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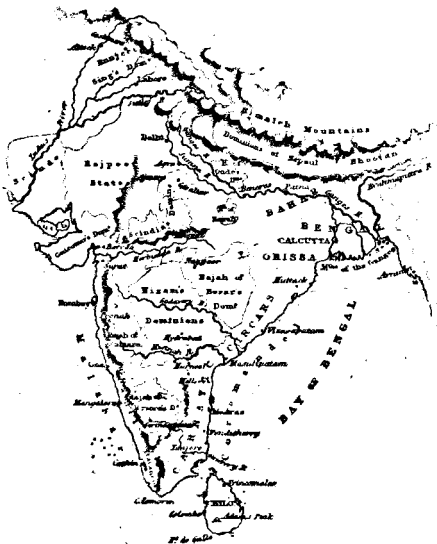


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FRAGMENTS  
OF  
VOYAGES & TRAVELS.  
BY  
CAPT BASIL HALL, R.N.

THIRD SERIES

VOL. I.



PRINTED FOR R. CADELL, EDINBURGH.  
AND WHITTAKER & CO LONDON.

1833.

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OF  
VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

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BY CAPTAIN BASIL HALL, R.N.  
F.R.S.

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*Third Series.*

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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WHITTAKER, TREACHER, & CO. LONDON.

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## ERRATA VOL. I.

Page 41, line 8, *for* "more populous," *read* "three times more populous."

Page 95, 6th line from the bottom, *for* "Hindoo," *read* "Mahometan."

Page 155, line 8, *dele* "or Lake."

Page 276, last line, *for* "1826," *read* "1818."

Page 357, line 9, *dele* "Hindoo and."

## VOL. III.

Page 276, line 5 (in a part of the impression), *for* "503°," *read* "493°."

## **DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.**

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The Facsimile Letter from Sir Walter Scott is to face the last page (328) of Vol. III., and is to be so pasted in, that it may open upwards.

TO

His Royal Highness

PRINCE GEORGE OF CUMBERLAND.

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SIR,

THE flattering notice your Royal Highness was pleased to confer upon the early parts of this little work, has encouraged me to continue it, and prompted me to solicit permission to dedicate the whole to your Royal Highness.

In these concluding volumes I have endeavoured to adapt both the topics themselves, and the terms in which they are expressed, to the more advanced age and experience of the persons for whose use chiefly the design was originally conceived.



It occurred to me, that it might be advantageous, particularly at this juncture, to render the great question of the East India Company's government, if possible, less complicated and unintelligible to young readers than it has heretofore been considered. I also hoped, that, if this task could be accomplished in connexion with lighter matters, and within any reasonable compass, the intrinsic importance and variety of the subject might lend it an interest, which I well knew, from personal examination on the spot, essentially belonged to it, though too rarely participated by persons at a distance.

My first intention, accordingly, was to have combined, incidentally with a narrative of the various voyages and travels which I made in the East, such remarks on the administration of the Company as might help to elucidate the intricate nature of the subsisting relations between the British nation and the inhabitants of Hindustan.

I soon found, however, that this plan would lead to much confusion, and that it was necessary, in order to afford the subject the best chance of being understood, not merely to arrange these materials separately, but greatly to condense them ; and, instead of attempting to exhaust, or even to touch upon every thing, to advert to those points alone which, upon the whole, appeared most likely to leave correct general impressions.

In this spirit, I have confined my observations on India to the first volume, in which is contained a brief account of the rise, progress, and present state of the East India Company, together with such details as seem calculated to illustrate the proceedings of our distant fellow-countrymen, in war, in peace, and in diplomatic arrangements with the native powers.

In the second volume are given sketches of some of the numerous excursions I made in the Eastern islands and on the continent of India.

The third volume is devoted almost exclusively to those nautical topics in which I have observed people on shore take the greatest interest; and in the consideration of which the rising generation afloat may, perhaps, find their account.

My chief purpose, however, will be answered, if these volumes prove acceptable to your Royal Highness, or instructive, or entertaining to young persons in any walk of life.

I have the honour to remain

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and most humble Servant,

BASIL HALL.

*London, 20th April, 1833.*

FRAGMENTS  
OF  
VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

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Third Series.

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CHAPTER I.

BRITISH INDIA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the proverbial charm of novelty, it is difficult for us at once to take much sincere interest in any place or circumstance respecting which we have previously known little or nothing; and probably for this reason it too often happens, that characters of the highest order of human intellect remain for ever unappreciated, and many enterprises of great pith and moment pass away without notice at all commensurate to their curiosity and importance. Such is pecu-

liarily the case when, from the field on which the incidents have displayed themselves lying far off, we have never acquired any distinct conception of their relation to home scenes familiar to us all from infancy.

In my multifarious perambulations over the world, I have seen no country to which this remark might be applied with so much propriety as to India, nor any one which stood so greatly in need of a popular historian to do justice to its high and varied merits. Yet I almost fear no writer of this description will soon be tempted to come forward, nor do I think he would be likely to meet with adequate attention if he ventured to try the experiment. There may be found, indeed, a set of curious inquirers and book-devourers, who will swallow any thing about the East, from a work in two massy quartos on the Rajpoots, to a leash of duodecimos on the life and adventures of a Persian barber. Generally speaking, however, grown-up persons who have been in the habit of hearing all their lives of Indian matters, without ever clearly comprehend-

ing them, will hardly be prevailed upon to risk a repetition of their former ennui, by engaging afresh in such a wide research, or tempted to trust themselves on such a huge and seemingly trackless desert of dry history. Most people, in short, will be content to go on to the last with the vague and unsatisfactory conceptions which accident, and the occasional long prosations of old Indians, have impressed upon their unwilling attention.

With young persons there appears somewhat more hope; for they have not yet become embarrassed with the complexity, nor frightened with the extent of this topic, while they may probably be interested in the East from recent familiarity with the Arabian Nights, or with the still more striking and graphic scenery and illustrations of Oriental manners referred to in almost every page of the sacred writings. The rising generation may therefore be rather predisposed to enter upon the inquiry, than actually disinclined, like most of their seniors, to listen to it at all. To these, or to any other willing readers, I think it might not be difficult to impart

a certain degree of useful and agreeable interest about India, by a simple statement of the rise, progress, and present state of our enormous Empire in that quarter of the world, accompanied by occasional illustrative explanations of the principles by which it is held together. Such a view would, of course, include a sketch of the means by which those vast regions have already been won, and are now retained in subjection. It might also be allowable to relieve these details by some description of the English society, and their occupations, in a country so far from home, and so entirely dissimilar from our own in climate, scenery, manners, and, generally speaking, in almost all the public duties, as well as many of the ordinary relations of private life.

If by any means this purpose could be accomplished, and the topic rescued from its complexity and pressure, even in a slight degree, the rising generation of readers at least might possibly be inspired early enough in life with as hearty a relish for Indian information as they take in that which relates to European countries. It

might then not unreasonably be expected, that as they grew in years, and acquired more extensive means of obtaining knowledge, they would become more competent to turn new information to account, as it arose gradually before them, in the advanced stages of the inquiry. If this could be brought about, and our relations with the Eastern world made less crabbed and difficult of comprehension, a subject heretofore notoriously uninteresting might in time gain favour with the public. This result would manifestly prove advantageous to every one of the various parties concerned. In the first place, it would surely be to the advantage of the British empire at large, of which India now forms an extensive integral portion, for the community at home to be made better aware of the sources of their power in those distant regions. Again, this knowledge would not be less beneficial in the end to the natives of the East themselves, whose welfare is so essentially bound up with our good government of their affairs. Nor will it be denied that such familiarity with this subject, on the part of



the public, might be useful, as well as satisfactory, to the East India Company, whose wisest and most beneficent acts are now so often grievously and wantonly misrepresented. Finally, the general diffusion of the information alluded to would, I am certain, be directly conducive to the advancement of the national reputation of England for good faith and fair dealing, all over the world. This last consideration seems the most important of any; since to such example, in all probability, more than to any other circumstance, the great joint cause of virtue and genuine freedom is indebted for its permanent existence, not only at home, but in every other country where popular institutions are known.

“ The situation of a dependent state, with a population of fifty millions, at the distance of ten thousand miles from the principal state, and surrounded by governments without faith, or even long-sighted prudence, is unparalleled in the history of the world; and the application of the common maxims of political morality to the management of such a dependence, is, from the very singularity of the case, likely

to require much caution, and to be subject to considerable mistake."

These are the words of Sir John Malcolm, one of the ablest authors who has attempted to render the subject of India popular and intelligible to distant readers. I say attempted, because, with all his powers, and the unequalled extent of his personal knowledge, I am afraid that even he has not altogether succeeded in rendering his favourite topic as popular as it well deserves to be. But unless that difficult service can be accomplished, there is little chance of India being duly attended to. This, surely, is much to be wondered at; for undoubtedly, in the whole circle of political history or philosophy, there occurs hardly any phenomenon which strikes the imagination with more surprise, or which seems more calculated to arrest attention, than the existence of such a prodigious extent of national power, exercised so far from the mother country. Unfortunately, too, the mystery of our Indian rule does not lie within range of ordinary explanation; for it differs in some of its most material points from every system

of public polity which has gone before it, in that or any other quarter of the globe; while it bears no resemblance to any thing at present existing elsewhere. The peculiarly insulated nature of this subject, therefore, added to its remoteness, and its vast extent, variety, and endless complication, almost necessarily render the topic irksome to a great majority even of those persons who take delight in the history of other countries. If it be difficult to obtain accurate geographical or geological knowledge of any distant place without actually visiting it, there is immeasurably more difficulty in gaining a correct insight into the moral and political state of remote regions without also bestowing upon them the advantage of a personal examination. In the case of European states, this is comparatively easy; but with respect to India, a visit is so totally out of the question in most instances, that, generally speaking, people give up the inquiry in despair, and even turn with something akin to disgust from a subject which, if they could only be brought to look upon it with the favour it deserves, they would, I verily believe,

discover to be fraught with the deepest possible interest.

The difficulties which beset the task of rendering India an intelligible and attractive topic are so very great, that I should never have dreamed of attempting such an undertaking, had it not occurred to me, during the course of a long and patient examination of the subject, both on the spot itself and elsewhere, and through many varied channels of study and conversation, that the theory of our Eastern power, complicated though it may seem, is, in fact, not only simple and satisfactory, but one which is capable of distinct and popular explanation. Neither, I believe, is it necessary to the acquisition of a clear general apprehension of the whole question, that any oppressive number of its details should be studied, or many troublesome technicalities investigated. On the contrary, I have generally found that all which is necessary to carry us pleasantly forward in these Oriental researches is a certain degree of reliance on the fidelity of the authorities consulted, and the application of ordinary reasoning to the results

so obtained. This, in effect, is neither more nor less than what the generality of mankind are compelled to do in the case, for example, of Astronomy, or any other exalted science. It is obvious, that not one person out of ten thousand who implicitly adopt the Newtonian theory of gravitation, is capable of demonstrating the truth of that law; and yet its universality of application is fully admitted and blindly acted upon, though the reasonings upon which it rests are not more demonstrably solid than the theoretical principles which, I conceive, will easily account for most of the political and moral phenomena, and likewise many of the apparent anomalies, of our Eastern empire. At the same time, hardly any writer would be guiltless of presumption if he were not to confess himself deeply sensible of the difficulty, and, I may add, extreme delicacy, of this undertaking. Other men, indeed, may well be distrustful of themselves when they find such an authority as Sir John Malcolm writing in the following strain on this subject, after upwards of twenty-five years' residence in the country.

“ The reflections which it is meant to offer upon the political, civil, and military government of British India, are submitted with a deference which proceeds equally from a want of complete knowledge of some parts of the subject, and a sense of its general magnitude and importance. The considerations alluded to are, indeed, of themselves, of so large and complicated a nature, that no person can expect to treat them without falling into frequent error : but the apprehension of this danger is not sufficient to deter me from contributing as much as I can to the elucidation of questions of such vast national importance ; and the character of the object which I have in view will, I trust, plead for any failure in its accomplishment.”—*Sketch of the Political History of India*, p. 444 ; printed in 1811.

If such were the feelings of an accomplished and experienced statesman, after having passed a quarter of a century in situations of the highest activity, and the very best possible for understanding the subject, it might seem quite idle for a mere incidental traveller to hope that he

can throw any additional light on a topic which has proved almost too hard for authorities possessing advantages in most respects so greatly superior to his own. It is not impossible, however, that, along with the disadvantages necessarily attendant upon a transient view of any such question, there may be found compensations arising out of the extent and variety of the field of observation, which, if they do not pretend to equal utility, practically speaking, in the way of actual and local business, may yet have their importance in helping us to grasp a larger portion of the subject at one view. Thus, perhaps, anomalies, which have been found almost unintelligible when viewed too closely, may be explained by a sort of generalising process not unlike that of looking over a map, or surveying a set of distant objects from a commanding height.

During the course of nearly four years of an active professional round of duties on the Indian station, accidental circumstances put it in my power to travel twice across the peninsula of Hindustan, from Madras to Bombay, and thus to see much

of the interior of the country. In the same period I repeatedly visited both the western or Malabar coast, and the eastern or Coromandel side of the peninsula. I was four or five times at the island of Ceylon, and passed through most of the straits, and touched at many of the islands, of the great eastern Archipelago. I also coasted for some hundreds of miles along the continent of China, very nearly to the point where the great wall joins the Yellow Sea. In the course of these extensive voyages and travels, opportunities were afforded, over and over again, of bringing into immediate comparison many different parts of this enormous question, and of discovering innumerable discordances and resemblances altogether unexpected before.

For example, nothing can be conceived more dissimilar than the manners and customs of the Indians and Chinese. The Hindoos are such complete slaves of superstitious observances, that they can neither eat, drink, sleep, nor perform any duty, without some absurd and idolatrous form. The Chinese, on the other hand,



possess scarcely a trace of religious principle, practice, or sentiment. Again, while the occupations of the English in India are of the most stirring and important nature, scattering them over a wide continent, and loading them with the weighty responsibilities of governing large provinces, their countrymen resident at Canton are confined to a few jealously watched acres, and their duties to the management of commercial concerns in one exclusive department. The Spaniards, in like manner, whom I saw at Manilla, are as different as possible in all their habits from the Dutch at Batavia; while the Malays and Cingalese differ in many important points from the Javanese and Sumatrans. Now, the effects produced on the human character and on the institutions of civil society by these contrasted situations, though extremely curious and instructive, can be fully understood, as I apprehend, only by those who have repeated opportunities of seeing and comparing them together on the spot, and bringing them almost into juxtaposition. It seems also quite possible that a considerable portion of these,

and a thousand other circumstances, may be little, if at all, known to persons whose duties have fixed them during half their lives to one particular spot, and to one class of duties; for their observation, however extensive, is still inevitably limited to one particular range, and thus varied comparisons are rendered impossible.

Under this course of immediate and rapid examination, I am free to confess that I found my opinions liable to such frequent changes, that at times I almost feared no safe conclusion could ever be come to, nor any general explanation given of the principles which maintained in secure action a political machine of such magnitude and complexity as our Indian government. And perhaps, if I had remained permanently in those regions, so that my observation might have been confined to Oriental topics alone, the confusion, instead of clearing itself up, might only have become worse confounded. The same train of fortunate accidents, however, which had given me opportunities of examining almost every part of the coasts of Asia, and a considerable portion

of the interior, have since enabled me to visit many other parts of the world, under circumstances generally so favourable that they are calculated, as I think, to throw back useful light on many of the scenes previously witnessed in the East.

Every one whose fortune it has been to travel much, will remember that, in proportion as his field of view has been extended and diversified, he has become conscious of important modifications both in his opinions and in his feelings with respect to the countries first passed over. If he revisits the same regions, after the lapse of a few years, he will often be astonished at the different aspect which almost every thing then wears from what it had seemed originally in his eyes; and a good deal of experience may be required to satisfy him that it is not the things themselves which have changed, but that the difference lies in his own altered habits of thought and feeling, and in the more practised powers of perception of his own mind. Supposing this sort of experiment to be tried over and over again, and that on each occasion a new set of countries

are brought into comparison with those first visited, fresh instruction ought to be imparted upon every return. The judgment, it is fair to suppose, will thus be chastised, and taught to exercise modesty in its decisions on points where the information is scanty, while, on the other hand, it may be enabled to pronounce confidently an opinion upon circumstances which have stood the test of frequent observation.

It is not always so ruled, however, by the critics; for if, unfortunately for the poor wight of a traveller, his account, be it ever so well grounded on personal experience, does not happen to square pretty nearly with the preconceived notions or wishes of his reader, who, up to that time, we shall suppose, is ignorant of the facts of the case—all those very circumstances which, in fairness, ought to entitle the narrator to a fair hearing, are actually arrayed against him as valid reasons for not trusting to his account! Such people forget that there are two kinds of prejudice in the world—one of knowledge, the other of ignorance; and that while

one person may judge wrong even after he has enjoyed ample opportunities of forming a correct opinion on the spot, another may possibly err quite as far by forming his judgment upon pure guess-work in his closet. Neither is it an uncommon case for readers to apply, insensibly, the circumstances by which they are surrounded in their own country, and with which they are already familiar, to explain things which are remote and unseen, and of which their knowledge, being drawn from scanty, conflicting, and uncertain authorities, must of necessity be very imperfect.

A well-known and most industrious writer upon Indian topics, but who has never been in that country, goes the length of gravely maintaining that more may be learned of India in one year at home, than during the longest life in the country itself! This moderate paradox very happily illustrates the position alluded to above, that there are two kinds of prejudice in the world.

“ Whatever is worth seeing or hearing in India,” says he, “ can be expressed in

writing. As soon as every thing of importance is expressed in writing, a man who is duly qualified may obtain more knowledge of India in one year in his closet in England, than he could obtain during the course of the longest life, by the use of his eyes and ears in India.”—*Mill's History of India, Preface, p. xii.*

Now surely this supposes that the traveller, or any other inquirer on the spot, is to do nothing more than bring his eyes and ears to bear on the objects surrounding him. Why should he not read or otherwise inquire into these matters, in their widest sense, while in India, as well as in his closet in England? Or, I may ask, why may not he combine the actual observation on the spot with subsequent closet study at home?

Sir John Malcolm, in one of his books, puts this distinction exactly on the opposite tack, and I think neatly enough.

“The author,” he remarks, “will probably be charged with Indian prejudices; and as he does not pretend to any exemption from the common frailties of human nature, he willingly admits that he must

be prepossessed in favour of measures which he has contributed to carry into execution. The merely English reader, however," continues this able historian, "will do well to recollect that there are also English prejudices; and that those who never saw a country so distant as India, and so unlike any thing in Europe, must acknowledge at least one great inferiority in such discussions."

It would be very unprofitable, however, to pursue these conflicting speculations; for, in the treatment of any subject that can be named, especially if it be one which engages much of the public attention, and, still more, if it be one highly exciting in itself, there must arise differences of opinion, which will always be described as prejudices by those of the contrary way of thinking. And as this consequence is quite inevitable, the only safe point to aim at is the fair and explicit exposition of the final result left on the writer's mind by the whole course of his observations and reflections, without his pledging himself to any party or theory, or indeed to any thing but sincerity.

We are never sure, beforehand, what direction prejudices are to take, nor what opinions any given individual may be expected to maintain. I remember, for example, once hearing a learned native of Hindustan remark, that if any two of his countrymen—not to say two states—could be found, who, at all times and under all circumstances, might entirely depend upon each other, the British power in India would soon be at an end. On being pressed to expand his enigma a little further, he said—The essential difference between you English and us natives consists chiefly in this particular, that while all of you have implicit confidence in one another, and can reckon upon every one of your respective movements being regulated by the strictest maxims of good faith, we, alas, possess no such bond of union as a rule of our lives. You act over the whole of this vast empire, as it appears to me, permanently, from a sense of duty, not merely because it seems to be your interest at the moment, but on principle, and simply because it is right. We, too, said he, certainly act, in the main, honestly; but we



do so because we have learned that such a course is for our advantage. We have our proverb as well as you about honesty and policy, which we say are "twins that are born, live, and die together." But, unfortunately for us Asiatics, whenever the temptation to err happens to be pretty strong, the unsubstantial nature of our motives becomes apparent, and straightway the whole of our moral structure falls to pieces, from the want of the cementing principle of good faith by which your conduct is regulated. The enormous superiority of physical force on the side of the natives sinks absolutely into nothing, when opposed to this moral strength which you bring into the field, and may continue to exert as long as you please. It unites all of you in body and soul, indissolubly, while it imparts to the whole of your numbers collectively the same decision of purpose, and uniformity of action, which belong, amongst us, only to rare individuals. The spirit of truth and the refinements of the point of honour, which you cherish on their own account, seem to pervade all your classes alike, and thus

your leaders are enabled to communicate the impulses of their master-minds to the youngest as well as to the oldest and most experienced man amongst you, and with equal facility and confidence at a distance as when close at hand! With us it is totally different. Our military leaders do indeed often exercise a wonderful sway over the minds of those soldiers who are immediately under their eye, and they can put large bodies in motion with considerable effect. But none of these men are to be trusted at a distance; for, as I said before, we are altogether without that confident power by which the English not only convey their wishes to one another, but at the same time secure the most hearty co-operation through good report and evil report—in disaster as well as in success—in danger, in difficulty, in temptation. The only question with you appears to be, ‘What is our duty?’ and that once ascertained, the point is pursued at all hazards, be the personal consequences what they may. If an Englishman at Delhi engages to meet another from Cape Comorin on such a day on the

banks of the Kistna, the promise is sure to be kept, whatever intervening circumstances arise to render it the apparent interest of either or both to depart from the engagement. And what holds good amongst you to the smallest trifle, is equally so in the most important affairs, and in every one of the multifarious ramifications of your complicated administration.

What, for example—continued the energetic old gentleman—what is it which enables our young friend, the collector of this district, to exercise such prodigious, such undisputed, almost despotic sway over the half million of inhabitants whose affairs he regulates, and from whom he draws for his government so large a revenue? It is certainly not to the petty body-guard of twenty or thirty Sepoys that he is indebted for his authority, nor to the influence of fear of any kind, for there is no appeal to military force within several hundreds of miles; and yet our friend's power is, for all the purposes of good government, as efficient, if not much more so, than ever was enjoyed

by the mere military possessors of this often conquered country. It is not owing to the inherent strength of his great talents, nor even to his unblemished personal character; but mainly, if not entirely, to that pervading principle of resolute integrity, acting at once as a duty and a sentiment, and forming an indissoluble part of the system of that body politic to which he belongs, that his influence is due. If the gentleman alluded to were removed to-morrow, it would be just the same with his successor. We might not, indeed, be so fortunate as to possess over us a man of so much ability or industry as our present resident, but we should be certain of his being equally conscientious, and as completely beyond the reach of any conceivable corruption. In fact, the slightest shadow of suspicion falling on his good name, would at once and irretrievably ruin his fortunes, by depriving him of all power to carry on the duties of his station; his place would speedily be filled up by some other person in whom the government had more confidence.

What renders all this more striking

as a matter of philosophical speculation, continued our learned Pundit, and more instructive as a matter of practical utility, is the curious fact of its being placed in such mortifying contrast with what generally takes place when we are left to our own native devices. The very persons over whom your residents, collectors, judges and magistrates, or military commanders, exercise so complete an ascendancy, possess in themselves, in a very slight degree, those moral qualities to the influence of which they submit without the smallest distrust. We know well enough how to appreciate virtue in those whom we have learned from experience to confide in; but the misfortune is, we cannot get up amongst ourselves either the same principles of action or the same confidence.

We have, I fear, concluded the old gentleman, little or no true patriotism amongst us; for we are all lamentably indifferent about our countrymen, unless they happen to be of the same caste—every other class we disregard—so much so, that, after all, it is perhaps to this fatal and most deteriorating institution that the

universal want of national sympathy in the East may be traced.

My worthy Hindoo friend may be supposed, in the heat of discussion, to have pressed the point rather too hard against his own countrymen, as people are so apt to do when anxiously bent on illustrating their opinions: but in most of his views we may go along with him. I think, too, it may be shewn that the principle alluded to carries its application into every branch, great and small, of the extensive scheme of policy which has led to such wonderful results. In fact, this remark may be generalised without limit; for an examination of the various systems in operation throughout the world will satisfy us, that there is no rule of good government except that golden one pointed out by my Indian friend; and that the prosperity of no state can be long secured where the principle of good faith, national and individual, is not the main-spring of action in the governors, and reciprocally in the governed.

At all events, be these speculations as they may, it must be more or less instruc-

tive to shew in what way this point in the national character of England has been gradually brought into practical exercise in India, from its early and partial application up to its fullest employment at the present hour. In such a review we shall readily discover how far our hold of that vast country, in times to come, is dependent upon the pure and vigorous maintenance of the integrity and good faith which have won it. For it will, I think, be clearly seen, by any one who studies the subject closely, that whenever, in past times, we have lost any political, commercial, or other advantages in the East, that failure may be traced to some relinquishment of the severe simplicity of the rule which places the qualities alluded to at the top of the list of our moral duties. In like manner, it may be asserted that our success of every kind, either with reference to our own national credit or to the happiness of the natives, owes not only its origin, but its present existence, to the same causes. If this be true, it follows, that our future authority in the East will be measured by the same scale.

It cannot, therefore, be otherwise than important to investigate the nature of those principles upon which so much depends, and through which, though at the distance of half the circuit of the globe from the mother country, the influence of English minds and manners, and of English feelings, is felt in the daily transactions of nearly ninety millions of persons, constituting the population of British India, and of the allied or protected states:

It would, no doubt, form a still more valuable and interesting object of inquiry, to ascertain the original causes which give purity to the fountain head or source from whence those principles flow, which, even so far from home, can produce effects so marvellous. But that topic is too sacred and copious for transient discussion, and I shall merely remark in passing, that the connexion between the character and prosperity of the parent state and that of its Eastern empire is so close and so inseparable, that any thing which tarnishes the national reputation at home, or essentially diminishes its prescriptive attribute of good faith, must be felt instantly, and



probably with tenfold disaster and disgrace, abroad. This applies especially to a country where almost all political authority rests upon opinion, and where any one act which weakens that support, must necessarily threaten to bring the whole stupendous fabric to the ground.

The East India Company began to rise into political power and importance at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when, the great Akbar having gone off the field, the different princes of India became engaged in wars amongst themselves, so interminable and extensive, that almost every province either sunk under the grinding despotism of domestic rule, or was laid waste by the perpetual transit of contending armies. In this state of things, when neither life nor property was secure for an instant, and all hopes of peace were banished from the land, it is not to be wondered at, that the wretched inhabitants hailed with joy the gradual rise of a government which not only promised them peace, but secured to them the observance of their ancient religion and manners, and gave

them hopes of a durable tranquillity far beyond what they had ever enjoyed before, either under their own monarchs, or under the wild domination of their various conquerors. The Hindoos had long been lost to all, or nearly to all feeling of national pride, from the frequency and variety of these conquests; and it was not unnatural that they should consider the very permanency of usurpation as a blessing, or that they should forget their prejudices against their European masters in a contemplation of that superior regard to justice and civilisation by which, even in those early times, they saw their rulers more or less accompanied. It appears, that in the first stages of our Eastern power these feelings were so generally shared by all ranks, that even the princes and chiefs of the country assisted in our establishment. But after a time, the leading men amongst the natives, whose authority was necessarily abridged in proportion to the rise of the Company, came to see too late, that in seeking to secure tranquillity for their country, they had allowed a power to gain head which they could never

shake, but, on the contrary, which actually extended and confirmed its authority by those very efforts which were made to subvert its influence. Success gave the European adventurers an obvious advantage; but what puzzled the natives beyond measure, was the manner in which these wonderful strangers, instead of being injured by reverses, only rose higher and higher from every misfortune. They could not conceive whence those apparently unbounded resources were drawn, by which fresh vigour was still imparted to the arms of their conquerors. "I am not alarmed," said the famous Hyder Ali, "at what I see of the strength and resources of the Company, but at what is unseen." This observation, made nearly a couple of centuries after the first establishment of the English in India, represents faithfully the impression made upon those ignorant nations by the interference of a state drawing support from a country with which they were entirely unacquainted, and of whose power they were able to judge only by its effects.

It is useful, in considering these ques-

tions, to bear in mind the truth of the old maxim, 'omne ignotum pro magnifico,' for in all mystery there is a tendency to exaggeration. But although this exaggeration may serve a particular purpose for a time, there may, and indeed in the nature of things there must, arrive a period of reaction, when the advantages gained by the indistinctness and extravagance of the first view will be more than counterbalanced by the loss consequent upon detection. If, then, in the pride of power, we forget the essential means by which our success has been acquired and hitherto preserved, or if we imagine that any panic or national submission can be rendered durable, or any deception permanently maintained to useful purpose, we shall surely find ourselves mistaken. Still more grievously shall we deceive ourselves, if we expect that those unseen resources for the possession of which we may at any time obtain credit amongst the natives, but which we do not really possess, will be made available for the purposes of real service in the hour of trial. Under no combination of events

indeed, public or private, can any man permanently hold his ground supported by false pretences ; and however much adventitious circumstances may give individuals, or even nations, the ascendancy at first, the time must inevitably arrive when, if they do not honestly profit by experience, and in all sincerity seek to gain their point by rendering it the interest of those with whom they act to co-operate heartily, they must in the end be themselves subdued. These maxims, though so obvious upon after-reflection, were but too often neglected in the course of our early Indian administration. Thus we often trusted, with a rash confidence, to means almost evanescent, while we neglected collateral assistance of eminent efficiency towards the establishment of our permanent authority. At certain seasons, again, when our affairs fell into the hands of weak men, we were guilty of the opposite error, and acted with an absurd degree of subserviency to the native powers. So much so, that in a spirit of very unwise humility we occasionally pursued a policy calculated to discourage or disgust our

friends, while it animated the hopes of our enemies. What, however, was worst of all, this vacillating, timorous, or selfish policy invariably lessened us in our own esteem; and thus, by casting a doubt on the integrity of our purposes in our own breasts, weakened the confidence which ever belongs to the consciousness of possessing a good cause.

Between these two extremes of overweening confidence and arrogance on the one hand, and real or affected humility on the other, there lies a just mean which we must follow if we desire that our empire in India shall be either durable or useful either to the natives or to ourselves. But it is not very easy to hit this point in the government of nations, any more than it is always easy to act right in the business of private life. Mere good intentions and honest industry will not suffice in either case; but precisely as the scale of our operations is extended, so the ascendancy of talents, and knowledge, and true public spirit, comes to be felt. There is this grand distinction, however, between domestic and political affairs. In private

life, a virtuous, but moderately gifted person, acting from a sense of duty, will rarely do much mischief; but in the government of extensive countries, a well-intentioned blockhead may often bring the severest misery upon the heads of those whom it is his purpose to benefit; and it is but a poor satisfaction to know that his intentions were the best in the world, and that his own character and fortunes are involved in the national wreck. Unhappily, there are but too many instances on record in the East to illustrate this position; but their occurrence only tends to confirm the doctrine, that the truest economy will ever be found in employing, at whatever cost, men of the highest capacity we can procure. Good intentions are a cheap commodity; talents—especially talents combined with public spirit and experience—very rare; and they are always in such demand, that no market is overstocked with this supply. But whether we have to deal with the gigantic powers of Hastings or Wellesley, or with the creeping, temporising intellects of Mr. A., Mr. B., or Mr. C., it will be of material consequence,

that in seasons of doubt and danger even these men should be constrained to resort to some general and well-established maxims of government, in order to rescue the vessel of the state from her difficulties. In seamanship, a thorough-bred sailor, though not a man of talent, may manage to work his ship off a lee-shore, by merely adhering to established rules of which he neither understands, nor is capable of understanding the principles.

It formed a part of my original intention to have endeavoured to point out in what those maxims of government consisted, which have proved so wonderfully effectual in the establishment of our empire in the East Indies. This seemed the more likely to be useful, as it struck me that by no other means could our authority in that country be maintained for any length of time, or be rendered profitable either to ourselves or to the natives. But having very soon found the task grow much too large, as well as too difficult for me, I have been led to imagine I may stand a better chance of doing justice to the subject, by adopting the humbler and less



regular expedient of touching lightly and in a transient way upon a few of the leading and more characteristic of those points in Oriental history, wars, politics, and manners, which refer to British India alone, and to the English residents in that country. In this way, opportunities, it is thought, may be afforded for introducing, amongst lighter matters, many incidental explanations and occasional remarks, calculated to illustrate subjects generally considered obscure, though not involving anything essentially difficult or complex.

It may be observed, that although fixed rules cannot possibly be laid down for the regulation of affairs liable to such perpetual variation as those of India, still, as the fundamental principles of morality, like the mathematical laws of the physical world, are really immutable, no combination of adverse or of fortunate circumstances can justify a breach of political honesty. Yet there may reasonably be allowed a considerable degree of elasticity in the actual administration of Indian affairs, which, however, will be safe and useful exactly in proportion to the univer-

sality and rigour of that good faith which sets it in motion. Many people vainly suppose it possible to determine by legislative enactments in England, what shall be the precise degree and kind of interference which our local governments in India shall exert in their political intercourse with the native powers. But all experience proves, that such detailed instructions either fail totally in practice, or lead rapidly to the defeat of their avowed and, I believe, sincere object—the welfare of the people of Hindustan. But while this is true, it certainly becomes a matter of real importance to investigate, in the spirit of truth and fair dealing, and also of political courage, the actual state of the fact. By ascertaining which roads lead us away from true improvements, we may have a better chance of discovering those which are practicable, and tend to good results. At all events, it becomes us to look the evils manfully in the face, and honestly seek to redress them; but in so doing, we ought not to refuse credit where credit is due, and, above all, we should try to avoid the folly of sacrificing

what has been found beneficial in practice, though perhaps imperfect or anomalous in theory, for the sake of the possible good which speculative changes might bring about.

To understand fully the nature of our Indian government, and to be able to judge correctly of the principles by which it is held together, and may be maintained as long as we please ; or to be able to say, with any chance of accuracy, what measures of improvement are most likely to be profitable, would require a course of study of prodigious extent, coupled, as I conceive, with a long series of actual observations on the spot. These conditions unfortunately shut out the greater number of persons whom it is most desirable to influence. For this, however, there appears to be no remedy. Setting aside the insuperable difficulty to most persons, of the voyage and the time required for even a transient visit to countries so remote, what person, save one or two in a thousand, could find leisure or patience to wade through the endless histories of India ? Or who could listen without going distracted

to an account of all the different regulations by which a revenue of more than twenty millions sterling is collected in as many different provinces? Or hope to comprehend the intricacies of a judicial system by which justice is administered over territories under our rule six times larger and more populous than France? It might be a little less difficult perhaps to explain the manner in which nearly two hundred thousand native troops are maintained in our pay, subjected to our discipline, and officered by British gentlemen; but who could expect to follow the reasons which determine the distribution of this vast army? All or any of these items, however, would be found trivial difficulties in this mighty research, in comparison to the gigantic task of understanding minutely the political relations by which our complicated interests in the East have grown into their present form, and are now interlaced and bound up with those of the native powers. I shall say nothing of the manners and customs of the Hindoos—their language, literature, science, and religion—for it is like at-

tempting to reckon the numbers of the stars to venture into such boundless inquiries, which, after all, are of very questionable interest. Yet, without a pretty exact, as well as a pretty extensive acquaintance with most of these things, it is, I fear, well nigh desperate for any man to engage in projects either for the improvement of the natives, or for that of the East India Company's government.

Would to God! however—and I say it with the most heartfelt conviction of its utility and importance to millions upon millions of our fellow-subjects in India—would to God that I could describe, in terms adequately forcible to engage the attention and convince the understanding of those whom it so deeply concerns, the countless advantages which the poor natives of those regions actually enjoy at this moment under the present much-abused system of government. For, while I freely grant that there exist many evils in the system, I believe very few of these are susceptible of much improvement, and assuredly none of sudden or extensive changes for the better. I admit that our

legislation is far from complete, that the taxation of the lands we have conquered may in some places press heavily on our Indian subjects; and that the administration of justice, though ten times better than ever it was in times past, is not quite so perfect as it may prove in the Millennium. I admit, too, that the natives of the upper ranks do not enjoy the authority amongst their countrymen which they enjoyed of old, and that amongst them there must necessarily exist some natural feeling of humiliation at witnessing the extension of an authority which has absorbed so much their own importance. Nevertheless, all things considered, I do firmly believe that India is at this moment more tranquil and more prosperous than ever it has been before. I believe, too, that the great mass of the inhabitants of that interesting country enjoy more real, practical freedom than they could hope to possess under their own native rulers, or will enjoy again under any rulers whatever, if we shall incautiously interfere with a system of such enormous complexity and extent.

## CHAPTER II.

## RISE OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

THE celebrated passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, a route once terrific to mariners, though now as familiar as the British Channel, and far less dangerous, was discovered by the Portuguese in 1497; and although the English endeavoured to share with the discoverers in the advantages of this grand opening for commercial enterprise, more than a hundred years elapsed before they shot a-head of the first bold adventurers, or could even hold any tolerable way with them in their golden race. What was quite unexpected, too, our traders found that the dangers and difficulties of the new navigation were trivial in comparison to those encountered on shore; their individual capital, also, though considerable, made but a poor figure in main-

taining expeditions so full of risk and so protracted in their term as Indian voyages then were. Besides which, it soon appeared that associations of merchants who might agree to combine their resources for the purpose of advancing their common object of gain, could have no security against the interference of wealthy competitors, unless protected in their speculations by legislative enactments of their own government, as well as the countenance of the monarchs with whose countries they traded. Queen Elizabeth, therefore, who admitted the sound reasoning of these views, sent an embassy to the Great Mogul Akbar, to solicit his protection in favour of her subjects; and shortly afterwards, without waiting for the emperor's answer, she granted a charter to a body of her merchants, by which, on the last day of the year 1600, they were erected into a corporation, under the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies." The original capital possessed by these speculators amounted to only 72,000*l*. Such were the small beginnings of that mighty power



which has overspread the richest portion of Asia, and far outrivalled in substantial wealth, real utility, and political influence, the authority of the greatest conquerors of the East! By this charter, the Company were vested with the power of purchasing lands, without any limitation, while their commerce was to be directed by a governor and twenty-four other persons in committee. They were to enjoy, during fifteen years, the privileges of an exclusive trade with Asia, Africa, and the islands of the Indian seas lying beyond the Cape of Bona Esperanza, as it is called in the charter. The Crown retained the right to resume the grant upon giving two years' warning, in the event of its not proving advantageous to the state; while, in the same clause, the Government stood pledged to the Company to prolong the monopoly for other fifteen years, should the scheme turn out productive to the nation. In 1609 the Company obtained a second charter, vesting them with a permanent right of exclusive trade, flanked, as before, by the cautious proviso that the Crown retained

the power of resuming the grant, if it was not found to promote the interests of the realm.

The first fleets of the Company succeeded very well ; but as their servants in the East were guarded by no forts, and recognised by no treaties, they found themselves not only very ill accommodated, but frequently exposed to insults and all kinds of injuries not only by the cross fire of their European rivals, the Portuguese and Dutch, but by the unsteady faith of the natives, to say nothing of the constant entanglements arising from their own deranged finances and defective discipline. The Great Mogul, indeed, had given the English leave to form settlements on the shores of his empire ; but the energetic Portuguese, inflamed with that peculiar hostility which appears in all ages to have characterised questions of commercial interest, or which, in the vulgar tongue, are said to touch the pocket, interposed every kind of obstacle to the peaceable establishment of the intruding English. The Portuguese claim to an exclusive right of commerce with India,

on the ground of original discovery, or "prior possession," as they called it, was first evaded, then derided by their rivals, and finally resisted by main force, as well as by the more obvious and legitimate method of manly rivalry in fair adventure. In 1612 the two powers came into actual contact on the Indian seas; and as the result, on several occasions, proved favourable to the British, a factory at Surat was established by them, under circumstances highly advantageous to their interests. The Company at home were not slow to improve these successes by opening fresh negotiations with the Emperor, or Great Mogul; and they even induced King James to send an embassy to Jehan-geer, then residing at Ajmeer. This mission took place in 1614. The Mogul received Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador, with all distinction; but the essential objects of the mission were almost entirely thwarted by the intrigues of the Portuguese. A confirmation of former grants, however, being obtained, and some minor privileges secured, the ambassador returned by the way of Persia, where he

succeeded in opening a new vein of commercial wealth in the Persian Gulf, chiefly through the favour of Shah Abbas, the reigning monarch of that nation.

The opposition of the Portuguese being thus promptly repelled by force on the one hand, and counteracted by negotiation on the other, it served, in the end, only to augment the resources of the English Company, chiefly by stimulating them to more active and decided measures. For a long time, indeed, it seriously embarrassed their finances, a difficulty which was greatly increased by an abortive attempt to share with the Dutch, or deprive them of the lucrative trade of the Spice Islands. In 1617 the English Company's agents obtained possession of two small islands in the Eastern Archipelago, through the friendship of the natives, but they were soon driven off by the Dutch, who attacked them with a superior force. The Company contrived, however, to maintain a certain hold of the Spice Islands, until February, 1623, when their sturdy rivals, commanded by one Herman Van Speult, determined not only to demolish the En-

glish root and branch, but to execute their purpose in such an impressive manner as to deter all future interlopers from appearing in that quarter. Accordingly, Captain Towerson and nine other English factors, with about as many attendants, were first tortured and then executed. The avowed object of the Dutch being the removal of their commercial rivals at all hazards, these measures were undertaken in the very face of a solemn treaty between the two nations, signed not four years and a half before (17th July, 1619), every article of which the Dutch had already infringed over and over again. They were no doubt encouraged in these proceedings by the tameness with which the English nation had already submitted to numerous insults and injuries inflicted upon their countrymen trading amongst the smaller Spice Islands, especially at Lantore, where the British factory had been forcibly broken up, and the Company's servants put to death. At all events, nothing could possibly be more pusillanimous than the conduct of King James the First's government on

this occasion. The country, indeed, was roused to a high pitch of astonishment, horror, and indignation, at the cruelties of Amboyna, but, strange to say, the trashy disputes between the states of Bohemia and the House of Austria engaged all the attention of the executive, while this violent national injury inflicted upon the English in the Eastern seas—involving a gross breach of a solemn treaty—was left to the feeble management of a company of merchants hardly established even in that capacity, and nowise competent to engage in such contests.

Thus encouraged by the supineness of their rivals, the Dutch resolved to postpone no longer the completion of their favourite scheme of ferreting the English out of the Spice Islands. A pretext for quarrelling was soon concocted, and torture used to produce the requisite depositions. This was defended upon the sole plea of its being no more than was usual under the Dutch law in cases of treason. It is now perfectly obvious, upon a review of the circumstances connected with this dreadful proceeding,

which has acquired in history the name of the Massacre of Amboyna, that the grounds upon which the English factors were arrested, tortured, and executed, must have been altogether improbable, if not absurd and impossible. Even supposing the whole of these allegations true, the course of procedure, and especially the flagitious manner of conducting its details, were not only manifest violations of the fundamental principles of justice, but appear to have been alike contrary to the laws of Holland and to the rights of humanity. The transaction, in short, seems evidently to have had its origin exclusively in the policy which aimed at the total extirpation of the English from that quarter of the Eastern world. In all probability, none of the atrocities eventually committed may have been contemplated in the outset, yet this furnishes little or no excuse, more especially as the Dutch Government at home not only offered no reparation, but within a few months afterwards gave ample corroboration of the unity of purpose between them and their Indian servants, by finally expelling the

remaining English from their neighbourhood.

It is not for the purpose of deepening a stain, already indelible, on the character of another nation, that I have adverted to this celebrated affair, but in order to call attention to one or two attendant circumstances worthy of notice, and calculated to assist us in tracing the causes of subsequent events immeasurably greater in extent and importance, by which the gigantic affairs of the East India Company were afterwards influenced. It appears almost demonstrable that if, upon the first breach of the treaty of 1619 with the Dutch, the English Government had insisted upon immediate redress, such a check would have been given to the audacity of their rivals abroad, that, instead of exerting all their energies to counteract the spirit of a treaty framed for the express purpose of securing the mutual advantage of the trading companies, the Dutch factors would have found their best interest, as well as their duty, in co-operating with the English. When, however, these persons saw the British Government indifferent,



and had no reason to believe that their own rulers were displeased with these measures, but, on the contrary, had good grounds for supposing them much gratified therewith, it was altogether too much to expect that the local authorities, in so distant a region, should stop short of the complete accomplishment of their avaricious purpose.

This ought to make us recollect, that there are two distinct classes of obligations belonging to what is called good faith in public transactions: the first consists in not doing any thing ourselves contrary to the letter and spirit of an engagement; the second in not permitting others to interfere with its provisions. We ought either not to have formed the treaty of 1619, or we ought to have resisted its flagrant infraction. This is obvious enough; but what is curious and instructive appears to be the effect produced on the public mind in England by the unworthy proceedings of their Government. When, in the first instance, the Dutch destroyed the English settlement at Lantore, the people at home became so excessively indignant, they would cheerfully have submitted to the inevitable

privations consequent upon a war, had such an alternative been placed, at that moment, in opposition to the national dishonour. But the resentment of the nation being left to spend itself in unavailing reproaches, instead of being embodied and directed by their rulers, contributed nothing towards the restoration of the dignity of the country, and the affair terminated in a vain paper war between the Dutch and English companies. These bodies were probably very fit instruments to have settled a question relating to nutmegs and cloves, but they were then unused, and totally incompetent, to discuss great international questions of this sort.

What was the consequence? A positive deterioration of the national feeling of honour, and a diminution of its sense of justice. For when the subsequent atrocities at Amboyna became known, though ten times more horrible than those of Lantore, accompanied by breaches of the treaty of 1619, still more inexcusable and insulting, the people of England, familiarised with the degradation worn so lightly by their pusillanimous rulers, scarcely

noticed the cruelties committed upon the persons of their distant fellow-countrymen. The moral of this part of the story it is needless to draw more explicitly than by pointing out, that in public, exactly as in private life, a tame submission to insult or to injury is the surest method to provoke a second and a more severe aggression.

The catastrophe of Amboyna, which demolished the Company's prospects in the eastern Archipelago; the defects of the constitution of their body at home; the expenses incident to the struggles of their servants in the East with their inveterate rivals the Portuguese; their want of forts; and consequent reliance on the slippery and selfish policy of the native authorities, brought their affairs to a very low ebb, and it was some time before the tide began to turn again. A fortunate accident, in 1636, led to the establishment of a factory on the banks of the Hoogley, a branch of the Ganges. A medical gentleman, of the name of Boughton, had proceeded from Surat to Agra; and happening to arrive at a moment when the daughter of the Emperor Shah

Jehan lay dangerously ill, he was called in after all the native doctors had exhausted their skill in vain. As the reward of his success in restoring the Princess to health, he received the privilege of carrying on a free trade; and on going to Bengal, he won by his skill no less favour with the nabob or soubadar of that country than he had earned at court, and he succeeded in obtaining for the Company those privileges which the emperor had granted to himself personally. In 1640, Boughton, who had been appointed physician to the nabob, with an ample salary, transmitted to Surat an account of these transactions, and of the privileges he had obtained for his countrymen. In consequence, two ships were despatched to the Hoogley, and the British commerce flourished greatly for a time. A regular factory was soon built (in 1642) on the left or eastern bank of the river, a few miles above the present city of Calcutta, and more than a hundred miles from the sea at the top of the bay of Bengal. Little, doubtless, could the founder of this establishment anticipate the period when the spot on which

he and his companions were barely allowed to raise a few humble sheds to cover their bales and boxes, was to become the chief seat of government of a mighty empire, embracing not only the whole peninsula of Hindustan, but cutting deep into the heart of the continent, over nearly thirty degrees of latitude, as far north as the mountains of Tibet and the sources of the Jumna and Hydaspes! Although the nabob professed all kindness and goodwill, he gave strict orders to his officers to superintend the building of the factory, and to prevent the erection of any castle or fort which could render the place convertible into a station of defence. Up to that date, indeed, (the middle of the seventeenth century), the Great Mogul had not suffered a single battery to be erected by foreigners in any part of his dominions. All the fortifications, in fact, which the Portuguese first, then the Dutch, and lastly the English, had acquired on the coasts of India, had either been bought or forcibly seized from Hindoo princes, then quite independent of the Mahometan or Mogul authority.

The English in Bengal were likewise prohibited from maintaining any armed force, except one ensign and thirty men to guard their property. The effect of these restrictions was to force the Company's servants to attend exclusively to the advancement of trade, and deputy factors were sent off from time to time to the principal points in the interior of Bengal and Bahar, where the most exquisite fabrics were, and still continue to be, manufactured. The factory contracted with the native merchants for the quantity of goods required, and they, on receiving one-half of the value in specie as a deposit, bound themselves, under a penalty, to fulfil, at stated periods, their own part of the contract. "By this mode of carrying on the trade," says an able historian, "the Company became invested with a right in all the goods for which they had contracted, even while these goods were in an unwrought or unprepared state; and from this circumstance their purchases then received the appellation of investments, which they have ever since retained."

Matters were not allowed to remain

very long in this flourishing condition. Pretexts were readily got up by the subordinate native governments for interfering with the free-trade system ; so repugnant to the habits and wants of a profligate and ambitious, and, of course, avaricious tyranny. It is indeed wonderful, all things considered, that the English were allowed to go on so long undisturbed ; for, up to 1660, they were exempted from the customs levied on the goods of other merchants. The sight of many spacious buildings, however, crammed full of the richest commodities, drawn together from all parts of the East by the wealth of the Company, and ready to be shipped for Europe, proved too great a temptation for the virtue of the worthy nabob, who insisted upon sharing in this golden harvest. The factors, of course, stoutly resisted this forced partnership in their profits, and produced the emperor's license granted to Boughton ; but that physician being now dead, the document, and all that it contained, was disavowed. The Company's servants, therefore, having no living testimony to produce, could urge nothing more

substantial than the undisputed immunities they had enjoyed so long under the sanction of the nabob.

‘ That is all very well, gentlemen,’ said the soubadar ; ‘ but let me hint, that as you have been indulged all along in these privileges merely by my bounty alone, and not at all by the influence of any superior authority, you will act wisely in handing over to me regularly a percentage upon all your profits, and you will also please to pay an additional duty henceforward on every item of your purchases at Dacca and elsewhere. Now I think of it,’ added the despot, ‘ I am just at this moment in want of a lac or so of rupees, which I shall be obliged to you to lend me, if you happen to have such a thing in your coffers.’

It was of no use for the poor traders to resist ; and these exactions went on increasing from day to day, for the nabob thought fit, in right of his own undisputed will and pleasure, to sit in judgment himself upon all differences between the English and his own subjects. And as the decisions of a bench so constituted were



almost always in one way, the poor factors drifted sadly to leeward in their speculations, whenever the native merchants fancied it more to their own interest to evade the payment of their debts than to fulfil their engagements; for their own bare testimony, as to the facts at issue, satisfied the judge. Bribery soon found its way into the court as a matter of course, and he who could bestow the most costly presents commanded the most favourable decisions. "Under a government so corrupt and debased," says the writer in the Asiatic Journal, vol. vii., "it will readily be believed that every artifice both of oppression and fraud was practised, in order to subject the English to fines and exactions, which, when they refused, or even hesitated to pay, their whole trade throughout the province was immediately suspended."

Appeals to the emperor, Shah Jehan, having produced no good effect, the factors in Bengal made up their minds to struggle through their difficulties, and to intrigue and bribe in their turn, but at all hazards to keep possession of so lucrative a trade. To their indefatigable per-

severance, therefore, and unconquerable patience, the English nation stood indebted for the preservation of their hold on that part of India. What might have been the effect of these measures had the mother country enjoyed any tolerable tranquillity about that period, it is difficult to say; but the Company's affairs, together with the corporation itself, and even their very name, were well nigh swallowed up and lost in the tremendous excitement of the civil war in England. The trade to India was, not unnaturally in such times, thrown open from 1652 to 1657, after which Cromwell thought better of the matter, and renewed the privileges of the Company, greatly to the annoyance of one party in England, who maintained, that if the trade were allowed to remain open, the British merchants could supply all Europe with Indian commodities, and even undersell the Dutch traders in Amsterdam itself; while another party declared that the nation had lost, during the few years the trade continued open, nearly all their privileges in India. There was a touch of truth on both sides;

but what the result of these arguments might have been upon Cromwell's mind can now only be guessed at, as he died shortly afterwards. To the great joy of the Company, Charles the Second gave them a fresh charter in 1661, investing them not only with exclusive trading privileges for fifteen years, but giving them a right to exercise civil jurisdiction, and to establish military authority. What was of still more importance, it empowered them to make war or to conclude peace with the 'infidels of India.' This charter, besides sundry minor privileges, permitted the Company to grant licenses to private merchants to traffic from port to port in India; and hence the name of 'country traders' came to be applied to a multitude of coasters and other shipping. Of this vast commerce the nation at home see nothing and know little, but it has exercised, from that hour to this, a prodigious influence on the prosperity of India, and, of course, indirectly contributed essentially to the commercial wealth of England. The capital and spirit of enterprise, indeed, are almost all British, which set these

active traders in motion, and keep them going in swarms along the whole line of Asiatic coast, from Babelmandel at the mouth of the Red Sea, to the Chinese ocean, and from Acheen-head at the north end of the island of Sumatra, to Cook's Straits in the savage islands of New Zealand, and indeed over the whole of the vast Indian Archipelago.

In 1663 Charles the Second obtained the island of Bombay from the Portuguese, as a part of the portion of the Infanta, whom he had married the year before; but finding the cost of maintaining this settlement greater than its revenue, he made it over to the Company in 1668. The circumstances connected with the occupation of that beautiful island and its splendid harbour, are so characteristic of those early periods of our Eastern history, and withal so instructive to public men in any times, that a hasty notice may not be considered uninteresting.

As soon as the British crown obtained a right to the island by treaty, they sent out a squadron, with a suitable force, to take possession. Lord Marleburgh, who had

been placed in command of this expedition, repaired to Goa, a Portuguese settlement about two hundred miles south of Bombay, and the residence of the viceroy. His Portuguese excellency, seeing that the treaty was explicit, accompanied the British authorities to Bombay, in order to surrender the establishment to its new masters. But the Portuguese colonists, amongst whom all the land of the island had been distributed, denied the right of their sovereign to turn them over, slave fashion, to any other power, and especially to a heretical power like that of England ; from whom they could expect little toleration on religious matters, even if their right of property were respected. The priests fomented these alarms to such a degree, that the viceroy at length retracted his promise, and refused to give up the place, upon which Marleburgh quietly withdrew from Bombay, and retired to a Portuguese settlement to the north near Surat. There he landed his troops to gain some refreshment after their long voyage.

But the Portuguese governor, alarmed at their warlike appearance, threatened

to demolish the English factory in his neighbourhood, unless the troops immediately re-embarked. Our pacific and complaisant commander-in-chief lost no time in getting on board again; and being now pretty well tired of knocking about in sight of the coast to no purpose, he sent the greater part of his force to an island near Goa, and proceeded himself to England.

The second in command having put the troops on shore, opened a fresh negotiation with the Portuguese viceroy for obtaining possession of Bombay; but he made no more way in the matter than his predecessor. Shortly afterwards he, fortunately, sunk under an epidemic disorder, which swept off at the same time most of the remaining troops. Nothing could be better timed than this epidemic; for, although it thinned the ranks and destroyed the greater part of the physical force of the expedition, it made way for a far more efficient moral power, in the intellectual vigour of the secretary, a person up to that moment unknown.

The secretary, now commander-in-chief,

at once negotiated a treaty with the Portuguese, the terms of which, without pertinaciously adhering to the unjust spirit of the original instrument, were sufficiently in accordance with it to be legal. What is more to the purpose, this new treaty was framed with a strict regard to the principles of justice and good sense, as well as consideration for the prejudices of the Portuguese inhabitants. All these had been overlooked in the original treaty made in Europe, in the most unfeeling manner; but Mr. Cook not only expressly and cheerfully stipulated that the existing occupiers of the soil should be guaranteed in the undisturbed possession of their estates, but that they should be protected in the full and free exercise of their religion.

The leading men amongst the colonists, who saw that at least they had to deal with an honourable man of business, immediately acquiesced in these arrangements, and allowed the island to be peaceably taken possession of. This desirable conclusion might probably have been reached at any previous moment of

the expedition, had the original commander-in-chief been a man of sense and decision of character.

Mr. Cook having assumed the government of Bombay pro tempore, in right of his own masculine understanding, transmitted to England a careful account of all his proceedings. Doubtless, he was well prepared for what followed, for he could hardly expect that the ministers who had followed up such a precious treaty with such an inefficient expedition, were likely to approve of the enlightened views which a subordinate person like Mr. Cook had taken of the subject. Accordingly, they disavowed all he had done, and sent out Sir Samuel Lucas as governor, with full powers to make such alterations as he might think fit, after investigating the condition and circumstances of the inhabitants. These sweeping powers, had they been intrusted to injudicious hands, might have overturned the whole, because there appears to have been no proviso about keeping faith with the inhabitants under Mr. Cook's treaty. Most fortunately, however, the plenipotentiary found the island



in so settled and tranquil a state, and the Portuguese so contented with their new government, that he considered it not only unjust, but highly inexpedient, to annul, or even to alter any part of the recent treaty. What is still more pleasant, he took upon himself to confirm Mr. Cook as governor of the island, and then returned to England, leaving it to the able negotiator who by his own abilities had gained the island, to complete its defences, and render it a useful possession to his country.

The history of British India, in all its various departments, is crowded with instances similar to that which has just been related, where men, totally unknown before, have been unexpectedly brought into action, sometimes when they themselves least expected it. Thus, men of the most modest and even humble pretensions, have in India often succeeded in raising the renown of their own country, and eminently advancing the happiness of millions of the natives, besides leaving for themselves a celebrity which hardly any combination of circumstances could have won.

for them any where else. Birth, patronage, wealth, and other sources of power, may, indeed, in all countries do a great deal to elevate the fortunes, and even the fame of some favoured persons. But it requires the stimulus of disaster, and the perils of unequal contest, and, perhaps, the failure of all the ordinary resources of war and politics, in such a wide and varied field as India, to call into the full light of the highest class of distinction such master spirits as Hastings, and Clive, and Coote, and Wellesley, and many others, whose names, though not so well known to us at home as these are, will continue familiar as household words in Asia, as long as the history of our Eastern empire is heard of even by tradition.

In the early part of the reign of King Charles II., which corresponds to that of the Great Mogul emperor, Aurungzebe, the English, in spite of all the opposition of their rivals abroad, and the distraction of the fierce civil wars at home, together with their own financial difficulties, contrived gradually to attain a considerable degree of stability and importance among

the nations of India. They had begun to form political connexions, and to assume something of a military spirit and character, which, though their operations may be difficult to trace, unquestionably form the germ of that power by which they were afterwards distinguished. They now possessed settlements on both sides of the peninsula: at Baroach, Surat, Bombay, Tellicherry, and Calicut, all lying on the western, or Malabar coast; at Conjeveram, Madras, and Masulipatam, on the eastern, or Coromandel coast: besides which, they possessed various other establishments on the shores of Orissa and of Bengal, near the mouth of the Ganges. Amongst the Indian islands, they still retained a factory at Bencoolen, on the western side of Sumatra; and one at Acheen, on the north end of that gigantic island, which lies so nicely balanced across the equator. In Java, also, near the western extremity, they owned an establishment at Bantam. Even to Siam and Tonquin, and as far off as Amoz, on the coast of China, and still further to the island of Formosa, these industrious tra-

ders had extended their feelers with more or less success. Surat, on the west coast of the peninsula, was then the grand headquarters, as Calcutta is now, with which the chiefs and agents of all the different subordinate establishments were instructed to correspond. There occurred no very great difficulty in complying with such orders in the case of those establishments on the continent of India; but the official intercourse between the presidency of Surat and the factories in the Eastern Archipelago and coasts of China, became, in those days of imperfect communication, little more than nominal.

James II. granted increased immunities to the East India Company; he also authorised them to build forts, to levy troops, to determine causes by court-martial, and to coin money. By these and other privileges, they were raised to a station which they disgraced by a thousand acts of corruption, violence, and tyrannical oppression. In 1694, the Company obtained a fresh charter from Queen Mary; but parliament having detected sundry abuses in their affairs, and a furious party hav-

ing started up in England against them, they had enough to do to maintain their existence. The merchants who were excluded from the Indian commerce by the monopoly of the Company, and who by them were termed interlopers, naturally joined against these exclusive privileges, and at length succeeded in outbidding their rivals, and obtaining a charter in 1698 as partial as that against which they had so vehemently complained. The old Company, however, again raised their heads, and next year obtained a confirmation of their former charter; so that England had now two East India Companies, both established by Act of Parliament, instead of one acting under the King's prerogative. The contests between these rival bodies soon rose to a high pitch; but, as Lord Nelson said of another species of warfare, 'it was too hot to last long,' and, after much absurd altercation, they united their stock, and assumed, early in the eighteenth century (22d July 1702), that name under which they have ever since been incorporated, "The United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies."

It may easily be imagined, that while these disputes were raging between the rival companies at home, their respective servants abroad were not idle; in fact, the very existence of both in the East was placed at hazard by these internal dissensions. Nor was it to be expected that animosities so deeply rooted should at once subside, upon the union of the principals at home; but the obvious necessity of the case, or rather the pressing pecuniary advantages of compromising these squabbles, in order to prevent the intrusion of third parties, speedily led to an adjustment. The Government required from the United Company, in exchange for a very favourable charter, a loan of more than a million sterling, without interest; and the parties most concerned in staving off the inconveniences of this loan, and in making the best bargain they could with Government, soon saw the fitness of uniting cordially in order to avert the common danger. It was at length agreed to submit these questions to the Earl of Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer of England, by whose award the Company agreed to abide. The

details of this arrangement are not otherwise interesting, except that they led to an amalgamation of the property and debts of the two rival parties; both at home and in India. Their affairs then became quite interlaced, and their interests, consequently, inseparable; and from that time forward, the intercourse of the English with the native powers of India has been much more intimate, extensive, and every way important.

## CHAPTER III.

THE FRENCH IN INDIA — BLACK HOLE AT  
CALCUTTA — HYDER ALI'S INVASION OF  
THE CARNATIC.

THE affairs of the Company soon began to prosper merrily, both at home and abroad, under the double influence of political and commercial peace; for the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, by allowing the enterprise of the different nations of Europe to find its best exercise in the promotion of mutual advantage at home, extended its salutary influence to their respective adventurers in the East. The capital and talent which had formerly been wasted by the two English Companies in counteracting each other's wishes, were now combined to produce the common end of gainful traffic; and as the British settlements in India were about that period managed by persons of con-



siderable prudence and ability, every thing for a time went on well. But it happened then—as it always will happen—that when England was deprived of the fervent excitement of war, her energies became disengaged from the details of foreign contention, and her people soon began to cast about for fresh topics of agitation in their own civil matters at home. Accordingly, as the success of the United Company trading to the East Indies had become notorious, they were not long allowed to enjoy their prosperity in peace and quietness. The watchword of ‘monopoly!’ rung over the country, and interlopers, as they were called, soon began to thrust themselves into the field. These interlopers consisted chiefly of British traders serving under foreign flags; and it cost the Company not a little trouble to put them down, by royal proclamations and acts of parliament formed expressly for the punishment of all such competitors. A rival set of foreign traders also started up against them about this time (1716) in the shape of an Ostend Company, under the sanction of the Emperor of Germany, and consequent

upon the acquisition of the Netherlands by the house of Austria. The old Dutch Company became equally alarmed at the activity of these intruders, and on several occasions actually interfered by force to put down this rivalry. Our United Merchants contented themselves with acts of parliament prohibiting foreign adventures to India under severe penalties, and giving the East India Company power to seize and send home all British subjects found in the East, who were not in the service or did not bear the license of the said body corporate ; and thus, after a time, by these combined means, their foreign opposition was beaten out of the field.

This opposition, though a mere bugbear, answered the purpose of frightening these monopolists into caution, and, no doubt, prepared them for the more formidable rivalry of the French, who were then considered our national enemies, and who, even in these enlightened days, and in spite of the march of intellect, reform, free trade, and liberality to boot, are still, and will, probably, ever continue to be so considered. After struggling in vain for the

greater part of the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth, the French succeeded, about 1720, in establishing an East India Company, the commercial returns for which proved so considerable, that both the English traders and their government began to fidget under this new competition. The nation at large, therefore, who took part with the Company, looked forward with pleasure to a war which should enable them, at all events, to throw the French interlopers overboard. On the other hand, our great rivals, who, as we all well know, are hearty fighters when war is agreed upon, felt so anxious to protect their rising commerce in the East, that they actually proposed, that "when the war in Europe commenced," there should be no quarrel between their respective Companies on the shores of Hindustan. But it was idle in the French to expect that while their fleet and ours were thundering at one another in the Channel, and our armies crossing bayonets in the Low Countries, there would be less active national animosity on the coast of Coromandel.

There is an amusing apologue bear-

ing on this point of politics in one of the fables of Pilpay. It was agreed, it seems, between the two great political rivals in the woods—the tiger and the lion—that their respective subjects, prowling near a well-stocked but distant sheepfold, should not interfere with one another while the two monarchs fought out their quarrel by fair means at home. The Persian poet draws a veil over the particulars of the struggle at head-quarters, but presents us with a pretty picture of the foraging party of triumphant lions next day in full-occupation of the sheepfold, and in close alliance with the terrified shepherds—while not a single tiger, he assures us, was to be seen in the field.

In 1744, 'the war that for a space did fail,' broke out in Europe between the French and English; and the flame, in spite of all pacific contracts, soon spread to Asia, where, by a policy as short-sighted as that of Pilpay's shepherds, the native princes of the country permanently sacrificed their nationality for the attainment of mere transient objects of personal hatred or ambition. Whatever may have been the effects on

the natives of this singular contest between the members of the French and English Companies on the plains of Hindustan, its salutary consequences on the British interests in that quarter of the world proved eventually very great. Heretofore nothing could have been more lawless, or, sooth to say, in many instances more corrupt or oppressive, than the conduct of the East India Company's servants in the East. Most of them appear to have recognised no principle but that of avarice, for they sought alone to advance their own pecuniary interests and those of their relations and dependents. In proportion as their strength and means in other respects increased, so did their greediness and oppression. From less to more, iniquity at last became the fashion; and as there seldom existed any very obvious or high motive to honour, but always a pretty high pecuniary motive to venality close at hand, accompanied by little or no personal danger from such gainful practices, nothing can well be conceived worse than the whole system soon became. When, however, a good, honest, avowed war

broke out between the rival European nations, more manly and generous motives were substituted for those of mere money-making; and the huckstering spirit of commercial squabbling was supplanted by the point of honour. Danger and difficulty, indeed, in all times and in all countries, prove marvellous teachers of humility and docility on the part of those who, in times of peace, are sure to be the most noisy, arrogant, and untractable. From the very same causes, in seasons of great trial, the modest and the brave, the most gifted and the best-informed members of every community, float naturally to the surface, and soon come into universal notice.

So, at all events, it proved in India about the middle of the last century, where the contest was no longer carried on between obscure and unobserved factors, agents, or traders, but between high-bred and intelligent officers, men of character and responsibility, acting under the full observation of their country and the world. At first, of course, the master-spirits who were then in the field could not be expected to impart

to the public service at large any great portion of their own taste in these matters, chiefly because the system of Indian rule had heretofore been so radically bad, that it required a long period to weed out the abuses. Ere long, however, India became, for the first time, a scene in which character was duly appreciated, and reputation was to be earned as well as money gained. Many names were then first heard which have long taken a distinguished station in history. Lawrence, and Clive, and Coote, and many more, might be enumerated, whose fame even the splendour and proximity of modern deeds have scarcely dimmed.

During the fierce war waged by the French and English in the Carnatic, on the eastern side of the peninsula, between 1744 and 1748, when the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle gave them breathing time, the English were taught some severe lessons. For example, M. Labourdonnais landed and pressed the English so closely, that they were obliged to come to terms for the surrender of Madras, after it had been in possession of the English for more than

a century. The garrison, unwilling to give up the town, stipulated for a ransom ; but the Frenchman, on the other hand, although he had no objection to the ransom, felt naturally desirous also of the ' gloire ' of hoisting the flag of his nation over the works of Fort St. George. He therefore made an arrangement, to which he pledged his honour, that, immediately after taking possession and merely displaying the French banner on the walls, he would give the place back again upon the payment of a moderate sum of money. This singular contract, however, was totally disapproved of, and for a time effectually crossed, by another French authority, the Governor of Pondicherry, M. Dupleix, a name then becoming well known in the East.

The French, it may be remarked, held at that time two principal positions or presidencies on the eastern side of the Cape of Good Hope :—one at the Isle of France, in the Indian ocean ; the other at Pondicherry, on the Coromandel coast. M. Labourdonnais was Governor of the Isle of France and the other insular posses-



sions of the French, and M. Dupleix of those of the continent of India. Accordingly, when the English sent a squadron to those seas, on the breaking out of the war in 1744, M. Labourdonnais lost no time in proceeding after them, as soon as he ascertained that they had passed the Isle of France. This distinguished French officer, who thought and acted for himself, succeeded in pushing his opponents out of the way, and, as I have already mentioned, capturing Madras. Independently of the terms upon which he acquired this fortress, it appears that the French admiral had positive orders from his own government not to make any territorial conquests whatever; and he accordingly prepared to give back the presidency to the English in the spirit of these instructions as well as those of the treaty of ransom. But the continental governor, Mons. Dupleix, within whose department the conquest had taken place, saw the matter in a different light.

To him nothing could seem more preposterous than giving up a position such as that of Madras, by whatever means ac-

quired. He entreated, scolded, commanded, but all in vain; and Labourdonnais being a man of honour, prepared to surrender his prize in terms of his promise. The ships under Labourdonnais, however, were sorely pressed by want; and M. Dupleix, hoping to compel his colleague into submission, refused all assistance to his own country's fleet, and at last, with great joy, he beheld them dispersed by a gale of wind. To such lengths did this wily governor carry his anxiety to gain permanent possession of Madras by the discomfiture of Labourdonnais, that he actually tried, though in vain, to raise a mutiny amongst the French ships, hoping that the admiral might be sent prisoner to Pondicherry! At last poor Labourdonnais was obliged to agree that the period of evacuation of Madras should be altered from the 15th of October, 1746, to the 15th of January, 1747. This was enough for Monsieur Dupleix. The Monsoon rendered it impossible for the fleet to remain, and Labourdonnais went off; Dupleix, meanwhile, laughing at the convention, kept fast hold of Madras, and declared the

treaty of ransom annulled. He then took possession of the keys of all the magazines, and carried the English governor and the principal inhabitants prisoners to Pondicherry! Ere long, fresh reinforcements came out from Europe to both parties; and Admiral Boscawen would probably have punished M. Dupleix for his flagrant breach of faith in the case of Madras, by taking Pondicherry, had not the news arrived, in November 1749, of the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, by an express stipulation of which Madras was to be given up by the French.

Still, neither party in India seems ever to have thought that peace between France and England could possibly mean any thing more than a truce, or temporary cessation of hostilities. At all events, the respective French and English armies were kept up with as much care as possible; and as they could not with any propriety go to loggerheads directly with each other, until their principals in Europe gave the signal, they employed their forces in assisting the different native princes, and fitting them to their own ends against

the season of renewed hostilities. This system of intriguing led to such complicated embarrassments on both sides, that the Directors at home, in utter despair of disentangling the ravelled skein which their servants had wound for them in India, applied to their respective sovereigns to mediate between the conflicting French and English companies. At the very moment, however, that reasonable terms had been proposed, and almost agreed upon, the war of 1756 broke out, and, of course, out flew also the swords of the Europeans in India, eager to cut the Gordian knot which their respective Companies had been so busily engaged in tying during the half a dozen years of peace.

The war, which soon raged briskly in India, gained a new and important character by the alliance of the adjacent native powers. Dupleix, whose star reigned in the ascendant for some time amongst the powers of India, not only conceived the grand idea of nominating the nabob of the Carnatic, and also of essentially influencing the affairs of the Deccan, or middle part of the peninsula, lying farther north,

but he hoped to bring the imperial throne of Delhi within his range. And certainly, had this energetic officer been duly supported by his government, or even by his own countrymen in India, he might have executed a considerable part of these splendid political enterprises, which, though deemed by most people at the time absolutely visionary, have since been far eclipsed by the policy and arms of the British.

Further to the east, also, English affairs seemed to be falling to pieces. Suraja Dowlah, a powerful native, advanced, in 1756, upon Calcutta, and so terrified the authorities, that they scampered off in such indecent and inexcusable haste as to take no charge of the hindmost, whom they left to the proverbial care of a certain respectable personage. The governor himself was of the number who took such good care of themselves, and escaped in the boats. The celebrated "Black Hole," however, into which his colleague Mr. Holwell, and one hundred and forty-six of the unfortunate garrison, who could not find means of escaping, were thrust, would seem a fit residence for persons

who thus pusillanimously deserted their friends at such a moment.

The details of this horrid story were once very familiar to the public; but as time diminishes the knowledge of such things, it may not be out of place to mention, that of a hundred and forty-six prisoners, only twenty-three were taken out alive next morning! This dungeon, called by the garrison the "Black Hole," was only twenty feet square, so that each individual had not much above two square feet and a half to stand upon, or somewhat less than the space covered by an ordinary chess-board. This confined room was fitted with two small windows, and these were obstructed by the verandah. It was in the hottest month of the year, and the night also happened to be particularly sultry. The excessive pressure of the bodies of the prisoners soon convinced them that it would be impossible for many of them to live through the night. Violent, but vain attempts were made to force the door. Mr. Holwell succeeded in getting near one of the windows, and by his remonstrances he produced a short interval

of quiet, during which he applied to an officer outside, "who," as Orme, the historian, says, "bore some marks of humanity in his countenance, and by the promise of a thousand rupees induced him to apply for a separation of the prisoners. The old man went to try, but returned with the fatal sentence, that no relief could be expected, 'because the nabob was asleep, and no one dared to wake him!'

For most of the dreadful details of that horrid night, I must refer to Orme and other writers. It may be enough to mention that the first effect of the confinement seems to have been a profuse perspiration; then intolerable and raging thirst; next excruciating pains in the breast, with difficulty of breathing little short of suffocation. Various means were attempted by the unhappy prisoners to gain room. They stripped off their clothes, and several times tried the experiment of sitting down; but when the order was given to rise again, numbers always sunk dead to the ground! Some skins of water were brought to the window; but as no one could wait to be

regularly served, furious and fatal contests took place, during which the water was scattered uselessly over their heads. Delirium and stupefaction beset most of those who remained alive. Dreadful struggles and mortal combats then arose in the attempts to reach the windows; so that, at two in the morning, not more than fifty remained alive. Mr. Holwell had sunk apparently dead in the heap when daylight broke; but as it was thought he might have more influence than the others at the window, he was drawn up, and Captain Mills, with rare generosity, resigned his fresh-air place to him. Mr. Holwell had scarcely begun to recover his senses when the nabob sent to know if the chief of the English was alive, and being told that he had survived the night, the prison-door was unlocked. But even then the dead were so piled one upon another, and the survivors had so little strength remaining, that they were employed near half an hour in removing the bodies which lay against the door, before they could open a passage to go out, one at a time.



Calcutta was recovered by the gallantry and skill of the great Clive and Admiral Watson, early in the following year, 1757, at the celebrated battle of Plassey, nearly about the time that accounts of renewed hostilities in Europe reached India. This success gave Clive a vast accession of influence in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, the details of which it would be difficult to condense. Notwithstanding these successes, the French influence about this period had reached nearly the highest point it ever attained in India. M. Bussy, a great French commander, had gained such advantages in the northern part of the peninsula, and had made himself so powerful in the Deccan, that he was earnestly entreated by Suraja Dowlah to assist him in expelling their common enemy, the pestilent English, as he termed them, from Bengal. This being an enterprise after M. Bussy's own heart, he cheerfully agreed to co-operate with the native prince; and there is no saying what might have been the result, had not the splendid successes of Clive broken up the alliance. Bussy's activity, however, found ample

employment in the Circars and other places, where he made his power felt much to our cost.

Meanwhile (1757) a large French reinforcement, under Count de Lally, an officer who had distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy in the year 1745, arrived at Pondicherry as commander-in-chief of the French forces in India. This energetic, but rather precipitate person, lost no time in laying siege to Madras, and after taking possession of the black town, had almost succeeded in capturing the fort, when Admiral Pococke arrived at the critical moment, and raised the siege. Lally then fell back, and set to work to strengthen himself and worry the English by forming alliances with the neighbouring nabobs. The English, however, could likewise play at this game, and it is quite distracting to read of the endless intrigues and counter-intrigues with the Hindoo states into which these motives led both the European parties. Well might Orme exclaim, "That the native governments of India have no idea of national honour in the conduct of their politics; and as soon as

they think the party with whom they are engaged is reduced to great distress, they shift their alliance without hesitation to the opposite side, making immediate advantage the only rule of their action."

It was reserved for a later period of our Indian history to act entirely above board, and to free ourselves from the contamination of these unworthy and pliable politics, of which, at first, it had been so vainly imagined permanent advantage might be taken by honourable men. Generally speaking, the cumbersome alliance of the different native powers whom the French or British either coaxed or awed into companionship, proved fully as mischievous as beneficial. Their means of assistance stood generally in the inverse ratio of their pretensions, while their good faith, so to call it, owned no rule but that of their apparent interest.

At the peace of 1763 the English remained sovereigns of the rich provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, the northern Circars, part of the Carnatic, and all their old possessions on the Malabar or western coast. The resources of their allies,

the nabob of the Carnatic, and the vizier of Oude, were likewise almost entirely at their disposal.

Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century, about the year 1760, the celebrated Hyder Ali came into the field. This able chief was of a stamp very different, in many respects, from any native authority whom either of the rival European nations fighting in the East had hitherto measured swords withal. Like the French and English, Hyder was himself an interloper in authority; for, though a native of the Mysore country, he possessed no legitimate title to the throne. In fact, he was merely an officer of the Hindoo Rajah, or king of that country, and a very subordinate officer too, being no more than a corporal; hence one of the names by which he is still known amongst the natives, Hyder Naig—Naig or Naik being the Indian word for that non-commissioned functionary. By a series of measures combining much boldness and cunning, under the guidance of a spirit of unprincipled and merciless ambition, and of talents vastly above the average of his countrymen, he contrived

in the end to overthrow the ancient Hindoo dynasty of Mysore, and to establish a Mussulman succession in its place. He had sagacity enough to perceive, very early in his career of usurpation, that the legitimacy of his authority, which owed in truth nothing to justice or prescriptive usage, would not be treated with much respect by either of the contending European parties, supposing one or other of them to gain any great ascendancy in India. As he probably hated both French and English with equal intensity, his greatest happiness would unquestionably have been to sit still and see the two rival companies demolish one another as completely as did the two Kilkenny cats in the story; after which it would have been easy for Hyder to have rid his country of the remaining tip of the tail—he cared not which. Such, no doubt, must have been his fondest hopes; but the Topee Wallas, or “hat-wearers,” who had chosen the level plains of Coromandel as their Oriental Flanders, on which arena to fight out their quarrels, seemed only to increase in strength, like bars of steel by hammering. Hyder, therefore, from the

high land of Mysore, perceived the necessity of deciding which of them he should choose as an ally, not—Heaven knows!—out of any good-will to either, but purely to secure the eventual ruin of both. This was statesman-like and patriotic; and his election of the French for his allies further shewed his sagacity; for the choice certainly gave him and his country a chance for independence, which an opposite course could never have done.

Hyder, who was unquestionably a very able man, appears to have well understood the characters of the two European nations fighting before him, and he probably reasoned in this way :

“ If I side with the English, we two shall presently beat the French out of the country. But will not these English then turn about and demolish me ? Whereas, if I join the French, and by our joint exertions we extirpate the English, it will not cost me much trouble afterwards to put Monsieur Jean Crapaud across the surf.”

Hyder became accordingly a steady friend of the French ; and right well did he fight their battle against us ; and after him,

his son Tippoo, who was bred in the same school, even bettered by the instruction.

Tippoo, by the way, famously made out Mr. Shandy's theory of the efficacy of names in modifying character, inasmuch as Tippoo in the Canarese language means Tiger. This name was bestowed by Hyder, from his son having been born near a superb mausoleum at Arcot, dedicated to the celebrated Mahometan devotee "Tippoo Sultan;" a spot which still continues to be a favourite resort of all devout Musulmen in Coromandel. The word sultan, I also learn from Wilks (vol. ii. p. 567), signifies the conqueror of his passions, or the spiritual king or lord. Thus, since the tiger amongst the Indians is considered the monarch of the woods, as the lion is with us, both the members of the sultan's name indicated sovereignty. He himself, indeed, shewed his agreeable recollection of this connexion by adopting the stripe of the royal tiger as a part of his insignia.

An accidental circumstance having led to Hyder's being appointed to the command of a fortress, when still a subordinate officer under the Hindoo dynasty, he

availed himself of his command to prepare means for enacting the robber on a great scale. Barbarous inroads were in those days common all over India, sometimes by Pindaries, sometimes by Mahrattas, and generally in a wild and tumultuous manner, grievously scourging to the wretched inhabitants, who always suffered ten times more in proportion than the invaders ever gained, since for one bullock or sack of rice carried off, ten were sure to be slaughtered or flung to waste. The Mysore country was ravaged by the Mahrattas in 1759; in 1761, by Buneé Visagee Pundit; and in 1765, 67, and 70, by Madoo Row; in 1771 by Trimbuc Row; in 1774 by Ragoonaut Row; in 1776 and 86 by Hurry Punt; and, lastly, in 1791 and 92, it sustained the most merciless ravaging it had ever been afflicted with, from the troops of Purseram Bow, a fierce marauder. These, as I have before mentioned, were undisciplined and desolating incursions, sweeping like whirlwinds over the country, and invariably leaving famine and pestilence to glean the fields which the wholesale invaders had cut down.



Hyder, who was a gentleman-like robber compared to these fellows, plundered his country in a much more systematic style. There are, it appears, or at least there were in those days, in most of the Indian states, a species of troops, or rather armed men, trained in the arts of plunder and theft in all their ramifications, and disciplined also after a fashion to resist attacks as well as to invade defended positions. Hyder became the captain of an immense gang of these cut-throats, numerous parties of whom he used to send out to pillage far and near, while he modestly contented himself with one-half of the spoil. Though he could never manage to learn to read or write, he yet kept such an exact arithmetical account in his memory, and possessed such multifarious checks upon the operations of his raggamuffins, that it became almost impossible to rob or cheat the man who robbed and cheated all the world. Hyder cared little, and his gang nothing, whether friends or foes were plundered, so long as the safety was equal. Grain, cattle, sheep, clothing, turbans, the

anklets and ear-rings of travellers, and even of peaceful villagers, were all alike to him. In this way, he gradually collected together property enough to enable him to go to war, at the fittest moment, in a more open and soldier-like style. In process of time, Hyder found himself at the head of fifteen hundred horse, and nearly five thousand foot soldiers. Backed by these troops, though he still rendered nominal allegiance to the reigning Hindoo monarch, he cruised about over his own country, Mysore, and the adjacent territories, pretty much at will. In reading the accounts of the silent and stealthy way in which this cunning warrior moved from place to place, one is perpetually reminded of the manner in which a tiger quietly watches for the most suitable moment to make his fatal spring. It cost Hyder, in fact, only two good leaps to seat himself on the throne of Mysore.

An invasion of the Mahrattas—the every-day occurrence of that wretched period—afforded him the first opportunity. As nobody was considered strong enough to resist these freebooters but

the formidable Hyder Naig, the corporal was accordingly appointed commander-in-chief of the army. This was all he wanted at that stage of his career. He speedily justified his appointment by drubbing and driving back the Mahrattas, and forcing them to consent to a favourable treaty. The poor rajah, the nominal sovereign of Mysore, was then, as most of his brother-sovereigns in India were, under the direct control of a despotic Premier. A mutiny being readily got up, the troops deposed the minister, and placed Hyder at their head. The rajah was then kindly permitted to enjoy a certain degree of liberty; while Hyder, in order (as he said) to pacify the tumultuous troops, consented to take charge of more than half of the rajah's dominions. But, had he wished it, he could at once have reduced the army to order by holding up his little finger.

At this moment the usurper was made sensible of his own rising consequence in the balance of power by an application from M. Lally to unite with the French in expelling the English. I have already mentioned, that he cheerfully agreed to co-

operate in this great national undertaking. But Hyder had also his own private and immediate purposes to serve, as he wished to secure a district lying between his recently appropriated slice of Mysore and the Carnatic, which lay between him and the bay of Bengal, on the eastern side of the peninsula. While he was deeply busied with these intrigues, the legitimate rajah's mother had well nigh upset Hyder's authority altogether, by uniting to the regular Mysore troops a force of Mahrattas, a sort of mercenaries always at hand, it appears, for any such desperate purpose. Hyder's camp being surrounded, he was all but destroyed, though he contrived to escape, and having reached Bangalore, he entered that fort before orders came to shut him out. His troops, however, which were hastening to his relief, were intercepted by the Mahrattas, who might and would have cut them off, had they not been bribed by the offer of one of Hyder's territories. The attention of these freebooters was diverted at the same moment by the offer of a sum of money made by the English to detach them from M. Lally,

who, in his turn, had also trafficked with the same party of Mahrattas, in order to induce them to take part with the French then besieged in Pondicherry! Thus these robbers, in addition to what regular plunder fell in their way coming and going, pocketed no fewer than three douceurs from three different powers, while all the parties hated one another with the most undisguised bitterness, thus affording a tolerably characteristic specimen of political prostitution. After a few more intrigues, and now and then a little fighting, Hyder became the undisputed sovereign of Mysore, and within a very few years afterwards he had consolidated his power so much, that he marched (in 1769) directly towards Madras, the very presidency itself, the head-quarters of the English; and having encamped within ten miles of the fort, he may be said almost to have dictated his own terms. He had just made a successful incursion, according to his annual custom, into the Carnatic; and as the English, who were unprovided with cavalry, could neither overtake him nor interrupt his devastations, he swept,

in his merciless style of warfare, the greatest part of the southern division of that country, sent his plunder home, and then, as I have just mentioned, he came to St. Thomas's Mount to beard and bully the English government. In this he succeeded completely, and having made a treaty of alliance and defence with the Company, retired to his own country.

About the middle of 1778, intelligence was received in India of the fresh war in Europe between the French and English. But the local contests, and other transactions with which we were involved in India, rendered hostilities with the French a subordinate concern, instead of being, as before, one of the first importance. Nevertheless we hailed with joy, as usual, an opportunity of coming to blows with our old antagonists; and although we very soon deprived them of their presidency Pondicherry, Hyder Ali still gave us ample occupation. He had been so much worried by those infamous marauders the Mahrattas, that he called upon the government at Madras to fulfil the terms of their treaty of April 4th, 1769, by which

the Company had undoubtedly bound themselves to assist him. The English, however, fought shy of the defensive stipulations of the treaty, which evasion on their part irritated Hyder to the last degree. But he prudently reserved his indignation until the Mahrattas were driven back, and then he had time to think of the English, whom he congratulated, ironically, on their capture of Pondicherry, giving them at the same time abundant evidence that he bore them any thing but good-will. In fact, with his usual caution, he only waited for his moment. In July 1780, accordingly, he descended the Ghauts with an army of not fewer than ninety thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were formed into regular battalions, mostly commanded by Frenchmen. His cavalry amounted nearly to thirty thousand. To these were added a hundred pieces of cannon, managed by Europeans, or by natives formerly trained by the English for the service of a nabob, one of their allies, from whom Hyder had seduced them. Monsieur Lally, of course, joyfully agreed to join the party with several corps

of Frenchmen, and he also took a considerable share in planning and conducting the expedition.

This formidable inroad of Hyder spread dismay from one end of the Carnatic to the other, and grievously perplexed the councils of the Madras government. I found many of the details still fresh in the memory of old persons in those countries more than thirty years afterwards. The British troops were soon called in from their outposts, and letters full of alarm written to the other presidencies and subordinate settlements. But the governor, the council, and the general in command, instead of being united, fell by the ears, thwarted one another's operations, and thus greatly diminished the efficiency of the means in their power. An advance of troops was indeed made; but, owing partly to an error on our side arising from deficient information, and partly to the activity and numbers of Hyder and the address of Lally, a division of the British army, under Colonel Baillie, was cut off and entirely destroyed near Conjeveram: It was on this occasion that Sir David



Baird was captured and carried to Seringapatam. Hyder's son, Tippoo Sultan, was a chief actor in this disastrous affair, in which he commanded a detachment.

Colonel Baillie's conduct was most gallant, but all his intrepidity and that of his companions availed nothing against the mighty host which Hyder brought upon him. About two hundred prisoners were taken to Seringapatam, and subjected to a captivity said to be more horrible than death. It is particularly pleasant to know, that all the French officers, from Lally downwards, exerted themselves unceasingly to alleviate the sufferings of the English prisoners. The French, indeed, were provoked to the last degree with the ferocity of Hyder and his hopeful son, while the natives could not repress their astonishment at the sympathy expressed by their European allies in the fate of such determined enemies as the English. Hyder Ali was cruel upon principle, rather than vindictive or unfeeling by nature, and it suited his policy at that moment, as he thought, to chastise his fallen enemies; but it does not appear that he took any intrinsic plea-

sure in witnessing the sufferings of others, when their pain did not contribute to his own ease or profit. The following sketch of this part of his character is drawn by one who had the most ample means, short of personal acquaintance, of knowing him. It serves to fill up some blanks in one's idea of a regular and absolutely uncontrolled tyrant, and what was deficient in Hyder's character, his worthy son Tippoo amply supplied.

“Those brilliant and equivocal virtues,” says Wilks, in his History of Mysore, “which gild the crimes of other conquerors, were utterly unknown to the breast of Hyder. No admiration of bravery in resistance, or of fortitude in the fallen, ever excited sympathy, or softened the cold calculating decision of their fate. No contempt for unmanly submission ever aggravated the treatment of the abject and mean. Every thing was weighed in the balance of utility, and no grain of human feeling, no breath of virtue or of vice, was permitted to incline the beam. In council, he had no adviser and no confidant. And there was but one solitary example

of feelings incident to our nature, affection for his unworthy son Tippoo Sultan, whom he nominated to be his successor,—while uniformly, earnestly, and broadly predicting that this son would lose the empire which he himself had gained.”

The supineness of the government of Madras, at the time Hyder was known to all the rest of the world to be preparing to overrun the Carnatic, is something altogether inexplicable. On Hyder's part nothing appears to have been omitted, and no department escaped his personal inspection; so that he marched from his capital in the month of June, 1780, with a force which had probably not been equalled, and certainly not surpassed, in strength and efficiency by any native army that had ever been assembled in the south of India. Hyder's ultimate object was, not the destruction, but the permanent conquest of the Carnatic, and the entire extinction of the English in the south of India. The prevalent impression, however, is, that on his first descent from Mysore, he perpetrated the wanton and indiscriminate destruction of the whole

country. This sort of proceeding might have suited the taste of his vindictive, bull-headed son Tippoo, but would have been out of character with the sagacious Hyder, who, as I have before observed, was never cruel or destructive except upon principle; and if he were guiltless of any feeling of remorse or tenderness, he was equally unconscious of any motive to active revenge without an ultimate military purpose. What he actually did in the way of desolation, is quite sufficient to give us an idea of the nature of an Indian incursion. When we know, therefore, that the evil done to the invaded country, and the cruelties inflicted upon the native inhabitants, were studiously and systematically limited to their lowest amount, by a long-sighted and powerful soldier in command of an army under perfect obedience to his will, we may form some faint conception (but I am told only a very faint conception) of the dreadful misery of those almost perennial invasions to which the greater number of the states of India were exposed before the full establishment of the British power. If there be defects in our

modern system of Indian administration (as no doubt there are), who that has ever glanced over any record of those days antecedent to the consolidation of our paramount authority, will deny that the total and permanent exemption from such bitter scourges is a blessing of the highest order, far more than sufficient to compensate for innumerable minor privations? Even one moderate and well-regulated inroad, such as that of Hyder into the Carnatic in 1780, includes, in the space of a few weeks, tenfold more actual distress than the most industrious collector of charges against the East India Company could scrape together in the half century which has since elapsed. And our respect will increase for the present admirable system of government, which it is so much the fashion, as a matter of course, to abuse, when we consider, as we ought in fairness to consider, that the unspeakable blessing of security, peace, and protection, together with the most unbounded religious toleration and personal freedom from interference in every custom to which the natives are attached, are not confined to the Car-

natic alone, nor to the limits of the three presidencies. It forms, indeed, the true praise and glory of the East India Company, that this government of security and tranquillity not only spreads far and wide over the whole peninsula of Hindustan, but extends high into the north, to the very sources of the Indus and Ganges. Unfortunately, however, for the well-deserved fame of the East India Company, it is much easier to point out the evils of those horrid and lawless Mahratta and Pindary incursions, and the almost total absence of good government which existed in former days, than to explain the benefits of the system by which these and many other evils have been done away with. A house on fire, or a country submerged by an inundation, are evils within the ken of every booby in the neighbourhood, and the story of destruction is told in terms suited to the meanest capacity; but when the operation begins of describing the fresh fabric which has been erected on the old site, or detailing the manner in which the desolated country has been drained and recultivated, the true difficulty is discovered. Thus,

while almost any one can point out what is defective or incomplete in the Indian system, comparatively few persons are disposed to consider what is essentially excellent in it; and still fewer seem to be aware of the progress which has been made, and is still going forward, in this course of improvement.

As Hyder, then, was an admirable soldier, and never permitted more mischief to be done when laying waste a country than was strictly useful, in a military point of view, to the purposes of the campaign, he did not burn or destroy the whole territory of the Lower Carnatic, from whence, chiefly, his supplies were drawn. He calculated that a considerable interval of time must elapse before the operations of the war, and the aid of his dear friends the French, should put him in possession of Fort George at Madras. Round this centre of British power, including, as far as he could, its maritime communications also, he drew a broad line of merciless desolation, marked, as Mr. Wilks graphically tells us, by the continuous blaze of flaming towns and villages. "He

directed the indiscriminate mutilation of every human being who should linger near the ashes, in disobedience of the mandate for instant emigration, accompanied by all their flocks and herds ; thus consigning to the exclusive dominion of the beasts of the forest the desert which he interposed between himself and his enemies. This line extended inland from thirty to fifty-five miles, according to circumstances. Round Vellore, also, he drew a similar circle. Black columns of smoke were every where in view, from St. Thomas's Mount, distant only nine miles from Madras, before an order was issued for the movement of a single English soldier !”

When, at last, the Madras government took alarm and the British troops were put in motion, they performed no great service ; and the commander-in-chief, Sir Hector Monro, after the fatal defeat of Colonel Baillie, retreated towards Madras, which he reached on the 15th September, after an inglorious campaign of three weeks, almost every day of which was marked by some mischance or hu-



miliation. Meanwhile, Hyder lay couched up, ready for a spring, in his fortified camp, about forty miles off; and there can be no doubt, that if affairs had been allowed to remain much longer in the management of the same hands at Madras, the result, for the time at all events, must have proved fatal to the British power in Southern India. The influence of a master-mind, however, was preparing to put itself into action, before which even the powerful genius of Hyder and his victorious hosts were made to bend, and eventually to break. It seems now pretty clear that, under the very peculiar circumstances of the case, both as to external relations and to the distracted state of our Indian councils, consequent chiefly upon the defective nature of their construction, any governor-general less energetic than Warren Hastings—who has so justly been called the political saviour of India—could scarcely have rescued the sinking state. This distinguished governor possessed, in a very eminent degree, many of the qualities of a great commander, and amongst these, the valuable faculty of

discriminating character. He shewed this by at once applying to Sir Eyre Coote, who, though advanced in years and infirm in health, proved himself the only man then in the field competent to vindicate in his own person the rights and honour of the British arms. Coote was then commander-in-chief in India, and member of the supreme council in Bengal; but he agreed, at the suggestion of Mr. Hastings, to proceed to Madras to repel the invasion of Hyder. The governor-general took care that he should carry with him two very efficient means of accomplishing this difficult purpose: one was a well-filled money chest, together with a large detachment of European infantry and artillery, besides a considerable force of native troops. The other consisted of a decree by which the supreme council at Calcutta suspended the governor of Madras. These measures placed the chief authority in the hands of Sir Eyre Coote, who thus held, by right of his instructions, complete command of all the resources of the presidency.

It grieves me to hurry through the account of the momentous period in which

the mighty game of Eastern empire was played by men who knew the moves right well. The war raged not only on shore but at sea. The naval actions between Suffrein and Sir Edward Hughes off Trincomalee, and subsequently off Madras, form good companions to the great land battle of Porto Novo, and the hard fight, but dubious victory of Pollilore. The details of all these engagements are singularly instructive to professional men. The ups and downs, too, of the arduous contest, considered in their civil relations as affecting the power of the East India Company, are not less curious; and, though apparently complicated, they will all be found to turn upon a few simple positions. Be this as it may, Madras, in the autumn of 1782, was reduced to very great distress, even in spite of the great successes of Sir Eyre Coote, who, at last, almost worn out with the intense labours of the field, had been obliged to return to Bengal. Nothing could be more gloomy than the British prospects at that moment, when the political horizon was suddenly cleared up by the death of their

formidable enemy Hyder Ali — assuredly the greatest warrior of modern India, and the monarch who has tried the strength of the English more severely than any other native authority in the East. All his resistance, however, only contributed, in the end, to consolidate the empire of his foes, and by sharpening their swords, and teaching them how to use their resources, and in whom to confide, contributed essentially to rivet that foreign influence upon his own country, and many an adjacent state, which he spent his long and active life in manfully endeavouring to counteract.

## CHAPTER IV.

WARREN HASTINGS—MR. PITT'S INDIA  
BILL—BOARD OF CONTROL.

THE course of nature having thus co-operated with the fortune of arms to relieve the presidency from the dread of actual conquest, these advantages might easily have been followed up with every chance of success, had not the dissensions in the local government of Madras well-nigh ruined the British cause in that quarter of India. Meanwhile the faithful adherents of Hyder having, for wise and statesmanlike purposes, adopted the singular resolution of concealing his death, they managed to continue the exercise of his royal authority for very nearly four weeks, if not without suspicion, at all events without palpable detection. The object of this concealment was to give time for the new sultan Tippoo to come over from the

Malabar coast, on the western side of India, and also to prevent the tumults which it was feared might be excited amongst the soldiers in the camp if it was known that their leader was dead. The manner in which this concealment was effected is described by Wilks, in his History of Mysore, and is highly characteristic of the native manners. Tippoo reached the army before any serious disturbances took place. Of course he pretended to be overwhelmed with grief; but, at all events, with or without sorrow, he felt so firmly seated on the throne, that he lost no time in following up the laudable designs of his parent, and, in conjunction with his allies the French, set merrily about expelling the English. At this time Tippoo possessed nearly ninety thousand men in the field, exclusive of garrisons and provincial troops; while in his treasury at Seringapatam he reckoned three crores of rupees, or about three millions sterling, besides an immense accumulation of jewels and other valuables, the plunder of numberless provinces well swept over by the marauding troops of his father.

Before taking a glance—and it must be only a glance—at the operations of Tippoo in furtherance of the darling object of his dynasty—the destruction of the English—a project which ended in his death and the entire political extinction of his line, it may not be amiss to take a peep at the derangements in the machinery of the English administration, by means of which chiefly Hyder had been able to make such alarming progress in his designs against us.

About the year 1773, the East India Company's affairs having fallen into embarrassments, they petitioned Government for pecuniary aid. This was granted; but the house of commons made an inquiry upon the occasion, which was followed by an act of the legislature materially changing the government of the East India Company's affairs both abroad and at home. The principal changes were, first, that the Court of Directors at home should be elected for four years, instead of being chosen annually, six members each year. Secondly, that the qualification of stock should be 1000*l.* instead of

500*l.* for one vote, 3000*l.* for two votes, 6000*l.* for three votes. Thirdly, that in lieu of the mayor's courts formerly established at Calcutta, whose jurisdiction extended to small mercantile causes, a supreme court of judicature should be appointed by the crown, consisting of a chief judge and three puisne judges, possessed of extended powers, both civil and criminal, over the subjects of England, their servants and dependents, residing within the Company's territories in Bengal. Lastly, a governor-general was to be appointed to Fort William (Calcutta), together with four counsellors, and vested with full powers over the other Presidencies. When any differences occurred, the opinion of the majority in council was to be decisive. This board were required to transmit reports to the Directors, who in their turn were directed to furnish copies to his majesty's secretaries of state, to whom also they were to send copies of all rules and ordinations, and if these were disapproved by his majesty, the orders were to become null and void,

This act appointed WARREN HASTINGS,



Esq. governor-general, John Clavering, Esq., Hon. George Monson, Richard Barwell, Esq., and Philip Francis, Esq., the first four counsellors.

To explain the radical objections which might be made to the theory of this construction of the East India Company's government, would occupy a needless degree of time and space. It may suffice to mention what occurred in practice. The king's ministry being vested with a power of interference, but being charged with no responsibility, were released from those salutary checks by which even the very best public men are kept right. Their favour and aid became indispensable to the governor-general; and, in order to secure these, it was soon found of use to advance the friends of the minister of the crown as well as those of the Direction. Thus the patronage of the governor-general in the East was almost necessarily regulated by the will of the ministry at home; and as ministers were liable to frequent change, the fluctuations which in consequence took place became the sources of endless corruption and abuses of every

description in India. Those were the days when the far-famed pagoda-tree grew and flourished—or rather, when the persons who lived under its shade flourished by the golden shower which they rained down upon themselves by shaking its branches. Such historians as delight in holding up the East India Company to the scorn of the country, and are all unmindful of the good they have done in later years to repair these enormities, make out a famous case of plunder and misrule about the middle of the last century, and number in their lists of delinquents some names of high celebrity. Let that pass. The system in itself was so essentially bad, that Warren Hastings, instead of having the comparatively easy task which now falls to a governor-general, who possesses the same responsibility, but is surrounded by men of high talents and high principles, was obliged to conduct his government with the servants he found there; and in order to stir them, he required, of necessity, to put in action those moving powers by which alone the wheels of government could then be made to go round at all.

I have no intention to give even the slightest sketch of the administration of Hastings, which lasted from the year 1772 to 1785. It required, as every one knows, the almost undivided attention of Burke, and some others of the keenest spirits of the age, for a period of seven years, to render the details of Hastings' government at all intelligible to the country. The real good, however, which this celebrated trial brought about, was not exactly what those statesmen who originated the investigation had chiefly in their view. Their purpose was to bring to justice a man whom they conceived to be a great public delinquent. But each year, each day—I may assert, each hour, of the inquiry only tended to prove, not merely the purity of purpose in the great statesman who was made the object of this furious party attack, but to shew the transcendent ability with which his administration, all things considered, had been conducted. Colonel Wilks, one of the best historians of the East, says, with his accustomed eloquence, “The saviour of India—a title conferred upon this great

man by the general voice of civilised Europe—became the convenient sacrifice to political manœuvre; a trial of seven years' duration (Feb. 1788 to April 1795) terminated in his honourable acquittal, at the bar of his country, of every accusation with which his character had been blackened. To the charge of oppression, an universal people made answer with their astonishment, their blessings, and their prayers. To the crime of receiving corrupt presents and clandestine extortions equal to the price of a kingdom, he answered with poverty; and to the accusation of his violating his duty to the East India Company and his country, was offered the simple fact of preserving unimpaired the territories committed to his charge during a period which elsewhere exhibited nothing but national humiliation."

This is the report of a friendly chronicler. On the other hand, Mr. Mill, the depth and extent of whose historical researches, and boundless industry in arranging and elucidating his materials, are beyond all praise, takes a very different

view of Mr. Hastings' administration. In winding up his narrative, however, he pays the governor-general the following rather equivocal compliment, which I dare say made old Hastings himself smile when he read it—for this great and excellent man lived long after all his political trials were over, and enjoyed that cheerful and serene old age which belongs only to a clear conscience. The historian declares “his firm conviction, that if we had the same advantage with respect to other men who have been as much engaged in the conduct of public affairs as Warren Hastings, and could view their conduct as completely naked and stripped of all its disguises, few of them would be found whose character would present a higher claim to indulgence than his. In point of ability,” adds the candid writer, “he is, beyond all question, the most eminent of the chief rulers whom the Company have ever employed; nor is there any one of them who would not have succumbed under the difficulties which, if he did not overcome, he at any rate sustained. He had that great art, also, of a ruler, which consists in attaching

to the governor those who are governed. His administration assuredly was popular both with his countrymen and the natives of Bengal."—*Mill*, 3d ed. vol. iv. p. 454.

When we recollect how recently the book I quote from was published, and that in the above comparison must necessarily be included Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley, the friends of Mr. Hastings may be well content that his memory should share the obloquy when coupled with the praise which attaches to such companionship.

But the effect of the inquiries of those days, or of the laborious researches of modern times, on the individual character of any public man, was manifestly of very minor importance compared to the advantage to be derived from the insight thus afforded into the very heart of the East India system of government. "This system," observes Sir John Malcolm, "corrupt and inefficient as it was, might have long continued, had not an unwearied spirit of investigation dragged the voluminous records of the Company into light, with the view of criminating

their principal agents. These attacks and their consequent reports disseminated among all classes a general knowledge of the affairs of the Company."—*Malcolm's Political History, Introduction*, p. 41.

The real advantage of such knowledge consisted in the power, or rather the sanction, which it gave to government to introduce measures for ameliorating the system. The temptations were still so great to continue many old practices then almost avowedly corrupt, that nothing short of the resistless force of public opinion, directed by the most accurate oral and documentary information, would have proved sufficient to bring about the reform, both of principle and of conduct, now so loudly called for. It was, indeed, to be expected that very violent discussions would ensue; but all these only contributed to the establishment of a course of administration such as the East had never known before.

Without going into details, it may well be considered a deplorable state of things when it becomes necessary for any purpose to place the government of a country,

as it were, in arrest, and to send another officer to do the duty. This occurred when Mr. Hastings was obliged to direct Sir Eyre Coote to conduct the war in the Carnatic, independently of the authority of the local government. Besides, an officer so highly gifted as Sir Eyre Coote is not always at hand to conduct a campaign. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt at all that the furious and indecent altercations which took place at the supreme council-board of Calcutta, contributed materially to clog the wheels of government. The structure of the Indian administration, under the act of 1773, was such, that the governor-general might often be placed in circumstances which deprived him of all power. This, in fact, did actually occur in the case of Mr. Hastings, who, for a considerable period in the early stages of his administration, being left in a minority in the council, was absolutely prevented from acting in the manner he knew to be most for the public interests. The responsibility of the governor-general was thus entirely frittered away; and what was worse still, the councils of the



government became so uncertain, and their measures so fluctuating, that the confidence of the natives, and of all others whom it concerned, were essentially weakened. When a member of the hostile majority in the council died, or went home on account of ill health or from any other cause, the governor-general recovered his power, and set to work in his own way; but anon, when a new member was appointed to the council—if he chanced to take a different view from that of the governor-general—all he had done was pulled to pieces. Thus the individuals forming the supreme government of India passed great part of their time in thwarting one another, in adopting, as each gained the ascendancy, totally different lines of policy, and in writing home myriads of angry paragraphs against their colleagues. These disputes, as may well be believed, too often assumed a personal turn; and at length a duel took place between Mr. Hastings and his chief antagonist in the council, Mr. Francis, afterwards Sir Philip Francis, the reputed author of Junius's Letters.

All this was bad enough ; but perhaps the evils arising out of such disjointed responsibility and systematic counteraction amongst the members of the council, were not greater than those which arose from the pretensions of the supreme court of judicature established by the same unfortunate act of 1773. Its jurisdiction was probably intended to be very limited in its operation ; but the judges took upon them to assume, under its letter, a degree of authority which actually outrivalled that of the supreme government, and speedily threw the natives into complete bewilderment. The parliament who passed the act, of course, anticipated nothing of this kind, and never dreamed of establishing two rival co-ordinate British powers in India. It would be tedious to enumerate the cases in which they thwarted the executive, and actually prevented the machine of government from moving ; but it is quite clear, that the perverse measures of the supreme court, had they been allowed to go on, would have rendered the collection of the revenue in India totally impossible. Had the hands of

Mr. Hastings not been tied up by the circumstance of his being frequently left in a minority in the council, there can be no doubt, judging from what he afterwards effected, that he would soon have counteracted these monstrous evils.

In truth, however, the entire correction of such defects, like those arising out of the abuse of patronage already referred to, and the custom, then almost universal, of receiving presents, in other words, bribes from the natives, lay beyond the reach even of the great ability and zeal of Hastings. He had not the power, though he possessed the will, to apply the remedy; and as all this had now become evident to the British public, in consequence, chiefly, of the alarming proceedings of Hyder in overrunning the Carnatic, a loud outcry was very naturally and properly raised for some change in a system which had led to such deplorable results.

All reflecting persons of experience in England saw and acknowledged that India could no longer be retained by the methods which had sufficed to hold it as a mere trading station, and that if we had

any expectation of being able to cope with such powerful men as Hyder, backed by such allies as the French, a new organisation must take place, which should afford a bounty upon character, and render a sense of duty paramount to motives of pecuniary interest. It seemed quite clear, at all events, that the old system could not work much longer; and the extraordinary events of Mr. Hastings' administration having brought the whole subject to light, and betrayed the evils it involved, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Dundas, and many others—the able statesmen of that day—considered it not unworthy of their talents to grapple with this complicated problem.

The extensive parliamentary inquiries and reports of 1783 paved the way for the subsequent important improvements made in the mode of conducting the East India Company's affairs. It was allowed by most people, both of those who had considered the subject for themselves, and those who took their opinions at second-hand, or who judged merely by the results, that a more efficient and energetic

local government was required ; and that, if we wished to correct the gross abuses of the existing system, a responsibility more defined, and practically more operative on all parties, than that established by the bill of 1773, had become absolutely indispensable. But there soon appeared a wide difference of opinion in the house of commons regarding the nature of the checks by which official men in India were to be restrained from getting on too fast, and the motives by which they were to be urged forward. Mr. Dundas, at length, brought forward a bill, the chief novelty of which was the proposal to appoint a governor-general and captain-general, who should exercise in his own person complete civil and military authority and control over British India. This high public officer was to be approved, but not nominated, by the crown, by whom alone, however, he could be removed. It was also proposed, that his majesty's ministers should receive copies of all despatches. This bill did not succeed, but it gave rise to one of a character nearly similar, which was introduced and

carried through by Mr. Pitt in the next session. As Mr. Pitt's bill, however, owed its success very much to the feelings and opinions set afloat in the country by the agitation of another plan brought forward about the same time by his great political rival, Mr. Fox, it will render matters much clearer, and more easily understood, to glance first at that measure.

Mr. Fox proposed two bills; one calculated to regulate the home or domestic concerns, the other the foreign government, of the Company. Their preamble stated, that disorders of an alarming nature and magnitude prevailed in British India—that the natives were reduced to great distress—and that the public interests were in danger of being ruined. As a remedy for these evils, Mr. Fox proposed that the whole power should be transferred, for four years, to seven directors or commissioners, to be aided by nine assistant directors. By these bills, the power of the governor-general was to be of a very different nature from that suggested by Mr. Dundas: in fact, the principles were directly opposite in the two cases. By extending the au-

thority, Mr. Dundas judiciously thought to extend the responsibility of the chief governor, but at the same time he took care to fix it more certainly on his shoulders. He defended this measure by saying, most truly, that there was fully as much reason to apprehend the introduction of arbitrary measures when the management of affairs was vested in two or more persons, than when freely intrusted to one. But Mr. Fox, in his constitutional jealousy of power, proceeded on a totally different idea ; and by tying up the hands of the governor-general as much as possible, essentially diminished, or rather dissipated, that responsibility which affords the best security for good and faithful public service.

It was declared by Mr. Fox's bills, that the powers of the governor-general in council should, on no occasion, be delegated to that officer alone, or to any person or persons whatever ; while the governor-general in council — that is, acting together — were restricted, as much as possible, but particularly in the case of making war. These provisions were avow-

edly proposed to remedy evils incident to the administration of Mr. Hastings, who, when he visited the upper provinces, had obtained from the council a delegation of their full authority. Most wisely, indeed, had that authority been given; for without it, as all experience has shewn, he could have done nothing useful.

The governor-general was also declared by Mr. Fox's proposed measure not to have the power of entering or invading, with an armed force, the dominion of any prince of India, except upon intelligence, the credibility of which was to be admitted, and individually recorded, by the majority of the members of the council, that such prince was about to make war on the Company or their allies. He was not to be permitted, without orders from the commissioners at home, to enter into any offensive alliance for sharing any country between the Company and a native prince; nor was he to hire out any troops, European or native, in any Indian state. No presents were to be taken, even for the use of the Company. This was another hit at Hastings, who, with great judgment



and propriety, had employed money gratuitously given by the native authorities in furtherance of the Company's objects. Finally, all monopolies were to be abolished amongst private traders.

These formed the leading provisions of Mr. Fox's celebrated measure, which passed, with a great majority, in the house of commons, but was thrown out by the house of lords, and, after a series of the most extraordinary discussions which have ever taken place in England between the crown and the parliament, the struggle terminated in the retirement of that statesman and his party from office. Mr. Fox's proposal, it must be borne in mind, was merely a temporary expedient; and what might have been the ultimate arrangement, it is difficult to say, though it seems probable that the Company never could have regained their authority. The suspicious policy of multiplying the checks on the local governments of India, and thus diminishing their power, in the vain expectation of rendering them more responsible, was grounded on a complete forgetfulness of the high

duties which they were called upon to execute. It took no account of the utter impossibility of appealing in time to the distant authorities at home,—who at best could not be one hundredth part so well informed as efficient and responsible observers on the spot—nor of the unspeakable complication and multitude of details which could be understood only by persons in India. The discussion now took the character of a violent political contest; and the right of regulating the Company's affairs became an object of public rivalry between the two great parties of the day, which were then nearly balanced. At last the scale was turned by what may be called a coalition between Mr. Pitt and the Company, who, though originally and still adverse to any interference in their concerns, naturally chose that side which promised to be the least unfavourable to their established rights and privileges.

Mr. Pitt's bill was passed in 1784, and four other acts, explanatory of it, in 1786; besides which, another very important bill was passed in 1788, declaratory of the in-

tentions of Mr. Pitt's first bill. Various alterations have since been made, but the constitution of the government, as far as relates to Indian affairs, rests at this time substantially on the legislative measures and explanations above cited, which were more fully established, and condensed into specific acts of parliament, when the charter was renewed in 1793 and 1813.

By these celebrated enactments a certain number of his majesty's privy council are to be named commissioners for the affairs of India, of whom one of his majesty's secretaries of state is president. These commissioners, who are appointed by his majesty and removable at his pleasure, are vested with a control and superintendence over all civil, military, and revenue officers of the Company, and hence their name, "Board of Control." The Court of East India Directors are obliged to lay before this Board all papers relative to the management of their possessions, and to obey all orders received from them on points connected with the civil or military government, or with the revenue of their territories in India. The

Board of Control, on their part, are obliged to return the copies of papers which they have received from the directors in fourteen days, with their approbation, or else to state at large their reasons for disapproving of them. These despatches, so approved or amended, are then sent to India by the Court of Directors, unless they should think fit to make any further representations to the Board of Control.

In the practice of business, when the question under consideration is one of importance, the chairman, or deputy-chairman of the Court of Directors, or both, meet the president of the Board of Control, and discuss, 'vivâ voce,' the views which have suggested themselves to his Majesty's government. When all the points of difference have been fully considered, and the conclusions agreed upon, the despatches are framed accordingly. Generally speaking, the following is the usual course adopted. The Court of Directors, acting upon their communications from India, relating to the political, revenue, judicial, public, military, and financial

affairs of the Company, order the officer whose duty it is to prepare the answer. This officer calls upon his assistants to make what is called 'a collection,' which comprises all matters relating to the despatch to be answered, which is always replied to paragraph by paragraph, according to the principle laid down by the Court of Directors and the Board of Control. The officer who prepares this answer communicates with the 'Chairs,' and takes their directions upon points connected with it. When the draft is fully prepared, it is laid by the chairman before the committee of correspondence. This is the regular and formal manner in which every despatch is first prepared, though, as I have already mentioned, 'previous communications' frequently take place between the Chairs and the Board of Control, regarding important despatches prior to their being laid before the committee of correspondence. At these conferences no one, as I understand, is present except the president of the Board, and the chairman and deputy-chairman of the Court of Directors.

Supposing the draft of the despatch to have passed regularly through the Court of Directors, it is then signed officially by their secretary, and sent up to the Board of Control. If the draft is returned by the Board approved, a formal despatch is drawn up, and sent out to India at once. But if the Board do not approve of parts of the draft, they return it to the Court of Directors, with alterations, which are made in red ink, by striking out some parts and adding to others, with a letter explanatory of the Board's reasons for making such changes. The Court, however, are authorised to address a representation to the Board upon these alterations. But in the event of the Board of Control not being satisfied with the reasons adduced by the Court of Directors against the proposed omissions or additions, the Board communicate their unaltered opinion to the Court, and at the same time desire that the draft, as returned by them, may be forthwith framed into a despatch, and forwarded to India agreeably to the provisions of the act of parliament. These orders are final and conclusive upon the

Court, although, in extreme cases, if the Directors are strongly opposed to the measure suggested by the Board, or believe that the Board has exceeded its powers, they may appeal to the king in council, who decides whether the alterations fall within the province of the Board. If that decision is in the affirmative, a mandamus may be moved for to compel the Court of Directors to sign and forward such despatches. In practice, however, recourse has very seldom been had to this step; and though differences of opinion between the Court and the Board are frequent, they almost invariably terminate in a mutual agreement. The public objects of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors being so obviously and essentially the same, a great degree of cordiality has at all times prevailed. Serious differences of opinion, leading to delay, and to troublesome discussions, it is true, have occasionally arisen; but, upon the whole, these have been of wonderfully rare occurrence.

There is, no doubt, a great advantage in having two sets of hands through which

every despatch must pass ; for it establishes a continued system of vigilant checks mutually acting and reacting upon each other. On one side is the Court of Directors—the primary and executive body—composed of professed men of business, most of whom have been in India, or who, at all events, have been long schooled in Indian topics. By the constitution of their corporation, also, they are not liable to fluctuation by political changes in the state, and they include all parties. They are therefore sure of continuing in the exercise of the government of India, whatever side may be in power. This permanency in office—modified only by the annual change of one-fourth of their numbers, in rotation, amongst themselves—secures a degree of uniformity to their administration, which is absolutely indispensable in the management of such an empire as that of India. On the other hand, the Board of Control is merely a branch of his majesty's general government for the time being, well acquainted with the spirit which actuates the administration of the day. And as they are influenced by strong



motives of public policy, they naturally seek to impart to the government of India as much of the spirit of their own party as may be consistent with the correct working of the vast system established in the East. The Directors, again, knowing this, will, of course, make due allowance for such feelings, and endeavour, as far as they can, to meet the views of government. In practice, too, they will be more careful in framing the drafts of their despatches than if they had to pass under no eyes but their own. For similar reasons, the President of the Board will be cautious how he interferes with the details of Indian affairs, from knowing that if his suggestions are not judicious and well weighed, they will be sure to attract the critical notice of experienced men at the India House, to the manifest discredit of his majesty's government, of which, it will be recollected, he is a cabinet minister.

The Court of Directors, it will be seen, then, have no power given them to send out any orders whatsoever without the sanction of the Board of Control. But

that Board is authorised to send orders from themselves to any of the presidencies of India, in the event of the Directors neglecting to send out true copies of the despatches mutually agreed upon between them, while, if the Board of Control forward any orders to the directors on points not relating to the government of India, the directors may appeal. In all cases of secrecy, and particularly such as relate to war or peace with the native powers of India, the Board have the power of sending their orders to the local governments of India, through a secret committee of the Court of Directors.

By Mr. Pitt's bill, the chief government of India was made to consist of a governor-general and three counsellors, the commander-in-chief of the forces having a voice in the council next to the governor-general; but he was not to succeed to the chief authority, unless it were specially so ordered by the directors. The governments of the presidencies of Madras and Bombay were similarly constituted, but both were placed completely under the rule of the governor-general in council,

on all points connected with any negotiations carried on with the native powers, or relating to peace or war, and to the application of their revenues and forces. The king was to have a right to recall any governor-general, or any officer of the Company, from India; and if, within two months, the Court of Directors did not fill up the vacancy, the crown became possessed of the nomination.

The difference between the bills proposed by Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt consisted chiefly in the following points:—that of Mr. Fox took away the commerce entirely from the Company; it abolished the Court of Directors, and deprived the Company of every appointment, civil, military, and commercial, both at home and abroad, vesting the whole patronage in the new commissioners. Mr. Pitt's bill left the commerce and the whole of the patronage with the Company. Mr. Fox's bill abrogated all the Company's rights, and well nigh confiscated all their property. Mr. Pitt's measure deviated only so much from their charter as was absolutely necessary, and, while he did not take away the go-

vernment of India from the Company, he secured to the constitutional executive of the mother-country a direct and efficient superintendence over the political affairs of India, by placing them under the control of a branch of the general government of the empire. Mr. Fox's commissioners, on the other hand, were not to be dependent at all upon his majesty's ministers, nor to hold any communication with them! Thus a complete 'imperium in imperio' would have been erected, possessed of powers and influence well calculated to have involved England in war with any of the European states connected with India, without even the knowledge of his majesty's government.

In 1786, as I have already mentioned, several explanatory acts were passed. The appointment of the commander-in-chief as member of council at the presidencies, was made optional, not obligatory; and the Directors were vested with the power of appointing the commander-in-chief in India governor-general, and of making the commander-in-chief at Madras and Bombay president of those settlements. But

by far the most important enactment, and one which has given more life and true vigour to the Indian administration than all those acts put together, was a clause in one of the explanatory bills of that year (and since confirmed by the acts of 1793 and 1813), by which the governor-general, and the governors of Madras and Bombay, were vested with a discretionary right of acting, in extraordinary cases, without the concurrence of their councils, being held solely and personally responsible for any consequences which might ensue from the measures adopted under such circumstances.

This extension of their powers was dictated by true political wisdom; and so far from the latitude which it gives for the undivided exercise of authority being calculated to injure the cause of freedom and virtue, it manifestly affords the securest guarantee which human institutions can possibly supply for the honourable discharge of public duty. What mind of any power or of any generous aspirations can be expected to act effectively in stations of high command, if its operations, though

commenced in the spirit of the most comprehensive policy, are to be checked in their progress by the idle fears or the factious obstructions of inferior intellects? Accordingly, in looking back at different parts of our Indian history, we see that when such men as Hastings, or Clive, or Coote, or Lake, were entangled with the clogs of stupid and perverse colleagues, they could not—even if they would—have put forth their gigantic powers. It would, probably, have been just the same even with Cornwallis or Wellesley, had they been similarly cramped. Men in such high and responsible stations require, at all hazards, to be possessed of the power to act freely and independently; and though, in practice, the privilege certainly need not often be called forth, the knowledge that it exists, though in a latent state, must prove eminently conducive to the vigorous course of political action especially in a country so remote as India. Can it be believed, for example, that if Warren Hastings had possessed such an authority, his council would ever have dreamed of pushing the office of go-

vernor-general so completely on one side as they frequently did? Would it not then have been the interest of his assistant councillors, as it always was their duty, to have studied to agree with the governor-general, instead of studying, as they too often appear to have done, how they could most effectually thwart him? All parties, I believe, are now agreed as to the wisdom of this new regulation; but at the time it was, of course, vehemently resisted by Burke, Francis, and other party men who opposed Warren Hastings.

Mr. Pitt's act of 1784 was avowedly temporary; but under the various important modifications of 1786, 1793, and 1813, it has been acted upon ever since. His attention seems to have been directed rather to the correction of grievous abuses, the regulation of power, and the salutary appropriation of responsibility, than to the complete removal even of admitted evils, or the actual introduction of a system theoretically perfect. He seems to have proceeded steadily on the plan of maintaining and practically amending the long-established constitution of the Company,

which he was far from wishing to abolish. It is supposed, indeed, that, on principle, he preferred sacrificing a good deal of the efficiency of his new measure, to disturbing rudely the forms of the old system. In this the minister's sagacity and knowledge of business became very conspicuous. As no statesman knew better than Pitt the absence of necessary connexion between innovation and improvement, he invariably began by respecting on its own account, as a matter of course, whatever was established. He then set about such modifications as he conceived might produce the least change possible—consistent with those improvements which were deemed advisable—but always scrupulously respecting, as far as he could, whatever had gained stability by prescription.

Before taking a final leave of these discussions relative to the structure of the East India Company's government, it may possibly be considered useful, by those to whom this subject is quite new, to revert for a moment to the rationale of one of the most important of all the changes introduced by Mr. Pitt; for to it, probably,



more than to any other cause, may be traced the astonishing success which has ever since attended the administration of our East Indian government. I allude to the establishment of the Board of Control; by means of which a most material revolution was effected in the affairs of the Company. For the first time in their history, it made their Court of Directors dependent upon the king's ministry—in other words, it incorporated the government of India with the general government of the British empire. This, as might be expected, was then much cavilled at, and has been not a little censured since; but, as I conceive, without any good reason. It was said, that so long as the government of India was independent, the ministers of the crown had no immediate interest in hiding its defects; and it was also asserted, that the directors and their servants, from not possessing this screen, were formerly exposed to the wholesome jealousy of parliament. But surely the facts do not bear out this view of the matter; for few will be confident enough to say, that India has occupied

less of the public vigilance since 1784 than it did antecedent to that period. That there should exist, in point of fact, two separate powers in the same empire, one of which should reign in the West, and the other in the East, seems a gross absurdity in the politics of one state. The flagrant abuses of the Indian system in all its parts—the pitiable inefficiency of the local administrations in those days—the absence of high principle in the local management of their acquired territories—the profligacy of their dealings with the natives, and, generally speaking, the absence of that enduring and habitual good faith which is the true foundation of public honour—as sound religious principle is the foundation of every virtue—were all features essentially characterising our Oriental history up to the date of the busy and important administration of Warren Hastings. That eminent benefactor of his country, and true friend to the natives of India, first pointed out the way to better things; and if he could not himself clear up the confusion, or entirely counteract the evils, he, at all events, placed the real

state of affairs, good and bad, so distinctly before his country, that there required only the herculean mind of Pitt to accomplish the practical remedy.

This great minister saw that by linking indissolubly the government of British India with the government of the empire at large, or, in other words, by rendering Hindustan an integral part of the state, and thus engrafting it on the parent stem, it would, by partaking of the same circulation, possess the same vigour in all its ramifications, and yield the same fruit as the original from which it sprang. It was objected to the arrangement of Pitt, at the time the measure for establishing the Board of Control was first passed, that it would extinguish all the useful power of the Court of Directors as an efficient public body. But the result has proved quite the reverse. It ought, indeed, to be always borne in mind as a matter of hope to those who are alarmed at all changes, as well as of warning to those who love mere innovation, that the consequences of any great political measure almost invariably turn out very different from what

either its abettors or its opposers predict will follow. In practice, it has happened that the influence of the Company in both houses of parliament, and in the country generally, has uniformly supported their authority in Leadenhall Street. Their political power, no doubt, has seemed to fluctuate with the changing degree of strength in the king's government; but the probability is, that this has been merely relative, and that while their administration has remained pretty uniform, the influence of the crown has varied.

It is certainly consonant to the soundest principles of political discipline that his majesty's government—who alone are strictly responsible to the country—should exercise an influence no less direct and constant over the Indian councils, than over every other branch of public affairs. On the same principle the Directors at home, as well as their delegated governors abroad, should be forced to feel that this control is effective and permanent, and its scrutiny complete. By this means the responsibility, at all times and under all circumstances, will eventually rest in one

superior quarter—that is, with the cabinet ministers of his majesty.

In the debates which took place in the house of commons in 1788, when Pitt's bill, declaratory of the meaning of this part of the enactment of 1784, was passed, the view just taken of the measure seems to have been generally understood. The minister, at all events, boldly and wisely avowed that such was his purpose, by declaring that the grand intention of the act of 1784 had been essentially to transfer the government of India from the Court of Directors to the ministry. Mr. Dundas, then president of the Board of Control, followed up this declaration by contending, that unless his majesty's ministers possessed the whole powers of government, the Board of Control would be a nugatory institution.

It has been asked, however, “ If the whole powers of Government were necessary for the Board of Control, what use was there for another governing body, such as the Court of Directors, without power? This was to have two governing bodies, the one real, the other only in

shew." But surely this is not a fair view of the case. It is not necessary, because his majesty's government possess the power of interference, that they should interfere so far with the details as entirely to supersede the Court of Directors as an executive administration regulating the affairs of India. The analogy of the Admiralty will make this matter clear. His majesty's ministers possess the undoubted power of governing the movements of the navy—they direct fleets and squadrons to be sent here and there; but is it on this account to be said that the Admiralty exercise no power in the administration of the navy? and that they exist merely for shew? The case of India is indeed vastly greater in extent, but the principle is the same in both. His majesty's government could no more attend to all the details of Indian affairs than they could attend to all the technical details of the fleet. But, as it is indispensable to the effective government of the country at large that the ministry should be held responsible both for the Indian government and that of the navy, a cabinet minister is made First Lord of

the Admiralty, while another is appointed President of the Board of Control—one may be called the secretary of state for the Navy, the other secretary of state for India.

Meanwhile the Court of Directors ought to be, and in practice generally is, composed of men obviously the most competent by talents, experience, and character, to conduct the complicated affairs of the vast empire under their command; and these gentlemen, in point of fact, do carry on all the details of the business. The Board of Control, on the other hand, forms the connecting link by which a salutary communication is maintained between the East India Company and the supreme Government of the country, and through them the parliament and the nation at large are kept sufficiently informed of what is going on. Through the Court, also, any political impulse may be propagated which it is considered may prove beneficial to the general interests of the empire, but of which they only can be competent judges on whom the responsibility rests of conducting the whole government of the country, and with whom

alone can be found the degree of knowledge requisite to render such interference otherwise than mischievous. Indeed, when we consider how very large a portion of the resources of England may be said to circulate through India, we may conceive how fatal it might prove not only to the welfare of that distant region, but also to the parent state, if the affairs of either country were conducted without reference to the interests of the other. It seems quite obvious, therefore, that if the machinery devised by Pitt, which had for its object this mutual communication between these two great parts of the British empire, has been found efficient for that important purpose—and experience amply shews that it has proved so—we may safely leave the theoretical evils of many of its details to be mangled by the ingenious sophistry of those ‘doctrinaires’ who deny the influence of genuine public spirit, and laud to the skies those verbal checks and counter-checks on human action which imply that as no public man is worthy of trust, all persons in office ought to be treated as if their motives were selfish and dishonourable.



In how very different a light did Burke view these things! "There is," says he, with beautiful delicacy of discrimination, "a confidence necessary to human intercourse, and without which men are often more injured by their own suspicions than they could be by the perfidy of others." Now the business-like and practical genius of Pitt, improving on this cheerful view of our nature, took a still wider range. He, of course, knew mankind vastly too well to fancy that he could make any system of government perfect. But he knew equally well, that he must gain the best chance for success by trusting to those generous and manly principles, which presuppose that high talents, coupled with extensive experience, and graced by reputation earned by real services, if fully confided in, will furnish an infinitely better security for the effective and honest performance of official duties, than all the ingenious contrivances by which short-sighted reasoners expect to convert the perversities of our nature into benefits, or seek to restrain the evil dispositions of unprincipled men by mere technical forms and regulations. The truth is,

Pitt saw that it had become absolutely necessary for the political regeneration of India, that its affairs should be managed in the same temper and spirit as the rest of the British empire; and, to bring this about, it was necessary to dovetail its administration firmly into that of his majesty's government. At the same time he saw and felt, as strongly as any man could do, the necessity of leaving the actual conduct of affairs in the East, as much as was possible consistently with this union, and due subordination, in the hands of the local governments abroad. He wished the servants of the East India Company to act, generally speaking, under the instructions of their own Court of Directors, and to be subject to no more interference on the part of the king's ministry than might be thought absolutely necessary, from time to time, to preserve the requisite degree of uniformity throughout all parts of the public administration of affairs; India, in that view, being considered merely a part of the grand whole.

In the spirit of an enlarged political philosophy, this genuine statesman's maxim

was, that the servants of the East India Company abroad, both civil and military, who were by the new act positively forbidden to trade or to receive presents, should be so liberally remunerated, that, in addition to all their other motives to rectitude, they should feel a strong pecuniary interest in the pure and right performance of their duty. I have been told, by persons who have heard Pitt speak on the subject, that it was his most anxious wish to render the emoluments of office in India, and the nature of the duties, and the respect which belonged to the profession, such, that men of the highest family, and of the best abilities, might be tempted to embark in the East India Company's service, with as good a prospect of distinction and fortune as in any walk of life, to which their birth, talents, and advantages in other respects, might entitle them to aspire.

It will, indeed, be a sad day for British India, if it shall ever come, when, in the spirit of a narrow and short-sighted economy, its rulers shall risk the deterioration of their service by reducing the

legitimate prospects of distinction and fortune which it has hitherto held out. Too much, perhaps, has already been attempted in that way; but it is surely dangerous ground to tread upon; for even Mr. Pitt's measure must have proved inoperative in practice, and the whole of its provisions might have fallen to pieces long ago, had it not been so contrived, that the paramount motives to action in India, and which came eventually to pervade all ranks and classes of the Company's servants, should rest essentially on the same genuine public spirit which has given to old England herself the ascendancy elsewhere. Nevertheless, deep-rooted as this noble sentiment may be, and productive though it must ever be found when duly encouraged, it may readily be starved out of the field. No parsimony in the pecuniary rewards given to a man of honour, nor any indignities arising from the denial of his due distinction, can prove strong enough to induce him to forfeit the trust he has once undertaken. But if the treatment which a public servant receives in India be essentially un-

worthy of his character and station in society; or if the rewards of his labours be not commensurate to the sacrifices he makes in consenting to abandon friends, home, and all the various walks of fame and profit which other lines of life hold out to him, how are his services to be retained? How is it to be expected that he will bring up his children to such a losing or degrading profession? What right have his employers to expect that his place will not be speedily supplied by a lower description of talents and character? Is it, after all, likely, that any purchasable service will ever eventually prove so cheap as that which is first-rate, however great its money price? As all analogy and all experience shew that the contrary holds good in every other walk of industry, and that the truest economy in the long run is to engage and to retain the best service at whatever cost, why should this well-established rule prove false in India?

## CHAPTER V.

## THE FIRST WAR WITH TIPPOO SULTAN.

AFTER the death of Hyder, the war between his son Tippoo and the English proceeded with somewhat less activity than before. But the struggle in the Carnatic between the French and English rather gained in briskness, and with so much advantage on the side of the enemy, that about midsummer of 1783, the most gloomy apprehensions were entertained at Madras. Just at that moment the news of peace in Europe fortunately arrived, and Tippoo, being left to fight it out single-handed without his allies the French, was brought to sign a treaty, early in 1784, on the condition of a mutual restitution of conquests.

The measures consequent upon the discussions in parliament already alluded to, respecting the administration of India,

were now about to be brought into full action; and it was well for our eastern rule that this particular period was chosen to infuse new vigour into the system. If Tippoo, when he renewed the war, had found us no better provided than we were when his father attacked us, he could scarcely have failed to make an impression upon the British authority in India, from which it might have been difficult to recover. But upon the passing of Mr. Pitt's bill, and the measures taken in consequence to consolidate our power in the East, we rose like a giant refreshed; and it is scarcely a figure of speech to say, that the arm of the British minister extended to India, and made its strength be felt there, as it was long afterwards with such irresistible force in Europe. The first person to whom the new authority was intrusted was Lord Cornwallis, a nobleman admirably adapted to the situation, as his high birth and talents gave the best possible security for justice being done to the grand experiment then about to be tried, of ruling India, like any other part of the empire, on the strict principles of justice

and honour. As he was greatly esteemed in England, all parties appeared satisfied with the appointment. His lordship's rank and character, while they brought him into close and confidential communication with the Crown, placed him as much as possible above the undue influence of the ministry, and also relieved him from any improper dependence upon the Court of Directors. In India, all classes, both of the British and the natives, were prepared to yield cheerful obedience to the new governor-general; and he availed himself fully of the advantages of his position, not merely by forming political alliances of immense importance, and engaging in successful wars, but by introducing many extremely important improvements into the military and civil establishments of India. For the present I shall touch only upon those great military and political measures adopted by Lord Cornwallis, to curb the ambition, and thus to counteract, if he could not subdue, the hereditary and rancorous hostility of Tippoo Sultan. In this Lord Cornwallis succeeded to a great extent; but it was left to a still more



powerful arm to crush that spirit altogether.

It will afford a tolerably distinct conception of one very interesting branch of Indian politics at that period, to state what precautionary measures Lord Cornwallis thought necessary, before coming to close quarters with such a formidable personage as Tippoo. In military talents, it is true, that chief fell greatly short of his father, but he yielded nothing to him in respect to ferocity and sincere enmity to the British, while his resources continued unimpaired, and in some respects were even greater than they had been under Hyder. The sultan's hostile purposes, indeed, had been so very thinly veiled, that it was impossible for any one not to see that he was collecting together every possible means for our overthrow, and forming alliances in every quarter of India to weaken our means of injuring him when ever it should suit his purpose to break out in open warfare.

Now, although the French, for the present, were quiet, we did not feel quite strong enough to engage with Tippoo

single-handed ; while, on the other hand, Lord Cornwallis was unfortunately tied up so strictly by the act of Parliament, that he could not legally take the initiative in the war, however expedient it had become ; but he was compelled to wait, at a monstrous loss of political and military advantage, till it suited his enemy Tippoo to commence hostilities. Neither could the governor-general, in strictness, form treaties offensive and defensive with the nations he wished to ally with himself against Tippoo, as such engagements, however desirable, might fairly have been construed into virtual declarations of war. In process of time, however, it became absolutely necessary, in spite of these injudicious refinements of a distant legislation, to make preparations for the hostilities in which Tippoo Sultan's conduct shewed evidently that we must soon be engaged, whether we wished it or not.

Without racking our brains and breaking our jaws by repeating a vocabulary of unpronounceable Indian names of places and persons, it may readily be understood by any one who will turn to the map of

India, that about the centre of the peninsula of Hindustan, between the seventeenth and nineteenth degrees of north latitude, there lies a large district, called Hyderabad, with the Godavery and Kistna, two celebrated streams, flowing through it to the eastward, and emptying themselves into the bay of Bengal. This immense territory, at the time we are treating of, was governed by a monarch named Nizam Ali, who, some years before, having killed his brother out of the way, then reigned in his stead. This monarch had made sundry favourable treaties with the British, but it now became of greater moment than ever to secure his friendship and active co-operation with us in our inevitable war with Tippoo. In other words, it was essential to make it the Nizam's interest to help us to crush Tippoo by all the means in his power.

The Mahrattas, also, the capital of whose empire, Poonah, will be found in latitude about eighteen and a half degrees north, not far eastward of Bombay, became very important persons in casting the parts for the great military drama

soon to be acted on the southern plains of Hindustan. These Mahratta states—who, though some of them have since been annihilated, and others effectually muzzled and chained, were, in those days, little better than mere plundering and lawless freebooters—had united with the Nizam a few years before against Tippoo. But the Sultan had beat them both so soundly that they now respected his power, and neither the Nizam nor the Paishwa (the head of the Mahrattas), though hating Tippoo with all their hearts, wished again to engage lightly with him. At all events, the Mahrattas were anxious to avoid a war of aggression, unless they could be certain of the support of the British in the contest, and of a substantial guarantee for security afterwards. Lord Cornwallis, entangled and sorely hampered as he was by the temporising and neutralising clauses of the act of Parliament, and teased by the mutual jealousies of these two rival powers of the Mahrattas and the Nizam, had enough on his hands, besides his own preparations for fighting Tippoo. The Nizam saw no objection to the proposed alli-

ance with the British, but he so much distrusted the assurances of his neighbours, the Mahrattas, that he greatly desired to slip into the treaty some specific clause by which he should be guaranteed against any attack from these incorrigible plunderers, when his own troops were absent in Mysore co-operating with the English in curbing Tippoo's power. It appeared, indeed, from the whole tenour of these curious and characteristic negotiations, that while the Nizam expressed the most unbounded reliance on the slightest promise of Lord Cornwallis, he testified an unceasing suspicion of the most solemn asseverations of his native allies. In the meantime Lord Cornwallis, from a just apprehension of giving offence to the Mahrattas, and thus losing the advantage of their co-operation in the war against Tippoo, was obliged to avoid committing himself by a treaty, the very terms of which must have implied his distrust of their good faith. He at last succeeded in giving the Nizam confidence by dint of verbal assurances alone, conveyed in conversation by the British resident; and it affords an inte-

resting proof of the estimation in which his Lordship was held, even at the outset of his splendid career, that a suspicious native authority should rest satisfied with his simple unwritten assurance on so momentous an occasion.

The aid of a subsidiary force was at once granted to the Nizam, and Lord Cornwallis held out to him prospects of great and permanent territorial advantages, in the event of their joint efforts bringing Tippoo to his bearings. What was still more important to the Nizam, he was encouraged to look forward, at a less inconvenient opportunity, for complete security, by a formal treaty with the British, against that most serious of all the dangers which threatened his power—the restless and insatiable ambition of his plundering neighbours, the Mahrattas. These pledges of support were in the end all fully redeemed, and our faith with the Nizam substantiated. It must be confessed, however, that after Lord Cornwallis quitted India, the Nizam had more than once but too good reason to apprehend he was to be left in the lurch, and his interests sacri-

ficed to the mischievous neutral policy already alluded to.

It cost Lord Cornwallis a vast deal more trouble to bring the crafty Mahrattas into any hearty co-operation in the grand alliance against Tippoo; for unfortunately there existed no subsidiary treaty with them, as with the Nizam, and his lordship at first wished that they should act by themselves in the war. The Mahrattas, however, were much too adroit for this; and after some delay, a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance against Tippoo Sultan was concluded between the English governor and the Paishwah, about midsummer 1790. The cunning and able minister who then managed the affairs of the Mahrattas at Poonah, was stimulated not only by a sense of recent injuries sustained by his country from Tippoo, and an apprehension of the future violence of that prince, but by the prospect of wresting from him four provinces won from them by Hyder Ali.

The following extract, from a letter from his lordship written just before the war, gives us an amusing peep into the state of

affairs. "My dependence," says he, "upon the support of both the Nizam and the Paishwah upon the present occasion, is grounded solely upon the expectation of their being guided by the common influence of passions, and by the considerations of evident interest which ought to dispose them to seize with eagerness a favourable opportunity to reduce the power of a prince whose ambition knows no bounds, and from whom both of them have suffered."

As the governor-general was prevented by the terms of the act of Parliament from going to war until his enemy actually attacked either him or his allies, or gave indications of such intention so obvious that there could remain no doubt about the matter, he was obliged to wait till Tippoo commenced hostilities. This was not long, however. The rajah of Travancore, on the Malabar or western coast, and a tributary of ours, had purchased a couple of forts from the Dutch, which Tippoo declared were his, and vowed to have back again. The rajah said he should keep them, and having between him and Tippoo a pretty strong line of military forts,



resolved to defend his property. As these Travancore lines make a great figure in Indian history, it may be interesting to mention that they consisted of a ditch sixteen feet broad and twenty deep, crowned by a strong bamboo hedge and a slight parapet, backed also by a rampart, and flanked by numerous bastions. They commenced at the sea, and extended inland to the eastward for about thirty miles, to the Elephant Mountains, a part of the great chain of Ghauts which fringe the western side of India.

The British, as by treaty bound, having stepped in to mediate, instructions were given to the Madras government by the governor-general in council, to investigate the claims of the contending parties, and, if necessary, to enforce their award, whatever that might be. The Madras government, however, appear to have trifled with these directions, and, strangely enough, to have leaned quite on Tippoo's side. At all events, they certainly failed to prepare the army, as they were instructed, in order to take active measures to support their eventual decision. For this dila-

toriness they incurred the unqualified displeasure of the supreme government. The case, indeed, was certainly one of considerable difficulty; but as it was by this time notorious that Tippoo, in the true taste of his dynasty, sought always rather to cut than to untie such Gordian knots in politics, the local government, which trusted to his forbearance, well deserved the censure passed upon their inactivity. The sultan himself very soon justified the governor-general's precautions, by drawing the sword, and attacking the lines of Travancore. Being driven back, however, in the first instance, he disavowed his own outrage on our tributary, the rajah, by describing the inroad as an unauthorised act of his troops. This aggressive act on our ally, however, furnished all the excuse required, and from that instant the most vigorous and active measures were taken to prosecute the war. Tippoo feeling himself rather in a scrape, evidently wished to defer actual hostilities as long as he possibly could, but, unfortunately for him, it proved beyond the reach of his nature to resist the temptation of pouncing

a second time on the lines of Travancore when he saw a fair opening, and on this occasion he succeeded in capturing them. Still, in spite of this second aggression, Tip-poo professed the most friendly disposition to the British, lamented these mutual misunderstandings, and offered to send a person of dignity to the general commanding the Madras army "to remove," as he expressed it in his despatch, "the dust by which the upright mind of the general had been obscured." There could hardly be much dust in the eyes of the man who wrote the following answer :

" I have received your letter," says General Meadows, " and I understand its contents. You are a great prince; and, but for your cruelty to your prisoners, an enlightened one. The English, equally incapable of offering an insult as of submitting to one, have always looked upon war as declared from the moment you attacked their ally, the king of Travancore. God does not always give battle to the strong, nor the race to the swift, but, generally, success to those whose cause is just. Upon that we depend."

A few days subsequent to this pithy little despatch, (about the middle of June 1790), General Meadows, marching from the plain of Trichinopoly, entered the territories of the sultan, and commenced the war with vigour. In the first instance Tippoo gained some successes, which encouraged him to act on the offensive; and he actually entered the Carnatic, like his father, though with inferior means of mischief. The governor-general himself, Lord Cornwallis, who arrived about this time at Madras, took the command of the army, and made some most important changes. One of these was the assumption of the sovereignty of the Carnatic from the native ruler called the nabob; a measure which, in its consequences, led to endless discussions. I have no intention of touching upon these technical matters, or of describing the events of the war, which Lord Cornwallis conducted with admirable skill, during the whole of 1791 and a part of 1792. At length the Royal Tiger was driven to his den, and Seringapatam being invested in February 1792, the assault was only stayed at the

last moment by the submission of Tippoo, whose political annihilation was thus deferred during eight years longer of tyranny to his own people, and bitter hostility to the English.

The preliminary treaty which Tippoo was now forced to agree to, required him to cede one half of his territories to the British and their allies ; and to pay three crores and thirty lacs of rupees, or considerably upwards of three million sterling, as a compensation for the expenses of the war. Two of his eldest sons were also given up as hostages for the due fulfilment of this treaty. Every one, I suppose, has read the description, or seen the picture, representing the singular scene which took place on the delivery of these hostages. "These children," said the Vakeel, "were this morning the sons of the Sultan, my master ; they must now look to you, my lord, as their father !" Lord Cornwallis, with much good nature, gave each of the boys a gold watch ; and next day the princes presented his lordship with a Persian cimeter, upon which occasion old Tippoo fired off a royal salute from the fort

indicative of his satisfaction at the reception of his sons.

It may not be uninteresting, because highly characteristic of all parties, to mention, that these pacific arrangements were very nearly broken up, and the campaign re-opened with increased rancour, by a circumstance which probably touched the heart of Tippoo a vast deal more than the captivity of his progeny, by threatening to deprive him of what he considered his just revenge, on the thoughts of which he had been brooding during the whole war. It seems that the rajah of Coorg, — whose territory lay on the west, and adjacent, to Mysore, between Tippoo's country and the Malabar coast, — had taken an active share in the war against him — partly from hereditary hatred, partly from a very natural wish to crush so troublesome a neighbour. Tippoo, on the other hand, who had never dreamed that the territory of his rebellious tributary, the rajah of Coorg, would be included in the portion of country to be ceded by the treaty, became excessively enraged when the intention of Lord Cornwallis

was first stated. He at once broke off the negotiations; and, although a million sterling of the fine, and his two sons, the hostages, had already reached the English camp, he seriously meditated a renewal of hostilities. Lord Cornwallis calmly stuck to his original point; and we may easily conceive the terror in which the poor rajah of Coorg must have been kept while these high contracting parties were debating whether or not he should be sacrificed. In the end, Lord Cornwallis succeeded in making out his point; and Tippoo, though still furiously indignant, was obliged to resign all claims whatever upon the country in dispute. This result not only demonstrated the military superiority of the British, but increased the respect of all their allies, and served to establish the impression which so much pains had been taken to fix on the minds of the native authorities, especially those of the Nizam and the Mahrattas, that the grounds on which the war had been originally undertaken were not only those of justice and necessity, but of strict good faith to all those native powers who assisted us.

Much astonishment has been expressed that Lord Cornwallis, when he had the power, did not utterly destroy Tippoo. Some persons have alleged, in explanation, that if the whole territory had been taken possession of and distributed amongst the allies, the two native states in the confederacy, the Mahrattas and the Nizam, would have been rendered too powerful for our policy to control. But this seems an unfounded notion. The finances of the British government were still in a very low state, and the outcry in England against war in India was echoed to the governor-general's ears by every packet, and in every conceivable shape of remonstrance. To the other motives tempting him to conclude so advantageous a peace, may be added, the undisguised jealousy, and almost hostility, of his two unwieldy native allies—one timorous, distrustful, and very slow to move—the other treacherous in principle, and only co-operating with the English against Tippoo out of pure revenge. An approaching war between England and France may also have quickened his lordship's movements. Whatever were the



real reasons, peace was made; half of the sultan's kingdom was surrendered and divided, the money paid, and the troops marched back again to their several homes. Thus ended the first campaign of the British against Tippoo Sultan.

I must now very reluctantly pass over unnoticed the arrangements made by Lord Cornwallis with Scindia, the powerful native authority already alluded to, who had forcibly established himself in the northern parts of Hindustan, and obtained possession of the emperor of Delhi. But I must not omit to mention in passing, that long afterwards (in 1803) it cost the duke of Wellington, then major-general Wellesley, only one brief but very hard-fought and glorious campaign to break the neck of the powerful confederacy formed by Scindia and another Mahratta chief of the name of Holkar. These princes, allied with many other minor plunderers, saw with infinite jealousy the gradual establishment of order, security, and efficient national defence in those regions over which they used formerly to sweep almost unresisted, with their clouds of fierce ma-

raiders. I must likewise hurry over the very important changes brought about in the relations between the Company and the nabob of the Carnatic, and pass altogether those entered into with the vizier of Oude. In order fully to understand these complicated branches of Indian history, a great deal more ground must be gone over than mere European inquirers possess patience for; while every Indian reader already knows more of the details than any general outline or sketch, however careful, could furnish.

The extraordinary success which marked Lord Cornwallis's administration is, no doubt, to be traced very much to the concentration of the resources of India, brought about by the recent amendment in the constitution of the Company by Pitt's bill, and the acts subsequently passed, explanatory of its intention. The entire possession by the governor-general of the civil and military functions, not only of the Bengal government, but of the other presidencies, enabled him to assume an active control and direction at any given point of India, at the very

moment required, with the undivided momentum of the whole British resources. In such hands this force proved irresistible; and the favourable impression originally made on the minds, not only of the English, but of the natives of India, by the rank and character of Lord Cornwallis, was amply confirmed by their observation of his skill in wielding these new and extended powers. Far and near, the successes of the governor-general had added strength and reputation to the government of the English. But while the admiration of the natives was extorted by these events, their fears also were roused, and no moderation on the part of Lord Cornwallis could remove their alarms for the future. In England, strange to say, another impression appears to have been left on the minds of the Court of Directors and the king's ministry by the same course of events: for it was now fondly believed by many honest folks at home, that the affairs of the Company in the East had been placed, by the exertions of Lord Cornwallis, on the true footing of security and strength which had been so long desired;

and that, in future, nothing was requisite but mild, moderate, and conciliatory counsels, to secure the lasting tranquillity and prosperity of the British possessions.

Lord Cornwallis left India in August, 1793, and was succeeded in the supreme government by Sir John Shore, who became afterwards Lord Teignmouth. During the five years of peace which followed, before Lord Wellesley assumed the management of affairs in India, what has been termed "the neutral system of policy" was adopted, in strict conformity with the literal sense of the legislative act already so frequently alluded to. A clause in that instrument declares, "that as the pursuit of schemes of conquest is repugnant to the wish, to the honour, and the policy of the British nation, it is not lawful for the governor-general in council, without the express authority of the Court of Directors, or of the secret committee, either to declare or commence hostilities, or to enter into any treaty for making war against any of the native princes or states in India, or to make any treaty guaranteeing the dominions of such princes or states,

except when hostilities have commenced, or preparations are actually made for the attack of the British nation in India, or of some of the states and princes whose dominions it shall be engaged by subsisting treaties to defend."

This act, which is still in force, was intended to set limits to ambition, and to check schemes of conquest, as all extensions of our territory were indiscriminately called in those days. But it surely could never have been the intention of the supreme legislature to deprive the local governments of India of the power of adopting preventive measures against political dangers which they had good reason to believe were in progress, or to prescribe, as it were, a positive indifference to the concerns of its neighbours. Could it possibly be meant to deprive the British government in India of the legitimate exercise of that moral influence and military power which its past wisdom, courage, or wealth, had gained for it? Are not the political influence and direct military power of the Company, in point of fact, the principal, and, indeed, the most legitimate

means of maintaining peace and tranquillity, not only in their own states, but in those of their neighbours?

The governor-general, however, who succeeded Lord Cornwallis, appears to have thought otherwise; and in the sincere and conscientious desire of governing India according to the literal meaning of the statute, and the expressed wishes of the authorities at home, he devoted himself entirely to the neutral line of policy. "The result of this experiment," says Sir John Malcolm, "offers an important lesson to those who are intrusted with the administration of British India. It was proved from the events of this administration, (that of Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth), that no ground of political advantage could be abandoned without being instantly occupied by an enemy; and that to resign influence was not merely to resign power, but to allow that power to pass into hands hostile to the British government. The consequence of political inaction was equally obvious; for this inactive system of policy, so far from attaining its object—which

was to preserve affairs upon the footing it found them—had only the effect of keeping the British government stationary, while all around it advanced; and of exposing it to those dangers which resulted from the revolutions of its neighbours, while it was even denied the power of adapting its policy to the change of circumstances. A period of six years' peace, so far from having added to the strength or improved the security of the British dominions in India, had placed them in a situation of comparative danger. Though our strength was not lessened, the power and resources of the other states of India had increased. The confidence and attachment of our allies were much shaken, if not destroyed; and the presumption and hostile disposition of the principal native powers of India too clearly shewed that it was to a principle of weakness or of selfish policy, and not of moderation, that they ascribed the course which had been pursued by the British government.”  
—*Malcolm's Polit. Hist. of India*, p. 225.

The allusion in the above extract to the diminished confidence of our allies refers

chiefly to the effect produced on the mind of the Nizam by our permitting the Mah-rattas to attack him, when he, the Nizam, felt himself entitled in reason and in equity, if not by actual treaty, to our aid against his treacherous neighbours. Though there existed no official writings on the point, the Nizam could not forget the authorised assurances of the British resident. Lord Cornwallis, at the time he was courting the alliance of the Nizam against Tippoo, said, most truly and forcibly, that we owed our power in India to that reputation which led the most perfidious nations to rely with confidence upon the verbal assurances of our representatives. "There can be no doubt," eloquently adds Sir John Malcolm, "that our eastern empire is held solely by opinion; or, in other words, by that respect and awe with which the comparative superiority of our knowledge, justice, and system of rule, have inspired the inhabitants of our own territories, and that confidence in our truth, reliance on our good faith, and dread of our arms, which are impressed on every nation of India."



It is very material towards the formation of a right judgment on Indian affairs, to bear in mind one class of circumstances, which, though sufficiently striking when fairly stated, are by no means obvious till dispassionately considered. A belief has become very general, that the East India Company have a direct interest, and a constant wish to extend their dominions. Appearances, too often, it must be allowed, have gone far to justify such a charge; but I am convinced that a very moderate degree of inquiry into the real merits of any one, or of all the cases embraced by these suspicions—in recent times, at all events—will not only prove the absolute necessity of those extensions of frontier, but shew that they have been most reluctantly made.

People forget, or perhaps have never been led to consider, that when circumstances lead the government of British India into such wars as those which, in our own defence, we waged with Tippoo, and afterwards with the Mahrattas, or more lately with the Nepaulese or the Burmese—that is, with any of the native

princes who would have deprived us of our paramount authority had we not subdued them—we, by conquering them, only change the character of our political relations with those particular states, but we also necessarily change our relations with those territories lying beyond them, which thus for the first time become our next-door neighbours.

Let it be considered, that if we conquer a country so completely as to assume the entire government of it, we must do one of two things;—we must either, in the character of masters of the new country, adopt as parts of our own policy, all those engagements by which the former possessors of the conquered territory were bound to their neighbours; or we must form fresh arrangements with those neighbouring states, between which and ourselves the new territory was formerly interposed. We cannot by possibility lie on our oars, and say we will neither meddle with the old engagements, nor make fresh ones. Our new neighbours will never submit to this; and in most cases it does so happen that some stipulation

on this very head forms a part of the terms under the sanction of which we enter as occupants of the new country. "Every new alliance that we contract," says Mr. Henry Russell, in his recent evidence before the House of Commons, "brings us into territorial or political contact with other states, which, in their turn, submit to the same system, and fall under the same consequences." These inevitable arrangements, unfortunately, increase in number, extent, and complexity, as our frontier extends; and a moment's reflection will shew, that it is hardly possible, almost in any case, to foresee what may be the solemn engagements with which any given conquest will entangle us; consequently we cannot possibly predict what future wars we may be led into. "To conquer peace" is a very pretty figure of speech; but it is perhaps the most difficult of all battles to win, and more difficult, I suspect, in India, than in any other country. No person, therefore, acquainted with the real state of the fact, will suppose it probable, I might say possible, that any eastern statesman of ex-

perience or good sense can desire to extend the territories of the Company with any view to the ordinary purposes of ambition—the love of power, the extension of patronage, or even the increase of revenue.

The following vivid but rather startling picture of the manner in which our empire has gone on increasing, is drawn by a well-qualified judge of such matters, Mr. R. Jenkins, who was political resident at Nagpore for twenty years.

“The rise and progress of our power in India,” says Mr. Jenkins, in his evidence before the House of Commons on the 27th of March, 1832, “have been rapid and marvellous. Unlike other empires, ours has been in a great degree forced upon us, built up at almost every step against our own deliberate resolution to avoid it, in the face, I may say, of every opposition which could be given to it by the legislature, his Majesty’s Government, and by the Court of Directors, acting upon correspondent dispositions in our governments abroad. Each successive governor-general in the last half century sent from this country, with minds fresh and un-

touched by local prejudices—including Lord Cornwallis during his first administration, who went to India under the act containing the well-known denunciation against conquest and extension of dominion (see p. 193), Lord Wellesley, Lord Minto, Lord Hastings (the last two strongly impressed against the existing foreign policy in India), and Lord Amherst—have seen reason to enter into wars and negotiations defensive in their objects, but generally terminating in that very extension of territory and dominion which was dreaded.”

The difficulty and anxiety of governing our eastern empire as it gradually swells under the inevitable force of circumstances, eternally moving forwards, far outweigh the pleasures even of kingly command. The additional income arising from newly acquired provinces seldom or never balances the increased expenditure; and the extension of patronage, at all times doubtful in extent, too often proves a thriftless and thankless source of enjoyment. To maintain the tranquillity of India by encouraging mutual cordiality amongst the native powers, instead of fo-

menting their jealousies, and to preserve what we possess essentially with a view to the prosperity of the inhabitants, and to the general credit and happiness of our Indian empire, is now, and I fully believe has long been, the prime object of anxiety with all our Indian authorities both at home and abroad.

Lord Wellesley's recorded opinions upon some of these points are well worthy of attention. In replying to an address from the inhabitants of Calcutta, at the close of the great Mahratta war of 1803, his lordship says, " My solicitude has been directed to the important purpose of effecting a general pacification of India on principles of reciprocal justice and moderation. The power, reputation, and dignity of the British empire in India will derive additional security and lustre from the establishment of peace and good order among the native states. In the decline of intrinsic strength, inferior states may perhaps have gained a temporary safety by fomenting the discord of contiguous powers. In any extremity, such a policy is unwarrantable and disgraceful, nor can permanent repose be

secured upon such precarious foundations in the actual condition of this empire. I am happy to declare, that the concord of the established native states, the independence of their separate authorities, the internal peace of their respective dominions, and the tranquillity of their respective subjects, will tend to confirm and to fortify the power and resources of the British government, and must constitute the most desirable objects of the British policy in India."

More or less, these generous and truly statesmanlike sentiments are certainly participated by the whole body of the East India Company's servants. They all know right well—some by experience, some by the instruction and example of others, and some by the mere force of those right principles which always beget the habit of thinking and feeling correctly, that their best chance for fame or fortune, public renown or private peace of mind, consists exclusively in cherishing honourable motives to action as the rule of their lives. To suppose that such men can ever wish to extend the British empire in the East, from

the sheer love of conquest, or any other selfish motive, or that they are regulated in their measures by "low ambition and the pride of kings," is to suppose a perversion of intellect totally irreconcilable, upon any known doctrines of policy, with the astonishing moral influence which has followed their steps.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE MARQUESS OF WELLESLEY—  
DOWNFAL OF TIPPOO.

By far the most interesting period of East Indian history commences with the arrival of Marquess Wellesley (then Lord Mornington), as governor-general, in the spring of 1798. The state of affairs in India at that moment was such that none but a mind of the highest order, and supported by resources moral and physical almost unlimited, could have seen through the formidable difficulties of that period, or hoped to overcome them. Lord Wellesley was possessed of peculiar advantages, which gave double confidence and vigour to the application of his talents and experience to the duties of a practical statesman. He had long enjoyed the benefit of the private friendship of Mr. Pitt, then prime minister of England,

and thus possessed an intimate knowledge of all the different branches of the general government of the empire, of which India, since the bill of 1784, had so happily formed an integral portion under one and the same head. His lordship was therefore not only acquainted with the bearing of each part of the grand scheme of British government upon every other, but from knowing that he possessed the confidence of the ministry at home, he could calculate upon the most ample support in all measures which had a business-like tendency to maintain those ultimate relations between the general administration of the empire, and those of India in particular.

Lord Wellesley appears to have been duly conscious of his own superior powers, and to have been resolute in carrying his measures through every obstacle when once he felt their propriety. But all parts of his proceedings, in correspondence, in conversation, in the most energetic action, and in the coolest deliberation afterwards, seem to shew an unusual desire to reach the exact truth, and to avoid every kind

of subterfuge or disguise. I have often been told by persons on the spot, who had much intercourse with him, that no one could be more minute in his preliminary inquiries than Lord Wellesley, or more patient in the investigation of any question. But when he had once gained all the requisite information, he became inflexibly resolute in his purposes, and, with astonishing sagacity, saw his way far ahead of almost every person about him, even of those who had most local experience.

For one qualification of a great commanding officer his lordship was particularly distinguished. Where he placed his confidence, he gave it without limitation; indeed no man—even Wellington, his thrice-renowned brother—understood better the true science of delegation. He appears invariably to have taken great pains to let his wishes be fully understood by the persons he employed, and having then furnished them with ample means, he started them off to execute the required service in their own way. Those whom he employed always felt certain of his hearty

support, and sure not only of his just meed of applause, but confident that every thing would be made the most of rather to their advantage than his own. Lord Wellesley seldom appears to have taken into consideration the probable effect which his measures might have on himself personally. Indeed, so pure and lofty a public spirit seems to have guided all his measures, that he delighted in throwing off credit from himself upon those who had participated in the task. The consequence of this system was, that every public servant in India worked under him, not only with all the energy which belongs to independence, but with the additional stimulus of his generous companionship and assistance. As there existed no jealousy, and no suspicious cramping of authority, there followed no reproaches even when failures occurred. So that all parties pulled together in a manner to which I know of no parallel, except in the fleets under Nelson, where, from the adoption of similar principles, every man, as England expected, really did his duty. The prodigious spring and elasticity which

those animating principles, guided by such a hand, and backed by such immense resources, gave to the whole Indian system, was soon felt from one end of our huge territory to the other ; and as the services to be executed were frequently of the utmost importance and variety, so, as if by magic, the penetrating genius of the new governor-general always discovered and drew to light an adequate number of agents to perform his will. It may be truly said, that such was his sagacity and his means of gaining a knowledge of character, that he very rarely made even slight mistakes in determining these selections ; and, in consequence, almost every enterprise, whether of a military or of a civil nature, which he set on foot, succeeded in a way which astonished not merely the natives, but the most long-sighted and experienced of the English themselves. I have even been told of men who, under the fervent stimulus of Lord Wellesley's encouragement and support, have been heard to wonder again and again at their own success ; and though, at first, they trembled at the extent of their sudden authority, and stag-

gered under the weight of responsibilities quite new to them, they came at length to discover that the governor generally had appreciated their capacity better than they had done themselves.

I need scarcely say, that when the fate and fortunes of mighty empires, and the happiness or misery of countless myriads of our subjects in the East were at stake, a governor of Lord Wellesley's stamp was obliged often to ride over the precise letter of his instructions, and occasionally to appoint men to high stations out of the jogg-trot order of seniority. But of all these irregular nominations, I do not remember to have heard of one which in the end did not fully bear out the wisdom of the choice. At the time, and on the spot, it was naturally to be expected that some dissatisfaction might be felt by those whose rank and length of service gave them, to a certain extent, a prior claim. But even these persons very soon recognised the justice, or rather the public fitness of the preference. After the capture of Seringapatam, for example, it became of the utmost consequence who should be nomi-

nated governor of that fortress, as the same officer, for obvious reasons, was to be placed at the head of the commission appointed to conduct the ultimate arrangement of the conquest. Many persons conceived it to be a perilous experiment, and even a piece of gross favouritism, in the governor-general, to name a near relation of his own to execute these important trusts. But when we know that the Duke of Wellington, then merely Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley, was the man selected, how different is the sentiment! Are we not irresistibly carried back to those momentous times, and forced to respect the prophetic sagacity and decision of character which had power not only to anticipate the judgment of the world at large, but firmness enough to act upon that anticipation, in defiance of all etiquettes and vulgar surmises?

At the period of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India (1798), Tippoo Sultan, the most formidable of our foes in that quarter of the world, had regained much of his strength; and as he never ceased to feel the bitter smart arising from his defeat by

Lord Cornwallis, he kept a constant look-out for opportunities of revenging himself. The aspect of political affairs, however, had materially changed during the interval which had elapsed since his father Hyder over-ran the Carnatic in 1780, and so nearly extinguished the British authority in that quarter. But, unfortunately for poor Tippoo, he either did not perceive, or did not make a proper allowance for those circumstances which had occurred during the preceding twelve or fifteen years to alter his position relatively to that of the English; nor perhaps was it possible for him to have done so. His own kingdom of Mysore, in the course of six years' peace, (which was then considered a long period of repose for any Indian state,) had greatly increased in wealth, population, and military resources; while, owing to political mismanagement, the adjacent territory of the Carnatic indirectly under our authority had rapidly deteriorated. Now, the sultan could not be made to understand, that although one part of our government might work ill, the other parts might be working well; and thus he



was blindly led by his wishes greatly to under-rate our power. Instead of forming a cordial alliance with us, which he might readily have done, he shewed no disposition to treat the English as friends a moment longer than delay appeared propitious to his fixed purpose of revenge. In this vindictive temper he laboured incessantly, and with considerable success, to strengthen his connexions with our enemies the French, by extending the authority of that nation in India.

Tippoo knew not, and his friends the French would not be so impolitic as to tell him—even if they were fully aware of the fact themselves, which is doubtful—that the native powers of India had no longer to contend with a mere company of merchants, possessed of scanty resources, and not only distrusted by the mass of their countrymen at home, but unsupported by the ministers of the crown. He and his allies had yet to learn, to their bitter cost, that British India had been lately formed into a part of the British empire, and that, while its direct executive administration was still vested in the East India Company,

a superintending control had been given to the king's ministers; and, consequently, that all the resources of the nation at large could at any moment be combined with those of the Company to give effect to their joint purpose. The unfortunate Tippoo, indeed, may well be excused for missing this point, when so many, even amongst the best informed persons in England, were slow to perceive the enormous advantage of the changes introduced by Pitt, and even predicted from thence the ruin of the country his measures were intended to benefit.

When half of Tippoo's territory was taken from him by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, and divided between the Mahrattas, the Nizam, and ourselves, offensive and defensive treaties were formed by us with these two states, by which it was understood—especially by the weaker power, the Nizam—that any one party was to be protected against the other. Such was assuredly Lord Cornwallis's intention; but this—unhappily, as many people think—was not the view taken by his successor in the government, who, acting under a

conscientious sense of duty, adhered rigidly to the letter of the restrictive act of parliament so often alluded to. The object of this act was to establish a neutral system of policy, in order, as it was vainly imagined, to check the progress of territorial conquest which was supposed to actuate our Indian rulers, by forbidding their entering into hostilities with the natives before an actual aggression had been made upon us. In 1795, however, the cunning Mahrattas, having discovered the policy of the reigning powers, were tempted by the belief that we should not lend our assistance to our old ally, actually entered the Nizam's country, and stripped him of a considerable portion of his dominions. The Nizam, feeling highly irritated at our not standing by him, dismissed the English subsidiary force from his capital, Hyderabad, and shortly afterwards admitted another large body of troops, which was entirely commanded by Frenchmen, amounting at one time to twenty-three battalions, with a formidable train of ordnance.

Tippoo, who of course was enchanted

with all this squabbling between us and our allies, spared no pains to foment the quarrel; and so successful were his intrigues, added to those of the French commander, M. Raymond, that, at the time of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India, all good-will towards us had apparently vanished from the Nizam's court.

Nor did his lordship find things in a better case on the western side of India; for whatever disposition to enter into our views might secretly be entertained by the Paishwa, or chief of the Poonah Mahrattas, he was in no condition to exert himself in alliance with us, either against Tippoo, or for any other purpose. A powerful northern chief, also a Mahratta — well known, I am sure, even to European ears — Doulut Row Scindia, by no means well disposed to us, had left his own territories and come down to Poonah to control the submissive Paishwa. He there effectually succeeded in counteracting all our endeavours to bring the Poonah Mahrattas into cordial alliance with us. Scindia's importance in the scale was greatly augmented by his pos-

sessing, as part of his army, a large body of native troops disciplined after the European method, and all officered by Frenchmen. With this compact corps of infantry, surrounded by clouds of Mahratta horse, Scindia held himself ready at any moment to dash in upon such of the British settlements in the north of India as might be left undefended, in consequence of the troops having been withdrawn for the war which the conduct of Tippoo rendered every day more and more inevitable.

Lord Wellesley, from the very first, and in the spirit of a manly policy, thought it right to give Tippoo every fair chance of accommodating matters, and coming to a just perception of his own station in India. His lordship appears at one time to have had hopes that Tippoo might at last see the inutility of his attempts to dislodge the English, and consequently the advantage of abandoning his French allies, and attaching himself cordially to the power then so manifestly in the ascendant. It has, I know, been alleged that Lord Wellesley never seriously contemplated this turn of affairs; and nothing would, perhaps,

have disappointed him more than Tippoo's submission. But the governor-general could not possibly have avoided following up his own definite proposals, and therefore it was clearly Tippoo's fault, and his alone, that he sacrificed sound policy to feelings of personal animosity.

Meanwhile, as every hour brought fresh proofs of Tippoo's hostile intentions, and almost open enmity, it became absolutely indispensable to our safety as a state to take vigorous measures for strengthening our hands by the alliance of the adjacent native powers before commencing active warlike operations. Upon the Marhattas, chiefly in consequence of Scindia's interference at Poonah, Lord Wellesley failed to make any impression; but with the Nizam he succeeded so completely as not only to re-establish the British influence in that quarter, but to demolish entirely the French authority. It happened that the prime minister at the Nizam's court saw further than his master; and it is more than probable he had already discovered the important change which had taken place at the British head-

quarters. At all events, the overtures which Lord Wellesley made were well received; and as old Azeem ul Omrah, the minister, brought these proposals under the Nizam's eye, he failed not to point out the dangers by which the kingdom of his highness was surrounded. His avowed enemies, the Mahrattas, openly threatened him; while Tippoo, though just now very civil and coaxing, was not more to be trusted. His principal reliance was therefore upon the French force in his capital. In this dilemma the distracted Nizam said to Omrah, his minister, "If we break with M. Raymond, the Frenchman, we shall straightway be obliged, in self-defence, to admit a still larger subsidiary force of English, and thus we shall become more dependent upon foreigners than ever." "That is very true," said the sagacious minister; "but it is surely wiser to be dependent upon a state whose good faith is acknowledged, and whose power is well consolidated, than upon one whose very existence in India hangs by a thread. If we lose the protection of the French without securing the co-operation of the British,

what is to keep out these accursed Mah-rattas—or how are we to repel the still more mischievous incursions of Tippoo, supposing him to maintain his ground?"

The Nizam's fears and doubts being at length overcome, he gave his assent to a negotiation with the British resident for the dismissal of the French corps, and for the increase of the English subsidiary force, provided these objects could be connected with a pledge on the part of the British government, that his dominions should be protected from any future unjust demands on the part of the Mahrattas—this being the string on which the Nizam, taught by bitter experience, always harped. A treaty was accordingly soon prepared, by which the English agreed to augment the former subsidiary force at Hyderabad by four battalions, and pledged themselves to arbitrate on principles of impartiality and justice all points in dispute between the Nizam and the Mahratta government at Poonah. The Nizam, on his part, agreed to disband the French corps in his service, and to deliver up its officers to the British authorities.

This last part of the treaty, however,



was much easier written on parchment than enforced in the field. A corps of fourteen thousand armed and well-disciplined men, of whom eleven thousand were on the spot, with a well-appointed park of artillery, and officered by brave and experienced Europeans, were not likely, it was thought, to submit to the paper bullets of a native prince. The admirable management of the British resident, however, Major Kirkpatrick, and the gallantry and skill of his able assistant on this occasion, Captain (afterwards Sir John) Malcolm, enabled them to accomplish this important service. As soon as the promised subsidiary force of the British approached near enough, the full execution of the treaty, as far as related to the dismissal of the French corps, was demanded by the resident. The Nizam now took fright—not unnaturally; and even the intrepid minister, Azeem ul Omrah, felt alarmed at the idea of coolly telling eleven thousand men to lay down their arms! “Gentlemen,” said the British resident, to the Nizam and his minister, “all this humming and hawing and apprehension is too late. The orders of the

governor-general are peremptory; in his name, and at your peril, I demand the instant and complete execution of the engagements entered into. If, therefore, you persist in this wavering conduct, I shall at once authorise an attack upon the French camp, and the Hyderabad court must be answerable for all the consequences of its weakness and want of good faith."

Another British corps of four battalions, with their guns, which had likewise been assembled on the Nizam's frontier pending these negotiations, were immediately marched to Hyderabad, where they joined the two battalions formerly stationed there. As soon as all was ready, a movement was made towards the ground commanding the French lines, indicating a resolution to attack them in the event of further delay. These vigorous proceedings having effectually removed the indecision of the Nizam and his minister, a proclamation was issued and sent to the French camp, by which the troops were informed that the Nizam had dismissed all the European officers from his service, and that those

who supported the Frenchmen should be punished as traitors! This modest proclamation, aided by the menacing position of the British troops, and by the internal divisions in the French camp, produced a violent mutiny in the enemy's lines, of which immediate advantage was taken. A strong body of the Nizam's horse, and the whole of the British force, closed up and surrounded the French cantonment at daylight. The soldiers, after some discussion, and on receiving a promise that all their arrears of pay should be liquidated, consented to lay down their arms.

Thus, in a few hours, a corps which, including detachments, consisted of fourteen thousand native troops, fully disciplined, and officered by Frenchmen, together with all their artillery, and a well-filled arsenal, containing every description of military stores, was completely disarmed, without a single life having been lost.

It is easy enough in this, as in many other cases of important services, to exclaim after the event, "How easy!"—But those who are best acquainted with the difficulties of command, will know how

to appreciate the business-like foresight and the manly confidence which could venture to anticipate such an extraordinary result with means apparently so inadequate. The impression caused all over India by this bold and successful stroke of policy was very great. It may be considered, however, only the first step in a series of political measures, all tending to one important national end—the utter extinction of the French influence in India, and the consequent destruction of all those plans formed by the native powers against us, which rested upon the hope of foreign assistance. Even the demolition of such an inveterate enemy as Tippoo, though of vast consequence, was a desideratum subordinate to the expulsion of the French. For Tippoo, who thought himself their master, was merely their tool, and in disarming our great European enemy of this powerful weapon, Lord Wellesley paralysed their exertions, and almost entirely broke down their hopes, in the south of India, though in the north they were still extremely formidable.

The French, as I have already stated,

had formed another force under Scindia. An able and most extraordinary person of the name of De Boigne, originally in the service of the English East India Company, had enlisted with Scindia many years before, and succeeded in organising for that chief a regular establishment of infantry and artillery, such as had never before been seen in the service of any native prince of Hindustan. The Mahratta leader, by a liberal but hazardous policy, had assigned to De Boigne a large district of his country, close to the English frontier, and yielding a revenue adequate to the maintenance of a regular force. This, under M. Perron, another Frenchman, his successor, amounted to between forty and fifty thousand well-disciplined troops, and upwards of four hundred guns. As long as this army—for it really was such—remained under the immediate command of De Boigne, the most effective encouragement was given to European officers of all nations to enter his service, and every man was not only allowed to retire from it when he pleased, but to carry with him any property he

might have accumulated. When, however, M. Perron succeeded to the command, in 1794, he pursued a different course. De Boigne had always received English and French officers indiscriminately, but Perron accepted French candidates alone. He even discouraged the English so systematically, that at the time of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India, this formidable body of men, acting in close alliance with the impracticable Scindia, was officered so exclusively by French, that it might almost be considered as a force of that hostile nation hanging permanently on the English frontier. They were ready at a moment's warning, at the suggestion of Scindia, or at the invitation of Tippoo, to enter our territory whenever the mass of our troops might be called away for distant service. It is more than probable, that the power of wielding such a force induced Scindia to resist all Lord Wellesley's endeavours to engage him in the alliance against Tippoo; and his lordship's address in neutralising a power of whose assistance he could not avail himself, was very great. This was all that could be

accomplished at the period in question, for the time had not yet come when the French influence under Scindia could, with safety, be attacked directly: A few years afterwards, it cost the mighty genius of Wellington but one short and brilliant campaign — beginning with the famous battle of Assaye — to demolish the French force entirely, and to bring both Scindia and his ally, Holkar — another plundering Mahratta chief — completely and permanently under our sovereign authority.

Before such an enterprise could be thought of, it had become absolutely necessary to take effective measures for reducing Tippoo Sultan to terms. While effecting this purpose, however, Lord Wellesley has been charged by some people, very inconsiderately, I conceive, with a wish to pick a quarrel with that monarch, in order that he might pull him from the throne. I daresay he was by no means sorry to find an occasion to go to war, though Tippoo, on his side, was at least as ready to fight. Lord Wellesley, with much prudence, took every care to afford Tippoo an opportunity of stopping in time,

and even went further in these conciliatory endeavours than most persons who read the details will be inclined to think right. The whole tenour of Tippoo's conduct, indeed, subsequent to the peace concluded by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, had shewn an implacable hatred to the British government, and a restless impatience to be freed from the presence of the English. He accordingly intrigued with the Nizam at Hyderabad, with the Paishwa at Poonah, and with Scindia in the north. He despatched an embassy to Kaubul, which lies between Persia and India. To Persia, also, he sent a mission, and another even as far as Turkey. His grand hope, however, rested on French co-operation, and in this he was wise, for they were by far the steadiest foes to us.

In the middle of 1798, accounts were received in India that ambassadors from Tippoo had arrived at the Isle of France; and various other evidence shewed his great anxiety for immediate reinforcements, preparatory to a grand attack on the British. It has been asserted that Lord Wellesley made more out of these



proofs of Tippoo's intrigues with the French than the circumstances fairly warrant; and that too much importance was attached to the danger likely to arise from the Sultan's alliance with our enemies. There would, no doubt, be considerable force in this criticism upon his lordship's reasoning on the occasion, had the case of French influence with Tippoo been the only one consideration. But what was the fact? We have seen that a body of fourteen thousand troops, officered by Europeans hostile to us, had been assembled at Hyderabad; while another, much more powerful, not only in numbers, but by reason of their complete subserviency to a Marhatta prince of great authority, was ready to enter our territories at a moment's warning. Accounts also were received about this time of Buonaparte's having landed in Egypt; and it was pretty generally believed that his chief object was an attack on British India, through the instrumentality of Persia and the other intervening powers in the north, but mainly by the help of Tippoo in the south. The Mysore country and the Carnatic

still contained many French officers, although the armies had been subdued; and the Isle of France possessed ample resources in men, arms, money, and ships, all ready to be put in action to the discomfiture of the British, as soon as measures should be duly prepared for them. Lord Wellesley, therefore, was every where surrounded by open as well as by latent dangers, such as were enough to render a secure and lasting peace totally impossible. He gallantly looked all these dangers in the face; and having resolved to meet them either by war or by negotiation, he arranged his plans in the order most likely to succeed, and determined to act without delay, and in such a manner as should make resistance on the enemy's part hopeless. The first measure, as we have seen, was the destruction of the French force at Hyderabad; the next blow was aimed at Tippoo, and miserably indeed would the governor-general have betrayed the immense trust in his hands had he hesitated over the interpretation of an act of parliament till that formidable sovereign had collected all his means of

offence, foreign as well as domestic, and felt himself equal to the accomplishment of his grand object, the extirpation of the British.

Far from this indolence, and from any idea of shrinking from responsibility, Lord Wellesley, after he had taken a careful survey of the ground, lost not a single moment in bringing the whole resources of the Indian government to bear on the point where he saw it would be most immediately important to make the greatest impression. A large and highly appointed army, equipped in every possible way for the field, had been speedily but quietly assembled at Madras on the eastern side of the country. Another, not so numerous, but equally complete in all respects, was soon collected at Bombay and despatched to the coast of Malabar on the west, ready to ascend the Ghauts at a given signal. The British forces in the southern parts of the peninsula were in like manner gradually drawn together, and ordered to be ready to move on Mysore. The Nizam's army, and also the English subsidiary force at Hyderabad,

were prepared to march from the north the instant they were required.

Lord Wellesley himself now proceeded to Madras, in order to give additional importance to these preparations, and to be ready to lend the weight of his personal influence and authority, either to negotiations or to the approaching military proceedings. In consequence of measures so admirably concerted, there never once arose, at any stage of this memorable campaign, the slightest delay or misunderstanding. Every branch of the service; indeed, civil and military, and every Englishman in India, appears to have been stimulated to unwonted exertion by the local knowledge and the extensive influence of their governor-general, whose talents and promptitude of decision may be said to have rendered the resources of the country doubly effective.

Tippoo was now called upon to explain his proceedings with respect to the mission sent to the Isle of France. His reply was entirely evasive as to the main point—his alliance and intrigues with the French; but he failed not to express great surprise

and displeasure at the governor-general's allusion to war, and the vast preparations made all around him. In answer to this shuffling letter, Lord Wellesley stated, in the fullest manner, the grounds of the measures he had adopted; and he very plainly and properly told the sultan, that his conduct for several years past had been such as to keep not only the British, but their allies, in such eternal alarms, that the whole country was exposed, during a time professedly of profound peace, to all the solicitude and hazard, as well as much of the expense, of open war. In referring again to that part of Tippoo's proceedings which related to his negotiations with the French, Lord Wellesley very justly said, that new arrangements had become indispensable, in consequence of Tippoo's recent engagements with the common enemy of the British and their allies. His lordship might have added, what, indeed, would have been very imprudent to add, that the extent of the influence and actual force of the French already established in other parts of India rendered it necessary to take prompt measures to prevent the growth

of a similar power under Tippoo. But it was no business of Lord Wellesley's to give any such hint of the importance he attached to the growing influence of our enemy, which all along had been his lordship's secret but resolute, and was now his avowed purpose to crush altogether. If, then, Tippoo chose to go along with the French, and to share fortunes with them, it was his own fault. In a letter, dated so late as the 9th of January, 1799, Lord Wellesley repeated his entreaties to Tippoo to meet with cordiality the moderate and sincere advances which were made to him to conclude an amicable arrangement. At the same time he plainly informed the sultan, that no further delays could be admitted, and that a final answer must be sent within one day after the receipt of the letter.

What Lord Wellesley would have done had Tippoo met these advances promptly and with a shew of sincerity, it is very difficult to say; and probably the most anxious moment of Lord Wellesley's administration was the period between sending this ultimatum to Tippoo and the day

on which the answer became due. At all events, no answer was received till several weeks afterwards, during which interval the mighty preparations of the governor-general were all going on silently. The Bombay army moved towards the Malabar mountains, and commenced drawing their heavy cannon up the passes of the Ghauts. The Madras forces in like manner proceeded from the plains of Coromandel towards the steep face which divides the table-land of Mysore from the low grounds. The Nizam's horse and our own Hyderabad subsidiary troops dropped from the north gradually into their appointed stations; while this immense circle of military circumvallation was completed on the south by detachments from all the different districts under our authority in that quarter of India.

At length, on the 13th of February, nearly a month after it was known that Lord Wellesley's letter had been received, Tippoo wrote to his lordship to say, that he was about to proceed on a hunting excursion, and begged the governor-general would send an officer to meet him, slightly

attended. To this Lord Wellesley replied, that it was now too late for amicable discussions, but that if Tippoo wished to treat, he must address himself to the commander-in-chief of the armies now on their march, that officer being empowered to enter into an arrangement for the establishment of a secure and permanent peace.

It is interesting to glance at the terms which Tippoo might have obtained at various times during these negotiations, had he chosen to come forward when invited to do so. When Lord Wellesley first arrived in India, and discovered, from the dislocated state of our alliances with the Nizam and the Mahrattas, and the want of adequate military preparations at Madras, that any sudden dash against Tippoo could not safely be contemplated, his lordship would have rested satisfied with the establishment of a British resident at Tippoo's capital, Seringapatam, coupled with the entire and immediate removal of every Frenchman in his service, and a solemn engagement to exclude permanently all persons of that nation from his armies and his dominions



generally. In the meantime the news of the invasion of Egypt by Buonaparte arrived, and the expedition was every where spoken of in the East as having an ultimate view to the conquest of British India. This made it doubly necessary to curb Tippoo without loss of time; while the brilliant success of the operations at Hyderabad, in disarming the French force, imprisoning the officers, and appropriating the army to ourselves, coupled with the forward state of the military preparations at Madras and Bombay, rendered the accomplishment of Tippoo's subjugation less problematical. The governor-general now resolved, in addition to the terms which he first contemplated, to insist upon Tippoo's exchanging the province of Canara, on the west or Malabar side of India, the only line of sea coast in his whole kingdom, for an equal extent of territory somewhere else and far inland. This was evidently aimed, as indeed all Lord Wellesley's measures were, against the French intercourse, since by the cession of Canara that nation would be entirely cut off by sea. Last of all, when an

overwhelming body of the British troops were fairly put in motion, by several powerful armies hardly seen before, but starting up simultaneously, as if out of the ground, and advancing towards the sultan's capital, and confident of success, Lord Wellesley again enlarged his demands, and instructed his commander-in-chief, if Tippoo shewed a desire for peace, to treat with him on quite a new basis. The specific terms were to have depended, in some measure, on the stage of the war at which the negotiations commenced; but in the event of a decided victory, or if the batteries had actually begun to fire on the capital, General Harris was directed to demand the cession of one-half of all Tippoo's dominions, and the payment of a couple of millions sterling, for the expenses of the war; also that four of his sons, and four of his principal officers, should be given up as hostages for the faithful performance of the treaty.

To these mortifying conditions poor Tippoo was never called upon to subscribe; he had set his life upon a cast, and, like another Richard, he was resolved

to stand the hazard of the die. He must by this time have begun to discover that, in opposing the new governor-general, he had at length encountered a master-spirit. But what might have been his thoughts had a Seer of his nation dived into futurity, and made him sensible that amongst the foes now marshalled against him was included the future "conqueror of the conqueror of the world?"

The campaign advanced—the siege of the capital was soon undertaken—and at noon on the 4th of May, 1799, only two months after the armies had entered the Mysore territory, the fort of Seringapatam was taken by assault—Tippoo Sultan was slain—and the brief empire of the house of Hyder subverted for ever!

## CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF MYSORE AFTER  
THE FALL OF SERINGAPATAM—EXISTING  
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE BRITISH  
AND THE DIFFERENT NATIVE POWERS  
OF INDIA—SKETCH OF THE SUBSIDIARY  
SYSTEM.

In the wide and wondrous history of British Indian politics, there are few events of more importance than the conquest of Mysore; and perhaps there can hardly be found any where an instance in which foresight, temper, and sound wisdom, in all the preparatory measures, were better followed up by promptitude, ability, and resolute courage, as well as perseverance, in the execution of the purposes aimed at. When we come also to examine the results, we shall find in them no less reason to admire the business-like sagacity which marked the very difficult arrange-

ments consequent upon victory. Let theoretical carpers and verbal critics say what they please of Lord Wellesley's motives and his despatches explaining them, there never was a more necessary or a more just war than that against Tippoo — at least, if it was right and expedient for us, consistently with the terms upon which we hold our eastern empire, to maintain our ground against an implacable native foe, and at the same time to extirpate from those regions the influence of our no less inveterate European enemy. Certainly two such stars as the French and the English could not much longer have kept their course in that sphere; and it became absolutely indispensable to the tranquillity of India that one or other, or both, should give way. The solution of this problem was the task undertaken by the vigorous mind of Lord Wellesley, and one which he not only mastered, but accompanied by various other measures almost of commensurate importance, every one of which was directed towards the grand end of our Indian rule — the happiness and improvement of the natives.

The whole of the extensive territory which, for nearly forty years, had belonged to the recently extinguished Mussulman dynasty established by Hyder, had fallen, by right of conquest, into the hands of the British and their allies; but it was no easy matter to say how the prize was to be disposed of. As the Nizam fortunately had good sense enough to discover the transcendent abilities of the governor-general, and political wisdom to feel that his best interest lay in reposing unlimited confidence on his great ally, he at once directed his commander-in-chief to acquiesce in any plan of settlement which Lord Wellesley should decide upon respecting the territories of the late sultan. This act of honourable confidence left the governor-general free to make such arrangements as should, in his deliberate opinion, be most consistent with those principles of moderation and justice upon which the war was undertaken. The fact of the Mahrattas having kept aloof from the alliance against Tippoo, freed Lord Wellesley from another awkward entanglement which their claims might have brought

with them, had they taken an active share in the war, while it left the governor-general a good opportunity of conciliating those powerful and troublesome marauders, by an act of unextorted and unexpected grace and favour.

As it is not possible to place these matters in a clearer light, or in a more condensed shape, than that in which they have been officially recorded by Lord Wellesley himself, I shall follow Sir John Malcolm's example, and quote verbatim a passage or two from his lordship's admirable despatch to the Court of Directors, dated 3d August, 1799.

“ In regulating the exercise of our right of conquest,” says Lord Wellesley, “ it appeared to me that no principle could more justly be assumed, than that the original objects of the war should constitute the basis of the peace, and of the general settlement of our territorial acquisitions. These objects had been repeatedly declared by the allies to be a reasonable indemnification of our expense in the war, and an adequate security against the return of that danger which originally pro-

voked us to arms. With a view to each of these just and necessary objects, it was requisite that the Company and the Nizam should retain a large portion of the conquered territory; but it required much consideration to determine the precise extent of that portion, as well as the just rule of partition. The war had not been undertaken in pursuit of schemes of conquest, aggrandisement of territory, or augmentation of revenue. In proportion to the magnitude and lustre of our success, it became a more urgent duty to remember, that a peace, founded in the gratification of any ambitious or inordinate view, could neither be advantageous, honourable, nor secure.

“ The approved policy, interest, and honour of the British nation required that the settlement of the extensive kingdom subjected to our disposal, should be formed on principles acceptable to the inhabitants of the conquered territories, just and conciliatory towards the contiguous native states, and indulgent to every party in any degree affected by the consequences of our success.



to limit the territory retained in the hands of the Company and of the Nizam, within such bounds of moderation as should bear a due proportion to their respective expenses in the contest, and to the necessary means of securing the future safety of their respective dominions."

After these observations, his lordship concludes this part of the subject by stating, that an attentive investigation of every comparative view of these important questions had terminated in his deciding, "that the establishment of a central and separate government in Mysore, under the protection of the Company, and the admission of the Mahrattas to a certain participation in the division of the conquered territory, were the expedients best calculated to reconcile the interests of all parties; to secure to the Company a less invidious, and more efficient share of revenue, resource, commerce, advantage, and military strength, than could be obtained under any other distribution of territory or power, and to afford the most favourable prospect of general and permanent tranquillity in India."

The grand difficulty in Lord Wellesley's case was to know what sort of government to set up in Mysore, or whether to set up any at all—that is, whether or not it might be wise to give that country the name, if not the real substance of an independent kingdom. In the end it was resolved that Kistna Rajee Oudaweer, a child of three years of age, the lineal descendant of the ancient Hindoo family of Mysore, whose power Hyder Ali had usurped in 1761, should be raised to the throne of his ancestors. At the same time a native of the name of Purneah, a brahmin of great ability and reputation, who had been the chief financial minister of Tippoo, was appointed dewan or prime minister to the young prince.

Most of the historians of India have given the Marquess Wellesley praise for the management of this branch of the question; but, while some consider his motives just, and his proceedings most statesmanlike, there have been others who impugn both. The result, as a matter of fact on the spot, and as a matter of opinion amongst the surrounding nations, is the

best criterion, no doubt, by which to judge of this point. To these I shall advert presently. In the mean time, as a wind-up to this hasty view of one of the most interesting and perhaps among the least understood parts of Indian history, I may briefly glance at the reasonings by which, all things considered, it is probable Lord Wellesley was guided in the political settlement of the Mysore country.

Had Tippoo not been killed at the capture of Seringapatam, considerable embarrassments might have arisen in the settlement of Mysore; and even as it was, there occurred many and great difficulties. The usurpation of Hyder and Tippoo, though the dynasty had subsisted not quite forty years, had lasted long enough to extinguish the hopes of the ancient Hindoo family, while the sons of Tippoo had been brought up in full expectation of succeeding to their father's authority. But if one of these princes had been placed on the throne, he must have consented to a vast diminution of power and territory—for this concession had formed a leading object of the war against his father. Edu-

cated, however, as Tippoo's children had been, they would have considered such a condition little short of the most abject and humiliating degradation. In the most narrow view of the subject, as Lord Wellesley remarks, the heir of Tippoo Sultan must have felt a perpetual interest in the subversion of a settlement founded in the partition of his father's dominions. The foundation of such a settlement would have been laid in the principle of its own dissolution. The interests, the habits, the prejudices and passions, the vices and even the virtues of such a prince, might have concurred to make him cherish an aversion to the English name, and he must have always felt an eager desire to abet the cause of their enemies. A hostile power would thus have been weakened, not destroyed; and a point of union for every turbulent machination would have remained in the centre of the English possessions, especially favourable for the intrigues of the French emissaries.

On the other hand, it was thought that the restoration of the descendant of the ancient rajahs of Mysore might be recom-

mended by the same course of reasoning which excluded the heir of the usurpation. The kingdom of Mysore, so long the source of calamity and tyranny within its own limits, and of alarm and occasional devastation to all its neighbours, might be rendered, Lord Wellesley thought, a peaceful and happy country in itself, and such as would offer no cause of distrust or fear to other states. These were his chief motives on the score of policy; while considerations of generosity, and its attendant advantages, and those which flow necessarily from acting in conformity with the principles of moral and political rectitude, favoured the restoration of the old Hindoo family. This, then, was determined on; and in the manly spirit of an enlarged policy it was resolved to give the experiment fair play.

The subsidiary treaty of Mysore was accordingly framed in a manner which should establish permanently, as it was hoped, the most perfect community of interests between us and the new state. The English government charged itself with the duties of external defence, and by guaran-

teeing the country from inroads or invasions, gave the most absolute assurance of security to the inhabitants, with whose customs or manners it engaged in no way to interfere. The restored dynasty undertook the whole internal administration of the country—the collection of the revenue, and the military police required in a territory composed of the reunion of a multitude of petty principalities. The natives in Mysore were astonished and delighted, for they had ceased to hope for so complete an emancipation from Mahomedan tyranny.

This arrangement has been called an experiment, and justly so; for the re-establishment of a subverted dynasty was a trial of new principles in the administration of our Indian government. “Among the inconveniences of that singular and generally beneficial government,” says Colonel Wilks, “established by the British nation in India, is the practice of committing the higher offices of the army and the state, and almost all situations of trust and emolument, to Europeans, and thereby excluding the natives of the country

from every object of honourable ambition. The settlement of Mysore was distinguished from all preceding measures of British policy, was greeted with applause in the remotest parts of India, and was acknowledged with unlimited gratitude by the people to be governed, as it left every office, civil and military, to be filled by the natives themselves, with the single guard of those powers of interposition in the internal affairs of the government which were reserved by a special provision of the treaty."

The full difficulty and delicacy of carrying on such a system of government can be appreciated only by persons who are familiar with the numberless occasions upon which the jealousy of the natives is apt to catch fire, or their fears to be roused. Colonel Wilks, who, from long experience, well knew all the intricacies of this very singular experiment in the history of politics, observes, "It is obvious that any ostensible exercise of such a power of interference by the British political resident would have a direct tendency to weaken and subvert the authority of the native

government; and that such an interposition, to be efficient to its true purposes, must be delicate, silent, and unobserved. The experiment was new, and with relation to its remote consequences, of momentous importance. Up to the time Lord Wellesley quitted India, in the middle of 1805, or about six years after the death of Tippoo and the new settlement of Mysore, the success of that arrangement fulfilled his lordship's most sanguine expectations." For a considerable time afterwards things went on pretty well, and even when I visited that country, in 1813 and 1814, all was tranquil, and apparently secure. Of late years, however, the evils essentially inherent in the subsidiary system have made themselves felt, and I fear it cannot be denied, that this great experiment will, in the end, prove a failure. The mismanagement of the Mysore country under the Rajah's government, as I understand, gradually became worse as he advanced in years, and as he released himself from the trammels of his ministers, who previously ruled the country either in direct conjunction with the British re-



sident, or upon a full understanding with the British authorities.

During the greater part of the long minority of the Rajah, the affairs of Mysore were managed by the native dewan, or minister, already named, old Purneah; and the ability of this distinguished statesman being seconded by the talents of some of the most experienced and accomplished of our eastern diplomatists, Webbe, Close, Wilks, and others, all went on smoothly; but after Purneah's death the Rajah began to exercise the office of sovereign, for which he appears to have been so little qualified, that he brought his country nearly to the verge of ruin; and in order to save it from total anarchy, as well as to secure the numerous advantages we had won by the conquest, we were compelled to occupy it in temporary sovereignty. Whether or not this assumption of the government of the Mysore will become permanent, I do not know. I presume that in the end it must be so settled; for it seems well nigh hopeless, according to all experience, to expect that any independent native government will be judiciously administered,

when surrounded by other states held in full sovereignty by the British, and so infinitely better managed.

It would hardly be possible to describe, in popular and intelligible language, the nature and extent of all the various relations which subsist between us and the different native authorities in India; and even if it were possible, I grievously suspect, that so long a story would prove interesting to those only who happen already to be pretty extensively acquainted with the subject.

Over some of the native states we exercise an undisputed and direct sovereignty, without the interference of any independent native authorities; in others, we have established permanent subsidiary forces, in pursuance of treaties mutually agreed upon; while, in several instances, we rely for peace and security upon diplomatic negotiations alone. But it seems highly important to remark, that, in the case of every native state with which we have any treaty whatsoever, we are distinctly admitted to possess the right of exercising a decided paramount influence. In this

spirit, we insist upon making ourselves the arbiters in all disputes threatening to disturb the general tranquillity of our own possessions or of any of those countries whose peaceful condition we have pledged ourselves to maintain.

Without floundering through a wide ocean of details, I could not pretend to describe the particular kind of interference, diplomatic and military, which circumstances have compelled us to adopt from time to time. The cases of hardly any two treaties are exactly alike. Sometimes a simple remonstrance effects all we wish; while under circumstances, to inexperienced eyes apparently similar, it may become necessary to march twenty thousand men to enforce an award which by treaty we have been called upon to pronounce. It has also happened that we have gone on for a long course of years with some of the states alluded to—for instance with that of the Nizam—without altering in principle our relations, and without any interference, except in the shape of solicited co-operation in settling distracted parts of the country. On the other hand,

it has been necessary in some instances actually to interfere, and, for a time, to assume entirely the reins of government of certain states, in order to rescue those countries from the total anarchy into which they had been carried by their native rulers. If I mistake not, this has occurred more than once with the Guicowar's territory, which is indirectly dependant on the Company, and whose affairs, when left to the natives, have always run into disorder, from entire want of method. From the absence also of those habits of good government which the surrounding countries already enjoyed under the British system, the revenue fell far short of the expenditure, and every thing else soon went wrong. As it was then found impossible, under such circumstances, for the natives to fulfil the conditions stipulated in their treaties with us, it became not only the right, but the bounden duty of the British government, to interfere. No sooner had the change been made from one set of hands to the other, than confidence seemed to be suddenly restored—the revenue gradually improved—justice, too, being rigidly and

honestly administered, and property, as well as person, secured against fraud and violence, all the wonted intercourse of domestic, agricultural, and commercial life re-established itself as if by magic. After a few years of this improved but temporary administration—which, as I have said, was strictly analogous to that existing in the adjacent countries permanently administered by the British—the Guicowar's affairs became so far restored to order, that the British government, in conformity with the treaty, was obliged to hand it back to its native rulers, who, it seems, plunged it again into disorder, and we have been called upon, I believe several times, to re-occupy the country, to put it to rights.

It is very difficult for persons who have not been over the ground, to recollect the hard names of the numerous different Indian territories in alliance with us, or subjected to our direct control. But if any one will take the trouble to open a map of India, and glance at it while he reads the following brief notice of the relations subsisting between us and the various native

powers of Hindustan, I think he will have a tolerably clear general conception of the nature and extent of our eastern empire.

In the language of the geography books, it may be said that British India is bounded on the north-west by Persia and Caubul, on the north by Tibet, and on the east by China and the Birman empire; while a very large proportion of the whole frontier, fortunately for our power, is bounded on the west, south, and east, by the sea.

Poonah, and the ex-Paishwah's territories, so long the scene of Mahratta license, plunder, and bloodshed, have lately been thoroughly conquered; and, being occupied by us in sovereignty, they now form an integral portion of the British possessions in India under the Bombay presidency. Those districts, instead of being a terror to all the adjacent states, and a source of constant anxiety to us and to our allies, are peaceably and cordially united in common interests. One small native principality only has not been included in these extensive arrangements, but has been assigned, for good services rendered to us in the war, to the rajah of

Satarah, the descendant of the founder of the Mahratta empire. He has been left independent, except in his foreign relations, and we have guaranteed the security of some of his jagheerdars or feudatory chiefs. The Paishwah's territories have been annexed to Bombay; and this deposed monarch, once the head of the Mahrattas, resides at Bittore on an allowance of about 100,000*l.* per annum. The predatory Mahrattas have been completely subdued; and those formidable plunderers, the Pindaries, no longer exist, I believe, even in name. Within the peninsula, Scindia is the only prince who still retains the character of an independent sovereign in all things, except in what concerns his foreign relations, which, it may be mentioned, once for all, we insist upon taking charge of in the case of every native state with whom we have formed alliances. Scindia, Holkar, and all the other Mahrattas, are therefore so effectually curbed and surrounded by our possessions or those of our allies, that they can no longer engage in predatory excursions. Their attention is, consequently,

turned to the arts of peace within their own dominions. This, no doubt, is dull work for people accustomed to rove at large, and plunder whom they pleased; but the relief to the surrounding states is unspeakable.

With Runjeet Sing at Lahore, with the Nepaul country, and with the Burmese empire, lying in opposite directions beyond the skirts of our dominions, we maintain relations of amity only. In western India, a large portion of Guzerat, the Concans, all the Poonah states, great part of Kandeish, and of the Deccan, are now provinces subject to our direct sovereignty, under the presidency of Bombay. Canara, Malabar, Coimbetore, the Carnatic, and Bednore, are subject to the government of Madras. Under the presidency of Bengal may be enumerated the huge provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; likewise Cuttack, Bundelcund, and Benares.

The island of Ceylon is also British, but is directly under his majesty's government, not that of the East India Company. This applies also to the Mauritius or Isle of France, and also to the Cape of Good



Hope, but to no other possessions in the east. On the coast of the Malay peninsula, the East India Company possess the island of Pulo-Penang, the fort of Malacca, and the flourishing new settlement at Singapore, close to the entrance of the China sea. The following list of the principal states forming what is called British India, may be thought interesting.

*Native States which have political relations with us, but are not directly under British Protection.*

NEPAL.

LAHORE, (subject to Runjeet Sing).

CHIEFS OF SCINDE, at the mouth of the Indus.

SCINDIA.

RAJAH OF DHOLPOOF, BAREE, AND RAJAH-KAIRAH.

*Native States with which Subsidiary Treaties exist.*

KING OF OUDE.

The BOOSLAH, or RAJAH OF NAGPORE.

The NIZAM, whose capital is Hyderabad.

HOLKAR, ..... Indore.

MYSORE, ..... Mysore.

TRAVANCORE, ..... Trivandrum.

COCHIN, ..... Cochin.

The GUICOWAR, ..... Baroda.

CUTCH, ..... Bhooj.

*Native States under British Protection, but WITHOUT  
Subsidiary Treaties.*

**BHOPAL.**

**SIKIM.**

**The SIKH, or HILL STATES,** on the left bank  
of the Sutlej.

**JAUT,** and other States, on the right bank of  
the Jumna.

**BOONDELA STATES.**

**REWAH.**

**STATES OF RAJPOOTANA.**

**STATES OF MALWA.**

**STATES OF GUZERAT.**

**RAJAH OF SATTARA.**

**STATES ON THE MALABAR COAST.**

**STATES ON THE BURMESE FRONTIER.**

*State Pensioners.*

**The KING OF DELHI.**

**NABOB OF BENGAL.**

**NABOB OF THE CARNATIC.**

**RAJAH OF TANJORE.**

**The PAISHWAH.**

**The PRINCES OF THE HOUSE OF TIPPOO.**

The subsidiary system alluded to above, undoubtedly carries with it great advantages, and has contributed not a little to the extension of our power in the East. At the same time, it has not been unattended by evils which, it is much to be feared, are inevitable during its continu-

ance, and can only be removed by others of a different, and, as some consider, an aggravated description. The nature of the subsidiary engagements which we make with conquered sovereigns of India, is briefly this. We take the entire military protection of their countries into our own hands, and while we garrison them with our troops, we place the whole force under the command of our own political residents. We guarantee those countries from all risk of foreign invasion, we permit no domestic revolt, and we agree to co-operate with our joint resources in the event of hostilities with any other nation. The native state agrees to abandon all intercourse with other powers, except through the British government; it binds itself to refer all disputes to their arbitration; and it also agrees to receive at court a British resident, through whose medium is imparted the advice and counsel of the British government on all affairs connected with the external, and sometimes with the internal, state of the country. On the other hand, the native princes retain in general the exercise of their independent

authority in all civil matters within their dominions.

Thus, with a strong hand, we have succeeded in securing perfect tranquillity. But although the exemption from foreign inroads be an unspeakable blessing, and, perhaps, upon the whole, a far greater good than is counterbalanced by any evils incident to the subsidiary system, still this opinion differs from that of some of our highest authorities on Indian matters. Our assumption of the whole military power of the government effectually puts an end to rebellion, or even to partial insurrection ; but, strange as it may at first sight appear, this is not in all cases an advantage. It gives, indeed, a fearful picture of those countries to learn, that in former times the only check to misgovernment consisted in the insurrection of the mass of the people. In consequence of this power, which could never under the ancient system be altogether subdued, the princes of the country knew, that when mismanagement and oppression were carried to a certain extent, there must be revolt, and that they would stand a chance

of being tumbled from their thrones. "This check, however," as Mr. Mill truly remarks in his evidence (16th February, 1832), "is, by our interference, totally taken away; for the people know, that any attempt of theirs would be utterly unavailing against our irresistible power; accordingly, no such thought occurs to them, and they submit to every degree of oppression that befalls them."

We take, as I have mentioned, the whole military power into our hands, while we leave to the native sovereign the entire administration of the civil government, with the exercise of which we are not supposed to interfere. The rajahs accordingly, and their ministers, being effectually secured, by our subsidiary forces, against revolt, gradually set about the work of extorting as much money as they possibly can from the people; and in this way many of the countries with which we have formed this description of alliance have been dreadfully impoverished, and some almost entirely desolated. Under such circumstances there is seldom even a pretence of any judicial administration

—and indeed in few purely native states, whether free or subsidiary, is there found any regular establishment for the administration of justice.

It has sometimes happened, when the native prince is a minor, the minister a virtuous and sagacious statesman, and the British resident an officer of great talents and local experience, that the country in which we have placed a subsidiary force has been tolerably well administered. This was the case in Mysore for upwards of twenty years, during the lifetime of Purneah. But although the government was managed ostensibly by native authorities, it was in reality administered by the British. Such a combination of favourable circumstances can so seldom be calculated upon, that they furnish no good defence for the subsidiary system.

The following picture, by one of the highest of our Indian authorities, Mr. Henry Russell, so long the resident at Hyderabad, shows the unfavourable side of this question in very strong colours.

“ One of the most striking effects, perhaps the most striking of all, which a close

connexion with us upon the subsidiary system has produced upon the native states that have embraced it, is the condition of premature decrepitude into which it inevitably hurries them. Every faculty that is valuable to a state, every organ that contributes to its wholesome existence, seems to decay under our alliances. From the moment that we undertake to protect a foreign prince, he ceases to have any inducement to maintain himself. The habit of going upon crutches deprives him of the use of his own limbs. By taking away the occasion, we take away, in the end, all power of exertion. Let a prince in this state of tutelage do what he may, his government must progressively decline. He has no longer any thing to hope from good measures, or to fear from bad; he has no longer any inducement to strengthen himself against the hostilities of foreign powers, or to conciliate the affections of his own subjects; all community of interest or of feeling between them is at an end; and having no longer any occasion for their attachment or support, he treats them as if he had none, and exacts, in the shape of

revenue, not what they ought to pay, but what he, in his own rapacity, desires to receive. Those impediments which his people, if left to themselves, would raise against him, are prevented or removed by the dread of the exercise of our power, and he proceeds in his course of injustice, violence, and extortion, without any fear of resistance or rebellion." In this way the Mysore country, the Nizam's, the Vizier of Oude's, formerly the Mahrattas', the Guicowar's dominions, and various others, have been going on from bad to worse, under the influence of a system which, in its very nature, appears incapable of effectual remedy.

How, it may well be asked, has this strange system arisen? and how is it to be corrected? The establishment of the subsidiary system, I fully concur with Mr. Mill in thinking, has arisen from the nature of the reiterated instructions sent from England not only against wars and conquests, but against extending our territorial relations in any way. Since, however, in spite of all these orders, we have been often engaged in wars which it has



been absolutely impossible to avoid, territory after territory has fallen into our possession. As it did not suit our fastidious taste to acknowledge these to be conquests, the ingenious expedient of subsidiary protective alliances was resorted to in order to maintain possessions which it would have been utter madness to have relinquished, but which, if taken absolute possession of simply and frankly, would have raised a violent storm of indignation in England. Indirect means were therefore of necessity resorted to, though, in all probability, much more hurtful than those against which the act of parliament was framed.

After examining the subject closely on the spot, and with some care since, I feel no hesitation in saying, that it were far more for the happiness of the natives of India, that, without any subsidiary subterfuges, we should gradually, but as speedily as possible, occupy the whole country in avowed sovereignty; and not only take the military power into our hands, but likewise all the civil branches of the administration, and most especially the judicature. Under the system of exclusive

British administration, with all its defects, those parts of the country which have been entirely occupied by us have enjoyed a great degree of happiness and prosperity in all respects, compared with the other states of India. I therefore rejoice to hear that the Mysore country is now in such a condition that it must soon be incorporated with the other states under our direct sovereignty. Those of the Nizam, Oude, and all the rest, will in turn follow the same course. Then, and not till then, can we expect that one uniform system of government in all its branches may be established over British India, and the empire of genuine law and justice be securely fixed amongst the vast population of Hindustan. As it is, we already possess the greater portion of the Peninsula, almost to the foot of the hills in the north; and ere long, no doubt, we shall be the undisputed masters of the whole. This inevitable consequence some very high authorities consider a great evil; while others think that until such absolute sovereignty be fully established over every part of India, it is almost hopeless, and would not be safe,

to attempt in earnest to ameliorate the condition of the natives, by entrusting them with high and responsible functions, civil, military, and judicial. It is satisfactory to think that so many experienced persons are of opinion, that after our authority has been thus extensively spread over India, we may with great advantage, as well as perfect security, admit the higher classes of the natives gradually to a considerable share in the civil administration of their own country. All the direct political power we must, of course, reserve in our own hands probably for a long period of years.

The controversy which is carried on between the various high authorities on this topic, are every way interesting and instructive; but as they are utterly incapable of abridgement, I must refer those who desire further information to the copious evidence taken before parliament during the last three years.

The following chronological table, shewing the progress of our power in the East, may be useful for the purpose of reference.

**CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE of the Acquisitions of the  
British in India.**

Dates of Treaty.	Districts.	From whom acquired.
1757. Dec. 20.	{ Twenty - four Per- gunnahs in Bengal. }	Meer Jaffier Khan, Nabob of Bengal.
1759. May 14.	Masulipatam, &c.	The Nizam.
1760. Sept. 27.	{ Burdwan, Midna- poor, and Chitta- gong. }	Cassim Ali, Nabob of Bengal.
1765. Aug. 12.	Bengal, Bahar, &c.	The Great Mogul.
1765. Aug. 30.	{ Company's Jaghire, in the vicinity of Madras. }	Nabob of Arcot.
1766. Nov. 12.	Northern Circars.	The Nizam.
1775. May 21.	Zemindary of Benares.	Vizier of Oude.
1776. May 22.	Island of Salsette.	Mahrattas.
1778. June 17.	Nagore.	Rajah of Tanjore.
1778. Sept. 18.	Guntoor Circar.	Nizam.
1786.	Island of Pulo-Penang.	King of Queda.
1792. Mar. 17.	{ Malabar, Salem, Din- digul, and Bara- mahl. }	Tippoo Sultan, by treaty.
1799. July 13.	{ Coimbatoor, Canara, and Wynaad. }	Conquered from Tippoo.
1799. Oct. 25.	Tanjore.	Rajah of Tanjore.
1800. Oct. 12.	{ Districts acquired by the Nizam from Tippoo Sultan in 1790 and 1799, and since ceded to us. }	Nizam, in exchange for other terri- tories.
1801. July 31.	The Carnatic.	{ Azeem ul Dow- lah, the Nabob of the Carnatic.
1801. Nov. 10.	{ Goruckpoor, Lower Dooab, Bareilly, &c. }	The Vizier of Oude.
1802. Dec. 31.	Part of Bundelcund.	Paishwah.
1803. Dec. 17.	Kuttack and Balasore.	Rajah of Berar.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—*continued.*

Dates of Treaty.	Districts.	From whom acquired.
1803. Dec. 30.	{ Upper part of the Doab, and Delhi territory.	Dowlut Rao Scindia.
1805. April 21.	Districts in Guzerat.	Guicowar.
1815. Dec. 2.	{ Kumaon, and part of the Terraie.	Nepal.
1817. June 13.	{ Saugur, Huttah, and Darwar.	Paishwah.
1817. Nov. 6.	Ahmedabad Farm.	Guicowar.
1818. Jan. 6.	Kandeish, &c.	Holkar.
1818.	Ajmere.	Scindia.
1818.	{ Poonah, Konkun, and S <sup>thn</sup> . Mahratta country.	Conquered from the Paishwah.
1820. Dec. 17.	{ Lands in S <sup>thn</sup> . Kon- kun.	Rajah of Sawunt- warree.
1822. Dec. 12.	{ Districts in Beeja- poor and Ahmed- nuggur.	The Nizam.
1824. Aug. 2.	Singapore.	Rajah of Johore.
1825. April 9.	Malacca.	Dutch.
1826. Feb. 24.	{ Lower Assam, Arra- can, Tavoi, Ye, & Tennasserim.	King of Ava.
1826. Dec. 1.	{ Ceded Districts on the Nerbudda, Sum- bhulpoor, & Patna.	Rajah of Berar.

## CHAPTER VIII.

EXTENT, POPULATION, AND REVENUES OF  
BRITISH INDIA—THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM  
—EMPLOYMENT OF THE NATIVES IN  
OFFICES OF TRUST.

THE population of the territories forming British India is somewhat less than ninety millions (strictly 89,577,206) of souls, while the area is rather more than half a million (strictly 514,190) square miles. The extent of the allied and protected states is still greater; and the two taken together occupy a surface of 1,128,800 square miles. (See p. 333 of First Appendix to the Third Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, October, 1831.) The native army, officered by British, consists of nearly one hundred and ninety thousand men; the European troops employed in India of about twenty thousand. The Company's civil servants

are in number about eleven hundred ; the English officers belonging to the native army of the East India Company, upwards of four thousand ; and those of the king's troops, from six to seven hundred. Besides these, there are between two and three thousand other British residents in India, licensed by the Company.

The revenues of India are derived chiefly from a land-rent ; but the profits on the sale of salt and opium, together with the ordinary customs, form large items.

The gross revenues of the three presidencies, and the subordinate settlements during the fifteen years ending in 1828-9, were 311,083,400*l.* ; being, upon an average, 20,738,893*l.*, or rather more than twenty millions annually.

The following statement for the year 1828-9 will shew the proportions in which the revenue is derived from different sources :—

	£.
Mint receipts .....	19,414
Post-office .....	135,617
Stamps .....	368,431
Judicial .....	126,464
Land revenue .....	12,895,366
Syer and Abkaree .....	861,196
Small farms, licenses, and moturpha, or tax on professions.....	152,780
Ceded territories on the Nerbudda ....	457,923
Burmese cessions .....	117,326
Subsidies from Mysore, Trancore, and Cochin .....	392,355
Salt .....	2,700,147
Opium .....	1,930,891
Tobacco.....	85,128
Customs .....	1,869,634
Marine .....	77,787
Profits of the Madras government bank .	10,013
Extraordinary receipts from Ava, Bhurt- pore, and Scindia, and from the Ma- dras Native Pension Fund.....	491,249

Making the total revenue in 1828-9 . . . £22,691,721  
 Or more than twenty-two millions and a half sterling.  
 —See p. 32 *Report of the Select Committee of the House  
 of Commons, ordered to be printed 16th August, 1832.*

The following table shews the average charges for the three years which ended 1827-8 — a period which included the costly war against the Burmese : —



*Average Annual Amount of the Gross Charges of the  
Indian Territory for the three years 1825-28.*

Civil, revenue, judicial, and marine . . .	£8,305,065
Advances for salt and opium, and charges	1,291,434
Military . . . . .	11,731,092
Buildings and fortifications . . . . .	724,291
Interest on debt . . . . .	1,748,513
Political charges in England . . . . .	2,102,422
Average annual charges . . . . .	<u>£25,902,817</u>

These two statements have been selected with no particular view ; but they will serve to give an idea of the details of the revenue and expenses of India.

In an estimate made by order of the House of Commons of the probable receipts and expenditure of the Company, at the expiration of the present charter, and printed in the first appendix to their third report of 1831, p. 10, the revenue is divided into different heads. By this, it appears that the whole may be taken, at very nearly eighteen millions sterling (17,936,219*l.*), eleven and a half of which are derived from the land ; three and a half millions from salt and opium ; and a million and a half from the customs ; the rest being derived from the post-office,

the mint, duty on stamps, and various other minor sources.

The total estimated charges in India alone are given at nearly seventeen millions (strictly, 16,863,949*l.*) Of these, the military expenses are nearly seven millions; the collection of the land revenue and the customs rather more than two millions and a half; the judicial expense about a million and one-third. The expense of the civil establishments is estimated at not quite a million and a half; and that of the salt, opium, and the marine establishments, at about a million and a half. The interest of debts is calculated at rather more than two millions; the remainder of the charges being made up of the expenses of the various public offices. The charges in England, including the interest on debts, amount to considerably more than two millions and a half (2,685,459*l.*), making the grand total of charges 18,763,517*l.* and the gross revenue 17,936,217*l.* Thus, it is reckoned, that the excess of charges over the gross revenue of India, at the expiration of the present charter, will be 827,300*l.* per annum.

In the above statements, no account is taken of the profits or losses incident to the trade of the Company. During the ten years which elapsed from 1819 to 1829, their average annual loss by the trade to India appears to have been upwards of two hundred thousand pounds, and their profit by the exclusive trade to China not quite one million annually. The commercial receipts of the Company, however, are derived from several sources beside their China and India trade. They receive a profit from the management of private trade goods, from the employment of their own ships, from interest on annuities and on government stock, and from interest on advances to the territorial branch.

Taking all these items together, we learn from the report of the select committee of the House of Commons, ordered to be printed 16th August, 1832, that

The average annual profit on the India and China trade during the fifteen years, from 1814 to 1829, was . . . .	} £1,009,047
'Annual average of all other sources of profit. . . . .	
	} 356,844
Total . . . . .	£1,365,891

It will easily be understood, that in such a sketch as this it is impossible to enter further into the financial and commercial details of the Company's concerns; neither could the topics connected with the monopoly of the China trade be discussed intelligibly, without occupying more space than can be given to it in so brief a summary.

The methods of collecting the land revenue vary so much in different parts of India, that I find it impossible to give, in any reasonable compass, an intelligible sketch of the mode of levying it. Lord Cornwallis, in 1793, established what is called the Permanent Settlement. Under it, in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, a great part of the land was to be held by persons called zemindars, in perpetual hereditary possession, on condition of their paying a certain permanent revenue to government. But in the more recently acquired territories under the presidency of Bengal, no fixed agreement has been made with the zemindars or landholders. Many authorities are of opinion, that it would be desirable if the demands of the

government could be every where fixed in perpetuity ; but others think this measure would be injurious both to the government and to the people. At all events, the local difficulties have proved so very numerous and complicated, and the circumstances relating to the countries falling successively under our direct control so fluctuating, that it has been found best, upon the whole, to adopt, generally speaking, the system of temporary settlements. In some places this is arranged by villages ; in others bargains are made directly with the individual cultivators of the soil, or ryots, as they are called. In many parts of India leases have been granted ; but the ryotwar system of annual settlements seems most in favour at present. In some districts, a proportion of the produce, commuted into a money-payment, constitutes the revenue ; in others, a rate per acre is levied. In one way or the other, as I have already shewn, the land is the grand source of revenue. Part of the Madras presidency is under the zemindary settlement, and from it is collected about one million sterling of revenue. But the

ryotwar system prevails generally in the countries under that presidency. The 'Permanent Settlement' has not, I believe, been tried except in Bengal, and a part of the Madras territory. Under the presidency of Bombay, both the zemindar and the ryotwar system are in use. By the ryotwar system, the cultivators make their bargains from year to year with the collector on the part of the government; and it is generally considered that much good springs from this personal and recurring communication with the ruling authorities. Upon the whole, it appears that it is not so much upon the particular system that the efficiency of the collection depends, but upon the moderate amount of the assessment, and the accurate registration in the village accounts of the cultivator's rights, and the sums to be levied.

It may be observed, that no religious distinction interferes with the right of holding property in land. Europeans, Americans, and all other foreigners whatsoever, are interdicted, by act of parliament, from becoming proprietors in the soil, except within the small circle of the local juris-

diction of the British courts of law, established at the presidencies.

People who have not attended to Indian subjects can form no conception of the boundless trouble which has been taken by the East India Company to investigate the revenue system, or of the talents and unwearied patience displayed by their servants in these researches. If it were possible to draw up a brief abstract of the reports of Munro, Elphinstone, Malcolm, Chaplin, Fullarton, Mackenzie, and many other able men on this curious topic, the result could not fail to teach moderation to those who censure at random whatever is done in the East, though, in fact, the chief object of the Company has been to meet the views and tastes, and to study the old usages and prejudices of the natives, as far as possible consistent with good government.

The same praise—for praise it is of a very high order—may be given to the Company and their officers, for their unceasing anxiety to place the judicial system of those parts of India subject to their rule, under as fair and equitable a course of adminis-

tration as the extraordinary nature of circumstances in that quarter of the globe renders possible. The merits and demerits of the native systems of judicature, as compared with that of the British, and the theoretical advantages and practical absurdities of both, together with the possibility of improving our judicial system, have for many years formed, and still form, subjects of animated, but amicable controversy amongst the best informed and most experienced writers, who, from studying the subject in all its bearings not only on the spot, but in England, are the best qualified to form an opinion upon it. If, however, an attempt were to be made to separate the parts of this vast topic, and to apply different views to different territories, there would be little chance of rendering it intelligible, without entering, in the first instance, into such minuteness of detail as would probably fatigue the attention of most inquirers, and perhaps eventually disincline them to examine with interest the more inviting and not less important branches of the subject.

It may be mentioned, however, that



there exists in India two separate systems of judicature — the King's or supreme courts, and those of the Company. The jurisdiction of the supreme court extends to Europeans generally, and, within certain limits round the presidencies, to natives also. The jury system, as it prevails in England, is confined entirely to districts within the jurisdiction of the supreme courts.

In the Company's courts there are three different classes of European judges ; *1st*, Those of districts, or Zillahs ; *2d*, The provincial judges ; and, *3d*, The judges of the Sudder Adawlut, or highest court. The duties of the supreme court, as presenting nothing very peculiar, need not be further described ; but it may not be uninteresting to glance slightly at the construction of the judicial system first regularly established in Bengal in 1793, for the administration of justice in the territories under our direct control, and which have been extended, from time to time, to other provinces since acquired by cession or conquest.

In each district, or Zillah, and in certain large cities, a civil court has been esta-

blished, of which one of the Company's servants is appointed judge; and to aid him in the exercise of his functions, a Registrar, with one or more European assistants, are named from the Company's civil service. The office of Registrar, however, has been in a great measure discontinued of late years. To each Zillah and city court are also appointed natives, duly qualified to expound the Hindoo and Musulman law in cases which turn upon those codes. These natives are moreover empowered to decide suits referred to them by the Zillah judge. Native commissioners have been appointed within convenient distances from the Zillah courts, for determining suits of a smaller amount. These native judges can try causes as far as five hundred rupees, or fifty pounds; and the amount may be increased, at the recommendation of the European judge, as far as five thousand rupees, or five hundred pounds; but I believe this varies under the different presidencies. These commissioners, who are selected by the Zillah judges, but subject to the approbation of the superior courts, are paid partly by salary, and

partly by fees on the sums litigated before them. They act essentially the part of arbitrators, and their mode of proceeding is summary. An appeal lies from these native courts to the Zillah courts, whose decisions are final, except in certain special cases.

Lord Cornwallis also established four provincial courts of appeal, to each of which were appointed three judges, chosen from the civil department of the Company's service; a Registrar, with one or more assistants from the junior branch of the service; besides several expounders of the native law—a Cauzee and Mooftie for the Mahomedan law, and, of course, a "learned Pundit" for that of the Hindoos. There are now six provincial courts in the provinces attached to the Bengal presidency, viz. Calcutta, Dacca, Moorshedabad, Patna, Benares, and Bareilly. Various other modifications of these courts have taken place since that time; but at present they not only exercise an appellate jurisdiction over the decisions of the Zillah courts, but even take cognizance of those causes which have been brought up to the Zil-

lah courts on appeal from the decisions of the native commissioners. They may either take fresh evidence, or send such causes back to the original court for further investigation. All original suits, exceeding five thousand rupees, are instituted and tried in the provincial courts. But in the event of a pressure of business, suits amounting to fifty thousand rupees may be tried in the first instance by the court about to be described, to which appeals lie from all the provincial courts.

The higher tribunal, established at the presidency of Calcutta, is called the *Sudder Dewanee Adawlut*, and is the ultimate court of appeal; its judgments being final and conclusive within certain limitations prescribed by act of parliament. This court consists of as many judges as the governor-general in council may from time to time deem necessary for the despatch of business. The number of judges at present is five. In cases where the property in dispute exceeds fifty thousand rupees, an appeal even from this high court may be carried to the King in England in council.

Various important changes have recently

been made, and are now in progress, with regard both to the constitution and jurisdiction of the tribunals above described ; but this brief notice will, I trust, be found sufficiently accurate and minute for general inquirers. The objects which the changes alluded to are intended to promote, are, the more prompt administration of justice, and a more extended employment of natives in the performance of judicial functions.

One of the principal difficulties attendant upon the working of the judicial system consists in the comparative ignorance in which an Englishman necessarily must ever remain of the language, manners, customs, and, above all, the religious tenets and practices of the natives. And, on the other hand, it is not very easy to command, as speedily as could be wished, the full assistance of the natives in a judicial capacity, since the state of political subordination in which they have been kept so long, has in a great degree broken down those habits of confidence and self-esteem which are required in such cases. I feel quite incompetent to give an

opinion upon the details of this very difficult and delicate point ; but the employment of the natives in judicial and other situations of responsibility, appears to furnish one of the best means by which, in time, the native character may be raised in the scale of society, and the intelligent and educated classes of Hindoos and Musulmen enabled to discover many generous and honourable motives to exertion in a field from which they are now too much excluded.

In the administration of criminal justice the courts are guided generally by the Mahomedan law, excepting in cases wherein a deviation from it may have been expressly authorised by the regulations of government. For some years after we acquired possession of the Dewanee, or right of collecting the revenues of Bengal, (1765), the administration of criminal justice was left very much to the exclusive management of the natives, the influence of the Company's servants being then exerted only to remedy the gross defects of the law, or to promote its due execution. Subsequently, however, courts of criminal juris-

prudence were established in each district under the denomination of Foujdary Adawlut, and a superior court called the Nizamut Adawlut at head-quarters. These courts, which were under the entire management of the natives, failed to produce the good effect which was looked for ; and in 1793 Lord Cornwallis changed the whole system. The Zillah judges were constituted magistrates for taking cognisance of criminal matters in the districts where they were respectively stationed. This has been found to answer so well, that it has been greatly extended since. All subjects of the British government not being Europeans, that is, who are natives of the territories forming British India, are amenable to these courts for crimes committed by them within the limits of the East India Company's territorial possessions, beyond the boundaries of the presidency. European subjects resident in the territories of the Company, under the presidency of Bengal, were amenable only to the Supreme Court of Judicature at Calcutta, antecedent to the act of 1813. But by that act all Europeans are declared, to a certain extent,

subject to the authority of the local magistrate, on complaint by a native of India in any part of the country. It would only confuse matters to enter into the details of the circuit courts, the court of Nizamut Adawlut, and the various police establishments;—it is enough to mention, that the system has proved effectual in securing the internal tranquillity of the country, and in establishing a degree of security for persons and property heretofore totally unknown in Hindustan.

The courts for the administration of civil and criminal justice under the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, do not vary materially from those of Bengal; and a revised system of police has of late years been introduced in many parts of the country.

Besides the judicial arrangements above alluded to, established by the British rulers of India in their provinces, there exists also, under their sanction, in some parts of the country, (the Madras presidency, for example), a purely native system for the decision of civil suits. This is known by the name of Panchayet, I believe from



the word "punch"—five—that being the general number of which this native court consists, though it often happens that they consist of one friend chosen by each of the litigants, and a third by the head of the village, or some one of the native authorities. This system has received the sanction and support of the Madras government, where alone I believe the experiment has been fully tried, of allowing the administration of justice to rest with the natives alone.

The merits of Punchayets, or native juries, as they have been sometimes called, has for some years past formed a subject of very animated controversy amongst the highest authorities in India. Some statesmen of great experience have strongly recommended the recognition and establishment of Punchayets, as more conformable, upon the whole, to the tastes and feelings of the natives, and more likely to lead to the correct administration of justice than our own Zillah courts. Other authorities declare, that the experiment of Punchayets has failed in every instance in which it has been tried under our auspices. When, in

place of this new device, the powerful influence of the British rulers established a regular system of judicature, although in many respects defective and repugnant to the habits of the natives, it was eagerly and almost universally resorted to in preference.

The best proof of the superiority, upon the whole, of the English system, in the opinion of the natives themselves, when compared with their own Panchayets, is found in their preferring the Zillah courts wherever they have a free choice open. A high Indian authority, Mr. R. Fullerton, in some interesting remarks on this subject, says, "The Panchayet has now been legalised under prescribed law, and under fixed and definite rules; it has been declared a part of the common law of the country; means of reverting to it have been provided; and at a lower charge than other process; and yet it appears, that out of an aggregate of seventy-one thousand and fifty-one causes decided, only three hundred and sixty-two have been submitted to Panchayets, and three hundred and fourteen decided by that process—a re-

sult which incontestably proves that the natives do not attach to that mode of adjudication the respect and importance which many supposed. Indeed, it was like many other native practices, a mere expedient in the absence of any settled system of judicature, resorted to in times of anarchy, confusion, and comparative barbarism, when no form of judicial process existed; and it is, therefore, not surprising that the practice should have ceased with the establishment of a regular system of adjudication. The result, indeed, corresponds exactly with what was to be expected.

“ The trial by Panchayet has been declared to be the common law of India; and it has been argued that it could not be said the natives had the benefit of their own laws, under a system which did not include as a part the adjudication by Panchayets. It is perfectly clear that their predilection for Panchayet arose from the circumstance of there being no other mode of adjudication. The creditor relied on his own exertions for the recovery of debts due to him; he placed peons over

his debtor, or he set himself down at the door until the debt was paid. To relieve himself from the importunities of the creditor, the debtor, if he disputed the demand, applied for a Panchayet to adjust it. The practice was not the result of a plaintiff seeking recovery of his just debts, but of the debtor seeking temporary relief from the pressure of personal demand."—*Selection of Papers*, 1826, vol. iv. p. 52.

Of the total number of causes decided in India in the year 1827, viz. 340,000, I understand there were only 700 determined by the Panchayets, while all the rest were adjudicated by the Zillah and other courts established by the Company.

It seems well worthy of remark, that the expense of these native courts is exceedingly small; while, in those under the British direction, it is considerable. In fact, in most cases, justice, or what is so called, is administered gratis in the native court; whereas, in that under the British authority, there is always some fee. According to superficial seeming, therefore, it might be supposed that in the native courts justice was more easily obtained and really pre-

ferable to that under British influence ; but if any value is to be attached to facts, and if litigants be allowed to be the most proper persons to speak on such an occasion, the above striking results would seem to demonstrate that the cheapness or dearness of justice—that is of real, substantive justice—is not to be measured by the quantity of money paid for it. Or rather, its goodness or real worth is not to be estimated by its mere cheapness or dearness, measured in money. For my own part, after a pretty extensive course of observation, not only in the East Indies, and in many other countries, but in that pestilent hot-bed of litigation, the United States of North America, I feel satisfied, that of all the fallacious cants by which people who do not often observe and think for themselves have been misled, one of the most delusive and practically mischievous is that which cries up what is so insidiously called “cheap justice.” No greater misnomer, I am persuaded, has ever been palmed upon mankind, than is implied by this expression. Nor, perhaps, has the mere force of words, without any solid meaning

to back them, any where contributed more essentially to disturb the even course of fair dealing between man and man. The diminution, below certain reasonable limits, in the expenses of process and other devices, by which law, or rather its forms, have been rendered available to every man who happens to fancy himself aggrieved, so far from being a blessing, is substantially a real curse to those countries in which such facilities have been unduly afforded. The phrase of "bringing justice home to every man's door," sounds very finely in the abstract; but if the result be, that, in a village heretofore peaceable and contented, every man is in consequence set by the ears with his neighbour, where is the gain? or what satisfaction is it to the wretch who is beggared to be told, that every thing has been determined strictly according to law, and that the fees by which his money, his time, and his peace of mind, have been melted away, though numerous, have been each of them small?

The real excellence of that branch of the judicial system in India to which I

have alluded as falling more immediately under the British influence, consists in its being essentially arbitrate in its character. The Zillah courts are, in fact, though not in name, courts of compromise, in which an honest arbiter decides between two contending parties, very much according to the reason of the thing, with only so much reference to the native law of the case, as may be useful in determining the actual nature of the point in dispute. This system, it is highly important to observe, could only be productive of real justice when its practical administration rests with disinterested men of character, who fill situations, the whole importance of which, either as to profit or reputation, or the prospects it holds out, turns upon public opinion alone. Were the despotism of mere brute force, such as ruled India formerly, to interfere with the courts of justice, nothing could be worse; but if, in point of fact and daily practice, the decisions are given in a manner approved of by the natives themselves; and if the power of these courts extends to the governors as well as the governed, and makes no

distinction between the native and the foreigner, but visits all with impartiality, the empire of justice is more completely established than it ever was under the sway of the most potent despot that has yet ruled the eastern world.

It is very true, that, for a long time, the natives could not bring themselves to believe it possible that their rulers would deal fairly by them in cases where one of the parties was English, the other a Hindoo or a Mussulman. But having gradually gained experience, by watching the invariable uniformity of the practice of the Zillah and other courts under the British influence, they have come in the end to see, and practically to feel and understand, as well as to admit, the superior advantages which they derive from trusting to the systematic integrity, if I may so call it, of the foreign authorities, in contradistinction to the corrupt, or, at best, uncertain and fluctuating motives which used to influence their own native courts.

It is by no means pretended by those who uphold the judicial system of India, that very many improvements may not be



introduced by degrees into its practice ; neither is it denied, even by its warmest advocates and admirers, that there exist in it evils which claim the deepest consideration of our eastern government. The number of judges is so much too small, that causes inevitably run into arrears ; and the occasional ignorance of the native languages and usages—to say nothing of the want of familiarity with the native laws, which must belong to many of our judges and magistrates—often causes considerable embarrassment. Still, when every thing is taken into consideration, it will be found that there is much solid justice and practical equity dispensed by the courts under the British judicial system.

The Mahomedan criminal law is in force in the greater part of the provinces under the Bengal and Madras governments, though it has been from time to time very greatly modified by the interference of the British ; under the Bombay presidency, the law of the religion of the party is generally administered—the Mahomedan law to the Mahomedans, the Hindoo law to the Hindoos, and that of

England to the Parsees and Christians. The Mahomedan and Hindoo criminal codes, however, have been greatly modified by the regulations of government, and many of their defects and absurdities corrected. At Bombay a criminal code has been recently compiled, which is applied to all sects; and even in Bengal and Madras, the Mahomedan law is administered more in name than in substance. On a person being convicted, the proper native law-officer expounds the law, and assigns the punishment which the Mahomedan codes award to the offence; but the Futwa, or exposition of the law, always closes with a remark, that it depends on the government to determine whether that punishment or some other shall be inflicted. The English judges have, therefore, in point of fact, the power of adapting the punishment to the nature and degree of the offence, and to the peculiar circumstances of the case. Scarcely any other crimes than murder, and robbery under aggravated circumstances, are punished capitally; and, upon the whole, crimes are comparatively few in India. About

one hundred and twenty capital convictions occur annually, of which the greater number are carried into effect.

I have already mentioned that various plans have been proposed for improving both the revenue and the judicial systems of India; and I have no doubt, judging from what has been done, and is now in progress, that, in process of time, very considerable ameliorations will be introduced. All parties seem now agreed, that it is highly desirable that natives of talents, education, and patriotic spirit, should be placed as much as possible in offices of trust and emolument. At present, unfortunately, the most intelligent and aspiring men amongst them can look to no offices worthy of their talents; but the time, we may surely trust, must one day come, if it has not already arrived, when they may safely and usefully be admitted to a fellowship in labour with ourselves in administering the affairs of their own country. If, as we suppose, the true interest and most secure happiness of India are best served by the general system now adopted by us, this important fact

cannot be less clearly seen by the able and virtuous men of that country than it is by us ; and if so, they will surely have at least as great an interest as any foreigners can have in maintaining the system entire. The personal attachment, however, of the superior order of natives to our government cannot well be much less than it now is, seeing that we exclude them from almost every fair road of ambition. But if the clever and upright men amongst them were once rendered eligible to situations of trust and respectability as well as of profit and fame, and appointed only according to their abilities and character, there can be little doubt that their devotion to our cause, which is now only a matter of cold approval—from being better than the old systems of anarchy or despotism, would then become a sincere and hearty co-operation. With respect to the working classes, who form the great mass of the people of India, it appears to be considered by themselves a matter of very little consideration who governs them, provided they are freely allowed to follow their own customs, and are not interfered with.

in any of their religious usages — they look to the person immediately over them, and look no further.

It is extremely gratifying to find that many of the best local authorities on Indian topics who have been examined before parliament during the recent investigations, give it as their unqualified opinion, that the natives might not only be safely trusted in certain offices, but that they ought to be placed at once in those offices, not merely on their account, but on our own. In the opinion of the most experienced persons, many, if not all the courts of original jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, might with great propriety be put entirely under native judges, with nothing more than a general superintendence on the part of the British authorities. At the same time it seems indispensable that the ultimate appellate jurisdiction should always rest with the government.

One gentleman of great experience, in his evidence before the committee of the House of Commons, 30th March, 1832, says, "I conceive that throughout the provinces justice ought to be administered

by natives, who are to be found perfectly competent to the office; that there should be a gradation of native judicatories, one class having jurisdiction over another; and that the operations of the whole should be superintended by British functionaries, who should connect the system of internal administration with the government which rules the empire. For I look upon India," he adds, "entirely as a conquered country, which cannot enjoy the advantages of a constitution of balance and check among its several parts, but must be kept under an absolute government."

It seems, indeed, preposterous to expect that a despotism like that of our government in India can be maintained like a free constitution, upon a system of balance and check among its parts; and it is equally absurd to expect that a handful of foreigners, who go to India merely for a part of their lives, in order to carry away a competence to maintain them in another country, should govern that gigantic empire, either physically or morally, otherwise than through the instrumentality of its own inhabitants.

“If,” says the same authority most judiciously, “the natives are inferior to us in point of integrity, that defect can be remedied only by the exercise and discipline of their moral faculties; and in the mean time, under European superintendence, and with proper checks, it need not prove a bar to their usefulness. The experience, however,” he adds, “acquired at Madras, where native agency has been largely resorted to for more than twelve years in judicial duties, does not justify the apprehension that natives are liable to prove corrupt judges. During that period they have decided on an average upwards of 60,000 suits in the year, to the general and growing satisfaction both of the people and of their official superiors.”—*Minute by D. Hill, Esq., 8th March, 1830.*

It is, indeed, almost self-evident, that in a country held by right of conquest and by the power of the sword, the judicature ought not to be left independent of the control of government. There is no public opinion in the mass of society to control it, and the courts may, with the best intentions, operate in a manner

totally at variance with the whole end of the government of the country, and with the system on which the administration of its affairs is conducted. The government ought, therefore, to possess the means of staying the proceedings of the courts of justice; and the decrees of the ultimate tribunal ought never to be executed without being previously made known to them that they may interpose their authority if they see occasion, or think that the safety of the state and the general welfare of the community make it necessary. It would only be in very rare cases that the government would find ground to interpose its authority, or be justified in exercising such a prerogative.

The government, therefore, was probably wrong in discharging itself of all direct concern with the judicature of India; for, without any fault on the part of the courts, the administration of the law may, and sometimes does, become an engine of the greatest oppression and practical injustice when separated from the rest of the body politic, which is necessarily of a despotic character. The union



of the judicature with the rest of the political system, cannot in India, as in free countries, be maintained by means of public opinion, which has literally no existence amongst the natives of India—or, if it does exist, is not heard and has no weight. Nor are there any free institutions to support the independent decisions of the bench. So that the only power which, by possibility, can sustain and enforce the right exercise of justice, is the government. If a member of council presided and officiated as chief judge of the Sudder Adawlut—if all suits filed, with the cause of action in each, were regularly reported to government, and if they had the power to stay any decree for a time, or altogether, and, when they saw fit, to order a new trial, the system of judicature would be guarded from being at variance, as it now too frequently is, with the general system of political administration, which, as it cannot be too often repeated, is essentially arbitrary in its nature, and must necessarily continue so. The government, in short, is the only authority which can at all times exercise

a salutary control over the judicature in India, or render its decisions conducive to the public welfare. The want of this power on the part of the rulers of that country has occasionally led to very great public evils and inconveniences, and in some instances even to rebellion.

It is highly gratifying to find men who have served long in India, and whose duties have led them to mix much with the natives, looking forward with satisfaction to the period when the inhabitants of the country may be able to relieve us from the anxiety of managing their own affairs. I will not risk marring the following manly testimony to the merits of the natives by any abridgment, but give the questions which were put to Mr. Hill by the select committee of the House of Commons, and his answers, as I find them in the minutes ordered to be printed, 16th August, 1832.

“ *Question.* Since your system supposes the more extensive employment of natives in the administration of justice, do you suppose that the effect of such an extended employment of natives would be, by what-

ever gradations, ultimately to throw the government of India into their hands?

“ *Answer.* My views on that point are, that the natives ought to be brought forward in the government of their own country, as far as they are capable of being so by their moral and intellectual qualifications, subject only to the security of the empire, so long as we retain it. My views would, therefore, bring them forward, certainly, in the administration of the country, but would not have the effect of placing political power in their hands.

“ *Q.* Supposing them to improve in intelligence and knowledge, do you conceive that the effect would be to endanger the stability of the British power?

“ *A.* If that effect resulted from a more liberal system towards the natives, I think it is a consummation most ardently to be desired. I do not think the measures I have suggested would be likely to place power in the hands of the natives before they were fit to use it. I have no conception that any English statesman who turns his attention to the subject would for an instant entertain the idea

of keeping India in a debased and degraded state, in order to perpetuate or prolong our empire.

“ Q. On the contrary, you would be prepared to suggest a system which might ultimately have the effect of completing the transition of power from our hands to those of our present subjects ?

“ A. That I should think a most desirable result, but I see no prospect of it.”

There is much feeling and good sense in the following remarks on the same subject by Sir John Malcolm. “ The people of India,” he observes, “ must, by a recurring sense of benefits, have amends made them for the degradation of continuing subject to foreign masters ; and this can only be done by the combined efforts of every individual employed in a station of trust and responsibility to render popular a government which, though not national, has its foundations laid deep in the principles of toleration, justice, and wisdom. Our success and moderation, contrasted with the misrule and violence to which a great part of the population of India have for more than a century

been exposed, have at this moment raised the reputation of the British nation so high, that men have forgotten their feelings of patriotism in the contemplation of the security and prosperity they enjoy under strangers; but these are feelings which that very knowledge that it is our duty to impart must gradually revive and bring into action."—*Malcolm's Central India*, vol. ii. p. 436.

The above words are quoted from a most important document, and one which, I am told, has effected a great deal of practical good in India. It is entitled, "Notes of Instructions to Assistants and Officers acting under the orders of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B."

As the concluding lines of this valuable paper contain much that is solemn and impressive, and at the same time useful to every person sincerely interested in the eventual fate of our mighty empire in the East, I venture to transcribe them as they stand.

"One of my chief objects has been to impress, in the most forcible terms, the great benefits which are to be expected

from a kind and conciliatory manner, and a constant friendly intercourse with those under your direction and control. It is the feelings and knowledge which such habits on your part will inspire, that can alone give effect to the principles that have been prescribed for your observance. You are called upon to perform no easy task:—to possess power, but seldom to exercise it; to witness abuses which you think you could correct; to see the errors, if not crimes, of superstitious bigotry, and the miseries of misrule, and yet forbear, lest you injure interests far greater than any within the sphere of your limited duties, and thus impede and embarrass, by a rash change and innovation that may bring local benefit—the slow but certain march of general improvement.

“ Nothing can keep you right on all these points but constant efforts to add to your knowledge, and accustoming your minds (as I have before urged you) to dwell upon the character of the British power in India, and that of the empire over which it is established. That empire, comprehending numerous tribes and

nations, with all their various institutions and governments, may truly, though metaphorically, be viewed as a vast and ancient fabric, not without shape and beauty, but of which many parts are in a dilapidated state, and all more or less soiled or decayed;—still, it is a whole, and connected in all its parts—the foundations are deep laid, and, to the very summit, arch rests on arch. We are now its possessors, and if we desire to preserve while we improve it, we must make ourselves completely masters of the frame of the structure to its minutest ornaments and defects; nor must we remove the smallest stone till another is ready suited to fill the vacant niche, otherwise we may inadvertently bring ruin on our own heads and those of others, on the spot where we too eagerly sought to erect a monument of glory.”

## CHAPTER IX

## THE ENGLISH IN INDIA.

THE British community in India is extremely limited in numbers, compared to the native population of the country in which they are placed. There are only between eleven and twelve hundred of the Company's civil servants actually employed; the English officers in our native army may be taken at about four thousand, all of whom hold commissions signed by his Majesty; while the officers of the King's troops in India are between six and seven hundred. The total number of European troops serving in India seldom exceeds twenty-two thousand men. This includes twenty-five regiments belonging to the King's regular army, the expenses of which are defrayed by the Company, and one European corps at each presidency exclusively in their service.

Every Englishman in India has a spe-



cific, well-defined duty to perform; consequently, there are to be found no idlers —no mere dandies—no crowds of people either unfit for employment or who cannot obtain work; one and all are essentially busy. It must also be taken into account, as a very peculiar feature distinguishing India from England, that while in the mother country an immense proportion of the whole society are engaged in their own affairs, and are free to choose their place of residence and their favourite occupation, the entire European population of India (with the exception of about two thousand residents upon sufferance) are occupied in fulfilling the orders of acknowledged superiors. They can choose neither their own duty nor their own station, but must execute the tasks imposed upon them when and where their official employers think fit to direct.

As a farther peculiarity, it must be recollected, that most of the duties allotted to the East India Company's servants are of a different character from any which claim the attention of persons at home. Even the ministry and the other official servants of

the public in England, offer but a very inadequate comparison to the civil service of India. The official men at home may all be changed in a moment, and the whole system of policy entrusted to different hands. It may even happen that very many of the new hands called to office in England are quite unpractised. But in India such sudden transfers of executive authority, from one set of men to another, are morally impossible; they may almost be described as physically impossible, in consequence of the wide distribution of the parties concerned, over an immense continent.

Even if it were not so, the parallel between the public servants in England and those in India would not hold good; since, while the persons who are in office at home form but a small proportion of the community, the official functionaries in India constitute very nearly the whole of the English society; so that the numbers being comparatively small, and all their duties well defined, the character of every one soon becomes known. This knowledge, again, is not confined to mere

general character, as it is in England, but extends to the minutest details. A man in India may be truly said to act perpetually in the face of an audience qualified to judge of his proceedings, by personal acquaintance with the subject in all its bearings. If a servant of the Company—as will sometimes happen—is appointed to a situation beyond his capacity, his deficiency soon betrays itself, and he is straightway removed to a station more suited to his powers, whatever these may be. In like manner, when any man—no matter whether civil or military—is put into a situation lower than that which his talents, his industry, or his knowledge might enable him to fill with advantage, the want of keeping becomes obvious, and he is shifted up in the scale till his proper level be gained. The range of duties in India is so boundless, that there seldom arises any difficulty in fitting men with work suited to their abilities. The principle of employment seems to consist in placing on each one's shoulders as much weight of responsibility as they can sustain; care being taken neither to overload

willing men with tasks they are incapable of executing, nor to waste the talents of others by applying them to business which persons of inferior capacity could perform equally well. This adjustment takes place in spite of all those rules and ordinances which are vainly promulgated at home with a view to uniformity and fairness, as it is called—as if it were otherwise than perfectly fair that high capacity should speedily take the lead of stupidity—or that knowledge should go before ignorance—or, finally, that zeal, perseverance, and every other variety of industry, or self-devotion and public spirit, should be distinguished and employed, before indolence, conceit, or selfishness !

The governor-general, the governors of the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, the members of council, and commanders-in-chief, are nominated by the Court of Directors. With these exceptions, the patronage of the appointments in India, to every office whatsoever, is left entirely in the hands of the local governments. The Directors likewise send out such writers and cadets as are required for the public

service in India. But here their patronage stops, as they do not interfere at all with their distribution in India.

It may be useful to consider, that as the Court of Directors is formed of experienced and practical men of all parties in the state, the field for the selection of these recruits for their service is very extensive and diversified. We find, accordingly, that the gentlemen sent to India are taken from all parts of the country, out of the upper and middle classes of society, without reference to politics, or to any thing but their aptitude for public business. The admirable practical result proves in a remarkable degree the wisdom of this arrangement, and appears to furnish one of the strongest arguments against any transfer of the elementary patronage, as it may be called, from the Court of Directors to other hands, especially to those of so fluctuating a body as the King's government. In support of this view, it affords me great satisfaction to avail myself of the following decided testimony to the public spirit and private worth of the Company's servants. It is the more valu-

able as coming from a distinguished and singularly well-informed historian, by no means friendly to some parts of the Indian system.

“To communicate the whole of the impression made upon a mind which has taken a survey of the government of India, by the East India Company, more completely through the whole field of its action than was ever taken before, and which has not spared to bring forward into the same light the unfavourable and the favourable points, it may be necessary to state, that in regard to intention, I know no government, either in past or present times, that can be placed equally high with that of the East India Company—that I can hardly point out an occasion on which the schemes they have adopted, and even the particular measures they pursued, were not by themselves considered as conducive to the welfare of the people whom they governed—that I know no government which has on all occasions shewn so much of a disposition to make sacrifices of its own interests to the interests of the people whom it governed, and which has,

in fact, made so many and such important sacrifices—that, if the East India Company have been so little successful in ameliorating the practical operation of their government, it has been owing chiefly to the disadvantage of their situation, distant a voyage of several months from the scene of action, and to that imperfect knowledge which was common to them with almost all their countrymen. But that they have never erred so much, as, when distrusting their own knowledge, they have followed the directions of men whom they unhappily thought wiser than themselves, viz. practical statesmen and lawyers; and that, lastly, in the highly important point of the servants, or subordinate agents of government, there is nothing in the world to be compared with the East India Company, whose servants, as a body, have not only exhibited a portion of talent which forms a contrast with that of the ill-chosen instruments of other governments, but have, except in some remarkable instances, as that of the loan transactions with the nabob of Arcot, maintained a virtue, which, under the temptations of their situation, is

worthy of the highest applause."—*Mill's History of British India*, vol. vi. p. 17. 3d edit. 1826.

The Directors never interfere in the slightest degree, directly or indirectly, with the local patronage, either at the presidencies or in the interior of the country, the whole of the nominations to office being left, without reservation, expressed or understood, to the governments on the spot. This gives a very distinctive and important character to the actual administration of India, the effective patronage of which being thus, in a great measure, cut off, both from the Court of Directors and from his Majesty's government, is placed in the hands of those persons who, in every conceivable view of the matter, must have the most knowledge of what is likely to be advantageous in such nominations. The local governments, it may be added, have at all times the most direct and obvious interest in making judicious appointments, in order that the work, for which they alone are responsible, may be well performed.

As new duties and new embarrass-



ments arise in the conduct of affairs—and of these there is no lack—all the official men in India get sifted over and over again. If one chance fails to bring a clever fellow into notice, or does not afford an opportunity of detecting the secret of a pretender's incapacity, another occasion will ere long inevitably present itself. Every man's ability in India becomes, accordingly, sooner or later, pretty well known to his employers, and is duly appreciated, recorded, and held in readiness, to be applied to the solution of fresh difficulties when these arise. The utility of all this care will be evident, when we recollect that nothing can secure the allegiance and attachment of our native subjects, but treating them in such a way that they shall feel a constantly recurring sense of the benefit of our government. And, as that can be established only by a system of perfect sincerity, fair dealing, and rigorous good faith, it becomes of infinite consequence to place the management of affairs in the hands of men who will act rigidly up to the true spirit of these principles.

The consequences of this singular state of things extend further than, at first sight, might be imagined; for it is not the government alone who exercise the scrutiny alluded to—it is employed likewise by the individual members of the society over one another. Their total number, as I have shewn, is small, but their duties are so conspicuous, and in the main so well understood, that every person is pretty well enabled to judge of his neighbour's conduct and capacity—if not by actual observation at the moment, at least by that nearly infallible test, the result. In point of fact, therefore, the private and public character of every official servant of the Company, civil or military, comes to be known, not only to his immediate circle, which may be either at the presidency or in the interior, but almost equally well over the whole of British India.

By an important and long-standing Regulation of the Court of Directors, each of the local governments is obliged to transmit to England copies, not only of every public ordinance or regulation, but of every item of correspondence in

all the different departments of their administration—civil, military, revenue, and judicial. As all official business in India, or very nearly all, is transacted in writing, and as regular minutes are invariably recorded of all consultations and other proceedings, ample means are furnished to the authorities at home of scrutinising at any moment the conduct of the governors they appoint. The regulation alluded to, although it tends to augment enormously the voluminous correspondence of the India House, makes the distant functionaries vastly more cautious than, in all probability, they would be, if such frequent and complete means of investigating the whole of their proceedings did not exist. If, instead of sending copies of every letter, every ordinance, and every minute of each consultation, the government in India were allowed to select for transmission to England such papers only as they might choose to consider useful to the public service, it would evidently be much more difficult for the authorities at home to fix the responsibility upon the proper shoulders.

There are no such things as taverns on the roads, or even regular hotels in the towns of India; so that European travellers of all ranks are necessarily thrown for their entertainment very much on the private resources of the resident civil and military officers of government. It is probably in consequence of this fact, that if any person be guilty of a breach of the laws of hospitality, his delinquency is circulated over India in a few weeks, to his certain loss of character, and, probably, to his eventual loss even of official station. Upon the whole, therefore, there is, perhaps, to be found no other example in the world of a society, high and low, being so completely under the influence of circumstances so extraordinary. The consequences of this state of things are so irresistible, that there is no escaping their operation, except by leaving the country altogether.

It is highly important, however, towards forming any just conception of the nature of the English society in India, to attend to the peculiar condition, moral and political, in which we originally found the

native population. And this view is the more important, as it affords an additional clue to the grand mystery of our eastern power. The true secret, no doubt, of the British strength in that quarter of the globe, will be found in the moral union by which the present rulers of India are held together; but even that, potent though it be, would perhaps have gone for little, had the great mass of the native population been differently circumstanced.

Without entering into the intricate and tedious inquiry which has for its object the origin of the existing state of society in the peninsula of Hindustan, it will be sufficient to remember, that for many centuries previous to our occupation of India, its various nations—in number between thirty and forty—had been subjected either to foreign domination, or to internal tyranny, while in turn all of them had been repeatedly, and I may say periodically, exposed to violent, lawless, and desolating incursions of barbarians. These causes, together with others incidental to their situation relatively to the powerful nations lying on the north and on the

west of Hindustan, had almost entirely deprived them of security, either in person or property, long before the Europeans appeared amongst them. They could scarcely be said to possess practically any system of laws—certainly they enjoyed no regulated system of judicature—but were at all times under the absolute will of the military chiefs, who neither felt nor pretended to feel any interest in the welfare of the mass of the people. As resistance to such authority, except in very extreme cases, was never dreamed of, the whole country became accustomed, during a long succession of ages, to the most abject submission to the reigning authorities.

The origin of the Hindoo religion, and that of the division of the whole population into castes, do not appear to be well known. But whatever may have been their causes, their effects are most extraordinary. They have entirely banished, or rather prevented, the growth of any trace of those feelings which we call nationality and public spirit. At all events, ever since we have known them, that proportion of the time and thoughts of

the natives which is not occupied in the production of mere subsistence, is almost entirely absorbed by superstitious rites, or by the exclusive and fantastic duties of their respective castes. It may indeed be said, without exaggeration, that the ingenuity of man could hardly devise a worse system of religion and of manners, or conceive a state of political circumstances more adapted to keep down the human mind than that which we found not only universally established, but deeply rooted in India.

The influence of the female part of the community over the rest of society, which is so eminently conspicuous in Europe, especially amongst the higher and middle classes, has no existence whatever in the East. The moral habits of the people—probably in consequence—are as gross and deteriorating to manners, as their religious principles (so to call such wild superstitions) are degrading to their intellects. All improvements originating with themselves are, therefore, totally out of the question. Public opinion, considered as an enlarged national principle, is quite

dead amongst them. They possess none of what we call influential men, or classes of men; and all those delightful and mutually beneficial relations which subsist between the different ranks of society in England, and in other countries of Europe, are absolutely unknown amongst the inhabitants of India. Without going into further details, it will therefore easily be understood how well the native society of India, when we first occupied the country, was prepared to be governed by a body of men possessed of cultivated talents, experience in public affairs, integrity of purpose, and unbounded confidence in one another, and who, in addition, held in their hands the warlike resources of a civilised empire.

To describe all the details of duty which a servant of the East India Company has to perform would fatigue the attention and confuse the judgment of persons not already familiar with the technical language of oriental business. But the principle upon which this duty turns, and the manner in which it is executed, being simple in themselves, may, I think, be rendered plain in a few words.



If a person have shewn good talents in any particular station, at or so near the presidency as to fall under the favourable notice of the government; or if he have taken advantage of some one of the opportunities which are perpetually occurring to bring his talents, his local knowledge, his acquaintance with the native languages or customs, or any other attainments he may possess, to bear upon some practical question of government, the chances are, that as soon as a vacancy occurs in a higher department, he will be promoted. For his new post he sets out accordingly—and in a few days he finds himself in a situation of immense responsibility, overwhelmed with duties, most of which are strange to him, surrounded exclusively by natives—several hundred miles, we will say, from the nearest appeal to higher authority. He is now called upon to administer, single-handed, the public affairs of a country perhaps half as large and populous as England. How is he to accomplish such a mighty task? Not by physical force, for his whole strength probably consists

of a small body-guard of sepoys. And even were it a dozen regiments, it would scarcely, of itself, avail any thing. What is he then to do? There is but one course open to him — the way of truth, justice, and thorough disinterestedness. For whatever be his tastes, or his manners, or even his abilities, they will avail him not one jot in governing the natives, unless his own conduct be stamped, out and out, with the sterling impress of good faith. In the next place, he must treat the people not only with kindness, but with hearty confidence; and although he may not at all times be able to command in others the fullest measure of honesty which he could desire, he will seldom fail to secure the best services of the natives by implying that he expects such conduct from them, and shewing that he duly appreciates their exertions. The character of the public servant who secures contentment in his province, at little or no cost of trouble to his superiors, but simply by the exercise of his own stock of mother wit, his own unflinching honesty, and the just regulation of his temper, is more cer-

tain of rising proportionably in the scale of society in India, than perhaps in any other quarter of the world.

While things are in this condition, let it be supposed that some official difficulties arise in another part of the country—suppose a newly acquired territory is to be settled, or an insurrection is to be suppressed—is it not likely that the man who has already shewn himself equal to one great task will be preferred to the new and more important duty, while the place which he vacates—now put in easy train—may be trusted to a younger and less experienced hand? In this way, the scale is so admirably adjusted in India, that, let a man's powers be what they may, the government, ere long, are sure to find work for him, which shall keep him always so fully and so well employed, that his labours will never be light, or one tittle of his capacity wasted. It may, indeed, be said, that the servants of the East India Company, generally, are exerting themselves, as nearly as possible, at their utmost strength. Under this constant effort we know how many unfor-

tunately break down ; and yet a belief exists in England that their labours are light and their lives luxurious !

On the other hand, if a collector, or judge, or magistrate, or commanding officer of any kind, stationed almost alone in the midst of an immense population, does not perform his duty truly, either from want of ability or from want of integrity, his power of conducting the business of his office speedily ceases. Those very natives, who, as long as they had confidence in his honesty and disinterestedness, had obeyed him implicitly, begin to reason about the propriety of his measures, and become suspicious of all he does and says. In a little while the distrust, which commenced by being partial, extends over the whole district, till, in the end, the political machine either stops, or is so materially interrupted in its course, that the effect cannot long be concealed from head-quarters. The revenue then fails to be duly collected—the laws are unjustly administered—the country falls into disorder, and at last the superior government is obliged to interfere.

The obvious remedy for this disordered state of things is the removal of a functionary who has proved himself incompetent. If his fault be a want of talents for the station he occupied, he is shifted to a lower office, better suited to his previously over-rated powers. But if, unfortunately, he have proved himself not to be a good man and true, he is quietly recommended to get the liver complaint, and to recross the surf without loss of time;—after which he is no more heard of!

These principles enter so completely into every branch of the Indian administration, that there is no possibility of any man escaping from their pervading influence. It is material, however, to recollect, that it is quite consistent with these statements that there should be a good many abundantly stupid fellows serving in India, just as there are very excellent heavy waisters and ordinary seamen in the best-manned ships of war. And it answers an exceedingly useful purpose to have good snug situations, suited to moderate or mean capacities, into which men may be silently dropped or promoted, who, but for this method of stowing them

out of the way, might give a great deal of trouble, and sorely perplex the executive. At the same time, none of these places are sinecures, neither must their occupants be blockheads; but the routine of their useful and indispensable duties may be such as not to call for much intellect, though they may and do generally require a proper allowance of that sturdy kind of honesty which no bribes can touch, but which is not necessarily accompanied by talents. It must always be borne in mind also, that for any thing ungentlemanlike or corrupt, there is in India no toleration whatever. Even the very lowest office of all requires good personal character and steady conduct, as conditions, for the absence of which no talents, no birth, no degree of personal favour in high quarters, can compensate.

I have spoken thus far of those persons only who serve in India under the direct orders and absolute control of the Company; but there reside in India, besides, a considerable body of English gentlemen who contribute materially to form the society at the three presidencies or seats

of government, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and a few, also, at some of the chief up-country stations. I allude to the merchants, agents, lawyers, medical men, and free mariners, besides indigo planters and others. Of the several occupations of these persons it is needless to say more than that they are all, to use a military expression, more or less directly in communication with the Company's government. They are, without exception, upon sufferance in the country—that is to say, the Company possess by law the power of removing them from the country; and although this power is very rarely exercised, it exists in sufficient force to produce an important effect. The houses of agency are intimately connected with both the civil and military servants of the Company in all parts of the country; and as they are the grand managers of pecuniary affairs, the intercourse between them and their constituents becomes so intimate as to draw both parties into common habits and sentiments. Thus most of the feelings which I have ascribed to the actual servants of the East India Company, who

form the great majority of the civil and military branches of society, are naturally participated in to a great extent by those not strictly in the service. I allude chiefly to that high spirit of honour and generous hospitality, and that uniform or habitual course of fair dealing, which stamps every thing said, or done, or even thought, in India with the genuine spirit of truth. The members of the various houses of agency and other wealthy mercantile establishments are certainly not intrusted, like the Company's servants, with high commands on remote stations, where integrity, forbearance, and public spirit, are all in all, and without which no man, however gifted, can possibly get on for a day; yet their dealings with the natives are so extensive and complicated, that, were it only from interested pecuniary motives, they would find it to their advantage to maintain untarnished the character which already belongs to their nation in India.

The power of the Company is, indeed, so immense, and the ascendancy it gives so beneficial to all parties concerned, and in every transaction of life, that the free



traders, the merchants, agents, and planters, licensed by the Company to reside in India, would be the blindest persons possible to their own best interests, were they not to discover these obvious truths, and to avail themselves eagerly of an advantage of position which is given to them by circumstances in some degree foreign to their pursuits, but bearing indirectly upon them with unceasing force. In short, it has become the interest of all these gentlemen not only to profit by their situation as mere money-makers, in so productive a country, but likewise to adopt in perfect sincerity the ideas and the principles of the East India Company's servants. Thus the only class of persons from whom, at first sight, a less refined course of action might have been occasionally apprehended—from their objects being purely pecuniary, and from their not being under any direct authority—are, generally speaking, cordial supporters and contributors to the same grand stock of moral influence, so to speak, by which our extraordinary hold over the East is maintained.

If this view of the chief source of our

Indian power be correct, it naturally gives rise to the important question, whether or not colonisation, as it has been called, or, more correctly, the free settlement of the English in India, which, it is whispered, is to form a clause in the new Charter, will interfere with the political system which at present works so admirably?

On this subject there is so great a diversity of opinion amongst the best informed authorities, that any very decided expressions respecting it may seem unreasonable; but I must be permitted to say, that after considering the subject attentively on the spot, and also in this country, and after reading all I can find written about it, the scheme of allowing English persons not belonging to the Company's service to take up their residence freely and permanently in India, appears, of all things, the most likely to unsettle the British authority in that quarter of the globe. As ours is a government of opinion almost exclusively, any thing which interferes with the moral discipline regulating that opinion is calculated to sap the very foundations of our whole empire. At pre-

sent, the authority of the East India Company extends effectively to almost all the English in India. I have already stated, that the system of control established over their servants is complete and searching in a degree to which there exists hardly any parallel, except, perhaps, in the naval service of his Majesty. This moral and political influence extends, also, in a great degree, to the small number of English who are now permitted to reside in that country upon their good behaviour, and who, generally speaking, from motives of interest, are content to fall into the ways of the Company, and virtually to become a portion of their servants.

But a sufficient number of troublesome exceptions have occurred, especially in the remoter parts of India, to give rise to great apprehensions, that, if the English are once permitted to enter the country freely, and to settle where they please, independent of the authority of the Company, it will be impossible to preserve for any length of time the complicated and highly artificial system by which that country is governed. The mischievous interference

of persons who would resist, on principle and from habit, all such restraints as are now imposed on foreigners resident in the country, and who would despise the authorities who attempted to enforce them, seems capable of no safe limitation. Even as it is, the laws established in India, sustained and administered under the powerful sanction of the Company, backed by the government at home, are barely strong enough to protect the natives from the occasional exactions of the few Englishmen who are allowed to become temporary residents far in the interior, though they are liable to be sent away at a moment's warning. It is also much to be feared, that by no extension of the present judicial system could the laws be made effective over persons who should possess a right to remain in India in spite of the government. It cannot, indeed, be too often repeated, that the administration must of necessity be essentially despotic in a country won by the sword, though retained chiefly by opinion.

Perhaps, after all, it is not saying too much to assert, that, under the present restrictions, India answers fully the purpose

of a colonial vent—not an indiscriminate one, certainly—for the mother country. When we consider the vast numbers of accomplished young men belonging to the upper and middle classes of society in England who find, if not an ample, at least a respectable provision in the East, we shall probably have reason to think that as complete an opening is already provided for the spare exertions of our countrymen as can prove useful either to England or to India. I allude not merely to the civil or military services of the Company, which afford occupation exclusively for gentlemen, but to employments which are mechanical, such as those of carpenters, blacksmiths, and other artisans, not to mention the private soldiers in the King's and the Company's European regiments.

There is one other circumstance relating to the structure of the English society in India which must not be omitted, as it very essentially modifies its structure. In England there are about as many ladies as gentlemen in most companies. It is quite different in the East. At the presidencies, no doubt, there are many ladies, and the

society at those places has its tone given it, in some degree, by that circumstance. But even there, every thing is so transient and fluctuating, that the benign influence of female companionship over the manners of the opposite sex is grievously limited. The nature of the climate renders it generally an unfit residence for children, so that one of two very painful alternatives must always be adopted — either the children are separated from their parents, and sent to England, or the mother is separated from her husband to accompany her children home. It occasionally happens that the poor little things are kept too long, in the fond hope that the fatal law will prove less severe than usual in their particular case; and so they droop and die! I have known stout hearts broken in this way. The children, indeed, when sent home, may be left in England by their mother, who then rejoins her husband; but what a fearful dislocation of a household is this!

Domestic life, accordingly, in India, even at the presidencies, cannot, by possibility, be the same as at home, even

supposing the parties concerned to be permanently stationed at those spots. A very small number of the whole service, however, are fixed in their situations. And what becomes of the rest? What can the residents at the native courts, the judges and magistrates in the interior, the collectors in the upper country, see of English female society?—Almost nothing. Still less can the military officers, who are continually on the march from distant region to distant region—from the banks of the Indus to the confines of China—from the beach of Travancore to the mountains of Thibet.

It is a curious sight, and one I have often watched with a mixture of amusement and pity, to witness the arrival at the presidency of a person who has been tanning himself for some ten or a dozen years far inland. The astonishment of a newly-arrived young lady from Europe can hardly be greater, at first beholding the gorgeous wonders of the East, than is the surprise of the sun-dried civilian or war-worn soldier, who gazes at the rosy cheeks of the European damsel—too soon,

alas! to fade. No less bewitched does he find himself by manners and conversation to which he has been long a stranger; and he straightway sets down as an angel upon earth every European female whom he meets with, and feels surprised how he could possibly have remained blind to such charms in those by-gone days, when he would no more have thought of marrying than of murdering a young lady. Without taking such an extreme case, it may well be conceived how it happens, that men so peculiarly circumstanced as the servants of the East India Company, must necessarily fall out of those habits of familiar intercourse with ladies which exercise such a salutary influence upon the character of men in Europe. The education and family of by far the greater part of the gentlemen forming the East India Company's service are excellent, and, consequently, their opportunities of seeing good society at home has been such, as to give them originally correct tastes, and a right direction to their thoughts on the subject of matrimony. But these thoughts and feelings become strangely



modified in the East, in spite of the best resolutions ; and the consequence is, that not a few hasty and ill-assorted unions are formed. Of course, many persons do marry well, and become all the better members of society, both in a public and a private point of view. Indeed, were it not for the heart-breaking separations formerly alluded to, marriages might well be as happy in India, and very often happier, than elsewhere ; for the parties in that country are more dependent upon one another than in a crowded society.

Strange matches, however, are occasionally made up ; and, what is not to be wondered at where the supply and demand bear no just proportion to one another, a great many rebuffs are given. So numerous, indeed, are refusals of this kind said to be, that a burlesque club has been spoken of, in ridicule of these rejected addresses. I remember, shortly after I arrived in India, asking a person standing by me who a certain gentleman was I saw flirting about the ball-room ?

“ Oh, that,” said he, “ is the president of our Juwab club.”

“What may Juwab mean?” I begged to know.

“Ask your neighbour,” whispered he.

I did so, in all the innocence of my griffinage, and said, “Pray, sir, what does the word Juwab mean?—they tell me you know well.”

The gentleman reddened with sudden anger; but seeing at once, from my manner, that I had been tricked, he recovered himself, laughed, and said:

“Oh! Juwab means an answer, or rather—a refusal.”

On my smiling at this, my informant continued, “I dare-say all this is very good fun to you; and doubtless the newly-arrived ladies must think us strange fellows to be so precipitate. But,” added he, with a sigh, “you little know, and the people of England little know, what we poor Indians suffer, and to what sad privations we are subjected. But the bitterest of all, by far, arises from the almost total absence of English female society.”

This brings me to a very painful part of the subject, but one which cannot be altogether passed over. I allude to that por-

tion of the Anglo-Indian community called the half-castes. I may scarcely, I believe, call these as yet a recognised portion of the English society; at least, they were not so considered in my day, some fifteen or twenty years ago, though I believe it is in some slight degree different now. But as these persons, or at all events their descendants, are probably destined to occupy an important station in the eastern world in future times, it is right to say a word or two respecting them. The half-castes are either the illegitimate offspring of English fathers and Indian mothers, or they spring from intermarriages between children so born. It would require much space and time to describe the circumstances which lead to these unfortunate connexions, nor could it answer any useful purpose to do so. The melancholy fact is all I have now to deal with, and it is impossible to disguise from ourselves, that the evil is one which must ever be found in like circumstances, however much good sense or good taste—to say nothing of good principles—may condemn it. Be the moral of the story, however, what it may,

the fact is, that children thus produced from stocks so essentially dissimilar, after a certain number of years of mismanagement by the mothers, fall under the exclusive protection, but too often absolute neglect, of their fathers. While some are sent to England to be instructed, others are reared at seminaries in India; but, in either case, they are generally well educated, and always brought up in the Christian faith, while they are taught to understand the advantages which belong to English manners and sentiments. In Bengal alone there are said to be now upwards of 20,000 half-castes, but what proportion of these may be the offspring of intermarriages amongst themselves, I know not.

I feel so fearful of offending the delicacy of individuals of this interesting class of persons, or of wounding the feelings of those to whom they are strongly attached, that I refrain from relating some characteristic and truly touching anecdotes respecting them. I shall merely observe, that I have scarcely ever made acquaintance with any half-castes of either

sex, who did not give striking and favourable evidence of their double blood, or who did not unite much of the vigorous intellect and decision of purpose of the European, with a good deal of the winning and graceful gentleness of Asiatic manners. A consciousness of the marked separation incident to the slight shade in colour by which nature distinguishes them from either of the two races from which they are sprung, when coupled with the melancholy history of their birth, has no doubt its subduing or humiliating effect. The half-castes do not enjoy the same, or nearly the same, advantages as the countrymen of their fathers; but they are in some respects better off than those of their mothers. They are decidedly superior to the natives as far as education goes, and in freedom from those gross superstitions and unworthy usages which chain down the minds of the Hindoos and even of the Mussulmen. They possess, however, as yet, no political advantages over the natives, while they are much worse off than the Europeans. The East India Company's power to dismiss obnoxious persons

from their territories does not extend to people born in the country ; but the half-castes complain, and it is said with reason, that owing to their anomalous character, they are deprived of many of the advantages of the courts of judicature established in British India ; and that, while they are Christians in principle and in practice, they are exposed to trial under Hindoo and Mahometan laws.

Already the wealth of many of these persons is very considerable, and their style of living often not unworthy of the country of their fathers. It appears, however, that, for reasons with which I am not fully acquainted, the British government in India have hitherto been extremely averse to place half-castes in situations of trust and emolument. They would seem to be systematically excluded from all offices except those of a subordinate class ; and in very few instances that I have heard of are they employed in situations of high responsibility. They are almost entirely engaged as clerks in offices, though many, no doubt, have risen to wealth by trade—and one of the most distinguished

master ship-builders in the East is a half-caste. Still they labour under very great disadvantages, a fact which, I understand, excites the constant wonder of the natives, who see no good reason why the English should thus systematically, and, as they think, cruelly, keep back their own offspring.

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I have thus attempted to give a brief sketch—I trust a correct one, though certainly very incomplete—of the nature and predicament of our Indian empire. Without pretending to exhaust any single branch of the inquiry, I have merely touched upon a few points apparently the best calculated to give a general conception of a subject so extensive, that it cannot be fully understood without very long and very patient examination. My purpose has been rather to explain the rationale of our extraordinary power in the East—so very different from any thing heretofore seen—than to describe at any great length the manner in which that power is exercised. It is perhaps impossible to discuss such

details in a limited space; nor is it at all useful to attempt such a thing, for any one who feels curious to inquire further into these interesting matters, will find no difficulty in procuring information at large on all or any of the topics to which I have alluded. I would venture especially to recommend a perusal of the reports and evidence taken before both houses of Parliament in 1830, 1831, and 1832. These, together with their well-arranged Appendices, furnish, perhaps, the most complete view that it is possible to give of the whole East Indian question, in all its bearings. And as the evidence referred to contains the testimony of the best-qualified witnesses, and includes every shade of opinion on every controverted point, substantiated by documentary evidence of the most undoubted authenticity, there can be no source of information more exact and satisfactory, or so copious. Innumerable party works on all sides may likewise be readily procured on any branch of the subject.

It was originally my intention to have given a short sketch of every part of the



system of Government in British India, but I soon discovered that this was too vast a task for the limited knowledge I happened to have picked up during my travels in that country; and I found the investigation and arrangement of fresh materials much too laborious and complicated for the time I could bestow upon them. I shall, however, be fully satisfied if I have so far excited any person's curiosity as to induce him to carry his inquiries further. And this I can safely promise him, that in proportion to the extent of his reading, so will be his gratification in pursuing these researches.

In this volume I have purposely omitted, for special reasons, several interesting topics, though I was by no means insensible to their great value; others I have been obliged to exclude, simply from want of room, and the dread of fatiguing the attention of my younger readers; and some subjects I have also passed by untouched, solely from a deficiency of information on my own part respecting them.

It is with considerable reluctance, for

ample, that I have expressly avoided saying any thing upon the Tea trade with China. But as I had some reason to believe that, before these pages can see the light, most of the material circumstances of that question will be changed, I have thought it needless to dwell upon matters which will then have lost their interest ; and equally needless to speculate on the operation of prospective measures, of which, as yet, we can know nothing precisely.

That part of the question, however, which relates to the civil government of India, is very differently circumstanced from that which relates to our intercourse with China. The tea trade may be taken from the East India Company, and thrown open to the public at large, possibly without asking any convulsion that shall threaten the existence of our sovereign power in the East. But it seems extremely doubtful whether any material alteration can be made in the political government of India without hazarding our authority in that quarter ; and, what is of vastly greater moment, without placing in imminent jeopardy the tranquillity, and even exist-

ence, of numerous nations whose security and prosperity we have taken into our safe keeping, and bound ourselves to maintain by the most solemn engagements that have hitherto held nation and nation together.

To assert that the government of British India, under the direct management of the present Company, and subject to the control of his majesty's ministers, is not perfect, is merely to repeat what may be said of any human institution. That a system practically more efficient as a whole will ever be devised, there appears to me not the slightest hope. Indeed, no extensive or abrupt change can be considered desirable by any one who, from having studied the subject fully and attentively, knows the facility with which well-considered improvements are already at all times applied to such parts of the system as require amelioration, by those under whom the administration of our Eastern affairs has been so long and so ably conducted.

If, finally, the disinterested testimony of a traveller who has seen, in his time, the working of nearly every form of go-

vernment on earth—in every climate, and under a vast variety of circumstances—be at all entitled to attention, it is freely and most cordially offered in favour of the Honourable East India Company's administration over almost every other which it has been his fortune to witness.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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