have been said and written if I had put the interrogatories spoken of by Mr. Reid. And what would Mr. Reid have written? Judging from the style of his present Pamphlet, I am justified in assuming that he would have accused me of having tried to bolster up a case against him, by pointing out the accuracy with which the witness described the appearance of a well-known man who was to be seen daily in public—the locality of the house in which all Bombay knew that he resided—and "a hundred other particulars" which the witness might have ascertained without going near him. My examinations of the man may have been imperfect, but they were carried on in no hostile feeling towards Mr. Reid, as my correspondence proves.

Mr. Reid thus concludes his allusions to the mission of Joteshwur.

“ It is more than probable that the mission to Bombay in 1848 had entirely in view to keep up that disgraceful connection with the political department of the Bombay secretariat, which we know has so long existed; (and I have little doubt, does so, at the present moment;—nay I would go farther, and express my belief that the same facility of obtaining information, where large sums are expended for the purpose, exists in all offices throughout India), and that the mention of my name in this matter was an afterthought, arising solely out of the hostile machinations of Furké’s party; the knowledge which they had obtained that I, in the first instance, had opposed the displacement of Nursoo Punt, in order to make room for Furké at the residency; and the appearance of the ‘Maurrice’ letter,—whether this was one of their own artifices, or whether, in reality, the communication of a friend to Nursoo Punt.\* No faith can be put in the after-statement of Moonims and Gomashtas, as to what were their objects at a former period. I believe that Furké, wielding the influence of the Resident, could have procured any such evidence that might have been desired.” PP. 63, 64.

Comment on such assertions is superfluous, after what I have shown not only to be the facts of the case, but to have been known to Mr. Reid as such. In the next Chapter it will be my duty to prove that the insinuations indulged in, here and elsewhere, by Mr. Reid, as to the influence of the Fudkey, are made in the teeth of official records, contained in those Blue Books to which Mr.

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\* Mr. Reid well knows that there was never anything in the most remote degree approaching to an attempt to displace Nursoo, in order to make room for the Fudkey. He knows as well as any one that Nursoo *volunteered* his resignation about the time he saw his corrupt practices were being detected. He knows that he himself had minuted that Nursoo’s intention to resign on the completion of his thirty years’ service had been previously intimated to Government. He knows that the invitation given to that man to recall his resignation was an unparalleled act on the part of Government. He knows that in the estimation of those who have officially investigated the matter, those “cogent arguments” by which he secured this temporary triumph to a criminal, were unjust and fallacious. And knowing all this, he must indeed have laboured under mental confusion when he penned the passage above quoted. The more so as he had himself been a party to, if not the very author of, the Minute of the 7th of October, in which it was distinctly stated that Nursoo Punt’s resignation was not occasioned by any conduct of mine.—*Vide antea*, p. 34.

Reid so frequently appeals, but from which, when he does quote, he quotes, as we have seen, in a very peculiar manner.

I have now only to observe, on certain remarks made by Mr. Reid in reference to the Joteshwur mission, at page 62 of his Pamphlet. He is alluding to the charge of corruption, not equivocally preferred against him by "Indus."

"The base insinuation respecting money sent from Baroda requires but little comment. *A proper distinction is drawn, throughout the Blue Book, which your correspondent cannot or will not discover (as I have on a former occasion observed,) between an attempt to bribe, and the obtaining money under the false pretence of bribing; both equally criminal in the parties prepared to bribe; but differing in respect to the other party inasmuch as, in the one case, he must be cognizant of an attempt, while in the other he may ever remain in ignorance of even the design. If such design ever existed in reference to myself, it is no more than existed in reference to Mr. Willoughby, Mr. Malet, Col. Outram himself, and others.* Our characters will, I trust, defend us from any imputation of criminality because natives are corrupt; and we must be content with lamenting that our purity could not protect us from the belief, even among the dupes of the corruptionists at Baroda, that any English gentlemen, holding the high positions that we did, could be corrupted." PP. 61, 62.

Since "*throughout the Blue Books*" I have "drawn the proper distinction," referred to by Mr. Reid; and since from beginning to end I expressed my firm belief in his integrity, wherefore may I ask, has that gentleman seen fit to charge me with having had recourse to "*tortuosity*," and other discreditable proceedings, with a view to prove him guilty of improper practices. And I protest against being placed in the same category with Mr. Reid. For though it is true that designs existed to offer bribes to Mr. Willoughby, Mr. Malet, and myself, as well as to Mr. Reid, there is a marked want of parallelism in our cases. When Mr. Malet discovered that his name had been placed in the bribe list—he called for enquiry. When Mr. Willoughby was informed by me (in 1837), that certain unjust decisions were attributed to his corrupt influence, and that there were plausible arguments in support of the supposition, *he hastened to thank me for my friendly letter;—he lost no time in showing it to the Governor;—and he begged to be excused from henceforth taking any part in the trans-*

*action of Baroda business.* When I myself discovered that it had been in contemplation to offer me a bribe of £5,000 on my return from Egypt—I forthwith despatched the document which proved the fact to Government, and urged enquiry with what was deemed un-official earnestness. When Mr. Reid was informed that the Blue Books contained matters requiring explanation at his hands, he treated them with superb indifference, until a public writer, taking a different view of his character from myself, plainly taxed him with personal corruption. And then, instead of expressing satisfaction at my having sought to vindicate his character, he falls foul of me for having reported that it required vindication; he attributes to me the vilest motives; he assails my mental and moral endowments; he perverts my meaning; and, carried away by the fervor of self-exculpation, he misstates my arguments. He flies in the face of facts, and of the opinions of those who, having officially investigated the subject, were best qualified to pronounce a judgment on it; and he unblushingly stands up as the champion of the convicted criminal through whom his name came to be “associated with the foulest of deeds and the vilest of men.”

It is not because “natives are corrupt” that the inhabitants of Baroda imputed corruption to him, but because there was what Mr. Frere calls “*an unhappy concatenation of circumstances,*” which to them appeared, *primâ facie*, inexplicable on any hypothesis save the one which led to the supposition that Mr. Reid was corrupt himself, and the supporter of corruption. And the views of the Baroda people on this subject will not be improved when Mr. Reid’s Pamphlet comes to be translated (and doubtless, ere this, Nursoo Punt has taken care to have it translated) into the native languages. That Pamphlet, in its translated form, will do more to convince the natives of Baroda of the “*efficacy of Khutput,*” than fifty years will suffice to undo.

Mr. Reid, moreover, greatly errs in supposing that the public of India—European and native—will conceive that there was nothing left to him but to lament the existence of a belief in his own corruption. What it was in his power to do, he has failed to do. And this fact will sink deeply into many minds.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE FUDKEY.

Amidst the many extraordinary mistakes committed by Mr. Reid throughout his Pamphlet, not the least remarkable are the assumptions in which he indulges regarding that especial object of his dislike—the Fudkey. Through this man's honest efforts I was, in 1848, enabled to expose those frauds which Nursoo Punt so criminally endeavoured to conceal. And it need therefore occasion no surprise, that the gentleman whose "cogent arguments" procured the temporary triumph of the since convicted Nursoo, should entertain unfriendly feelings to all who had been concerned in exposing his misdeeds. But it is a legitimate subject of astonishment that, led away by these unfriendly feelings, and by the animosity felt towards myself, Mr. Reid should have indulged in allegations and insinuations regarding him, which the Blue Books, on which he professes to base his allegations, proved to be diametrically the reverse of correct.

Mr. Reid represents me as having, in 1848, intentionally withheld information regarding this man, which it was my duty to have afforded; and, not satisfied with this, he more than insinuates, that on my return from Egypt, in 1850, I became his dupe and tool; that I accepted his statements, followed his advice, carried out his wishes, and, in fact, allowed him to wield the power and influence of Resident. With what justice, a very brief statement will suffice to show.

Venaik Monsheree Fudkey, commonly called Baba Fudkey, is a gentleman of good Mahratta family—a relative of the officer

who had held the post of Commander-in-chief of the Paishwa's army. He is a native of the Deccan; but many years ago was deputed by his family to Baroda, to promote certain pecuniary claims against the firm of Hurree Bhugtee of which the Guicowar was a partner. In 1837-38, he aided Mr. Malet and myself, in our investigations into the systematic bribery and corruption which pervaded the native political establishments of Guzerat. In recognition of these services, he was appointed Native Agent for the Rewa Kanta; and he acquitted himself of his duties in a manner to elicit a warm tribute of praise from Mr. Malet. In 1839, Mr. Malet was succeeded by Mr. Remington, who avows having been early prejudiced against the Fudkey on account of his independent bearing; and in 1843 that gentleman got rid of him. No charge was brought against him, though he had held the office for five and a half years under the hostile espionage of the relatives of those corrupt servants whose rogueries he had brought to light. Mr. Remington broke up the Fudkey's appointment into four clerkships, and one of them, with proportionally reduced allowances, was placed at his disposal. Having failed to record a prompt acceptance of the offer, he found himself out of place altogether. He petitioned Government for re-employment; and his petition was sent "*for Report*" to the officiating Resident at Baroda, to whom (*at that time*) the Political Agent for the Rewa Kanta was subordinate. The officiating Resident, as ill luck would have it, was Mr. Remington, who made a reply, the injustice of which I have demonstrated at some length in my Khutput Report (B.B. p. 1382 to p. 1388); and in another Report, dated 22nd June, 1850, which does not appear in the Blue Books,\* he accused the Fudkey of having lived beyond his means, insinuating that the alleged extra expenditure must have been improperly met; and he described him as possessing too much influence over the subordinates of the office.

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\* But which, by some mysterious process, found its way to a Bombay newspaper, and has been published by "Indus" in the 4th edition of his "*Bombay Briberies*."

There was no one in Council to pen "cogent arguments" in behalf of the bold and faithful servant whose services in the cause of purity had raised up so many enemies. And in May 1844, the Government declared, on the strength of Mr. Remington's unsubstantiated and unquestioned Report, that he seemed a very "unfit person to be employed in any political capacity."

Having left Guzerat in 1838, I was ignorant of these incidents in the Fudkey's history, when, after an absence of nearly ten years, I was nominated to the post of British Resident at Baroda.

Soon after my assumption of office I made enquiries regarding the Fudkey. I learned from Nursoo Punt that he had been dismissed for misconduct; and the Government reply to Mr. Remington was brought to my notice. I was grieved but not surprised at the intelligence; for I had a painful recollection of the fate of other native servants, who, notwithstanding their former high character, and the services they had rendered in the exposure of corruption, had, soon after their promotion, fallen into snares laid for them by the Nagurs, and themselves been guilty of malversation. And when I took into consideration the contaminated atmosphere of the Baroda court which Fudkey had for years been breathing, his fall seemed to me so little a matter of surprise, that I peremptorily refused all his applications to be permitted to pay his respects to me.

In the summer of 1848, however, the collusion of Nursoo with the perpetrators of the frauds which I was investigating (in the cases of Govind Row and Gorajie Pol) rendered it necessary to seek extraneous aid. But I in vain sought it among my own subordinates. And, in my difficulty I bethought myself of the Fudkey, of whose sagacity, zeal, and application, I retained a grateful recollection; and who, I remembered, had been of signal service in unravelling frauds to the prejudice of that very Gorajie Pol, on whose case I was then engaged, of a similar nature to the frauds which formed the subject of my enquiries. "I was thus"—to quote from my Khutput Report—"induced to investigate the grounds on which Government had founded its decision against the Fudkey; and a careful study of the case satisfied me that Government had

been misled into an act of great injustice towards this individual. Impressed with this conviction, I should have appealed, on his behalf, for a reconsideration of his case, *had I not discovered that the prohibition against his employment had been virtually annulled by the permission granted to him on the 5th of July 1847—to apply to the local authorities on the occurrence of a vacancy—a permission, which appeared to me a tacit acknowledgment on the part of Government that its former condemnation had been unmerited.*

“I accordingly solicited him to aid me in investigating the case of Gorajie Pol. At first he objected to do so, on the ground that, by exposing the rascality of Nursoo Punt, he would assuredly bring on himself a series of persecutions so soon as I left Baroda. And in justification of his fears, he reminded me of what he had already suffered in consequence of his exposure of the Nagur intrigues (in 1837, 38.) I laughed at his fears. I assured him that no such persecutions as he dreaded would be tolerated at the present day; and I succeeded in securing his services, much to the alarm and indignation of Nursoo Punt.”

The zeal and ability displayed by the Fudkey in the difficult task I had assigned him, entitled him to my gratitude. I believed that they would be duly appreciated by Government, and I recommended him as Nursoo's successor. But, as has been seen, the “cogent arguments” of Mr. Reid led to the continuance of Nursoo Punt in the post which he had betrayed. A prohibition was issued against the Fudkey being employed at the Residency. I myself was, in my absence, censured for having made use of his services—a procedure which the Government were pleased to declare proved that “I could not have examined the records of my office.”

When, on my return to Baroda, I discovered that the Fudkey's fears had been realized, that he had in very deed been subjected to shameful persecutions, instigated by Nursoo Punt, I deemed it my duty to make an appeal on his behalf. And I deemed it no less my duty to vindicate myself from the blame imputed to me for having employed the Fudkey in 1848. I showed that the



ignorance of the records, applied not to myself, but to those who had censured me. I explained the circumstances under which I had employed the Fudkey. And I drew attention to their own letter of July 1847, authorizing him to apply to the local authorities on the occurrence of a vacancy.

*My explanation and reasons were admitted by Lord Falkland to be "SATISFACTORY."* (B.B. p. 985.)

Yet Mr. Reid, with all these facts before him, has not hesitated to write as follows:—

"Of Furké (as I have said above,) I knew nothing beyond what Col. Outram had mentioned, namely, that he had formerly been native agent in the Rewa Kanta, but was 'not now in Government employ.' Why he was not then in employ, it did not occur to me to enquire. Col. Outram had an opportunity of informing Government of every particular respecting his protégé when he recommended him in his letter of the 9th September 1848, to succeed Nursoo Punt as native agent; and on such an occasion, he was bound to state all he knew, good or ill, respecting him, so as to guide Government in its decision. In par. 42 *et seq.* of his Khutput Report, Part II. Sec. II., he tells us 1389. that when he joined at Baroda in May 1847, he was fully aware of Furké's having been 'dismissed from Government employ on account of his misconduct;' and of the Government having in the letter of the 20th March 1844, declared him unfit for political employ; and that it was only when he desired his assistance in 'a very intricate and long- 1390. pending case,' that he discovered 'that the prohibition against his re-employment had been virtually annulled by the permission granted to 'him on the 5th July 1847 to apply to the local authorities on the 'occurrence of a vacancy.' Whether this letter of the 5th July 1847 1390. to Furké will bear the construction which Col. Outram places upon it,—whether it was only the ordinary answer given by Government to every application for employment,—or whether it was given after a full consideration of the facts which had led to the declaration of Furké's ineligibility, and with a design of removing it,—and whether a corresponding communication was made to the 'local authorities,' (of whom the Baroda Resident would have been one) cannot (that I have discovered) be seen from what Col. Outram has told us in the Blue Book. It is clear, however, that Col. Outram knew regarding Furké everything that could be known, and that he did not communicate his knowledge to the Government on an occasion when it was most essentially his duty to do so. I will ask, what would Col. Outram have said if

Nursoo Punt, in recommending any man to him for official employment, had omitted to state facts which he knew—injuriously, though in his opinion unjustly—affecting his character?" PP. 35, 36.

After what has already been said, the reader requires not to be told that this statement is singularly incorrect. Passing over Mr. Reid's profession of ignorance of everything regarding a political servant, whose case had twice come before the Government of which he was a member, I have to remark, that when he says that in my Khutput Report I avowed myself to have been "fully aware" of the Fudkey having been dismissed from Government employ "on account of misconduct," he states what is simply inconsistent with the fact. I never so expressed myself. What I stated was, that "*I was informed, &c.*" Nursoo Punt was my informant. And, as the very Report from which Mr. Reid professes to quote shows, it was only when I examined the correspondence that I discovered *that the Fudkey had not been dismissed for misconduct; that he had never been dismissed at all; that he had been got rid of by a side wind; and that the letter in which the Government declared that he "was a very unfit person to be employed in any political capacity," was based on a report which a little reflection showed me to be unjust, and the injustice of which, I may add, has since been admitted by the Bombay Government itself. (Vide Lord Falkland's Minute, dated 5th June 1852.)*\*

Again, Mr. Reid is either singularly ignorant of matters with which he ought to be acquainted, or else he knows full well that the letter written to the Fudkey in July 1847, under orders of the Government of which he was a member, was not "the ordinary answer given by Government to every application for employment."

That letter was in reply to a petition, in which, after detailing the hard usage he had received, and urging, with truth, that not one single charge of infidelity or malversation had been brought against him, he begged that he might be readmitted to the Government service. And thus ran the document alluded to:—

"In reply to your petition, dated the 1st instant, soliciting that you

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\* Ordered to be printed.

may be appointed to some situation under Government, I am directed to inform you that the Honourable the Governor in Council sees no reason to interfere in your behalf, *but that you may, on a vacancy occurring, apply to the local authorities.*"

Let it be borne in mind that the Secretary (Mr. Malet) through whom I forwarded my recommendation that the Fudkey should be Nursoo's successor, knew more of his history than I myself did; that he was in charge of the department in which were all the records relating to the Fudkey; that it was he who had written the letter of July 1847, intimating to the Fudkey that he had the permission of Government to apply to the Resident for employment on the occurrence of a vacancy; and I think it will be admitted that if I erred in aught, I erred merely in not giving that exposition of the injustice of Mr. Remington's Report, which even the Bombay Government now admit to possess a considerable amount of cogency.\*

My letter, recommending the Fudkey for the post of Native Agent was dated the 9th September 1848. On the 12th of that month I went to Bombay; and I did not resume my appointment

\* The implied censure, even were it as just as it is devoid of foundation, would come with singularly bad grace from the gentleman who thrust back into the office which he had betrayed, a man whose relationship with notorious corruptionists had been alluded to by himself in a manner to indicate that had it been known in time it would have been a bar to his appointment. And, in reference to this subject, I would recall the reader's attention to what has been said at pages 33, 39, and 56. Mr. Reid possibly may not have been the author or inspirer of the Minute of the 7th of October 1848, in which Lord Falkland was made to express sentiments which he now disavows, and to acquit by anticipation a man of whose guilt he some weeks after had no doubt. But even should Mr. Reid not have been—and few will doubt that he was—the inspirer or author of that Minute, he knew full well when he endorsed it, that his Lordship could not at that time have been in a position to form an opinion on the subject. He knew that the Minute did prejudice an undecided case. And what shall we say or think of the functionary who was a party to such a transaction—a transaction so calculated to confirm the belief of the natives in his corrupt interest in the fortunes of Nursoo Punt?

till May 1850. From that period till my removal from office in December 1851, Mr. Reid represents me as having been in close communication with the Fudkey—his tool and creature. I now proceed to show how diametrically these representations are the reverse of fact—simply premising that were it otherwise, Mr. Reid's case would not be one whit improved. For the question is, not how or whence I obtained that information which enabled me eventually to bring to justice the convicted criminal with whose character Mr. Reid is so mysteriously impelled to identify his own reputation, but, whether the man is or is not a rascal. But to my task.

When, on the resumption of my duties at Baroda in 1850, I found that what I regarded as great injustice, had been done, both to the Fudkey and myself, I made efforts to secure a reconsideration of his case; and I wrote the Report of June 1850. But my efforts were vain. Though Lord Falkland minuted that the explanations I had given for employing the Fudkey were "satisfactory," no communication to that effect was made to myself. Instead of reinvestigating the case of that valuable public servant, the Government (as the Court of Directors have reminded them) rebuked me for reopening the case.\* (BB. p. 235.) And though I continued to make every effort in my power to procure justice for the Fudkey, I felt it to be my duty to abstain from bestowing any mark of regard or favor on one who still lay under the ban of Government. My feelings on this point became still more potent, when, in the course of time, charges (which eventually proved to be the result of foul conspiracy) were brought against him. *Not only did I not admit him to terms of intimacy, or seek his counsel, as Mr. Reid has seen fit to assert, but I PROHIBITED HIS COMING TO THE RESIDENCY.* And with the exceptions about to be specified, that prohibition was so rigorously enforced, as to be productive of serious embarrassment to myself, by enabling Nursoo Punt's creatures and allies to deter those who

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\* Notwithstanding Mr. Willoughby's protest, that, as a man of honor, I had been bound to re-open the case.

had it in their power to aid me, from giving me any assistance, by pointing to what was regarded as my ungrateful treatment of a man who had been ruined for the honest service he had rendered myself and others.

On one occasion, in March 1851, I agreed at the request of my guest, Mr. Grant, who took a deep interest in the Fudkey, to admit him to a *mere ceremonial visit*. Subsequent to this, during his trial before Major Fulljams on those charges, got up by Nursoo Punt's son, which were proved to have been the result of a vile conspiracy, the Fudkey petitioned for leave to examine the records of my office for information requisite to his defence; and I granted him the desired permission, but directed my native agent to inform him that I could hold no personal intercourse with him, and that all his requisitions must be preferred to my assistant, Lieutenant Battye. Again, on the 31st of August 1851, in compliance with an urgent entreaty to be allowed to speak to me on pressing matters of great importance to himself, I gave him a (*standing*) interview. Somewhere about the same period, his evidence was required on the trial of Nursoo Punt, then proceeding before Mr. Commissioner Frere; and as the trial took place in the Residency, he of course came thither. During the progress of the trial, the officer who assisted in the conduct of the prosecution, desiring insight into the intricate case of Gorajie Pol, which the Fudkey had unravelled with so much ability in 1848, sent for him, and submitted some accounts to him. But the moment I discovered that this had been done, I sent to demand the papers back, and censured the officer in question.\* Again, in November 1851, after the Fudkey had been honorably acquitted by Major Fulljames of the charges brought against him through the agency of Nursoo's son, and a few days before my own removal from office, I did send for him to aid me in a difficult matter—there being no other native at Baroda in whose sagacity and honesty I could rely.

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\* My able friend Lieutenant Pelly, of the 17th Regiment of Bombay Native Infantry.

Such was the nature of my intimacy with the Fudkey—such the amount of the assistance and advice received by me from the man whom Mr. Reid has chosen to represent as possessing my ear, influencing my judgment, and exercising my authority during the years 1850, 1851. And the reader may judge of the confused condition of mind under which Mr. Reid brought himself to give so distorted a view of the facts of the case, when I submit certain passages contained in those of my Blue Books on which he professed to base his monstrous allegations.

On the 7th of December 1851, I thus expressed myself, in reference to certain allegations respecting the Fudkey, contained in the letter in which my removal from office was intimated to me—

“In your 124 para. Baba Fudkey is designated as my ‘approved assistant in detecting the frauds and intrigues going on at Baroda.’

“As matters of vital interest to Baba Fudkey are now before Government, it is fair towards him, and for the ends of justice, that his character should not be undermined by misrepresentations; and his Lordship in Council must have been lamentably misinformed when you were directed, in allusion to a given case, to name as my ‘approved assistant’ an individual who not only rendered me no assistance therein, but who was, I believe, during the larger portion, if not the whole of the time the said case was being investigated, absent from this capital and residing in Bombay.

“I beg further to add, that until when, a few days ago, compelled ‘by sheer necessity,’ as stated and explained in my letter, No. 221, B., dated 2nd instant, to seek Baba Fudkey’s aid in deciphering certain Soucarray writings, I have never, in any case, called in his assistance since I returned from Egypt. And moreover, having discovered that when a gentleman who assisted me in the late commission did, in the case of Ghorajee Poll, without my knowledge, send for Baba Fudkey, and entrusted certain village accounts to him for the purpose of ascertaining whether they had been correctly represented, I sent, the moment I heard of the circumstance, to recall the papers; recovered them before they had been four hours in his possession; and permitted him to enter no further into the business than was necessary to enable him to render a clear statement of the said village accounts, the correctness of the details of which, as given by him in 1848, had been questioned before the Commissioner.” B.B. p. 915.

Having previously, on the 2nd of December, in another commu-

nication in reference to my proceedings at the same period, thus reported—

“As explanation for having employed the Baba on this occasion, I beg to repeat, that sheer necessity compelled me, and that I had the less scruple in having recourse to his assistance, because he had so lately been acquitted by Captain Fulgams of the charges brought against him; and because he could have no motive for deceiving me as to the real interpretation of writings, the originals of which he knew would ultimately be submitted both to the Bombay and Guicowar Governments.” B.B. p. 1169.

And in a previous paragraph of the same letter, in reference to certain untrue allegations on the part of the Guicowar's Minister, I stated (p. 1168) “*my avowed disapprobation of Baba Fudkey's being employed in any capacity whatever under the Durbar, alone prevented His Highness calling him to his Ministry.*”

Nor were these the only declarations as to my connection with the Fudkey, contained in the Blue Books. Thus if Mr. Reid had turned to page 147, he would have found that on the 31st August, 1850, in writing to Mr. Andrews, I observed—

“As to Baba Fudkey, or any one else, having advised me on this occasion, you are quite mistaken. \* \* \* So far from Baba Fudkey having had anything to do with the business, *he has not once been admitted to the Residency, or to a personal interview with me, since my return from Egypt.*”

There are, I believe, other passages in the Blue Books which are perfectly inconsistent with the statements and insinuations so often indulged in by Mr. Reid in reference to the Fudkey; but these will suffice to illustrate that gentleman's accuracy, and the value due to his assertions.

I beg to be understood as not charging Mr. Reid with wilfully stating that which he knew to be untrue. My charge is, that he reproduced the erroneous statements put forth by Mr. Andrews and Nursoo Punt, and accepted by the Bombay Government, without taking the trouble to examine whether they were not diametrically opposed to the real facts of the case.\*

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\* It may not be amiss here to notice, that in a petition to the Court

of Directors, written in May, 1852, the Fudkey takes credit for having assisted me in my investigations of the Joitæbhae case. It may be a misapprehension on the part of the gentleman who wrote out the Fudkey's English petition, who, as ignorant of Mahratta as the Fudkey is of English, must have been dependent on the intervention of the Fudkey's carkoons and other interpreters; or it may be that that gentleman assumed, as a matter of course, that the Joitæbhae case, which excited so much attention at the time in Bombay, was among the corruption cases in which the Baba aided me; or it may be the result of the tendency to exaggeration so inherent in the native character. But whatever its source, it is a mistake.



## CHAPTER IX.

### JOITABHAE SETTANEE.

At page 319 of the Baroda Blue Book will be found my report on the case of Joitabhae Settanee, the widow of a Baroda banker, who was for a long period subjected to a series of the most heartless persecutions. These were inflicted on her by Baba Nafra, the trustee of her deceased husband, who enjoyed the active aid and support of the Baroda Durbar, and of his relative Nursoo Punt. Through favour of the former, the Guicowar's courts screened the criminal, and refused redress to his victim; while by the misrepresentations of the latter, the officer who officiated for me during my absence in Egypt, was betrayed into withholding from Joitabhae that reparation to which, in virtue of the "Guarantee," she was fully entitled.

Prior to my departure for Egypt, I had made arrangements which, by leaving the Guicowar's courts no excuse for longer delaying to promulgate some sort of a decision, would have enabled my successor to reinvestigate the case on appeal, and thus have put it in his power to bring the conspirators to justice. I had not at that time any conception of the villanies that had been practised, but I was most anxious that a full investigation of the case should take place at the Residency, and that the Native Agent, Nursoo Punt, should not be allowed to take any part in the investigation. One of the first of those little incidents which induced me to doubt his honesty, was an attempt made by him to mislead me to the widow's prejudice. But Mr. Reid's "*cogent arguments*" in behalf of the corrupt Native Agent, by

which Lord Falkland was induced to invite Nursoo to remain in the post which he had betrayed, defeated my arrangements. No investigation took place; the persecutions of Joitabhae were continued; fresh indignities were heaped upon her; and these results I had no hesitation in attributing to the erroneous information conveyed to my *locum tenens* by Nursoo Punt. When, on the trial of the latter, the evidence of the former was taken, he exonerated his Native Agent; and took on himself the entire responsibility of his measures. But, as the Court of Directors have observed, "there is ample ground of moral conviction that Nursoo Punt misinformed Captain French, as he is clearly proved to have misinformed Colonel Outram." The acting Resident, they remark, was grossly misinformed of the facts of the case. In consequence of the erroneous information conveyed to him "he misled the Government, and enabled the persecutors of Joitabhae to commit gross injustice;" and as "having only just arrived at Baroda, he was in a great measure dependant for his information and impressions on others, and particularly on his Native Agent" they hold that Captain French's testimony, though it necessitated the judicial acquittal of Nursoo, did in nowise alter the moral aspect of his case. And when it is remembered that the "strongest suspicions" were left on the minds of Mr. Frere, and the Court of Directors, that Nusoo had received a reward of £2800 for the services rendered by him to Baba Nafra in respect of this very case, the reader will, I think, admit that the Court's opinion is entitled to respectful assent. Whether the author of the "cogent arguments" by which a temporary triumph was secured to the corrupt Nursoo, is to any extent responsible for the "gross injustice" inflicted on Joitabhae after my departure for Egypt, is a question I should never have mooted had not Mr. Reid attempted, in more than one passage, to sneer away sympathy for the outraged Joitabhae, and to imply doubts of the reality of the outrages to which she was subjected.\* These sneers and implications will not be lost on the people of Guzerat. And the confidence in the

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\* PP. 18, 28, and 65, of Mr. Reid's "Letter."

existing system will not be strengthened by learning that the man whom they have for a long time regarded as corrupt, and who they have been told will ere long obtain a seat in the Court of Directors, has found such tactics best suited to his self-exculpation. But, in order to show that the views promulgated by Nursoo's champion, are not concurred in by that honourable body into which he seeks admission, I subjoin an extract from one of their despatches:—

“The voluminous papers transmitted with this letter *fully prove that Joitabhae \* \* \* has been the victim of a nefarious plot, concocted by Baba Nafra \* \* \* and of which the instruments were forgery, coercion of witnesses, subornation of perjury, and the forcible abduction of a child who had been, for 18 months, acknowledged to be the legitimate son of Joitabhae; and who, under pretence of being spurious, was delivered over by Baba Nafra to certain Coolies alleged to be his parents, soon after which he died. The widow was kept for nearly three years under a guard, without any provision from the firm for her support, and was disgraced and expelled from caste.*” B.B., pp. 8, 9.

These transactions, the Court of Directions elsewhere designate “*iniquitous,*” and “*oppression of odious character;*” and there are few readers of the Blue Books who will not adopt the view taken by the Court of Directors, in preference to that *insinuated* by the apologist of Nursoo Punt in the following passage. The italics are those of Mr. Reid himself.

“Nursoo Punt *may be* the greatest villain that the corrupt soil of Baroda has ever generated; Baba Nafra *may be* in the same category; all their friends and supporters *may be* rightly placed in the same schedule; Jethabae *may be* an injured angel; Furka, a persecuted saint:—But when I consider the nature of the plots in the series of dramas presented to us—the characters of the performers, from His Highness the Guikwar and Col. Outram down to the lowest kolee—and the locality of the scene of action—I am constrained to the conclusion that the justice of the catastrophes has not yet been shown, and that the whole of the matters treated under such circumstances remain still involved in a deep shade of darkness and of doubt.” B.B. p. 65.

It is at all events consolatory to bear in mind, that the gentleman who, after perusing the Blue Books, feels constrained to such a conclusion, had not effected his entrance into the Court of Direc-

tors when the Baroda questions were discussed by that body. Not that any "cogent arguments" which he might have been inclined to urge in behalf of the criminal whose innocence he hints at, would have had any weight with his honourable colleagues; but because, the distrust and alarm which the tone and statements of his Pamphlet cannot fail to have excited in India, would have been materially enhanced had his views been promulgated under official sanction.

As it is, I have only to observe, that the natives of Baroda, like Mr. Reid, have some difficulty in discovering "the justice of the catastrophes." But their difficulty and his, differ in kind, and in degree. In Nursoo Punt they do *not* pretend to behold "the greatest villain that the corrupt soil of Baroda has ever generated:" but they *do* regard him as a corrupt and faithless public servant, whose villany secured a temporary triumph through the "cogent arguments" of the functionary with whom he boasted that he maintained an improper influence. They witnessed the official obstacles with which I had to contend, in my endeavours to bring him to punishment. They have pondered on the singular leniency towards the convicted culprit, displayed by Mr. Reid's friends, colleagues, and successors. And, in unhesitatingly declaring their belief that these gentlemen failed to vindicate the claims of justice when pronouncing sentence on Nursoo, they but express an opinion which has been deliberately recorded by the Court of Directors.

Their opinion of Baba Nafra, even if no stronger than that entertained by the Court of Directors, would justify them in considering the punishment awarded to that man as incommensurate with his crimes. For Joitabhae they never claimed angelic qualities, but they know that she has sustained grievous wrongs, including the abstraction and death of her child, and that the protraction of her sufferings is in a great measure referable to the efforts made by Mr. Reid in behalf of the unprincipled Nursoo. In the Fudkey's fate they behold a mournful warning to all natives who may feel tempted to act honestly, boldly, and energetically, in aid of such of their superiors as may be engaged in vindicating the purity of British administration. And I shall

be agreeably mistaken if they do not think that in Mr. Reid's Pamphlet they can discover further confirmation of the suspicions they have, it is to be assumed unjustly, so long entertained regarding him.

In one of Mr. Reid's remarks there is much truth. There is still much unfathomed doubt and darkness regarding the villanies of Nursoo and his protégés. For, there are those even in the Court of Directors—gentlemen of renown, whose good opinion Mr. Reid would fain cultivate—who consider that, in my attempts to resolve that doubt, and enlighten that darkness, I did not receive from the Government that support which was due to my investigations, "and which, a right view of the great importance of vindicating the purity of our administration in the opinion of the native community, ought to have led the Government to extend to me."\* And if, in spite of all the difficulties with which I had to contend, I have contrived to bring so much to light, and certain criminals to punishment, there are few who will believe that my achievements would not have been greater, and the results more satisfactory, had I not—in the language of Colonel Sykes—"found my efforts for a great public object, through a course of years, constantly thwarted, and inadequately supported."†

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\* Protest of Mr. Mangles, Captain Eastwick, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Plowden.

† Protest of Colonel Sykes. Both these protests are given by Mr. Chapman, in his Pamphlet entitled, "Baroda and Bombay, their Political Morality."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE NAGUR TRIALS.

The only erroneous statements on the part of Mr. Reid which still remain to be noticed, are those made by him in reference to what are called the Nagur trials.

The history of events, so designated, is detailed at some length in the Baroda Blue Books (pp. 1342-1380) with a view to show that the corruptibility of the Bombay Government had long been an article of the popular belief in Guzerat; that such belief had oft-times been brought to the notice of the Government; and that its origin, progress, and permanency, were clearly attributable to the remarkable tenderness displayed by them towards corrupt native servants; and to the singular unwillingness they displayed to assist their local officers, in uprooting the systematic corruption amongst their subordinates in which they themselves were supposed to participate. The predecessors in office of Nursoo Punt, towards whom such singular leniency was manifested, belonged to the Nagur (or snake) division of Brahmins—a class of men famed even amongst their castemen for their subtlety, avarice, and unscrupulousness. From this class, the various appointments in the native departments of the political establishments in Guzerat were almost exclusively supplied. For a long period they rioted in almost unchecked authority; and to their influence and proceedings was mainly due the fact, that for many years antecedent to 1836, extensive tracts of Guzerat became the theatre of

violence, anarchy, and outrage.\* Representing themselves as able to secure such decisions as they chose, through their corrupt alliance with men in power, they encouraged disaffection—promoted litigation—and instigated the chiefs to treat with contempt all appeal against the arrangements of the local officers. Every new suit was a source of gain to them—every fresh outbreak, with its consequent investigations, brought them additional clients—eager to obtain, and ready to pay for, the exercise of their assumed power. For, a series of unfortunate coincidences had fully impressed the natives with the belief that this power was far from unreal, and that it was well worth the purchase money demanded by its possessors.

Till this systematic corruption should be broken up, and the natives be taught that the Bombay functionaries were above sharing with the Nagurs the profits of their nefarious compact, it was vain to hope that the peace of the disturbed district could be permanently secured. And in conjunction with other officers located in Guzerat, I addressed myself to the task of purging its political establishments. Our labours were eventually to a certain extent successful. But far from receiving from the Government that aid and encouragement which we naturally looked for at their hands, the most disheartening obstructions were thrown in our way; extraordinary facilities of escape were offered to the corrupt servants whom we wished to bring to justice; pleas more remarkable for their charity than their logical cogency, were offered in their behalf; and when, in spite of all difficulties, convictions were at length obtained, the Government treated the

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\* Extract from a despatch from the Honble. the Court of Directors, having reference to the period in question.

“ Disorder had progressively increased, instead of diminishing, until at length, by the confession of all the local authorities, neither natives nor British officers could travel between Dussa and Abundabad without a strong escort. Our officers were subject to continual insult and ill-treatment, for which no reparation could be obtained: and the respect for the British name and character in that part of Guzerat was lower than at any former period.”

convicted with a leniency which was universally regarded by the native community as evincing a corrupt and criminal sympathy with the offenders. They pleaded in behalf of this leniency, that the existing laws did not enable them to visit political servants with an adequate severity; but years passed, and they made no efforts to obtain, by legislative enactments, those powers the absence of which they deplored. And they would not inflict the full extent of the penalties which were undoubtedly within their reach.

Much of the odium thus attached, in native estimation, to the Bombay Government at large, fell to the share of Mr. J. P. Willoughby, the Secretary in whose department the Nagur cases were considered. And I deemed it my duty to communicate to that gentleman the opinions entertained regarding him by the natives of Guzerat. Unlike Mr. Reid, Mr. Willoughby thanked me for my "*friendly communication*;" and he lost no time in applying to the Governor for permission to hold himself entirely aloof from the disposal of the cases. Of the Governor's concurrence in the suggested arrangements, I was not, however, apprized, till long after he had thanked me for the friendly communication I had sent him. And, in common with the other local officers, I continued for a long time to believe that to him we were still indebted for the obstacles thrown in our way. When I discovered my mistake, I hastened to set the Baroda resident of that date (1838) right, in respect of this matter; and my letter is given in the Blue Books in illustration of the correspondence which the Nagur trials elicited. Part of that correspondence bears the signature of Mr. Reid, who was then one of the Government Secretaries; and "*Indus*" having commented on what appeared Mr. Reid's share in the transactions, that gentleman has seen fit to write as follows:—

"The folly and unfairness of assuming that the Secretary signing a letter is, therefore, responsible for its contents, may be fully established from the papers under consideration. In these Nagur cases Col. Outram was guilty of that injustice towards his friend, Mr. Willoughby;—he discovered his error, and made an apology;—but he does not seem to have taken warning. The injustice has been repeated as respects myself; to expect an apology from your correspondent would be to give him credit for some sense of shame. I shall therefore pass on." P. 10.



These statements are simply inconsistent with fact. I was never guilty of "assuming that the Secretary signing a letter is therefore responsible for its contents." But I assumed, and was justified in assuming, that Mr. Willoughby was in a great measure responsible for the contents of the letters on the Nagur cases bearing his signature, because those cases belonged to his department, and because, as Mr. Reid tells us, at page 5,

*In all cases the initiative is with the Governor. He either prepares his own minutes, having them when necessary copied in the office of his private secretary; or they are brought to him in draft, for his consideration, by the secretary of the department, either in his handwriting, or copied in his office from his rough drafts. The latter is the usual process in all except cases of extraordinary importance, or cases in which a Governor himself possesses that Indian or practical knowledge which enables him to propose measures without consultation with any other party.*

Sir Robert Grant, who was Governor during the earlier history of the Nagur trials, was notoriously devoid of "that Indian or practical knowledge" to which Mr. Reid alludes; and, far from these trials being treated as of extraordinary importance, the whole correspondence, as given in the Blue Books, proves that they were disposed of in a manner to imply that they were of insignificant import. And no one acquainted with the character of Sir Robert Grant will believe the assertions of Mr. Reid, or any one else who may choose to affirm, that he was likely, in respect of these cases, to depart from the usage which prescribes that the Governor's minutes shall be drafted for him by a Secretary. Still less will they believe that he would, save under the "cogent argument" of some Secretary, have penned the letters which appear in the Blue Books.

Sir Robert Grant died in June 1838, and was succeeded by Mr. Farish, with whom, according to Mr. Reid, the initiative lay in the disposal of all cases that came under the discussion of his Government. Than Mr. Farish no one was better qualified, in virtue of "Indian or practical knowledge," to dispense with the services of a Secretary in the preparation of his minutes; and if he had been led to regard the Nagur cases as of "extraordinary importance," he doubtless would have taken their consideration

into his own hands:—but that he did not do so is affirmed by Mr. Reid, who attributes to Sir G. Anderson the credit of having disposed of them after Sir Robert Grant's death. Sir George Anderson certainly was one member of Mr. Farish's council: but whether he will feel inclined to accept the compliment paid to him by Mr. Reid, is a matter yet to be determined. This, however, is a question with which I have no concern. Suffice it to say, that, though I quoted Mr. Reid's letters, as I quoted those of Mr. Willoughby and others, I never, in any of my reports, attributed to Mr. Reid responsibility for the letters which bore his signature. But I may add, that, had I assumed him to be the Secretary to whom the Nagur cases were confided after Mr. Willoughby had been permitted to sever himself from them, I should have been justified in the assumption. It would have been contrary to all precedent, if these cases had not been handed over to the management of some Secretary. The impression left on my mind, by my communications with the men in the office in 1838, distinctly was, that to Mr. Reid was assigned the duties of which Mr. Willoughby was relieved. It is a fact, admitted by Mr. Reid himself, that when, in 1841, Mr. Willoughby objected on conscientious grounds, to accompany Sir J. Carnac to Baroda, Mr. Reid was selected to perform that duty. And that Mr. Reid was considered by the natives of Baroda, to have some share in conducting the business of Mr. Willoughby's department, is evidenced by the fact, of there having been assigned to him £6,000 of the money intended to be administered by Dhakjje Dadajje, the Guicowar's Bombay agent.

Mr. Reid emphatically denies that he ever had any connection, direct or indirect, with the disposal of the Nagur cases, beyond signing the letters issued after Mr. Willoughby had severed his connection with the questions of which they treated, and seeing that they were in accordance with the minutes on which they were framed. Such a denial I am not inclined to cavil at. But it would have possessed more weight if Mr. Reid had not made a singular confession when treating of the subject. The Nagur cases formed a portion of the "political affairs of Guzerat;" and

these Mr. Reid tells us, at page 7, "throughout his whole career as Secretary and member of the Government, were conducted, under the Governors and their councils, by Mr. Willoughby"—while at page 10 he admits the fact of Mr. Willoughby having at one time "been specially permitted to hold himself aloof from the disposal of these cases." And the reader has already seen that during a considerable portion of the time that Mr. Reid was in council, Mr. Willoughby was his colleague; that on Mr. Malet, not on Mr. Willoughby, did it devolve to draft the Governor's minutes "on the political affairs of Guzerat;" and that, contrary to all rule and precedent, (as laid down by himself,) Mr. Reid took on himself Mr. Malet's duties, and wrote a minute which, but for recent agitation, would have, in all time coming, been attributed to Lord Falkland—a minute in which that nobleman was made to set forth "cogent arguments" in behalf of a corrupt public servant.

As the Officer through whom Nursoo Punt's rogueries were brought to light, and through whose investigations, as stated at length, resulted the necessity imposed upon Mr. Reid of publishing his Pamphlet, that gentleman bears me a grudge which displays itself in many injurious and unlooked for devices. Thus, in a note attached to page 8, he volunteers the following small piece of hypercriticism, from which our common friends can hardly fail to derive some amusement.

"Note. The real designation of this caste of Brahmuns is 'Nagu,' or 'Naga,' a Hindoo legend deriving their origin from the 'Nag' or cobra de capello. With the view, probably, of holding them up to public detestation, as endowed with all the evil attributes of that venomous reptile, Col. Outram terms them the 'Snake caste' and 'Snake fraternity.' But others describe them as an intelligent race, and celebrated among their countrymen for qualities the reverse of those thus assigned to them. Col. Outram may have been deceived by the mere sound of the name, or, as I understand he does not speak, read, or write either Goozuratee or Muratee (the languages alone in use in Goozurat), his interpreters, if unfriendly to the Nagus, may have misled him."

That the persistent admirer of Nursoo Punt, should look with favour on the Nagurs, is only consistent. But it is not quite con-

sistent in the author of this hypercritical note, who has no scruples about spelling other native names in a fashion very different from that adopted either by Indus, or in the Blue Books, to persist, as he does, in adopting my erroneous orthography. Consistency in such a matter, however, is of little importance to Mr. Reid, so long as he can say or insinuate aught which he thinks calculated to annoy me.

I readily acknowledge that I am no scholar, and no linguist; that my knowledge of Guzeratee is not very perfect; and that my acquaintance with Mahratta is not much more extensive. But it might have occurred to Mr. Reid that if I were so utterly ignorant as he pretends, I must be endowed with miraculous powers in some other respect. He well knows that, in 1836, I was selected to tranquilize a province of Guzerat, which for a long time had been the scene of anarchy and confusion,—and that I was successful. He is well aware that I had many delicate and difficult judicial investigations to conduct, and that the Government whose Secretary he was, bestowed many compliments on my “unremitting and laborious exertions,” intimating that “the eminently successful results of these labours; the temper, skill, and patience of my investigations of claims and grievances, had often been brought to the favourable notice of the Honourable Court.” He knows that I received most gratifying acknowledgments of the manner in which I investigated and remedied financial arrangements, which had been a source of much political disquietude. He is aware that I laboured, neither lightly nor in vain, in giving that permanence to the tranquilization I procured for the troubled districts, which could only be derived from an improved fiscal system, and the promotion of commerce. He knows that these objects were effected, not through—but in spite of—the efforts of my native subordinates, whose gains were in exact proportion to the disturbance that prevailed in the province. And knowing all this, he must assume that the results were obtained by the sheer force of dumb show—obtained, as he implies them to have been, by one utterly ignorant of the languages alone used in the country.

## CONCLUSION.

If, in the foregoing pages, I have been compelled to record much to Mr. Reid's disadvantage, it will, I hope, be conceded, that I have neither exaggerated, nor set aught down in malice. And I believe that not even Mr. Reid himself will be able to detect a single passage in which I have had recourse to captious argument or unworthy verbal criticism. It is hardly to be expected that any one dealing with so complicated a mass of papers, as those contained in the Baroda Blue Books, shall altogether avoid mistakes, or a certain degree of inaccuracy. And it has been very far from my desire to take advantage of trifling or transparent inadvertencies. If, notwithstanding this disinclination, I have, in the fervour of controversy, been betrayed on any single occasion into the exercise of an unnecessary hypercriticism, I beg to apologise to the readers of these pages.

I would that with this contingent apology, I could couple such expressions of respect for Mr. Reid, as are to be found scattered, with no niggard hand, throughout my official Reports. But it were false and hypocritical to pretend that my estimate of that gentleman's character has not been materially modified by the further information, relative to his connection with Nursoo Punt, which I have derived from the Blue Books, and his own Pamphlet. And no one who honors me by perusing the foregoing pages will, I believe, hesitate to admit that, whether or not Mr. Reid's character stood in need of vindication prior to his appearance as an author, a farther and very different style of defence has been rendered necessary by his unfortunate Pamphlet.

Mr. Reid, it is said, is, and for a long time has been, ransacking

the records of the India House, with a view to the preparation of a series of special pleas, on behalf of that criminal at whose mercy the natives of Baroda believe him to be. His object, I am informed, is to make it appear that Nursoo Punt is an innocent and persecuted man, who has received injustice not only at my own hands, but at those of Mr. Frere, and the Court of Directors. Whatever casuistical skill can effect for so bad a cause, will doubtless be achieved by the author of those "cogent arguments" which overcame Lord Falkland's sense of right and wrong. And if, in the creditable undertaking which report assigns to him, he pay as little attention to consistency, to accuracy of quotation, to adhesion to facts, and to the canons of logic, as he has in his first essay at authorship, his brochure may appear to those ignorant of the merits of the case most satisfactory and conclusive.

But I would suggest to Mr. Reid, that though he may succeed in placing the friend of Nursoo in the India Council Board, more will be required of him ere he can repair that want of confidence with which the natives of India will certainly regard one who is not only considered by them as corrupt, but has himself deliberately rejected the only arguments which have been urged with a view to the vindication of his own reputation.

He must suggest some explanation of the fact, admitted by himself, that a belief in the corruptibility of British functionaries is deeply rooted in the native mind of western India. He must explain how it is, that the shrewd natives of Baroda have, year after year, remitted large sums to Bombay, to purchase favourable decisions from the authorities; how it is, that they consider themselves to have received an equivalent for their remittances; and by what means they were brought to regard himself as the especial friend of the most eminent of the bribe remitters—Nursoo Punt's "wealthy and wicked relative," Baba Nafra. Such explanation I endeavoured to afford, on a theory supported by facts and consistent with the assumed integrity of the authorities. And, as a pregnant illustration of my theory, I adduced the remarkable history of Nursoo Punt. But Mr. Reid has seen fit to repudiate the illustration, and *pro tanto* my theory; and

in so doing, he assumes the responsibility of explaining all those painful facts of which my theory alone afforded a satisfactory explanation, and which no amount of special pleading can efface.

He must explain how it came to pass, that, contrary to official usage, Nursoo Punt's irregularly transmitted petition of the 18th September, 1848, was received, with his concurrence; \* that, though this petition reflected on my official conduct, the fact of its existence was withheld from me; † and that it was not only received and circulated, but formed the basis of a minute in which the unconscious Lord Falkland was made to express sentiments he did not entertain; to prejudge a case of which he knew nothing; and to propose the conferring on a man accused of official infidelity, a compliment rarely conferred on natives of even unblemished and unsuspected character. ‡ He must state what share he had in the conception of that extraordinary minute; and even should he disavow its inspiration, he must explain how it happened that he, so well acquainted with the corruption of Baroda, could agree to the pre-judgment of such a case, and consent, without enquiry, to place at the elbow of the new and locally inexperienced Resident, a man labouring under serious imputations; §—one whose demoralization he had five years previously foreseen as a not improbable result of his transference to Baroda; and who, less than five years previously, had been brought under his official cognizance as related by family ties to the leading corruptionists at Baroda—to those very corruptionists with whom I had more than suspected him of being in criminal collusion—to those very corruptionists whose alleged misdeeds it was the duty of the new Resident to investigate—and, above all, to that *facile princeps* of the Baroda corruptionists, who had, so recently as 1840, been a party to the design entertained by the Guicowar to administer a bribe of £6000 to Mr. Reid himself.

Nor will it suffice for Mr. Reid to pretend that dread of the Fudkey alone made him accede to a proposal so totally opposed to

\* Page 33.

† Page 34.

‡ Pages 34 to 38.

§ Pages 52 to 56.

English ideas of common justice and common sense—for it was competent for the Government to nominate whom they chose to the post which Nursoo had resigned.

And if Mr. Reid have that regard for his reputation, which at one time influenced myself, he will explain why he was so anxious to exclude from the office of Native Agent, the man who, of all others at Baroda, was least likely to play into the hands of the corruptionists—the man who had incurred their undying hostility, by the hearty and able manner in which he had exposed their misdeeds in former years—the man who had so recently enabled me to defeat the collusive artifices of that Nursoo, whose interests Mr. Reid was promoting, I will not say in a “tortuous,” but certainly in a most extraordinary manner—the man whom the Bombay Government themselves now admit to have been unfairly dealt with,\* and against whom Mr. Reid displays a startling personal vindictiveness and animosity. He must explain why it was that, though the pre-judgment to which Lord Falkland was committed bore date the 7th of October, not only was no intimation of it vouchsafed to myself, on whom it so seriously and so erroneously reflected; but the documents which could alone enable his Lordship to see the extent to which he had been committed, were sedulously kept from his Lordship’s notice, till after the departure for Egypt of an officer, who, it was well known, would have thrown up his sick leave and immediately returned to Baroda, had he been aware of the nature of the strange and unparalleled proceedings that were in progress. He must satisfactorily explain the painful facts connected with Jeyrow’s petition, and its detention in the Persian department,† not as these facts are erroneously detailed by him, but as they are fully stated and elucidated in the foregoing pages.‡ He must give a less self-contradictory exposition of the “Maurrice Letter” than that

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\* Lord Falkland’s Minute, dated 3rd of June 1852. Not in the Blue Books, but among the papers subsequently granted to Parliament on Mr. Otway’s motion.

† At that time under the management of Mr. Reid’s son-in-law.

‡ Chapter IV., commencing at page 57.



which is set forth in his Pamphlet; and he must consistently account for those facts and obvious deductions, in reference to that letter, which it has been my painful duty to detail.\*

\*These are but a small part of the matters which it behoves Mr. Reid to explain; and his explanations must be very different in character, and kind, from those vouchsafed in his Pamphlet. If his ambition extend beyond securing that seat in the East India Direction, which he cannot desire for himself more earnestly than Nursoo Punt, and Nursoo's allies, desire it for him: if it be his wish, as it is undoubtedly his duty, to diminish that damage which he has himself been the cause of inflicting on the British name in Western India—(a damage which was very serious prior to the publication of his Pamphlet, and which that Pamphlet has enhanced)—*he must plainly and distinctly deny and disprove the imputations which the natives of Baroda have cast upon him, and other officials, and so place the administrative functions of England in India on their just and proper foundations.*

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\* Chapter V., commencing at page 83.