The Correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck

Governor-General of India
1828–1835

Edited with an introduction by
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Preface, Introduction, and Notes
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PREFACE

GOOD biographies of the great British governors-general of India, particularly those of the nineteenth century, are few and far between, and the most surprising neglect of all is that of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck's rule in India between 1828 and 1835.[1]

There is no doubt about the importance of his period of rule, for it was in Bentinck's day that the British seriously began to get to grips with the questions whether and how far they should attempt by means of deliberate policy to change traditional India; and his own contributions in trying to define the right direction and lines of social and economic policy and to improve race relations were positive, distinctive, and formative. Bentinck has a special place in the history of race relations. Unfortunately, his just and humane attitudes towards Indians and their potential role in the new India did not gain general acceptance among British ruling groups either in India or Britain. Had they done so there can be little doubt that the Indo-British empire would have been more beneficent than it was and its contribution to the well-being of mankind even greater.

No doubt the complexity and massive scale of documentation which is to be found in the archives on British India have done something to daunt would-be biographers, and the prevailing anti-imperialist mood of the last thirty years has been far from encouraging, but the British governors-general belong as much to the history of South Asia as to that of Britain, and the time will come again when in terms of their human importance such studies will be called for, and as much by the east as by the west.

This published selection of correspondence from the Bentinck archive is therefore offered not only as important in its own right but also in the hope that it will encourage others to write about his governor-generalship preferably in the context of his varied career as a whole.

The papers of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, from which this selection is drawn, form part of the Portland Collection deposited by the Duke of Portland with the University of Nottingham in 1949. The Lord William Bentinck papers, which constitute about one-third of the whole Portland Collection, have been sorted and admirably listed by the Department of Manuscripts there, and are organised in seven sections chronologically covering the main phases of Bentinck's life and career: (*a*) Pre-Madras to 1803, (*b*) Madras 1803–7, (*c*) Pre-Sicily 1807–11, (*d*) Sicily 1811–14, (*e*) Pre-Bengal 1814–27, (*f*) Bengal 1827–35, (*g*) Post-Bengal 1835–9.

For the purpose of this selection I have been concerned solely with

[1] Since the above was written Dr. J. Rosselli's study of aspects of Bentinck's life has appeared: *Lord William Bentinck: the making of a liberal imperialist, 1774–1839*, London, 1974.

section (*f*) Bengal 1827–35, that is, with Bentinck's governor-generalship of India. This section itself is divided roughly into 1. *Correspondence*, 2. *Minutes*, 3. *Accounts*, 4. *Maps and Plans*, 5. *Miscellaneous Correspondence*. This last forms the largest section and is contained along with the other sections in bundles, files, and file boxes and folders. An excellent detailed list of the whole collection, document by document, is available, which includes the dates of documents wherever known, so that the simplest and most adequate form of reference to each document is by date, which is therefore the method of reference followed in my published selection.

In the following introduction I have set out and explained the themes and subjects which I have thought most worthy of selection and illustration; and have attempted briefly to clarify and interpret the main lines of Bentinck's policy, and to evaluate the importance of his work in India.

The government of India under the East India Company necessarily formed a complicated process, and for a full understanding of the many parallel and convergent channels of correspondence, I have added a brief note on how India was governed in Bentinck's day.

This work could not have been done without the great help afforded by the archivist, Mr. J. H. Hodson, who, knowing that I could not spend prolonged or frequent periods at Nottingham, readily made material available to me in London. Even so it would have been impossible to make progress without the invaluable research assistance of Dr. B. N. Pandey, now Lecturer in Indian History at the School of Oriental and African Studies, who on my behalf spent a great deal of time in the archives at Nottingham University, and in discussing with me document by document the proposed selection of material. He further supervised the typing of material from which the final selection was made. It is a pleasure also to acknowledge most gratefully my continuing indebtedness for the many kindnesses and every facility afforded by the former Indian Office Librarian, Mr. Stanley Sutton, and his staff. I am indebted to Miss M. D. Wainwright and to Miss N. Matthews for help with the proofs and the index. I wish to record my appreciation of the School of Oriental and African Studies which has met the costs of publication.

Correspondents in the early nineteenth century varied so widely in their usage, in their spelling of names, in capitalization and punctuation generally, that I have attempted to introduce a measure of consistency by bringing these matters into line with modern usage. I have also expanded the many, sometimes obscure, abbreviations. In the spelling of Indian terms and proper names it has also been necessary to use as far as possible forms which are recognisable by the modern reader without attempting an exact transliteration. Indian words and phrases are freely used by the correspondents and have not been italicized in the text, but a modern version and their meanings appear in the glossary.

INTRODUCTION

Bentinck's career—problems of interpretation

ALTHOUGH generally regarded as one of the outstanding governors-general of British India, and although his family papers and official correspondence have long been available for study, no substantial treatment of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck's rule in India has been published.[1] The subject itself, moreover, is not without attractive features both as they relate to his personal reputation and the generally accepted judgments about him, and also to his important role in history; for it was his lot as governor-general not, like his predecessors, to make war, but in peace to face squarely the question of how far and when the British should embark on a deliberate policy of modernizing and westernizing Indian society. By his day the British political conquest of India was virtually complete, India was at peace, and to Bentinck thus fell the task of defining the new responsibilities and the new lines of policy.

His reputation, especially in Bengal, where his memory is still kept green, is that of a great governor-general, an original thinker and far-sighted social reformer, and a considerable man of affairs with solid contributions as a ruler to his credit. This, too, is the view expressed in general histories of India by modern British historians, for example, by H. H. Dodwell writing in 1934, and by Thompson and Garratt in the same year, and more recently by Dr. Spear.[2] Modern writing by Indian historians, too, has taken much the same line. On the other hand, a detailed research study by Dr. John Rosselli of a relatively short period of Bentinck's career between 1811 and 1814, when he was commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean and virtual governor of Sicily, has presented a very different picture of a politically rash, often short-sighted ruler, sometimes impractical, and apparently possessing few of the qualities for which elsewhere he has generally been so highly praised.[3]

Writing in the heyday of Victorian imperialism Bentinck's biographer, Boulger, felt it necessary to defend Bentinck against the charge of seeking 'to facilitate the transfer of the government of India from English to

[1] D. C. Boulger's *Lord William Bentinck*, published in 1892, does not pretend to be more than a sketch which makes little use of original material. The *Dictionary of National Biography* entry does not use the Bentinck papers, and indeed states that they were lost. Since the above was written Dr. J. Rosselli's study of aspects of Bentinck's whole career has appeared (see p. ix n. i).

[2] *The Oxford History of India*, 3rd edn. edited by P. Spear, 1958, pp. 586–9.

[3] J. Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck and Sicily*, Cambridge, 1956. With his early career in mind Sir Charles Webster somewhat harshly described Bentinck as 'A brilliant and unbalanced egoist, all the more dangerous because he was also imbued with species of idealism'. *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh*, I, p. 75.

Indian hands', and to discount on the grounds of personal animosity the attacks of the historian, William Thornton, on Bentinck's character which he said 'added the treachery of the Italian to the caution of the Dutchman'. But even Boulger could not explain, except on the possible score of political antagonism, the disparaging assessment of Bentinck's own nephew, William Greville, who wrote, 'He is a man whose success in life has been greater than his talents warrant, for he is not right-headed, and has committed some great blunder or other in every public situation in which he has been placed.'[1]

In the light of these conflicting views, a fresh look at Bentinck is needed; and from the briefest of glances at even a simple outline of his career it soon becomes apparent that there are other equally important and unresolved questions hanging over his character and work.

As one of the sons of the politically influential third Duke of Portland, Bentinck was naturally able to take for granted the support of a strong family connection, and to look for quick advancement in early life. Thus as a young army officer he was selected in 1795 to be aide-de-camp to King George III, and simultaneously provided with a seat for the rotten borough of Camelford in the house of commons. From this traditional eighteenth-century springboard of the British aristocracy he was lifted in 1803 at the early age of twenty-eight into the governorship of the East India Company's Madras presidency in India, and presented with a golden opportunity not only to consolidate his personal fortune, but also to share in the grand imperial schemes of the governor-general, Richard Wellesley; and for good measure the chance of the succession was dangled before him. However, within four years these prospects were shattered by the decision of the East India directors to hold him personally responsible for the mutinous outbreak of the Madras sepoy army in 1806, and to recall him to England; and it was small consolation to find on his return that opinions among the authorities in London on his share of the responsibility differed so sharply that the decision was never formally ratified.

Despite this controversy, and the shadow over his reputation, Bentinck found no difficulty in slipping back into parliament and in resuming his army career, and, in the favourable military context of the war against Napoleonic France, in securing very rapid promotion, which in 1809 took him to the high rank of lieutenant general, and two years later to the command of the British and allied forces in the Mediterranean.

For the next four years, in the climax of the war against France, he exercised great political and military power, not only as allied army commander but as virtual governor of Sicily. It was a situation demand-

[1] D. C. Boulger, op. cit. pp. 304–5.

ing great skill and a cool head, but Bentinck soon proceeded to set his masters, the allied governments, by the ears with one plan after another for the establishment of popular governments in Sicily and among the states of Italy. 'How intolerably prone he is to Whig revolutions everywhere,' Castlereagh, then foreign secretary, complained to the prime minister, Lord Liverpool, 'he seems bent upon throwing all Italy loose.'[1] Despite several serious political failures each followed by a stern warning from London, Bentinck's obstinate refusal to abandon his own political line of policy led in April 1815 to his summary recall.

Back in England Bentinck once again entered the house of commons but, although seemingly cast for an influential personal role in national politics as one of the first men of high rank to profess publicly ultra-radical opinions, a role which was likely to be all the more significant in the forthcoming period of peace, which seemed to offer a chance of major political reform in Britain, he chose to withdraw into private life at his country seat at Downham Market in East Anglia, where for the following thirteen years he quietly spent much of his time.

Although he took some part in local politics as a supporter of George Canning, his brother-in-law, and also accepted the post of commissioner for drainage and navigation in the great level of the fens, it was all in all a remarkable change in his way of life.[2] In such periods as he spent in London he contented himself with silent opposition to government in parliament, and seemed to find his main interest in cultivating the leading reformers of the day, often being seen in their company, especially at the home of George Grote, the noted historian and educationist.

In 1819 he declined an offer to return for a second term to his former post as governor of Madras. Three years later, however, he let it be known that he was not uninterested in the succession to the vacant governor-generalship of India and was gratified to receive some support among the East India directors, but the prime minister, Liverpool, who held a poor opinion of his judgment, promptly blocked the nomination. Five years later, in the summer of 1827, when the post again became vacant, by which time also his relative, George Canning, had replaced Liverpool as prime minister, he was given the job, being doubly fortunate because the East India directors were at best lukewarm and in any event his name at first had stood no higher than sixth on the list of nominations, and few could have foreseen that through the refusals of others it would come to the top.[3]

Like his contemporaries we cannot but be surprised that Bentinck, who in his prime had evidently settled for a quiet life, should in his middle

[1] Rosselli, op. cit.

[2] Neither Boulger nor the entry in the *D.N.B.* makes any reference to his tenure of the commissionership, thus missing an important clue in understanding Bentinck's later work as governor-general of India.

[3] C. H. Philips, *The East India Company*, p. 261 and n.

fifties, when no longer a fully fit man, have become willing to face the strain of high office in the steamy, unhealthy, and exhausting heat of Bengal. His wife, Lady Mary, on whose judgment he obviously relied, had also at first been against the idea of returning, but Bentinck would have been less than human if he had not been moved by the wish to restore his Indian and personal reputation. Still resentful of what he had always felt was an unjust decision to recall him from India, he no doubt thought that a successful term as governor-general would altogether bury the unsettled controversy over Madras. On top of this, and what probably clinched the matter, was the fact that recently he had been suffering a period of financial difficulty, and the governor-general's salary of £10,000 a year and expenses could scarcely be sneezed at; and as both his wife and he agreed, 'It formed the best situation in His Majesty's gift.'

From his record, therefore, Bentinck in the first active phase of his career up to his fortieth year emerged in public life as a man of great energy and forthrightness, yet he was impulsive to the point of rashness, and generally lacking in political insight and the art of the possible. On this record his recall from the Mediterranean was not only justifiable in itself but appeared also to confirm the judgment of those who earlier had brought him home from Madras.

But references to his private life and personal relations in this period gave a somewhat different impression, which was highly favourable to him. Friends described him as 'straightforward, honest, upright, benevolent, sensible', and again as 'unaffected, open, candid, kind'. Apparently not without a streak of vanity, he was yet undemonstrative, even at times withdrawn, and subject in his own words to 'a great deal of irritable shyness', so that even to receive and wear a public honour was 'the infliction of a positive misery'. Despite his chosen line as a soldier and his experience of high political and military office, he so loathed pomp and ceremony that one observer not unreasonably summed him up as a man who 'thinks and acts like a Quaker of Pennsylvania'.[1] His framework of personal life, his tastes, his clothes were simple. His colleagues in Calcutta were astounded to see him freely riding about in an ordinary coat with no escort, or on occasion even setting off from Government House for a walk with an umbrella under his arm.

How far therefore his withdrawal in 1815 from national politics into local and private life represented a straightforward preference, an impulse of nature evoked by public failure, a desire to get out of the limelight, or rather a profound political dissatisfaction with the general conservative direction of British affairs, we cannot be sure, and even his personal

[1] V. Jacquemont, *Letters from India*, p. 12.

correspondence and private *Journal* do not help to resolve the question; for his writings seem deliberately or perhaps unconsciously to avoid self-analysis and reveal little of his motivation, his hopes and fears.

Against this background of apparent or real contradiction and unresolved questions, we are bound in the search for firm, satisfying interpretations to look again at his record as governor-general in India, particularly as revealed in his personal correspondence, at the same time asking whether the middle-aged ruler of British India had profited from his earlier bitter public experiences, and how far, if at all, he had been changed by thirteen years of semi-private life in rural East Anglia.

THE INDIAN GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP

Briefing in London

At a meeting in George Grote's house just before Bentinck's departure for India, it is said that he assured James Mill, the utilitarian historian and philosopher and at that time a senior permanent official at the East India House, 'I am going to British India, but I shall not be governor-general. It is you that will be governor-general.' For his part, James Mill apparently had no high hopes at that time of Bentinck as ruler in India, seeing him as a 'well-intentioned but not a very well-instructed man'.[1] Even this was a generous reading from Bentinck's previous record, and although it must have been gratifying to Mill and his fellow utilitarians to have as governor-general someone who had shown himself fully aware of the high tide of political and social reform that was flowing in England, his previous public performance when in positions of authority could have given no one grounds for confidence that he would pull it off. Indeed, Bentinck's only ardent supporter among the East India directors, John Ravenshaw, who thirty years earlier had personally served under him in Madras and still remained a steadfast friend, admitted that he too was apprehensive lest Bentinck as governor-general in India should turn out to be in his own words 'an impetuous innovator'. And this was certainly the general expectation in London.

Whatever view Bentinck might have had of his own proper role as governor-general, there were no two thoughts in the minds of his masters in London, whether among the directors at the India House in Leadenhall or the government ministers at the India board of control in Cannon Row. In their view the key and dominating factor was money, the state of the Company's finances, and the fact that, as it so happened,

[1] We may note also that one of his staff in India, H. H. Wilson, later said 'He [Bentinck] is an ignorant man. He has a vigorous mind and quick observation, but he never reads and, therefore, often judges wrongly.' To Ramcomul Sen, 20 Aug. 1834. P. C. Mittra, *Life of Ramcomul Sen*, Calcutta, 1880, p. 17. Bentinck himself said to Mill, 'I must confess to you that what I have ever read amounts to very little, and that it is not without pain that I can read anything.' Boulger, op. cit. p. 54.

Bentinck's term as governor-general was to coincide with parliament's periodic deliberations on the future of the East India Company's political control over India and monopoly of British trade with China, and in particular with the debate on the question whether government should renew the Company's charter which was due to expire in 1833.

Judged by previous experience, financial matters were bound to loom large in reaching a decision on this important question, and the attention of all concerned was therefore certain to be focused on the existing high costs of the Company's administration in India and the extent to which these were liable to become a charge on the British exchequer. If the Company could pay its way in India there was presumably a good case for confirming its rule and renewing its charter.

At the private dinner party which the directors by custom gave to each newly appointed governor-general on the eve of his departure, the chairman-elect, William Astell, himself a successful city businessman, and by reputation 'open, honourable and straightforward' (who incidentally had voted against Bentinck's appointment), spoke of his doubts whether parliament would renew the charter unless the Company could be shown to be paying its way in India, and went on to draw out for his listeners the harsh financial facts. Within India itself since 1814, the Company's total excess of expenditure over income had amounted to nearly twenty millions sterling, and for the past five years the annual deficit had averaged three millions sterling. It was certain, too, that in any event the Company's monopoly of the China trade would be called in question, and yet it was not generally realised that for the past half century it had been the profits from the China trade and not from India which had provided the Company with such surpluses as it had enjoyed, out of which, for example, the interest and dividends on loans from government and on the Company's stock had been paid. In short, Astell's conclusion and directive for Bentinck was that in future the Company in India must pay its way, or risk early abolition; and the new governor-general must define his policy accordingly.

The Indian context

With these sharp words ringing in his ears, Bentinck with his wife, Lady Mary, left England on board H.M.S. *Undaunted*, in January 1828, and after an unpleasantly rough voyage, broken only by a welcome week's rest at Madras, landed at Calcutta and took charge of the government on 4 July 1828.

At the customary ceremonial induction to office, Bentinck created something of a sensation. So modest and unassuming was his manner, so determined apparently was he to do away with the excessive pomp

affected by his predecessors, who had followed the high imperial style set by Richard Wellesley at the beginning of the century, that the comment was at once heard among both British and Indians that 'a second Cornwallis' had arrived. No sooner settled in than he had Calcutta buzzing again for he made it known officially that he would like to hear of suggestions to advance 'the general prosperity and happiness of the British empire in India', not least from 'all native gentlemen, landholders, merchants and others' as well as 'all Europeans both in and out the service', and for this purpose he would make himself readily accessible to all, including 'native gentlemen and natives of respectability'. And as a small but telling touch he added that Indians who were thinking of calling on him were welcome to drive up to Government House in their own carriages, something that had not been permitted since Wellesley's day.

In the Company's capital city, Calcutta, in which by this period British officials were in the habit of taking Indian inferiority and deference for granted, this seemed almost a revolutionary step, a gesture which was capable of being interpreted as a declaration of acceptance of responsibility on his part not simply to London but to all the peoples under his rule. He must have been aware that most British servants of the Company would look askance at his attitude and considered declaration of intent, but he could scarcely have foreseen that at one move it would establish him in good *rapport* with the most important social and economic force in India, the rising middle classes of Calcutta and Bengal.

Despised, ignored, or neglected by his predecessors, the Bengalis were delighted to be taken up in this way, and always emotionally quick to react, readily responded to what they regarded as a recognition of their new strength and status. Although no immediate tangible contribution of a practical kind emerged, a favourable climate of Indian opinion was at once created from which Bentinck and the British were to benefit immeasurably. Looked at in retrospect it is clear that this simple gesture, with the implications lying behind it, constituted one of the most telling acts of his governor-generalship. Certainly it could not have been made at a more opportune moment.

Bengal was in a state of intellectual and social ferment. Through the speculation in land set loose by early British experiments in settling the ownership of the land in Bengal, culminating in the permanent settlement by Cornwallis in 1793, a new self-conscious landed class of Bengalis had emerged with a keen eye to fortune, yet clearly aware of their dependence on the British regime, and of the opportunities which it offered. Moreover, as the British continued to open up the trade of the province, a new Indian merchant and banking class had grown up, centred in Calcutta, working side by side and often in close co-operation with British agents.

Boosted by the British conquest of India, Calcutta's finance and trade in the first three decades of the century grew in spectacular fashion. Its population likewise increased, and in the 1820s grew to some 230,000 stretching out for seven miles along the banks of the Ganges.

Among Bengalis it was the Hindu families—the Roys, the Tagores, the Debs—rather than the Muslims who were benefiting from these developments, for the politically displaced Muslim nobility and landed class were not as well poised or willing to seize the new economic opportunities, and the Muslim peasantry, lacking leadership, remained relatively quiescent and backward. Although acquiring new vested interests in land, banking, shipping, and trade, and along with them an essential and very important working knowledge of the English language through which government and the economy were increasingly being conducted, these new classes for the most part still clung to orthodox Hinduism. They saw no incongruity in showing radicalism in economic matters and yet remaining traditional in social and religious affairs. By comparison there was a smallish, distinctive group who saw the situation as a golden opportunity to increase Indian acquaintance with the intellect and spirit of Europe, and therefore sought to spread western ideas as a means first to change and reform Hinduism and Hindu society itself; and through Bentinck's rule they were to grow in influence.

Politically, too, the Indian context favoured change. The Company's government for the first time in the century was moving into a period of peace, which was in fact to last throughout Bentinck's term of office. He and his government were therefore able to survey with some confidence a vast Indo-British empire which had been conquered and pacified throughout the whole of south and central India and as far west as the petty Sind states on the Indus river.

In the north-west the British high tide of conquest had for the moment reached a natural barrier in the Sikh state of Punjab, created by the famous Ranjit Singh, in his youth a heavy-handed conqueror but now a worn and tired man acutely aware of the superior power of the Company and anxious only for peace and quiet. In the forested hills of the north-east the Burmese had already recoiled in disarray from their first major clash with the Company and the frontier there, too, was firm.

Within the frame and grip of British India itself, there remained a subdued multitude of over six hundred Indian states, some like Hyderabad and Mysore very large in extent, some even smaller than the smallest English county, one and all stranded by the British tide of power like boulders and pebbles on the seashore, without apparent purpose, strength, or meaning: and all in subordinate relationship with the Company. And if any inclination still existed within any part of the subcontinent to offer a challenge, it had recently in 1826 been snuffed

out by the ostentatiously spectacular British storming of the hitherto impregnable fortress of Bharatpur, near Delhi.

'It is impossible', pronounced Bentinck, 'to conceive dominion and supremacy so completely acknowledged and feared as that of the British government from one end of India to the other. Our power is irresistible.' It was true that in London, Calcutta, and Bombay there were some in high places who were loud in voicing fears of the threat implicit in the recent Russian penetration of Persia and Afghanistan, but Bentinck remained unmoved: 'I confess myself to be entirely without interest in the affairs of central Asia and Persia, and even Russia, though from these countries have so often sallied forth the past conquerors of India, and will again in all probability.' With confidence, he repeatedly asserted, 'In my time the storm will not gather', and he proved right.

Uncertain beginnings

On the six months' voyage out there had been ample time to consider the strong directives which he had received in London, and, once in Calcutta, he soon moved to establish two retrenchment committees for civil and military expenditure respectively, with an official membership to be drawn from the three presidencies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay.

But personally to set the right tone and perhaps dramatically to call public attention to the need for economy, and to reassure the London government of his good intentions, he also announced on the directors' orders an immediate reduction in the Bengal army's 'half-batta allowance', which was a somewhat odd extra allowance paid to those cadres of the Company's Bengal army which happened to be stationed at the four major cantonments. The amount involved was small, some £19,000 annually, and the ruling itself in justice to the rest of the Company's armies, was fair; and with London behind him and his council acquiescent, Bentinck took it for granted that the order was quite straightforward, almost routine, and would be so accepted.

In particular, the ready agreement of his leading civil servant and councillor, the famous Sir Charles Metcalfe, was encouraging, for he was a man of great seniority and experience, indeed having been in India since Wellesley's day when Bentinck was first in Madras, and enjoyed the highest reputation as an administrator. Unfortunately both Bentinck and Metcalfe were reserved by temperament, slow to make friends, so that each left the initiative to the other. As a result an initial coolness sprang up between them, giving an unnatural formality to their early exchanges, which Bentinck in his own interest ought to have gone out of his way to break down. When asked about the 'half-batta' resolution, Metcalfe had thus contented himself with expressing a brief and, as he saw it, quite proper assent to a straight order from his masters, the

court of directors, but he can scarcely have been unaware that the timing and context were wrong. It was a pity he did not say so to Bentinck.

The Bengal army, grossly swollen, and pampered through an overlong succession of wars, almost endemically in a state of indiscipline, was in no mood for cuts. Among its British officers, already anxious about their future prospects in an era of peace, a sense of fear and resentment prevailed and reactions to the half-batta order were therefore immoderately loud and bitter. Meetings of protest were called in all the major military centres, indignant letters were showered on the editors of the English newspapers in Calcutta, and an elected council of officers, apparently in defiance of Bentinck's authority, deputed their own representative to proceed at once to London to put their case directly to the home authorities.

Discipline in the Company's armies, as Bentinck knew to his cost from his Madras days, was chronically slack, and similar outbursts had frequently occurred in the past and were in themselves no great cause for alarm on the part of government, but when very senior Bengal officers went so far as ostentatiously and curtly to refuse his own first and personal invitation to dine, Bentinck not unnaturally grew angry and uneasy, and therefore took the logical step of at once asking for some public demonstration of support from the commander-in-chief, Lord Combermere. But he was unlucky. Comfortably established at his Agra headquarters many hundreds of miles from Calcutta, under pressure from his own staff, and only too conscious of long-standing scores which he wished to settle with the civil government, Combermere was disinclined to pull Bentinck's chestnuts out of the fire. Foolishly, he even let it be publicly known that, if anything, on the half-batta issue his sympathies lay with the army against the government.

As a result Bentinck was appalled to find that quite unwittingly he was already moving towards a major clash with the army, the one body with which in the light of his previous unhappy Madras experience, he would have wished above all to keep on good terms. 'My crime', he lamented, 'is simply to have carried into execution an order, which Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst declined doing. This is my sole crime. . . . In this most odious duty . . . I have, I fear, incurred universal dislike. . . . I am grieviously beset on all sides.'

But his mistake in point of fact was to have acted so precipitately on so relatively small a financial matter without first giving himself a chance to sense the situation. It seemed that he had not learnt the lessons of Madras and Sicily. By his hasty action he had conjured up an image of himself as a governor-general under strict orders from London, who in the most clumsy and unsympathetic way was bent on economy at all costs. Promptly and publicly dubbed 'the clipping Dutchman'—a slighting

reference to his family origins—he was throughout his governor-generalship never able in official British circles to live down this description; but more important, through his ineptitude he had raised widespread doubts in the services on his capacity to put through a major policy of retrenchment.

Although in a blaze of anger initially tempted to stamp out the agitation, perhaps to retaliate by court-martialling the recalcitrant officers, second and wiser thoughts prevailed and he decided instead to play for time. Since the half-batta order had in fact come from London, he announced that he would see what could be done to get it reconsidered, and meanwhile would suspend it. Within a general policy of economy there was as he well knew little chance of a change of mind on this point in London, but at least he won for himself a much needed breathing space of several months in which to recover his poise, and to begin to restore official confidence.

Inordinately scared by the whole affair, Bentinck showed early signs of strain and nerves, even going so far as to tell his personal staff that he dared not leave Calcutta.[1] But chance intervened to bring him to a juster estimate of the situation. A severe fall while taking early morning exercise on horseback, followed by bouts of fever, put him to bed and in convalescence forced him to take a short sea cruise 'to the eastward', whence some weeks later he returned 'much restored', and no doubt reassured to find that his worst forebodings about the military situation in Bengal were unjustified, and that tempers were cooling fast.

However, there were other equally thorny problems awaiting him, in particular a demand for an important personal decision, which he could scarcely put off, and yet which seemed certain to add to his difficulties. Sir John Malcolm, the doyen of the Company's servants and since November 1827 governor of Bombay and now at the zenith of his splendid Indian career, had for some time been trying to take over from Calcutta a special responsibility for settling the affairs of the petty chiefdoms of central India, his old stamping ground. Recently, while on leave in London he had privately obtained encouragement from the president of the India board and from his old chief, the Duke of Wellington, whose word in London on matters Indian was almost law, but the final decision, to Bentinck's disgust, was referred by the London government to the governor-general personally.

As perhaps was to be expected, little love was lost between Malcolm and the Calcutta secretariat, which to a man was strongly opposed to handing over the responsibility; and Bentinck was therefore landed with the dilemma of either offending his own staff or annoying Malcolm, who,

[1] See, for example, his outburst in his letter to the Company's London secretary, Peter Auber, 1 June 1829.

as he knew, had many friends in high places in London. He saw clearly enough that the correct decision was to reject Malcolm's claims, if only because Malcolm's intention of exercising a close paternal control over the dependent Indian princes and chiefs was personally unacceptable to him and anyway contrary to the East India directors' general line of policy, and there was every reason to believe that Malcolm was proposing soon to retire from India. But, uneasy lest Malcolm should use any rejection of his claims to make political trouble in London, where Bentinck's own support was far from secure,[1] and fearful that any decision in Malcolm's favour would upset influential sections among the senior Bengal civilians at a time when he had already fallen foul of the Bengal army, Bentinck dithered. As the months passed it became increasingly clear to him that the one thing in fact which he dared not do if only in his own interest was to sacrifice his own staff, so at last summoning up his courage, he warned Malcolm, 'You shall have from me a clear stage, fair play and no favour', and then told him that the decision had gone against him, and to his own immense surprise and relief found that Malcolm acquiesced without demur or rancour. His ghosts, plainly, were being conjured up by himself.

But the tension of mind created by one crisis after another, minor though they really were, along with a realization that 'the oppressive heat of this abominable climate of steam' was already beginning to undermine his health, clouded his early months in India. It was a difficult uncertain beginning, which badly shook his confidence.

First, and unfavourable, impressions of the Company's services

Although protesting 'boredom with the overwhelming load of uninteresting business'—not surprisingly since he was notoriously disinclined to read his papers—he had meanwhile set in motion private enquiries into the general state of the Company's administration, which were intended to prepare the way for a major policy of retrenchment. Although the presidencies of Bombay and Madras technically lay within his purview, he knew that like his predecessors he must largely leave their affairs to the governors on the spot, but he could not fail to see that his own absurdly distended province of Bengal demanded instant attention and action.

Peter Auber, the court of directors' knowledgeable secretary in London, in a first exploratory and private letter to Bentinck—which was gradually to grow into a prolonged, somewhat gossipy correspondence—had with some truth commiserated him on his bad luck in succeeding 'to a most amiable but imbecile governor [Lord Amherst] and with a

[1] See, for example, the letter from J. G. Ravenshaw, a Director of the Company, 2 Dec. 1828.

service that will still require to get out or to grow out of the effect engendered by Lord Amherst's predecessor [Marquess Hastings]'. Certainly Bentinck's own first impression on arrival was of a marked decline in morale and discipline in the Company's civil service since the period of his previous Madras service in Richard Wellesley's day. A generation had passed, but the British, he thought, had failed to use time to advantage, and had refused to face important facts.

As far as he could see, the scene where dynamic action by government was most required lay one thousand miles to the westward in the still unsettled north-west provinces and central India, yet the governor-general's council and secretariat had remained at Calcutta, esconced in the long-since settled districts of lower Bengal. As a consequence, he said, in a large area of British India 'the control and superintendence of official authority is utterly inefficient and inadequate . . . and its main defect consists in the absence of all official subordination'.[1]

He did not have to go far to see some of the evidence for himself because even in Calcutta it was plain that the initial training of the young British civil service cadets at Fort William College left almost everything to be desired. These young men, nominated in London under an outworn system of patronage, and once in Calcutta apparently under no official pressure to apply themselves to study, were signally failing to acquire a knowledge of the relevant Indian languages and laws, without which they could never do their jobs effectively. Fifty-six of the most recent batch in training had failed their examinations; and it was notorious, too, that they were squandering their time on women and drink and around the gaming tables, and many were becoming so heavily indebted and demoralized as to jeopardise their own future and the welfare of the peoples for whom they would become responsible. To reorganize the college and to enforce stricter discipline was comparatively straightforward, and this with the guidance of Charles Metcalfe was soon done, but in the up-country districts the evident indisposition or inability of the senior officers to control or train their juniors could not be quickly remedied.

Admirable policies might be sweated out in the secretariat, exhaustively vetted in London and ultimately enunciated from on high in Calcutta, but there was plenty of evidence to show that they were not filtering down the official chain of command, and so were not being applied in the field.

Bentinck made this point explicit:

Twenty-eight years have passed away since we obtained possession of the

[1] Bentinck maintained this view throughout his governor-generalship, his subsequent journeyings in the country districts serving to strengthen it. See his letter to Charles Grant, President of the Board of Control, 21 Dec. 1832.

greater part of the ceded and conquered provinces. Ten years were then assigned as the term when all the information required for a permanent settlement was considered practicable to be obtained, and here we are, having made but miserable progress in this work, and retarding by our unlucky arrangements the general prosperity of the country.

It was to be expected that every new administration would find some cause for criticism of its predecessors, but the condition of British India, as revealed by Bentinck's early inquiries, does suggest that in the Company's newer northern territories the civil administration under his predecessors, the Marquess of Hastings and Lord Amherst, had stagnated.

Disconcerted by the evident failure of the Company, as he saw it, to honour the moral responsibility of conquest, and particularly by the poor performance of its senior civil service, about which he was scathing in his comments, and by the gloomy implications for his own proposed policy of economy, he did not mince words in his confidential reports to London:

> If I were obliged to draw an inference from the facts and reports which each council brings more or less before us, as well as from the information received out of doors, I am afraid that I should be obliged to say that the administration of civil and criminal justice, if not a complete failure, was so defective and inefficient as to demand our instant and most serious attention.[1]

When he had had the opportunity of seeing for himself the ground situation in some of the relevant districts he was even more vehement and positive: 'Our system of civil government . . . is miserably inefficient. . . . In every branch of it, revenue, judicial, and police it has sadly failed.'[2] And the prime cause, he thought, was the number of senior civil servants who were 'totally inefficient' yet 'secure of promotion because there are no competitors'.

Reflecting on the evidence already before council, Bentinck's first conclusions were that the governor-general and council ought to make their presence felt in the country districts by leaving Calcutta and moving about more freely, and that their permanent home and secretariat should be transferred from that city to a geographically more central position in the empire, perhaps a thousand miles up-country to Meerut or Agra near Delhi; secondly, that a determined effort to complete the land settlement of the long-since conquered northern territories should at once be made; and thirdly, as a corollary, that the number of settlement officers should be increased.

But in the prevailing context of the need for financial economy it was certain that no substantial addition to the already costly establishments of 459 British civilian officers and the annual salary and allowances bill of

[1] See his letter of 10 Dec. 1828.

[2] To Charles Grant, President of the India Board, 21 Dec. 1832.

over one million pounds would be feasible, and that therefore any increase of numbers must be sought through the relatively cheaper employment of Indians. For Bentinck personally economy and justice could thus happily go hand in hand, for as he said:

> the exclusion of the natives from a participation in the government, which I so much condemn, was, I perfectly well know most honestly determined by a belief in the utter worthlessness of the native character and of their unfitness for all charges of trust. Happily this prejudice is giving way rapidly to more liberal and enlightened principles on the part of the younger part of the service.

Impelled in any event by another spell of sickness, Bentinck proposed as one of his early priorities to leave Calcutta along with his council on an extended tour of the districts of north-western and central India, and sent a preliminary enquiry to the London authorities on the idea of transferring up-country the seat of government. But in studying the implications, his own staff brought to light unforeseen complications. Although the personal right of the governor-general to travel throughout British India had long been established by acts of parliament, there was evidently genuine doubt as to whether the council was similarly empowered, and the law officers therefore advised Bentinck to take no action and to stay in Calcutta until London had spoken its mind. So, much against his will, he settled down to wait.

The beginning of reform and social policy

As it turned out, this enforced stay was a public blessing because it enabled him to take a decision on proposals for revenue and judicial reform relating to the already settled areas which for many years had been slowly maturing in the secretariat, which had several times been deferred by his predecessors and which, without a further loss of self-respect and efficiency, neither he nor the council could put off.[1]

For many years it had been apparent that the separation of judicial and revenue powers in the long-settled or regulation provinces, which it had been the primary purpose of the Cornwallis settlement of 1792–3 to achieve, had become a source of inefficiency, misrule, and injustice. Overwhelmed by a large upsurge of law cases, the provincial courts of appeal were clogged, and as a consequence gaol deliveries had become protracted and the detention of prisoners illegally extended. In the western provinces, too, the boards of revenue had signally failed to control the excesses of the subordinate field officers.

[1] Holt Mackenzie, described by Bentinck as 'by far the ablest of the Company's servants', had been responsible for the later drafts of these proposals. He was secretary to government in the territorial department, and had been with Bentinck's predecessor, Amherst, on a tour of the upper provinces in 1826–7. See Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, and an article by T. G. P. Spear in *Bengal Past and Present*, 1967, pp. 24–37.

After exhaustive study, the Calcutta secretariat had therefore concluded that the magistrates and collectors of revenue should be brought together under the superintendence of some twenty newly constituted commissioners of revenue and circuit who were to enjoy the powers of both the former courts of circuit and the revenue boards. At the same time in the department of civil justice, the formation of a new class of native judges, the *sadr amins*, was recommended to clear the arrears of cases to expedite the processes of law, and in the western provinces a court of appeal for revenue and judicial business, separate from that at Calcutta, was proposed with its seat at Allahabad.

Calculated to achieve a more direct and better informed administration, to enforce proper discipline in the civil service, to speed up the processes of law, and to extend the use of native agency, these proposals were moving in the directions already considered desirable by Bentinck. Although they were not his own proposals they accorded well with his general purpose, and he therefore felt justified in at once putting them into effect.

Reaching this decision was a comparatively straightforward, almost a routine process, but alongside these files lay another subject, that of *sati*, almost buried in a mass of evidence and argument, which had accumulated over the past thirty years. *Sati* was the practice, fostered mainly among high caste Hindus of northern India, of committing a widow to be consumed in the flames of her dead husband's pyre, which had continued for so many centuries that Hindus had come to accept it as part of their original sacred tradition, although in fact no sanction for it could be found in the ancient texts. Despite the Company's discouragement, there was no sign of the practice being discontinued, and Bentinck was told by his district officers that some five to six hundred cases were still occurring annually in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The persistence of *sati* therefore offered a fundamental challenge to the British on their general policy towards the subject peoples, which had been discounted while the Company was preoccupied with war but which must be faced with the return of peace. It thus posed for a nervous and shaken Bentinck an awkward decision as to whether and when he dared risk making a move on what seemed certain to be a most controversial matter.

As far back as 1805, the reigning governor-general, Richard Wellesley, on humane grounds had talked about promulgating a regulation to abolish *sati*, and in the interval his successors had cautiously inched their way towards this decision, without ever quite reaching it. One and all, including Bentinck's immediate predecessor, Amherst, had ultimately drawn back from the fear that such formal interference with Hindu custom might cause a civil and military uprising. But no governor-general could now ignore or dismiss the subject, for Christian mission-

s in both India and Britain had long since continued to sustain a
y campaign against the rite, and before Bentinck left London they
raised their voices, bringing fresh and strong pressure to bear for
ight prohibition; and the East India directors had specifically com-
ıded the matter to his early attention.

first scrutiny of the evidence on the governor-general's desk showed
: a considerable majority of British district officers—Bentinck put the
re as high as ninety per cent—favoured prohibition as both humane
yet unlikely to cause violent Indian opposition. There was, however,
strictly administrative need to take urgent action; the matter could
e once again been shelved. But, as his earlier career showed, Bentinck
temperamentally inclined to take political risks and, when in doubt,
ct first and argue afterwards. He felt strongly that on moral grounds
ne the rite could no longer be tolerated by a British government, and
t from his own personal point of view failure to act would be to
licate responsibility and to betray the liberal ideals for which he
ieved the British should stand. Opinions might differ on the desir-
lity and expediency of pursuing a general policy to reform Indian
iety, but here to his mind was a custom so barbarous that no truly
ilized government could refrain from taking action. Yet he was only
well aware that a false move on a matter of this delicacy would leave
governor-generalship in ruins, and that he had already stirred up
ıre than enough trouble for himself in the Bengal army, which being
minantly high caste, was bound to be closely concerned. He noted, too,
ıt the opinion of the sepoys had not been sounded, and that his senior
ıncillor, Charles Metcalfe, had not finally made up his own mind on
: right course of action.

Caution prevailed. There was no need for haste, and he decided to take
time and make quite sure of the views of the public and the armies.
rty-nine of the most experienced British army officers, for example,
re separately approached. One by one their replies came in, and it was
n that only five advised against taking any action at all. Twelve
oured abolition but were averse to direct prohibition by government
gulation, eight supported suppression by the direct intervention of
ıgistrates, and twenty-four urged complete, immediate, and public
ɔpression by the government. Bentinck already knew from the papers
fore him that opinion among British civilians in general overwhelm-
gly discounted the likelihood in the event of prohibition of any hostile
ıction either by the sepoy troops or by Indians generally, and similar
:ws had already been put to him by the senior judges and superin-
ıdents of police. Making every effort to stay closely in touch with
dian public opinion in Calcutta, particularly with the progressive
ım Mohan Roy, and his group of Bengali intellectuals, who were

known to favour abolition, Bentinck finally became convinced that, if anything, he was 'following not preceding the tide of public opinion'. With an influential section of Indian opinion openly declaring against *sati* and the near unanimity of officialdom on the matter, further delay would have been unreasonable, and on 7 December 1829, with the agreement of his council, Bentinck publicly declared the practice of *sati* illegal, and punishable by the courts.

Thus far the Company with its mind preoccupied with problems of war and trade had not studied the social systems of the peoples whom it had conquered. Of course a massive amount of relevant information, largely put together by district officers, had accumulated in its files, but there was no organized basis or framework of knowledge on which a positive social policy could be based. Broadly, the hostile assessment of the debased and inferior character of Hinduism put forward by Christian missionaries and their supporters, reinforced by the arguments and writings of James Mill and his fellow utilitarians, had gained wide acceptance among the British in India and at home, but the Company's government in London and Calcutta had remained generally and somewhat vaguely of the opinion that it would be politically dangerous to interfere with Indian social and religious customs. The decisions to make a searching enquiry into the Indian view of *sati* was therefore a milestone, not only for Bentinck personally, but for British policy as a whole. Against the background of an already restive army, it had required courage on his part to take up the matter and to declare his standpoint. From his record no one doubted that he had this kind of moral courage, but on this occasion, too, he had shown good judgment in calmly, slowly bringing the public and government to a decision. For the Company to profess neutrality not only on *sati* but generally on Indian social and religious matters was in his view neither desirable nor practicable, and if British rule over Indians was to have any justification other than force and financial profit, if India was to be drawn by Britain into the comity of nations, if she was to be modernized by a western government, criteria other than those emerging from Indian society itself would have to be applied. He felt able to justify this to himself; for, as he said, the ultimate beneficiaries were the Hindus who, once emancipated from 'those chains and shackles upon their minds and actions, may no longer continue as they have done, the slaves of every foreign conqueror, but... may assume their just places among the great families of mankind'. Twenty years earlier he had been similarly moved in calling for the emancipation and freedom of Sicilians. While remaining remarkably constant in his aims in India, he was beginning to show that he understood that bold declarations of intent were not enough, and that a purposeful collection of relevant evidence and consideration of the means was at least as

important. Once the decision was taken, and was seen to be calmly accepted by Indians, he seemed to gain in confidence and in his view of the future, and putting his fears behind him, he gave his governor-generalship a new lease of life.

One mark of this change was that his relations with the redoubtable Charles Metcalfe, which from the start had been unnecessarily cool, took a quick turn for the better. Despite the instinctive liking which had grown up between Metcalfe and Bentinck's clear-headed wife, Lady Mary—he found her, he said 'a most engaging women'[1]—the two men had for months gone on warily circling round each other like two elderly battle-scarred dogs, but now, on Bentinck's initiative, they began to appreciate that on many important matters they saw eye to eye, and mutual respect soon ripened into friendship.

Each privately had long been aware, for example, that one of Bentinck's first initiatives, the two retrenchment committees, had got lost in detail, and as a demonstration of what could be done by right-minded men, they put their heads together to prepare a plan to reorganize and cut to the bone the subordinate government of the Straits settlements; and in these discussions, too, it must have become clear to Bentinck that no major retrenchment or radical change in British India would take place unless the initiative and drive came from or was seen directly to come from the governor-general.

Future government and the agency of change

But it was in a dialogue on the kind of government that the Company ought to be seeking to create in India that the two men drew most closely together. Invited by the new president of the board of control in London, Lord Ellenborough, to suggest changes to be considered by parliament for incorporation in any revised charter for the Company, Bentinck flattered Metcalfe by at once turning to him for advice.

Each was encouraged to find that they shared the assumption that 'we are bound to give Indians the best government in our power'. Neither saw any marked advantage in altering the London end of the Company's government, and both instantly dismissed as impractical the idea of establishing one highly centralized Indian government to supervise the whole of British India in detail. 'It is impossible', snorted Bentinck, who found the mass of council paper tiresome, 'to get through even the reading of the details of this (Bengal) presidency.' By comparison

[1] Victor Jacquemont (*Letters from India* 1829–32, pp. 4, 12) gives a pleasant account of Lady Mary: 'She is a woman of fifty, who must have been quite handsome, but has now no pretensions to youth. . . . Lady William is very kind and clever. I had the pleasure of speaking my own language with her, and it was a very keen one. She discovered, I do not know how, that, like all Frenchmen, I was a very lukewarm Catholic, and not a very ardent Christian: and since she is pious, or tries to be, she attempted to convert me.'

the arguments in favour of creating a new subordinate government in the upper provinces, separate from Bengal, were strong, and Metcalfe in the light of his own previous service there, urged them on Bentinck who, seeing their relevance to his own advocacy of the transfer of the central seat of government from Calcutta, was only too ready to agree. Although their ideas for reorganizing the civil government were modest in scope, on military and strategic policy they sought a sweeping overhaul, providing for a fresh definition of the relationship between the king's and the Company's European armies in India, and preferably for the formation of one united force under the king. They also drew pointed attention to the fact that troops of both armies were still stationed, especially in the south, as if the subordinate and weakly Indian states continued to offer the major threat to British power, and that by comparison the exposed north-west and north-east frontiers were ill-protected. If there existed any potential internal threat, they felt that it lay rather in the excessively high proportion within the Company's armies of Indian to British troops, which had been growing unchecked since Wellesley's day. There was great good sense in these arguments as the following three decades, and particularly the débâcle of the mutiny of 1857, were to show.

As perhaps was to be expected the two men differed in their assessment of the extent to which financial retrenchment could usefully be carried. Metcalfe, first and foremost bent on defending the interests of his beloved civil service and therefore on laying stress on what it had already achieved, thought that savings could not be made without dangerously undermining morale, and that in the event few Indians would be found suitable for senior posts. Bentinck, better aware of London's insistence on the need for economy, and himself seeking new social and political patterns for the future, was bound to disagree on both counts, but they were at one in assuming that, if India was to be westernized and modernized, the *creative* forces to produce change and development in the civil service and in India generally had to be European, and that European colonization in India was therefore immediately desirable on some scale. Clearly, this was a most important, a fundamental conclusion and recommendation.

In a private letter at this period, Bentinck revealed in detail to Ellenborough at the India board in London exactly what he had in mind.[1]

> The introduction of European school-masters or teachers of all the improvements in agriculture, in moral management, in manufactures, in the use of machinery, is one of the greatest benefits that can be conferred upon this country. In all these arts, India has made no improvement; she is as she was ages ago, and although I hear much of the blessings of British government, I know not what has been done deserving that appellation, except the establish-

ment of tranquillity. . . . When I talk of improvement I really believe that there is not one middle-sized county in England in which there is not more laid out on general improvement in one year, than in all the [Indian] presidencies put together. Since the peace [of 1815] I have been entirely devoted to country pursuits. Farming, canals, drainage etc., have been my hobbies, and here, war and foreign politics being no longer our chief avocation, I look at all this country as a great estate of which I am the chief agent, whose principal business is to improve the condition of the tenantry, and to raise the income, not by rack-renting and sub-letting, but by bringing into play, by judicious management and encouragement, all the resources which its soil and circumstances abundantly offer.[2]

And, in a simultaneous note to the chairman of the court of directors, he added:

The almost entire neglect in which the sources of wealth, convenience and civilization have been so long left, is a positive scandal and disgrace to our government. . . . The happiness and the prospects of mankind . . . I honestly confess it to be my ambition to promote.[3]

In these statements, which come straight from the heart, and which drew directly on his experience as commissioner of the great level of the fens, Bentinck best defined his aims as governor-general. His predecessors in that office may have thought that in conquering India and establishing unity and peace, and in providing what they thought was a fair system of revenue and judicial administration the British had gone far enough, but he saw the essential task, the justification of conquest lay in going beyond these admittedly very considerable aims and achievements to the need to encourage social and economic change, development and growth, primarily in the interests of Indians.

Problems of external policy and the Indian states

Although clear enough about the desirable objective, he was less certain as to the exact means and priorities to be employed to achieve them. Adamant on one thing, that no action should be taken until he had visited the up-country districts, and with a new confidence born of his growing friendship with Metcalfe, and the success over *sati*, and the knowledge that the Bengal army's threat to his authority was receding, he felt emboldened on 16 October 1830 to quit Calcutta, and with his personal staff to embark on what turned out to be a prolonged tour of

[1] To Lord Ellenborough, President of the India Board, 5 Nov. 1829.

[2] Since writing this introduction, I have come across Dr. Rosselli's invaluable article, 'An Indian Governor in the Norfolk Marshland: Lord William Bentinck as improver, 1809–27', in *Agricultural History Review* XIX, i (1971), pp. 42–64.

[3] See his letter of 7 May 1831.

the upper provinces. With Bentinck's full confidence, Metcalfe, as vice-president of the council, was left in Calcutta in charge of the government.

In fact nearly thirty months were to elapse before Bentinck returned to take personal charge of his council and government in Calcutta.[1] The cool seasons were spent on tour and the hot summers at the newly established hill station of Simla, some 170 miles from Delhi. Although this long period of absence, far distant from his council and secretariat in Calcutta, was bound to slow down an already cumbrous governmental machine, Bentinck was certainly right to go and see for himself the conditions in upper India. Without this he could scarcely judge the feasibility of transferring the seat of government up-country, or of establishing a new provincial administration, and it was high time to make direct and personal contact with the army command and the military centres at Agra and Allahabad.

Although it was safe to assume that Metcalfe, by now generally referred to as 'the uncrowned king of Calcutta', was more than equal to maintaining the routine processes of government at the centre, it is nevertheless surprising that Bentinck, who was well aware of the key role of the governor-general, should have stayed away for quite so prolonged a period. One factor among others which no doubt influenced him was the conviction that the climate of Calcutta threatened his health, and that to remain there would in effect cut short his time as governor-general.

But the cost to government was clear. 'I am perfectly aware', Bentinck frankly admitted, 'of my own comparative uselessness when separated from the experience, knowledge and talents of my colleagues.' In the East India Company's system, discussion of policy in council was the key factor in exploring and establishing policy, and in all important matters initiative lay essentially with the governor-general. To divide his government in this way was certain to make it even more difficult to get agreement on policy and to reach decisions on which action would follow. In fact, Bentinck never succeeded in revitalizing the Calcutta centre of government nor did he make any effort to gather together, as Richard Wellesley, for example, in his day had done, a circle of devoted colleagues at headquarters and in key positions in the field, dedicated to the task of fulfilling the aims of their chief. The style of his government was different; he sought rather to influence public opinion, perhaps over the heads of his colleagues; but the means were sadly inadequate, with the consequence that many of the new ideas which attracted his attention

[1] He returned to Calcutta in Feb. 1833, but even then it was with the intention of leaving immediately for Madras. In fact he did not go to Madras until Feb. 1834, returning finally to Calcutta in Feb. 1835. He left for England at the end of his governor-generalship on 20 Mar. 1835.

and peppered the pages of his memoranda were not generally understood or tried, or if tried were not persisted with.

His long absence from Calcutta produced further unhappy consequences. The India House in London became increasingly irritated and critical. Traditionally suspicious of any Indian governor who showed a disposition to work without his council—which was thought of as the Company's watch-dog—the directors countered by expressly forbidding him to introduce major changes without previous reference home, and rejected 'instantly and peremptorily' his proposal to transfer the seat of government from Calcutta.

On receipt of such sharp orders, indicative of waning confidence, Bentinck's wisest course would have been to return to Calcutta to review the position, but the prospect gave him no pleasure, and meanwhile attractions were not lacking to keep him in the field. He wanted to study at first hand proposals for the long-delayed land settlement of the upper provinces which had long since been prepared by Richard Bird, the land revenue expert, and to see some of the Indian states, especially those with strategic importance. He was in fact able to meet personally the nawab of the problem-state of Oudh at Lucknow, and some of the Maratha princes at Udaipur and Ujjain, and to take part in a splendidly staged summit meeting on the north-west frontier with Ranjit Singh, the independent ruler of the Punjab, and to confirm his own previous assessment that there was no threat to the Company from the states or the Sikhs.

On the north-west frontiers he himself had not the slightest intention of altering the *status quo*, although he did allow Ellenborough, who had become president of the India board in London in September 1828, and who was by nature aggressive and bombastic—to push him into supporting the exploration of the Indus river by steamboat as a possible means to expanding British trade, a venture which he must have realised was bound later to lead to political involvement. He felt much the same about the north-east frontier and showed this by simply confirming possession of the already occupied province of Tenasserim. But he deliberately gave as little time as he could to external policy and, as his correspondence shows, was only too glad to turn his back on the frontiers, brushing aside, for example, the attractively expansionist exhortations reaching him from Lieutenant Alexander Burnes who had recently penetrated from Lahore into Afghanistan.

Although the neighbours to the north-west and north-east were obviously still uneasy about the Company's long-term political intentions, Bentinck was satisfied that he had correctly interpreted their current mood for peace, and that he could safely turn his attentions to the vexed internal questions raised by the decay of those Indian states, large and

small, which had long since come under British protection, and which lay well within the framework of British India.

Not that he had much room for manœuvre in defining general policy towards them, for William Astell, by this time the chairman of the court of directors, had already warned him that money might usefully be saved by cutting to a minimum, or better still by eliminating altogether British interference in the Indian states' internal affairs, and that this therefore was the court of directors' general line of policy. But as Bentinck found, it was one thing to state general policy and quite another to apply it to a bewildering variety of situations spread across India.

The broad pattern of the Company's relationships with the ruling princes of the major states of Oudh, Maharashtra, Hyderabad, and Mysore had been set thirty years since at the beginning of the century as part of the great conquest by Richard Wellesley, combining on the one hand a subsidiary force of Company's troops strategically stationed within each state and paid for by the ruler; and on the other hand, the suspended threat of British control over internal administration, personified in the presence at the Indian prince's capital of the British political resident, who was the direct representative on the spot of the governor-general. Thus bolstered by policy, and force, and in practice remote from the control of Calcutta, the British residents had long since grown into petty potentates, often pursuing their own private, and sometimes corrupt ends, and to such a degree that the reputation of the princes had been gravely depressed in general esteem; and unhappily, the lower they sank the more they and their families were tempted to act wildly and irresponsibly. To make matters worse the presence of the Company's troops in the states effectually protected the princes against any revolt by their subjects. Whatever they might say, the British could not escape the appearance of condoning or encouraging princely misrule.

The fact was that with the British achievement of paramountcy and the pacification of India, the assumptions on which Richard Wellesley's settlements had been made no longer applied, and in particular the need for the British subsidiary forces in their existing form had disappeared. Wellesley, moreover, had always been ready to face the consequences of princely misrule and in the last resort to assume control of the administration of an Indian state, or even to consider outright annexation, but by Bentinck's day the London authorities had hardened against any further, and probably expensive, extensions of responsibility lest the states' governments should altogether wither away leaving their territories to be administered by the Company, which even within the British provinces had long been notoriously unable to cover its own costs of administration.

Accepting the directors' point of view the more readily because he

saw in this another useful opportunity to give Indians greater public responsibility, Bentinck openly avowed that 'Direct interference is . . . the very worst course'. Yet in practice he found the utmost difficulty in applying a general policy of non-interference, for as he confessed, 'Nice distinctions continually offer themselves.' From state to state conditions of course differed greatly, but in one and all the deterioration in the princes' sense of responsibility and interest in government had been allowed to develop unchecked for too long a period to permit them to recover quickly.

It was evident that any attempt to define a considered policy of non-interference would demand a reappraisal of the traditional role of the governor-general's personal representatives in the states, the British political residents. They were certainly going to need a much higher level of sympathy, knowledge, and skill than they had normally demonstrated in the past, and it was therefore doubly unfortunate that there appeared to be a shortage of good men. Whereas Wellesley had never seemed to have any difficulty in finding first class officers, Bentinck lamented that he could count the residents of real ability on the fingers of one hand, and always felt at a loss whenever a new senior appointment had to be made. But he did not in fact devote his mind to the problem, nor did he possess the flair for spotting or the warmth of personality for attracting young talent, and on several occasions made downright bad appointments, as with Ricketts in Oudh, Briggs in Mysore, and Martin in Hyderabad, by all of whom he could scarcely have been worse served.

He was able to do little more in fact than faithfully try to follow the general line of policy indicated by the directors. In settling central India for instance, he went out of his way to avoid giving the appearance of imposing on the chieftains 'the yoke of a superior power, so that they shall feel all advantages of independence'. The treaty with the central Indian state of Nagpur was revised in order to raise the personal standing of the raja and to cut British interference to a minimum, and a start was made in studying how 'to deliver back the government of the Nizam of Hyderabad's dominions to the native authorities'. In the matter of successions to the thrones of the Indian states, Bentinck found that internecine family intrigues and quarrels, often leading to palace revolts, virtually forced the Company to intervene; and in Oudh, he had reluctantly to conclude that the decay of Indian administration had already proceeded so far that active British interference and control could alone preserve the state from total collapse and immediate annexation.

Consistent with his own philosophy Bentinck could bravely say, 'We require that they, the princes, shall govern well, and failing of that, they

must suffer the consequence'—a sentiment which his former chief, Richard Wellesley, himself would have applauded—but he was unhappy and uneasy when forced to take over temporarily the administration of the large southern state of Mysore, and even to annex the tiny principality of Coorg, whose insane ruler had committed political suicide by declaring war on the Company. The plain fact was that he wanted to see Indians assume more, not less, responsibility; and anyway these operations were costly, and financial stringency and the director's strict orders permitted little flexibility and virtually excluded a close control over the rulers.

Although Bentinck himself may have been reasonably clear in his own mind on the general line of policy, it is open to reasonable doubt whether he ever succeeded in conveying to the princes and their families the full significance for them of the Company's position, and their own likely future role. Thus they continued to bear all the appearance of puppets being jerked helplessly up and down as the various strings of British policy were successively pulled; and by the time that Bentinck left India there was little sign of their being firmly set on the path of improvement. In retrospect, it is evident that the task of controlling and modernizing the states, numerous and scattered as they were throughout the length and breadth of India, far exceeded the Company's capacity. Indeed, not until the winding up of empire with the transfer of authority and power in 1947 did the British succeed in bringing this unhappy story to an end.

Economic crisis

Important though the problems of the states were, Bentinck and Metcalfe knew that their first priority must be to take advantage of the period of peace in order to settle, reorganize, and develop the British Indian provinces over which the Company already had direct rule.

On orders which continued to flow from London—the imperious Ellenborough, president of the India board, for example, bluntly threatening, 'Should you not succeed in making such reduction as may bring the expenditure within the income, we shall be forced to reduce with a rough hand'—the primary emphasis had to be placed on retrenchment in the Company's civil and military services, and despite the widespread unpopularity of this policy among his own officials who feared personal salary and expense cuts, Bentinck had no choice but grimly to set his mind to this. It was doubly unfortunate, an added blow, when the general economic terms of international trade began to turn against the Company's Indian settlements, even bringing some of the big private agency houses in Calcutta to the verge of bankruptcy, thus threatening the savings of British officials.

These agencies, which had first evolved mainly as a means of remitting the surplus private funds and savings of the Company's British servants to Europe, had found a profitable role in lending large sums to government at favourably high rates of interest, and had thus become inextricably involved in all major government financial operations. Growing over-confident in the unaccustomed atmosphere of peace, all had recently been speculating heavily, some of them wildly, and the collapse of one house in May 1830 produced a crisis in public confidence, and a disastrous run on the others which some of them failed to withstand.

In London, the court of directors, which had long been critical of the adventurous policies of the agencies, and perhaps not clearly aware of the extent to which the credit of the Calcutta government was involved, somewhat cavalierly advised Bentinck not to intervene and to let events take their course; but knowing that in any financial crash both government as well as its servants in their personal capacity stood to lose heavily, Bentinck, even though privately of the opinion that the agencies were 'a monstrous fabric', disregarded these orders and sensibly lent government money to tide most of the agencies over the crisis. 'The government itself', he argued, 'is everything, sovereign, landholder, trader, banker. Playing all these parts, it is incumbent upon it to do its duty.' By these means the run on the houses was checked and public confidence was slowly restored, but the slump was severe, in Macaulay's somewhat exaggerated description, 'ruining one-half of English society in Bengal and seriously injuring the other half'. But there is no doubt that the crash spread gloom and created uneasiness and resentment throughout the province, and unhappily reinforced the official view in London that European settlement in India should continue to be kept under close control, and possibly even restricted.

Within the sphere of government itself, Bentinck therefore found that his room for financial manœuvre and retrenchment was still further circumscribed. Confined as he was, and forced to press every possibility of economy, it might have been expected that in general he would become cautious and discouraged, that he would draw in his horns. But he ran true to character in never ceasing to welcome and advocate ideas for reform, change, and development. In this his enthusiasm was unquenchable.

In minute after minute in these years—on the need for law reform and land settlement, on the enforcement of discipline in administration, on the value of irrigation, on the need for more and better canals and roads, on the uses of steamboats on India's major rivers and between Europe and India, on the importance of reducing internal transit duties on goods, on establishing a universal uniform currency, on methods to improve cultivation, on the reduction and reorganization of every branch of the

military services—on all of these subjects, and many more besides, he forcibly argued his ideas for change. One of the members of his staff was driven to comment, 'He was incessantly writing minutes on all subjects and his private and military secretaries were employed all day in copying them and sending them to the departments to be officially brought before the council.' It is scarcely conceivable that within a policy of retrenchment he can have expected his own council and staff or indeed the Company to give effect to such a vast and varied, not to say original programme of reform and modernization, and anyway for most of the time he was himself too remote from his own Calcutta headquarters to attempt to do it himself. On a charitable view he may well have preferred to see his role not as an efficient chief executive, but as a leader and moulder of public opinion, both official and private; always to be open and responsive to ideas for change which must come sooner or later, a middleman rather than a creator or practitioner of modernization. But nowhere in his official memoranda or private correspondence in this period does he make this explicit. On a less favourable interpretation, it is arguable that here was the restless, impractical, often rash innovator at work, the same enthusiastic Bentinck, apt to be carried away by ideas, who had learnt little about practicality since his days in Madras and Sicily. The truth probably lies somewhere between the two views.

What is certain is that his quick succession of shafts 'from distant Simla' pricked and annoyed his Calcutta secretariat. Thoby Prinsep, secretary to the territorial department, who became chief secretary in 1834, complained that he had never seen a man 'who had such a love of work, or such an incessant desire to meddle with everything, great or small.... He had great love of change and desire to meddle with every institution or practice he found in work or prevailing. It is impossible to deny that some of his changes were beneficial, but he as often muddled what he meddled with, as improved it'.[1] H. H. Wilson, another member of his staff, took much the same view.[2] Charles Metcalfe, who incidentally was vastly enjoying his own virtually independent role as superior in Calcutta, managed to remain urbane and friendly, although towards the end even he began, as he frankly told Bentinck, 'to feel unqualified annoyance' at what he considered was Bentinck's unnecessary and sometimes petty interference.

In fairness to Bentinck it should be emphasised that he had started with a view that in a country so poor and backward as British India his ideas for reform and modernization could be widely and effectively applied only if an active policy of European colonization were to be adopted, but unhappily on this vital matter (and partly through his own

[1] Curzon, *British Government in India*, II, p. 125.
[2] P. C. Mittra, *Life of Ramcomul Sen*, Calcutta, 1880, p. 17.

failure to get his ideas across), he had met with misunderstanding and hostility from the authorities in London. Initially incensed because they thought—wrongly as it happened—that Bentinck was proceeding to apply this policy without first consulting them, the directors in particular feared, not without reason in the light of the recent notorious Palmer case in Hyderabad and the crash of the agency houses in Calcutta, that such a policy would open British India and particularly the princely states to further and greater exploitation by European adventurers.

It was unfortunate that there was at this time no full-scale examination and discussion of this vital subject, no meeting of minds, no pressing of this matter to an issue. This did not happen until many years later. As a result there was a profound misunderstanding between Bentinck and the London authorities. Bentinck, as his very able minute of 30 May 1829 showed, was thinking of colonization by a small sober class of British with capital and skill, mainly artisans, teachers, and craftsmen, with, as he said, 'a character of solidity', but the directors had in mind a category of dubious and rapacious free-lancers, newspaper proprietors and journalists, speculators and money-lenders, bent on exploiting the Indian princes, with many of whom they had already come to blows and had endless trouble. Bentinck had put his case well and with unusual vehemence—'I never felt', he declared, 'a more decided conviction upon any subject'[1]—but he seems to have accepted that on this subject the task of persuading London was beyond him, and he did not return to the charge. He may be thought to have given up too easily, and certainly if this part of his policy of creating change was of such vital importance, it is puzzling that he should have gone on putting forward one proposal after another for development, although he knew that the mainspring was missing. Or, it may be that on further reflection, the practical difficulties, especially the high cost in a period of stringency, which were implicit in a policy of British colonization, deterred him.

The problem of releasing forces for change

In his early years as governor-general, especially in his first period in Calcutta, Bentinck seems to have assumed that quick, effective change for good in Indian society would and should come mainly from direct action through the formal processes of government by law and official regulation; but as he toured the country districts and came to appreciate the communication-gap which existed between the administration and the people, and the magnitude of change which would be demanded of Indians, high and low, townsman and cultivator, and as the dogmatic confidence and opportunism of young 'Anglicists' on his staff, like

[1] Bentinck to Ellenborough, 5 Nov. 1829.

Charles Trevelyan, worked on his always impressionable mind—'that man', he said, 'is almost always on the right side in every question'—he looked more and more to the slower, perhaps surer influence of education, public and private, as the greatest and most appropriate instrument of change. 'It now seems', he said in June 1834, 'an universally admitted axiom that education and the knowledge to be imported by it, can alone effect the moral regeneration of India.' Six months later he had apparently cast doubts aside: 'General education', he proclaimed, 'is my panacea for the regeneration of India.'

But there was no obvious official way ahead along this line of policy because his own advisory committee of public instruction, consisting entirely of British officials, was itself deeply, even bitterly divided on educational policy between a group of so-called 'Anglicists' who favoured greater support for education through English and a group of 'Orientalists', who urged the primacy of Indian languages as the medium. But in fact the debate among the people of Bengal was not seen in these simple terms.

Indian educated society and the new thrustful middle classes throughout Bengal had been for a decade in a state of ferment, not the least element in which was their growing awareness of the economic and social advantages of learning and using the English language. Some, like Ram Mohan Roy, 'the first brilliant product of European influence in India', saw it as a means to reform Hinduism and transform India along western lines; some, like the financier and trader, Radhakanta Deb, took a different view, stressing rather its practical advantages in official intercourse and in trade. Thus although differing in ultimate assumptions and aims, one and all were agreed about the usefulness and need for English.

Under the East India Charter Act of 1813 the Company in India had been enjoined to spend not less than one lakh of rupees annually on education, and in fact by Bentinck's day was spending in northern India alone rather more than double that amount, mainly in supporting colleges of higher education in the traditional modes, in which the medium of instruction was Arabic, Persian, or Sanskrit. But expressly to meet Bengali demand, classes using English as the medium had gradually been attached to most of these colleges and so popular were they becoming, so plentifully were rich Bengalis endowing both day and evening schools to teach English, and so quickly were the successful students themselves proceeding to open new private and often profitable schools for the same purpose, that the committee of public instruction came under growing public pressure to divert an increasing proportion of its own funds in these directions.

However, in the early years of Bentinck's governor-generalship, the

majority of its members were still in favour of maintaining the *status quo*, and although Bentinck showed that he was willing to take the opportunity of altering the balance of membership in favour of 'the Anglicists' whenever a vacancy arose, this process was bound to take some time. Meanwhile the general shortage of funds, of textbooks, and of teachers precluded any radical change. This did not prevent the debate in the committee, in the press, and in public meetings from becoming loud and heated and so confused that in April 1834 Bentinck began to wonder whether he ought to 'put off the development of views on the great question of national education until the public mind should be better prepared for their reception'.

His tours meanwhile through the country districts had even raised fundamental doubts in his mind about the right order of priority in government policy, the primacy of education, and about the desirability of setting out in this way to change Indian society. He was, for example, far from convinced that interference by the government in the field of traditional education was called for. 'It might do more harm than good', he said, 'the great curse of our rule has been a constant interference with the long-established native system of Indian society and of the introduction of our own fancies and schemes, which coupled with *our own* ignorance, have desolated, more than any Maratha invasion, some of the finest provinces of our Empire. The great object and end of all these innovations was increase of revenue.' He therefore readily agreed when the proposal was put to him, that it would be a useful preliminary to prepare a report on village education in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in order the better 'to understand the native mind', and to assess the extent to which it was possible to absorb the existing traditional system into 'a national plan', and deputed an eager Christian missionary, William Adam, to do this.

But this was a long-term matter, and meanwhile there were urgent practical priorities, on which action could not be put off.

> Our costly European establishment, our monopoly of civic agency (£2,000 per head), the exclusive appropriation to itself of all the honours and all the emoluments of administration [he wrote], are the great cause of our great expenditure, and prevent the execution of most of the measures which are recommended for the benefit of India, more especially moderate assessment, abolition of transit and other duties, and of most impolitic and vexatious taxes, the formation of roads, the elevation of the mind of India and the adoption of a great many other measures demanded by the welfare of the country and the happiness of the people. . . . The ground must be prepared and the jungle cleared away before the human mind can receive with any prospect of *real* benefit the seeds of improvement.[1]

[1] See letter No. 730.

However, by the spring and summer of 1834, rather earlier than Bentinck had thought possible, the party in the committee which wished to place a major emphasis in higher education on English as the medium of instruction and development had begun to gain the upper hand, partly because of changes in membership and partly because the evidence was increasing daily that this was the Bengalis' own preference. The timely arrival in India of Macaulay, the new law member of council, and a declared 'Anglicist', whom Bentinck promptly appointed as chairman of the committee, had the effect of consolidating a position already substantially achieved. Thus Macaulay's well-known minute on education promulgated on 2 February 1835, marked not so much the crisis of the battle for English education as a victory celebration towards the close of a long-fought campaign.

The middle classes of Bengal had in fact made the choice for themselves. From a variety of motives, intellectual and practical, and in a variety of ways, they were busy declaring their taste for English. The Calcutta press in English, for example, was already flourishing, with four dailies and many more weeklies, and in 1832–3 the Calcutta School Book Society had sold over fifteen thousand books in English and was to sell twice that number in the following two years.

With the tide flowing so strongly, government felt encouraged to proceed with the creation of a Calcutta medical college, to teach medicine and surgery through English, and to revise the membership of the committee of public instruction, still further strengthening the British official element in support of 'the Anglicists' and adding two Bengali members, both of whom in fact represented moderate rather than radical elements. Partly on this last account, partly perhaps because of Bentinck's growing uncertainty about the right direction and emphasis to give to educational policy, the detailed proposals of government which finally emerged were more cautious than Macaulay's minute had urged. The Calcutta Madrasa, for example, was in spite of Macaulay not to be abolished, nor were funds to be diverted from oriental colleges; and although government stipends in future were not to be awarded for traditional classical studies or to assist publication in these languages, no existing stipends were to be discontinued. Such modest official funds as were otherwise available were to be used to foster a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English. It was left to Bentinck's successor, Auckland, to make the policy effective.

Army reform and retrenchment

Bentinck's awareness that for reasons of health his time in India was fast coming to an end—'my race is run and my tenure a very precarious one' —caused him to make a last, almost a desperate effort to restore good

relations with the army. Partly because of his maladroit beginning, followed by his prolonged absences on tour, he had not put forward specific proposals for army reform and retrenchment although he knew from his own experience as a soldier that in a period of peace following a prolonged age of war this source offered the greatest scope for economy.

From the date of his early clash over the proposed reduction of the half-batta allowances, Bentinck had had a rough passage with the army command. Successive commanders-in-chief had rejected his plea for the need for radical retrenchment. Lord Combermere refused to get involved in detailed discussion, while making it plain to his own personal staff that he thought Bentinck was misguided. His successor, Lord Dalhousie, was a sick man, unable or unwilling to give public support to the governor-general; and his successor in turn, Sir Edward Barnes—not unfairly described by Bentinck as 'incorrigibly wrong-headed'—from the start quite misunderstood the proper and subordinate relationship of the commander-in-chief to the governor-general, and arrogated an independence of action in so contumacious and foolish a manner that in 1833, on the reluctant advice of Bentinck, London rightly recalled him. Without some prior agreement between the governor-general and the commander-in-chief, reform of the army was clearly impossible, and not until this was clearly appreciated in London did the home government have the good sense to make Bentinck himself commander-in-chief thus clearing the way for a radical reconsideration. But unhappily by this time, Bentinck's health, energy, and tenure of office were running out.

On returning from his stay in the upper provinces and the hills, Bentinck once again found the climate of Calcutta unbearable, and under the press of accumulated business fell sick with chronic indigestion, which a short sea cruise in the Bay failed to remedy. As he saw it, with what strength remained he ought to pay a visit to the south, where most of the army was still stationed, and in his capacity as commander-in-chief to draft plans for the reorganization and reduction of all British forces in India, and to define afresh their strategic role, rather as he and Metcalfe had earlier worked the matter out when advising on the charter renewal.

But on arrival in Madras in February 1834, he was afflicted by paroxysms of sickness and giddiness and was 'reduced to the utmost debility', living on a diet of sago and arrowroot, and forced on medical advice to retire to the cool climate of what was later to become a new hill station, Ootacamund in the Nilgiris. Realising that he could not hold on much longer—'for I am already,' he said, 'among the shades of the departed'—he gave up his plans for a southern tour, submitted his resignation to London to take effect in March 1835, and in the months remaining doggedly settled down to cut the costs of an army 'which

I fearlessly pronounce to be the least efficient and most expensive in the world'.

Along with the Company's adjutant-general, and quartermaster-general, and on the advice of two other senior generals who had given him steady support and in whom he had confidence, and with his own political and military secretaries in attendance, he soon drew together the main lines of reform, which as he had rather oddly put it, 'from some accident have never been brought to any satisfactory issue'.[1] His primary, stated aim was 'to make one harmonious system', and to this end papers were prepared on the equalization of pay and allowances and on the terms of service throughout the Company's armies; on the merging of the king's and Company's European forces; on the reduction of the size of the native elements, and finally on the redeployment of forces to cover the exposed north-eastern and western frontiers. Drawing deeply on his own experience as a soldier, and on the wisdom of his colleagues, he produced a cogently argued and coherent series of memoranda, together constituting the most comprehensive and far-sighted review of its kind since Wellesley's day, and one of his own best attempts at reform. But it had come too late for action by Bentinck himself, and as it happened the reorganisation recommended to his successor was soon engulfed by the onset and débâcle of the first Anglo-Afghan war.

In February 1835, exhausted and ill, Bentinck returned from Madras to Calcutta and on 20 March to his own and his wife's great relief sailed for England.

It was in keeping with his modest bearing and the humble style of his administration in India, that after his return he should decline the offer of a peerage for his Indian services.

BENTINCK'S ACHIEVEMENT IN INDIA

Bentinck's whole approach to the revision of the Company's government and his intention of employing more Indians in administration and in more senior positions, and of reorganizing the army, and of introducing western ideas and practices while restraining the excesses of Indian social systems, place him among the foremost of British modernizers in India in the nineteenth century. He showed a sponge-like capacity to take up ideas for change from whatever quarter they came, and seems not to have been unduly concerned that he did not in practice command or create the opportunities or the time, or mobilize the support to apply many of them. His prolonged absences from the seat of government in Calcutta, amounting to well over one half of the total tenure of his

[1] See letter of 7 Aug. 1833, No. 607.

governor-generalship, however desirable and useful they may have been on other grounds, lost him the confidence of the London government and appear to have divorced him from his council and secretariat, and prevented the formation of a strong, coherent governmental group dedicated to the application and spread of his ideas. With his departure, there was no one, no group, at the top to sustain 'the age of reform'.

The question in what respects and how to modernize India was the most acute facing the Company's government, and the most fateful for Indians, but apart from the controversy in the general committee of public instruction, which in point of fact began before Bentinck's day, no great and continuing debate in the colonnades of power was initiated and sustained by him. Failing this, it was virtually certain that any major political or military crisis would blunt or thwart many of the initiatives that Bentinck had taken, and the preoccupation of his successor, Auckland, with the problems of the north-west frontier and the Anglo-Afghan war had precisely this effect. However, Bentinck's well-known modesty of manner and easy accessibility to Indians, his eagerness to take public, including Indian, opinion into account, well illustrated by his support for the freedom of the press, his emphasis on discipline and control among the Company's servants, his advocacy of improvements in material conditions, and above all his wish to provide education and employment and greater responsibility for Indians, on whose behalf the government was increasingly to be conducted, created, however fleetingly, a new style of government which caught the imagination of the rising Indian middle classes in Bengal, long keeping his memory green and producing throughout the nineteenth century a pro-British mood, which even survived the mutiny of 1857–8.

In a normal tenure of no more than five or at most seven years, no governor-general of the vast and complex Indo-British empire, no head of what was already a complicated bureaucratic machine, could hope to bring about a radical change of ideas throughout government and society, or even in any one important field to carry through to completion a wholly new line of policy. Bentinck was no exception. His rule was remarkable not so much for his own practical achievements as for his open-mindedness to ideas for change and declaration of liberal intent to pursue policies which in his own words would found 'British greatness upon Indian happiness'; and for his own personal relations with and treatment of Indians. But he did not convert his officials to his way of thought. Dalhousie, one of his successors, was more to their taste. However, like Ripon later in the same century, and Halifax in the twentieth century, he created a dialogue between rulers and ruled, between the races, which enhanced the quality of government and public life. Although few of his successors defined the goal in these terms, or

pursued it so wholeheartedly, or in a spirit of humility, from his day onwards it was impossible to ignore the high and noble sense of mission which had been put before the Indian people and the imperial government. Bentinck in his day was the man who did the greatest honour to Europe in Asia.

NOTE ON HOW INDIA WAS GOVERNED

On assuming his governor-generalship in Calcutta on 4 July 1828, Bentinck became part of a complicated machine linking India and Britain, well described at the time as 'a government of checks . . . which must always be purchased at the expense of delay'.

The East India Company from its headquarters in the East India House in Leadenhall Street, London, ruled over a vast political and trading empire, based on India and stretching from the Red Sea and Persian Gulf on the west to the Straits Settlements, Canton, and Hong Kong on the east.

Ever since 1784 the responsibility of government in London had been fully shared between the Company's court of directors and the ministry of the day, represented by an India board of commissioners with a minister, the president, who was sometimes a member of the cabinet, in charge. The court of directors consisted of twenty-four members elected by the Company's proprietors or shareholders. Chief among them were the chairman and his deputy—the chairs—elected annually by their colleagues, on whom fell the task of negotiating major policy for the Company's possessions with the president of the board in London and of keeping in personal touch overseas with the governor-general of India and his chief subordinates, including especially the governors of Madras and Bombay. Along with the senior serving member among the directors, the two chairmen also formed the secret committee of the court, which was the medium through which the British government in the person of the president of the board dealt with important and urgent matters relating to war and peace, and with the Company's foreign policy generally. The secret committee, moreover, was the channel through which in the last resort the government could assert its own policy.

The great bulk of the Company's routine business relating to government and trade was handled by the East India House which found it necessary to maintain an administrative staff of close on three hundred members, including at this period in the most senior posts men of distinction like James Mill and his son, John Stuart, and Thomas Love Peacock. By comparison, the ministry's India board kept only a small supervisory staff. By and large therefore, except on the most important matters, the initiative on India business rested with the Company.

Subject to the authority of London the Company's territories came

under the general control and jurisdiction of the governor-general in council at Calcutta. Like the governor-general the Bengal councillors were appointed by the London government, and through the process of discussion in council and the preparation and circulation of minutes, they were expected to play a constructive role in stimulating and guiding the governor-general's initiative.

India under British rule and paramountcy was organized in two broad categories: on the one side, the provinces directly ruled by the British; and on the other side the Indian states which were still in the hands of traditional Indian princely families. The largest and most important British provinces were Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, the two last each having its own governor and council directly appointed from London, and Bengal remaining as an additional responsibility of the governor-general in council. The Indian states, which numbered over six hundred, scattered throughout the subcontinent, occupying about two-thirds of the total land area, were in subordinate treaty relationship with the Company and formed a special responsibility of the governor-general himself. To each of them he therefore appointed his own representative, the British political resident, who in practice exercised great influence, and reported directly to the governor-general.

Each of the three provinces of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras had a supreme court, the judges of which were appointed by the crown. In all three the tendency of the judges to assume a role independent of the governor in council led to frequent and bitter clashes. Likewise the maintenance side by side in India of two armies, that of the king and that of the Company, created friction, and the army commanders-in-chief, who were appointed by the British government, often quarrelled with the governors in council. Bentinck suffered greatly in these respects, and did not get a firm control over the army until the office of commander-in-chief was added to his governor-generalship.

At this period communication between London and India was still maintained largely by sailing ship, which took anything from five months upwards on the single voyage. All interchanges on policy were thus inevitably subject to long delays, and, moreover, in London itself negotiations between the East India House and the India board were often protracted so that not the least of the governor-general's difficulties lay in interpreting what were bound to be out-of-date orders from London and in gaining London's support, or at least understanding, for his own policies which had already been put into effect. He had constantly to assess the extent to which likely differences of view in London not only in cabinet but also as between the president of the board and the chairman of the court, or between the directors themselves, ought to be taken into account in formulating and applying policy in India.

In this world-wide setting with so many individuals in a position to play an influential role, personal and political relationships were of course important, and usually found expression in a wealth of private and confidential correspondence, which ran parallel with and often complementary to the massive flow of public and official governmental exchanges. The Bentinck papers form just such a voluminous collection of public and private material, yielding evidence on Indian government and policy under Bentinck on every aspect of importance.

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1. *Lady William Bentinck*[1] *to the Duke of Devonshire*

Plymouth. 10 January 1828

My dear Duke,

I sent you to Devonshire House two prints of Lord William and myself. They represent us not as we are, but as we were numberless years since. Lord William's is still very like, and the only good likeness we have of him, and I think you will like to have us both. Let them find a place in one of your drawers. The weather is bad, but the wind not unfavourable, and we are to go on board tomorrow, to arrange ourselves comfortably and sail if possible in the evening.[2]

God bless you.

I shall not forget your commissions, and they shall be zealously executed.[3]

2. *Sir John Malcolm's memorandum for Bentinck.* Secret and Confidential

Bombay. 24 January 1828

With Lord Combermere's character your Lordship is better acquainted than I am.[2]

Mr. Baillie[3] is a most respectable man, he is thoroughly versed in the details of government, and particularly on all points that relate to judicial proceedings. From his attainments as a scholar, and the talent he showed in youth, he gave a promise that has not been quite kept, this I ascribe to his having been a fixture in an office at Calcutta from the day he entered the service till the present.

His mind appears to have contracted instead of expanded, and from what I learn he wants confidence in himself and dreads responsibility.

Sir Charles Metcalfe[4] is an honourable, able man, liberal in his views, and *very decided* (perhaps too much so at times) in his opinions. I have

1. [1] Bentinck married in 1803 Lady Mary Acheson, second daughter of Arthur, first earl of Gosford.

[2] They left on board H.M.S. *Undaunted* shortly afterwards, arriving at Madras in May, and at Calcutta on 4 July 1828.

[3] See below, 19 Aug. 1828.

2. [1] Malcolm, Sir John, 1769–1833, one of the most famous of the Company's servants, Governor of Bombay, 1826–30. *D.N.B.*

[2] Combermere, Lord, 1773–1865, Field-Marshal, Commander-in-Chief in India 1825–30. *D.N.B.*

[3] Normally spelt Bayley, William Butterworth, 1782–1860, I.C.S., Member of the Calcutta Supreme Council 1825–30, Acting Governor-General Mar.–July 1828.

[4] Metcalfe, Sir Charles, I.C.S., Member of the Supreme Council, Aug. 1827–Nov. 1834, Acting Governor-General Mar. 1835–Mar. 1836. *D.N.B.*

often thought this distinguished public servant tried questions too exclusively by his own experience and judgment, and did not give that weight he should to those of others; but this defect in his character, if it is the case, detracts little from his value. He is a person on whom implicit reliance may be placed, and I anxiously anticipate his cordial co-operation with your Lordship; he is the only civil servant in high station at Calcutta who has not been educated in an office; his mind has been formed amid scenes of action and in the exercise of great responsibility. This has fitted him to judge questions of state policy as they affect our native subjects, as well as in their conformity to general principles of rule, but you will soon discover and appreciate his qualities.

Mr. Swinton, chief secretary, is a plain, sensible man, with sufficient diligence and experience of his duties as an executive officer. He has never left nor desired to leave Calcutta except when accompanying the governor-general. I should conclude from what I before knew, and have lately heard of him, that he has all the qualities which are to be attained in an office, but with all the limitations and prejudices which belong to men formed at a presidency.

Mr. Holt Mackenzie[5] I do not know personally, but from the information of others, and from the perusal of many of his papers, I am led to form a very decided opinion of his character. I should judge him to be the cleverest man in Bengal, and had he been early thrown into scenes of practical business I think he would have proved the most distinguished of the civil servants of that presidency, but on the early development of superior abilities he was employed to reform, to plan, and to scheme. His talent in writing, and the ingenuity of his mind, combined with his general knowledge, gave great currency to his opinions; but he has brought forward much that displays a spirit of speculation which gives me alarm. There is in many of his papers too great a reliance on the principles of political economy, and general conclusions from assumed facts and too little attention to the actual state of our various possessions in India, every question relative to which, must be practically treated and as applicable to them. We should never forget the sentence of Burke: 'I have lost all opinion [said that wonderful man] in your swaggering majors, having ever found the truth lie in the little men or circumstances!'

If my opinion of Mr. Mackenzie is correct, your Lordship will derive great and essential aid from him, but while you benefit from his information and talents, you will be slow to be guided by his opinion and judgment.

Lieutenant Col. Casement,[6] the military secretary, is an officer that

[5] Holt Mackenzie, 1787–1876, I.C.S., 1817, Secretary to the Territorial Department. Author of the Settlement Regulation VII of 1822. 1826 Secretary to the Governor-General on tour in the Upper Provinces. To England in 1831, where he became a Commissioner of the Board of Control.

[6] Casement, Lieut. Col., later Major General and Sir William, 1780–1844. Secretary to Government in the Military Department, 1818–38.

I conclude must be quite competent to the duties of his station; he is not a man of remarkable talent, and is reputed and I believe with justice, to be very prejudiced. His principal and almost avowed object, ever since he was in office, is to advance the interests of the Bengal army, and he has often endeavoured to do this to the injury of that of the other settlements. I have seen proofs of this disposition which made me regret that a man so biased, should have attained a station where he was particularly required to have more enlarged sentiments; on this point your Lordship will require to be upon your guard, on others you will I make no doubt find Col. Casement a useful public officer.

With Mr. Stirling I am no further acquainted than to know he is a very useful and respectable public officer.

Mr. Prinsep[7] is coming forward among the public functionaries at Calcutta, he is clever and quick, but I should judge from what I have seen and heard of him, rather flippant and full of pretensions; he is office bred, and has much of that character which belongs to such an education.

There have been so many changes in the political department that I shall limit myself to a mention of those who have served under me, and with whose characters I am perfectly acquainted.

The first in the importance of his duties and by far the first in his qualifications for the political line is Major Josiah Stewart, resident at Gwalior. This officer has been employed in the political department for twenty-two years, ten of which he has been with me, or under my orders or observation.

Major Stewart has that happy combination of heart and head, of temper and judgment, which has rendered him one of the most successful of our political agents; he is an excellent scholar, and his correspondence is marked by that clearness and simplicity which belongs to good taste. To appreciate fully the character of this public officer it is only necessary to read his account of all that took place on the death of the late Daulat Rao Sindhia.[8] The supreme government your Lordship will find have praised Major Stewart in the highest manner for his conduct on this critical occasion: Lord Amherst[9] has in his private letters expressed himself with all the warmth of gratitude for the service rendered his administration; but the true point of Stewart's merit has not been touched. With our commanding influence in India others might have accomplished the ends for the attainment of which he is praised, but he is a rare instance of an individual having by his conduct for a series of years, so won upon the mind of the native prince with whom he resided that he became the person in whom Sindhia when dying exclusively reposed his confidence, and to whom those who succeeded that prince looked wholly for advice, and support. Such results

[7] Prinsep, Henry Thoby, 1792–1878, I.C.S., Secretary in the Territorial Department, 1826. Chief Secretary, 1834. Member of Supreme Council, 1835, and later 1840–3. *D.N.B.*

[8] Sindhia, Daulat Rao, Maratha ruler, 1794–1827.

[9] Amherst, Lord, 1773–1857, Governor-General 1 Aug. 1823–10 Mar. 1828. *D.N.B.*

speak volumes, and will I am assured recommend this public officer to your Lordship's entire confidence and esteem.

Mr. Wellesley, resident at Indore, is a very sensible man and most correct and honourable public officer; he may be particularly depended upon on all points that relate to the integrity of the service, as he will never suffer any job, or allow himself to be persuaded, or deluded into any improper proceeding. To these merits he adds an excellent temper and very good judgment; his defects are a coldness of manner, and a want of warmth in his work that has all the appearance if not the reality of indifference in what he is engaged. This prevents him animating others, and giving that soul to his proceedings which is required in the scenes in which he has been engaged, and may be hereafter.

Mr. Wellesley has prescribed to himself certain objects in life which he pursued with rigid adherence to his original plan—these do not include any views of ambition, they are limited to the correct performance of his duties and a retirement to England at an early period. He has taken into this scheme an estimate of his own qualities and conscientiously considers that his competence is limited to the satisfactory performance of the duties he has now to perform, but it is probable this sentiment which he has expressed to me is biased by a local attachment to Indore as a residence, and a dread that his health which has recently suffered may not prove equal to more enlarged or more arduous duties.

Capt. Lowe, resident at Jaipur, was on my staff during the last war, and was introduced by me into the political line, to which he has been repeatedly recognized by the supreme government to be a most valuable acquisition. This officer is not more remarkable for plain sense, good temper, and honourable principles, than for his warm heart, and engaging manners, he is an equal favourite with natives and Europeans, and altogether a character with whom your Lordship will be delighted.

Major Caulfield, political agent at Kottah, will probably be at Calcutta when your Lordship arrives, and no person can give you better information of the actual condition of central India and Rajputana, he was with me during the Pindari war. He is a very sensible man with a good though a warm temper—very high minded and full of energy and ardour both as a soldier and a politician. . . .

There are many other valuable officers in the political line, particularly in central India with whose characters I am intimately acquainted, but I shall defer saying anything of them till I know how far I am to have any concern in the supervision of that country—if none, I shall take care to give you the fullest information of their respective merits and pretensions.

Among the many reasons which combine to make it desirable a governor-general should often leave Calcutta, there is none more cogent than the necessity of his seeing and becoming acquainted with the country and the public officers in the interior. The secretaries with whom he is surrounded, while jealous in a degree of their exclusive

influence and power, are the slaves of their own forms, and the advocates of general principles and rules which often, while they facilitate the duties of their offices, spread trouble and confusion over distant provinces. I have had much experience on this point and am happy in thinking it is one in which your Lordship's opinion concurs with mine.

3. *Charlotte Malcolm*[1] *to Duke of Wellington.*[2] Copy

24 Manchester Square, London. 13 February 1828

My Lord,

I trust you will pardon my applying to you on a subject of peculiar anxiety. Your Grace is aware that Sir John Malcolm's chief inducement in accepting the government of Bombay was the expectation of having central India placed under his charge, which is likely to be frustrated by a paragraph in the last instructions from the court of directors to the governor-general, now before the board of control.[3] This paragraph while it highly approves of Sir John's suggestions respecting the regulations of central India, expressly excludes him from holding that government, on the plea of undue interference with his present duties—duties not changed in nature or extent since Sir John contemplated combining the two appointments.

I fear the failure of his favourite object would be a severe disappointment to Sir John, and the hope that a further consideration of the subject might prevent the adoption of the measure could alone have induced me to intrude on your Grace's time.

4. *Peter Auber*[1] *to Bentinck*

India House, London. 21 February 1828

My Lord,

I have had the honour to receive by the hands of Mr. Ellis Heaton who did me the favour to call on me last week the letter from your Lordship at Plymouth on the 9th instant. From what transpired in my interview I shall feel no hesitation whatever in unreservedly availing myself of your Lordship's permission to communicate with that gentleman, on any point wherein I conceive that either the interests of your Lordship or the honour of your Lordship's government may be best promoted.

In trespassing upon your Lordship from time to time under the indulgence you have been so good to extend me I trust your Lordship will

3. [1] Charlotte Malcolm, wife of Sir John Malcolm.

[2] Ever since his victories in India, Wellington had increasingly been regarded as an authority on all Indian matters.

[3] The question who was to administer central India caused Bentinck much anxiety. See Introduction, pp. xxi–xxii.

4. [1] Auber, Peter, 1770–1866. Entered the East India House at 16, made Secretary 1829–36.

believe that my only object will be to put you in possession of matters as they transpire here and which in my humble judgment may be calculated to give a view of the leading opinions here and at the west[2] on Indian subjects and regarding the various interesting and sometimes difficult questions regarding and connected with the important charge which your Lordship has undertaken.

I may sometimes anticipate the [?multitude] of despatches which I know to be in progress and on other occasions add to such despatches what is the general impression here regarding them: and under these circumstances I am sure your Lordship will have the goodness to receive my *communications as confidential.* I will invariably distinguish between what is decided upon and what may be in progress or of a general and demi-official character and I have only to entreat that if I shall appear to trespass unnecessarily on your Lordship's valuable time that you will check me; and I must entreat that your Lordship will never deem me to be wanting in those sentiments of respect which on all occasions I should desire to evince if I touch with freedom on points originating in India and which may in some measure have undergone discussion here.

The packets of private letters and papers returned from Plymouth after the departure of H.M.S. *Undaunted* I have now the pleasure to forward by the Company's ship c/o the 4th which is despatched from hence for Bengal and China today.

Mr. Booth by desire of your Lordship has called upon me and I have put him in the way of sending newspapers and pamphlets from time to time as he shall judge proper.

A book entitled the *Parliamentary Mirror* edited by Mr. Barrow a barrister has come out with the meeting of parliament. It is a weekly publication and £5 for each session. I have on my own responsibility sent your lordship the first three copies, as it is very highly thought of and gives so connected a detail of the proceedings in both houses.

Should I have erred, I will put a stop to it immediately I am favoured with your Lordship's wishes. On Monday last a discussion took place in the house of commons in which the explanations from Messrs. Buckingham and Herries are given—and so much interest has been attached to the debate that I have enclosed the *Times* of Tuesday which contains the best report of it.

The subject of M[alwa and Rajputana] which was under discussion here when your Lordship was in Plymouth so far as the court is concerned is decided: and is now before Lord M[elville][3] to whom in consequence of his late succession to the office the matter is somewhat new—and consequently nothing will yet be sent out officially by this conveyance.[4]

[2] That is, at the Board of Control, Cannon Row, which was appointed by the Government to supervise the East India Company.

[3] Melville, Robert Saunders, second Viscount, 1771–1851, President of the India Board of Control, 1807, 1809, and 7 Feb. 1828–24 Sept. 1828.

[4] See C. H. Philips, *East India Company, 1784–1834* (1940), pp. 153–83. This probably refers to the question of who should administer Malwa and central India.

Had Sir J. Malcolm returned to India under other circumstances than as governor of Bombay the court would have not felt indisposed to avail themselves of his talents: but as it is the court decidedly and distinctly decline falling in with his suggestions. . . .

5. *Board of control on the administration of central India*

India Board. 26 February 1828

Sir,

I am directed by the commissioners for the affairs of India to return to you the Bengal political draft No 156, in which they have made essential alterations.

I am directed in the first place to observe, that if the board had concurred in the opinion of the court, as to the inexpediency of placing Malwa and Rajputana under the government of Bombay, they would not have deemed it necessary to address the supreme government upon a subject of which they had no previous official cognizance and regarding which they were neither required to exercise their discretion, nor furnished with the means of forming a correct judgment. But the board are of opinion, that it is desirable to give to the governor-general in council a discretionary power to place those countries under the government of Bombay, if his Lordship shall think that arrangement the most expedient for the public service.

It is a circumstance not entirely to be disregarded that Sir John Malcolm, as the board have reason to believe, was greatly swayed in his acceptance of the government of Bombay, by the expectation of having, once more, some concern in the management of countries, to which he had devoted so much care and attention. It is admitted, on all hands, that Sir John Malcolm possesses, in a high degree, the peculiar qualifications for managing native chiefs, and others newly connected with the British government. The board are quite satisfied, however, that no one of the plans for placing central India under the supervision of this officer is fit to be adopted, except that of placing the countries under the governor *in council* at Bombay; and the board have not deemed it expedient positively to enjoin even this arrangement. It is simply recommended to the Bengal government, who are certainly the best judges of the inconvenience to arise from the interposition of a subordinate government between them and the immediate manager of their interests in central India. The board are as little disposed as the court can be, to sanction any unnecessary expense on account of the proposed arrangement, and they do not contemplate any addition except that of the governor's occasional visits. It can hardly be doubted that these countries ought occasionally to be visited by an English governor, and it is as little to be doubted that the governor of Bombay can make the visit more conveniently and more cheaply than the governor-general.

In the present state of India, the board are impressed with the conviction that it is desirable to lighten the duties of the governor-general; not by restricting his controlling authority for the law has provided that this shall be coextensive with our Indian dominion; but by relieving him from some of the details of administration, or correspondence.

6. *J. G. Ravenshaw*[1] *to Bentinck.* Confidential

London. 3 March 1828

My dear Lord William,

Your very kind letter on the eve of your embarkation at Plymouth was forwarded to me by Lord Gosford. I am very glad you have left me to communicate with a person whose candour, frankness and anxiety about everything concerning you and yours so completely accords with my own disposition. The affair of Mr. Spring Rice[2] is settled. I like the arrangement much. I have no doubt he will answer admirably all the purposes you look to. I shall make acquaintance with him as soon as I can.

I have attended pretty regularly at the India House for the last 5 weeks. My communications to you about matters going on there should be preceded by a few preliminary observations which will at all times require your attention.

In the state in which our court and the authorities at home are at present you must not consider any thing decided on till it finally passed the board and the court. When I say therefore that any measure has been formally proposed to the committee of correspondence you must not conclude that it will pass that committee or that if it does it will pass the court—or even if it passes the court that it will be sanctioned in Cannon Row.[3]

Still it may be useful to you to know what important measures are agitated—in what shape they are first proposed, what alterations are made in them in their travels, the grounds upon which such alterations are made, and the final decision.

Mr. Pattison,[4] our present deputy, has declared his intention not to look to the chair next year. From present appearances, which however are by no means settled, I think my friend Mr. Loch[5] will be the deputy, and very probably Mr. Astell[6] the chairman. There are some however

6. [1] Ravenshaw, John Goldsborough, 1777–1840, I.C.S., served under Bentinck in Madras. Director of the Company, July 1819–40. Chairman and Deputy Chairman 1831–3, d. June 1840.

[2] Spring Rice was to go to India as Bentinck's private secretary, but did not finally go, being appointed to the Cape; and later becoming Secretary to the Treasury, 1830–4. *D.N.B.*

[3] That is to say, by the India Board of Control which was situated in Cannon Row.

[4] Pattison, James, Director Mar. 1805–29, Deputy Chairman and Chairman 1817–18, 1821–2, and Deputy 1827–8.

[5] Loch, John, Director 1821–53, Deputy and Chairman 1828–9, and Chairman 1833–4.

[6] Astell, William, Director Jan. 1800–45, Deputy and Chairman 1809–10, 1823–4, Chairman 1828 and Deputy 1829, and Chairman 1830–1, d. Mar. 1847.

who wish to see Sir George Robinson[7] there, but the state of his health is against his taking it. In either case if Loch is the deputy it will do very well as regards you. Astell though he voted against you—I know not why—has not I think any hostile feelings and will be disposed to do you justice.

The court passed a draft on the subject of central India positively rejecting Malcolm's proposal to take charge of that country either as governor or governor-in-council at Bombay, but desiring you to place it under one authority and exercise a vigilant control over the person in charge. The new board has reversed this decision upon the ground that the Bengal government has already too much to do, and that Malcolm was induced to go to Bombay only under the belief that he was also to have central India, which is not the fact as regards the court at least, or anything that they know, for there having been reports to that effect, he was spoken to on the subject by our late chair, and distinctly told he was to go to Bombay only, and was not to expect anything else. How this first collision will end there is no saying, though I should not be surprised if the new military minister was to cram it down the throats of a majority. The proposition however is merely to leave the question to your decision. I hope on every account it will not be so, for Malcolm has so little of the confidence of our court that he will have more than enough to do to give satisfaction in Bombay. The board certainly prefer the transfer to the governor-in-council of Bombay, but a transfer once made is not easily retransferred. Suppose then that anything happens to Malcolm, the transfer will remain in the hands of the senior civil member of council in Bombay—would that be a desirable event? I should say certainly not.

Another draft has passed the court adverting to some of the causes of inefficiency of the Bengal army adverted to in the report of the committee of enquiry into the Barrackpore mutiny. As far as it goes it is very well, but it is poor and meagre, not comprehending as I think it ought, the whole or anything like the whole or even the most important parts of the subject. It has been followed up however by another draft which is now *before* the committee of correspondence, in answer to the government despatch referring to the report of the committee to whom the court's orders of [*illeg.*] were referred for consideration, as well as to a memorial or remonstrance on the subject sent into government by Col. Casement, the adjutant general. In this despatch the conduct of the government in referring the question to a committee, the tone and language of the committee's report and particularly of Colonel Casement's memorial are I think very properly censured. For my own part I think the parties who can hold and maintain such language are unfit for office, and the government that can receive it without censure and thereby adopt it in fact neglects its duty.

The draft relative to the employment of our officers in the service of native powers makes no progress, though it embraces one of the most important points in the military question.

[7] Robinson, Sir George, Director 1808–Mar. 1829, and Deputy and Chairman 1825–6.

The great desideratum in Bengal has always appeared to me to be the reconciling the European officers to regimental duty, and this can never be done till the temptations which now give them much in other directions are removed, and everything is done that can be afforded to make regimental duty at least comfortable.

In the draft I have alluded to as being before the committee of correspondence it is proposed to allow regimental ranks to go up as high as lieutenant colonel. Several of the reforms, reductions to half-batta and other measures of equalization of military allowances between the 3 armies before directed, but objected to in Bengal, are enforced. The allowances to brigadiers of both classes are increased, and a considerable boon is granted to the medical department. I am anxious to improve the allowances to all commands, but they tell me the expense cannot be borne. It should be done however even if all staff appointments were taxed to pay the expense.

The disappointment we have experienced in not getting our promised bullion from India has compelled us to sell a million of our stocks, in order to meet current demands at home. This has been a sore grievance especially to those who had conceived the idea that this *nest egg* might have facilitated the renewal of our charter. For my part I do not think the renewal ought to turn on any such point. The question with me is under what arrangement India can be best governed for the good of the people, and at as little expense as possible to the people of England. Great changes are certainly required, but I cannot persuade myself that India can ever be well governed by the British cabinet, without the aid of some such intermediate authority as the court of directors. If the China monopoly which now enables us to carry on the concern is taken away, the effect will be to distribute the profit which is now made, among a few commercial houses, or money merchants, if you please. Will this do the people of England any good, and yet in that case they must submit to a direct taxation to meet the India territorial charges, in addition to paying the profit which the merchant will put on his tea and which if the trade is confined to few hands will be nearly as much as they pay as at present, without paying any direct tax.

It is said they will get their tea cheaper—this I am not so sure of—but I am quite sure they will get a much worse article. Competition is advantageous in many respects—but it almost invariably tends to deteriorate the quality of articles. Even with our monopoly we have very great difficulty in keeping up the quality of our teas. Anything said by Mr. [?Accram] is a joke, to the ingenuity of the Chinese at adulteration. The ground I feel disposed to take is [to] throw open the trade to China, but to retain the home supply of tea to the Company, but to let British merchants carry it anywhere else—and even to Canada where we take it at present—which trade I would give up. I would also do away all restrictions whatever on the trade to and from India, and do away with anything in our commercial regulations that gives the Company a preference over the merchant. A draft has passed the court with

reference to a despatch from Bengal accompanied by a note from Mr. Prinsep relative to the late commercial levies there and the aid afforded by government to the mercantile community. We had much discussion on the subject and difference of opinion. In the general tenor of the draft however I fully concur. The connection between our civil and military servants and also the government and the mercantile community is to me fraught with great danger. It crosses the financial operation of government on all occasions and in all directions.

Six principal houses carry on the trade and speculation in salt, opium and indigo, with very little capital of their own, but chiefly with the spare monies of our own servants and other Europeans who lend them for the sake of higher interest, and to some extent with native capital. Hence all our servants—and what is more all those holding confidential situations about you, have a decided interest in upholding these houses under all circumstances. Then again the fictitious high prices obtained for salt and opium depend on the welfare of these houses, and then the government are connected with them. The hold these houses then have both on the government and its servants must in the common course of things lead them to imprudent speculation—relying as they always have done on government aid, whenever things come to the worst. Hence the avowed difficulty of the government in raising money by loan, lest it should withdraw too much capital from the houses and endanger them. We shall not only all be ruined ourselves but the sales of salt and opium and hence the public revenue will also be seriously affected if these houses stop. This is in fact the common language, and to me it is an awful state of things. It exists however, but however desirable it may be to withdraw from it—great care and caution must be observed in withdrawing. Withdraw we must by degrees nevertheless. It is true that at present these houses are the principal medium of remittance to England, and that as long as this state of things exists, it is better for the merchants to carry on their concern with the monies of our servants and for our servants to trust them. I much wish therefore that we could afford to give our servants a remittance. The merchants must then provide capital elsewhere, and their dealings would be placed on a sounder footing.

You will hear enough of political events from other quarters, so I shall say little. The majority against the Test Act will perhaps surprise you. I was disposed to Mr. Canning's view on that question, and am still not satisfied even if it is carried through the Lords, that it will fulfil the expectations of its supporters, or help the Catholic question. Mr. Peel you will see cut a sorry figure in the house, or rather in walking out of it in a pet. It is evidently the Duke alone that keeps the administration together. I think well of him and the more so as he seems disposed to be liberal in his measures. . . .

Affairs in the east are in a ticklish state. The Turk is rousing the spirit of his people—when roused I fear some such act being committed either against Russia—or [*illeg.*] generally which may lead to war. The

result of war must I think see the dismemberment and division of European Turkey, and the driving the Turks back into Asia. This may affect you in India if the cause is taken up as is not unlikely by the whole Mussulman race—Mahomed established his religion by the sword and it may die sword in hand. Here is a speculation for you. At any rate the possibility of it is an additional reason for looking to the state of your army.

Adieu. I write again shortly.

7. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 6 March 1828.
Recd. 2 July 1828

My Lord,

I have the honour to address your Lordship by the Company ship *Earl of Balcarres* under date the 21 ultimo. I now avail myself of the opportunity which offers in the despatch of the *Thomas Coutts* for Bengal and China to forward a packet of private letters which have reached me to your Lordship's address and likewise the 3 and 4 numbers of the *Parliamentary Mirror*, which I shall continue to send until I shall receive your Lordship's wishes.

In consequence of a letter from the Earl of Gosford to Mr. Lindsay the court have granted permission to Mr. Spring Rice to proceed to Calcutta to join your Lordship in the capacity of private secretary in the room of Mr. Dobbs, whose licence to reside in India will consequently cease on Mr. Rice's arrival. This will be intimated to your Lordship officially in council. I know the court's adverting to parties who have accompanied former governors-general are adverse to the continuance of any person in the suite of the governor-general for whom there is not an avowed and ostensible office, and that under these circumstances they will look for the return of Mr. Dobbs to Europe, but I believe that gentleman is a barrister and it occurs to me that your Lordship might wish to allow him to try his fortune at the Calcutta bar. Should this be the case—the best mode will be for Mr. Dobbs to apply through the Bengal governor officially to the court of directors for leave to remain for the purpose of seeking admission by the bench and a private letter from yourself to the chairman would effect the object. I mention this, which tho' a trifling matter in itself, if not carried forward regularly may really create a misconception which it is desirable should be avoided.

The subject of Malwa is still undecided. The court's opinion I have already stated to your Lordship as strongly opposed to the administration of central India being placed in the hands of Sir John Malcolm separately or as governor-in-council of Bombay. The board entertains different sentiments: still they do not propose positively to say Sir John Malcolm is to have the charge, but leave it to the governor-general to

decide. Against this view the court will address the board so that some little time may still elapse before the matter is finally settled.

Despatches have been received from Bombay the latter end of September. It appears that a committee had been appointed somewhat like a committee of finance and that total reductions are contemplated to the extent of lakhs 15,48,456, an increase of revenue was also anticipated of 20 lakhs to accrue from additional duties, a portion on British imports. The whole would be subject to approval from home, being levied under the 25 section of the 53 Geo. 3, c. 155. I do not however believe that such sanction will be extended at least to a part.

The draft of an insolvent debtors bill sent home from India is now under consideration by the legal authorities in this country who are favourable to its provisions but no decided opinion has yet been given as to its ultimate adoption.

The points to which I have adverted as under discussion between the board and the court your Lordship will do me the favour to remain as private. I allude to them as your Lordship may like to know how matters of the moment are travelling here.

Another question of interest, is the succession by regimental rise to the rank of lieutenant colonel instead of that of major as at present. It has been discussed shortly but its consideration is deferred for the present as it seems to involve a material tho' perhaps an essentially advantageous departure from the system at present existing.

The subject of the connection with the Rajput states is under review: it will take some time to come to a clear understanding of all that has passed with the several numerous heads. It likewise involves the expediency of our continuing our connection, intimate as it must be, or of dissolving all intercourse or connection with those states. The latter course however desirable it might have been originally is now almost impossible.

The change in the directors takes place next month. The present chairmen will both go out. Mr. Astell is mentioned with Mr. Loch for the deputy.

I have already mentioned today that your Lordship's government will have a strong supporter in Mr. Marjoribanks,[1] who I am sure will be pleased with any communication your Lordship may at any time favourhi m.

There is nothing of any immediate moment or interest going forward but I shall with your Lordship's permission continue from time to time to renew my comments of what is in progress here.

7. [1] Marjoribanks, Campbell, Director 1807–40, Deputy and Chairman 1818–19, 1824–5, 1832–3, d. Sept. 1840.

8. *Court of directors on the administration of central India*

East India Board. 13 March 1828

Sir,

I have laid before the court of directors your letter dated the 26th ultimo returning the Bengal political draft No. 156 in which the board of commissioners have made essential alterations, and I am commanded by the court to request that you will submit to the board the following representation on the subject of those alterations. . . .

It is stated in the third paragraph of your letter as 'a circumstance not entirely to be disregarded that Sir John Malcolm, as the board have reason to believe, was greatly swayed in his acceptance of the government of Bombay by the expectation of having once more, some concern in the management of countries to which he had devoted so much care and attention'. The court have seen this statement with extreme surprise, and I am commanded to declare in their name, that neither by the court collectively, nor by the chairs individually were any expectations ever held out to Sir John Malcolm directly or indirectly or any encouragement given him to expect that he should in any capacity have any concern in the management of central India. On the contrary he was distinctly informed in a letter from the chairman written with the sanction of the court, and dated the 13th June last (the day on which he was sworn in) that he was to consider himself as appointed exclusively to the office of governor of Bombay. By whom Sir John Malcolm was encouraged to form the expectations alluded to in your letter, the court know not, but whether he formed them without any ground whatever or on insufficient grounds, the court feel it to be their bounden duty to submit their opinion to the board, that they should not be wholly excluded from the consideration of a great public question, the decision of which ought to rest, not upon personal but upon purely public grounds.

Indeed were personal considerations at all admissible on an occasion like the present, a circumstance has been brought to the knowledge of the court by their chairman to which they would be disposed to attach more importance, than to Sir John Malcolm's expectations. The last visit which the chairman received from Lord William Bentinck at the India House shortly before his Lordship left town for Plymouth, was made for the sole purpose of beseeching the chairman to endeavour to get a speedy and final decision on the question of central India passed in this country, and to prevent its being made matter of reference to the Bengal government. And the court have no difficulty in comprehending the motives by which the governor-general may have been actuated in so doing. It was natural for his Lordship to be desirous not to be placed in the unpleasant predicament either of disappointing Sir John Malcolm's wishes to be charged with the superintendence of central India, or of yielding to them at the risk of causing dissatisfaction throughout the Bengal service. For the court cannot entertain a doubt, that

the proceeding if adopted, would excite jealousy, at least in that service, and thus injuriously affect the public interests. If the governor-general had any reason to believe that Sir John Malcolm's views would be supported by the board, his Lordship's anxiety would naturally be the greater that the question should be finally disposed of at home. . . .

One of the grounds on which Sir John Malcolm's proposition is founded is the great distance of the several political stations in Malwa and Rajputana from Calcutta, and the long time which elapses between the dates of references to the supreme government and the receipt of the answers to such references. Although by vesting the superintendence of those countries in the Bombay government, something on ordinary occasions might be gained in point of expedition, yet, in all cases of importance, the inconvenience of delay would be increased, instead of being diminished. At present the references on important cases proceed direct to Calcutta from the political agents, who in like manner, receive directly the answers of the governor-general in council, whereas under the projected arrangement, the references must travel circuitously from central India nay even from Bhopal to Bombay, where the subject would undergo discussion and thence to Calcutta, to be discussed anew, and the orders of the supreme government, instead of being conveyed directly to the place of execution, would travel round by Bombay, thence to be forwarded to the local agents. Under such circumstances the control of the supreme government over the administration of central India would be merely nominal and on the proceedings of Sir John Malcolm when separated from his council and up the country there would be no check whatever.

It is observed in your letter that 'It can hardly be doubted that these countries ought occasionally to be visited by an English governor, and it is as little to be doubted, that the governor of Bombay can make the visit more conveniently and more cheaply than the governor-general'. The court can perceive no reason, why the various states of Rajputana should be visited by an English governor, in preference to the states of Nagpur and Hyderabad, or the countries belonging to Sindhia, and they believe that there are some of our own provinces and those too not less valuable and interesting than Malwa, on which that honour never has been conferred, and which notwithstanding have not suffered from, nor even felt the privation. The court with all submission feel bound to express their opinion that the business of the Bombay government is sufficiently arduous and extensive to occupy the time and attention of a man but regret that Sir John Malcolm should have formed so imperfect an estimate of the duties with which he is already entrusted as not to see how much the addition of other duties of so much extent and importance would impair his ability to discharge them well.

In regard to the relief alluded to in the conclusion of your letter which the governor-general would experience in being exempted from some details of correspondence, I am to remark that the court attach very little importance to it. It would be temporary like the arrangement itself

and the short-lived advantage would in the court's opinion be far more than outweighed by the inconvenience attendant on two separate changes of authority. . . .

9. *Board of control on the administration of central India*

India Board. 19 March 1828

Sir,

I have laid before the commissioners for the affairs of India, your letter of the 13th instant, containing the representation of the court of directors on the subject of the alterations in the Bengal political draft No. 156.

After a full consideration of the objections which have been urged by the court the board adhere to the opinion which they expressed in the altered draft.

The board admit that under the circumstances stated in your letter, the personal wishes of Sir John Malcolm may be disregarded in the decision, but the peculiar qualifications of that officer, constitute in the board's opinion, a public ground for the arrangement which they contemplate.

The board avow, that, in recommending it to the favourable consideration of the governor-general in council, they are actuated by a sincere persuasion that the influence which Sir John Malcolm has acquired, among the native chiefs and people of Malwa, and of the adjacent regions, will operate beneficially in establishing the conciliatory and moderate system of policy, which he has delineated in his letter of the 25th April 1827, to the chairman and deputy chairman of the East India Company.

As, however, it is possible that some practical objections to the proposed measure may exist, which neither the authorities in this country, nor Lord William Bentinck himself, while in England could duly appreciate; the board still think better to abstain from a positive order for the transference of the British interests in Malwa and Rajputana to the government of Bombay.

They willingly leave the question to the governor-general in council, not doubting but that his Lordship, though not unnaturally anxious to be freed from the responsibility of the decision, will decide rightly, after giving due weight to the considerations which suggest themselves on either side. . . .

I am therefore to desire that, in conformity with the provisions of the 13th section of the Act 33d Geo: 3d Cap 52, the draft, as altered by the board, may be forwarded to India without delay.

10. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck.* Confidential

London. 21 March 1828

My dear Lord William,

In my last I told you of the board's demur to the court's resolution not to transfer central India to Bombay. The *court* sent up a strong and nearly unanimous remonstrance against the view taken by the board, who however persist, and insist, under the power which they have—on our adopting their suggestion. The despatch therefore leaves it to you to make the transfer or not as your government may think right, but no additional expense is to be incurred beyond Sir John's travelling expenses on tour, either now or hereafter. The opinion of the court on the subject remains unchanged. I know no point on which they are so unanimous. I do not think there are two men in the court of a different opinion, and some of Sir John's warmest friends are against the measure. My own fancy and indeed conviction is that Wynn[1] committed himself to Malcolm and that the course resorted to is deemed necessary to redeem the pledge so irregularly made. Perhaps the Duke may have expressed a feeling on the subject, but I cannot believe that our present president approves of the measure.

Sir John we know is in bad health—and were it otherwise there is reason to believe he will not remain more than two or three years in India. Suppose therefore the transfer made, what can he do in so short a time—and when he comes away there must be a retransfer to Bengal for you cannot leave the country under the Bombay government with any other man at the head of it. Such frequent changes must be productive of infinite mischief—and under all circumstances I cannot think that you will be *councilled* to make the transfer. I wish nevertheless that no option had been left to you.

We have not yet decided the question about regimental promotion to the rank of colonel.

There is another awkward question before us. Sir William Rumbold[2] has applied for leave to return to India. The committee of correspondence have negatived the request. The court are to decide next Friday. I think they will do the same. The board nevertheless may give leave—that we cannot help—but I am so satisfied from what has passed that he would be a perpetual [blister] upon you—that I trust Lord Melville will do what I think right.

I have made acquaintance with Mr. Spring Rice and am much pleased with him. What a pretty business your [predecessors] have made about the bank charter. I always contended the new charter was illegal, but it seems to be thought that the old charter is still in being—from the

10. [1] Wynn, C. W. W., President of the India Board of Control, 7 Feb. 1822–7 Feb. 1828. See Philips, op. cit., pp. 230–61.

[2] Rumbold, Sir William. Lord Hastings had first taken him to India in 1813. Rumbold joined the Palmer brothers in forming a firm to develop resources in Hyderabad. In fact it lent money to the Nizam and defrauded him, and the Court of Directors recalled Rumbold. See Philips, op. cit., pp. 225–8.

surrender of it not having been formally accepted by the court. Virtually however I think it was accepted—and at any rate I suspect you will require an act of indemnity. The principle of mixing up the government and individuals in such a concern is all wrong, but you have a memorandum of mine on this point.

I write in great haste—it being late at night and I am off to Brighton in the morning. Lady William—and you if you have time to read it—will be delighted with Heber's journal.[3] I should mention that in the discussion about central India the particular request you made to the chairman—to have the point decided one way or other at home was alluded to—somewhat against my will—as I did not know or rather feared that you might not like to have it known you had made such a request.

11. *Bengal government on* sati

10 April 1828

Honourable Sirs,

We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your honourable court's despatch under date the 25th July 1827, and to transmit to your honourable court copies of the reports of suttees for the years 1825 and 1826, received from the court of nizamat adalat, together with copies of our resolutions passed thereon, and of various other documents on the same subject, recorded on our proceedings of the 6th ultimo.

2. For the opinions entertained by your late governor-general and the members of the board respectively, on the expediency of direct interference in suppressing the rite of suttee, we beg to refer your honourable court to the several minutes recorded on our proceedings.

3. It is justly observed by your honourable court, in the despatch under acknowledgment, that one of the difficulties attendant on the consideration of this question arises from the difference of opinion which prevails amongst the ablest of your public functionaries as to the safety of such interference; and when it is considered how many circumstances, independently of practical observation and knowledge of the native character, may influence them in forming their judgment on the subject, it becomes extremely difficult to decide on the degree of weight which should be attached to the sentiments of each individual, and still more so, which set of opinions should be allowed to preponderate.

4. Officers who have acquired their experience chiefly in one part of the country, from observing the frequent occurrence of suttees, are led to consider the evil to be of so crying a nature that it ought to be put down at all risks, while others in a different quarter, where the rite is

[3] Appointed Bishop of Calcutta, 1822–6, travelling in all parts of India, and publishing a *Narrative* in 1828.

rarely observed, think it scarcely deserving the hazard of interference. In some districts the dispositions of the people are prone to violence, and their minds easily excited; in others the apathy of their general character, and perfect submission to the will of their rulers, precludes any ground for apprehension that they would offer the slightest opposition to the orders of the local authorities.

5. On perusing the reports now transmitted, your honourable court will not fail to notice with satisfaction that the number of suttees in 1826 fell considerably short of that reported in any of the four preceding years, and we trust that the favourable results of that year warrant our expectation that the diminution may be progressive.

6. In submitting their report of suttees for the year 1827, the court of nizamat adalat have been directed to endeavour to ascertain the cause of any extraordinary discrepancies which the returns from the local officers may exhibit in the number of instances which may have taken place during that year in their respective districts, compared with other adjoining jurisdictions as well as the cause of the greater prevalence of the practice in the neighbourhood of Calcutta than in other parts of the country, in the hopes that such explanations may tend to facilitate our determination on the measures which it may be deemed expedient to adopt hereafter, should our expectation of a gradual diminution of suttees not be realized.

12. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck.* Confidential

Brighton. 14 April 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 22 September 1828

My dear Lord William,

In my last I told you that in spite of all the court could do and they were much in earnest and almost unanimous in what they did, the board had taken on itself to submit the case of Central India to the consideration and decision of your government. I am sorry for it on every account—and not the least on Sir John's—for it has placed him in an awkward situation with the court—who feel that he will care little for them—so long as he can force his wishes upon them by the paramount authority of the board and ministers. He will find however to his discomfort if he remains long in India that this sort of conduct will not answer.

By the exercise of similar power the board have permitted Sir W. Rumbold to return to India, against the wishes of the court—so that notwithstanding the abuse heaped upon Mr. Wynn for exercising his authority so often—it does not seem that we are likely to be better off under our new president. The question as to allowing regimental ranks to go on to lieutenant colonel has been taken out for the present, and the draft in which it was, passed the court without it. A despatch is gone to you

on the subject of the aid granted at different times by your government to the agency houses.[1] You are forbidden to do so again—and to let all parties know this. Some of my colleagues are quite alarmed at this, but I confess I think that the sooner the dependence of the merchants on such aid is put a stop to the better—and if they confine their speculations and money dealings within prudent bounds they cannot require it. I do not recollect anything else of moment.

The new chairs are settled as I told you, Mr. Astell and Mr. Loch. Mr. Pattison, otherwise worn out, has been attacked with paralysis and so has Sir George Robinson, and I should fear that neither of them will ever be efficient again. Some of our *young old men* therefore must soon come into play.

I have made an acquaintance with Mr. Spring Rice and given him for his amusement on the voyage a copy of all the selections we have had printed at the India House. The Hyderabad and Hastings papers etc. It is rumoured that Mr. Rice's family are much against his going out.

We have heard of your disastrous voyage to Teneriffe and I was much amused with the account Lord Gosford gave me of Lady William's quieting the alarms of the French females by putting a voyage to India in one scale and a nunnery at Madeira in another. The remainder of your voyage I think has made up for the untoward commencement of it. Would that Don Miguel had got your weather or even worse for he is upsetting everything in Portugal—our troops are all come home and the besotted fool may now play himself for a time in his own way. The Russians I think will march to the Danube and I hardly think they will stop there. The French are collecting a large force on the Mediterranean —found everywhere according to reports—but no one seems to know where. I cannot help fancying that they are to get Cuba in payment of the Spanish debt to them, and there may be secret article binding the French to assist Spain in recovering South America. The present distracted state of these new governments renders such an arrangement not improbable certainly. It seems to be supposed here that we are to keep out of war let what will happen, and that our foreign policy is to be changed altogether. There are certainly indications to that effect which have no doubt done us harm on the Continent, but I cannot think it will be so.

I am now as regards public duty an idle man but I am collecting materials for a life of Sir Thomas Munro[2]—and though out,[3] shall I dare say have many calls upon me from the India House—so that I shall not die of idleness.

The great question you will have to solve is how far the revenue of India can be made to pay the expenses—and the home charges on

12. [1] The Agency Houses were private firms originally established to facilitate the transfer of money from India on behalf of private individuals. See Introduction, *p. xxxvii.*

[2] Munro, Sir Thomas, 1761–1827. One of the most famous of the Company's servants. Governor of Madras, June 1820–July 1827. *D.N.B.*

[3] That is, out of the Direction by rotation, which happened to each Director every fourth year.

account of India—given the end of China trade profits—and not for a year or two—but permanently. You will be puzzled I think even with our commercial profits to make both ends meet unless you set a finance committee to work. Great expectations are held out from the one here but I suspect we shall all be much disappointed. Nothing has happened yet to occasion much opposition in Parliament and this session may pass over without much, but a wary eye is kept on the Duke and the first false step he takes we shall have a fine noise. The court will look with extreme jealousy and suspicion at every move made by or in favour of Sir William Rumbold—you must recollect this.

I am collecting materials for a life of Sir Thomas Munro—his character and opinion on all matters of government—should you fall in with anything that may assist, pray let me have it—his public correspondence I have access to of course but any of his private letters or other papers would be extremely valuable.

13. *Sir John Malcolm to Charles Wynn.* Private. Copy

Bombay. 19 April 1828

My dear Sir,

. . . I am almost led to believe from a private letter from the India House that the proposed plan of employing me in central India is likely to be abandoned. I should hope not. Every thing I have seen or heard satisfies me more than ever I was before of its necessity, and this as much on grounds of economy as of policy. But the secretaries at Calcutta will probably succeed in convincing Lord Wm. Bentinck of the contrary as I imagine they did Lord Amherst. Divide and rule is the maxim of these office men as it is of many others. They hate large and concentrated authority, and until the system is changed, every governor-general must be, to a certain extent, in their hands and govern India much tho' perhaps unconsciously influenced by the feelings and prejudices of that presidency to which he more particularly belongs. Lord Wellesley was the only man that ever overleapt this boundary. He not only visited other countries but he called round him those whom he thought possessed most knowledge from every presidency in India. I hope Lord William Bentinck will do something similar; but the government of the Empire must be disconnected with that of a presidency.

I have, I confess, little hope that my request to be appointed provisional successor to the governor-general will meet attention. It is under circumstances, only a feather, but it is one I should prize. In the last conversation I had with Mr. Canning he told me that he thought it an object of fair ambition and reasonable expectation. When I mentioned my intention of writing to you upon the subject he observed he thought I was right in doing so. I mention this fact as a reason why the object dwelt more in my mind than it otherwise would have done.

I am labouring hard in every department, and I trust you will be satisfied nothing is neglected. My health is excellent, but still I rejoice that six months of the three years I propose to stay are past; nothing will detain me beyond that date, but emergencies that are not likely to arise or a prospect of further advancement in public life which, without such emergencies, is still more improbable.

This resolution accords with what I told you in England, and I regret to say it accords with my age—comfortable as I am in family and in circumstances, I shall feel that I have no business to be in India after I am three score! I may still however be able to do you some good in England, and in the year 1831 I shall expect to find you very busy with plans for the future administration of this Empire.

You will regret occurrences at Madras. I have seen Sir Thos. Munro's papers public and private till within a few days of his death, and you may depend upon two facts, first, that his extraordinary mind preserved its full vigour to the last moment, and secondly that you are safe in maintaining every measure he proposed. I am sick of the narrow and prejudiced views of many of his opponents. His ryotwar system like that of village settlements acted upon liberally must raise the frugal and industrious cultivators. The general objections are theoretical. The best grounded is that against the whole of a village being made responsible for every individual. This is called making the honest and industrious answer for the dishonest and idle, but before decision upon a general maxim of rule, we must refer to the peculiar conditions of the society it affects. Villages in India are families the members of which have ties and obligations towards each other unknown to other communities. Besides, the state in every system must have security for its revenues, and this, according to all my experience, is the least objectionable mode of obtaining it. The ryotwar and village settlements is in most parts of India that of native states. The minister of the prince makes over countries to bankers, or rich men who advance the whole or part of the revenue. The banker employs or settles with a renter or manager, who in his turn settles with heads of villages or ryots. Where a raja, thakur or zamindar exists, he is maintained in authority, and a settlement with him is made for the lands to the administration of which he has a hereditary right, but such chiefs or heads though allowed to remain on the soil on which they have claims, and to aid in the rule of the inhabitants with whom they have influence, are when extinct, never fabricated nor constituted as part of the system of the government. On the contrary, they are always deemed as a part of it which would be an evil from what they consume of the revenue, were it not that their claims, ties and connections make them essential to the popularity of the state, useful, if conciliated, in preserving the local peace, and dangerous to it if outraged or displaced. What similarity have such a grade in the Indian community to our manufactured zamindars, whom we create from a sense of policy, and destroy from a sense of justice? We grant or sell them lands unknown to the purchaser, and in which he has perhaps not one tie or

connection. We give him certain immunities and at small cost, he becomes our middle man, but as such he may and does cause us loss with little if any benefit to himself, for we have armed those below him with *statutes at large* by the good aid of which they can keep him for years out of revenue which is justly his due and which we can recover from him by summary process! Nothing substantially good can arise out of such a system, and the state can never be repaid for the revenue it has sacrificed to establish and maintain it, nor has it nor can it ever realize one delusive hope of simplifying by such means its fiscal administration. We are told that the ryotwar system is calculated to make and preserve a population of paupers. I deny the assertion on the ground of experience. I have known individual cultivators in provinces under native states where this system prevails, rise in fifteen years from two to seventy ploughs and I am glad to find from Mr. John Sulivan that in the large countries under his management in the southern parts of the Madras territories, there are many and increasing examples of men rising to wealth and consequence by the natural means of cultivating that land on which they were born.

With respect to raising natives both in the fiscal and judicial line, I am of the same sentiments as Sir Thomas Munro. I desire not only to maintain princes and chiefs whom we find existing over the lands ruled by their forefathers, and to encourage cultivators to become proprietors, but I desire to share the aristocracy of office with the natives of India. There may be some hazard in their admission, but there is much more in their exclusion. We have yet made a very timid beginning. We have amins it is true, but on this side there is not one from whom an appeal does not lie to a stripling three or four years from college. We must go a step beyond this or we can do no good. Men must have charge and responsibility; they must be accountable to none but the highest authorities in the country, or they will never attain that self importance and that dignity of individual character which we are labouring to give them through the means of our schools and colleges. These should be shut up forthwith unless we mean to give more scope for the lessons and the knowledge we are imparting.

What I have stated is little short of treason with a great proportion of the public servants of this country, and I may include among this number some of the most sensible and respectable of those in the judicial line. I am far from thinking these able and liberal men are influenced by other than the most conscientious motives, but I must think they have, from the pursuits of their lives, impressions in favour of established forms and proceedings which, when united with the feelings and opinions of the natives by whom they are immediately surrounded, prevent their minds from viewing this question as one that must be judged by considerations affecting the whole Empire not by its effects on any one district or province. These gentlemen on whom I pass this opinion probably deplore the bias which a too general education has made upon my mind, and the unfortunate propensity it has given me to disturb the

long established order of things, for to hear them speak of changes *we have introduced within the last ten years*, you would suppose that an effort to revert to usages sanctioned by as many centuries evinced a spirit of innovation ! ! !

You will hear later accounts than we have of Persia. Our last letters are dated the 31st of January when there appeared again a prospect of peace being concluded, and the Russians recrossing the Araxes. This will crown the extraordinary efforts of Lieut. Col. Macdonald,[1] and I shall be much disappointed if his conduct throughout does not meet with both approbation and reward. It has raised his character, and, what is of much more consequence, it has raised the character of his country. If Paskievitch retires to the left bank of the Araxes, the fall of the throne of Persia will not be immediate, but it will be nevertheless certain. The advance of the Russians in that quarter will be impelled by events that must have this effect unless she is prevented by a stronger motive than a dread of the arms of Persia. I do not desire to speculate upon futurity, but if anything serious should occur requiring our arming, pray consider me as thirty not verging to three score. I shall go wild in such a case if I was not employed.

14. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 9 May 1828

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship by the regular Madras Bengal ships out of London—Nos. 12 and 13 of the *Parliamentary Mirror* and sundry private letters which have reached me.

Since my last letter the ship *Minerva* with the first remittance of treasure amounting to 23 lakhs has arrived.

By the present despatch a letter is sent in the political department on the subject of employing European officers with the troops of native powers. The court refer to their letter to the political department of the 21st January 1824 and state that the opinion therein conveyed remains unchanged. Such opinion is wholly adverse to the employment of such persons. The despatch intimates that positive orders will be sent out to the military department. That despatch is not yet finally settled. It permits parties appointed therein to the 21st January 1824 to remain but desires the removal of those who have been appointed since the date of that despatch and who are mentioned on the returns from Bengal of the 27th July 1826. . . .

It is likewise proposed that hereafter no European officer not belonging to the Company's service shall be permitted to hold a commission in the service of any native prince or power nor be employed in any native corps in the Company's service. No officer is to be appointed to the service of a native power who has not served 4 years with his corps, nor

13. [1] Macdonald, Lieut.-Col. Sir John, 1782–1830, British envoy to Persia, 1824–30. *D.N.B.*

to remain with such power after he attains in his own corps the rank of major. The government is to frame regulations as to the pay to be drawn by such officers when so employed.

In a public despatch Dr. Bryce is to be directed to devote himself to his clinical duties and to abandon all concern in newspapers as is Major Surgeon Grant who appears to have been subsequently connected with it.

Reports say that Mr. Spring Rice is to succeed Lord Palmerston who goes to Jamaica as governor. I believe it to be quite settled that Mr. Rice does not proceed to India since I last addressed your Lordship.

The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts has passed the Lords and Commons. His Majesty's decision is not yet given.

Last night Sir F. Burdett brought forward the Catholic question; and Mr. Brougham seconded the motion for a committee of the whole house on the subject. The debate was adjourned till today.

The chancellor of the exchequer last night gave notice of his intention on Monday next to call the attention of the house to the expediency of making provision for the family of the late Mr. Canning.

The insolvent debtors bill sent home from India [i.e. Calcutta] is now with the law officer of the crown and Company preparatory to being submitted to parliament this session: also the bill for reviewing the criminal law in India and a bill to give martial law for the Bombay service.

15. *S. R. Lushington*[1] *to Bentinck.* Copy

Madras. 14 May 1828

My dear Lord William,

I sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival, and I extend that congratulation to all of us interested in the Company's welfare, and the good government of their affairs.

I was fortunate in making my landing good here the very day before the monsoon began, after a voyage of three months and ten days.

I have found everything as I expected, except one of the council and the chief secretary—Mr. Graeme[2]—has proved himself a very fair (or should I say, foul) copy of your former plague Mr. Oakes[3]—more pompous, less talent, and much more obstinate and offensive. Fortunately his time in the council expires next month and we shall all feel it as great relief to get rid of him. From Sir George Walker[4] and Mr. Ogilvie I have received the most cordial assistance and since we changed our intriguing secretary we have gone on very satisfactorily.

15. [1] Lushington, Stephen Rumbold, 1776–1868, I.C.S., service in Madras under Bentinck. Governor of Madras, Oct. 1827–Oct. 1832.
[2] Graeme, Henry Sullivan, I.C.S., had been acting Governor before Lushington's arrival.
[3] Oakes, Sir Henry, 1756–1827, formerly Military Auditor General, Madras.
[4] Walker, Sir George, 1764–1842, C.-in-C. Madras, 1826–31.

The general state of these territories and of all India is peaceful and productive. It has been my chief care since my arrival to reduce all avoidable expense, and we have thence succeeded in bringing our charges below our income—a state of things unknown here for many years past. We have besides sent home thirty lakhs of bullion according to the wishes of the supreme government; and are providing a full investment, so that I think our honourable friends in Leadenhall will be satisfied with our supplies, both of coins and cloths.

What frightful changes have happened since you bade me a kind adieu in Berkeley Square. Remembering Lady William's preference of this house, but not then imagining she would ever revisit it, I have made it all ready for her Ladyship's reception and she will find it quite prepared for her. I shall occupy the Marine Villa upon the brink of the sea, which you will have discovered from the roads.

The death of poor Sir Thomas Munro in July last, you will no doubt have heard before you sailed. It has been the source of much trouble to me in remedying the mischief of Mr. Graeme's interregnum, but it is now happily over, and our ancient institutions are safe from further inroads. By the bye I should mention that my first cause of dissatisfaction with him was his persevering determination to reimpose the tax upon the pepper vines in Malabar which you wisely abolished in 1806, and for the renewal of which no man has ever since opened his mouth, but the said Mr. Graeme. However I extinguished this project which he had taken the opportunity of his temporary powers to reinflict upon the peculiar people of Malabar against the collector's earnest remonstrances through the board of the revenue and nothing now can revive it but the command of your Lordship, the governor-general, which I hope never to receive.

If I had not an equal dread of the surf and the sun I would have visited you in the seas, but I am sure you will have the goodness to excuse this and let my aide-de-camp know at what hour you prefer to land and everything shall be ready to receive you with due honour, my dear Lord, and to convey you to the Garden House—

P.S. I keep this letter ready, lest you should come upon us in the night. This, my dear Lord, is copy of one which I am very sorry you are not to receive first at Madras; but it will at least show that I was heartily prepared for you.

16. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Bombay. 26 May 1828
Recd. Kedgeree. 2 July 1828

I had some private letters by the *Duneira* which arrived yesterday as late as the 3rd of January by which I learn you had not then left England but were about to sail.

I enclose you copies of two private letters despatched this morning to Mr. Wynne and the chairman. They will show how matters are here. I have reason to think nothing satisfactory seems concluded about central India. I have only to entrust your Lordship will not have a moment's uneasiness about any question that is personal to me. My only wish is that I may be spared any partial concern with the affairs of that quarter and this is grounded on a conviction that I might do harm and could do little good even by my advice—for it is not on the general principles but the details that the success of such arrangements must depend. 'I have no opinion (Burke said) of your swaggering majors, having ever found the truth lurk in the little men or circumstances.' Besides in countries like central India the mode of carrying plans into execution is often of more consequence than their substance.

The Bengal gentlemen have misconceived my minute upon the affairs of Bagdad. They thought I recommended plans that would have incurred cost. I never did as they will be informed. I was willing for the sake of good feeling to give the Pasha—*play things* in the form of—arms artificers—provided he paid for them but never expecting as I stated the slightest good from such supplies beyond the proof they afforded him of our friendship. I never could recommend such useless expenditure.

Your Lordship will be happy to learn on your arrival that peace has been concluded between Russia and Persia. Though it may not be of long continuance it is still an event of great benefit. Had it not been made, the present king would certainly have lost his throne and the Russians have been advanced to a position from which I trust they are now some years distant. I cannot convey to your Lordship an adequate idea of my impression of the conduct of Lt. Col. MacDonald on this trying occasion. I learn some of the Calcutta politicians think he made the king succumb too early. They know little of the subject that entertain such opinions, but Col. MacDonald is no favourite with some of these gentlemen who disapproved of Lord Amherst's choice, but he has done high honour to his Lordship's judgment and I am proud of him as one of my pupils. Another of my school (of whom I am equally vain) Major Stewart sailed for the Cape this morning. He will return about October or November and will be highly prized by you. He preserves temper and peace wherever he is employed and maintains instead of destroying the little rank and consequence we have left in the native population of India.

With my manly and virtuous friend Sir Charles Metcalfe your Lordship will be much pleased. . . .

P.S. You must have left affairs in England internal and external in a very unsatisfactory state—but if it were not for difficulties we should all go to sleep.

Enclosure No. 1. *Sir John Malcolm to J. Pattison*

Bombay. 24 May 1828

I thought I should have answered your letter received by the China ships by this opportunity but they are not yet arrived.

Matters go on very well, we are most busy with our reductions and we shall I trust satisfy you that we are not behind our neighbours in our efforts to meet the difficulties of your finance. I have some hopes of increasing our revenue, and every pains shall be taken to prevent its deteriorating.

I have been obliged to establish the stamp duty on suits below 100 rupees—the exemption was a favourite measure of Mr. Elphinstone[1] but had he been here I am sure he would have agreed both in the necessity and expediency of its repeal. The loss of revenue was very considerable, litigation in small causes was greatly increased and every kind of roguery and collusion was resorted to in order to evade the stamp duty.

The sequestration of the territories of Baroda is completed. There was neither opposition nor disturbance. Every one appears satisfied regarding the necessity of the measures, and as the local authorities remain as before there is no change except that of accounting to us for the revenue instead of the Gaikwar. Some of the farmers may desire to quit, but they will be replaced by natives, and no Europeans whatever will be introduced into the administration, this will enable us to give these districts back when the debts for which we are security are paid without the embarrassment of one of these positive or implied pledges which would attend their restoration under any other arrangement. Many may think I deprive the inhabitants of these countries of the benefits of English rule, judges, collectors, regulations etc. etc. etc. but those who are most partial to our system could not desire it as a temporary expedient, and believing in this view to be bad I had no alternative but that of leaving matters as they were, or appointing superintendents as at Hyderabad and not seeing much good in the latter expedient, beyond that of serving my friends, I did not give it a second thought.

You will hear much of the question of our monopoly of Malwa opium. The revenue it involves is very considerable. The good name lost according to Sir C. Metcalfe (no incompetent judge) is greater than any pecuniary gain can warrant, but what I doubt is the practicability of our long carrying on this profitable concern. You will however hear enough of this subject from other quarters. If I am not to go to central India I shall for many reasons desire to avoid any mixture of my opinions with those entrusted with the administration. What are accepted as benefits under one system, became evils under another, and I am no friend to patchwork.

16. [1] Elphinstone, Mountstuart, 1779–1859, one of the most famous of the Company's servants, Governor of Bombay, Nov. 1819–Nov. 1827. *D.N.B.*

Your friend Mr. Bridgeman whom I like much will keep you informed upon all legal questions. You will ere long have some strong line to draw. There cannot continue to exist in such distant possessions two kings of Brentford—you will have to choose. In extreme cases, and such will occur, either governors must have power to transport judges, or judges have power to hang governors. Do not pass this latter law till I am safe at home.

Enclosure No. 2. *Sir John Malcolm to Charles Wynn*

Bombay. 24 May 1828

Nothing of any consequence has occurred since my last of 19th ultimo.

You will see our correspondence with the supreme government on financial subjects and you will, I trust, recognize as just the principles we have assumed. We are making progress with our reductions, and my labours have been latterly directed to a subject (that of nazarana or offerings on succession or appointments to office) that will, I trust, enable us to preserve some of the old landed aristocracy of India, and not look to its total extinction as desirable, from the supplies it brings to our exhausted treasuries. I trust by next ship to send you the paper, which has cost me much trouble, but from which I must anticipate the most beneficial effects both financial and political.

We have been disappointed respecting the arrival of Lord William Bentinck, and must conclude he has not sailed before January. He will find much to do upon his arrival and amongst other difficult tasks, one of much importance will be the settlement of the question of Malwa opium—a subject on which Sir Charles Metcalfe and Mr. Wellesley are in the extreme of opposition. Many references have been made to me; but unless it becomes a duty, it is a subject upon which I must decline entering. It depends on too many details and embraces too large interests to be superficially treated. Our financial condition is not one that can warrant our hazarding the amount produced by this monopoly. At the same time we may pay too dear for it, and after all be unabled to carry it through. The practicability of this measure is what I doubt, smuggling has increased, is increasing, and will increase. But I shall not anticipate by my crude remarks the full and conflicting opinions you will receive on this subject.

I shall be anxious for your sentiments on late proceedings at Madras, as far as they relate to the question at issue regarding the native juries. Lushington gave me a perusal of his minute, and I enclose a copy of my private letter to him upon the subjects, my opinions upon this question are not shaken by that of the host of judges to whom he has referred. These gentlemen appear all of the same sentiment as to the unfitness of the natives and the excellence of the present system; of which they and Mr. Lushington appear to think a native jury would be subversive. I confess I cannot view it in that light. The jury, when it operated well,

would be an aid to our system, and it would be a concession to the natives calculated I think to improve and elevate them. It would, as far as the natives are concerned, be no innovation but reverting to an ancient usage to temper our great and unprecedented innovations! After what has passed, however, I shall doubt the success of this system at a presidency where the governor and all the principal judges have condemned it by anticipation. I shall be glad if you give the latitude to introduce this measure, circumstances are more favourable to it; and I myself do not entertain a doubt of its success. A very able native in the Deccan, to whom I explained Sir Thomas Munro's minute, added, 'There would be an advantage beyond what is stated. The natives at large would recognize more than they do now the justice of the sentences passed upon them. They at present think men are imprisoned, transported, or hanged because it is *sahib ke khooshee* (master's pleasure) and beneficial to the sirkar or government; but when they see their countrymen and persons of the same caste sifting a case, and passing judgment, individual guilt would be more acknowledged than it now is.' Mr. Dunlop the session judge at Poona was sitting by me, and quite assented to the truth of this observation.

Our Baroda sequestration is completed without the slightest opposition or disturbance. This I impute in a great degree to our leaving every man in his place. There have been as yet no changes of authorities beyond that from the prince to the English government as superiors. If the farmers refuse to continue in charge, we must get others; but all shall be native administration during our short occupation of these provinces. Our half and half interference in such rule is in my mind of all measures the worst. It is good for nothing that ever I could discover except to create jobs, and to destroy our local reputation.

Syaji[2] has issued a counter proclamation. It is the manufacture of Bombay, and meant for the London market. He has placarded it at Baroda and over his territories, and sent it, the resident states, to Calcutta and Benares. I shall take little if any notice of it; but go on treating this deluded prince with every kindness and consideration that is possible. When he finds all the hopes held out by the rogues here are fallacious, and that he has been plundered of the money by fellows who have fed him with lies regarding the power and intention of his Majesty's supreme court; he will revert to his former feeling and allegiance. In the meantime it is satisfactory to know that every branch of the family of which he is the unworthy representative are pleased with our proceedings, and not only consider them as most moderate, but as evincing our resolution to alienate no part of the territories of the Gaikwar state. This impression is, I am happy to state, quite general and to it we owe the quiet and hitherto successful operation of our arrangements.

We all go on very harmoniously; but I shall soon have occasion to write you very fully regarding the increasing pretensions as to the limits

[2] Syaji, Rao II, ruler of Baroda, 1818–47.

of the jurisdiction of the supreme court. If that extends in any form to an interference with our fiscal administration or our zillah jurisdiction, the government cannot go on. Our regulations are already almost treated as bye-laws; and our collectors and judges will in time fear to act upon them. Depend upon it, this is not a subject upon which it will much longer answer to temporize. It must be fairly looked at, and if it is good that his Majesty's judges should have more extended authority, let it be openly and decidedly granted. It will be understood: which will in some degree take from the evils that result from the undefined nature of the present powers of the court.

My late visit to the raja of Satara was very satisfactory. That connection works well: and it is quite refreshing to me to be in a country in which there is even the appearance of native rank. If my projected plan of nazerana answers, I shall give equal stability to some of our other Deccan families which an attack of cholera on the person of their representative would at present annihilate.

We have had much discussion lately about our sadar court, which, it is thought, ought to be brought from Surat to Bombay. This arrangement Mr. Elphinstone contemplated and is no doubt desirable, as the southern Maratha countries appear certain to be annexed to this presidency. The difficulty has been to effect the arrangement without increase of expense, but this will, I should hope, be done.

17. *Holt Mackenzie to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 27 May 1828

I have the honour of returning Mr. Graeme's memorandum, with a note of a few thoughts that have been suggested by its perusal. I have not the slightest doubt of the expediency of giving better pay to our native officers. But it seems to me to be even more important that all who are to be other than the mere executors of orders, should be, as far as possible, chosen from the people and selected with a reference to their wishes. I likewise enclose a statement of the tributes and rents collected by officers who would fall within the scope of Sir John Malcolm's scheme, supposing it to extend to Jaipur, Ajmer, and Jodhpur. The territories of Saugor and the districts on the higher part of the Narbada, which pay a revenue of between 28 and 29 lakhs are not included in his plan. Your Lordship will perceive that the tracts under the immediate management of British officers in Malwa and Rajputana are not of any great extent or importance. They are managed in the same way as the Delhi and Narbada provinces: the superintendents exercising the powers of civil and criminal judges, magistrates and collectors, under the control of residents at Indore and Delhi and the governor-general's agent at Saugor respectively. By far the most important however of the duties which belong to the local agents are those which relate to the different

states and petty chiefs under our protection or guarantee. They are not only very numerous; but their possessions seem to be so scattered and intermingled as to render unavoidable the frequent interference of the British authority: or advice and mediation which is perhaps not less authoritative. Some further regulation of functions so essentially judicial, seems to be even more necessary than a code for the non-regulation provinces, in which most of what is useful of the printed code is virtually enforced. But the transfer to Bombay, besides involving a double change calculated to disturb the minds of the people, would not seem to be a measure likely to promote the public service: and the orders of the court appear to be repugnant to Sir John Malcolm's main design of having a strong and largely trusted government in central India. Indeed, if a new presidency were thought of (and Bengal has certainly swelled out of all reasonable limits) Delhi or Agra would I think naturally suggest themselves as the seats of government. The latter especially is central to all points requiring prompt attention—the Sutlej frontier—Malwa and Rajputana—Bharatpur—Sindhia—Bundelkhand—Rohilkhand and Oudh. It is easy of access on all sides. To the west and north-west communication by means of camels is very rapid. Little is wanting to the construction of carriage roads. There is already a good road across the Doab and to Delhi, Karnal and Ludhiana: a branch to the hills could be made without difficulty and at little expense. The climate is dry and healthy. Natives of the south do not seem to suffer even by the heat of the north-west nor does the change of diet to the other food, on which the lower orders there subsist, appear to be injurious—whereas natives of the north-west suffer greatly when brought into a moist climate: and the change to a rice diet when they enter Bengal, for the climate of which they have a horror, is frequently hurtful. The approach to Bombay from the other side of the Vindhya and Satpura ranges I believe to be still most difficult and dangerous. The establishment of a government at Agra, within 24 hours run of Delhi on the one side and of Gwalior on the other and close to Bharatpur, would probably supersede the necessity of maintaining a considerable portion of the existing establishments in the political department. And it might seem for the fertile and populous districts of our western provinces, a better administration of justice than can I fear be expected from a sadar court and board stationed in Calcutta. Now a government in Malwa and Rajputana would apparently add much to our expenses with comparatively limited advantage. But I have many apologies to make for intruding upon your Lordship these crude and hasty thoughts. My sentiments on the whole matter amount merely to this: that I should be heartily glad to see Sir John Malcolm in authority as a governor of central India; but I should not less lament the transfer to Bombay of the most difficult and important branch of the supreme court.

18. *Court of directors on the army half-batta allowances*[1] *to Bengal government, 28 May 1828*

2. We now reply to your separate military letter of 6th January 1825, but must previously observe that the very desultory and unconnected manner in which it is written has laid us under the inconvenient necessity of collating and referring to several paragraphs widely distant from each other, before we could collect and concentrate the several observations relating to the topics respectively discussed in it.

3. We desire attention to this remark in your future correspondence in this department.

4. We must also advert in terms of great displeasure to the general style and tone of comment upon our despatch of 25th November 1823 which pervades the letter now before us, in which the relative situation of your government and of the home authorities seems to have been entirely overlooked; and we must express our particular disapprobation of the conduct of your military secretary in presuming to address to you a formal memorial against the execution of a principal part of our orders as contained in the despatch above mentioned.

5. We are of opinion that we should but ill discharge our public duty if we omitted to remark a very objectionable characteristic of the despatch now before us, which, while it purports to be a reply to our instructions respecting the whole Indian army, chiefly confines itself to that part of our orders affecting the army of Bengal.

6. This fault in your mode of treating our orders is strikingly apparent in regard to the reductions prescribed by us in the allowances of the Bengal officers. These reductions form an essential part of the arrangement for equalizing the allowances of the three armies; a measure so important in all its bearings upon the future prosperity of India, and so well calculated to obviate the difficulties which heretofore have obstructed the junction of troops of different presidencies employed against a common enemy, that we should have thought the mere statement of our views would have been sufficient to ensure not only your attention but your most zealous co-operation.

7. If you had considered our orders in this light, it would probably have occurred to you that the Bengal, as the more favoured of the three armies in respect of allowances, was necessarily subjected to reductions from which the inferior footing of the other armies exempted them. Notwithstanding this, our plan of equalization went no further in reducing the emoluments of the Bengal officers than appeared absolutely necessary, in as much as the equalization was limited to field allowances, and a very large proportion of the Bengal officers were still left in receipt of full-batta in garrison and cantonments; and tho' a portion of the officers of Madras and Bombay were also continued in receipt of full

18. [1] This despatch takes up the question of reducing the allowances of the Bengal army—the half-batta question. Bentinck's attempt to obey his instructions caused grave trouble. See Introduction pp. xix–xxi.

batta, yet these were generally stationed with subsidiary and field forces beyond the frontier, and constituted but a very small proportion of the establishments to which they belonged.

8. In regard to the particular case of reduction against which your objections are urged with the greatest force, you have left it to us to remind you that notwithstanding that a very small proportion of the Bengal officers would have sustained some loss in their garrison allowances by the reduction of the three stations of Barrackpore, Berhampore and Dinapore from full to half-batta, the *whole* of the officers of the Madras establishment when marching, or in the field, will, under the operation of the same order, be upon a lower scale of allowance than before. Before therefore you recommended us to relinquish this part of our plan, which, considered in the light of a permanent regulation, constituted an essential feature of the new arrangement, you should have been prepared to offer some suggestion as to the mode of dealing with the case of the Madras officers who, tho' still left on an inferior footing in respect to their garrison, sustained a positive loss in respect to their field allowances.

9. The principle of equalization being admitted your objections to the reduction prescribed by us in the allowances of certain division, brigade and regimental staff is also liable to this remark, that the reasoning in your despatch is against the execution of an order which could not with propriety be relinquished unless you were prepared to recommend an equivalent increase to the corresponding appointments at Madras and Bombay, and to the still stronger objection of resisting the execution of an order which did not affect the allowances of which any officer was actually in receipt, while it could scarcely be known upon what individual the retrenchment would ultimately fall; in as much as the successors would obtain the appointments when they became vacant, as a matter of favour, and would be disposed to consider themselves as fortunate even if they could obtain them upon the reduced scale.

. . . . . .

19. We have further to observe, in reference to your observations respecting the reintroduction of half-batta at the presidency, Berhampore and Dinapore stations, that those stations were originally half-batta stations and the only half-batta stations in the Bengal provinces and the argument that the officers of the Bengal army would consider the re-establishment of half-batta at those stations as only a precursor to its extension to other military posts is altogether gratuitous, and we believe unfounded; whilst the justness of the principle that a difference should always subsist between cantonment and field allowances cannot be controverted.

20. Upon a full reconsideration of our orders on this subject comprised in our letter of November 1823, we direct that the presidency, Berhampore and Dinapore stations be considered half-batta stations from the time of your receipt of this despatch. . . .

19. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

India House, London. 29 May 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 5 October 1828

My Lord,

By the ship *Lord Hungerford* we are making up a packet for Bengal and I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship no. 16 of the *Parliamentary Mirror* and likewise the copy of a work by Capt. Ross on steam navigation. It is a subject which I believe interests your Lordship and I understand that professional men entertain a high opinion of Capt. Ross's views on the question.

Your Lordship will learn tho' perhaps not with much surprise that further changes are in progress in the cabinet. Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Charles Grant,[1] Mr. Lamb, and Lords Dudley and Palmerston have resigned. Sir George Murray it is reported is the new secretary for the colonies in the room of Mr. Huskisson.

The bills drawn on the Company by Col. Macdonald for £100,000 in liquidation of the treaty of 1813 under which we are bound to pay Persia 200,000 toman annually when she was engaged in war have been presented and accepted here.

Nothing of any immediate interest has passed since I last addressed your Lordship. The house of commons meets again tomorrow where the insolvent debtors bill, the criminal law bill and the real estate bill—will be brought before them. They all relate to India and will I think be passed this session.

The court of proprietors which met yesterday resolved that the whole of the papers regarding the disgraceful affair of the sale of a cadetship should be printed for the information of the public. When out I will have sent a copy for your Lordship's perusal.

20. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private

Bombay. 3 June 1828

My dear Lord William

I have already written you about Lt. Col. MacDonald. His efforts have been most extraordinary and were at last crowned with success. The Russians have evacuated Azerbaijan and to our envoy's character and talent we owe them not being advanced six or seven hundred miles nearer India than they now are. Of the consequence of these events I shall shortly have to record my sentiments and I shall not therefore trouble you with them at present.

You will find on your arrival a question regarding Lt. Colonel

19. [1] Grant, Charles, Lord Glenelg, 1778–1866, son of the Director of the same name, President of the India Board, 6 Dec. 1830–20 Dec. 1834. *D.N.B.*

MacDonald's accounts and however little it can be expected that your Lordship should enter upon such subjects in their detail I do hope that consideration for an individual who has rendered his country an essential service will induce you to make yourself master of this question that you be enabled to render justice to a public servant whose private feelings and personal interests have been alike injured by the manner in which he has been treated. I do think if your Lordship has time to examine into this transaction you will hold Lt. Col. MacDonald justified in every expense he has incurred by the extraordinary emergencies of the moment for which the rules for ordinary times cannot be expected to provide. I do confess it fills my mind with disgust when I reflect on the wealth and titles which have been acquired by men on the same scene who have given all their attention to promote their private interests, to see a man who never gave a thought to his personal concerns but who devoted himself to those of his country so treated. Lt. Col. MacDonald's accounts have I believe been referred home in the lump to the directors and this may prevent their being now taken up at Calcutta but their final settlement, as well as his continuing to defray charges from his small private fortune that are I think strictly public, depends on you.

There is a short private history connected with his appointment. He was recommended by me to Lord Amherst, who nominated him contrary to the advice of Mr. Swinton, who desired Mr. Prinsep to be sent. The consequence of disappointment has been no favourable feeling on the part of those secretaries.

MacDonald is my connection and I am proud of it, but it is not favour but justice I solicit for him.

(Enclosure in the above) *Sir John Malcolm to Lord Melville*

Bombay. 18 June 1828

My Lord,

Your Lordship will no doubt see my letters to your predecessor, I shall therefore not recapitulate the subject of these communications.

All is quiet and goes well at this presidency. The measures which have been adopted at Baroda have hitherto had a very salutary operation. Their decided character has evidently put an end to those intrigues and speculations which have so long vexed and disturbed that court. The prince is not yet in good humour but he cannot continue long insensible to the moderation with which he has been treated and every member of his family is satisfied, that attention to its honour and permanent interests, has been a primary consideration, throughout all the proceedings into which government has been forced by the bad conduct of Syaji.

We are busy with reductions and reforms. It is proposed to bring the sadar court from Surat to Bombay. The arrangements connected with

this measure, while they increase our means of control and inspection, and facilitate appeals, will incur no additional expense. I can see my way I think in the territories of Bombay, to the preservation and rise of a native aristocracy. You will find all my measures have a tendency to affect those essential objects. I shall transmit in a few days a long minute on nazarana, or offerings, which is intimately associated with it. The privileged class which Mr. Elphinstone established in the Deccan and which you will find by my minute in the judicial department 30th January 1828 I have taken every means to confirm and improve, are a class of nobility with special privileges derived from us that they must highly appreciate.

Your Lordship is I know one of those that bear in reverence the memory of Sir Thomas Munro, and you will not readily admit that his matured mind, which preserved its full vigour to the last hour of his existence, could hastily adopt the crude suggestion of any man, or men, on a point of such importance, as appointing a native jury or rather panchayat, for such it should be termed, to aid in the administration of criminal justice in India. This measure had long occupied the mind of Sir Thomas Munro, and to me it appears every way worthy of his character. I consider, that properly introduced, it will be found the greatest of aids, instead of being subversive of our present system. I deem it no more an innovation than our having lately had resort to village authorities, we had in the ardour of our first reforms swept away; but admitting it as a novelty it may be asked is it our desire, or is it not, to improve the natives of this country, to enlarge and enlighten their minds? If it is can we expect this end will be obtained thro' repetition of lessons and hearing of lectures within the precincts of our schools and colleges? We must give action and a good direction to the spirit we kindle, or its operation will be all against us. But I contend, (and on the ground of experience) that the natives are quite qualified without our tuition for the duties Sir Thomas Munro desired to allot them, and will pledge any reputation I have for the full success of this measure, whenever it is tried under circumstances favourable for its accomplishment. My friend Mr. Lushington has acted conscientiously and therefore properly, in rejecting it, and he is supported by a host of judges. I have perused all the arguments against it, but my opinion is unaltered. I think however, that after the opinions that have been stated, it would be hopeless to try the introduction of this plan into the territories of Madras, at least until the experiment had been made elsewhere. It is this opinion which makes me address you upon a subject from which I should otherwise have abstained. If this favourite measure of Sir T. Munro is deemed worthy of a trial, direct that it be made at this presidency, where many circumstances are peculiarly favourable for its introduction, and where some of the *first* men* in the judicial department, are sanguine in their expectation of its success.

* Mr. Sutherland second judge of the sadar at Surat, Mr. Dunlop session judge at Poona, and Mr. Norris, judicial secretary are decided advocates of this measure.

We have many advantages favourable to this experiment. Our new code is clear and condensed, and is singularly free of technicalities. It is accessible to the natives of our different provinces, in their own language. Persian is never used, indeed it is a language not known to one in a hundred thousand of our subjects, and retaining it in the Deccan would have been to exclude for ever our subjects from a knowledge of the proceedings of our courts of law.

Notwithstanding this improvement we cannot flatter ourselves with the belief that natives not immediately concerned have much sympathy with our system of judicial administration. They view our forms as those in which we choose to administer the power we possess, but few if any of them, can believe the system contains those checks which it does upon ourselves and they always refer more to the character of individuals who preside in them, than to the constitution of our courts of justice.

There can be no doubt that the admixture of natives in the administration of our laws, would lead to their being better understood and appreciated. It would create an interest in our judicial proceedings, that does not now exist. This would in no time have an influence on the character of the population among whom those called upon as aids in our administration of justice would gradually acquire influence and distinction. But there would be other advantages. Perjury would be checked. Witnesses would not only fear detection in falsehood, from the more minute examination of their countrymen, but they would give their testimony under very different feelings, when before men upon whose estimation their future happiness and credit in life depended, than when questioned by a foreign judge whom they never saw before, and who during their lives, it was not probable they should ever see again.

We hear re-iterated opinions of the unfitness of the natives of India for situations of trust and confidence. Their prejudices of caste, their falsehood, their ignorance, their immorality are brought forward as the grounds of their exclusion, and we are required to wait till they are reformed and more fully instructed, before we press them forward to their further disgrace and the injury of our own reputation and interests.

I never can believe in such an unfavourable character of our native subjects, but supposing it true, can better means of their improvement be devised than the impressions which must be made upon this community, by granting our confidence, and by giving honourable employment to its most distinguished members? Without we do so that instruction and diffusion of knowledge we are so anxious about is a dangerous effort. It is to fill the vessel with steam without one safety valve! But on what foundations do the accusations against the natives rest? As servants to ignorant, capricious and sometimes violent European masters, they have no doubt often proved full of falsehood, cunning and servility. Where judged by their conduct to despots and tyrants of their own tribe, they have been found guilty of the defects and crimes which belong to the condition they filled all over the world. But have we been disappointed in the trial we have made of the natives of India as servants not of

individuals but of government. Has not our native army proved faithful and brave? Have not the few native servants (including amins) we have yet ventured to raise above the will and pleasure of a European superior, fully met our expectations? Assuredly then to conclude they will not perform their duty as jurors is to condemn them without fair and full trial, and I must contend there exists no evidence on which we can pronounce them unfit for such employ. Even admitting the truth of all that is stated against them, observations formed of men debarred from duties and activities calculated not merely to change but to form their characters are not sufficient to enable us to determine what would be the conduct of the same men under the existing motives [*sic*] of a wiser and more liberal policy.

We must not conceal from ourselves the causes which combine to exclude the natives from any share in the administration of India. It is an overweening sense of our own superiority, a love of power, and an alarm which I deem groundless, that as their interests are advanced, those of European agents will be deteriorated but if I am right in believing as I conscientiously do, that without they are treated with more confidence, elevated by more distinction, and admitted to higher employment, we cannot hope to preserve for any period our dominions in this country. No feelings or considerations should be allowed to oppose their gradual progress to every civil function and employ. By raising the most active and eminent of the natives of India in their own estimation and that of others we shall reconcile them, and through them the population at large to a government, which doing so, confident in its own justice and wisdom casts off the common narrow and depressing rules of foreign conquerors. This is a subject upon which I have thought much, and between such a course of policy as I have stated, and colonization to a very great extent, I see no medium line by which this empire can be preserved to Great Britain.

Among other means I deem the admission of the natives of India to a share in the administration of criminal justice to be one that is both safe and politic. I cannot participate in the alarm taken by many experienced and able men at Madras. The regulation that has been abrogated at that presidency appears to me to be calculated to guard against all danger in the introduction of this system and though we have the power under our regulations* of associating natives in the trial of criminal causes, it was my intention that we should have proceeded a step further, and have adopted the regulation of Sir Thomas Munro, but after what has past, though we may exercise the latitude given in our own code, we shall do nothing more till we hear what your opinions in England are upon the whole of this subject.

* Vide new Code of Bombay Regulation 13/1827 Chap. 6 Sect. 38 Clause 5th.

21. *Lt. Col. J. Macdonald to Sir John Malcolm.* Private. Extract

Persia. 6 June 1828

If the progress of Russia be not soon put a stop to nothing can avert the speedy dissolution of that empire. I know from Paskievitch himself that the emperor is bent on the capture of Constantinople which he considers an object worthy his highest ambition. The Russian chargé d'affaires who is on the road hither for that purpose, will strain every nerve to press this weak and unprincipled court into the quarrel; and if he offers high may I think succeed. I will do all in my power to prevent or retard the accomplishment of this object, but what are remonstrances without support from my own government.

I came here with Abbas Mirza[1] to see the old king and condole with him on the loss of his cash which has so much affected his mind as to induce an attack of incessant palsy. His constitution is otherwise much shattered. From his general appearance I should not conceive that he will continue many years longer an inhabitant of this world. What course am I to pursue in the event of his death? I have no instruction on this subject. Am I to remain passive or afford my support to Abbas Mirza? These are questions of importance that you may be able to solve.

The prince seems determined on the prosecution of his mission to the camp or court of his Imperial Majesty. The ostensible object of this embassy is to solicit redemption from the payment of the 9 and 10 crores, to get back Tabriz which has been half-promised to him and if practicable to purchase the whole of the Georgian territories. But he will no doubt enter into some secret compact to secure the throne. What else can be expected after the manner in which we have abandoned him?

22. *W. B. Bayley to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 24 June 1828
Recd. on board. 2 July 1828

My Lord,

In the almost hourly expectation of your Lordship's arrival, I have refrained from writing to you in continuation of my former letter, which was despatched soon after Lord Amherst's departure from India.

Unless the *Undaunted* should have touched at Madras your Lordship will scarcely have heard of the re-establishment of peace between Russia and Persia. The terms of the treaty which involve considerable sacrifices both pecuniary and territorial are highly humiliating to Persia and leave her in the event of future quarrels almost entirely at the mercy of Russia. Our envoy Col. Macdonald was satisfied that any further attempt to prolong the contest would have been followed by the entire

21. [1] Abbas Mirza, commander of the Persian army, heir-apparent to the Persian throne, died 1833.

destruction of the Persian empire, and influenced by that conviction, he exerted himself to induce Persia to accept the terms dictated by her adversary. His good offices were interposed by the desire of both parties, and led to the final adjustment of the treaty of peace.

Since I last wrote to your Lordship nothing has occurred to disturb the tranquillity of our territories. The season has been very unfavourable for the cultivation of indigo in Bengal, and there is some apprehension of embarrassment amongst the mercantile community, whose interests are somewhat injuriously affected by the loan transactions of the government; it is hoped however that the present necessity for raising money by loan will soon cease. We have continued our efforts to reduce expenses as opportunities have occurred and we are still engaged in enquiries directed to measures of economy both here and at the other presidencies.

Our relations with Ava continue on a perfectly friendly footing and we have been able to reduce the military force hitherto maintained on the coast of Tenasserim in Arakan and generally on our eastern frontier. Our territorial acquisitions from Ava are not at present productive of much revenue, but they are tranquil and generally I believe in a state of progressive improvement.

The *Nereide* yacht is lying at Kedgeree in readiness to proceed to Saugor on the approach of the *Undaunted* and so soon as intelligence of her arrival at the Sandheads reaches Calcutta one or two steam vessels will be despatched to facilitate your Lordship's progress.

My latest communication from Lord Combermere is dated the 30th ulto. from Simla in the vicinity of the Himalaya mountains. I transcribe the following portion of his letter for your Lordship's information.

'It is my intention to remain here till the end of October when I shall proceed on my tour of inspection via Meerut, Delhi to Nusserabad, thence, through Bundelkhand to Allahabad and Benares where I shall embark at the latter place in a steamer or pilot vessel and to visit Arakan, Moulmein etc. and then to return to the presidency. Lord William Bentinck will find two letters from me at Calcutta, therefore I do not inflict on him a third, but I shall be much obliged to you if you will take an opportunity of letting his Lordship know what my plans are for the next twelve months, provided he has no commands for me which should interfere with the arrangements I have made.'

23. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Poona. 28 June 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 15 July 1828

My dear Lord William,

I am becoming very anxious to hear of your arrival at Calcutta as you have been due, to use a phrase of *the commercial department*, some weeks.

I have written so many letters to you that I feel bound to abstain from any but short communication. I enclose a copy of a letter to Lord Melville on a subject on which I am assured you will take great interest. It relates to points upon which my mind is quite decided.

In a letter that either has gone or will go in a few days to Bengal your Lordship will find a long minute of mine on nazarana or offerings. It takes a wide scope but I do trust it will be found to reward your attentive perusal. I can quite understand the thousand general objections that may be made to my propositions as well as the practical difficulties that may arise in carrying them into execution but I am quite satisfied that if cordially adopted and acted upon this tax will not only be productive but be found calculated to reconcile the objects of preserving a native aristocracy—without loss of revenue.

I arrived here two days ago and have much to arrange. I must visit Khandesh and Satara after which I shall report to your Lordship my views as to the slow and gradual changes I mean in the southern Maratha countries, into which it is my intention only to introduce Bombay servants as vacancies occur.

We hear the Nizam is not likely to live long. A revision of our administration in the Deccan (for call it what they choose it is our administration) will merit your fullest attentions. I do not think there is any part of India where a considerable proportion of the inhabitants hold the English name in less regard than in the territories of Hyderabad. Without desiring to attach blame to individuals I must think nothing could be more unfortunate for our good name or for the people of the country than the whole of our interference with its affairs.

24. *Bentinck to Sir John Malcolm*

Barrackpore. 9 July 1828

My dear Sir John,

On the 2nd at Kedgeree I received your letters of—

April 6
„ 26
„ 27
May 26
June 3
„ 3

and I have since received yours of the 6th March, together with a very interesting paper, the date of which I do not recollect, it being left in Calcutta, giving me a picture of our *dramatis personae*. This latter document is particularly interesting and useful and I give you my best thanks for it.

We landed here on the 4th, and my time has since been so entirely occupied, as it still continues to be, with all the business, pomp and

ceremony of my situation, that I really can but give you a single remark, and that only upon [?one] of the very many important subjects contained in your correspondence.

Central India is the first in order of importance and this very day and only within this couple of hours, has been put into my hand the despatch of the court referring all your papers to the consideration and decision of the supreme government.

The only point insisted on by the court, in the event of the transfer, is that these territories shall be annexed to the governor-in-council and not separately to yourself, but of course you have a copy of this despatch.

I will frankly confess to you that this determination of the court perplexes and embarrasses me beyond measure and is decidedly adverse to my earnest entreaties upon the subject.

My request to the chairman and to Mr. Wynn, and I stated the same to Mr. Marjoribanks as well as Mr. Campbell[1] and others, was, that the question should be determined at home and not sent to us.

I over and over again told them that as far as my authority or my feelings about power and jurisdiction were concerned I was perfectly indifferent to the arrangement.

I always did you the justice, which I think you deserve, and said that the arrangement which should gratify you would be most acceptable to me, but I urged that it should be made by them: I urged further, that there should be no divided authority; that you should not be invested with the subordinate powers of a governor-general's agent, but with the same authority complete and entire as that possessed by the governments of Madras and Bombay and only subject to the general authority of the supreme government.

I have had but little conversation here, for we as yet have not met in council, and I have had but one single interview either with Mr. Bayley or the secretaries, but my own prediction and your own apprehension I am sure will be entirely verified that all the officers here whether from natural jealousy or the natural love of power will be most adverse to this measure.

In what situation shall I then find myself, called upon to sanction a new political arrangement for a country to which I am an entire stranger, and finding possibly unanimous opposition on the part of all whom I must necessarily consult.

Another dilemma I was most anxious also to avoid, and that is, the possibility of my being the very instrument of your disappointment; for however well pleased I should have been with any plan formed under the responsibility of others, when that plan is to be settled by myself, I must put all private feeling aside, and listen only to the cold and dry dictates of reason and political expediency and advantage.

Here are my first honest sentiments upon a hasty perusal of the court's orders.

24. [1] Campbell, Robert, Director 1817–52, Deputy Chairman 1830–1, and Chairman 1831–2. Died 1858.

In the course of three or four days I shall have an opportunity of consulting with my colleagues and of coming to some more mature and satisfactory review of the case and I will from time to time communicate to you most frankly and confidentially my sentiments as they arise and will state to you the course which I propose to follow. I will put the other subjects of your letters in a separate paper.

25. *Holt Mackenzie to Bentinck*

18 July 1828

My Lord,

In conformity with your Lordship's desire I have put down, in the accompanying paper, the thoughts that occur to me in regard to the college;[1] and I have communicated with Captain Ruddell on the subject. That officer concurs generally in what I have suggested, expressing doubts only as to the effect of maintaining the interposition of the college council. Such a body appears to him ill calculated to secure a sufficiently prompt and vigorous control. It has been my object to avoid all change, beyond what is unavoidable. And I feel pretty confident that, if your Lordship will vest the secretary to the college council with the power of enforcing the statutes and standing orders of the institution and will yourself assume and directly exercise that paternal interest and authority which seems to me naturally to belong to the head of the government in relation to the junior servants of the Company, as well as to the visitor in his relation to the college, the intervention of the council, which will in several other respects be convenient, will in no degree operate to prevent the attainment of those important objects your Lordship has at heart. I will offer no apology for the freedom with which I have stated my sentiments; and, however worthless your Lordship may deem the suggestions I have ventured to submit, I trust you will do me the justice to believe that they have not been carelessly adopted, tho' offered simply as hints for consideration, and in rather a rude shape.

26. *Bentinck to Lord Melville*

Calcutta. 21 July 1828

We anchored at Kedgeree on the 2d of this month and on the 4th I took the oaths and my seat in council.

We stop'd a week at Madras. We had intended to remain there only two or three days, but Lady William, who has been a great sufferer

25. [1] College of Fort William, Calcutta, where the new members of the civil service received initial training. Captain Ruddell was in charge. The paper has not been included.

throughout the voyage, was very unwell and was prevented from proceeding.

I found a great deal of unpleasant feeling existing at Madras in consequence of the strong measures, which Mr. L[ushington] had found it necessary to adopt for the purpose of overcoming the opposition which was made to his government. The acts were done, and whether right or wrong, no interference on my part could have been in the least degree useful. I was therefore happy to avail myself of the shortness of my stay to decline entering into any public business. The accounts of my poor brother's death, which have just reached me, would indeed otherwise have prevented me. The only papers relating to those measures which were shown to me were Mr. Graeme's appeal and the minutes of the members of council respecting Mr. Graeme's removal from council.

In regard to that appeal, my opinion from old time had always been that the less the supreme government interfered with the local governments the better; that such interference should only be given in extreme cases, involving the general welfare; and that in the present case there were peculiarly strong objections to our doing so. The question affected in no way the general interests. It was confined entirely to the local administration, for which the governor-in-council is solely responsible: it was almost a personal question between the governor and Mr. Graeme with other subordinate servants of the government. The governor and his council by whom he was supported were alone the judges of the expediency of those measures. The supreme government could not interfere, that is could not undo the acts of the Madras council, without lowering their authority and without adding therefore to that opposition and insubordination which had been represented by Mr. Lushington as so injurious to his administration. I therefore went from Madras with a determination, if the case should not have been decided before my arrival, to advise the not entertaining this appeal.

I found upon my arrival that the supreme council had already taken the question into consideration, and had so far acted upon it, as to send the letter of Mr. Graeme to the governor-in-council of Fort St. George, for any remarks they might choose to make upon it.

Upon reconsidering the papers in the first council after my arrival, when I expressed the opinion already described, this doubt occurred to us, how far the legality of all the acts of council might be affected, if, by the illegal removal of Mr. Graeme, the council should become not legally constituted. The opinion of the council was unanimous, that under the orders of the court, as they had been invariably acted upon at Bengal and Bombay, and as far as they know, at Madras, the governor-in-council at Fort St. George had no power to remove Mr. Graeme. The possibility of a case, involving such very serious consequences, which a bill of indemnity could alone have considered and perhaps not entirely induced us to take the safe course of consulting the opinion of the chief justice.

I understand that he has taken a view of the whole question, but his official report will not be made till Thursday next. I understand how-

ever his opinion to be, but I write without the certainty of accuracy, 1st the council had no power of removing Mr. Graeme, 2dly that the supreme government have a right to interfere in all the acts of the local governments. 3rd that Mr. Graeme has no right to appeal to the supreme government. 4th that the acts of the council are not invalidated by Mr. Graeme's removal provided the majority by whom all acts in council must be decided, is not formed by the substitute of Mr. Graeme. 5 that in the event of the death or resignation of Mr. Lushington, should Mr. O[gilvie?] assume the government as first in council (Mr. Graeme legally being the first) then all the acts of the government would be invalid. I will, if the ship has not sailed, send you a copy of the chief justice's opinion together with our own resolution upon it.

I am happy to say, that every thing is quiet and prosperous. There are some dissensions between the states of Rajputana, which though troublesome and difficult of adjustment cannot affect the general tranquillity. Our finance occupies all our attention and I hope to be able to make considerable reductions. I anticipate much satisfaction from my colleagues. I am sorry that the position of central India has not been decided in England. I earnestly entreated your predecessor and the chairman not to refer the question to the supreme government. As a matter of feeling, I did not care for the transfer of any part of the authority or dominion of this government to Bombay, and I should have been well pleased that Malcolm could have been gratified in this object of his ambition. I foresaw that all opinions here would be adverse to the transfer, as is the case. . . . I was anxious not to be the instrument of his disappointment, as I might become, if the responsibility of the decision was left with us.

27. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Private. Rough draft

Calcutta. 21 July 1828

Dear Sir,

In the hope that I may be performing both an acceptable and useful office, it is my intention to communicate to you by every opportunity a short sketch of the latest intelligence in my possession. I have preserved the form of a 'private' address for the following reasons, that I neither wish nor do I think I ought to appear officially disjoined from my colleagues, that I may write without the restraint which responsibility would necessarily impose. And as far as you are concerned that you may be at liberty to communicate to the court as much or as little of my correspondence as you may think proper. I must beg you therefore to consider my future letters as strictly private—as letters of news only, conveying no sentiments but my own and those of the moment, subject to change upon further information and better advice.

I shall beg leave first to introduce myself upon the stage and to inform you that I arrived at Madras on the 14th May.

My intention had been only to remain two or three days partly to see Mr. Lushington and partly from curiosity and for the pleasure of revisiting our old abode. Lady William's health obliged us to stay a week.

As far as I could in so short a time form an opinion of the state of affairs in that presidency it seemed to me that they have a favourable aspect and that Mr. Lushington was doing all in his power to reduce the expenditure, for the present the principal object of our care and anxiety.

I have unhappily [?found] much irritation in the settlement in consequence of the removals of Messrs. Graeme and Hill both of them men of character, the latter particularly, held in universal esteem. As my stay was so short and Lushington had proceeded too far to admit of conciliatory arrangement which perhaps might have been easy could my authority have been interposed at an early stage, I determined to abstain from all interference and enquiry into those transactions.

I should not have adverted to this subject at all had not the appeal of Mr. Graeme to the supreme court given rise to [some] legal questions of considerable delicacy and importance which I shall presently relate.

I arrived at Kedgeree on the 2nd July and on the [4th] I took the oaths and my seat in the supreme council.

I found that on the 27th ulto. the council had so far entertained Mr. Graeme's appeal as to refer it to Mr. Lushington for any remarks he might chance to make upon it. These papers were brought for reconsideration before the first council which I attended.

Upon the question of the legality of Mr. Graeme's removal I certainly had great doubts. Inferences might certainly be drawn from some passages of the court's despatches, which [favoured] the construction put by Mr. Lushington upon the court's intentions as described in their despatch of 1801 restricting the period of service in council to five years: but all the facts as far as could be collected from the records, supported an opposite construction.

Neither in Bengal nor at Bombay, had any member of council gone out as a matter of course at the expiration of his term without an express order of the court to that effect. The despatch of 1801 seemed to me only to be intended to communicate for general information a rule intended by the court for their own future guidance, but only to be acted upon by their own direct order.

I did not feel any doubt either as to the power of interference on the part of the supreme government in this or any other act of the local government.

But knowing at the same time as I did that these measures had been considered in despatches by Mr. Lushington (of the correctness of which opinion he and not me was the judge) to the support of his authority, I deemed it highly inexpedient that we should entertain the appeal. Neither did justice to the individual Mr. Graeme seem to require such intervention because with the court rested complete power both to re-instate him in council and to compensate him for his loss of salary.

But upon further considering the subject, there arose a question of far greater magnitude, viz: if the council of Madras is illegally constituted, how far are its acts legal and valid. The possibility of such a predicament, affecting, as it would do, so seriously the personal responsibility of the governor and council of Fort St. George as well as the public interests, determined us to submit the whole case to the opinion of the highest authority, the chief justice. We are not to receive his opinion in writing till next Thursday and therefore the report which I have read of his sentiments upon the various points submitted to him may not be quite correct: but I understand them to be—first—that Mr. Graeme has no right to appeal to the supreme government. Secondly—that the supreme government have a right to control and direct all the acts of the local governments. Thirdly—that the governor in council had no power to remove Mr. Graeme. Fourthly—that the acts of the majority of the council of Fort St. George provided the majority is not formed by the member substituted for Mr. Graeme are legal and valid. Fifthly—that in the event of the death or resignation of Mr. Lushington and the succession of Mr. [?Ogilvie] (Mr. Graeme being legally the 1st member in council) the acts of the council would not be legal.

If the *Sovereign* should delay her departure till after Thursday, I will send again a copy of the chief justice's opinion.

I perhaps may have said more than was necessary upon this subject. Our political relations with Oudh, Nepal and all other neighbours seem satisfactory. There is much unpleasant discussion between some of the states of Rajputana and it is a most difficult point to decide how far our interference should be interposed. The rule at present observed and which seems the wisest, is to leave each state to settle its own internal differences, and only perform the part of mediator at the mutual request of both parties.

I wish the court could have saved me from the embarrassment of a decision upon the question of central India. All opinions here, as I well foresaw, are adverse to the transfer of that country from supreme government.

I am inclined to believe that the state of the finance will turn out better than former estimates may have represented it. I have the impression, but not the certainty, that our military establishments of battle are infinitely higher than a state of peace requires—I have already taken measures for ascertaining their amount, and for taking a review of the comparative means and comparative cost of the system in force under each presidency. I hope no inconsiderable reduction may be made under this head.

Nothing further at present occurs to me. The troops at Fort William and Barrackpore are in good health. . . .

I feel much pleased with my colleagues as well as with the confidential executive officials of government.

28. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Seroor. 21 July 1828

Lt. Col. MacDonald sent this letter open for me. The diamond star the king gave him is on its way to Calcutta to be disposed of according to usage. But though we are poor, this well earned mark of distinction will I conclude not be included in our savings but returned to one who if they are not insensible to just claims will ere long have to boast of more substantial rewards from the Company and country he has so admirably served. I quite envy him the opportunity he has had of showing what honour, energy, and talent can effect. My only comfort is he is a [protégé] of my own.

I go tomorrow to Ahmadnagar and shall probably notwithstanding the season go further. There is nothing so useful as these visits of inspection.

29. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Ahmadnagar. 27 July 1828

My dear Lord William,

I have received your kind letter of the 9th instant.

As no copy has been sent to me, I cannot speak of the letter of the court of directors on the subject of central India, further than from the heads given by your Lordship. My private letters from England, among which two are from the India House and one from my brother Sir Pultenay, mention my employment as a question that had been under discussion between the court and board of control, but had been decided in the affirmative according to the wishes of the latter.

With respect to the letter received by the supreme government, it has probably been found difficult to refuse to the governor-general in council a power that he possesses by law of suspending the adoption of any measure he deems inexpedient or impolitic. If they have not indicated their own wish for the accomplishment of this measure in a manner that is so decisive as to overcome all lesser objections, the cause is probably to be found either in an indifference to the object, or a confidence in your Lordship's views being so correspondent with their own, as to render their expressions of their wishes sufficient.

With respect to the placing central India under my exclusive authority, or that of the governor in council at Bombay, you will find my sentiments in my letters to the chairmen. There would no doubt be advantages in vesting me with separate power: but the mode directed appears to present no serious obstacles to the execution of the plan; and the arrangement being special, and distinctly grounded on considerations that refer to an individual combined with the country being kept in the political department, must prevent those inconveniences and

obstructions that might perhaps be anticipated under different circumstances.

The analogy with Mysore I have noticed in my despatch to the chairmen: but the best and plainest view to take of this subject, is to consider this measure as one of preventive policy, taken in time of peace, and of the same character as that which you would be compelled to resort to in the event of war on the western frontier, when it would be quite impossible, without danger to the public interests, to keep under distinct and remote authorities, agents and petty states bordering upon and interwoven with those territories of Bombay, which were either the scene of the war, or those which were to furnish resources for carrying it on. Late events in Persia give this part of the question additional importance. I deem the fate of that country only delayed for a short period: and though I dread no European invasion, I anticipate, as an immediate consequence of the occupation of a part of Persia by Russia, and the advance of the agents of that nation, continual intrigues and troubles on our frontiers; and I know none where they are more to be expected than on the quarter to which I allude: and it assuredly would be inexpedient in such case to have political agents referring to Delhi and Indore, that their superiors might refer to Calcutta for orders, how and when they should so operate with the proximate high authorities, civil and military, of the government of Bombay: and it would be still more inexpedient, on such emergency, to vest these inferior agents with any separate or distinct power.

It was the desire of the authorities at home to annex much of Malwa and Rajputana permanently to Bombay. They judged from its juxtaposition; and they thought that my having the administration of these provinces for a few years would place them on the same footing that the territories of Poona were by Mr. Elphinstone, who had similar advantages of personal impressions to aid in effecting his objects. This arrangement I strenuously opposed, on the same ground that I had wished to prevent the annexation of the Poona territories to Bombay. My object then was, and is at this moment, to establish a subah government, which in the principles and forms of its administration, should be so constructed as to admit of the co-existence of a native aristocracy with our rule: and to do this, I was satisfied it was indispensible to keep both our regular courts of adalat and his Majesty's courts of justice at a distance. I am no enemy to these courts. They contain their portion of good and evil, like all human institutions: but I do not desire to extend their sphere of jurisdiction, for reasons elsewhere stated: and I am quite satisfied, that unless some such measure as I have proposed is speedily adopted, their power will soon embrace all India, and be, in my opinion, when so spread, a sufficient cause of the downfall of this empire.

In offering myself, when applied to, as the instrument to carry this plan into execution in central India, I sought not only to preserve in their condition natives of rank, and to perpetuate a school of liberal and enlightened European agents, but I desired to introduce a system

that would excite the ambition of the Indian service, by creating high stations, to the execution of the duties of which a knowledge and qualifications were indispensible, that would place them beyond the reach of the mere European. I cannot desire to limit the exercise of the fair patronage of the authorities in England; but the canvassing character of our free constitution must create apprehension of the occasional abuse of that patronage; and that, when it affects high appointments to India, is one of the most serious of our dangers. Besides, the services abroad (particularly the civil) requires objects of ambition. At present, besides the privilege of going to sleep in council, or reading and writing large minutes upon small questions, I really know none. The political line is so reduced, so frittered away, and altered in its duties, that it never can, without a change, rear the instruments it once furnished to government.

These were the hopes and views by which I have been tempted forward. I always calculated on counteraction from certain classes of men, both in England and India; but I certainly did not think their efforts would be successful. With respect to your Lordship's individual case, I can quite understand it; and I can fully enter into the inexpediency of your acting, at the very commencement of your government, in opposition to those with whom you are associated, and to whom you must look for aid in the execution of your arduous and difficult duties. Under such circumstances, I can neither expect nor advise any measure, however important I may deem it, that is to have the effect you appear to think would result from your pressing the adoption of this plan. I am not surprised, that your secretaries and some others should have the feeling they have shown on this occasion, for these feelings belong to men who have from boyhood breathed the atmosphere of Calcutta, and who, conscious and proud of their rectitude and talent, desire to keep all subservient to their office rules and desk-dominion: but I shall be surprised indeed, if a man like my excellent and able friend Sir Charles Metcalfe should seriously advise your Lordship against this measure, including, as it does, a complete reform of the government of central India. In a letter to me upon the subject, his chief ground of objection appeared to originate in his dislike to the connection of the western provinces in any manner with Bombay. The secretaries fighting for their offices, and what they may deem the interests of their particular service, is natural: but that a mind like his should receive a bias from this presidency-feeling, is amongst the strongest proofs of the indispensible necessity of what I have so often and so strongly urged, the emancipation of the ruler of the empire from the duties and influences that must limit and embarrass him, so long as he remains, as he is now, the head of a distinct presidency.

These gentlemen in Bengal, who believe they are contending for the service of that presidency, will prove in the sequel unhappy advocates of the interests of which they are the champions. Central India, under my plan, would remain in the political department a general line, and Bengal as usual would have the lion's share in the appointments; but

petty agencies cannot long be continued under such distant and separate authorities, as those who preside over the princes and chiefs on the Bombay frontiers, from Dhar to Sirohi. These will be found an expense as well as an embarrassment, that must produce a change; and countries that I desire to preserve under the general but special political authority of Bengal, will early merge into the territories of a subordinate government. Of this I am certain. Indeed, considering all circumstances, if a plan for the separate government of central India is abandoned, it is the next best arrangement.

I shall not trouble your Lordship with any further arguments as to the expediency of a measure, which, if you refrain from carrying into execution, it will, I am assured, be from other causes than that of not approving of its principles, or of not desiring to employ me as an instrument in promoting the success of your government. I have only two favours to ask, as connected with this subject: the first, that if I am called upon, it may be in a manner that places me beyond every counteraction and vexation that could arise from the pretensions of inferior authorities. Another is, that the question may be at once decided, and, as far as I am personally concerned, no reference made to England. My reason for the first request is that, with as devoted a zeal as any man can have in the public service, and with the most sincere attachment to your Lordship, I have neither time nor temper to bear with the interruptions to which I should be liable under any half-measure: and with regard to the second, I am not content to await such an appeal. There is no prospect of fame or fortune sufficient to make me protract my stay in India; and while I am determined to leave Bombay in December 1830, I shall, if my health at all declines, proceed sooner: and on this ground I have earnestly requested they will name a provisional successor. I have made the chairman fully aware of the situation of Mr. Sparrow, who, if none is appointed, will succeed. He is an excellent man, but bed-ridden and incapable, I fear, of even temporary charge, to which, were his health better, I should deem him equal. I have some time since given an opinion that your councillors should be deemed eligible to provisional succession to the Madras and Bombay governments: and if the authorities at home take this range, they can be at no loss to supply my place, till a permanent successor arrives. If they do not, they have no claim upon me for a sacrifice of health, and hazard of life; for without imputing fault to individuals, Mr. Wynn having gone out of office and Sir George Robinson having left the chair, I consider a pledge given to me by a president of the board of control, and a chairman of the court of directors, to have been virtually broken, and that I have been deprived of an opportunity of serving my country at a period when many circumstances combined to make it probable [that] two or three years of my life would be more valuable to the public interests than all that had past.

With such sentiments, your Lordship will not be surprised, that, possessed as I am of an independent fortune, and with such a family and

circle of friends as you know me to enjoy, I should be most anxious to return. I contemplate, however, no idle life. I have, I trust, a seat in parliament awaiting my arrival: and on the approaching question regarding the future administration of India, I shall be better able to serve my country, than contending with the prejudices and opposite opinions of office men in India and England. I now from many causes regret I did not follow the opinion of the Duke of Wellington who was strongly against my coming to India, chiefly on the ground of health, for he approved my plan regarding central India, on which, after perusal, he gave me his opinion which was decidedly in favour of its adoption; and from a note of his to Lady Malcolm of the 18th February, he appears to have taken an interest in removing the obstructions which, she had informed him, were likely to prevent its execution.

After this full statement, which I owe on public grounds to the support of my own judgment, and the steps I have taken in this proceeding, allow me to put your Lordship's mind at perfect ease with regard to your being the instrument of personal disappointment to me, by not carrying the present plan into execution. As far as my private feelings, my comfort, and my health are concerned, the whole bias of my mind is against the proposed undertaking. It was from the first, and is at this moment, deemed by me a sacrifice of all these to the performance of a great duty, though in the execution of that, I no doubt associated the advancement of my fame with that of the best interests of the Indian empire: and as far as the latter is concerned, I am completely convinced of the justness of the views I took, from every information I have received since my arrival in India; and it is to me a great satisfaction to find my views concurred in by some who have the best means of judging this important question.

I cannot conclude this long letter without informing you as a friend, not as governor-general, of some facts which will show how this proposition originated, and became blended with other prospects of future employment.

After being treated as I was by his Majesty's government, when nominated by the directors, governor of Madras, I abandoned all thoughts of going to India. My pension, in addition to my regiment made an income of about £2500 per annum: and £12000 prize-money, added to my small private fortune, gave me that repose and independence for which I had laboured, and which my age and constitution required. This scheme of retirement was interrupted by an offer of the government of Bombay. I desired a fortnight to consider of the proposition, and had made up my mind to stay at home, when Mr. Wynn did me the honour to pay me a visit in Hertfordshire, when he changed my resolution by pointing out the advantages to India, and the honour to myself, that would result from my becoming the instrument of carrying into execution my own plan for the administration of central India.

My ambition was sufficiently awakened by the proposition of Mr. Wynn to make me accept of the government; but I did so with the

expressed understanding that the superintending charge of central India was to be annexed. Extracts of my letters to Mr. Wynn and the chairman are enclosed: and I think your Lordship will agree, that nothing could be more specific: and that appointing me to Bombay, after such a communication, contained a pledge, on the fulfilment of which I had every right to place the completest reliance.

I will not conceal from your Lordship, that there was another motive upon my mind which had much influence in disposing me to return to India. Lord Amherst, I learned from his friends, did not propose to revisit England till the close of 1828, or the beginning of 1829. The necessity of giving provisional commissions to the office of governor-general and the governors of Madras and Bombay, had been agitated; and I thought, from the prominent situation in which I would be placed, that I might have a prospect of a temporary succession to the first station in India, from aspiring to which, I knew his Majesty's ministers at that period (particularly the Duke of Wellington) had no desire to exclude persons in the Company's service. I further knew, that it had been contemplated, when Lord Amherst was expected to return at an earlier period, to nominate the late Sir Thomas Munro his successor.

This last dream of ambition was completely dispelled by the death of Captain Amherst, which with other causes, hastened the resignation of his father, and led to the appointment of your Lordship. Conceiving, however, that the governors of the subordinate presidencies were, with the commander-in-chief of India and the first in council in Bengal, fair candidates for the provisional succession to the office of governor-general; and considering it (as I have always done) neither just to individuals or to the public interests, to have these high officers without named temporary successors, I applied to the late Mr. Canning to obtain the provisional succession to your Lordship, which, I stated, though a mere feather, was one I prized, and which, associated with my nomination to superintend central India, would increase my reputation and influence, and thereby greatly facilitate the performance of my public duties. Mr. Canning quite concurred in my view of this subject, and said he thought what I sought was a fair object of ambition, to which I had, from character and services, every pretension. He desired me to apply to Mr. Wynn, and to mention his opinion; which I did. This vision, has, like the other, vanished; and I am not in the humour to renew solicitations upon it or any other subject connected with India. My future schemes, such as they are, shall rise, flourish or perish in a more genial clime, and one where I have resources that render me free from such disappointments.

This is a longer letter than I intended, but it is the last with which I shall plague you on this subject; and let me conclude by stating that I have already persuaded myself that whatever disappointment my ambition may suffer from the line which I can perceive your Lordship is likely to adopt, will be more than compensated by decreased hazard to my health; and I am not without hope, that the period which remains

of my existence may be better employed than keeping the peace amongst wild rajas and thakurs, and reconciling them to principles of rules, which, however liberal, were not known to their fathers and mothers; and all this uphill labour liable to be criticized by men who had foretold my failure, and whose reputation for foresight and wisdom depended upon the fulfilment of their prophecy.

I need not assure your Lordship, that, as long as I remain, I shall be unremitting in my efforts to give you satisfaction within the sphere of this government. Our reductions, about which I know you are anxious, have been considerable, and more are in progress. We have heaps of reduced staff, and many civilians out of employment. All, therefore, cannot be contented; but I take what care I can of temper and good feeling, and seeing, as men do, that I act upon principle, and have no favourites but the best public servants, I personally experience neither dissatisfaction nor opposition.

30. *Bentinck to John Loch.* Copy

Calcutta. 12 August 1828

Dear Sir,

I hope my congratulation on your becoming the deputy chairman may not be a delusive anticipation. I shall hail this event with great satisfaction, because convinced as I am of the improvement that the resources of India may derive from active exertion and prudent direction if duly supported by prompt encouragement at home, I feel that, as long as I deserve it, I shall be assured of finding in you an able auxiliary as well as a most powerful protector.

I have to beg your particular attention to a memorandum (too long) prepared at my desire by Mr. Secretary Prinsep upon the practicability and advantage of establishing a steam navigation *up* the Ganges. Of the success of the experiment which we are about to try as far as Allahabad, I have little doubt, although the boat itself is ill-constructed for the purpose. But in the event of failure now, I am quite satisfied that with a better contrived vessel and perhaps with increased power a future attempt will certainly succeed. A journal of the *Comet* steamer, herein enclosed, with only two 10 horse power engines, and — tons, gives fair grounds for supposing that the *Hoogly* 158 tons with 2 – 25 H. power engines, will more easily stem the current.

We are curiously situated here with an empire of vast extent, with hardly a road that is carriageable to any extent and with a river, admirably circumstanced in point of direction, but hardly available as a communication, from its rapidity in the wet, and its shallowness in the dry season. If these difficulties can be overcome, if that distance can be traversed in 15 or 20 days which now occupies 60 or 70, will not our commerce be greatly benefited? Will not our political, civil adminis-

tration be greatly improved by the facility of quicker and efficient control? And will not our political, military position be greatly strengthened by thus shortening the line of communication, and rendering unnecessary so large a military establishment, if one part could be quickly brought to the reinforcement of the other?

We have now also several double establishments, two mints, two gunpowder manufactories, two gun carriage manufactories; with a quick water conveyance available at all seasons, much of this expense might be saved.

In reference to this improvement and to another, equally depending for success upon science, *irrigation*, no greater boon could be conferred upon India by the court, than in sending out a very good civil engineer. Capt. Forbes who is charged with the construction of the new mint is a very superior officer; there are two or three others who are also very scientific, but however great the abilities of the individual, it is impossible he can possess the same practical experience with those men, who have been either engaged in, or familiar with the infinity of great works and improvement, of the last 15 years in England. As for irrigation, much as has been done, and mainly as in cultivation in general in the lower parts of the country dependant upon it, I am quite convinced from my brother's example in Notts, with which your brother is acquainted, that by diverting the water from a higher level, great tracts of waste lands might be made productive.

There is another view in which a good civil engineer would be very useful, by being annexed either as member, or secretary, or as an executive officer like Mr. Leppings in the marine department, to a board, which should have the exclusive direction of all public buildings, canals, bridges, roads, banks, rivers, etc. At present the buildings are all under the military board, the inefficiency of which is universally admitted. The members are nominated ex officio, and it happens unluckily that some of them are very inefficient and others are engaged with the business of their own separate departments. With this unanimous opinion on the part of the members of government, and of the secretaries, you may reasonably ask why we do not remedy the evil; I answer this is not a time to make new boards, and the military board is a part of the constitution (if I may apply the term) of all the presidencies, and has always been charged with these duties.

It seems that I have said more than enough upon this self evident proposition.

I do not see on any point cause to expect embarrassment or difficulty. The finance is far from that equilibrium of receipt and charge which is desirable, but much has been done, and is still doing, and if the court will continue to enforce at whatever hazard the reduction of our expenditure within our income, be assured that the object will be attained. But permit me to remark that the court must be consistent also and lend its own hand to the work. Look to the useless and expensive establishments to the eastward, represented here to be a *favourite child* of

the court, which must not be touched. Look again at the continuance of the last six regiments, solely maintained, in the face of an immense deficit, for the sake of the interests of the European officers. You will excuse my straight forward dealing, but look on to the renewal of the charter, and when that day of reckoning comes, I wish that you and me may be able to give a good account of our stewardship. If we do not put our finance into good order, the result will be a parliamentary commission, which would be attended, if the Cape forms an example, with terrible results to the civil and military establishments in India. I dread as much touching any civil or military allowances as much as a magazine of gunpowder. But I am convinced that it is by bringing them down to a moderate and reasonable scale, by general equilibrium through all the presidencies, that a much greater evil can be averted. Practically also the great salaries have worked ill. The service, speaking of them as a body, are poor and loaded with debt, and why? Because they were enabled to borrow only upon the credit which the certainty of a great salary created. A smaller salary with a higher retired allowance would have much better answered the object. I find myself still digressing. I will therefore beg your pardon for thus transgressing upon your patience and time.

Pray allow your brother to be an advocate in behalf of the proposition contained in the first part of this letter. I beg to be kindly remembered to him.

31. *Col. W. Morison*[1] *to Bentinck*

Cochin. 13 August 1828

My Lord,

If the success which I have had in the service and which is mainly ascribable to your Lordship's early patronage, were any excuse for intruding on the time of the governor-general, I might hope to be pardoned for respectfully offering my congratulations on your return to India, and joining in expressing my participation in the general satisfaction, which that event has diffused.

I owe to your Lordship on the recommendation of General Stewart my first staff appointment in 1804; and having remained at Madras as deputy secretary to the military board during the three following years, I had sometimes the honour of being noticed in society, both by your Lordship and Lady William Bentinck. Of these circumstances I have still a grateful remembrance, and this allusion to them may possibly bring me to your recollection. In such case, and if it would not be deemed too great an encroachment, I should feel a pride in being allowed to submit at any convenient time, a few testimonials in favour

31. [1] Morison, W., Resident in Travancore, May 1827–Dec. 1829.

of my endeavours to execute various duties entrusted to me since the above period, in the hope that the perusal might induce your Lordship to think me not undeserving of further support and countenance.

Your Lordship will be glad to learn that Travancore is a flourishing state and enjoys as much tranquillity as any province of equal extent in the south of India. I have every reason to believe that the reigning family are firmly attached to the British government, and that the people in general are sensible of the advantages of its protection. Little more is now required than a revision of the courts of justice, which are inefficient, and I fear corrupt—while being of British introduction. I have suggested to government that some interest should be taken in rendering them reputable. Her Highness the rani will soon have to resign her charge, as the young raja comes of age in April next, when he will complete his sixteenth year. He is docile, sensible, and has a taste for literature. He is fond of English books, and devotes with success, a portion of his time to the study of history and geography—nor does he neglect the Sanskrit and Persian languages. He appears much attached to the English and will I think be ready to follow at all times, any advice which may be given to him by government. I beg leave to enclose one of his letters which his aunt the rani assured me was his own unaided composition.

Cochin is in a state of management in no way inferior to Travancore, tho' I think that the subsidy is on too high a scale consistently with the continued prosperity of the country and the dignity of the raja, a subject which has been brought to notice both by my predecessor and myself, and I happen to be aware that it was the intention of the late lamented Sir Thomas Munro, to take measures for reducing the amount which is often paid with difficulty. The affairs too of this little state are occasionally liable to inconvenience from a troublesome class of inhabitants who are exempted from the raja's authority—which has also been submitted to government. The good old raja paid the debt of nature on the 4th of this month. His heir who is about eight and twenty is I fear not of a very tractable disposition, being moreover without talent and very ignorant; but I am happy to add that peace and quiet prevail throughout the sircar, as well as in the raja's family, and that I do not apprehend any interruption to a quiet succession to the masnad as soon as the funeral ceremonies of the late raja are over, and as soon as I may be honoured with the commands of the Madras government.

But I fear I am not justified in writing at such length; tho' in my situation I could hardly with propriety have addressed your Lordship on your arrival, without submitting a brief notice of such affairs in this quarter, as might appear to be most interesting. And I own I am inclined to believe that my letter will be received with all the indulgence of what I may stand in need, in having taken the liberty of writing it.

32. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Private. Copy

Calcutta. 14 August 1828

Dear Sir,

My last letter to you was dated on the 21st July. The opinion of the chief justice therein adverted to, could not be prepared in time to be sent by that conveyance. It is now transmitted in a separate despatch from government. Whatever be the right interpretation of the court's order of 1801, this discussion will have the good effect of obtaining a distinct instruction for our future guidance.

I am much concerned to inform you of the alarming state of the health of the Bishop of Calcutta. He sailed on the 12th in the *Marquis of Huntly* for Penang and as you will see by the enclosed extract of his letter to me, has determined to resign his office. His medical attendant here, Dr. Nicholson, thinks very ill of his case. He was however somewhat better when the last accounts left the ship. His complaints are an abcess in the liver and ulceration on the lungs.

A question exciting much interest here, but not likely to produce much at home, respecting the stamp regulation, was decided yesterday in the supreme court against the government. The information was against the house of Alexander & Co. for accepting a bill of exchange not drawn upon stamped paper. The defence was that in the particular clause of the regulation applying to this question, the word bill of exchange is not expressed. The word therein used is obligation, always understood in law to mean contracts under seal. The judges differed in opinion and the jury availed themselves of this difference to give a verdict in favour of the defendants. It is thought, that under all circumstances the jury would have given the same verdict. Another trial against the same party is coming on today when the Company's advocate means to apply for a special verdict. It is hoped if we are defeated in this object by the determination of juries to take the law into their own hands, that the supreme court will consent to the introduction of a clause into the existing regulation, rendering invalid all papers comprised in the regulation, which do not have the stamp.

The actual receipts and charges for 1826/7, together with the estimates for 1827/8 form the subject of a separate despatch. Even upon the present calculation the result will turn out better than the estimate, but I hope much will still be accomplished by further reduction.

The third instalment from Ava has been paid in full, and Sir Archibald Campbell[1] has no doubt of the payment of the remainder, some time perhaps being granted by way of indulgence in the payment of the last instalments. I propose visiting our possessions eastward in November next. I shall not be absent above five weeks.

I trust that the internal feuds that have existed in Rajputana and which affected more or less the neighbouring states are on the point of

32. [1] Maj.-Gen. Sir Archibald Campbell (1769–1843), commander of expedition against Burma, 1824–6, and Governor, 1826–9. *D.N.B.*

being settled. I do not recollect at present any other object worthy of communication.

Begging you always to communicate as much of my letter to the court as you deem fit.

P.S. I have omitted to beg your attention to a paper in the general department upon the practicability of establishing steam navigation *up* the Ganges. The experiment will be very shortly tried. If it succeeds so great will be the advantages to the general strength, convenience and welfare both of government and of the population, that I hope the court will give us their best assistance, both in engines and engineers, in promoting its success. Attempts have been made with success to instruct the natives to manage the engines.

33. *Bentinck to Campbell Marjoribanks.* Copy

Calcutta. 14 August 1828

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to say that your brother has come down to the presidency in such bad health that I have not had the pleasure of seeing him. But he hopes to be better in a day or two.

I have acted upon your advice of writing shortly to the chairman the *news* of the day, disclaiming for my letters all official responsibility and leaving to his discretion to communicate as much or as little of their contents to the court as he might think proper. You I know will have the goodness to tell me how far my letters may square with your advice and fulfil my object of doing that which shall be satisfactory as a communication of the earliest intelligence to the principal authorities of the court.

I am happy to inform you that as far as concerns my relations here with my colleagues and with the public functionaries, I feel perfectly happy and satisfied. I see my way clear before me. I have of course a good deal to learn, but if I may apply the expression, I know sufficiently of the geography and language to make my way pretty well, although in a strange country and I hope I may be said to start at once from the post, without being obliged to depend solely on the assistance of others.

I have not mentioned in any other letter, I believe, the college. I shall be able easily to reform it. Its great and main defect is the total absence of all discipline, but this is not the fault of the students but of the commanding authorities. The means at the disposal of a governor are ample to give complete effect to all the objects contemplated in that establishment.

I am glad to say that Lady William is somewhat recovering from the effects of the voyage, though the weather is extremely hot and oppressive.

I fear there is little chance of the recovery of the Bishop of Calcutta. He sailed on the 12th in the *Marquis of Huntly* for Penang with the resolution of resigning his appointment.

Wishing you health and begging the continuance of your long kindness, etc.

34. *Bentinck to Lord Melville*

Calcutta. 14 August 1828

My last letter was dated the 21st July, per *Sovereign*. . . .

I am sorry to send you the enclosed extract of a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta, by which you will see that his state of health has obliged him to go to Penang, with the determination of resigning his appointment. I fear he is not likely to live. His complaints are, abscess in the liver & ulceration of the lungs with a most enfeebled constitution. The principal physician here, Dr. Nicholson, has a very bad opinion of his case. He was rather better when the *M. of Huntly* China ship sailed from the Sandheads on the 12th inst.

The only paper of much interest sent home by the present despatch is a statement of the receipts and expenditure of the three presidencies for 1826/7 and the actual estimate for 1827/8. There is still a considerable deficit, but we think, that even upon the data assumed, the result will be more favourable than the estimate. I trust however that it will be in our power still to make very considerable reductions.

The chief justice's opinion upon Mr. Graeme's removal from council forms also a separate letter. Although our view entirely agrees with that of Sir Charles Grey, yet as no immediate inconvenience is to be apprehended, we have refrained from issuing any instructions which might be in collision with the government of Fort St. George and might be very annoying to Mr. Lushington personally, and keep alive the dissensions which have prevailed at Madras.

I am happy to say that the intestine feuds that have reigned in Jodhpur and have more or less affected the neighbouring states, appear on the point of being settled.

Every thing continues quiet and all our foreign relations seem in a satisfactory state. The third instalment from Ava has been paid in full and there is no doubt of the payment of the remainder at least such is the assurance of Sir Archibald Campbell in which I am disposed to rely.

We are about to make an experiment for ascertaining the practicability of establishing a steam navigation *up* the Ganges. If we can effect in a week what it has heretofore required a month to perform both our political and military communications will be very much expedited; and the general efficiency and the strength of the empire very much promoted.

The country is generally healthy—the weather is extremely oppressive.

Lady William joins in her regards to Lady Melville.

35. *Lady William Bentinck to the Duke of Devonshire*

Government House, Calcutta. 19 August 1828

My dear Duke,

I enclosed a letter to you yesterday for Mrs. Clifford, pray forward it as I hear it is likely to precede Clifford's arrival in England.[1] I received a few lines from him this day, from Kedgeree, written on Sunday. He was making slow progress, the current being against him, but the steam vessel was doing her best possible to tow them out of the river. We miss Clifford greatly. In this distant quarter of the globe, it is doubly painful to part with a friend. Notwithstanding all our storms at sea, and the discomforts in consequence, we were always *at home* and happy chez lui, with power to do whatever we pleased. I never really met with a more truly amiable person, a kinder friend, and master, and indulgent and humane commanding officer. He is very deservedly beloved both by his men and officers. He suffered so much by asthma, that I am of opinion he will sooner or later be compelled to remove to a warm climate, at least for a time; he recovered both his health and looks here, owing to the heat which I suppose overruled the excessive damp of this climate. In a few hours everything becomes wet and mouldy, the leather upon the chairs and boxes, pictures, books etc. I am at a loss to know why we are not all ill unless as I observed before the great heat counteracts the evil of damp.

The building we inhabit would suit even your ideas of magnificence. It is a very striking edifice, for which we are indebted to Lord Wellesley. The galleries are sufficiently spacious to afford a good walk and the pavement of finely polished China marble give the appearance as well as the feel of coolness.

By Clifford I have sent you a collection of flower seeds, from our gardens at Barrackpore. By way of precaution I had them soldered in tin, and I am now told they would have been better had I sent them in a canvas bag. Have the box opened, and the seeds wiped, and planted as early as possible. The water lilies are perfection as to beauty; they must be tried in a large tub of water placed in the hothouse. I have also sent you some stuffed birds. Give them without delay to a professional man to perch upon an artificial tree, which must be *closely* confined within a glass case—the air must be effectually excluded. If you employ a man of taste he will make something pretty, and ornamental for your rooms. I mean this as a souvenir from an affectionate cousin who by this time may be forgotten, but who does not wish to be so. I have also sent another little souvenir in the form of a cockatoo, a mild and amiable bird who has never yet attempted to scream—don't let any body teach him so to do.

Now for your commissions, I have employed Capt. Timmings of the *Reliance*, Chinaman, to make a beautiful collection of Chinese drawings; they are to consist of flowers, birds and insects, some feather screens, and

35. [1] Clifford, Captain of H.M.S. *Undaunted*, which carried them to India.

two or three ivory curiosities. The captain is understanding in all such matters, and has very obligingly promised to superintend the whole of my troublesome commission. He remains some weeks at Canton and has offered to carry home your things and assist you in getting them out of the India House, where they are often detained unnecessarily and the articles injured by the curious. Capt. T. may probably inform you of the arrival of your things. I beg you will reply to him, (not as is your custom by your butler) but with your own hand, and your thanks duly expressed. Are not some also due to me for laying out your money so judiciously?

Lord William is well, and busy from morning until night—the great secret of happiness. I hope your sisters are well. Should you wish at any time to present them with any specimen of eastern manufacture, I empower you to employ me, and I shall undertake it with pleasure.

P.S. Lord William begs to be kindly remembered. The paper I am writing on was quite dry and stiff five minutes since, and it is now so damp I can scarcely keep the ink from running. Put up a secret prayer for my valuable life. We shall soon expect Mr. S. Price. I have sent you a list of the garden seeds by Clifford.

36. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

Dapooree. 19 August 1828

My dear Lord William,

I am just returned from the funeral of Sir Edward West. I shall give the president of the board of control and the chairman my honest sentiments as to the qualities required in a successor. Knowing how such questions are decided in England I do not expect much good from any representation I can make but I shall fulfil my duty. I wish your Lordship would say to them how much depends (as long as the jurisdiction is so undefined) upon the character of the chief judge. He must have temper and judgment, as well as law and above all he must view himself as an aid instead of a check upon the civil government of the country.

I enclose your Lordship copy of a letter to the Duke of Wellington regarding two individuals now under your Lordship's orders. Time will show you how right I am as to the tone of the public service but it is a subject on which I shall not enlarge. My excellent and able friend Lt. Col. MacDonald is deeply disgusted and I cannot think the despatches written immediately before your arrival will effect a change in his sentiments, for though praise is extorted [*sic*] there is a marked spirit of reserve in bestowing it, a mixture of censure with approbation and a total absence of that kindling spirit which his extraordinary and successful exertions were so calculated to call forth. I write most freely the impression made upon my mind by the whole of this proceeding but I am far from expecting it will be in your power to put such matters right in a day a month or

a year but I do confidently look for the government being eventually taken out of those offices where it has been for some years past administered.

P.S. I am most seriously embarrassed in consequence of the delay to my nazarana concern, which I confess I did not anticipate. I thought you would have given me a certain latitude under general instruction and in consequence suspended several settlement and the decision of some urgent question but I must, as the Italians say have 'Paze' . . .

37. *Bentinck's minute on central India*

25 August 1828

In reference to the question of the transfer of central India to the immediate control of the governor in council of Bombay which the court of directors in their despatch of the 21st March have left to the decision of the supreme government, I beg leave to offer the following remarks.

Stranger as I am in a great measure to the occurrences which have taken place in Malwa and Rajputana since the establishment of British supremacy, I feel greatly embarrassed in being called upon at so early a period after my arrival, to form an opinion upon a subject which seems to involve so many considerations of delicacy and importance.

I deem myself fortunate, at the same time, in being associated in council with those who have been constant and watchful observers of the policy together with its results pursued by government towards central India, and one of whom was not only the negotiator of the treaties with the principal Rajput states, but whose long and recent duties as resident demand for his opinions peculiar notice and confidence. In the generality of cases that come before council, where my own experience would leave me without a guide, I feel secure in placing implicit reliance in the concurring opinions of my able and enlightened colleagues. But if upon the present occasion, the members of the supreme council should not assent to the proposition of Sir John Malcolm, I shall feel myself placed in the unwelcome predicament of being an arbitrator between authorities, for whom I entertain the highest respect and to each of whom I would most willingly bow.

Foreseeing that this may be the task imposed upon me, I am anxious that this question should undergo the fullest discussion, and previously to our coming to any determination I would propose that a full communication of the views taken by the different members together with a copy of the present minute should be sent to Sir John Malcolm for his consideration and reply. I personally feel the greater anxiety to obtain a thorough conviction to my own understanding, because, with the degree of sanction that Sir J. Malcolm's project has received from the

authorities at home, I should consider myself not only justified, but even required if it were my misfortune to disagree with my colleagues, to carry the question upon my own responsibility.

Having thus candidly confessed my own inability to come at once to any satisfactory conclusion upon the strength of my own unaided judgment, I have now to beg of the members of council, that they will record their sentiments upon this question, and rather by way of soliciting the benefit of their information and advice, than of giving any opinion of my own, I shall briefly state the questions suggested to my mind by the perusal of Sir John Malcolm's memorandum.

It strikes me that the whole question turns upon this single point, does there exist in central India that degree of misrule, disorder and general dissatisfaction requiring the interposition of an extraordinary authority, and is the benefit likely to be derived from such interposition of sufficient magnitude to overcome the objections on principle which oppose the measure.

These objections are first the withdrawing of any of our foreign relations from the direct interference and control of the supreme government, and secondly the withdrawing that direct control now after having been established during a period of ten years.

This opinion of subjecting all our foreign relations to the immediate superintendence of the supreme government in the expediency of which as a general principle Sir John Malcolm entirely agrees, is not new on my part. When governor of Madras, I strongly advised against the transfer of Mysore from Bengal to the Madras presidency. Experience has only strengthened the conviction. My reasons may all be comprised in the single word 'interference', the unfortunate obligation of all our subsidiary and protecting treaties. I apply the term unfortunate because to the existence and exercise of this authority do I attribute the annihilation of many of the states comprehended in these engagements, and I as certainly anticipate the same fate for the remainder unless this most delicate duty is restricted within the narrowest limits and performed with the utmost delicacy, forebearance, and justice. Every day's experience has demonstrated the difficulty of framing a line of conduct which shall at one and the same time respect the perfect independence of the sovereign, and yet shall maintain the right of his subjects against his arbitrary acts; acts which he only ventures to commit from a sense of security from retaliation under the protection of our guarantee. Not a consultation has passed since I have taken my seat in council, in which this question of interposition in the internal affairs of independent tributaries has not been the occasion of much deliberation and embarrassing discussion. The government of the present day has I think wisely resolved to regulate its conduct, by the strictest adherence to the very letter of its treaties. Partial trouble and inconvenience may occasionally be prolonged by the non-intervention of the supreme authority with prompt and overwhelming effect. But to make these alliances useful to the British government and comfortable to the chiefs themselves, there

must reign in the minds of all not only no distrust of our ultimate designs but a thorough and intimate conviction that while their feelings of pride and independence will never be offended by our power, their tranquillity, wealth and prosperity can only be assured by our protection.

To maintain complete uniformity of principle and system in respect to all these relations, and to restrain within due bounds the delegates of our paramount power, vested as they are with a trust so delicate and so very open to abuse, it is indispensible in my judgment that the eye of the highest authority should constantly and unceasingly bear upon every part of this complicated machinery. This direct authority need not prevent agents and residents in states contiguous to Madras and Bombay from sending copies of all their correspondence to the governor in council of those presidencies and in cases of emergency of asking and receiving their orders. But let them always act under the consciousness and above all, let the chiefs of those states also have the satisfaction of knowing that they are under the immediate eye of the principal authority of the state.

To the objection which on principle the transfer of central India to the government of Bombay appears liable, must be added the obvious inexpediency of any change of system, if it has worked well, which has prevailed during a period of ten years.

If from local position the permanent annexation of these territories to the supremacy of a subordinate presidency were deemed advisable, the measure would stand upon a clear and intelligible basis. Again, if Sir John Malcolm had been placed in his separate capacity as an agent subordinate to and under the immediate direction and control of the governor-general in council, in this case also there need not have been any implied change of existing arrangements. But it is now proposed that a complete revolution in the governing authority shall take place, and after the long and general war and the continued series of anarchy and confusion which had prevailed in central India may it not be feared that all the clashing interests and conflicting rights which have been subsequently settled, might again be disturbed, and that each discontented chieftain and individual might hope that the unfavourable decision in his case might be reversed? May it not also be feared that under a different authority the termination of internal feuds, apparently on the point of being settled, might be suspended in the expectation of finding different principles of policy and of conduct? And may it not be feared that even with the most prudent conduct the public mind might be thrown into a general state of uncertainty and alarm?

But disinclined as I am on general grounds to the proposition, I am as clear that all these objections ought to yield to urgent political expediency and I am far from being satisfied that such a state of things does not at the present moment exist.

In paragraph 13 of Sir John Malcolm's memorandum it is stated, 'If Bharatpur had not fallen[1] there appears to have existed no doubt of the

37. [1] Refers to the siege and capture of this fortress by the British in 1826.

occurrence of almost general revolt against our authority in this part of India. But though the fate of that fortress has made a deep and salutary impression, we must not deem ourselves free from similar danger. We shall find that success in resisting any attack we may make upon any fort in western India, will immediately convert it into a Bharatpur. This result will arise from similarity of caste, of habits and of feelings in the great majority of this part of India.'

The scene of such revolt is laid of course in central India and I ask of my colleagues, first, whether in reference to the supposed failure at Bharatpur this impression of a general revolt may seem to be well-founded, and I ask secondly, whether the disaffection out of which such revolt might have arisen, is or is not founded upon the system of government actually in force in central India. Bharatpur has happily fallen, and it is quite certain that without foreign aid, the case contemplated by Sir John cannot possibly happen in the present state of India. This however does not alter the question, which is not as to the effect but to the cause. Does deep and extensive disaffection exist, and is it, as far as central India goes, produced by our misrule and erroneous system and regulations.

I ask again whether this *prima facie* case of the unsuccessful exercise of our supremacy may not be made out by the dissensions and civil war which prevail in the Rajput states where our authority has been so long established. It might be inferred that under an able, active, and paternal superintendence such dissensions ought not to have existed, much less to have so long continued.

May it not be reasonably assumed that the unexpected presence of an authority formerly so well known and so deservedly popular with all ranks and classes in central India, might operate as a most seasonable interposition. If there are evils in the principle of our system, or abuse in the practical enforcement of it, may not his great experience, aided by the confidence of the public, better enable him than another to suggest a remedy, and should disaffection to our authority exist, I am confident we should all agree that there is no one, who possesses to a greater degree the happy and powerful manner of placing in their true light the real intentions of the British government and of establishing by kindness and conciliation universal confidence.

Having now concluded my questions to my colleagues, I will now address myself to Sir John Malcolm.

As the court of directors have saddled the supreme government with the responsibility of the measure, it becomes our duty before we can give an assent to it, to know precisely the views of Sir John Malcolm in respect to the alterations he proposes to introduce in central India. I certainly read in his paper very many enlightened and benevolent principles of general policy, which have my entire concurrence, but I do not exactly collect in what manner they are to be practically applied.

In paragraph 6 Sir John observes 'the establishment of a more efficient administration for central India independent of the great advantages

to that country, might serve as a model in other parts of our empire, almost equally remote. Such a government founded in conservative principles, while it conciliated and attached all classes would afford the best opportunity we are ever likely to have of preventing the universal spread of a levelling rule, which will have to encounter in the rooted prejudices and high spirit of the tribes of Rajputana a resistance very different from that we have ever yet experienced in India.'

This paragraph it is right to observe was written in 1821, and may not be meant by Sir John to apply to the present arrangements of the supreme government.

It is however necessary as the responsibility is vested in us, that I should ask, if Sir John continue in the same opinion, in what the inefficiency of the present system consists, as well as what that other system may be, which I agree with him in thinking ought always to be founded upon the enlightened measures he has laid down.

The territory of central India may be divided into two parts, the one and that by far the greatest proportion occupied by various chiefs, acknowledging the supremacy of the British government and tributary to it, but possessing independent authority within their own states. The other part consisting of different districts of which the revenue and judicial administration is placed in the hands of British officers.

With respect to the first as our relations with each are fixed by a separate treaty the only question that can arise as to the system to be pursued towards those chiefs, is as to the degree of interference which by virtue of our power we may choose to exercise with their affairs. It is especially desirable that Sir John should give us a clear and explicit explanation of his own sentiments upon this most important point; and to enable him to do so the more effectually, I recommend that the accompanying extracts from the recent correspondence of the supreme government with the resident at Delhi regarding the affairs of Rajputana be transmitted to him. And unless I were perfectly assured of the complete acquiescence of the Bombay government in the line laid down in those instructions, I should most reluctantly resign a little of our authority into their hands.

Of the other part of central India subject to our immediate administration, I have called upon the territorial department for a statement of the extent of revenue derivable from these districts, and the members of council will perhaps have the goodness to state if any peculiar circumstances in the political state of the country afford grounds for questioning the efficacy of the existing arrangements or for believing that they are otherwise than satisfactory to the population.

Until the main question is decided it seems unnecessary to consider any of the details accompanying Sir John Malcolm's memorandum, as all responsibility in the event of the transfer would hereafter belong to the governor in council of Bombay it would seem more respectful to that authority and more satisfactory to ourselves that we should in the first instance request them to consider the existing distribution of

appointments and division of powers and to communicate for our sanction such alterations as they may deem essential to the due discharge of their trust.

38. *Bentinck to Sir John Malcolm*

Calcutta. 26 August 1828

My dear Sir John,

I have received your letter of the 28 July.

I am glad that you appreciate justly the difficulties of my position. Here there exists an almost unanimous opposition to the transfer.

In Leadenhall Street the disinclination to it is almost as general. From the board of control not a word in its favour or against it has been communicated to me.

How then do I stand? By yielding to the feelings of my colleagues and to that body, whom it is obviously my interest to conciliate I consult my own ease and escape, and with your acquittal too, from a most unpleasant predicament.

This is not all, for there is another consideration, which cannot be wholly overlooked. Central India has been now ten years under the Bengal government.

Will Sir Chas. Metcalfe be without feeling upon such an occasion, will he and will all the other actors in the diplomatic department like the sort of criticism which plainly says, you know nothing about your business, you have managed ill from the beginning; Sir John Malcolm is the only man who can restore light and order out of this confusion and darkness.

This is again not all, for although my opinion is entirely at sea upon the subject, yet my impressions are unfavourable to the transfer. I know little of central India but what I have read in your publications. I have seen a great deal of correspondence lately from Rajputana and the result of what I have heard and seen is that central India does not offer at present the field of any great or useful service which your description holds forth. In the beginning no doubt a good and [?efficient] arrangement such as you above all men were calculated to effect might have had the happiest effects. But every day seems to have lessened the practicability of what might have been produced at first by the overwhelming influence of a powerful mind and superior talents. I am not disposed to feel much respect for these Rajput chieftains. They are like your old Highland clans, brave, plunderous, with all the weakness, conceit and vanity of Asiatic communities. Nothing but time and the steady operation of the policy laid down by the treaties, firmly but kindly executed can restore perfect order to that country.

You evidently overrate very much the extent of our territorial possessions and the duties belonging to them. Your principles and maxims of

government are much more applicable to our western provinces where the field is really great.

Notwithstanding all these encouragements and inducements to turn tail and run away from the question, I have resolved to consider neither you nor myself. You shall have from me a clear stage, fair play, and no favour! I have nothing to do with the promises made to you from home. I must be solely guided by my unbiased and impartial judgment of the good or evil of the arrangement; and I have, in the minute which I have given in to council, proposed that before we come to any decision the objections entertained by council should be sent to you for your observation and reply; and I have distinctly stated that if I take your view of the question in opposition to my colleagues, I should be prepared to carry the question upon my own responsibility.

I promise you further, a decision and no reference to the court.

I have not answered your letters with the regularity which they deserved; but what with the oppressive heat of this abominable climate of steam, and the overwhelming load of uninteresting business, I never in life was less actively disposed.

Lady William is much better than I expected.

I think of visiting our settlements to the eastward about the end of October. They are dreadful blood suckers with little prospect of corresponding advantage.

39. *J. Young*[1] *to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 1 September 1828

My Lord,

I have the honour to return the telegraph papers.

Perhaps I am not very well qualified to give a sound opinion on any branch of this question as I am the original telegraphist, and feel some parental pangs at the death of my child, even in its mutilated shape. As originally proposed, it was to have crossed the peninsula, or at least to Cawnpore or Delhi. Others lopped off the best limb and I admit it to have then lost almost all its usefulness. It always occurred to me as a sort of reproach that in our place the French would not have held such a country, so long, without establishing telegraphic communication. They have kept up their great lines to Brest, Calais, Lisle, Strasburg, Toulon, Bordeaux, Bayonne and Rochfort to this day. England I think still maintains these lines, yet in those countries the post (expresses) travel 8 or 10 miles an hour. Here we are still jogging on at a fast pace of half that rate. But I believe your Lordship has taken up this matter seriously.

39. [1] Col. Young as an army officer had previously served under Bentinck, and got to know him in the Mediterranean. Young was now engaged in working in a Calcutta house of agency. He was well known for his utilitarian views.

In regard to the Saugor Island branch of telegraphs. The substantial utility of such an establishment would perhaps be limited, to the matter of conveying immediate intelligence to town of ships having got aground or met with disasters requiring anchors and cables or other aid, which by the help of steam vessels might be conveyed to them so as to arrive 24 hours after the accident, from town, or in half the time from Diamond Harbour.

During the N.E. monsoon such accidents at the Sandheads or James and Mary are rare and the dangers to life and property by delay, comparatively trifling. Even in the stormy half of the year, they are not frequent; and the increasing use of steam, whether for tugging, piloting, or carrying relief diminishes the number and the danger when they do occur. I went out the other day in the *Reliance* of 1500 tons, to the floating light nearly, tugged by the *Nawaddy* steamer, but for whose help the Indiaman must have lost the springs for the weather would not have admitted of her moving. The *Castle Huntly* followed us, tugged by the *Ganges* steamer.

The late superintendent, Captain Weston, was very actively busy just before his death, in going about to the different mercantile houses, to obtain assent to their bearing a portion of the expense of a line to Saugor Point or Edmonstone Island. I believe he obtained the concurrence of most officers. But as his propositions were in writing, his papers must be forthcoming somewhere and will show the result. Before the scheme is abandoned, it might be advisable to have full information and specific estimates of expense prepared by Major Jackson and laid before a mixed committee of marine and mercantile and underwriting personages, who might ascertain and report to government the real expense, the usefulness or otherwise, and the quantum of charge for which the commercial body was willing to make provision. On such data your Lordship would then have no difficulty to decide the question finally.

To teach natives the use of the machinery and accurately to distinguish and repeat the signals, I found no easy task; we know how soon a sepoy on leave forgets his drill and manœuvres; there is something of weight therefore, in retaining Major Jackson's 'nucleus'.

P.S. The more I think the more I am filled with uneasiness at one thing your Lordship said yesterday, perhaps I imperfectly comprehended you. I allude to the determination of government when our troops are doing duty with Madras or Bombay sepoys on higher pay, to reduce them to our level; the only mutinies and discontents in my recollection that have arisen among our sepoys, have been distinctly traceable to real or supposed breaches of faith on the part of the state and mostly on matters connected with 'traitement' in one shape or other.

Pardon me for earnestly asking if there be not a probability of greater real evil to the state and the service in reducing the Madras, than in raising the Bengal pay? Is it not even safer to let the Bengal pay continue at its lower rate, than to reduce the other? If I were in command

of a Madras battalion I profess to your Lordship I should hardly know how to address myself to the sepoys' *reason*, in endeavouring to show good cause why they should suffer loss by the accident of a Bengal regiment's joining the same corps d'armée, whereas to the Bengal sepoy I could vindicate the justice if not the policy of the previous inequality, by the undeniable fact that the Madras sepoy engaged to serve on certain terms of pay, and the Bengal, on different terms.

I humbly mention a 'golden rule' which I offered to Mr. Wynn's consideration when so much alarm prevailed about the melancholy Barrackpore affair. That wheresoever a sepoy was sent on service of any kind, the most fastidious care should be taken to place him, and let him see that he was placed, in precisely the same condition as if he were in the old provinces, in respect to the proportion or ratio between his pay, and the expenses to which he was exposed by remoteness or change of position or other incidents of service.

I think I shall die in the conviction that such a general principle frankly acted on would secure us against any serious discontents for ever, and that nothing short of it will. There are scores of papers in the board of control by Malcolm, Munro, Worsley [*sic*], and many other authorities, strongly detailing the effect on the sepoys, and especially the Carnatic corps, produced by long continued employment in the centre of India remote from their own native provinces, even with the scale of pay which [?I] fear it is intended to cut down.

40. *Holt Mackenzie's scheme for the better government of India*[1]

3 September 1828

Scheme for the better government of the Bengal presidency, and of British India

Supreme Govt.	Governor-General	as now	
	Commander-in-Chief	as now	
	Chief Secretary and Councillor	60,000 [rupees]	
	Secretary for civil details	45,000	
	do for military do	36,000	
	3 assistants at 12000	21,600	1,62,600
Calcutta Govt.	Deputy Governor	108,000	
	Civil Councillor and Chief Secretary	60,000	

40. [1] Holt Mackenzie was largely responsible for the scheme of administrative reorganization which Bentinck adopted.

	Military Councillor, the officer commanding the presidency divn.		
	Secretary for civil details	40,000	
	do for military and marine	30,000	
	2 assistants	14,400	2,52,500
Agra Govt.	Deputy Governor	1,08,000	
	2 Civil Councillors	1,20,000	
	Military Councillor	60,000	
	2 Secretaries of civil detail	80,000	
	Secretary for military do	30,000	
	3 assistants	21,600	4,19,600
			8,34,600

It is proposed that the governor-general in council shall in regard to the ordinary administration of the Bengal presidency as of the other presidencies, content himself with a general superintendence: having however a veto in the legislation and with full authority to interfere as he may deem necessary or proper. The management of political affairs, the direction of all business connected with the civil administration, of the Indian army, the supervision and control of all general arrangements of finance are presumed properly to belong to the supreme authority. It is supposed that great public advantage will result from enabling the governor-general to cast aside the load of detailed business which he has now to conduct or for which at least he is held to be responsible. Not less benefit is anticipated from the facility which the proposed plan will give to the governor-general of proceeding with an adequate establishment, to any part of British India in which his presence may appear to be required: it being assumed that in Calcutta he is cut off by distance and climate from the means of any thing like a free communication with the chiefs and people of whatever circumstances and disposition. It is most essential he should be accurately informed, for in his darbar a few Calcutta babus and vakils, generally of no consideration and many of them little acquainted with those they represent, take the place of the men of rank and influence who would crowd from all parts of Hindustan to a court held at Delhi or Agra. It is concluded that the government at Calcutta, which was constituted at a time when our possessions did not extend beyond Benares (that province being then under a single chief) cannot adequately superintend and control the details of civil government throughout the presidency now extended, about 600 miles to the north-west of that province and about 300 from the banks of the Ganges into the very heart of India: to say nothing of the addition of Cuttack running more than two hundred

miles to the south-west, or of our more recent acquisitions, or of the vast accessions made to British India in other quarters evidenced by increase of the general revenue from about seven to about twenty crore of rupees with a corresponding increase of civil and military establishments.* It is believed to be certain that the court which now exercises the supreme appellate jurisdiction over all the provinces that are subject to the Bengal code affords a very inadequate share of security to the people of the western provinces. It is submitted that in the unsettled conditions of those provinces it is not wise to separate there (if anywhere) the supreme judicial authority from the government. It is consequently proposed that the local administration of those provinces which will be comparatively free from the petty details that arise at the presidency shall exercise the powers of the sadar diwani and nizamat adalat. These details of the government of Calcutta to be exercised as heretofore [by the vice president in council during the absence of the governor-general] with such modifications as will suggest themselves under the altered constitution of the supreme government. It is presumed that the governor-general when at the station of either of the subordinate governments will call to his council the deputy governor; and, in matters relating to internal government, the other councillors of the local administration. The commander-in-chief is supposed only to take a part in the affairs ordinarily cognizable by the supreme government.

To meet the above expense the following funds present themselves—

Two Civil Members of Council	1,95,000	
6 Secretaries	2,83,000	
Deputies and Assistants	60,000	
Saving at Delhi (a single commissioner to be substituted for the residency and commission)	1,15,000	
Superintendent of Police N.P. (with a local government this appointment will no longer be necessary)	72,000	
2 Judges of the Sadar	1,10,000	8,35,600

It seems to be likely that, with a local government so near as Agra, the Bharatpur agency costing about 42,000 rupees might at an early period be discontinued and some decrease might be made in the establishment of the Gwalior residency of which the expense is stated rupees 1,75,000.

Probably too a larger reduction would be effected at Delhi: for I have supposed the palace guard and intelligence establishment to be maintained. I have left to the commissioner all his uncovenanted and private establishment; which if he were joined with one of the members

* This is in 1793–4. The contrast would be much stronger if we went back to the time of Warren Hastings.

of the western board might not be necessary and I have taken no credit under the head of contingencies.

With respect to subordinate establishments and other miscellaneous items of expense it should not apprehend a material if any increase of charge. The expenses attending the governor-general's visits to the western provinces would doubtless be very considerably reduced. But the object seems to be well worth a considerable pecuniary sacrifice.

41. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 14 September 1828

My dear Lord William,

I have received your Lordship's letter of the 26th ultimo, and am much obliged by the explanations it contains. I conclude from it all idea of employing me in central India is at an end, but I do trust the objections taken to my agency will not prevent the adoption of plans better suited to lay the foundation of permanent peace and prosperity in that country than those changing systems, which we have had for the last eighty years.

The mention I made of promises in England could never be meant by me to have the slightest influence on your Lordship's decision on a point where it became your public duty to exercise your judgment, but these promises were stated to open the sentiments of those by whom I was nominated and as proofs that—as far as employment in central India was an object of honourable ambition I had on public grounds a just right to complain of disappointment.

As the question is considered settled, I shall neither court, nor avoid further discussion upon the subject. It is one upon which my sentiments cannot be changed, and I do not expect to be able to alter opinions grounded on the data I believe there to be of the gentlemen of Calcutta.

As far as my private feelings and health are concerned, your Lordship's intentions are a release to me from a pledge of exertion under which I might have sunk but which had I lived to go through with it would I believe not only in its local effects but in the expression of the principles established have been worth all the services of my life.

My estimate of our territories in central India was made from a paper received from the India House and probably there were errors in it, but this, though it might have affected the extent of establishment, had little connection with the general objects of a plan, which sought less to improve immediate revenue than to prevent that ruinous expenditure in military preparations and operations, which are the too frequent result of the mismanagement of countries like Rajputana.

In concluding I must again state I fully appreciate your Lordship's situation and it will be a satisfaction to you to know that owing to several circumstances the earlier period at which your view of this

subject will enable me to return to England is likely to be a source of private convenience and gratification.

Pray make my best regards to Lady William on account of whom I dreaded a Calcutta September. I am rejoiced to hear you think of moving.

42. *Bentinck to Sir John Malcolm*

Calcutta. 25 September 1828

My dear Sir John,

Some objection appearing to exist to the *official* communication of the minutes of the other members of council, I have obtained their consent to send them to you privately.

You can now therefore answer the arguments and are only restricted from adverting nominally to their authors. My wish has been to associate you with us in our supreme council, to consider this subject as one purely public and divested of all private feelings or interest, and to give to the question the benefit of the finest and fullest discussions. I wish all to be satisfied with the fairness and honesty of my proceedings; and above all I wish to satisfy myself.

We have received the despatches from Persia, and I hope you will send me the minute you had prepared to write. I am doubtful whether Col. Macdonald did well to take back the 200,000 tomans, which will be considered as releasing the prince from his engagement made under full powers from his father, to cancel the 3rd and 4th articles of the treaty, and which on our part had been executed by the payment of the money. The prince's bond under such circumstances, appears to me to have all the validity of a treaty, and the ratification of it by the king was in my judgment a matter of little consequence. But a different view may, since the aggrandizement of Russia towards the East with every prospect of its increase, be taken of this question in England, and we may be glad to have an excuse for putting a stop to Russian encroachment. I use the word *may*, not that I think this will be the case. The fact is that Persia is now little better, if so good, as a Maratha power, and equally unable to cope with Russia, as the latter was with us, and we can derive nothing but disappointment and disaster from cooperating with her for the defence of her territories. Indeed we cannot defend her. She is completely at the mercy of Russia, and if Russia should take it into her head to invade India, she will begin not by the invasion of Persia, but, as Bonaparte should have acted towards Poland, by a close alliance with that power.

These questions however must all be decided in England, as they will have been, and sent to Col. Macdonald long before any opinion of ours could reach him. We shall therefore abstain from giving any opinion ourselves upon the subject.

We have determined today in council to allow the repair of the residency house at the sum specified, 2000 tomans; which Col. M. may be glad to know, that he may begin the work.

I am sorry to hear so poor an account of Lady Campbell—she will be a dreadful loss to you. My last letters came down only to the 10th of May. They are silent as to the cabinet dissensions, and I do not collect either from the papers or any private letters, their immediate cause. . . .

43. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

25 September 1828

My dear Lord William,

There is nothing I have more at heart than a fair trial of the steam passage to England via Cosseir or Suez—my being able to make it depends upon your giving us the *Enterprize*. From the full report of my friend Col. Wilson who came a passenger in her from England I know well her powers both of carrying coals and of velocity. These qualifications will no doubt make many with your Lordship anxious to keep her at Calcutta, but I think your Lordship will think with me that no employment in your quarter can have the importance of an early experiment of our means of rapid communication of intelligence. In my view the present state of affairs in Europe gives this object additional importance.

I shall be anxious for your Lordship's answer as I shall write immediately to England to [*illeg.*] and have no doubt from what passed upon the subject before I left England and from my friend Sir Frederick Adams' anxiety upon this point that a steamer would be at Alexandria, but if not, the state of our letters reaching that port would determine the benefit, for they can calculate to within a day the short period from it to a port in the Adriatic; with the *Enterprize* my opinion is that a letter might be conveyed to Alexandria in three weeks, certainly in four—but with a vessel of less powers, particularly if like the *Ganges* that came to Bombay, I should be sorry to see the experiment tried, as it would be a waste of money and might lead to erroneous conclusions. With this feeling I am quite resigned if you do not generously give us the *Enterprize* to await the completion of our own vessel now building—though I fear I must hazard leaving an experiment to others, which it was a favourite object with me to make myself.

44. *Bentinck to Sir John Malcolm*

Calcutta. 30 September 1828

My dear Sir John,

I enclose a minute, which has been approved by council and which in a few days will become the subject of an official despatch to you and Madras, proposing the formation at Calcutta of a civil and military

committee composed of officers belonging to the three presidencies to review the general expenditure and establishment of our Indian empire.[1] You will perceive that the recommendation takes its rise out of facts continually coming under our notice, of many most useless charges in our system in Bengal. I have always had the opinion that there existed more [profusion] here than at either of the other presidencies. Latterly Bombay is said to have run us a hard race: but however this may be, I am quite certain there is no remedy for the evil except by a fair and dispassionate examination and comparison of the charges of all the presidencies by a committee of able, impartial and enlightened officers. Had Spring Rice come out, I destined him to be the secretary of that committee and essential benefits would have been derived from his good humour, his superior talents and his general habits and knowledge of European business, in addition to which his impartiality as a stranger would have been no slight advantage. I think I shall make Capt. Benson my military secretary, whom I chose entirely from his character and who seems a most estimable person (the brother of Benson the popular preacher at St. John's Church) the secretary of the committee, in order to secure impartiality and to give if required, the aid of my own support and encouragement.

The success of the measure will altogether depend upon the men sent to us. I am anxious to have the best possible and the higher in the province, and the greater their consideration, the better. I believe Mr. Warden lately in council, is not the one I knew in Malabar or otherwise from the opinion I then had of him, I should have suggested him. He having been in council where all the interests of the government come under review, and who has had the benefit of knowing Mr. Elphinstone's sentiments would be a *prima facie* strong recommendation.

Your military men are wholly unknown to me. But you are sure to make the best choice to go beyond our wishes. We have not fixed upon our member here: but probably it will be Holt Mackenzie, who is certainly a very able man. Your portraits of the characters here are quite equal to Lawrence's. I have said more than enough upon this subject. I will for the present conclude.

45. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Bombay. 7 October 1828

I send you copies of the minutes of the civil counsellors. That of the commander-in-chief I have not yet received. It is not so strong but he concurs in all proceedings.

Our letter which we thought moderate and which was quite necessary to prevent the pleas of ignorance of our intentions has created a terrible

44. [1] This was Bentinck's first step in preparing the way for retrenchment of expenditure, as he had been instructed in London. It failed in practice. See Introduction, .

flame. The court I hear met yesterday and the judges could hardly find words to express their indignation at our insulting letter. It was read in court and their answer was given by the clerk of the crown to the chief secretary! I enclose a copy of it. Sir John Grant was the most violent but Sir Charles Chambers also fumed not a little. He said I am informed, that they owned no superiors and had no equals. I certainly think that this last assertion is undeniable. . . .

We must expect from the present temper of the judges that they will go to every extreme. I have personally evidence of the violence and want of discretion of one of them that I feel it charity to conceal. I am too conscious of being right to be annoyed much less to have my temper shaken by any thing that has occurred or can occur. Your Lordship may therefore depend upon my proceeding calmly but resolutely to preserve the affairs of this presidency from suffering any serious injury and I shall as far as I can take advantage of present proceedings to prevent encroachments which cannot go much further without ruin to the [*illeg.*].

I have written home my feeling by the *Raffles* which sailed yesterday. I enclose copy of my letter to Mr. Wynne which though short contains the whole truth of the present question at issue.

46. *Bentinck's minute on the appointment of civil and military committees*

10 October 1828

Several circumstances of late have strongly confirmed an opinion which I had been disposed to entertain, that much good might arise from a general review of the expenditure and establishments of the three presidencies.

The circumstances to which I allude are:

First: The 'accidental' discovery of an excessive establishment of military cattle under the presidency of Fort William.

Secondly: The discovery arising out of a reference to the governor in council of Bombay in consequence of the preceding fact, that at that presidency there exists *no* establishment of public cattle.

To a similar reference made to Madras we have received no answer, but it is not improbable, that there a different system may obtain.

Thirdly: The 'accidental' discovery only in the last council, that an expense of 5,000 rupees per mensem is and has been for very many years, uselessly expended as an allowance for the maintenance of six bullocks for carriage of spare arms.

I use the word 'accidental' as contradistinguished from results produced by positive enquiry and investigation. These and many other items of expense in all departments have come to the notice of the government, as it were, by chance only and when so presenting them-

selves have always undergone immediate enquiry and reduction, when expedient.

If such large and unnecessary charges are thus accidentally brought to light, I think it fair to infer, that a committee appointed expressly for the purpose, might unfold many other useless charges and might suggest alterations calculated to produce a great saving of expense as well as unity and efficiency in the general administration.

My idea is, that such an enquiry would be most advantageously conducted by two committees, one civil and one military, composed of three members, one from each of the presidencies, to sit at Calcutta. It is by comparison between the establishments of the three presidencies, and in some degree perhaps in the spirit of rivalship existing between separate bodies, that we can hope to arrive at true conclusions. We cannot, as in the appointment of the finance committee in England, select individuals of perfect independence and free from personal bias on the subjects under consideration. Here the selection is necessarily confined to the service itself.

In some respects it would be more convenient and economical for each government to conduct the enquiry by a committee formed of its own servants but to my judgment a single combined committee would be far preferable: because besides the greater degree of impartiality and earnestness which men may be expected to show, who are not under the influence of local feelings and prejudices and whose labours may come under the review of the legislature itself, there is this other great advantage, that in no other way, can the charges and establishments of the three presidencies be brought to the test of fair comparison and impartial revision.

It is of course my intention that the governments of the several presidencies would choose their own men.

47. *Sir Charles Edward Grey*[1] *to Bentinck*

Garden Reach, Calcutta. 11 October 1828

My dear Lord William,

I ought some time ago to have mentioned that, at one of the meetings of the Asiatic Society I communicated the letter which I had received from Sir Gore Ouseley, Sir A. Johnston, and Col. Fitzclarence and I mentioned that your Lordship had been addressed on the same subject. We then appointed a committee for corresponding with the R.A. Society of which Sir Charles Metcalfe is president and Mr. Haliday is secretary. I shall write to the R.A.S. to inform them of these proceedings, and to assure them that I am willing to do every thing in my power

47. [1] Grey, Sir Charles (1785–1865), 1820 Judge of the Supreme Court, Madras; Chief Justice, Bengal, 1825–32. *D.N.B.*

to promote the freest and fullest intercourse and correspondence between the two societies, and, perhaps, it would be taken as a courtesy if Sir Charles Metcalfe, who is a member of the R.A.S. were to do the same.

The Asiatic Society has never thought of abandoning the publication of its transactions: and there is no occasion for transferring that duty to the R.A.S. A volume of our transactions has been very recently published, and a subscription is opened for the purpose of publishing another without delay. To make the members of each society members of the other, it would be necessary to call a general meeting of the Asiatic Society, and the measure would answer no useful purpose. It is quite a matter of course to admit into the Asiatic Society any respectable person who wishes it. The only practicable cooperation seems to me to be that of a free correspondence, which might be made easier if this government should be disposed to give the secretary of the Asiatic Society the privilege of sending and receiving letters free of postage: a privilege which in the hands of the present secretary I am sure would never be abused.

As your Lordship is so good as to ask my opinion on the points on which the R.A.S. desires your Lordship's assistance I will venture to state what occurs to me.

I know of no means by which the attention of learned natives could be directed, or our own countrymen stimulated, unless by calling a public meeting: and I do not believe even that would have any permanent effect.

There can be little doubt that amongst the records of the government there must be a great mass of information which would, if published, elucidate the statistics, topography, natural history and meteorology of India: but I do not conceive that a general liberty of examining these records could be given to any but a sworn servant of the government. In the forthcoming volume of the transactions of the Asiatic Society one or two reports of the state of particular districts will, I believe, be published. If any officer of government would make a selection of scientific and literary information there cannot be any doubt that it would be in his power to form a curious and valuable collection.

The R.A.S. are not aware that an admirable catalogue of the Mackenzie collection has recently been printed by our secretary, Mr. Wilson. I think I can undertake that Mr. W. will send a copy of this to the R.A.S. and I do not apprehend that any difficulty would be made about permitting the R.A.S. to have a copy of any manuscript in the collection at their own expense.

To send the R.A.S. copies of any catalogues or other books which have been published by the government and of which copies remain on hand would seem to be an act of courtesy and liberality free from any objection.

If the R.A.S. were incorporated, and subject to permanent regulations it might not be objectionable to give them the privilege of free

postage: but if they are a mere voluntary society inconvenience might arise from this indulgence by reason of some change in the form or spirit of the society which might put the government under the necessity of resorting to the ungracious measure of withdrawing the privilege. Pardon the freedom with which I have made these remarks. . . .

48. *Bentinck to Lord Melville*

Calcutta. 17 October 1828

I have to inform you with much regret of the death of the Bishop of Calcutta at sea on the 22nd of August. Mrs. James had landed at Penang and was to proceed to England in one of the ships on their return from China. I consider him to be a great loss to us. I did not know him, but he is represented by those who did, to be a mild, conciliating, amiable, enlightened man and no high churchman.

I am happy to say that I have little to communicate from hence. All is peace and tranquillity, and what is locally of importance to us, there has never been known so healthy a season. The 59th Regiment (King's) 900 strong stationed in Fort William has only 28 men in hospital.

We have made no decision yet about central India. My colleagues in council are unanimous against the measure. The universal opinion out of it is generally unfavourable. I have thought it fair by Sir John, that he should have an opportunity of replying to the objections made against his proposition. The fact is, that Sir Charles Metcalfe is much better informed of the state of those countries than Sir John Malcolm, and his opinions are certainly entitled to equal if not greater consideration. Sir Charles is a very able, solid man, and held in the highest estimation. I have little doubt of his being the first man in India.

We have resolved upon forming two committees at Calcutta, civil and military, to be composed each of one member from the three presidencies, to review the general establishments of our Indian empire. I am satisfied they are susceptible of much improvement, and reduction without materially interfering with individual interests.

We have also some measures in contemplation for the greater despatch of justice and for establishing a more efficient control of our revenue collectors. I am just now particularly pleased with the complete success that has attended our experiment of steam navigation up the Ganges to Allahabad under the most unfavourable circumstances of season. The voyage by a good sailing boat takes about three months. The steamer has performed it in twenty four days and four of these were lost by the want of pilots, and from the bad steering of the vessel. It was apprehended that the vessel would have been lost on the sand banks of the rivers. She only struck twice, was extricated without difficulty and suffered no damage. Every succeeding attempt will be comparatively

easy. I anticipate even greater advantage in India, where we are almost without roads and with the slowest communication, from this cause, than in any other country in the world.

49. *Bentinck's minute on Persian affairs*

28 October 1828

. . . . . .

8. As my views do not exactly agree with all of those which are expressed by Sir John Malcolm in his minute, under date 1st September, it may be right that I should state generally my estimation of the value of our Persian connection.

9. I perhaps am disposed to go beyond most others in my apprehensions of the future danger to our Indian empire from Russian ambition. That power has probably already discovered the folly of interfering with the politics of Europe and of knocking her head against the wall of western civilization and superiority to her both in arts and arms. From such contests she may reap honour but very little profit. It is much more natural that Russia like all the other northern hordes, encouraged by precisely the same inducements of finer climate, easier conquest and richer booty should take a southern and eastern direction. The rich harvest so easily gained from her short recent inroad into Persia will be no dissuasive to future projects of ambition and conquest. The time is probably distant before the event may occur, but that the Russian eagles will at some time or other be unfurled on the Indus, is to my mind as clear an induction, as any that can be inferred from the past history of mankind.

10. It must be therefore desirable, that we should have interposed an official barrier against the encroachments of this formidable adversary, and for this object Persia is peculiarly well adapted; too near Russia not to be her natural enemy, and too far from India, and at the same time not possessing a sufficiently gigantic power to give any real alarm to British dominion. Besides this, if ever Persia is no longer able to resist the Russian arms, and to preserve her existence as a completely independent state, as I fear is her present condition, she must necessarily become the ally of Russia in any project of eastern invasion. The question is not what it is desirable Persia should be, but what she is and whether it is possible, even with our best assistance that she can now be made, or that at any future time we can reasonably hope that she can become, a substantive and efficient barrier.

11. I cannot imagine how the most sanguine politician can anticipate any such probability. Persia whatever she may have been heretofore, is now as weak and powerless as any of the Asiatic courts, and possesses

49. [1] It was Bentinck's conviction that the affairs of Central Asia would not obtrude on his tenure in India, and that the Russian threat was not imminent.

as compared with Russia, pretty much the same means of resistance, as Sindhia or Holkar were able to oppose to the British arms. The character of Abbas Mirza holds out no prospect of a more efficient order of things. In every despatch the resident complains of the want of faith, the inconstancy and the weakness of the court and of the government. In one of the most recent papers either of Lieut. Col. Macdonald or of Sir John Malcolm, it is stated that had the Russians advanced, many of the southern provinces would have revolted from their allegiance.

12. From these facts, from the general tenor of all the accounts from Persia, I cannot but come to the conclusion, that this alliance can be productive of no benefit whatever, that expensive embassies, subsidies, all present-making for the sake of coaxing and humouring the feelings of the Persian court is false policy and a useless appropriation of the public money, and that it is only calculated to keep up in the mind of that court a delusive estimate of their own importance to us and encouraging a reliance upon our assistance from which disappointment and disadvantage to their interests must necessarily ensue. In short I cannot but agree in the view of this question so well stated by Sir Charles Metcalfe in his minute of the 2nd of July last.

13. If we are to defend Persia against Russia it can only be done by a declaration of war in Europe and the British government evidently have no wish to be entangled in any such catastrophe by this Persian connection.

14. I deem it important at the same time that we should have a political agent at the court of Persia, to watch the state of affairs and the proceedings of the Russian and Persian courts, to interpose our friendly advice and mediation, if the same rash and headlong measures should be again attempted, and to furnish intelligence of all the intervening states from Persia to the Indus, of which at present we seem to possess little information.

15. Upon the present occasion, I can truly say, that I differ most reluctantly from the distinguished individual, whose experience and knowledge of Persian feeling and of the Persian power as bearing upon the interests of Great Britain, and whose great talents dispose me to regard him as the highest authority upon the present question, and still more should I regret to be called upon to pursue a course of policy in direct opposition to his opinions. But at present no such imperious necessity exists, and until the British government may have pronounced a more decided judgment upon the different opinions entertained at Calcutta and Bombay, I am anxious to pay a certain degree of deference to the recommendation of Sir John Malcolm, and I beg leave accordingly to propose that he be authorized to offer the prince a portion of the arms asked for, without stipulating for immediate payment but leaving the demand for subsequent adjustment according to the future orders of the honourable court.

16. In connection with the present subject I shall take this opportunity of offering a remark upon the minute of Sir John Malcolm dated

the 15th of September 1828, upon the subject of piracy in the Persian Gulf, and upon the great advantage to our general interests in that quarter, if it were possible to obtain from Persia a cession of the island of Kharrack. In reference to the general treaty adverted to in the 10th paragraph, a 'naval confederacy' of which Sir John in the 6th paragraph of the same despatch proposes that Great Britain should be the head, would no doubt be a very desirable measure. At present the whole expense of the marine employed in the suppression of piracy in the gulf falls upon the British government and we seem to have a right to demand that the other states and tribes, whose commerce, equally with our own, has so much benefited by British protection, should place themselves under our direction and give their co-operation for the general advantage. But I entertain little hope of any such result.

17. With a view also to get rid of the inconvenience of 'that mingling in local disputes and politics which it is quite impossible for the resident to escape from as long as he is stationed at Abushire, and, which besides other bad effects, has and will continue to embarrass our general interests in Persia with questions, which however trivial in themselves, acquire importance from being mixed with the claims and privileges of our subjects and agents,' as well as with reference to the possibility of our being compelled to withdraw at some future time from the continent of Persia altogether, an insular position and safe harbour for our marine must be of the greatest consequence. I therefore agree in the recommendation of Sir John Malcolm, that the envoy at the court of Tehran should be instructed to take advantage of a favourable opportunity, if such should ever occur, to obtain a grant of this island.

50. *Government circular on* sati *addressed to military officers*[1]

Government House. 10 November 1828

Sir,

Towards the end of the present or the beginning of the next year, the general annual report upon suttees from the sadar adalat, containing the reports and sentiments of the judges and magistrates of the inferior courts will be laid before the governor-general in council. His Lordship is not certain that his information is correct, but he has heard that the majority of these opinions will be found in favour either of the immediate or gradual abolition of this practice. The governor-general therefore finding himself in the awful predicament of thus early being called upon to come to a decision upon a point of such momentous importance, is anxious previously to consult the opinion of those officers whose long experience, penetration and judgment may have been

50. [1] For the context see Introduction, pp. xxvi–xxviii.

directed to the consideration of this very anxious subject, as well as of the consequences which might ensue from any interference on the part of the ruling authority.

Of the rite itself, of its horror and abomination not a word need be said. Every rational and civilized being must feel anxious for the termination of a practice so abhorrent from humanity, and so much at variance even with the otherwise mild principles of the Hindu religion itself. But to the christian and to the Englishman, who by tolerating sanctions, and by sanctioning incurs before God the responsibility of this inhuman and impious sacrifice not of one, but of thousands of victims, these feelings of anxiety must be and ought to be extreme. The whole and sole justification is state necessity—that is, the security of the British empire, and even that justification, would be, if at all, still very incomplete, if upon the continuance of the British rule did not entirely depend the future happiness and improvement of the numerous population of this eastern world.

So far there it may be assumed that all feeling is agreed, but beyond this point opinions greatly differ.

Some conceive that the question of abolition cannot be approached at all, without positive danger, and without exciting the belief, that general conversion to christianity is our ultimate and sole object.

Others again take a decidedly opposite view of the case, they affirm, that a direct prohibitory order from the government would at once accomplish the object without the risk of any unpleasant circumstance. They affirm, that the practice itself is confined to families and castes; that it is the exception rather than a rule of general observance, as is obviously the case. That by far the greater proportion of suttees take place in Bengal, where the most submissive obedience to their rulers precludes the possibility of resistance, and where the long knowledge of our constant respect for the religious usages of the country, forbids any apprehension of our ultimate designs. They say, that in the upper provinces where the greater courage and general independence of the native character might occasion resistance, the occurrence of suttees is comparatively rare. They assert again, that there are many districts, in which the magistrates acting upon their own authority, have never allowed the ceremony to be performed and without the occasion of any unpleasant circumstance. The abolition of infanticide is brought forward in confirmation of the safety of the measure, and to this is added what may be considered the strongest fact of all, namely the subjecting of Brahmins to capital punishment in direct violation of the shrastra, in opposition to universal feeling and prejudice, and to the utmost disgust of that class, who have such unbounded sway over the whole Hindu population; but still, neither to the original enactment of the law, nor to its daily execution has opposition been ever offered.

Others again hope, that the practice may be gradually, and as it were, insensibly got rid of. It is considered that in the north-western provinces, where the examples are but rare, no injury could arise from

its being forbidden, that without any positive regulation, a tacitly authorized interference on the part of the magistracy, if exercised with due discretion might go far in promoting the desired object. Much, it is said, may be expected from the progress of education, and an actual diminution in the number of suttees in comparison with former years, if progressive, gives ground for hope of the self abandonment of this horrid rite.

There seems to be a very general opinion also, that the regulations of government, by giving a sort of sanction to the practice, have rather done harm than good.

If upon any or all these questions you should have been enabled to come to any decided conclusion, his Lordship would feel obliged by the communication of your sentiments.

But the point upon which the governor-general is most anxious to consult you, and perhaps it is the most important feature in the whole consideration, is, the effect that any declared intention of the government whether of immediate or gradual abolition might have upon the minds of the native army. With this view the following queries will probably aid in directing your attention to the points his Lordship wishes more particularly to be informed upon.

Would debarring the practice of suttee create any sensation among the native officers and sepoys of the Hindu persuasion likely to evince itself in tumult or revolt, or actual opposition to the measures enacted for its abolition? Would they consider the suppression of this particular rite so great a hardship, as to cause amongst them manifestations of disgust or irritation, or ill will and disaffection to the state? Supposing actual opposition or manifestations of feelings of a serious and unpleasant nature to be in your opinion improbable would interference in the matter of suttee to the extent of a total abolition of the usage, create anxiety and alarm amongst the sepoys, under the apprehension of other innovations, or excite a dread that this was only the first step towards a more general attack on their customs and religion; or would such interference be deemed by them an abandonment of our professed desire to abstain from invading their customs? Notwithstanding an apparent passive submission to an edict for the discontinuance of suttee, would the effect of such a measure be to create sullenness amongst the men, or any distrust of our motives; or would it be likely to generate and diffuse among the native soldiers the slightest aversion to our rule and authority?

As mischief might arise if it were known that this question was under consideration, his Lordship is particularly anxious that you should not confer with any native upon the present occasion, and that in replying to this letter, you will have recourse to no other opinions, than what past opportunities and previous personal observation may have enabled you to form.

51. *Bentinck to Sir John Malcolm.* Private. Copy

Calcutta. 12 November 1828

I am glad your judicial war is nearly over, and I hope the victory you have obtained here, will equally follow your proceedings in England.

The bar and the judges here (but I can only speak with certainty of the opinion of one of the latter) are unanimous in thinking that the judges at Bombay have put an erroneous construction upon the provisions of the charter (a copy of which I have not yet been able to obtain) in reference to writs of habeas corpus, and have greatly exceeded their powers. The mistake into which they have fallen, is as to the prerogative writ issued by the court of king's bench under an act of Charles the 2nd. It is the opinion here, that that act has nothing to do with India: and it is clear that it cannot, for if the judges of the supreme court were compellable, without the exercise of any direction of their own, to issue a writ of habeas corpus upon every application, as they have assumed to be their duty, every gaol would be emptied of its prisoners, and every rich native of the provinces would be put under restraint and contribution by the harpies of the supreme court. The courts, as well as the lawyers, have always asserted that they have the power of issuing a writ of habeas corpus upon the provisions of all residing within the territories: that they possess the power given by the *common* law to the court of king's bench to enquire, and where they deem fit, according to their discretion, but not of necessity, to order the parties, from whatever part of the territories before them. You will perceive that this construction of the law is far from going the length of the other, and altho' *I believe* that it never was the intention of the legislature to place any other but Europeans and their servants who might be resident without the limits of the court, under their authority, still there are words in the acts which evidently support this interpretation.

The council here are unanimous in thinking you right in having restricted this extreme and illegal exercise of authority. Perhaps they are not equally so in your having chosen the best mode of making known your intentions to the court, and that a private communication in the first place, and your ultimate resolution by a verbal message by the advocate general, might have answered all purposes better, but these are very minor criticisms.

I received today your letter of the 22nd October relating principally to Sir J. Grant. He is not a solitary instance of an union in the same person of great personal courage and great political cowardice. I am sorry for his weakness, but I think it impossible that he can carry it to the length of not implicitly obeying the orders of the government. If he acted otherwise he ought to be immediately suspended from his office. You have taken your line and whether right or wrong, you cannot retreat an inch, without compromising the authority of government and without occasioning great political mischief.

In respect to Sir J. B. be assured that any reference upon the case supposed shall have from us instant and most decided support.

The questions however were not submitted to the advocate general and Mr. Compton, who however is not provisional as you supposed. From the former we have no chance of any immediate answer, but the latter as a candidate for office, will probably answer to our urgent call for an opinion.

I have no acquaintance with Sir J. Grant, except that general one of one member of the house of commons with another. I do not ever recollect being in his company, and when recommending to me his son, he addressed me rather as a stranger than as a house of commons acquaintance.

52. *Bentinck to Lord Combermere.* Copy. Private and Confidential

Calcutta, 12 November 1828

Dear Lord Combermere,

Having had the suttee question very much pressed upon my attention in England, and feeling the great responsibility which under any view of the case, and under any decision must belong to me, both in my private and public capacity, I came to this resolution for my own future comfort, that as soon as possible I would come to a decision upon the question, in some way or other. The annual report of the judges and magistrates shortly to be sent up to government, will afford this opportunity, and in the meantime I am anxious to obtain such other information, as may tend to elucidate the subject in all its different bearings. The effect of abolition upon the minds of the native army is one of the most important considerations, which of course the civil officers can give no opinion upon and can only be supplied by military officers of experience. As every step taken in a measure involving such serious consequences requires the utmost possible prudence and precaution, I have thought it better for the sake of future security in the event of a decision in favour of abolition, and in the event of consequent disasters, to be able to shew that I had neglected no means of ascertaining the sepoy feeling. The question being one of state policy, I addressed a letter officially to the military secretary of government, desiring him to give me a list of officers most likely to have considered, and best able to judge of the effects of the measure under contemplation. I send you the list prepared by Lt. Col. Casement as well as another of some additional names by Captain Benson. I enclose a copy of the letter, which will be addressed to all these officers in a few days.

I will send you an abstract of all their opinions, and perhaps you will have the goodness in the course of your tour to make the same enquiry. The council will of course come to no determination upon the question till they have consulted your opinion. It will be two or three months, before the papers can be laid before the government.

53. *T. Robinson to Bentinck*

Madras. 15 November 1828

My dear Lord,

I fear you have put into my hands a privilege which I am very likely to abuse, by allowing me to address your Lordship with such freedom. I will try not to act against the public good by using it too lightly, but I value it far too highly not to keep up the charter you have granted.

I had been anxious for some time to write, but the public accounts of your illness alarmed me, and made me hesitate to intrude upon you. In the mean time your Lordship's very kind letter arrived, and emboldened me by your too partial mention of my first-fruits, to offer to your acceptance a paper of questions I have thought it right to circulate among the clergy in order to obtain an accurate account of their several cures, and the prospect of usefulness at their stations. I have already begun to feel the advantage of this measure in the fuller confidence of the chaplains and the opportunity it has afforded of a more exact statement of many particulars of which I ought to be in possession, or of which they might either have scrupled or neglected to inform me. The parochial visitation which I have undertaken of the whole presidency will, with God's blessing, complete this object. I have just returned from a dawk journey thro' the stations, and I hope to proceed on a more leisurely and more interesting tour to the south immediately after [*illeg.*]. In forwarding all my views in these journeys the government has shewn a kindness and liberality for which I cannot sufficiently express my obligations.

There is another official paper, which I venture to enclose, connected with our missionary churches, and relating to a subject of immense importance. Your Lordship is aware that there has long been a difference of opinion among the missionaries as to the extent to which the observance of caste ought to be permitted in native converts. The elder missionaries often advocate its continuance to a considerable extent; the younger call loudly for its abrogation. The feud has long been high and Bishop Heber in his visitation of the south was taking measures to collect such complete information from all quarters as would enable him to issue an episcopal regulation on the subject. My own intimate acquaintance with his Lordship's views, especially in whatever regarded this archdeaconry, has made me naturally anxious to carry into effect the measure which engaged many of his last thoughts, in order that when the question is referred again to the decision of a competent authority, the materials of judgment may be fully prepared. Your Lordship's experience in India has been so extensive and imbued with so much wisdom, that you will perceive at once the great importance of the enquiry and the necessity of caution in its pursuit.

The great want of chaplains, and above all, of such men as would do honour to our church by their wise and humble diligence, begins to press on me more heavily and painfully as I see more of the spiritual wants of

our fellow countrymen, especially in the remoter stations. I have taken the liberty of addressing Lord Melville on the subject and entreating his most favourable attention to it. At the same time I have been bold enough to ask his Lordship for the appointment of a chaplaincy for a clergyman who has been several years in India, and whom I long to see in a sphere of greater usefulness. *Mr. Sawyer* is an ordained clergyman, who came out in the service of the Church Missionary Society, and his humble and exemplary labours, his great acquirements, and fine temper, have won for him the confidence and respect of all. He is of a good family and they were unfortunately alienated from him for a time by his acceptance of an inferior appointment to this country and rejecting a chaplaincy which was offered him. Larger experience has now convinced him that he was wrong, and that he might do more good to his own countrymen, and not less to India, if he were a regular chaplain on the establishment. He is returning home for family reasons, and I feel very anxious that he may return to us in the situation he desires. Will you pardon me, my dear Lord, for taking the liberty of mentioning your Lordship's name, and expressing my hope that you would kindly strengthen both my requests to the president by a few words from yourself.

Our venerable and excellent friend, Dr. Rottler, having nearly completed his dictionary of Tamil, has placed the MS in the hands of the district committee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in order for its immediate publication. The committee have learned with great pleasure that your Lordship has kindly allowed it to appear with the patronage of your own name, and they have now requested me, as their chairman, to present their respectful thanks for this act of condescending kindness shewn to its venerable author, and, further to request that you would be pleased, on behalf of the supreme government, to aid the publication by taking some copies of the work, when completed, for the College of Fort William. They venture to make this request on the ground of its very great public utility to the service, and as being the only dictionary (that deserves the name) of an ancient and important language. The work has been submitted to the examination of the best Tamil scholars in Madras, who speak very highly of its execution; and in order to ensure its perfection and correctness, the governor has very kindly authorized the secretary of the board of public instruction to prepare the sheets for the press. I will do myself the honour of enclosing the first sheet as soon as it is struck off, together with an official letter in the name of the committee.

I fear your Lordship will think me an importunate beggar, but I have still one more request to make on behalf of another society, and of an undertaking which holds out the promise of immense advantage to the British inhabitants of every part of India. The Church Missionary Society, feeling the necessity of providing for the education of the children of their missionaries, either by sending them to England, or establishing a school for them in this country, have determined on the latter

expedient, and their committee have received instructions to proceed immediately with the necessary building, on the Nilgiri hills. They are expecting the immediate arrival of two well-educated, ordained schoolmasters, to conduct the institution, and in the course of next year we hope to see it in active operation. But the great want of anything like a good school for Europeans in India, the great facilities thus placed in our hands, and the hope that we may be able in great measure to defray the expenses of our immediate object by admitting others to share in its advantages, have determined us to make it a general public school for Europeans, and Indo-Britons thro' the whole of India. The only restriction we propose to make is that the committee shall have the power of judging of the fitness of every such application. I am preparing a sketch of the plan and object of the institution, in order to facilitate its general circulation at the different presidencies in the hope of obtaining assistance in the building which will be an immediate outlay of 20,000 or 30,000 rupees. I am in great hopes that the government of Madras may give us some assistance, perhaps in procuring timber, on the ground of our supplying a room for the regular performance of divine service by the chaplain of the station. The committee has requested me to address your Lordship on the subject, and to express our humble hope that you would kindly condescend to patronize our undertaking, and allow the proposals to go forth with the powerful sanction of your name.

I cannot conclude without entreating your Lordship's pardon for having trespassed so long on your indulgence, nor can I resist adding an expression of grateful acknowledgment for the kind wishes contained in your letter. We have, I trust, my dear Lord, too firm a trust in the overruling providence that controls and orders what is best for his church, to do other than bow in humble resignation to his will that has a third time made us desolate. As far as any prospects are concerned of my own possible succession, I can most truly say that I am far too happy in my present sphere, to be ambitious of any removal even to so high a dignity; the prospect of being your Lordship's chaplain at Barrackpore, and of the nearer enjoyment of your society and friendship (if you will allow me so strong a word) would be in itself a great inducement.

54. *Lt. Col. Playfaire to Captain R. Benson*[1]

Sitapur. 24 November 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 5 December 1828

Sirs,

I have had the honour to receive the circular to my address of date 10th instant and in conformity to the desire therein expressed, its contents shall not be divulged to a single individual, European or native.

I have then simply, by command of the right honourable the

56. [1] Benson was Bentinck's military secretary.

governor-general, to give my opinion from past experience and observation, as to the effect likely to be produced, by the abolition of the rite alluded to in your letter. This I do without hesitation and it is, that any order of government prohibiting the practise would create a most alarming sensation throughout the native army, they would consider it an interference with their customs and religion amounting to an abandonment of those principles which have hitherto guided government in its conduct towards them. Such a feeling once excited, there is no possibility of predicting what might happen. It might break out in some parts of the army in open rebellion, certainly, in all it would produce distrust and disaffection.

It has been said that the practise is not enjoined in the shrastra. This may be a fact, but if so, the knowledge, or belief of it, is confined to a few; I think I may affirm, that nine-tenths of the Hindus from the caste of Gwallas, upwards, think otherwise. They regard the rite as sacred, and as a certain passport to endless felicity hereafter.

I make no apology for having so briefly communicated my sentiments. I feared that to have enlarged on the subject I should have unnecessarily occupied too much of his Lordship's valuable time.

55. *Government of Bengal resolution on the appointment of civil and military committees*

25 November 1828

In the expectation that the members of the civil and military finance committees whom the governments of Madras and Bombay have selected in furtherance of the resolution of the 10th ultimo, may be expected to arrive in Bengal at an early period, the governor-general in council proceeds to consider, first, what officers shall be appointed as members for this presidency, 2ndly, what further arrangements shall be made for giving to the committees the utmost practical degree of efficiency, and 3rdly, what instructions shall be issued for their guidance in the prosecution of the important duties to be confided to them.

2. On the first head the governor-general in council resolves that the secretary to government in the territorial department shall be the member of the civil committee, and for the military committee, his Lordship in council deems it proper to select Brigadier E. P. Wilson.

3. In considering the second of the points above stated, it appears to his Lordship in council that the weight and authority of the committees will be greatly augmented and other important advantages secured by their acting under the superintendence of the members of the supreme council, one giving his attention to the civil and the other to the military committee. His Lordship in council accordingly resolved that Mr. Bayley be solicited to undertake the superintendence of the civil

finance committee, and that Sir Charles Metcalfe be similarly requested to superintend the military committee.

4. It is not of course designed to cast upon the members of government any part of the labour of research which will be necessary to the ascertainment of the facts upon which the committee will have to report. That will be the duty of the members, and his Lordship in council does not contemplate the necessity of Mr. Bayley or Sir Charles Metcalfe's taking any share in their deliberations: tho' they will naturally maintain such a degree of communication with the committee which they respectively superintend as may be necessary for the purpose of removing any difficulties which they may meet with, or any doubts they may entertain as to the general views of government.

5. The governor-general will himself watch with an anxious interest the progress of both committees under a strong sense of the importance of the objects to which their labours are to be directed and a cordial resolution to give his most strenuous co-operation towards their successful accomplishment.

6. It appears to the governor-general in council to be necessary that each of the committees should have an officer of ability attached to them as secretary, and his lordship in council accordingly resolves that Mr. P. M. Wynch, deputy secretary to government in the judicial department, shall be secretary to the civil committee, and that Major W. Kennedy, 1st assistant to the military auditor general, shall be secretary to the military committee.

. . . . .

11. In pursuance of this principle, it is the desire of his Lordship in council that the civil committee should with the following restrictions enter on a complete comparative revision of the establishments entertained in the several departments of the civil branches of the government at the three presidencies: the object being as far as can be done without an inordinate delay to see that all who are wanted are employed to the best advantage; and that not a rupee is uselessly or unnecessarily expended.

. . . . .

14. The commercial branch of the honourable Company's affairs it appears to his Lordship in council desirable to reserve for special consideration. As to the ecclesiastical department the committee can only notice the general financial result for the consideration of government and the home authorities.

15. In regard to all other civil establishments in the general, judicial, revenue (all branches included) and marine departments, it is the desire of his Lordship in council to leave the committee altogether free to push their enquiries to the utmost extent, to which they may consider it to be necessary or expedient to carry them, with the view of securing unity, efficiency and economy in the establishments maintained and arrangements made at the several presidencies.

16. The committee will also particularly enquire into and report upon arrangements adopted at the several presidencies for providing the accommodation required for the public offices and generally as to the course pursued in regard to the construction and repair of public works and buildings belonging to the civil department.

. . . . . .

27. The military committee will of course be guided in their proceedings by the same general principles as are prescribed for the civil committee in so far as they may be properly applicable to both branches.

28. With a few exceptions, it is the desire and expectation of government that their enquiries should embrace all matters connected with military finance.

56. *Lt. Colonel Porderi to Captain R. Benson*

Benares. 25 November 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 3 December 1828

Sir,

Your letter of 10th November, regarding suttees and marked confidential, I had the honour to receive on the 21st instant.

Our situation in India, would indeed be precarious, were the fears entertained by many that an order for the abolition must be followed by general revolt of the Hindus incited by the Brahmins and priests.

I consider such fears groundless for these reasons, that the influence of the Brahmins over the Hindu population, has been on the decline for many years, and continues to decline.

That rites and ceremonies, involving cruelty and immolation, are less attended on, and cared for than formerly, and that indifference to them is increasing.

That those holidays and festivals which have pleasure and recreation are as well attended and as much enjoyed as ever. If our interference tended to an evil and not a good end; if we promoted torture and death, disaffection and revolt might ensue. But as the history of our government prove the reverse, and the universal feeling displayed by all classes of Europeans to discourage whatever in the Hindu religion and their social customs has a cruel or an immoral tendency, while the countenance of all Christians in whatever has good for its end towards the natives, as well as our participation in all holidays that embrace innocent mirth and amusement, must have long convinced them, that we act on one general principle at least, and I think they must have discovered it to be their happiness.

I have heard, that Sir John Shore governor-general used to attend the Durga puja nautches given by rich natives in Calcutta, as civil and military servants do now.

On the dewali, dussara, holi etc., they invite Europeans, by whose presence they consider themselves honoured. They request some gentleman to provide a dinner, wine, etc., at their expense. The raja of Benares does this, the same takes place at Agra, Delhi, etc.

We never invade the sanctity of their dwellings, or places of worship, or their religious mummery, as we are prone to think it. It is felt and acknowledged, that one great motive alone prompts us to interfere, the prevention of cruelty and death.

When Lieutenant Clayton and another young officer on the elephant, were driven into the Jumna and both drowned, for persisting in firing at and killing a monkey (they are held sacred) at Muttra, government took no notice of the circumstance, nor would they, if any of their servants, civil or military were killed by the natives, in any wanton act of insult regarding their religion. This is well known throughout India.

If any man or men, therefore, shall raise the cry that conversion to christianity is our object, they must be designing hypocrites or traitors, and should be treated as such.

In what light positive interference so as to ensure the prevention of suttees is viewed by the natives, may be found in the many recorded instances of such interference being most successfully exerted by a few individuals, three, four or six Europeans, where thousands of natives being present might easily have destroyed them without detection. Witnesses would not have come forward, and impunity was certain. At the moment the pile has been lighted, when enthusiasm may be granted to have been at its height (if any existed) has the intended victim often escaped. Thus, the multitude, commonly Hindus, either struck by admiration at, or partaking the feeling of the fearless few, very few, in the cause of humanity, have suffered the woman to be led quietly away, though violence in the rescue has been sometimes resorted to, not by swords, or firearms, but by sticks and the hand.

The sacrifices by the wheels of the car at Jagannath, of burning women to death, of drowning them at Allahabad, the suffocating by earth forced into the mouth and nostrils, on the banks of the Ganges, of those supposed incurable, the painful inflictions of devotees, all becoming more infrequent, prove the Hindu religion is losing ground. Lord Wellesley at once stopped the practice at Saugor, of men, women and children, being thrown to sharks and alligators, and sent a sepoy guard there.

The severest blow the religion has received, I imagine, arises from our laws not respecting persons, Brahmins and priests being as liable to punishment for all crimes as the rest of the people.

I therefore conclude, that an order for immediate abolition would not be attended by danger. I believe the lower classes ripe, and expectant, and anxious for, the abolition.

But I had rather such order be given and acted on, in silence. Any publication of such a resolution on the part of government, seems uncalled for, and unnecessary. By silence, I mean that neither words or

writings should be used publicly. I would request the word 'suttee' not to be spoken in the hearing of a native. Rumour often does more mischief than acts. Firmness on the part of all judges and magistrates (appearing to result rather from personal feelings of pity for the sex) in withholding their permission, countenanced by courts of appeal and the government, must avail at once to abolish the practice. A notice from the magistrate, on a suttee being proposed to him, that every native engaging in one shall be thereby for ever disqualified serving the Company might have a good effect.

Suppose circumstances call for the publicity of the sentiments of government, I see no cause for alarm, if the edict shall pronounce a forced or concealed suttee, murder, and the actors be treated accordingly.

No reliance is to be placed, I conceive, on the self abandonment of the horrid rite, while the priesthood have any power, or their self interest be involved. They would sacrifice hundreds of widows on the pile if they dared, whose families possess not a rupee, in support of their power and popularity, in the hope that the estate of some rich suttee, would fall into their merciless hands to plunder. They seem to have been in India, what the Jesuits were in Europe, a party in every Hindu family possessing either riches or ra[gs].

The wily originators of this horrid rite, Brahmins and priests no doubt, by depriving rich male orphans of their only protectors, their mothers, to whom men owe all their virtues and good qualities, and by making the children their murderers (for the eldest son, or nearest relative light the funeral pile) annihilate all social ties, and the strong link, parental affection, that binds children to their families, and through them to the existing government.

If by gradual abolition be meant the partial local experiment in the western provinces, I should doubt the policy of such proceedings. If any feeling or prejudice be trampled on in one place, and be allowed (indulged) in another according to the native fancy (I suppose the priests correspond on important points all over the country), our conduct may be deemed unfair, unjust.

Gradual abolition may be said to be going on everywhere, for no suttee ought to take place without the magistrates' consent, who never grant it, till persuasion is tried in vain, and then always with painful reluctance yielding only to the letter of the regulations, and the fear of the displeasure of government, which however is sometimes risked by magistrates refusing their consent.

Suppose the relations and priests resolve on the suttee in spite of the magistrate, that they assemble a mob, prepare the pile, that disaffection appear, and that force be requisite to rescue the woman, I believe that a select body of native police, with sticks in their hands will be fully sufficient and meet no opposition. The priests anxious to keep alive their expiring power, and this source of profit, will be found to be the instigators and should be traced and punished. The mob, commonly Hindus, care little or nothing about the matter, will be merely disappointed of

seeing what they consider an interesting spectacle, and disperse. If an affray happens and some be killed, the matter can be treated in our courts as other similar affrays, on public occasions.

The idea of calling in the sepoys or military enters not my mind, though I have no doubt that any of our sepoys (not being Brahmins) would readily act, and that many Brahmins if accompanied by their officers would agree to act to prevent a suttee, but each man should have only a stick in his hand and be dressed as common natives, no part of the uniform appearing. I am convinced that the native army will hail the abolition with feelings of satisfaction. I believe our sepoys, Hindu, and Brahmin, care less for their religion than they do for the Company's service. They enlist from the age of sixteen to twenty-four and numbers have no other home but their corps. On the annual leave many including Brahmins, will pass the whole time, four, five, six months, they are supposed to be at home, among the women of the nearest town or village. They are a very depraved class in respect to women. Instances exist of the sepoys either shewing a passive spirit or aiding to rescue a suttee.

In the *Calcutta Journal* newspaper, of Monday 7th February, 1820, is an account of an intended suttee at Lucknow. It states the crowd consisted chiefly of sepoys of 23rd Regiment. I was with the corps at the time, and believe the writer misinformed, in saying, the sepoys 'all but willingly yielded a passage' for the escape of the suttee. I fancy they finally helped her to escape. There were at least twelve hundred sepoys present, probably more, and if they felt their prejudices violated, why did they allow the woman to escape? Why did they not kill the three or four officers on the spot? The fact is they were indifferent to the result. I believe the writer also mistaken, when he says the officers incurred any danger.

The publication of this letter attracted the notice of Lord Hastings who ordered a court of enquiry, and the dismissal of the man from the service who threw the woman on the fire. I presided at the court. This man, a sepoy named Subsook Fewaree, was a relative of the deceased, was interested in the property and, I learnt, paid by the pandits for the act of throwing her on the pile. The woman was the wife of Rawdeen Sookool a Brahmin sepoy who had died in the hospital the night before.

The adjutant general's letter which states by command of his Lordship, that compulsion on such an occasion is tantamount to murder is dated Fort William 8th March, 1820, No. 3509. Intoxicating the woman at the time was perhaps equally murder.

In the India Gazette of 30th June, 1828, is a letter detailing the rescue of an intended suttee at Mirzapore. Let it be observed there was 'confusion but no violence,' and that, 'an avenue was soon found through the crowd.' I was glad to hear that the Brahmin who first seized the woman to throw her on the fire, received a knock-down blow. No doubt every sepoy of the 49th Native Infantry, off duty was present.

I will notice but two other suttees. A magistrate near Benares refused

his consent, the woman persisted, till he placed her child in her arms when she wavered. He soon learnt that her family and the pundits, priests, were about to burn her by force. He and an indigo planter hastened on horses to the pile, which in a minute would have been lighted, and led her away. The crowd were amazed but offered no opposition. Some of the police chaprassis present absconded fearing a serious affray, others I heard offered some assistance in making way for the woman.

Lately at Chunar the pile was ready and the suttee and a multitude were waiting the magistrate's permission. In the interim, Mr. Bowley a native missionary and a few native christians were persuading the woman not to commit suicide, and while talking to her, gently led her away from the pile through the crowd, some of whom expressed praise at their conduct, others censure and disappointment of the tamasha, but no one offered the least hindrance to the departure of the party with the woman. Mr. Bowley visited her afterwards in her house. She had not been molested by her family. She then gave vent to her feelings, saying, that she was now an outcaste and a beggar, and that no one would feed her.

I am of opinion that the bulk of the population and our native army will be indifferent to the abolition, that revolt would not follow, nor alarm be excited, nor innovation in their religion be apprehended. The sepoys feel that their officers and the government are most tender in protecting them in their religious customs. Our motives on all occasions of cruelty whether involving religion or not are rightly appreciated by them.

The Barrackpore mutiny many expected would excite a revolt in our army. The ringleaders in it, as ever, were Brahmins. But the hanging Bindah Fewarri and others, created no sensation, and I believe the army heard the orders on the occasion with perfect unconcern.

If it be true that Mammon be the God the priesthood worship, then they have their price. If the abstaining from a suttee were to be rendered more profitable than promoting one, they may be bought by government, who have only to take the priests under protection, at their seats, Jagannath, Gaya, Benares, Muttra, etc. Privileges, lands, immunities, may be granted them. If money for this purpose, and to maintain the women saved, be wanting, a vast sum may be collected for an end so divine in England and in India.

If the preparations for a suttee were conducted according to their law, the Hindu law, few would be fatal. The pile bearing the deceased should be in flame before the suttee ascend. It is so laid down, and it has happened that when the body has not been found or have perished, that a shoe or a turban of the deceased has been substituted and answered. The suttee unattended, is to rush into the flames. If she refuses or if she retreats from the fire, she is considered a disgrace to the family and cast out. That the family are, in consequence, held in disgrace, or feel themselves so, I doubt, if not deny. Any attempt to force her on the pile either before ascending or after retreating from it, is a positive murder. The

construction of the pile is a cursed device, a trap. Oil, ghee, saltpetre, sometimes powder are below. Very slight uprights, and string support a heavy mass of logs above. The moment the former are fired, the dead body and the woman sink as into a pit, crushed and buried by the weight of the wood above. She cannot extricate herself if an instant too late in jumping off. Her ascending the pile at all, before it be blazing, is a murderous innovation, so is laying the dead body across her breast, so is holding her down by a bamboo, or tying her or stupifying her by drugs, or menaces of future ill treatment or burning, her being in bad health, or being pregnant, or having a child at the breast that is under two years old, to which period they give children the breast. One or more of these diabolical abuses of the proper ceremony have been always resorted to, to secure the death of their victims, and I believe we might have overruled them forty years ago. Had government interfered only so far as to have insisted on the rite being fairly and correctly performed how many thousands would have been saved.

If we are still to permit suttees, an experienced doctor ought to ascertain all these points, and be present with the magistrate. Their presence should be indispensible. The pile or trap of the pundits should be pulled to pieces, and another firmly constructed by people of the magistrate. The drums and noise to drown the cries of the victims be prohibited. Straw, intended to suffocate by its smoke, not to be used. The fire would thus be gradual, and its effects be hardly felt by any woman in her senses, without her striving to flee from it which she would always have time to do, were the pile fairly built.

57. *Brigadier W. Richards to Captain Benson.* Confidential

Mathura. 26 November 1828
Recd. 8 December 1828

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular of the 10th instant, calling upon me, by desire of the right honourable the governor-general, for my opinion relative to suttees; and more particularly, as in the events of their being prohibited by authority, either by an immediate or gradual abolition, what effect I conceive it would have upon the minds of the men composing the native army.

I must begin by remarking that during the whole period of a continued service in India, of upwards of four and thirty years, I never was present at a suttee, and that I do not recollect hearing of any one having taken place near the cantonment at which I was stationed during that long period. I have, however, no hesitation in saying, that I have never had the slightest doubt but that this horrid rite would be at an end the moment it should be prohibited by the authority of government.

I do not consider the debarring the practice of suttee would create

the slightest sensation among the native officers and sepoys of the Hindu persuasion, composing the Bengal army, as it is not amongst them or their connections that this horrid rite prevails; and as to its eliciting any opposition from them, if abolished tomorrow, I can safely state from a long and very intimate acquaintance with the general character of the native officers and sepoys; that no notice whatsoever, would be taken of an order of the sort, if it should pass without any particular comment, and that so far from their being apprehensive of other innovations in consequence thereof, that it would be merely considered as emanating from government as a matter of course, just as any other order does. I never heard, or had, the slightest idea that the abolition of this abominable rite would be thought an invasion of their customs in any way whatsoever.

From my knowledge of the character of the native soldier, I have no hesitation in declaring that I do not conceive the discontinuance of suttee would in the slightest degree create sullenness among the sepoys, or any distrust of our motives, nor would it be likely to generate or diffuse among them the slightest aversion to our rule and authority.

58. *General orders on half-batta stations*

Fort William. 29 November 1828

No. 254 of 1828. 1. The right honourable the governor-general in council is pleased to publish the following regulations in obedience to instructions from the honourable the court of directors, communicated in their military general letter under date the 28th May, 1828.

Half-Batta Stations

2. That Barrackpore, Berhampore, and Dinapore, shall be considered half-batta stations, from the 1st proximo. Officers belonging to corps now at those stations are exempted from this regulation, so long as their respective corps continue to occupy their present cantonments.

3. That Dum Dum shall likewise be considered a half-batta station from the same date. Field officers at present attached to battalions, and captains and subalterns, to troops or companies, now at that station, are not to be affected by this regulation, so long as their battalions, troops or companies respectively continue at Dum Dum, and the officers now exempted remain attached to them.

4. The above regulation is equally applicable to staff as to regimental officers at the stations of Barrackpore, Dum Dum, Berhampore, and Dinapore respectively. . . .

59. *Bentinck to R. Fullarton.*[1] Private

Barrackpore. 30 November 1828

Dear Sir,

I have postponed my departure till after the arrival of the *Lady Flora,* which was to sail on the 22nd July. She is a very fast sailor, and may be hourly expected. Last year she left England on the 9th of August and arrived before the end of this month. As I am to have the pleasure of seeing you so soon, I shall confine my letter to two subjects only.

Your letters and despatches had put me in possession of the reasons of Sir John Claridge's visit to Calcutta, which were also confirmed by Sir Charles Grey. Upon communicating upon the general question with Sir Charles, I found his opinion upon this as upon all other occasions, when I have been desirous of consulting him, governed by the most impartial and liberal spirit, and by an anxious desire to give every support to the government. After the very disagreeable proceedings which have taken place at Bombay, in the course of which the total suspension of the administration of justice has been threatened, it has been the wish of the judges here, that the dissensions at Penang should, if possible, be adjusted, and as you will see by the enclosed letters, Sir Charles Gray and Sir Edward Ryan have succeeded in prevailing upon Sir John Claridge to return to Penang, and I am sure you will meet him in a spirit of conciliation. I thought it right to shew Sir Charles Grey your despatches to the supreme government, in order that he might be in possession of both sides of the question: and I asked him at the same time plainly to say to me if he thought there were any points, which you ought to concede to Sir John; Sir Charles in his answer, which I will shew you when we meet does not directly answer my question. But he says, 'I hope the letter which I now enclose (herein transmitted) may be the groundwork of an adjustment of these differences.

'In cases like the present one, it is impossible to proceed with certainty against the recurrence of the evil: but it will tend to the avoidance of dispute, that Sir John Claridge means at present not to interfere with the arrangements of government respecting the expenses of the officers and followers of the court; he speaks with no asperity of Mr. Fullarton, but entertains a great respect for his understanding and abilities'.

I have since seen Sir John Claridge and I had some conversation with him upon the subject, and it strikes me that he returns in a good spirit. If any points should remain unsettled you may command my mediation.

It was asked me by Sir John Claridge, in consequence of a report which had prevailed and which I had before heard, if I had not received or was expecting to receive some orders respecting Penang, which were supposed to constitute one of the causes of my visit to the eastward. I answered that, respecting Penang I had not heard a syllable in England; neither was I in expectation of any letters concerning it. I stated to him

59. [1] Fullarton, Richard, was in charge of the Straits Settlement.

further, that at Penang I had nothing to do and meant to do nothing; that my particular object was the lately conquered provinces, and that this was but the commencement of a plan for visiting the whole of the territories at the earliest period possible, in order that I might have the benefit of local information. I said this to Sir John, and so I say to you. It is not my intention to assume the authority which the legislature gives me to take part in your affairs: if my authority is exercised at all, it shall only be at your request and when your own may happen to be insufficient. I have to thank you for a most clear and able exposition of the finance of your presidency. That paper was referred to our finance secretary, Mr. Mackenzie, for his remarks. He has made a long note upon it, which has been before council but is not recorded: it has been thought better that I should undertake to submit it to you privately and I propose doing this in person, rather than by letter. . . .

60. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck.* Confidential

India House, 2 December 1828
Recd. Barrackpore. 4 May 1829

My dear Lord William,

We have lately received accounts of your arrival in Calcutta but nothing more. As you left England with a full knowledge of the changes that have taken place here in the administration you will of course be prepared to proceed with caution, for I suspect there are parties here who would not be sorry to see you in the wrong. Our court gave a great dinner lately to Lord Ellenborough, the new president.[1] All the ministers attended. Our chairman gave your health as usual in a very becoming way—but if I can judge of people's feelings by their countenances I should say that some of them on that occasion betokened no good, and I have other reasons for suspecting that there is no great good will towards you. This however is probably no more than you expect. I have seen very little of our court lately but I have no reason to suppose that any impression has been made there. My friend Lushington has made a melancholy commencement at Madras—and I know not how he is to go on with any satisfaction to himself or benefit to the public. Malcolm on the contrary is exceeding all expectations formed of him by our court.

I have been so much occupied with my memoirs of Sir Thomas Munro that I have only had time during my vacation to make occasional enquiries as to what is going on at the India House—but I do not hear of anything particular—except some arrangements for the benefit of the army. The common report is that Lord Dalhousie[2] is to succeed

60. [1] Ellenborough, Lord, 1790–1871, President of the India Board, 1828–30, Dec. 1834–April 1835, Sept.–Oct. 1841. *D.N.B.*
[2] Dalhousie, Lord, 1770–1838, C.-in-C. India, Jan. 1830–Jan. 1832. *D.N.B.*

Lord Combermere, but our court certainly know nothing of it. By the by, at the dinner before alluded to Lord Combermere's health being proposed by the chairman in a complimentary way, the Duke jumped up and returned thanks for him and added that he was glad to find that his recommendation had turned out so well.

It is just as well you should know these little things.

61. *Bengal government to the court of directors on revenue policy*

10 December 1828

Para. 1. Having seen reason to conclude that the system in operation for the superintendence and control of the executive revenue authorities is seriously defective (your honble court appear to have come to the same conclusion) we have considered it to be our duty to enter on a full consideration of the means by which a suitable remedy may be applied. And after deliberate reflection and much discussion we have satisfied ourselves that for the attainment of the objects which your honble court and the local government have with equal anxiety laboured to accomplish it is indispensably necessary to employ a considerable number of revenue commissioners vested with a controlling authority each over a moderate tract of country and acting intermediately between the collectors of districts and a general board stationed at the presidency.

2. While this matter engaged our attention in the revenue department we found in the communications of the sadar adalat and in the reports of the state of business in the several courts of civil and criminal judicature not less occasion to infer that in the judicial department also some change was essentially necessary in order to secure an adequate supervision of the executive officers and the due administration of justice. And as the first step to the desired reform, it has appeared to us to be advisable to employ the same agency by which the revenue district officers are to be controlled and directed in superintending the police and administering criminal justice under the authority of the nizamat adalat. This we propose to effect by vesting the abovementioned commissioners with the powers that belong to the courts of circuit.

3. We are thus able to provide with some reduction of expense such a number of commissioners of revenue and circuit as to secure that each may without difficulty superintend efficiently the affairs of the districts placed under him even in quarters where circumstances call for the most minute interference and at the same time hold the half yearly sessions with the regularity which justice and policy equally require and after the maturest reflection we do not perceive that even on the strictest principles of those who advocate the system established by the code of 1793 such an union of powers in the authority appointed to control the

executive officers is liable to any serious objection. It is certainly we conceive calculated to secure many important advantages.

4. In regard to the powers exercised by the officers in charge of districts, we do not propose any immediate change. The executive functions in the different departments will remain therefore as heretofore separate where hitherto disjoined and united where hitherto held together, and beyond the unquestionable improvement of separating the criminal and civil jurisdiction of the provincial courts which is the immediate consequence of the appointment of commissioners of circuit we have not made any alteration in the tribunals appointed to administer civil justice excepting in the case of a few districts in which vicinity to tracts of country superintended by officers possessing full revenue and judicial powers and other circumstances have suggested the extension with some modification of the plan that has been so long successfully followed in Cuttack.

5. We have abolished the offices of superintendents of police as no longer likely to be useful in a degree commensurate with the expense.

62. *Bentinck's minute on revenue and judicial administration*

10 December 1828

Seeing in the proceedings of government reason to apprehend that the system at present in operation for the superintendence and control of the executive revenue officers is defective, and enquiry confirming the conclusion, I directed the secretary to government, in the territorial department, to report fully on the subject. I now lay before the board the accompanying paper, which that officer has submitted to me, in compliance with my instructions.

The arrangement therein suggested corresponds in principle with the plan of a principal with subordinate collectors, existing at the Madras presidency in the ceded districts under Sir Thos. Munro, the complete success of which appeared to me at that time incontrovertibly established. Mr. Graeme, who was then one of Sir Thomas' assistants and may be considered as a high authority in revenue matters, informs me that subsequent experience entirely confirmed the goodness of the system. The sanction of the court of directors was strongly expressed in favour of that arrangement, and I learn that the same authority has directed its introduction in Cuttack. I think there will be advantage in keeping more distinct the controlling and executive authorities and I therefore very much approve of that part of the suggestion, by which the commissioners are to be relieved from any part of the executive duties of a collector.

Before however coming to any final decision, I am anxious to learn the sentiments of my colleagues and I should not wish to confine our deliberations strictly to the offices immediately connected with the

territorial department, if it shall appear to them that by a more comprehensive arrangement, we could advantageously combine the object of securing a more efficient system of revenue management, with that which is above all important, the better and more prompt administration of civil and criminal justice, and I think this may be done without any sacrifice of established principle, if the revenue controlling and the revenue executive powers are kept distinct. I have seen with pain that the files of the civil courts, (those of appeal particularly), are loaded with arrears, and that in many instances the gaol deliveries have been injuriously delayed, and there is reason to apprehend that in the Bareilly division especially the judges of circuit cannot adequately control the magistrates and the subordinate police. It would be presumptuous, after a residence of a few months only, to come to a decided conclusion upon so momentous a question. But, if I were obliged to draw an inference from the facts and reports which each council brings more or less before us, as well as from the information received out of doors, I am afraid that I should be obliged to say, that the administration of civil and criminal justice, if not a complete failure, was so defective and inefficient as to demand our instant and most serious attention, and I trust that Mr. Bayley, who is so well-versed with this subject in all its different relations, and who is very sensible of its defects, will have the goodness to consider and to suggest the means, by which this undeniable right of the subject and this primary duty of every government can be more completely fulfilled.

(Enclosure in the above)

Holt Mackenzie's report 10 December 1828

Having some time ago been desired by Mr. Bayley to state my opinion as to the expediency of modifying the constitution of the revenue board in the western provinces, I was tempted to take the opportunity of submitting the sentiments I entertain in favour of a still wider change of system; under the persuasion, that the established revenue and judicial system has from inherent defects (above all from the separation of the lines and the want of popular institutions) essentially failed in securing for the people such a measure of good government as is at all worthy of our country, and that it has little or no tendency towards improvement. But, partly from the oppressive heat of the weather, partly from other causes, which will readily occur to others without my avowal, I have found it more difficult than I thought it would have been to put my notions into a distinct shape. And such a change could not of course be thought of without long and serious consideration, and even if I were much more certain than I am of the accuracy of my views, and had had ample time fully to develop them, I could only have ventured to submit them as matter of enquiry.

Some change, however, in the constitution of the controlling revenue

authorities seems to be very urgently required, and under the commands of your Lordship, I proceed to state what has occurred to me, confining my speculations to the offices immediately connected with the territorial department.

On the one hand, it seems to be indispensably necessary that government should be relieved from a portion of the references on which it is even now required to decide by the institution of an authority that shall come between it and those who immediately direct and control the executive officers, and, on the other hand, if the immediate supervision of the executive European officers is vested in deliberative boards, trusting for their knowledge of facts chiefly to the reports of those whom they have to control, conducting their business for the most part through the medium of English correspondence: exercising authority over tracts extending in each direction many hundred miles, issuing their orders from the recess of a kachheri situate in some corner of their jurisdiction, it seems to me quite certain that they will utterly fail to impose any effectual check to the grossest mismanagement. Things may indeed go on smoothly upon paper. We shall obtain in any quantity we require periodical tributes of self-applause. We may even have the demonstration of good management, which is afforded by an increasing rent roll. But there will be no real security that our officers, (even those who are thoroughly honest and zealous), are not occasioning much miserable distress and much cruel injustice: we shall have as heretofore, under our best officers, multitudes of industrious men oppressed by an excessive demand, or robbed of their property through some abominable abuse, and in other cases the most wasteful sacrifice of the government dues in favour of a few.

As recently expressed to me by a very intelligent officer, the vast majority of the collectors' acts, whether good or bad 'is absolutely unknown both to the board and government, and what does appear before them may for aught they know be either the result of the most laborious research, or of no research at all, but compiled by native officers saving their European superiors all trouble but that of signature'.

With the best possible system of control indeed, it would be vain to hope for anything like the full truth. Nobody knows it, at least, nobody who will divulge it. But if we wish to come at all near it, we must compell our collectors to master all the details of the work done by their subordinates and to authenticate what they do by an actual trial and by a real appeal to the parties interested. If this be done and if moderation be our guiding principle, I feel confident that the difficulties which have been so artfully raised, will speedily disappear. With the people once for us all indeed must be plain sailing. Our native officers will become, what they ought always to be and what most of them are excellently qualified to be, executive instruments directed by their European superiors, not the governors of those they profess to obey. The worst settlement then made will be a great improvement upon the past system, bestowing upon the people many real blessings in spite of all our

blunders, which we shall gradually discover and correct. But government and the subordinate controlling authorities must be prepared to do their duty to the people. There must be no mincing the matter of personal control and responsibility, and no slurring over the question of qualification. The collectors must be able to say: 'I visited the village for such a time, I examined the boundaries and found or made them settled, and acknowledged by such and such persons and in such a manner. I had the field-book of the measurement in my hand. I adopted such means of testing the accuracy of its record in regard to extent, soil, and crops: I caused the different abstracts to be made in such a manner by such and such mutasaddis: I can read the accounts readily: I compared the results and found them to agree: I examined personally such and such parties: I understood them and they understood me: the detailed assessment was made and checked and verified in such a manner. It was fully explained to all interested either directly or through their accountant. It can easily be paid. They agreed and pattas were issued, or, if not, why.'

The tahsildars' reports should show precisely what they did in controlling and checking the amins, the collector's rubakari must be a bona fide minute of his actual proceedings.

But for the above purposes, we must have a controlling authority of corresponding energy, and, (as far as the difference in extent of jurisdiction allows), equally accessible to the people.

It will not suffice to wait for complaints: those who complain are often the least likely to be injured.

In the matter of settlement, especially under the provisions of Regulation VII, 1822, the controlling authority should, I think, apply to the acts of the collectors the same kind of tests that collectors apply to the proceedings of tahsildars, and tahsildars to those of the measuring amins. They should go upon the spot, completely through the papers relating to a certain number of villages in each pargana or other tract, with particular reference to the varieties of tenure and interest which the preliminary enquiries may exhibit.

They should communicate personally and familiarly with their collectors, seeing exactly how they do their business, and especially ascertaining beyond the reach of question, that they can actually do what on the records they are presumed to do. When they find they cannot do so, they must teach them: where they cannot be taught, they must report them as destined for some easier duty. They will thus adjust a thousand matters of detail, which otherwise will either never be adjusted or the adjustment of which through a formal written correspondence will be tedious beyond measure. They should in short, I conceive, do in regard to their collectors, almost everything which was expected from the principal collector in his intercourse with his subordinates when that appointment was experimentally introduced into Bundelkhand. But they must have more distinct authority and they must not be burdened, as Mr. Fane was, with a load of executive duty.

In the instructions, which led to the experiment of Mr. Fane's appointment, the court of directors do not appear to have in any degree debarred the government from exercising a considerable latitude in regard to details: and the more I consider the subject, the more am I satisfied that, if we would really establish an efficient system of control, the controlling and executive authorities should be kept distinct. A principal collector really acting as such must virtually direct everything with almost all the same liabilities to err as now beset our collectors, in the heat and haste of the executive administration. A particular individual may possibly not err, under such circumstances. But then all that can be said is that in the special case no control is necessary. If he does err, as most men will do, he will, I apprehend, require for the correction of his errors a much more active supervision than can be exercised by a single deliberative board.

I would therefore leave the executive officers very much as they are, excepting that deputies should be really such; doing what they are bid by their principals. And I would have the controlling authority altogether relieved from the executive management of the districts under them.

The sphere of their control must be much more limited than what is assigned to the boards, that they may really know the country and be enabled frequently to visit the different divisions of it.

In the western provinces the proceedings of the collectors in the exercise of the extensive judicial powers belonging to them cannot be effectually controlled, if we place under each controlling authority so wide a tract of country; and, if the first mentioned class of officers are active in making settlements, we must, I think, have a separate authority of control for every five or six collectors. For, besides the investigation and decision of individual complaints and the special examination of a certain portion of each year's work, every village settled will involve the necessity of reading at least the rubakari (or minute), of settlement and of examining the general results afforded by the account of the assessment, so as to see that on the face of the record, there is no reason to think that the rights of the people or those of government have been neglected or sacrificed.

But, such a scheme seems to require that the immediate control of the collectors should be vested in individual commissioners. For unless, by uniting the departments we could call in the aid of the judges of circuit, the appointment of a sufficient number of boards, though each consisting of two only, would occasion heavy addition to the public charges: and even with the aid of the judges of circuit, it would be necessary that each member of the boards employed in the immediate supervision of the collectors, should separately undertake the details of a certain number of districts.

The employment of single commissioners in the necessary number, must of course add to the urgency of providing relief for government by the institution of an intermediate authority; and such commissioners it

will probably be thought proper to subject to a degree of supervision, which government could scarcely exercise, even if it had the requisite leisure.

In considering the means of providing, without additional expense, the necessary number of local commissioners and a superior board, I have reverted to the conclusion I had already drawn, that the place of the special commission, acting under the rules of Regulation I, 1821, might be advantageously taken by the revenue authorities. As far as concerns the circumstances of the sales, the investigation of the cases tried by that commission appears to be generally easy, so that the revenue commissioners using the instrumentality of the collectors and their officers when they see fit for purposes of local enquiry, might, I conceive, without difficulty undertake the trial of them. And in regard to the more intricate claims of the joint proprietors, that have to be settled when sales are annulled, I am more and more persuaded that they can be adjusted satisfactorily only after a field measurement and individual assessment with a detailed census, and all that should be done in making settlements under Regulation VII, 1822, and this done on the spot and amidst the people.

If then the three mufassal commissioners, in addition to the nine members of the boards, be considered available for the duty of controlling the executive revenue officers, there will be no difficulty in providing the necessary number of local commissioners and the members of the sadar board without any increase of expense. . . .

63. *Bengal government to the court of directors 10 December 1828 on military allowances*

Honourable Sirs,

Para 1. We have the honour to bring to the early notice of your honourable court, a minute by the governor-general, recorded on the first of military consultations, in which his Lordship takes a comprehensive review of our public establishments of army carriage cattle, and enters into a full discussion concerning the propriety of subjecting them to extensive reductions. We shall abstain from giving more than a rapid sketch of the governor-general's views and conclusions, as his Lordship's minute exhibits in itself a condensed exposition of a most important question, nor is our recommendation necessary to ensure for a document involving such high considerations the best attention which your honourable court can bestow upon it.

2. An examination of the different items of our military expenditure attracted the governor-general's attention to the fact, that, with some trifling exceptions, the whole of the regular army in Bengal was provided with carriage cattle for the conveyance of its camp equipage, and that at some of the more important military positions, carriage was

constantly maintained for the transport of 100 rounds of extra ammunition per man, and in most other situations, of 60 rounds, besides establishments for the conveyance of troop stores, three days grain for cavalry and horse artillery, and of hospital stores, rum, [*illeg.*] for the European soldiery: between four and five thousand draft bullocks for the transport train, exclusive of those attached to the several batteries of light field artillery: a number of elephants for an extensive field hospital, and of camels for express; with a separate establishment, on a liberal scale, for the camp equipage of the commander-in-chief, and the army general staff.

3. During the momentous transactions in which the British Indian empire has been engaged for the last twelve or fourteen years, the governor-general admits the necessity of being prepared for prompt movement and immediate service; but in the present posture of our political affairs, no object exists, in his Lordship's opinion, for keeping the army in such complete state of military equipment, while our financial condition requires that every safe and practicable reduction of expenditure should be enforced. With the necessity however of keeping fully equipped for a prompt employment, a force of sufficient extent to maintain our paramount ascendancy, his Lordship is fully impressed, but, in the power and dispositions of the surrounding estates, he can foresee no events which may not safely let the portion of troops which it is intended should be kept in a condition relative to equipment, to take the field at a short notice; his Lordship being decidedly of opinion, that at no period of our history have we had less danger to apprehend than at the present moment; a position which he feels every confidence will be acquiesced in by his colleagues.

. . . . .

17. The governor-general concludes his minute by stating that the detail of the arrangements he has suggested, and for which we refer your honourable court to the minute itself, may not be the best which can be adopted, but that he rather advances his opinions to invite discussion, which may lead to a well considered and mature revision of army cattle establishments.

18. We have now to report, that the governor-general's minute has occupied our earnest attention, and that in all its essential points an entire conformity of opinion prevails.

19. With a view to secure the early attainment of the important objects proposed by his Lordship, we immediately instituted the following proceedings: a copy of the governor-general's minute was forwarded to the commander-in-chief with a request that his Excellency would deliberate on the various questions it embraced, and favour us with his sentiments concerning the arrangements proposed: the commissary general was at the same time directed to discontinue making purchases, and to suspend any arrangements then in force for replacing casualties in any description of army cattle: we also ordered that the catching of elephants should for the present be discontinued.

20. We had the satisfaction of finding that the commander-in-chief's sentiments were in perfect accordance with our own on the subject we had submitted to his consideration: his Excellency's reply is one of the marginal numbers.

21. In concluding this subject we discharge a pleasing duty in bringing to the knowledge of your honourable court, that the reductions herein detailed will be effected as early as practicable, and in intimating our confident expectations, that, though some modification may ultimately be found necessary in the proposed distribution of cattle, the diminution of our expenditure in this branch of disbursement, will, when the arrangements are completed, be at least equal to the estimated amount.

64. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 11 December 1828

My Lord,

By the *Sovereign* free trader which arrived on Saturday we learnt that your Lordship had taken your seat in the government.

The only communication was your Lordship's private letter to the chairman of which only so much was made known verbally to the court as regards the pacific relations with Ava and Nepal, the amelioration in the finances and the healthy state of the troops, and moreover that your Lordship's view [?leant] to some considerable reduction in that part of the public services.

I transmit with this letter a copy of the military despatch which goes out as to brevet rank of colonel to the lieutenant-colonels commandant, and the future reduced strength of the armies at the three presidencies.

In the civil branch some paragraphs have been under preparation which entered into a general review of the several departments. In the communication which has taken place on the subject westward some alterations have been made and a pretty strong intimation inserted to the government that if economy is not followed up a change of instrument would be sought for. This has reference to measures of expenses incurred during the late war and have not yet been reduced, but I mention the views of those in authority at the present moment that your Lordship may be confidentially apprised of what their ideas are at present although I do not apprehend any such communication would be suffered to go from hence. Indeed I am persuaded of it, for I believe the court of directors are fully sensible of your Lordship's disposition to reduce all needless outlay for a moment to suppose that instruction so worded would be needed. There is no doubt whatever that one great source of charge is the intended European agency which is deemed requisite to carry on the present system. The civil establishment is large and expensive and it becomes a question of how far the aid of native agency from the better

classes might not be brought into operation, with advantage and economy. . . .

By the *Iris* of this morning's arrival the letters for the Earl of Gosford and Lady Mary Bentinck reached me and I have sent them off. It is quite sufficient that any letters from your Lordship are put under cover to me, simply India House, London, and I hope to have the honour of being announced to your Lordship's government as secretary instead of assistant secretary to the court with their favour in the beginning of next year. . . .

I do not trespass upon your Lordship with a more lengthy communication as I shall do myself the honour of writing more at length by the Company's ship which I think will be as early in India as the *Andromache* which takes this.

65. *Bentinck's minute on Sir William Rumbold*

14 December 1828

It is quite clear to my mind that the court intended to sanction the return of Sir William Rumbold to Hyderabad but I agree at the same time with Sir Charles Metcalfe, that if this government foresaw any injurious consequences from such leave being given, which could not have been in the court's knowledge or contemplation it would become our bounden duty to refuse it.

These Hyderabad transactions have been so often, so completely and entirely under the cognizance of the authorities at home, the whole subject so perfectly known to them, and all the facts and opinions given in Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute are admitted by him to be already in his recorded correspondence that however much I might differ from the conclusions of the court, I should not feel myself authorized to withhold an implicit obedience to their orders.

It is however a new fact, that in Sir Charles Metcalfe's opinion, Sir William Rumbold will carry with him a degree of influence to Hyderabad which will be omnipotent with the minister and will lead to a renewal of those scenes and transactions which the court are so anxious to prevent. This opinion certainly is one for which I was not prepared, and is so opposed to all inferences deducible from Sir William Rumbold's altered circumstances, that unsupported by the authority and the sincerity belonging to it, I could not give it a moment's credit. If the same influence existed which unfortunately sent him to Hyderabad the apprehension would be obviously well founded. But from the period of that nobleman's departure from India, the government here have been always more or less unfavourable to the house. The circular of 1823 put forth all the influence of government against them, illegally as it since turns out. It declared all its contracts to be void and if influence is anything and justice nothing, as I believe to be the case at Hyderabad

and all other native courts, it was tantamount to an authorization on the part of the supreme government to all the debtors not to pay the demands of the house. The subsequent orders have borne a character of less disfavour, but still refusing the countenance of the government. These late orders merely relax upon the single point of allowing personal communication with the minister, but so restricted as to leave no doubt of the same adverse feeling of the home authorities. I am perfectly aware that it is in my own power to give him all the influence he requires, but Sir William has already received from me the expression of my determination to obey strictly the orders sent to me, to deal to him impartial justice but no favour, and I am not the less qualified for executing this task, from never having read the papers and from being, therefore, almost an entire stranger to the proceedings.

But supposing the objection entertained by Sir Charles Metcalfe to be well founded, have we not a complete remedy in our hands? Have we not in the resident an efficient control over Sir William Rumbold's proceedings and have we not the power to effect his instant removal from Hyderabad?

Under these considerations I am of opinion that the court's orders should be obeyed, all the instructions contained in these and their former instructions being rigidly enforced.

66. *Lieut.-Col. Tapp to Captain Benson*

Mathura. 16 December 1828
Recd. Calcutta. 20 December 1828

. . . . . .

4. From the constant intercourse I have had with natives of every description for a period of more than 27 years, and the consequent knowledge I have obtained of their general character, their prejudices, their apathy towards what does not immediately concern themselves, I have every reason to believe that the very great majority would feel perfectly indifferent on the subject, and in the many conversations I have had with natives on this point, I cannot remember a single instance in which the slightest personal interest was displayed whether the practice were sanctioned or abolished. It is notorious, that out of the thousands assembled to witness this disgusting ceremony, very few, and those only who are personally interested, consider it in any other light that that of a '*tamasha*', or if there be any who give it a thought afterwards, but to speculate on the quantity of wood and ghee expended, and other circumstances unconnected with any serious reflection. It might be supposed that those who catch at the flowers scattered by the misguided victim must feel a deeper interest in the ceremony, but the same eagerness is manifested to obtain the balls which have passed

through the body of a European at a military execution, and the grain, cowries etc., thrown about by the criminal on the way to the gallows.

. . . . . .

10. I do not think that the interference of the government in the matter of the suttee, to the extent of a total abolition of the usage, would create anxiety and alarm among the sepoys, or excite the apprehension of other innovations; nor do I believe that it would induce a dread that this was only the first step towards a more general attack on their customs and religion. It does not appear to me that the adoption of the above measure would create a belief that general conversion to Christianity is our ultimate and sole object. Both Hindus and Mahomedans have so many outward rites and ceremonies, that they seem scarcely to comprehend the existence of a religion so much divested of them as protestant Christianity, and the very limited attendance of European officers at public worship has caused many to doubt our having any religion at all. That the Hindus have no hostility towards Christianity is evinced by the marked respect they pay to missionaries, and I remember when Mr. Thompson was at [*illeg.*] in 1818, nearly 100 of the men of the 2nd Regiment (to which I then belonged) used daily to attend him to hear the scriptures read and explained, and many of them have subsequently asked me if this was really the religion we professed. With regard to their imagining the abolition of the suttee an abandonment of our professed desire to abstain from invading their customs, not one in a thousand is aware of any such profession, although all feel that they enjoy a perfect toleration in religion, and are quite contented with things as they are, without looking forward to what our motives or intentions may be, and if a few more enlightened or inquisitive than the rest should reason with each other in these subjects, they are more likely (judging from past events) to arrive at the conclusion that we tolerate every religion but our own; at all events, the marked disrespect, and even irritation so generally shown by European Christians towards the few natives who have professed our faith, can scarcely have failed to convince a reflecting native that we do not desire to convert them to Christianity.

67. *Bentinck to Lord Melville.* Private

Calcutta. 16 December 1828

By the *Lady Flora*, which arrived in the course of the last week, I received your kind letter of the 26th July.

We are thoroughly impressed with the necessity of reducing to the utmost our expenditure, and I am sanguine in my hopes, that you will think we have honestly and heartily set to work in the execution of this object. The army is undergoing a gradual reduction to 70 men per company as ordered in Lord Amherst's time. I should hope a further

luction of its numbers will be practicable. The latter establishments, ɔt up hitherto at their war complement, are to be very much lowered, h the entire approval of the commander-in-chief. Many other military ɔenses have been discontinued.

ın the civil salaries we have made considerable diminution, without erfering materially with the interests of the service at large. We have ɔd a maximum for those salaries made up by commission, and which ounted to a ludicrous excess, and in behalf of those whose fatigue and ties are by far the most easy, I advert to commercial residents and um agents. We have limited them to the same standard as those ɔtted to the members of the sadar court and of the boards, which are far the most laborious and responsible offices under the government. : have equalized the salaries of the members of the same boards, lucing the highest rate and adding to the lowest. A change in the aries of the political department has taken place, which will save a ıat sum to the government and yet add to the improvement of the ıdition of the resident himself. Those salaries consisted of two parts, ɔwance to the individuals, and a separate public allowance for all ırges. These have been consolidated under one head.

[expect much from the civil and military committees. They will be y well composed. I suspect that the Madras administration is in- itely cheaper and more efficient than those of Bengal or Bombay. e commissariat and public buildings are sources of immense expense der this presidency, and I have great doubts of the goodness of the ınagement. In Madras the former under Colonel Morison is highly ɔken of. I wished Mr. Lushington to have put that officer on the nmittee, but he could not be spared from Travancore.

You will at a very early period receive a plan about to be immediately ried into effect, for improving the control over the revenue officers, d for expediting the administration of the duties of the court of cir- t, by substituting independent commissioners for the judges of circuit, each of whom, three or four revenue districts are to be confided and whom also the collectors will be subordinate as they were before to : boards. It is a plan long since formed, of Mr. Holt Mackenzie's, om I consider to be by far the ablest of the Company's servants.

[had hoped to have sailed ere this to the eastward. Our possessions : a dreadful drain upon us and their establishments quite unsuited to ir wants or importance. We think considerable reductions may be ıde at Penang and its dependencies. I have a long memorandum from : territorial secretary upon their expenditure. As there is wherewithal the remarks to displease Mr. Fullarton, I have thought it better to liver them to him in person. Mr. F. is an old Madras acquaintance; is a very honourable man; he has given us a most cordial exposition all the affairs of his government and I feel quite assured of his ıdy disposition to meet our wishes; personal explanation will remove y impression of unfair criticism or apparent blame, which I am sure he nnot deserve. I hope his differences with Sir J. Claridge will have

terminated. Sir Charles Grey and his colleagues gave the best advice to their brother and if any subject of difference should still continue I hope to be able to remove it.

Everything is quiet in India, that is in our possessions. In Sindhia's territory, Partember one of the family is in rebellion against the rani. Upon the principle of non-interference with the internal concerns of these independent states, we leave them to adjust their own differences, taking care at the same time, that they shall not be a cause of molestation to their neighbours.

I shall take care to notice the distinction pointed out in the letter of recommendation.

I forgot to mention that the reason of my not going to the eastward is caused by Mr. Bayley's health requiring him to proceed to sea for three or four weeks. He is not seriously ill. I shall go when he returns.

68. *Bentinck to the Hon. Hugh Lindsay.*[1] Private

Calcutta. 20 December 1828

My dear Sir,

Uncertain whether you will still be on the continent, although I can with difficulty believe that Indian interests will allow you to be so long absent upon your cruise, I shall send you a letter of light postage, but still of more, I fear, than its worth. I will begin by saying, that in respect to my colleagues and all matters relating to the government, as affecting myself personally, I am perfectly happy and contented. I will now thank you for your letter of the 30th May. I have already written to you, that I had been able to give to Colin Lindsay the situation the most agreeable to him and for which he is perfectly qualified, that of secretary of the board of trade. Mr. [*illeg.*] wished it for his son and is, I am told, not pleased with the appointment; but his son is not in the same line and is by many years the junior of your nephew. He is not yet returned from China. I am happy to hear his wife is so much better. She was thought in a very dangerous state, when she went from hence. Sir William Rumbold is arrived but has not brought with him as favourable instructions from the court as he ought to have had, if he has been treated with the injustice, which you and many believe him to have been. I have not read the papers, and shall not do so unless my duty compels me. But as an old Indian, I know pretty well upon what success and failure has turned and will turn. Favour and not justice is that pivot. The governor-general's favour (most imprudently given in the first instance) gave unlimited credit and authority to the house. The positive disfavour of a succeeding government accomplished their ruin as completely as the former had its excessive prosperity, and circumstanced as the house now is, no cold restricted orders like that

68. [1] Lindsay, the Hon. Hugh, Director, 1814–44, Deputy Chairman and Chairman, 1826–8.

which accompanied Mr. Lamb and which *totidem verbis*, with the exception of allowing a personal intercourse with the minister but in the presence of the resident, now comes out with Sir W. Rumbold, will effect the purposes of justice, if (I speak as a complete stranger) justice is his due. The despatch should have required that the influence of the government should have been given, in all cases of just demands, whose non-liquidation may have been occasioned by the unfavourable interference of this government in declaring that to be illegal which was legal and in fact encouraging all the debtors not to pay the demands of the house and almost denouncing them if they did. I have determined to obey strictly the orders of the court, whether favourable or otherwise, but securing Sir William from all foul play here. I consider this Hyderabad business quite as a nuisance here, out of which I shall keep my nose if I can. The feelings of all those around the government are very hostile to Sir William and the public are not very favourable to the individual, but they think the house has been ill-used, and I rather think the public are right. We have enforced the half-batta order, and all others contained in the military despatch. These will fall heavily upon the individuals, and I think a more convenient [way] might have been adopted of effecting the same end. But it is my principle, when the *whole question* has been before the home authorities and more particularly, when so often as this subject has been, that we are bound to follow implicitly the directions from home. We are about to introduce great improvement into the revenue administration as well as for the quicker despatch of criminal circuit business. We are also revising the civil salaries, and without doing any real injury to the service at present, I hope the establishment of a scale of moderation now will save them hereafter from the possible investigation and clippings, after the manner of the Cape, of a parliamentary committee. Nobody can tell when the charter renewal question comes on, what turn it will take, who will be minister, who even will be king and what may be the result; as the captain of your quarter deck, I wish to have the ship in good order and prepared for the storm. This was principally my view in forming the finance committees. They will be well-composed, and I think their proceedings will stand any parliamentary enquiry. But much good at any rate will arise from a comparison of the three establishments, and reduction with improved efficiency will be a certain consequence. *The college* is I am happy to say in better order. I have no doubt of making it what it ought to be, but more power is wanted. If necessary I shall make an example of one of the most incorrigible, but I hope to be able to avoid it. The expense of education with its little success is one of the greatest abuses in the Indian administration. I will thank you to read my minute upon the subject in which I have plainly spoken my sentiments upon it. I hope we shall be able to reduce our expenditure within our income; indeed it must be done at whatever cost. I should have already visited our eastern province and Penang (a sad and useless source of expense) but Mr. Bayley's health required his going to sea,

and I shall not go till his return, in about a month. Lady William is very well and sends her best regards to you and Mrs. L. We found Charles Lindsay the same honest, good-hearted fellow that we left him. Met him again with very great pleasure. I am at the end of my paper.

69. *Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute on the Fort William College*[1]

28 December 1828

I wish that I could signify my concurrence in the intention of the governor-general to maintain the college of Fort William, for all my predilections are in favour of that institution.

But as I have been compelled, by the result of my observations during many years, to come to the conclusion that the college is both useless and mischievous; I am bound, in duty, to say that I should prefer its abolition.

It is useless in my opinion, because more useful knowledge than what is taught at the institution might be acquired in public employment at any station in the country.

It appears to me to be mischievous, because it collects young men together, and by the force of example and fear of reproach promotes generally habits of extravagance, from which many would escape, if left to follow their natural inclination or to practise the prudence, which, away from baneful influence, good sense would dictate to them.

I see little, I must confess, in the state of society in Calcutta that can make it desirable to congregate young men in this place. The general ways of this society promote idleness, expense and dissipation, and there is very little intercourse between the young and the old that can tend to any beneficial purpose.

I cannot recognize, in this institution, much resemblance to the splendid plan of that which the illustrious founder of the college of Fort William proposed to raise, and which promised to be worthy of being classed among the eminent seats of learning that adorn and instruct the world.

Before that design was conceived, young men in the civil service came to India at an earlier age than now, and consequently with an interrupted and unfinished education. The college was to have provided instruction for them in all branches of literature—twelve terms or three years were to have formed the period of their studies. A suitable structure was to have been erected at a short distance from Calcutta. The provost, vice-provost, professors and students were to have resided within its walls and collegiate discipline was to have been established.

This plan was never fully carried into effect, and was finally relinquished, in consequence of orders from home.

69. [1] This college for the training of East India civil servants had been founded by Lord Wellesley in April 1800, and still continued though in a reduced condition. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 125–30.

But the operations of the college commenced with encouraging success, under the auspices of [its] virtuous founder. His noble spirit seemed to animate the institution. There was emulation among the students and they went forth to undertake their duties in the public service, with high-toned principles and anxious zeal.

I have no doubt, that the college, although crippled by subsequent reductions, and totally devoid of efficient discipline, has been beneficial in producing a more general diffusion of the knowledge requisite for the discharge of public duties, than existed before its foundation.

If I could bring myself to think that its continuance is necessary in order to maintain the same effect, I should be an advocate for upholding it.

But I am not of that opinion. All the good that is done by the college now, might, I consider, be done without it, by insisting on qualifications, which before its institution were not declared to be indispensable. At the same time the evil and the expense, which it causes, might be avoided by its abolition.

I should not object to the expense, if I thought the continuance of the establishment essential for the qualification of young men for the duties of the civil service; that is, if I supposed that civil servants could not be as well qualified without it; or that it produced good in any other respect. But if, as I conceive, it be neither necessary nor useful; but rather productive of mischief; then the expense must be a waste of the public resources.

According to the practical operation of the college at present, young men for the civil service join it on their arrival in India, having previously learned something or nothing in oriental languages at Haileybury. They enter their names generally for the study of two languages, with a view to obtain the required qualification. The idle neglect their studies, are eventually sent away from college into the interior, and years sometimes pass, before they are reported fit to enter on the public service. The better disposed study one language, until they pass the requisite examination and are reported qualified in that language. Then they neglect that language, and study another, until reported qualified in that also. Then they enter in the public service, and find that what they have been learning at college is not exactly what qualifies them for the public service; and they have to learn and qualify themselves anew. In the meantime, the students, whether attentive or consummately idle, have generally, with few exceptions, incurred debt, in consequence of the expensive habits acquired at the college, which debt remains a burden and embarrassment to them for many years and perhaps for ever.

It must be admitted, that there would be no security against the extravagance of young men, who might be prone to expense, even if there were no college; but the overriding evil of the institution, in this respect, appears to me to be, that it affords encouragement and incitement to extravagance; and actually deters from the exercise of prudence

by the ridicule and contempt which are generally inflicted on that virtue among young men herded together; and too frequently by their elders in society also; among whom it is a common saying, that they do not like to see young men too prudent, and that they would rather see them a little extravagant; encouragement being given by such remarks to a vice, which could not be too strongly reprobated and discouraged and it is often in its consequences utterly destructive to the principles and integrity of a public servant.

In expressing my opinion that the college ought to be abolished as being mischievous with respect to the extravagance which it encourages, and the consequent state of debt and embarrassment which it causes throughout the civil service; and as being unnecessary and therefore useless for that purpose of instruction, which it is professedly designed to accomplish; and consequently entailing a waste of the public resources; it is incumbent on me to state what arrangement I would propose to substitute, with a view to the beneficial reception and disposal of young men of the civil service, on their arrival in India.

There should be a suitable mansion to receive them on their landing, and a table kept for their accommodation. There should be a superintending officer, whose duty it should be to reside in the house, and preside at the table, and to exercise a paternal control over the conduct and habits of the young men, and assist them with guidance, advice and instruction, during the short period of their residence under his authority. Their allowances, during this period, might be fixed with reference to the circumstances of their being provided with house and table, and therefore liable to little expense and might consequently be so moderate, as to furnish no temptation to remain in that situation.

The young men immediately after their arrival, should be subject to an examination and those who might be found qualified by knowledge acquired in Europe, or on the voyage to India, to enter on the public service, should at once be appointed to some employment, with the full allowance attached to it, and sent off by dak, or by some other conveyance, according to the season, to join their respective stations, and commence their career of public duty. Those not qualified should nevertheless be sent away from Calcutta, to quiet stations in the interior, to be strictly under the orders of public officers of approved character, who would take pleasure in advising and instructing young men under their charge, and would assign to them such employment as would most speedily qualify them for the public service, and render them, in the meanwhile, not entirely useless. During this period of tutelage, they should receive allowances merely sufficient for their subsistence, and inferior to those attached to any public office. When reported qualified for the public service, by competent examiners, they should be appointed to offices, with the full allowances of servants in employment, and with a retrospective addition to their former salary, under limitation and regulation, to defray the expense incurred on account of native teachers, as now granted to officers of the army, who

have passed examinations successfully. The period of service, as giving title to subsequent advancement in rank, station or emolument, should invariably date from the period of qualification. Until qualified, they should remain in their inferior allowances, without any promotion, and after a given time, sufficient being allowed, if not then qualified, their cases should be deemed hopeless, and they should be consigned permanently to inferior duties in public offices, where no qualifications in eastern languages may be required, with the power still of redeeming themselves, on showing due qualifications; or they should be otherwise disposed of as might be ordained for useless servants.

Although I doubt the practicability of entirely preventing extravagance in every instance, I should still hope, that it might be in a great deal suppressed in the service generally, by systematic discouragement and condemnation on the part of government. Hitherto, the discouragement, however much professed, has never been effectual, because it has been merely nominal, and without any practical operation, but if it were made a part of the duty of superiors to reprove obvious and habitual extravagance; and on failure of reform, to report such misconduct; and if young men, in a career of such folly, were warned by the government that their conduct had attracted notice and excited displeasure; and would be punished if persisted in; and if the promise were fulfilled, in cases of perverse continuance in the course condemned, it can hardly be supposed that those measures would be entirely devoid of effect.

I should not despair of being able to answer any objections that might be advanced against the arrangements which I have suggested, as compared with those which at present exist for the instruction of young civil servants after their arrival in India; but further details are at present uncalled for, and would only be tedious. I have offered my opinion, in discharge of what I conceive to be my duty, on a question of so much importance, but without any expectation of affecting the resolution, announced by the governor-general, for the continuance of the college.

Considering the main question therefore as determined, I have only further to express my cordial concurrence in the sentiments expressed by the governor-general, as to the necessity of establishing a stricter discipline in the college, as well as my assent generally to the arrangements which his Lordship proposes to adopt for that purpose; and especially to the proposition for placing the students under the immediate superintendence and control of one officer, vested with suitable power and authority.

70. *Beatson*[1] *to Benson*

Camp Bhind. 29 December 1828

My dear Benson,

I sent you the other day my reply to your public letter about suttees, which reminds me that I am suffering our private communications to fall sadly into arrears.

But you know me too well to suppose that this can arise from diminished regard—and you know too well now, by experience, how absorbing is the employment of a great public office. It has forced me to give up, or to lessen, my correspondence with all whom I most regard.

Colonel Fagan and I made a scruple of [not] seeing each other's letters until they had been actually despatched, that you might have two opinions, and not one joint opinion. We have since actually communicated the rough copies of our letters.

I had much conversation on this subject within the last year with Mr. Ewer, who in his annual travels all over upper India, and in the papers which come through his hands as superintendent of police, has excellent materials to assist his good natural talents in forming a judgment;—and with Captain William Murray, political agent at Ambala, one of the best men in that line, and particularly well acquainted with the feelings and habits of the Hindus in upper India. They both laugh at the idea which some people seem to entertain of the difficulty and danger with which the abolition of suttees would be attended.

It is speculative reading men, *ideologists* as they would be termed by the *utilitarians*, men learned in the shastras and tales of the Hindus, and who view that people chiefly through the spectacles of books, who foresee any serious difficulty in the matter. Horace Wilson for example will argue about the feelings of a Hindu peasant or soldier of this age, from what he has pictured to himself of the ancient Gymnosophists—as the Archbishop of Truro calls on the House of Peers to 'attend to the words of Moses' on the Catholic question. But every man who looks at the Hindus as they really are, finds like Bishop Heber that much, very much, of the nonsense we hear and read about them is to be unlearned.

70. [1] Beatson, Captain William Stewart, of Tenth Regiment Light Cavalry.

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71. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 1 January 1829

My Lord,

I have had the honour to receive this morning the several packets from your Lordship by H.M.S. *Undaunted* which ship reached Portsmouth yesterday. I have despatched the various letters according to their addresses—that to Mr. Astell, the chairman, I have sent to his seat in Bedfordshire where he is for the holidays. The one for Mr. Loch, our deputy chairman, I gave into his hands this morning. To each I have also made known the letter from Mr. Prinsep as to the health of the bishop. Reports had been current of his Lordship's death but I trust unfounded.

I beg to offer my best thanks for your Lordship's letter to myself and particularly for the kind expression of your Lordship's intentions as to the Captain Hall, and I shall not fail to mention to Lady Raffles, with whom I dine today, the gratifying expression of your Lordship's sentiments regarding Sir Stamford.

Mr. Marjoribanks is at Brighton but I am in weekly correspondence with him when he is not in town. He will receive your Lordship's letter and I have no doubt you will hear from him by the regular despatch of our Bengal and China ships next week.

The point which I venture to suggest to your Lordship in communicating with the chairs and especially the chairman *privately*, is exactly what your Lordship has fallen in with. Mr. Astell who is an open, honourable, straightforward man, remains till April when the new arrangements for the year take place. What they may be still seems very doubtful. There are three gentlemen named for deputy or who rather should be said to be candidates. Mr. Clarke,[1] Mr. Campbell and Mr. Ravenshaw—the latter in my judgment has the majority of the court and if the present arrangement shall not go on for another year (which I do not think probable) Mr. Loch will succeed to the chair. I mention these points because your Lordship may not be led to communicate to any one with whom you might not correspond unless he was in the chair or deputy and if I might suggest I should confine them to Mr. Loch, Mr. Marjoribanks and to Mr. Astell who will feel flattered by a letter now and then and who is a powerful member of the court. I am sure your Lordship will forgive my dwelling upon the comparative trifles which yet in their way are sometimes of moment and I am sure they frequently turn a person's view who thinks he has a certain standing in the court and does in fact influence by that position. I will keep your Lordship fully informed of the changes either actual or anticipated and state which may be the most probable.

71. [1] Clarke, William Stanley, director of the East India Company, March 1815 to his death in January 1844. Deputy Chairman in 1834–5, and Chairman 1835–6.

The finance letter of the 31 July gives a more satisfactory prospect of the pecuniary affairs—and the reduction of the gross deficits including India and home to 47 lakhs is most important as compared with those of 1826/7 nearly 2 millions and a half and that of April last of upwards of 2 millions.

Penang is a most intolerable millstone: the charge is enormous. The situation of the recorder's court together with the extraordinary conduct of that judge will draw very full attention to that quarter from hence.

The question of central India is one which it was the wish of all here should have been settled without casting the task upon your Lordship. Of the ability of Sir John Malcolm there can be no doubt but when his age, and the already expensive mode introduced in the Bombay system, so much exceeding what was anticipated large as that was, are considered, it is felt that the responsibility and difficulty of your Lordship in fixing upon him as an instrument to effect the object is very considerable.

I have already intimated to your Lordship that a despatch on the general civil charges of India was in preparation and that a curious passage had been inserted. This is now expunged and the draft is under consideration. I shall in another letter by this conveyance give your Lordship an outline of it: it is long and interesting. Some may be hereafter altered and parts struck out but whether it be so or not the views may be important to your Lordship and I shall therefore communicate them fully, assured that you will have the kindness to receive the present as well as all future communications from me marked *private* as such, and to your Lordship alone.

Mr. Hill has arrived from Madras. He called upon me officially yesterday. He has no intention of retiring. The jury question will come forward in the shape of a despatch to Madras and I fear will disappoint Mr. Lushington upon whom it has some remarks.

I enclose a few private letters for your Lordship. The Earl of Gosford is in town. I have written the letter to his Lordship this morning and I have advised him of the packet for next week.

I forward a letter his Lordship sent me on Monday.

72. *James Mill*[1] *to Bentinck*

East India House, London
2 January 1829

My dear Lord William,

I intrude upon you at present with a letter to be conveyed by a young writer, to whose friend I could not refuse the compliance, though very

72. [1] Mill, James. East India House, Chief Assistant, Revenue Branch, 1819, Examiner of Political Correspondence, 1831–6. *D.N.B.*

unwilling to be guilty of such liberties, and not less unwilling that your flattering condescension towards me might seem to yield the temptation. However, I ask for no patronage; and the young man I believe to be of far more than ordinary promise, he having carried the right hon. Lord William C. Bentinck prizes at college in a way surpassing all precedent. The idea that your Lordship is not inattentive to his conduct, I have no doubt, will be with him a potent incentive to virtue; and so much of your countenance as may have that effect, is all I presume to request for him.

Nothing has occurred here which has made me think it necessary to occupy any of your time with a letter of mine. The feeling towards you in this house is the same with that which you carried away with you. The deputy chairman has showed me your letter to him (just received) with which he is highly pleased; and your letter some time ago to the chairman has been much approved by everyone who has been indulged with the sight of it.

What you have said about economy is very opportune. There is a strong spirit of retrenchment sprung up at the board of control, or at least strong language about it; and I am happy that you have given them to know that it is [first priority] in your case, and that you want but the requisite support from home (an indispensable requisite; for who is popular that retrenches?) to carry it [to] every prudent length.

I hear that your first proceedings have created a favourable impression in the service, especially the more intelligent of the men at the presidency. The ladies, however, are very much astonished at your throwing off all state—and say it is very odd. There are among the old men, however, who say, this is just like Lord Cornwallis.

Our friends the [Grotes][2] are well, and often join in remembering you with affectionate regard.

73. *Bentinck's minute on the press*

6 January 1829

In a recent despatch the honourable court have directed that no officer in their service shall be connected with the public press.

In obedience to their orders, we have given notice to Mr. Grant and to the Reverend Dr. Bryce, that they must relinquish their interest in the *India Gazette* and the *John Bull*.

We have made no formal decision respecting Mr. Atkinson, superintendent of the government press, and it had been my intention, as I have elsewhere stated, to have recommended a suspension of this part of their orders.

Concurring entirely in the reasons which have induced the honourable court to prohibit their servants from being engaged with the public

72. [2] Grote, George, historian and reformer. *D.N.B.*

press, and having already enforced their orders against Mr. Grant in his capacity of editor of the *India Gazette*, it will be clear that the recommendation in favour of the same gentleman, which I have to offer, proceeds from no consideration for the individual, but solely from motives of public convenience and expediency.

Upon arrival in India, I find the press at Calcutta and Bombay enjoying practically at least as much freedom as in England, and although my opinion always has been very much alive and still continues to be so, to the very great evil that might arise from an unrestricted liberty of the press, yet from recent enquiries, I am satisfied that the press under existing circumstances is productive only of advantage to the government and to the community. The danger of a free press in India consists principally in the effects that it may have upon the minds of our native population, civil and military. It requires no ingenuity of statement to give an odious character to the nature of our position in India, and such representations mischievously intended and actively circulated might easily bring our dominion into jeopardy; and against an evil of this sort, it is essential that the hand of despotic power should be instantly laid, and the evasions which the law affords in a free country, should not be permitted for a moment to paralyse an efficient remedy. But the completely inoperative and harmless state with respect to the natives of the newspapers in the English language published in Calcutta will be at once apparent from the accompanying return (A) from the postmaster-general of the number of copies of each transmitted to them by post within the week to the interior. The return exhibits almost a complete blank. I then enquired whether an extensive circulation of native newspapers, containing translations from the leading articles of the English papers called liberal, might not exist, which would more decidedly prove an appetite for political information and discussion, and from which an inference of possible danger might be drawn. From the secretary in the Persian department, I have received a report, a copy of which is herewith transmitted marked (B) of all the papers published in the native languages, with an estimate of their number, and a description of their character. It will be seen that even these have no encouragement.

Out of Calcutta therefore as respects our native population, the public press has not any influence whatever.

In Calcutta there are certainly a great many rich and enlightened natives, and the Hindu College will add every year to their number. In Calcutta alone will be found natives versed in European history and politics, understanding the principles of liberty and the rights and benefits of constitutional freedom. But these are few in number, having little influence upon the population within the city, and none whatever on the rest of India. Whenever the natives have come forward upon any public questions, as upon the stamp and jury regulations, they have been considered rather the puppets of the European part of the society, than the originators of those petitions. As a body they seem incapable of

political mischief, and the public press may be said to be as innocuous in Calcutta as out of it.

On the conduct of the European functionaries, the press, as far as my observation enables me to judge, has had a salutary operation; and circumstances affecting the general interests have come to the knowledge of government through this channel, which otherwise would probably have escaped it. Public criticism at first, as I am told, excited some soreness, and dreadful anticipations of future calamity were naturally entertained, but custom seems to have entirely removed the feeling and the apprehension. The preceding government most justly in my opinion decided it to be a more expedient and safe policy, to leave the press alone, than to attempt to coerce and stifle it by prosecutions, which had no other effect than to give celebrity to the editor, greater notoriety to an objectionable doctrine, and to drag the local government before the tribunal of public opinion in England, with the addition of much inconvenience to the home authorities.

But very much over-estimated as the effects of the public press appear to me to have been, I conceive on the other hand, that every opinion and every word proceeding from the acknowledged organ of the government must always carry a deep and universal interest. In support of this proposition, no argument seems necessary. If the *Government Gazette* were like the *London Gazette* dealing merely in official news and notices, and not indulging in political speculations, little would it signify by whom this paper might be conducted; but bearing as it does the name of authority, and publishing exclusively the orders of the government, all the rest of its contents must partake more or less of the same character. Destined as this paper has been by the honourable court to the support of an excellent institution, the sale would be unproductive, if as with the *London Gazette*, political disquisitions were entirely withheld. It therefore becomes important to have in the editor, an able and discreet promoter of the views and system of the government. Considering Mr. Grant to be eminently qualified for this office, by his character, ability and experience in the management of a paper, which it is understood has yielded him considerable profit; believing that this arrangement will not interfere with his medical duties, and having no reason to think that out of the service, the same indispensable qualifications could be obtained, I beg leave to recommend that in this instance the orders of the honourable court may be suspended, and that Mr. Grant in compliance with the request of the committee of the orphan asylum may be named superintendent of the government press, as long as his medical duties may retain him at the presidency.

I forgot to remark that in a former despatch of the honourable court, I perceive an opinion expressed that the *Government Gazette* is not the property of the government, and not under its orders. I conceive the very contrary to be the case as to the authority of government, and though the profits of this paper like those of the public lottery have been diverted to purposes of public charity and improvement, I still

think that the rights of the government over both these funds remains unaltered.

(Enclosure in above)

Return A

Weekly circulation of newspapers through the post office, from the 16th to 26th September inclusive.

Daily papers:—

Bengal Hurkuru, weekly . . . 1,089
average daily . . . . 155, of which one is daily sent to the address of a native at Santipore.

John Bull, weekly 1,432
average daily . . . . 204, of which one is daily sent to a native at Jungipore.

India Gazette, weekly . . . 561
average daily . . . . 280, of which one is sent to a native Parsee at Bombay.

Government Gazette, weekly. . 595
average daily . . . . 297, of which seven are sent to natives, viz. one to Lucknow, Chandernagore, Burdwan, Ludhiana, Cawnpore, Santipore and Murshidabad.

Calcutta Chronicle,
weekly 379
daily . . . . . 189, none of which are sent to natives.

Persians:— issued every week. . 26, of which nine are sent to natives, viz. to Aurangabad, Rangpur, Benares, Fatehgarh and Gwalior, each one, and to Lucknow and Delhi, two each.

I have reason however to believe that out of the five numbers sent to Mr. Ainslie in Bundelkhand, several are for natives, the independent rajas perhaps who are under him as political agent.

(Enclosure in above)

B.

A. Stirling to Bentinck

Calcutta. 1829

My Lord,

In reply to the question contained in your Lordship's letter, I have the honour to submit the following brief account of the state of the native press on this side of India.

From 1824 to 1825/6 there were altogether six papers published in Calcutta, in the native languages, viz. 3 Bengali, 2 Persian, and 1 Hindi, besides two by the Serampore missionaries, one in Persian and the other in Bengali. Of the former, the Hindi and one Persian paper were given up in 1826/7 for want of support, and I believe that the Serampore

missionaries have been obliged to discontinue their publication since June last, when the government subscription was withdrawn as a measure of retrenchment. The public subscription to the remaining Persian newspaper called the *Jam Jehan Nooma* was at the same time discontinued, and it owes its present existence, on an inferior footing as to types and paper, entirely to the patronage of a few English gentlemen, myself included, who attach importance to the circulation of these papers, as a means of diffusing knowledge and exciting a spirit of enquiry and reflection among the natives of India.

It may be considered quite certain that a native newspaper, in the present state of Indian society, is a luxury for which there is no real demand beyond the limits of Calcutta, and that consequently few or no copies will find a sale in the interior, when the editor is left to his own resources without any assistance from government or its officers.

The papers in the Bengali language have always flourished, because they find abundant supporters in that large class of the Hindu population of Calcutta who have become imbued to a certain extent with English tastes and notions, and amongst the rest a love of news, which is thus supplied to them in a cheap and accessible form. Their contents are limited chiefly to notices of shipping, prices current, appointments, police reports, proceedings in the supreme court, and descriptions of suttees. They rarely touch upon politics, whether foreign or domestic, and never exhibit any original remarks or speculations, excepting occasionally in defending the practice of suttee, against the animadversions of some European editor.

The Serampore papers partook of much the same character (with exception of course to what is said of suttees), but the selection of articles of intelligence was more judicious and varied, and better calculated to impart useful and instructive information.

The *Jam Jehan Nooma* which I consider to be the best native newspaper that has yet appeared, never contains any original matter. Each number presents a few articles well translated from the English Calcutta papers, and an abstract of the intelligence from the several courts of Hindustan, as given often very inaccurately and always most imperfectly, in those genuine native sources of intelligence, the akhbars. Its merit therefore, such as it is, consists entirely in the editor's judicious selection of articles from the English newspapers, and the style in which his translations are executed. The English articles being taken chiefly from the paper called the *Hurkuru*, it occasionally happens that the pages of the *Jam Jehan Nooma* present remarks which savour of criticism or censure of the measures of government, but on the whole the editor evinces great propriety and discretion, in abstaining from the introduction of comments and observations at variance with the spirit of the press regulations. Notwithstanding all the extraneous support which this publication still receives it seems to be sinking, and I doubt whether it can stand much longer, because in the mofussil an article of the sort is not wanted, and in Calcutta, Persian is not a language

generally understood or cultivated by those classes who alone feel interested in acquiring a knowledge of passing events, and whose tastes have been somewhat elevated and improved by their intercourse with Englishmen. It is to be feared that the poverty of our native subjects, beyond the limits of the presidency, operates generally speaking nearly as forcibly as their want of curiosity, to indispose them from affording encouragement to native newspapers.

74. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Private. Copy

Malda. 12 January 1829

Dear Sir,

Having observed the great interest taken by the court of proprietors in the question of *suttees*, I think it not unlikely that the subject may again be brought into public discussion. As no step of this kind will in all probability be taken without previous communication with you, I am anxious very shortly to state my own views and wishes upon this most important point.

There cannot be alive the man more anxious for the abolition of that horrible rite than myself. I do not believe that among all the most anxious advocates of that measure any one of them could feel more deeply than I do, the dreadful responsibility hanging over my happiness in this world and the next, if as the governor-general of India I was to consent to the continuance of this practice for one moment longer, not than our security, but than the real happiness and permanent welfare of the Indian population rendered indispensable. I determined therefore, before I came to India, that I would instantly take up the question, that I would come to as early a determination upon it, as a mature consideration, involving so many and such distant references would allow, and having made my decision, 'yea or no', to stand by it and set my conscience at rest. So I have proceeded. A question of this nature cannot be hurried. Alarm must not be excited by improperly and out of due course giving publicity to the existence even of an intention upon the subject. The known abandonment of it also, should such be the event, could only prove injurious to the cause in future. I have therefore waited, instead of prematurely pressing, for the annual report of the sadar court upon suttees, which is made at the present time. I have in the interval written a confidential circular to the officers of the greatest experience and judgment, begging their opinions as to the effect which the abolition might have upon the minds of the native army. Their answers are now coming in. When I return to Calcutta, I will send you a copy of this circular, as best showing my views and explaining the extreme caution, that I think must be obviously necessary. I should hope, that a representation of these

intentions will induce those who have taken up the question, to suspend the discussion for the present. I believe that these public discussions do infinitely more harm than good to the cause. The public press here is very injudicious in this respect. No man likes to have his religious belief reviled. I, however, wish not to prescribe a course for others. I know that those who have been so strenuous in this cause, are actuated by the very best intentions. All I have to request is, that they will give me credit for an anxiety equal to their own, that they will await the determination of the supreme government and that they will, during the period of deliberation at least, give their confidence to a council all the members of which are equally animated by the same desire. Sir C. Metcalfe would never allow a suttee to take place in a district under his orders. I rather think but am not sure, that Mr. Bayley gave to the custom the same successful discouragement. Yet both these gentlemen in their capacity as counsellors have not deemed it safe hitherto to interpose the direct authority of government, and surely if men with their experience, abilities and goodness of heart can hesitate, others knowing little or nothing of India and having no responsibility, may justly distrust a too positive opinion of a different tendency.

75. *Bentinck to Lord Melville.* Private

Malda. 12 January 1829

In the expectation of receiving an answer from Sir John Malcolm to the objections made by both my colleagues to the transfer of central India to the government of Bombay, I have not thought it necessary to advert to the orders sent out to the supreme government upon that subject. That question had been under discussion before I left England, and I then urgently entreated both Mr. Wynn and the chairman to settle it there and not refer it to us. It was to me a matter of perfect indifference, in what way the decision might be made. But I clearly foresaw, that the feeling in Bengal would be much averse to any diminution of political consequences on the part of the supreme government, and that the disinclination on this ground would be in no respect abated by Sir John Malcolm being the individual to whom it was to be transferred. Their feelings had no weight with me. I was an entire stranger to the question. Sir John was my friend. I entertained for him great regard and a high opinion of his talents and services. Upon a former occasion I had endeavoured to persuade Mr. Canning, instead of submitting the names of three individuals for the selection of the court of governors of Bombay, to recommend at will Sir John Malcolm, who in my opinion had superior claims to the other candidates. With these feelings in favour of Sir John, I should have been happy if my superior authority

had gratified him in this object, so dear an object of his ambition. But I was still more anxious to escape being one of the judges on this question, from not knowing whether my own opinion might not thus become the very instrument of his disappointment. You will perceive by the minute I have recorded that my opinion bears against the arrangement, but I should have been happy if Sir John Malcolm by a refutation of the objections so forcibly urged both by Mr. Bayley and Sir Charles Metcalfe could have enabled me to decide in his favour. I have heard from him privately, that he would not consent to undertake the administration of central India under the principle of non-interference with the internal affairs of the dependent states of Malwa and Rajputana, which this government had unanimously decided to adopt and upon which indeed had been hitherto acting. I shall be anxious to know how far the principle in question, which is very important, may meet with your approval. I believe it to be the only one, by which the goodwill of those chiefs can be maintained. I am happy to say, that those countries are now tranquil, with the exception of a member of Sindhia's family, Partember, whose son is to be married to the rani's daughter, but against whom nevertheless he is in arms. He has been beat by the contingent, and the dispute may be said to be terminated.

76. *William Astell to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 20 January 1829

My dear Lord,

I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter of the 21 July last, addressed to 'the Chairman'; and also the letter with which your Lordship has favoured me under date the 14 August last as well as a duplicate thereof: and I beg that you will accept my best thanks for your free and unreserved communications which under the mark '*private*' afford intelligence of much interest, which it might be difficult to furnish under official form. Your request that your letters may be considered as strictly private shall be duly attended to, and I trust that in the exercise of the discretion which you have therein reposed in me, I shall not exceed the bounds which, could your wishes be ascertained, you would yourself prescribe.

The dissensions which have existed at Madras have, as might be expected, occasioned much concern in this quarter, and the court have felt themselves compelled to animadvert, in condemnation of the governor of Madras on the course which he has pursued towards Mr. Hill, of whom the same high opinion is entertained here as in India. The question which has arisen with respect to Mr. Graeme's removal

from council involves some difficulty, but has been decided by the court in favour of the view taken by Mr. Lushington. The opinion of Sir Charles Grey to which your Lordship alluded has been officially received. I have observed with great satisfaction the good understanding which subsists between the government and the bench, and which I doubt not, under your Lordship's judicious and temperate administration will continue to prevail—the court have in deference to the high authority abovementioned refrained from offering any opinion as to the legality of Mr. Graeme's removal; and in their despatch to Madras have simply contented themselves with an explanation of their understanding of the orders of 1801, which as your Lordship will perceive, is opposed to the view taken of those orders by Sir Charles Grey, and Mr. Graeme. The court have also (I hope clearly and explicitly) laid down regulations for future observance, which it is believed will meet any cases that may hereafter arise, and remove any doubt that may be suggested in regard to the duration of service of the several members of council at the respective presidencies.

The court have viewed with much gratification the measure of reform and retrenchment now in progress at your presidency, and also at Madras and Bombay. Your Lordship may be assured of the court's cordial co-operation towards a reduction of the territorial expenses. We are also at this moment earnestly engaged in a revision of the home charges, as a despatch is now in progress through the court containing suggestions and recommendations in view to a very considerable reduction in the political, revenue, judicial and general charges of India; which will convince our respective governments that we are fully disposed to take our share of the invidious task of which the state of our affairs imperatively demands the fulfilment. The suggestions which your Lordship has thrown out relative to our establishment to the eastward shall meet with that attention to which they are so well entitled. The expenses of that establishment are now under our consideration, and I trust that they may be greatly reduced without injury to the public interests;—and I would fain hope and believe that under your Lordship's administration, if peace and tranquillity be preserved in India, the embarrassments in which the Company's affairs are now involved will be removed and that we shall be able to render a good account of our government of India both as respects our financial and political administration. Towards this desirable object I think that nothing can more conduce than the employment of native agency in preference to the expensive services of Europeans;—and allow me, my Lord, to take this opportunity of expressing my hope that the 'adventurers' which beset every governor-general, and authority, may not be a source of trouble to you, and displeasure at home. Sir William Rumbold was permitted, contrary to the wishes of the court, to return to Bengal; and though many restrictions were imposed upon him, I cannot but recollect that he was the chief cause of diminishing the fame of the late Marquess of Hastings,

and that I observed to Lord Melville (who was persuaded to interpose his authority and to overrule the court's decision) that I trusted Sir William would not be a thorn in your Lordship's side as he had been to your predecessor.—Further let me express a hope that the supreme court may not continue to be overstocked with that pest of society, attorneys, who now swarm at Calcutta to a number double what is required, and that your Lordship will also as far as in your power lies prevent the useless admission of barristers at your presidency—I offer these remarks in free and easy communication equal to the desire which I have to see your Lordship's government terminate as auspiciously as it has begun.

77. *John Pearson to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 26 January 1829

My Lord,

I have given to the question which you referred to me the best consideration in my power; and I regret to add that the conclusion at which I have arrived in point of law, is opposed to what I believe your Lordship would think most expedient on the present occasion.

I do not, indeed, find that it is forbidden, expressly and in word, to divide the council; and for each part to act separately, as in its particular district. But I conceive that a measure of the kind was never in the contemplation of the legislature; for all the acts of parliament appear to have been passed with reference to what may, perhaps, be termed the unity of the council; or, in other words, to a single and not a divided government. Without troubling you with a long legal argument, it may be proper to bring to the notice of your Lordship some of the provisions which appear to me inconsistent with any other view of the subject.

By the 33 Geo. III, c. 52, s. 24 the government is in a governor-general and three councillors.

By the 27th section of the same act (which was framed to empower the governor-general and other governors to act without the concurrence of their respective councils) the governor and the members of council are directed to 'exchange with and communicate in council to each other' in writing, 'to be recorded in their secret consultations', the grounds of their respective opinions; and if each retain his opinions, the members of council are, nevertheless, all of them to sign their names to the order made by the governor-general or other governor.

By 39 & 40 Geo. IV, c. 79, s. 12 a similar exchange of reasons is directed under circumstances of another kind.

By 33 Geo. III, c. 52, s. 51 the governor-general or other governors

cannot without the concurrence of his council act in his judicial capacity, impose taxes, or make, suspend or repeal any general regulation for the civil government of the country.

By section 39 of the same act, the several orders and proceedings of each presidency are to be signed by the chief secretary to the council of the presidency.

And though this provision is partially repealed or, at least, modified by a subsequent act, the principle of it appears to be fully recognized and continued. By 53 Geo. III, c. 155, s. 79 in consequence of occasional inconvenience arising from no other person being authorized to sign the proceedings of the several presidencies, it is enacted that in the absence of the chief secretary they shall be signed by the principal secretary of the department to which they relate.

I will not trouble your Lordship with any further references. But I think you will agree that the clauses which I have mentioned contemplate only the existence of a single and undivided government in each presidency.

78. *Robert Hamilton to Walter Ewer*

Benares. 30 January 1829

I have the honour to submit the annual suttee report for 1828, and beg to accompany it with a few remarks.

2. It appears that no considerable alteration occurs in the annual number of suttees which take place within the limits of this district, this, I apprehend, may be considered a satisfactory evidence of the increase or decrease of estimation in which the performance of the rite is held at one of the most sacred homes of Hinduism in India.

3. Having resided some years at Benares, and during a greater part of the time conducted the duties of the magistrate's office, I may be able to advance an opinion on the subject of suttees founded on a more actual knowledge of the circumstances attendant on the performance of the rite, than other individuals possessing less advantages though alike desiring the abolition.

4. In 1826, I had the honour to submit a report on this subject in the hope that the government would have availed itself of the opportunity which then offered to suppress at once the rite, or to restrain its performance under such restrictions as would almost render it impossible. That the former measure would have been unattended by tumult or commotion, I am perfectly confident, and I should not have suggested the latter had it not been under the apprehension that government, having so long tolerated the observance, might feel reserve in directing its total and sudden abolition.

5. When the rite itself is considered, and by what class of human

beings it can *alone* be performed, humanity strenuously urges a rigid adherence to established usages, and the strictest interpretation of law. Were its performance indiscriminately directed to be observed by widow or widower its abolition would not have come under discussion at this late period. As it however is, a single positive authority cannot be adduced enjoining the observance of the rite of suttee, denouncing penalties in case of non-observance, or conferring protecting immunities on the person who sets fire to the pyre.

6. To suppose that oversights such as these would have occurred amongst persons of such acknowledged ability as the framers and writers on the Hindu codes is to stigmatize them with carelessness or negligence on one of the principal points of their labours. Is it possible that were the rite of suttee an old established custom coeval with the burning of the dead it would have escaped notice? Or that the proper ceremonies enjoined for the occasion should not have been laid down, and clearly defined, at the same time that other important ceremonies were especially ordained and declared?

7. The absence of all such directions may surely be taken as proof that the antiquity of the custom is far less than is generally supposed. It is true that no actual origin can be traced, but surely this is no reasonable ground for declaring it most ancient.

8. In all my communication with the Hindus of Benares, and with many of the numberless individuals of rank and information who resort to this city in the course of their pilgrimages, I never yet have heard a solid authority quoted in support of the rite. It is invariably stated that its performance will be productive of benefits to the widow, and her deceased husband, in a future state, but it nowhere is ordained that it must be observed, or that its non-observance will bring down wrath on the living or surrender the departed to more horrible purgatory. Now the non-performance of other ordained rites and their non-observance is deprecated. If then the rite of suttee is an essential component part of the doctrine by which Hindus profess to be guided, how can such an extraordinary omission be accounted for? It certainly is calculated to excite a distrust in the authority, and surely humanity, if nothing else, imperatively demands the protecting influence of a humane and benevolent government. . . .

9. The pandits, with whom I have frequently conversed, admit that there is a deficiency of authority, but I fear they ground a more solid defence on the toleration of the government. Indeed on enquiry whether in the event of suttee the person who lighted the pile was by Hindu law absolved from the crime of murder or from the express prohibition to slay, it has been answered the government have not prohibited the right, and made setting fire to the pile illegal; it is a custom tolerated and consequently its performance scarcely punishable. That such a lamentable view should be taken of the light in which the rite is held by government cannot but be most distressing. It however is but too true, that the public acts of governments have not altogether been of that

decided nature as to impress the community with the abhorrence which is in reality felt by the legislature. Had however the impression on the mind of the public been solely confined to the knowledge that though government were not disposed at once to suppress what was considered by so extensive a portion of its subjects an ordained rite, still its observance was tolerated with extreme repugnance, and only until a satisfactory enquiry into its origin and ceremonial had been conducted, upon which decided measures would most assuredly be enforced (should not the observance of the rite previously fall into disuse) the marked displeasure of official authorities might have been required towards the heirs in all cases wherein a suttee had been allowed by the family. Government offices and appointments might have been closed against them, and the community might have been led to believe that the surviving members of a family in which a suttee had taken place laboured under a stigma which could not be removed, and from which their respectability, and influence materially suffered.

10. In the western provinces and in this neighbourhood, no severer mark of displeasure can be evinced by a public functionary than refusing to receive the complimentary visit of a respectable individual. Indeed, the individual is generally supposed to be in disgrace, and in a community constituted like that of an Indian town such a report is sufficient to lower the character of the person alluded to and to render him an object of aversion and distrust. This feeling may possibly have degenerated at or in the vicinity of the presidency. Of this I have no power of judging, and therefore can only conjecture that the effects of not being countenanced by those in power is, even in Calcutta, a serious drawback to any man.

11. Were government disposed to enforce the abolition of the rite they perhaps would not have difficulty in finding a precedent. During the Mussulman dynasty, I apprehend, suttees were prohibited, if not suppressed. I believe they are yet prohibited and the prohibition unattended by any discontent or demur in extensive tracts already under the rule and power of government. As far as my knowledge enables me to give an opinion of the possible consequences of a prohibitory enactment as relating to the city and district under my immediate charge, I can safely and unequivocably declare, that its enforcement would not be attended by any general disquiet and after suppression in one or two cases by the hand of authority, the rite would cease to exist and fast sink into utter oblivion, as other ceremonies which have already been abolished by the order of government. The powers of magistrates must however be absolute and no appeal allowed. Unless this be the case the local authority will be cramped and limited, which would be peculiarly objectionable and pregnant with inconvenience and dissensions.

12. I trust the nature and subject of this report will excuse its length. In conclusion I have only to remark, that as far as my experience goes, I have not known an instance, except once at Lucknow, of the widow

of a sepoy becoming suttee, neither are the sepoys attendant spectators on the occasion of the rite in this city, and I should conceive are less interested in the ceremony than any class of subjects under the government.

79. *R. Nisbet to Capt. Benson*

Rangpur. 31 January 1829
Recd. February 1829

Lord William Bentinck was so kind yesterday morning as to enquire regarding the method I pursued in making roads and bridges while judge and magistrate at Rangpur, and condescended I believe to ask my opinion as to the practicability of road making in general through the country.

Having been interrupted by the entrance of different gentlemen, and the announcement of breakfast, I was unable to explain at all what was required. I feel therefore anxious to take the liberty of soliciting the favour of you to submit to his Lordship's notice the following remarks when an opportunity may offer of so doing.

I understood Lord William to ask first how I made the roads, and bridges, and secondly how I kept them in repair. In reply to the first, I beg to state that all the roads within 5 or 6 miles of the station were made and kept in repair exclusively with the convicts. With regard to roads further distant, my plan was, first to make the road with convicts, and then to place the superintendence of it under the different zamindars through whose estates it passed and they in return vested the management in their village officers (gomasta and patwari) who caused the different ryots in each village to keep in repair as much of the road as run along their fields. To issue this order is easy enough, and all magistrates can do so, but to ensure a willing compliance requires a little management. In Rangpur I was so fortunate as to secure the good wishes and co-operation of the landed proprietors, owing to my long residence in the district, and my constant endeavours to conciliate them and also frequent personal communication. The result was, I had only to propose anything advantageous to the community or which justice demanded, and they were not only willing to aid my endeavours but actually did so, most zealously.

This assistance I may here observe was obtained not only in road making but in the more important duty of preserving the peace and order of the district and in securing public offenders. Having found the zamindars so well disposed in Rangpur I naturally felt inclined to consider them a very superior set of men, and in general better disposed than in other districts, but at the same time I am confident I could effect as

much in any of the neighbouring districts as I did at Rangpur. In Purnea for instance, where his Lordship remarked the entire want of roads, I am certain if I were the chief authority of the place I could there also make an improvement. One thing I am fully convinced of, few magistrates really work their convicts. They might do in general four times the labour they perform, but then it is necessary to superintend in person; mere native agency will not answer. At Rangpur I always went three times a day to see the works going on, and sometimes oftener. When the distance was great from the station, I remained myself on the spot in tents, and kept the prisoners in huts there. This indeed with respect to them I did even within two or three miles of the jail as I found so much time lost in going and coming. It was also the surgeon's opinion that the convicts were more healthy in huts in small parties of 50 and 100 than all together in jail. Whenever I went out myself and remained in tents I always took the amal with me and transacted business daily, the same as if I were at the sadar station.

With respect to bridges, I built them entirely myself, merely by the aid of convicts. The bricks I not only burnt but carried from the kiln to the spot by means of the prisoners, and with the exception of a head mason and one or two assistants (the former I retained permanently, the latter merely when wanted) no professional workmen were employed. I selected persons sentenced to long periods of confinement, and had them instructed by the head mason, so that after a time I had prisoners in the jail who were able to work without any assistance. One small bridge (the span of the arch about 12 feet) I constructed exclusively by convicts, and it proved as good as any of the others, which masons had superintended. In one or two instances men who I had taught continued to work as masons in the town after being released, though not originally of that calling, which with respect to natives, is rather singular. The only expense I had to incur on account of the bridges was for lime, and this was without a rupee being charged to government. By Regulation VI of 1819 the proceeds of public ferries let in farm, may be disbursed by the magistrates in improvements. From this fund, with the sanction of the superintendent of police, I bought my lime, paid the wages of the masons, and any other incidental charges. When I was made magistrate of Rangpur, none of the ferries had been let out, but very soon after I received charge, the regulation was enforced by me, and the benefit to the community was considerable. This might be effected in every district, and it only requires the different magistrates to try the experiment to induce successors. Mr. Smith my able successor at Rangpur has I understand done a good deal also by means of this fund, and at Banglipore during the 12 months I was there, I built two bridges from the proceeds of the ferries. In my district the natives are fully sensible of the advantage of good roads, and easy public communication, and in proof of that they were so in Rangpur, I may here mention, that in a complimentary Persian address presented to me by the principal

zamindars and inhabitants on my leaving the district, the fact of having improved the highway, and communication throughout the zillah, was dwelt upon in terms of great approbation. Another improvement, which I endeavoured to affect both at Rangpur, and Banglipore, was the introduction of trees not indigenous to the districts. With these, I was supplied gratis, from the honourable Company's garden near Calcutta by official application to the superintendent, and you might have observed fir trees growing many miles from the station of Banglipore close to the paddy fields. These are all the remarks that occur to me just now, and you will probably think with me, that should his Lordship do me the honour to read them their length will nearly exhaust his patience, and I shall therefore conclude, requesting your indulgence for the trouble I have given you.

Having applied to visit the presidency on leave for ten days, I shall be proud to answer any question Lord William might do me the honour to put on this subject, should he think it worth further discussion, that is, if my leave be complied with, for though I hope it will be, I am not certain.

P.S. I must beg to apologise for the mistakes made but I have been interrupted repeatedly during the time I have been writing.

80. *Bentinck's minute on central India and the upper provinces*

10 February 1829

Sir John Malcolm having declined to assume the government of central India upon the views unanimously entertained by the supreme government of the policy by which our relations with those states should be regulated, there seems to be for the present an end to the question.

I cannot, however, forbear from remarking, that on reading the 17th and 18th paragraphs of his minute, in which the manner, degree, and occasions, in reference to our interference with the affairs of those states are particularly described, I cannot discover any material difference, from the actual practice of this government. In cases of internal concern and dissension our advice, but nothing but our advice, has been interposed; our arbitration has been always offered, but only upon the condition of the expressed desire of both parties. It is only in the preservation of the public peace and in preventing those continual hostilities which have heretofore, for ever prevailed in those countries, that our power has been and will be immediately and vigorously exerted. In short our anxious object is, that these chieftains shall never feel the yoke of a superior power: that they shall feel all advantages of independence, and that they shall only be deprived of the power of

mutual aggression and of tyrannizing over their weaker neighbours. This is, as far as I understand, the general scope of our system, and exercised with judgment and forbearance, I think our paramount power must conduce to the order of that part of the world, to general tranquillity, and to the general welfare and prosperity of both princes and people.

I believe the court in one of their despatches as well as Sir John Malcolm and Sir Charles Metcalfe have suggested a different distribution of duties in respect to the chief controlling officers, from that which at present exists.

Sir John Malcolm has also adverted to the advantage of diminishing the European agency, an idea which had already occurred to me, and which I found upon conversation with Sir Charles Metcalfe, to be also his opinion. It being however my intention to propose if no unpleasant occurrence should take place to the eastward (of which there is at present not the most remote chance in the opinion of that best of authorities, Sir Archibald Campbell) that the government shall in the course of the present year be removed for a time to the north-western provinces, I am desirous that no changes shall take place in the present arrangements, until upon the spot and in communication with the local authorities we can best determine these questions.

The presence of the supreme government in the north of India will not only be useful in enabling its members to come to the most satisfactory conclusion upon central India, to which the authorities at home seem to attach so much importance, but the unsettled state of many other questions regarding both the revenue and judicial administration will be much expedited. There can be no doubt that the seat of empire is placed unfortunately at a distant extremity and in that part where from the character of the inhabitants and from the long establishment of the permanent settlement of the judicial regulation, little attention from the supreme authority can be ever requisite.

To Calcutta as a capital, a consequence has been given, which, as I have elsewhere stated, in no respect belongs to it. It is in the upper provinces where we have a brave population, where the great part of our army is both raised and stationed, where our political relations are numerous and intricate and the more closely inspected and controlled by the supreme authority the better, where the revenue settlements are still unfinished and where the general happiness and attachment of the people, if it be possible to accomplish these objects, must be one of the most essential cares of the government. I do not learn that point has been as yet attained.

Of the very great advantage to the public service and to the general welfare which will be derived from this measure, I cannot entertain the smallest doubt; my late visit to a few of the districts in Bengal, so long in our possession, has shown me the utility of personal inspection by the ruling authority. In one district, that of Purnea, there is not a trace of good administration, while in those of Dinajpur and Rangpur, which

have at times been blessed by the superintendence of excellent collectors and magistrates, every attention to the general convenience and improvement is at once obvious and gratifying. The case of Purnea, I propose to bring before the council in a separate paper. The same opportunity has convinced me of the inexpediency of keeping up the Purnea provincial battalion and has led me to doubt the necessity of many other of the provincial corps, the duties of which may, I think, be better performed by the civil power, with a great reduction of expense. I have been also satisfied that there is no occasion for retaining any longer a regular corps in the unhealthy station of [*illeg.*]. I wish I could say, that I had only discovered evils susceptible like these of an easy remedy. But I have been deeply impressed with the monstrous oppression which our population suffer from the native police establishment, and while every man whether in or out of authority admits fully the whole extent of their exactions and most tormenting and offensive conduct, yet no one was able to offer even a suggestion by which this illegitimate power could be kept in check. The causes are of course various, and this is not the time for their consideration. But the principal one may be said to consist in the inefficiency of European control, and it is precisely as the vigilant superintendence of the government over its European functionaries, and of the latter over their native officers, is diligent and active, so will all the objects of good government be advanced or retarded.

Although my late visit will have been attended with some public advantage, yet I am perfectly aware of my own comparative uselessness when separated from the experience, knowledge and talents of my colleagues, as well as of the chief and confidential officers of government. I might go alone, as other governors-general have done, to the upper provinces, but I hope never to be separated from the council, and in the discussion and final arrangement of the various and complicated questions connected with central India, I consider their presence to be indispensable. The only objection to this measure that had particularly struck me was the expense of moving the government with its departments. But upon reflecting upon the great assistance that may be derived from a judicious appropriation of the public cattle to this service, I am satisfied that the whole charge may be so reduced as not to weigh a feather in the balance against the advantages of the plan. By the removal of a part of the troops to other stations, Meerut will afford ample accommodation.

81. *Government circular on* sati *and pilgrim tax*[1]

16 February 1829

The governor-general has recently had before him the annual report of suttees for 1827. From the perusal of that document his Lordship has learned with much regret, that the practice of the horrid rite continues to prevail to a great extent. The subject of suttee indeed is one which has occupied much of the governor-general's serious attention, and the consideration of it has not failed to leave on his mind a conviction that the practice ought if possible to be suppressed. But before coming to any final decision on the expediency of terminating by authoritative interference a practice so abhorrent from humanity, his Lordship feels desirous that the fullest deliberation should be given to this whole momentous question.

Amongst other points to be considered is the manner in which the practice may be prohibited with the least violence to the feelings and prejudices of the Hindus, and with the least probability of creating alarm or of exposing the intentions of the ruling authorities to misapprehension.

On this head a suggestion has been made to the governor-general, whether in the event of the abolition of suttee it might not be expedient to couple with it a repeal of the regulations under which a tax on pilgrims is now levied. Long custom may probably have removed the obnoxious impressions to which the imposition of this tax may originally have given rise: but it seems reasonable to suppose that the pilgrims, for the most part poor and miserable, could not but feel gratified with this act of consideration and relief, and that in the return from their pilgrimage they would spread through every part of India a favourable report of the conduct of government, and would thus give the best contradiction to the sinister interpretation which innocent fear or mischievous intention might have founded upon the measure of abolishing suttee.

Objections however exist to the adoption of this suggestion. The repeal of the system will close a productive source of revenue. The balance of the tax in favour of government being considerable, the advantage ought not, it is thought, to be relinquished unless at the same time an important boon be conferred on the parties relieved from the impost. But it is surmised that the removal of the tax on sacred places will not with the Hindus be so popular a measure as might be anticipated; inasmuch as a slight payment for access to places of imagined sanctity has a tendency to raise their fame, and enhance the merit of the devotee: more especially as Hindus are apt to argue the dignity of places of religious resort from the attention paid by the ruling power to the regulation of their establishments. It is said also that the existing system is well calculated to check extortion, and to protect

81. [1] Sent to the Bengal civil officers of the Company.

pilgrims from the oppression which the ministers and officers attached to places considered sacred would, if left to themselves, practise upon the deluded worshippers. The maintenance of public tranquillity moreover in the neighbourhood of places esteemed holy must, it is said, be expressly provided for, as very numerous affrays and breaches of the peace are to be expected where such a number of strangers from all parts of India are promiscuously congregated. A tax on pilgrims requisite for the attainment of this end cannot be considered unreasonable. Supposing however the government inclined to relinquish the revenue derived from the pilgrim tax in the hope that such a proceeding would gratify the Hindus, it would become a question whether the institutions at Jagannath, Gaya, and Allahabad might be safely left to themselves or whether it would still be necessary for government to interpose for the general management of their establishments and to maintain extra police and other officers for the preservation of peace and order in the districts. As the interests of the scouts sent out in search of pilgrims might be affected by the repeal of the tax, it seems proper to consider whether this class of the various descriptions of ministers and servants belonging to the temples have influence sufficient to disseminate mischievous notions among the Hindu population of the intentions of government in causing a change by which they may feel aggrieved, although it might seem on the other hand that the less the government might take in the shape of tax, the more would the pilgrims be able to pay as offerings to the priests.

On the suggestion generally for repealing the tax regulations as coupled with the suppression of suttee, and on the objections to which the measure seems obnoxious as well as upon the general question of the safety and practicability of abolishing suttee, it will be satisfactory to the governor-general to be made acquainted with your sentiments.

82. *Resolution of the government of Bengal on European settlement*[1]

17 February 1829

The governor-general in council remarks, that the present restrictions on the occupancy of land by Europeans have notoriously failed of their purpose; and their effect in inducing a recourse to fiction and concealment has been manifestly injurious.

2. When the tenures are avowed, there will no longer be any difficulty in defining their extent and nature; and an essential security may be obtained against the fraud, inconvenience and litigation which the present system is calculated to occasion, and which must be alike

82. [1] This modest attempt by the Bengal government to modify the existing rules for the occupation of land by Europeans, was picked up by Charles Metcalfe and led to a radical minute by Bentinck urging European colonization (see 30 August 1829) on a much wider scale. This created consternation in London and brought down the wrath of the home government on Bentinck.

injurious to the success of trade, to the peace of the community, and to the character of our countrymen.

3. Every day the great importance of facilitating the production and reducing the cost of articles of export from India becomes more apparent: but with the above opinion of the practical effect of the prohibitory system, it appears to his Lordship in council unnecessary to dwell at length on such considerations.

4. They would indeed evince that the matter is one of great national interest; but apart from any such argument, the practical results of the prohibition seem to afford ample grounds for its discontinuance.

5. Although the provisions contained in s. 107, c. 155, of the 53d of his late Majesty, in regard to the administration of civil justice, seem to require explanation and amendment; and though the state of the law relative to the trial and punishment of criminal offences committed by British subjects in the more distant provinces is still more seriously defective; these circumstances do not appear to constitute any sufficient ground for postponing a compliance with the prayer of the memorial above recorded, since, as already observed, the measure appears likely in its consequences to diminish litigation, and to obviate the causes of violence and crime.

6. Actuated by the above sentiments, his Lordship in council resolves that the resolution of the 7th May 1824 shall no longer be confined to lands required for coffee plantations, but that the same principle shall be applied to all cases in which Europeans may desire to occupy lands for the cultivation of indigo or other agricultural purposes.

7. His Lordship in council further resolves that the 19th, 20th and 21st sections of the above-mentioned resolution shall be rescinded.

8. The rules contained in Regulation 38, 1793, and other corresponding regulations, requiring only that before Europeans occupy land they shall obtain the permission of government, no new enactment appears to be necessary; and his Lordship in council considers it to be advisable to postpone any measure of that nature until the exigencies of the case shall be practically developed. In the meantime the above resolution will sufficiently define the conditions on which the required permission is to be granted.

9. On the application of Messrs. Alexander & Co., relative to the Nujifgurh estate, his Lordship in council deems it unnecessary to pass any special order, it being undesirable that government should interfere with individual claims.

83. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 18 February 1828[9]
Recd. Calcutta. 29 June 1829
[Wrongly dated in text]

My dear Lord William,

I really have nothing Indian to write about and they tell me there is nothing going on in Leadenhall Street out of the common routine of business. I must however, if I have not done so before, thank you most sincerely for your very long and satisfactory letter by the *Undaunted*. Your visit to Madras must upon the whole have been rather melancholy. Everything seems to have gone wrong with my friend Lushington since he landed there. I lament it much, not only on his, but on account of the government, which never can assume the front and bearing it ought to do—to be respected—as long as he remains there. Mr. Hill was ordered to be restored to office forthwith—he has however since arrived at home, and a number of indefinite or unfounded charges made against him after the event came home with him, but they have been declared worse than nothing and Mr. H. will go out again in the spring. I have heard much from Lushington of course but I confess I have not been able to see anything like sufficient cause for his quarrel with Graeme or Hill. He ought as soon as he can to offer Graeme the highest situation under council, but I am afraid a different spirit will move him.

Malcolm on the contrary has been getting on very much and generally to the satisfaction of all the authorities at home. I confess myself most agreeably disappointed and if he would only leave others to see his merits without thrusting them before your eyes upon all occasions, he would with me be second only to Munro.

This schism with the King's court will do good and lead I hope to a law declaring the powers of those courts. It seems true Mr. Dewar upon whose advice as advocate general he (Malcolm) acted has been made chief justice of Bombay and a Mr. Seymour, the other puisne judge. This will probably bring Sir J. P. Grant to his senses, but I would have recalled him—for the man who holds such doctrines as he does is not a fit man to administer the law in India. The recorder of Prince of Wales's Island is I hear recalled—so that one may hope these two measures will bring the judges to their senses.

Lord Dalhousie is appointed to succeed Lord Combermere but will not sail till June or July. I have given to Lord Ellenborough, to give to him, copies of two papers on the Indian army written by Sir Thomas Munro in 1810 and 1813 and given by him confidentially to the president of the board of control at that time. They are well worth your reading. I sent copies of them to the Duke of Wellington who read them with great interest. I found the original drafts among his manuscripts.

A Mr. Turner is talked of as your new bishop—and is well spoken of.

I doubt if you will be surprised at what has happened here, but you will I know rejoice at the prospect of peace and unanimity between England and Ireland. Mr. Peel's conduct will no doubt go far to accomplish the object in view and all liberal men are now high in his praises, but it is a question upon which the historian may and must indeed say much. As to the Duke I always suspected he was a liberal and many I know have long thought Peel also.

Winchelsea, Newcastle & Co. are very sore at having been allowed to commit themselves so deeply without a hint of what was in agitation. There were signs enough abroad however and they had I know their suspicions many months ago, but they thought their Brunswick clubs and meetings would [*illeg.*].

Such a history of conversion as we shall have before the question is settled was never heard of. The Great Brunswick Duke, Cumberland himself arrived here only on Saturday and is supposed, for very good reasons, to have ratted already. Oh, that Mr. Canning had achieved the victory which awaits the Duke and Peel! There will be a struggle in the Lords no doubt—but when you see the Lonsdales, Beresfords, etc. come over so quietly you will not fear the result.

This question I suppose will be a sufficient excuse for postponing anything like new measures of any other sort till the next session. Mr. Whitmore is attempting to get a committee on the China trade, but I do not think he will succeed or that the present administration will allow the question of the charter to be agitated till 1831/2 and even then the probability is, if the Duke continues in power, that he will arrange all his plans and have his bill ready before the world will know anything about it. For such seems to be his fancy or his will, which there is no great disposition now to dispute, but times may change in this respect.

The China question however, after all, is the principal question, and that is a question of money or friends more than anything else. If they take from us that source of revenue, John Bull must submit to be taxed to make up the Indian deficit, and parliament then no doubt will keep a sharp lookout on your disbursements abroad and ours at home in order to keep that deficit as low as possible.

In other respects the effect of opening the trade to China would probably be to give us bad tea at a little less price than we now pay for good. A considerable market might open itself for British manufacturers by which the nation might gain but numbers of individuals would lose.

There have been several plans in agitation for the chairs next year, which will end I think in Mr. Loch being chairman and Mr. Astell—the present chair—going on as his deputy. This is an odd looking arrangement but under all circumstances not a bad one. There are many reasons why it should be so, but they cannot well be explained.

I am afraid from what I hear that you will be obliged to submit some time longer to the Persian humbug of an embassy—which first and last must have cost the Company little less than 4 million sterling. There would seem to be some idea of annoying Russia from that quarter in an apprehension of her encroaching too rapidly in that quarter, but the greatest bugbear I know is the Russian bear.

84. *Court of directors to the Bengal government on retrenchment*

India House. 18 February 1829

Para 1. From our late despatches in the financial and military departments, you must be fully aware of the anxious interest which we take in the financial embarrassments in which our territorial affairs are involved.

2. Your financial letter of the 28th February, leads us to expect, at no distant period, further communications on the retrenchments which you then contemplated in the civil as well as the military branches of our service, and, though we are perfectly sensible that, for many reasons, the investigations preparatory to reductions of expense may be better conducted in India than in this country, we do not on that account, deem ourselves absolved from the obligation, at this critical moment, of offering such suggestions and recommendations as occur to us on a matter of so vital importance. The results of the best consideration which we have been able to give to the subject, we shall arrange under the heads of political, revenue, judicial, and general charges.

3. In your political letter dated 26th October 1827, you drew our attention to the great expense of the Persian mission, which, in the year 1826/7 appears to have exceeded by more than two lakhs of rupees the limits which we had fixed for it, and at the same time referred for our decision the question whether it is to be maintained on its present footing, or withdrawn and an agency of inferior description substituted, similar in its scale of expense to that of Mr. Willock.

4. We are not prepared to substitute an agency of an inferior description for the mission now maintained at the court of Tehran; but you will take care that the expenses of that mission shall not in future exceed [12 lakhs] per annum.

. . . . .

9. Is it that the political measures adopted under the government of the Marquess of Hastings have failed to produce their expected results and if so, whence has this arisen? Is it that your military force is not

distributed in a way the most favourable to its efficiency? Is it that our system of government is so little popular with the natives as to require a large army to preserve the internal peace of the country; or is it that our notions of security and of the conditions indispensable to the enjoyment of it, have altered with our position? That we have grown more susceptible of alarm, quicker in our apprehensions of danger, nicer in our calculations of the means of averting it, more cautious of encountering hazards, less fertile in resources, or less confident in them, and in ourselves? If there are causes whether of temporary or permanent operation which render it unsafe or in any respect inexpedient to maintain somewhat similar proportions between a war and peace establishment in India which are usually observed in the states of Europe it is desirable that the nature of such peculiarities should be investigated and explained. We wish you to investigate the question thoroughly yourselves and to consult the persons you may think most competent to form an opinion upon it. You will then communicate the result of your deliberations to us.

10. The great political changes which have taken place of late years have been accompanied with a corresponding change in the duties of your political agents. Their numbers, too, have been multiplied at a very considerable additional expense, whilst the old residencies (with the single exception of that of Poona which was necessarily discontinued on the overthrow of the Peshwa's government) have been suffered to remain upon their former footing. When our power in India was less predominant than it is now become, your political residents were often engaged in conducting difficult negotiations, detecting dangerous intrigues, and defeating formidable combinations against our interests, whilst their constant task was to fix the friendly, conciliate the wavering, and intimidate the ill-disposed. Vested with such functions (similar, in fact, to those performed by diplomatic agents in Europe) their characters as representatives of the British government, combined with their important avocations, required on public grounds establishments calculated for display, and a corresponding degree of magnificence in their style of living. But those situations now are very much altered. The holders are occupied chiefly as counsellors of the ministers at the courts where they are stationed (most of which have faded in splendour as the princes have decayed in power) in paying a few occasional visits of ceremony, assisting more or less actively and directly in the internal administration, or mediating the adjustment of incidental disputes between the sovereign and his subjects or neighbours. Their utility to our government consists almost entirely in their endeavours to preserve general order or to restore tranquillity where it has been locally disturbed. It is rather a remarkable fact, too, that the only considerable chief in India, with whom for a number of years, we have had no serious dissensions is Ranjit Singh[1] with whom we have no political agent stationed.

84. [1] Ranjit Singh (1780–1839), ruler of the Punjab.

11. Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We are very far from meaning to disparage the merits of our political residents or to undervalue their services; on the contrary we believe them to be equal in point of industry, zeal and talent, to any other class of our public functionaries; and if their exertions are attended with less brilliant results than on some former times this is imputable to no fault of theirs, but wholly to the change in their position. As little is it our intention to recommend their being withdrawn from any of the more important stations. Our object is simply to suggest to you a revision of our durbar charges under a persuasion that by accommodating the political part of your establishment to the altered state of our foreign relations, and the description of duties now performed by your political residents, a considerable saving may be effected.

12. It may probably be expedient to maintain the residencies at Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad, upon nearly the present footing: but it appears to us, that those at Gwalior and Nagpur might be expediently reduced to residencies of the second class, considering their diminished political importance, and the circumstance of one of the princes being a minor.

13. The same observation applies to Indore. We admit indeed, in so far as respects Gwalior, that there are a number of arrangements in progress with that court which would render any change in the establishment of the residency unadvisable at present; but the reduction should nevertheless be kept in view.

14. We are aware also that the resident at Indore has the important charge of superintending the affairs of Malwa. But we are of opinion that the performance of these duties would be better provided for by the appointment of a superintendent with a liberal salary who would not find it a very burdensome addition to attend to the affairs of Holkar's courts. Under such an arrangement the allowance now granted to the resident for table allowance etc. or a sum nearly equivalent, say Rs. 50,000 per annum, might be saved. It is not our wish that Mr. Wellesley's emoluments should be curtailed while he continues to hold the office of resident (and the same observation will apply to Mr. Wilder's at Nagpur) because we are decidedly averse on equitable considerations, to retrench the allowances of individual civil servants, except in cases where they have recently been unduly augmented. But should you find it advisable to remove Mr. Wellesley to the residency of Lucknow, an opening would be made for such an arrangement as we have suggested.

15. In turning our attention to the residencies under the presidency of Fort St. George we can perceive no good reason for continuing Mysore as a residency of the first class, and are of opinion that it should be placed on the same footing with that of Nepal which the present vacancy in the office affords a favourable opportunity of effecting.

16. In respect to the residency at Tanjore and the Chepauk agency, we think that they may be dispensed with altogether, without prejudice

to the public interests. The duties attached to these situations are very unimportant in their nature and arrangements may easily be made for their performance without keeping up separate establishments for the purpose. The business at Tanjore may be transacted by the collector of the provinces, and the duties attached to the Chepauk agency may be transferred to one of the secretaries to the Madras government and it is our desire that the arrangements in respect of the Chepauk agency be carried into immediate effect.

17. The Satara residency under the Bombay presidency seems to be wholly unnecessary, and must be discontinued. It now costs upwards of a lakh and a quarter of rupees per annum, and occupies a resident, with no less than four assistants, whilst the whole of the raja's territory yields an annual revenue of only about thirteen lakhs.

18. We would also strongly recommend for revision our relations with the state of Travancore, which appear to us to be unsuitable to the present circumstances of both parties, and to the general state of the south of India, and as exhibiting an instance where considerations of general policy, no less than motives of economy and a liberal view of the raja's interests, as well as of our own, combine in suggesting a change.

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23. The residency at Satara as well as those at Tanjore and Travancore, are all held at present by military officers. There are certainly some political and civil situations in which a military man is more useful, than one whose knowledge is confined to matters of a civil nature. We do not object to the employment of military men under these circumstances but we desire that they may be only so employed when there is reason to expect that their services will be more useful than those of any of our civil servants.

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39. On looking through the whole of our political agencies, we cannot but think they are considerably more numerous than an exclusive attention to British interests would either require or justify. Whatever duties are performed by those agents, pursuant to obligations which we have contracted must of course be provided for at our charge. But when European officers are employed systematically in the service of native states, at their own desire whether in disciplining and commanding their troops or in assisting in the civil administration of their territories it appears to be no more than just and reasonable that we should be relieved from all expense on their account during the time that they are so employed. We believe they do indeed at present, at least for the most part receive allowances, and on a very liberal scale too from the princes whom they serve, while at the same time they draw pay from the Company. We are desirous that all officers so employed should continue to hold our commissions and to receive our pay, but we think it but just that the native state which has the benefit of their

services should reimburse us for the expense to which we are subjected; and you will immediately adopt the necessary measures for the attainment of this object suiting these measures to the circumstances of each particular case. Where military officers hold civil situations under our own governments, a deduction ought to be made from their civil emoluments equal in amount to their military pay. The military collectors under the Bombay government have till lately received in addition to their military pay the highest rate of allowances granted to civil collectors.

40. In adverting to your political charges the causes of their increase, and the means of reducing them, we should be guilty of a most important omission if we did not draw your particular attention to the large expenditure incurred by military expeditions. We might adduce many instances in which such expeditions have been hastily and inconsiderately determined upon, where expense has been incurred without corresponding benefit and dangers have been incurred not averted.

41. We desire that in deliberating upon the expediency of any military demonstration or operation you will consider all the consequences of a first step.

42. We desire that you will never lightly engage, even in petty wars, in which we risk as much as we do in great wars, because we risk our reputation upon the maintenance of which our power depends, and in which success affords no prospect of advantage or even of indemnity. Such wars may be necessary but they are always to be deplored.

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44. It is a subject of much regret to us, that although we have been successful in training the natives of our Indian empire to become effective soldiers, we have not as yet succeeded in a purpose which if it be more difficult of attainment is not less deserving of our endeavours, viz. of rendering their services available in the internal administration of the country.

45. We are perfectly aware that they are extensively employed in the details both of the revenue and judicial department, the business of which could not in fact be carried on without them and that European agency is resorted to more for the purposes (at least professedly) of check and control than with a view to an active personal performance of other executive duties.

46. That European agency to a certain extent, is indispensably requisite we are far from questioning; but we have nevertheless, been long of opinion were there a more liberal confidence reposed in the natives generally, the public interests would not materially suffer in any respect, whilst in some they would be essentially benefited. It is necessary to present them with fresh incentives to honourable exertion as well as to supply them with the means of education in order to elevate them in their own estimation, to call forth their energies, and to attach them to our government. To do this, is at once our duty and our

interest for it will enable us to narrow the limits to which European agency is now carried, and thereby ultimately to effect a great saving of expense.

47. The natives are admitted not to be deficient either in capacity or diligence, and we cannot join in the conclusion which we think has sometimes been a great deal too hastily drawn, as to their want of trustworthiness until a fair experiment has been made of their fidelity under circumstances of less powerful temptation than those on which they have been usually placed. In the ranks of our armies their loyalty and devotion have never been surpassed. In your domestic establishments you have daily proof that kind treatment as rarely meets with unworthy returns, as among any other people. It is chiefly in public civil employments that inveterate propensities to falsehood and fraud are imputed to them, often without due regard to many palliating considerations, without sufficient advertence to the causes which have produced these defects in the national character, and we are afraid we must add without a systematic application of those means which are best adopted to improve the nature of man.

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49. It is nevertheless essential to this result in India that the natives employed by our government shall be liberally treated, that their emoluments shall not be limited to a bare subsistence, whilst those allotted to Europeans, in situations of not greater trust and importance, enable them to live in affluence and acquire wealth. Whilst one class is considered as open to temptation and placed above it, the other without corresponding inducements to integrity should not be exposed to equal temptation and be reproached for yielding to it.

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51. In the lower provinces of Bengal, the land revenue is paid in large sums by wealthy proprietors whose estates constitute ample security for its punctual realization; the instances consequently are rare wherein it is necessary to resort to compulsory measures to secure the dues of government. The collectors are there too, almost wholly exempt from the delicate and difficult duties of forming assessments and granting remissions and the people from being long habituated to our system, have become familiarized with its mode of working and submissive to its operation.

52. With reference therefore to the nature and extent of the duties now performed by the collectors in the provinces which were permanently settled in 1793 and 1796 we wish you to consider whether the number of collectorships might not expediently be reduced. We are aware that they are now less numerous than at the periods referred to: but it is fit matter for consideration whether they are not still more numerous than is absolutely requisite with reference to the interests of government and the people. We shall not venture to give a decided opinion on a question in respect of which you have certainly better means of forming a correct

judgment than we possess and where an erroneous decision might possibly occasion a defalcation in the revenue far exceeding any diminution which might be effected in the charges of collection. We regard it however as a subject deserving your deliberate attention.

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70. It is unquestionably our paramount duty to endeavour to secure to the natives of India a prompt and pure administration of justice. This is no less due to the people in return for what they pay than indispensable to the maintenance of our character, and to the stability and prosperity of our government. It is nevertheless true that in the judicial as well as other departments of government money may be unprofitably expended. Of all modes of supplying defects in administration a multiplication of instruments is the most obvious but it is not invariably either the most economical or the most efficacious.

71. A considerable portion of the expense of the judicial establishment consists of the salaries of the European officers and we are not of opinion generally speaking, that those could be reduced without weakening the securities for a careful and conscientious performance of important duties. Neither perhaps (although this is a point on which our opinion is less decided) would it be practicable to effect any immediate reduction in their number without occasioning delays in the dispensation of justice, an evil of scarcely less magnitude than a total denial of it. We are satisfied, however, that by persevering in the same disposition which has been manifested of late years to employ native agency, and by gradually extending the jurisdiction of the munsifs, and sadar amins, the number of European functionaries may be diminished, not only with safety but advantage.

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85. *Bentinck's minute on Tenasserim and Penang*

19 February 1829

I beg leave to announce my intention of embarking for the eastward on Monday next.

I feel great doubts whether the possession of the Tenasserim provinces can, either now or hereafter, ever compensate for the great excess of charge beyond their revenue incurred for their maintenance, and on the contrary there must always be an apprehension whether these provinces, while they divert a portion of our force from the general defence of our empire may not subject us to the additional risk of war with our new and uncivilized neighbours. My conversations with Sir Archibald Campbell have been satisfactory as far as this latter apprehension may be entertained, and from the goodness of the military

position at Moulmein, it would seem that with a small comparative force, it may be possible to keep the Burmese in check, if disposed to make incursions upon our southern provinces. But I am desirous to examine myself this port and in conjunction with the civil commissioner to form a correct opinion upon the establishments civil and military which upon the lowest scale can with safety be considered necessary.

When expressing these unfavourable sentiments of the Tenasserim provinces, I consider Arakan on the contrary to be a most valuable acquisition.

The establishments at Penang and its dependencies have appeared to council susceptible of reduction, particularly those in the military department. It is quite clear that more staff officers than can be required, are entertained. I am desirous therefore of personally conferring with the government of Penang upon these subjects and if I find this opinion receiving their confirmation (and the representations of that government of their affairs have been always marked by the greatest frankness and candour), I shall have no difficulty in ordering the immediate return to Madras of those officers whose services may be dispensed with.

During my absence from this presidency I request that Mr. Bayley will assume the office of the vice-president and deputy governor of Fort William. I propose to take with me the secretary to government in the general department whose place can be temporarily supplied by Mr. Parker, secretary to the board of customs, salt and opium, without occasioning to government any increase of expense, Mr. Parker's duty being performed by his deputy.

86. *Minute of Sir Charles Metcalfe on European settlement*

19 February 1829

Concurring cordially in the proposition for extending to Europeans, engaged in the cultivation of indigo, and in other speculations, the privileges already granted to coffee planters, I beg leave to submit my reasons for advocating that proceeding, as I am not quite satisfied with those stated in the resolutions of government.

I have long lamented that our countrymen in India are excluded from the possession of land, and other ordinary rights of peaceable subjects.

I believe that the existence of these restrictions impedes the prosperity of our Indian empire, and of course that their removal would tend to promote it.

I am also of the opinion that their abolition is necessary for that progressive increase of revenue, without which our income cannot keep pace with the continually increasing expense of our establishments.

I am further convinced that our possession of India must always be precarious, unless we take root by having an influential portion of the population attached to our government by common interests and sympathies.

Every measure, therefore, which is calculated to facilitate the settlement of our countrymen in India, and to remove the obstructions by which it is impeded, must, I conceive, conduce to the stability of our rule, and to the welfare of the people subject to our dominion.

The proceeding now adopted being a step forward in what appears to me to be the right course, has my hearty concurrence.

The only objection that strikes me to the spread of a British Christian population in India, is the existing discordance of the laws by which our English and our native subjects are respectively governed. This objection will no doubt in time be removed, and the sooner the better, by framing laws equally binding on both parties, in all concerns common to both, and leaving to all their own suitable laws, in whatever peculiarly concerns themselves alone. The present system of judicature in India, by which the king's court is rendered entirely separate from the local administration and institutions, and often practically subversive of their power and influence, is fraught with mischief; and that part of the system which makes our native subjects under some circumstances liable to the jurisdiction of the king's court, under some to that of the Company's court, under some to that of both, without regard to residence, or any clearly defined limitations by which our native subjects can know to what laws or courts they are or are not amenable, is replete with gross injustice and oppression, and is an evil loudly demanding a remedy, which can only be found in a strict local limitation of the powers of his Majesty's court with regard to the persons and property of native subjects, or in an amalgamation of the king's court with the local judicial institutions, under a code of laws fitted for local purposes, and calculated to bestow real and equal justice on all classes of subjects under British dominion in India.

87. *Bentinck's minute on the half-batta orders*

22 February 1829

The letter of the commander-in-chief under date the 11th December recommends that the order of the honourable court reducing certain stations in the lower provinces from full to half-batta, should be again referred for the reconsideration of the home authorities. This letter having been received after the actual publication of the general order directing the execution of the court's instructions and not appearing to contain any new argument or facts which had not been advanced in the preceding discussions, it became unnecessary to renew our deliberations upon the question. I also considered that any remarks upon the

court's instructions themselves, would be better made at a subsequent period when the finance committee might lay before us a full comparative view of the advantages and disadvantages belonging to the condition of the army at each presidency respectively. From that alone can any correct inference be drawn how far the equalization of allowances may or may not constitute an equality of condition and how far the orders of the court, founded abstractedly upon a most just principle, and aiming at the accomplishment of a very desirable object, are practically as just and equitable, as in theory they would appear to be. But as this order has given rise to great and general dissatisfaction expressed in numerous memorials, it becomes necessary contrary to my first intention, to explain the sentiments which I entertain upon this unpleasant subject.

It is I believe a very prevailing sentiment in the army that their interests have been cruelly deserted by the present government from carrying into effect an order, which two preceding governors-general in council had determined to suspend. The commander-in-chief also by his recommendation intimates that a similar decision is now required from us by a due regard for the public welfare, deeply involved as it is in the cheerfulness and contentment of the officers of the army.

I am quite ready to admit that I view the measure in question with as sincere and deep regret as can be felt by the commander-in-chief. I consider it open to many and great objections, which I shall presently explain, and if no consideration of paramount importance had interposed I should have been most happy to have yielded to Lord Combermere's suggestion. But here I am obliged to ask myself this question: are we as a subordinate authority, justified in disregarding a thrice repeated order of our superiors, when we have not a single new fact or argument to offer in opposition to it and when the subject in all its bearings is as well known in London as in Calcutta? If obedience can ever be an imperative and indispensable duty, it must be under circumstances like the present. Nothing could justify our taking a different course but a conviction that the necessary consequence must be great public danger, either likely to occur before the result of a reference, or entailing some permanent evil not susceptible of future remedy: but none exists. It is an evil certainly of no slight magnitude that great individual suffering should be inflicted, without an adequate countervailing public benefit, but still they are individual and not public interests which are affected, and the hand which inflicts can within a very short interval more than repair the evil.

The points of view in which I think this order is open to objection are first, that it accomplishes but imperfectly any of the objects which may be considered to have been in contemplation, whether in respect to equalization or to the correction of the absurd and extravagant practice, existing probably in no other army in the world, of granting the same pay and allowances in garrison and in the field. The principle

of equalization may be considered both in reference to the other presidencies as well as to the officers of the same presidency. In respect to the latter the commander-in-chief doubts whether there is any difference between the circumstances of the officers at the reduced stations and those at Benares and Cawnpore. It is right to say, that this position is not generally admitted: but it is quite clear that the reduction bears no proportion whatever to the difference, which, as these doubts exist, must be trifling: and it is no less certain, that between the specified stations and almost every other in the lower provinces, there exists the most perfect equality of circumstances. With respect to the other presidencies, no data are afforded by which any just estimate of the relative condition of the armies of the three presidencies can be formed.

Towards the attainment of the establishment of a different rate of pay in war and peace, as is the case in the other presidencies, the order has done worse than nothing, by drawing a line of distinction which did not before exist, and so far by placing an obstacle in the way of a more general introduction of the principle if deemed expedient, neither is the execution more happily imagined than the principle of the measure. At all the stations there are several regiments, but a part only of the force is annually changed. By the present arrangement a relieving regiment, which to that moment has been in the receipt of full batta and which has had to bear the expense of a long march, is to be placed on half-batta, while the corps at the same station, whose terms of relief is not yet come and which therefore has not been exposed to the inconvenience of moving, retains the full batta. The establishing an inequality where there in fact was none, and thus keeping alive for two or three years (that is till every one of the regiments at the station should be removed), a subject of invidious distinction, might have been avoided by fixing a distant period, say a year, when all without distinction might have been placed in the same position. I had felt a strong desire to remedy this inconvenience, but the very fact of the minuteness of the details contained in the court's despatch, which are always better left to the adjustment of the local government, satisfied me that the question could only have been so determined after mature discussions, and that there must have been strong reasons in favour of this apparent departure from equity and expediency.

Although I thus object to the details of the order, yet in the principle I cordially concur, and conceiving much of the reasoning of the officers of the army to be founded upon an incorrect conception of their own position in relation to the supreme authority, it becomes a serious question whether it is not incumbent upon the government by a general order to recall the good sense of the army to a proper view of the question. I hear of rights and of compacts, and of an understanding which all who enter the army entertain of the inviolability of the then existing pecuniary advantages annexed to their military career.

It has been the good fortune of the E.I. Company, that the close

of every war has been marked by a great accession of territory, rendering necessary the continuance of the additional establishment occasioned by the war. But if the reverse had been the case, will it be pretended that this government alone of all the governments of the world is precluded from reducing its complement of officers, the pay of whom forms the great proportion of its military charges, let the state of the finances be ever so desperate or the necessity for such a military force be ever so trifling?

I am sorry to see the opinion in the commander-in-chief's letter, that if equalization is to take place, the lowest should be raised to the highest. How is this possible? The only consequence must be a reduction of the establishment in proportion to this extra charge, and the placing a large number of the officers upon half pay, and the infliction upon them of what they would consider positive misery and destitution, to which however hundreds, nay thousands of the king's officers after the most gallant service, were subject at the close of the war.

The most unjust imputation founded upon this order, is that of a disregard on the part of the authorities at home to the feelings and interests of their army; and this charge is made, when within these last few months, after the conclusion of the war, at a moment of a general reduction of the army, and in spite of a large deficit, the six extra regiments, raised against the court's orders and never sanctioned, have been suffered to remain as a permanent part of the establishment. Was not consideration for the interests of their officers the whole and sole motive for this order? Supposing four or five thousand men, the effective rank and file of these six corps, to have been wanted, would not an addition of a few men to each company of every regiment have answered every purpose, by which a saving, without any loss of military efficiency, of above ten lakhs of rupees would have accrued to the state? I regret to see the impression of such great and such solid benefits so speedily obliterated.

In stating as I have done in the commencement of this paper, my objections to the partial, inequitable and incomplete operation of the present order, I am very far from being convinced (although I by no means entertain the opposite opinion) that the views of the court cannot be executed, although perhaps with considerable modification. As I have before said, I have no data before me to judge of the relative condition of the three armies. I reserve my opinion upon this subject, till the finance committee has furnished us with this statement, and I beg to recommend that this subject may form one of their earliest reports. I have not seen also any satisfactory calculation of the necessary expenditure of an officer. But this I know that whether great or small, all the officers, with few exceptions, will live up to their incomes; and experience I am sorry to say, has shewn in the civil service, that the greater the allowances the greater the extravagance and the subsequent embarrassment. I should fear the same unhappy results prevail in the army. The fact of distress is no proof of insufficiency of pay and

allowances, though it should plead strongly in favour of the most indulgent possible mode of effecting any useful reform.

The best argument in favour of full batta in peace, would have been that it was insufficient in war and that profit and loss must fairly be made to counterbalance each other. No such argument has been ever advanced and as far as I have heard I believe it to be a notorious fact and a subject of mirth and ridicule to the troops of the other presidencies, when they fall in with those of Bengal, that the baggage of the latter is beyond measure excessive and cumbrous.

88. *Bentinck's minute on army rank*

23 February 1829

I am confident that the council will agree with me in thinking that there cannot be a more fitting moment than the present to propose any measure by which the feelings of the army may derive a just satisfaction and I am no less confident that the civil service, at whose expense this boon must be granted, so far from feeling reluctance will anxiously and generously join in giving it their hearty acquiescence.

By the rules of precedency in force in India, all senior merchants take rank before lieutenant-colonels of the army.

As I cannot learn the reason of the arrangement I conjecture that after the disturbed times of our first conquests it was thought expedient for the purpose of introducing law and order to give a pre-eminence to those officers who were charged with the civil administration. In Europe at the same period and in all times peculiar distinction has been shewn to the military service and honour and respect have been their principal rewards and in society they have always held and still hold much as ever an equality at least with if not a superiority over those of the same condition of life, let their profession be what it may.

Concluding this to have been the motive and probably a very good one at the time of the regulations it is quite clear that any necessity for the continuance of it no longer exists. The civil power in India is as completely established as in England and there is no collision whatever between the two authorities and public expediency no longer requires that this invidious distinction should be maintained.

It is more objectionable when the age and length of service of the two classes are considered. The service of the youngest lieutenant-colonel (1804) places him near the top of the list of senior merchants and the greater part were actually in the army before a great many of those at the bottom of the list of the senior merchants came into the world.

I need say no more and I am the more confirmed in the recommendation I am about to make 'that senior merchants and lieutenant-colonels shall rank according to their seniority' from having seen in the London

East India Register that the court have lately established the same regulation in St. Helena. As I believe no power of giving precedence belongs to any but the sovereign authority, it will be necessary that this proposition if approved by the council, should be sanctioned to the honourable court for their confirmation.

89. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.*[1] Private

Kedgeree. 24 February 1829

My dear Lord,

I see by a paper of October received at Madras, that you have succeeded Lord Melville in the board of control. I congratulate you on your appointment, and I anticipate much comfort and happiness in serving under your orders. I am on my way to Penang and shall return by our settlements on the east coast. All these possessions are a sad weight upon our finances, and I hope to be able to effect some considerable reduction without impairing any of the efficiency of those establishments. I expect to be absent about five weeks. I will prepare for you a short statement of the most important questions belonging to our Indian governments during the voyage.

I have been very ill, but have recovered, though I am still very weak. I expect much benefit from the sea air. Lady William is very well and desires her best regards.

90. *Robert Hamilton to Captain Benson*

Benares. 1 March 1829

Sir,

I have the honour to reply to your letter bearing date 16th ulto.

Previous to entering on a particular discussion of the different points adverted to in your letter under acknowledgement I beg to state my firm and mature conviction founded on a careful and considerate reflection of the subject that the suppression of suttees would not be attended by any danger to the state, or to the peace or tranquillity of the country, neither would it be likely to lead to political inconvenience or embarrassment.

The city of Benares is one of the most sacred homes of Hinduism in India; in it the bigotry of the people is nurtured and strengthened by the most rigid adherence to their tenets, it is peopled by the wealthiest

89. [1] Ellenborough, Lord, President of the Board of Control 24 Sept. 1828–6 Dec. 1830, again 20 Dec. 1834–29 Apr. 1835, and 9 Sept. 1841–26 Oct. 1841. *D.N.B.* In fact, Bentinck was not happy under Ellenborough, and was glad when Charles Grant succeeded him in Dec. 1830.

and most scrupulous of Hindus, surrounded by all the outward professions and emblems of their religion; inhabited by crowds of every description of religious enthusiast, the place where every Hindu is anxious to die, and the resort of all classes of rank of all ages, more especially those whose earthly career is drawing to its close and who look forward to death within its limits as the certain road to happiness hereafter. At such a place then it would be expected the performance of this most inhuman rite would be frequent, and that its frequency would be in proportion to the peculiar sanctity of the spot, a sanctity immemorially acknowledged. How far the practice supports the expectation may be ascertained by the annexed statement shewing the number of suttees that have taken place within the last nine years, during which period seasons of extreme sickness and mortality have prevailed, and from which an average may be fairly deduced. Viewing the average thus taken and bearing in mind the peculiar [holiness] of Benares, it surely cannot be decreed a reasonable testimony in support of the obligatory nature of the rite of suttee. In a population amounting to 500,000 souls at the least calculation the average number of suttees bears no proportion to the number of deaths, indeed I have never met with any satisfactory or reasonable argument on the subject in any of my very frequent conversations with the learned of all ranks and from all parts who have visited me since I have resided at Benares.

I take the liberty of annexing a letter addressed by me to Mr. Walter Ewer, superintendent of police on the occasion of submitting the last year's annual report. In it I have entered into a more particular investigation of the subject than perhaps I should be authorized now doing.[1] I will therefore now pass on to the points adverted to by you.

As to the manner in which the rite should be suppressed I am distinctly of opinion it should only be done by a positive, unconditional, unmixed prohibition, to be efficiently carried into effect by all public authorities. I do not intend by this that a proclamation is to be issued or that any strikingly public mode should be adopted, for such I should deprecate, but, that the rite should be prohibited by a regulation, prohibiting its observance, declaring all aiders and abettors punishable, escheating all property of every description, and excluding all relatives from public employment or offices. I would not that in the first regulation the punishment should be defined or any designation of the character of the criminals made. Circular letters might be addressed to magistrates for their guidance, and the discretionary powers that would be vested in the public functionaries would operate beneficially in the introduction of the suppression; the regulation could be brought into effect without any ostentatious or irritating display. Under the present system no suttee ought to take place without the express sanction or authority of the magistrate. After the receipt of the regulation the officer would refuse the first application, stating the rite was prohibited, and that its performance would render all

90. [1] The text of this enclosure is given as letter 78 (above, pp. 145–8).

parties liable to punishment. The police might be ordered to arrest and send in all the parties, in the event of the suttee, together with the relatives; and one or two examples would if promptly and effectually made at once put an end to the horrible rite. I would not advocate suppression by force throughout India. In some parts it might be resorted to, but I am of opinion the suppression would be equally decisive and far more substantial by the mode I have noticed as it would affect more materially the interests of survivors without interfering so directly with their religious observances. The mere knowledge of the rite being prohibited would be sufficient to abolish the custom in some districts and but little if any difficulty would occur in putting down the practice in the western provinces generally. It would however be useless to issue any orders without the powers of the magistrates being declared free from interruption and appeal. The whole force and countenance of all public authorities should be arrayed in their support and every possible assistance afforded by commissioners of circuit. These late arrangements, respecting circuit I consider will tend most beneficially to suppressing the rite, the superior power to whom parties aggrieved by the acts of magistrates will resort will now be at hand and the aggrieved will have comparatively a small distance to travel to obtain redress, thus the confirmation of the orders in cases of suttee will be rapid, and the case quickly disposed of and the matter set at rest in a very short space.

Although I think the military view with unconcern any civil regulations and care little about their religious ceremonies which do not partake of holiday and show, yet I think it would be injudicious to attempt to suppress a suttee by having recourse to the soldiery. The civil power alone should be employed and the strongest and severest punishments inflicted on aiders and abettors; transportation in extreme cases, and banishment in ordinary ones I conceive the most suitable punishments for offenders under the regulation. To a native nothing is more dreadful than being exiled from his district even for a limited time and therefore I venture to suggest it. Magistrates should be empowered to punish with labour for a period not exceeding two years, and to commit to the court of circuit such cases as they might consider requiring severe punishment. Leniency at first will not be advisable, though I cannot but suppose that the punishments under the regulation would be rare after the first year or two from the promulgation. I cannot bring myself to suppose any fears would be engendered in the minds of our native Hindu subjects by a prohibition of the rite of suttee, or that they would be led to believe it was the first only of a series of encroachments on their religious tenets and customs. Apathy is the strongest feeling if I may use the expression, that pervades the Hindus, coupled with an inordinate desire to scrape together money, and I feel persuaded that the observance of the most strictly enjoined ceremony would be quitted were it likely to entail any possible contingent loss or hindrance in any of the affairs of life.

I apprehend it might be unwise and impolitic to couple with the edict suppressing suttees any boon or favour such as noticed by your letter; viz. the repeal of the pilgrim tax or taxes on religious places. The motives would not be comprehended and capable of misconstruction; the taxes are a profitable source of revenue to the state without being an oppression to the subject, and although government might remit them, yet I imagine that they are so well known to exist throughout India, that they are anticipated by every pilgrim and that the tax, instead of being saved to the pilgrim would be exacted and paid to the priest, as a part of the necessary dues and expenses attendant on the pilgrimage. It would be impossible for government to prevent the priests availing themselves of so lucrative and what would be considered so legitimate a means of enriching themselves, and under the best consideration I can give I am inclined to think the tax has a beneficial tendency and is a wholesome check, affording (in the eyes of pilgrims) and evincing a protecting disposition which it is well known is regarded with infinite satisfaction by every class throughout Hindustan.

Another reason for my objecting to the coupling the repeal with the suppression, is, supposing hereafter the capacity of the priests and attendants of places of pilgrimage or worship was to become such as to require the interference of the legislature; and a necessity for the re-institution of the tax arise, how could government consistently with its principle, act. Would it not be shackled? and would not the crafty priesthood recur to the suppression and forthwith spread abroad that the suppression of suttees was the condition, and that its re-institution would be followed by the observance of the rite in all its horrors. Besides would not this species of negotiation imply a degree of acknowledgement in the authority, if not the propriety of the rite which government are by no means desirous of admitting?

If government have an object in extending a boon to their native subjects no more popular measures could be adopted than the repeal of town duties (except in Calcutta) or even the repeal of the duty on ghee, the vexatious prying of a custom-house officer is sufficiently annoying in Europe, what must it be then to the natives of India who consider their honour tarnished by the females of their family being exposed to the gaze of a stranger. Yet not a covered cart passes a custom-house chauki without the risk of this indignity, and a douceur to any amount is tendered to avert the dreaded scrutiny even though not a single article liable to duty could be found. The consequence of this state of things is the annihilation of all friendly intercourse between the residents of neighbouring towns and a manifest obstruction to that degree of general intercourse so advantageous to a well governed state. The town dues are certainly an available resource in case of state necessity and their imposition at any time would be unattended by expense or trouble. The lowest class of individuals would feel the boon and it would be extended in its advantages to many remote and distant

provinces. There are no taxes on pilgrims or places of worship at Benares payable to, or from which a revenue is derived by government.

In conclusion I would beg to apologize for having so protracted this address; its nature and object I trust will plead in excuse. Whatever measures may be the result of the deliberations of government, it will be a satisfaction to me to know that my humble efforts have always been exerted in endeavouring to suppress a sacrifice so revolting to the best feelings of humanity.

Enclosed statement showing the number of suttees at Benares from January 1820 to January 1829

Year	Number of suttees	Number prevented	Age Oldest	Age Youngest	Remarks
1820	11	3	70	20	In 1823, 4, and 5 extreme sickness and mortality prevailed.
1821	12	—	85	20	
1822	10	4	80	38	
1823	18	2	85	22	
1824	16	2	80	24	The average for 9 years is under 14, say 14.
1825	17	5	61	25	
1826	15	4	75	22	
1827	15	2	75	25	
1828	11	5	85	18	
	125	27			

R. N. C. Hamilton.
Magistrate of Benares.

91. *Bentinck's minute on vaccine establishments*

2 March 1829

It is obvious from the admissions made by the medical board in their secretary's letter of the 16th of December last, as well as from other sources of information that the vaccine institutions have not answered the ends contemplated, and that their success has not in any degree corresponded with the expense attending them. The existing system must therefore be deemed erroneous, and the heavy annual charge of upwards of 69,000 rupees incurred for the establishments a fit object of retrenchment.

The medical board in their proposed modifications of the system do not profess to aim at a reduction of expense. They point out a scheme for the consideration of government which they think better adapted

than the one in operation, for prescribing and disseminating the vaccine matter, and for introducing among the natives the practice of vaccination with success. I do not however concur with the medical board in the sentiments they entertain on the subject. Their proposed alterations rid the system of not one of the errors which obstruct its efficiency. On the first introduction of vaccination into India, the hostility of the climate to the uninterrupted preservation of the virus, and the reluctance of the natives to submit to the process might have been overlooked. But experience has shown, that the natives are indifferent, if not averse, to the practice, and that in most of the provinces beyond Patna owing to an extremely heated and arid atmosphere, it is impossible for some months of the year to maintain the practice or to preserve the genuine vaccine matter. Yet the board recommend the addition of several new stations within the range of the unfavourable climates, and where no facilities offer for inducing the natives to submit to the process. This they proposed to accomplish by giving to each medical officer at the new and old stations, a small salary to secure their co-operation and a couple of active peons for the purpose of procuring subjects for innoculation.

On the supposition that this plan possesses little or no advantage over the existing system, and observing that it is equally expensive, I would refer to the original intention of government in creating vaccine institutions. That intention appears to have been to maintain a constant supply of vaccine matter, which might be always available for the protection of the families of its servants against the contagion of smallpox; and to introduce amongst its native subjects, the benefits of vaccination. To effect these objects, establishments have been formed in various parts of the country. Their success however, as is evident from the returns, and the reasons assigned for their partial failure, has in no degree corresponded with the expense attending them, and consequently the expectations and wishes of government have not been fulfilled.

It is absolutely necessary however for the important purposes just noticed, that the great blessing of vaccine innoculation should be preserved in India. This object may I think be attained at a comparatively moderate charge, and accompanied by advantages in some degree commensurate with the expense, by establishing a few depots of vaccine matter to be carefully and diligently supported. Following up this view of the subject, it only remains to determine their number and locality. In selecting places for the depots, the choice ought to fall upon such spots as present the fewest obstacles to success. That is where the climate is least unfavourable, where the European population is considerable, where from a longer and closer intercourse with Europeans, the natives may be supposed more assimilated to them in their customs and notions, and where consequently the least difficulty will be experienced in procuring subjects for innoculation. Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna appear to me, and the returns of persons innoculated

countenance the supposition, places very suitable for vaccine depots. I would propose therefore that vaccine establishments on their present footing be continued at those places; and that all other institutions at principal and subordinate stations be abolished from the first proximo, unless it be thought highly desirable to uphold, notwithstanding the disadvantages of climate, one or two principal stations in the upper provinces. In this case, I would not object to continuing to Agra and Bareilly or to any two places that may be selected, vaccine arrangements on a modified scale of 160 rupees per mensem each. I mention Bareilly and Agra for their geographical positions as convenient for disseminating the virus at proper seasons, and also with reference to the climate of Bareilly and the number of Europeans about Agra.

The number of vaccine stations can be hereafter gradually increased, under a proper and well ordered system in proportion as the benefits of vaccination become better known and appreciated by the native population, and when medical experience and skill have devised efficient means for keeping and disseminating the virus in climates now found so inimical to its uninterrupted preservation.

The financial results of this proposal will be, if four stations only are maintained, an annual expenditure of 13,680 rupees, if six of 17,520, instead of 69,144.

92. *Bentinck to John Loch.* Private

Singapore. 13 March 1829

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you a short note from off the Sandheads per *César*. We have had a very pleasant passage, 9 days to Penang, 36 hours to Malacca and 20 hours to this place. I found Mr. Fullarton at Malacca. I passed twelve hours with him, and shall pass two days at Penang in my return. We sail today. I intend taking my seat in council at Penang for the purpose of co-operating with Mr. Fullarton in making such reductions as may seem practicable, more particularly in the Madras military staff, which in many instances is unnecessarily large, and which as depending upon the Madras government are in some measure beyond the reach of his authority. It was an unlucky day, when the simplicity and economy of the first form of government for these islands gave way to the cumbrous and expensive machinery of a governor in council and above all of a recorder's court, with *English Law*, happily without lawyers. The revenues of the three islands amount to five lakhs of rupees including half a lakh from judicial fees. Is it credible that the recorder's court alone with all the judicial appendages and charges should amount to near one half of the income? I think it has been here, as I suspect also at Bombay. When the income comes out of the purse of another, much less attention is paid to economy than when it is

supplied from one's own. I grieve to see so much Bengal money so uselessly wasted upon establishments totally unsuited to the wants of the society or to the nature of these dependencies. One third of the money would pay establishments equally efficient and more satisfactory to the population. Upon this subject there is but one opinion, and I hope when the charter is renewed, that the opportunity will be seized of reverting to the former order of things. The court will receive a strong representation from the supreme government upon this subject.

This place seems to be thriving and will no doubt continue to do so, though probably not with the rapidity which by now has been anticipated. Penang and Malacca on the other hand are inferior to most of our own country towns even of the lowest order.

I will not trouble you more at length at present. When I left Calcutta, our latest despatches were dated in September. I had received private intimation of an intended order from home for the further reduction of the army, but in what manner no mention was made. I am of opinion that the establishment now of 70 may be safely reduced to 65 if not to 60 men per company, and it has been my intention to propose it, whenever the process of absorption by casualties shall bring down the strength of the army to the thousand already ordered. I left the finance committee in action and I shall be much disappointed if great benefit is not derived from their labours.

93. *Walter Ewer to Captain Benson*

Meerut. 21 March 1829

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 16th ultimo.

2. So long ago as the end of 1818 I addressed government in the judicial department on the subject of suttee, and I forwarded a second letter on the 15th August last. I have no copy of the former, but the original can be easily referred to. These letters contain my sentiments regarding suttee, and I have nothing to add to the opinion therein expressed, that the practice might be prohibited without a chance of the measure being productive of any discontent among our Hindu subjects.

3. With regard to the manner of preventing suttee I would suggest an enactment declaring that all persons aiding and abetting a widow in its performance should be declared guilty of murder, and punished accordingly. Capital punishment would of course be commuted when too severe, but still it should be held out as the consequence of assisting in any degree to perform suttees. A plain and positive prohibition is now required, for during the last 12 or 14 years the government and the nizamat adalat have gone on trifling with the question in a manner which has only had the effect of persuading the natives that we are

afraid to resort to positive interference. One day brought forth declarations of abhorrence and proposals for immediate abolition coupled with apprehensions of the consequence of so imprudent an interference with the religious prejudices of the natives. The next produced contradictory expositions of the pandits and orders from the nizamat virtually telling the people that the government had no manner of objection to the rite provided it was performed under the prescribed restrictions, and in presence of a police officer, but as no punishment attached to disobedience of their orders, the only impression conveyed to the Hindus was, that the government and the court rather approved of the practice than otherwise, and those assisting at it have been known to say they were burning the widow according to the regulations!

4. This weak mode of proceeding has obtained in consequence of a too strict adherence to a practice of the government which should not I think have been persisted in on such an important occasion; it is that of rejecting, or not asking, the opinions of those servants, civil and military whose situations place them in more intimate contact with the great body of the natives, and adopting the suggestions of those who however well their talents may qualify them for the duties of their high situations, frequently have few opportunities and means of obtaining the information which is forced on those of a lower rank, and become familiar even to those whose abilities may be of a very inferior description.

5. Although not exactly an adviser of the government, a notable specimen of the first mentioned class is to be found in the late Bishop Heber, who blinding himself with the consciousness of possessing great abilities, passed judgment on the condition, habits, and dispositions of the natives with a boldness only authorized by long intercourse with them, and a considerable knowledge of their language. The short period he was permitted to be with me prevented his obtaining either one or the other. But the mischief, however unintentional on his part, is done: his book with all its mistakes and groundless opinions is gone forth to the world supported by his high name and amiable character; it is regarded as gospel by the people in England and long will it prove a stumbling block to those whose experience and knowledge may justly entitle them to differ from the author.

6. With respect to the abolition of the pilgrim tax, I beg to submit my opinion that it is impossible to excite a general feeling of gratitude among the Hindus. They would immediately try to find a motive for the measure, and would fancy they had found it in our intention to bribe their acquiescence in the abolition of suttee: they would perhaps go a step further, and say we were afraid to order the latter without some such concession. Altogether I think it would be a sort of bargain unworthy of the government.

94. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House, London. 31 March 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 20 August 1829

My dear Lord William,

I do not know of anything here of sufficient importance to write about but Mr. Auber I believe has mentioned what is going on generally. I shall be in office again next week, and hope then to prove myself a better correspondent than I have been for the last twelve months.

You have made your friends very anxious about you by falling from your horse and we are not yet quite easy as we have no account saying that you have completely recovered the effects of the accident. I have seen letters from Malcolm stating generally the circumstances that had induced him to give up all idea of central India. In so much he gives you every credit for the kind and candid manner in which you acted in the business. He never intended and if he had he never could have remained in India long enough to see his own plans, however good they may have been, carried into execution, and the probability is they would have failed in other hands. I am in every account therefore glad that nothing is to be done.

There is no chance I think of anything being done in parliament about India this year but Mr. Whitmore will probably try hard for a committee on the trade next September. I however would not agree to any partial committee till I was prepared to go into the whole question.

I give you joy of the triumph and manner in which the Catholic relief bills passed the house of commons last night and I have little doubt they will pass the lords before Easter. If not I understand there will be no holidays.

I saw Lord Gosford three days ago.

95. *W. Bird to Captain Benson*

Calcutta. 4 April 1829

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th of February last, requesting my sentiments as to the safety and practicability of abolishing suttees, and likewise in regard to the expediency of repealing the tax on pilgrims, as a means of reconciling the Hindu population at large to such abolition.

2. As to the practice of suttee itself it has for many years past undergone so thorough a discussion—the sentiments of so many able and experienced men have been so fully expressed on the subject—and the conviction produced by those sentiments of the duty of suppressing it

as soon as possible, has been so decisive and universal, that to advance any additional arguments on that point might be considered superfluous. But a new state of things has arisen out of these discussions to which perhaps sufficient importance has not been attached, and which by rendering the longer toleration of the practice so much more dangerous than the adoption of almost any measures for its discontinuance, appears to me to furnish the only argument that was still wanting in favour of its immediate suppression.

3. These discussions, by exposing in the most obvious point of view the odious nature of the practice, together with all the revolting circumstances connected with its operation, have established beyond a question that it is of the most cruel and atrocious character, and such as no civilized government ought for a moment to tolerate, if it has the power of suppressing it. Charged however with the anxious and important duty of providing for the general safety of the country, the government is naturally cautious in taking steps, even for so desirable an object, by which that safety may be endangered, but the local authorities looking merely to what is immediately before them, and seeing no such danger, do not participate in the same apprehensions. Called upon to sanction, and often personally to superintend these inhuman sacrifices, the magistrates are placed in the most painful and trying situations—and it is not to be wondered at that their feelings as men should get the better of their duty as public officers, and that they should be unable to resist the natural impulse to exert themselves, beyond what may be strictly authorized, in order to save sometimes the young, and always the deluded, victim from being sacrificed, in the most cruel of all modes, on the altar of prejudice and superstition. It is not, I repeat, under these circumstances to be wondered at, if with the feelings of common humanity about them, their blood should run cold on presiding at such a spectacle, and that, shocked beyond endurance, by the preparations for so horrid a ceremony, they should be irresistibly hurried along to risk the consequences, whatever they may be, of throwing obstacles in the way of its execution, and become regardless of every other object in order to effect that which abstracted from political considerations, must be viewed by all in the light of a paramount and indispensable duty.

4. I speak from experience. The painful emotions excited by being officially a party to the performance of the rite in question, can never be got rid of and it is not to be expected with the universal conviction which now prevails of the practicability of putting an end to it, and of the baneful tendency of our interference, that the loathsome duty of sanctioning and regulating its execution should be discharged with indifference. The records of government contain abundant evidence that the magistrates, influenced by the feeling above described, are alike regardless of the rules passed for their guidance, and to the supposed prejudices of the people, and have recourse in defiance of both, to the most arbitrary, and oftentimes to the most injudicious

steps, in order to obstruct the practice even while in the very act of celebration.

5. Such a state of things is pregnant with the greatest danger and inconvenience. It must be obvious that when multitudes are assembled together on such an occasion, they must be liable in the greatest degree to be driven to desperation by any unauthorized interference, and that if opposition is to be met with, it is much more likely to occur at a moment when they are obstructed in the enjoyment of what they understand to be allowed by supreme authority, than if the practice were lawfully forbidden. Moreover, it would be less equivocal, and consequently less likely to cause dissatisfaction, were the Hindus prohibited at once by the regulations from the performance of the rite, than to be let to act under the supposition that it is allowed, while they are at the same time exposed not only to the most irritating restrictions, but even to seizure and detention, in order to bring the observance into disrepute, and deter others from availing themselves of the privilege which the government has allowed in such matters. It stands on the records of government that the Brahmins in some parts of the country are so dissatisfied with the kind of interference to which this ceremony is now subjected, that they have declared, it would be preferable to the community were suttees prohibited altogether, than that they should continue exposed to such vexatious interruptions.

6. It should likewise be remembered that while the interference in question has the effect of incensing and disgusting the community, and by so doing, of endangering to the utmost degree the preservation of the public peace, the sufferings of the victims themselves are greatly aggravated and prolonged, and that these obstructions, from the unseasonable mode in which they are attempted, have the effect rather of promoting than of discouraging the practice, in as much as the victims in question derive additional strength and courage from the excitement which the interest taken by the magistrates in the ceremony invariably creates, and obtain by the éclat attendant on perseverance under such circumstances, the highest possible honour with which their heroism can be rewarded.

7. But we have advanced too far to recede, and as to retrace our steps would now create more sensation than to go on, the safest course, as well as the most desirable, is to persevere, and abolish the practice altogether. Not one single instance of opposition has ever been attempted even under the provocation afforded by the interference of the local officers above referred to, and this fact supplies the fullest security against resistance to any procedure on the part of government formally adopted and promulgated for the purpose. In the foreign settlements and other places where the practice has been put an end to, it was effected not only without opposition but without a murmur; and in cases where we ourselves have interposed for the general interests of humanity by the prevention of other barbarous and unnatural practices, but especially by subjecting Brahmins to capital punishment, no in-

convenience resulted, although the latter was a violation of Hindu prejudice much more calculated to excite clamour and commotion than the suppression of suttee, respecting which there is not only a great division of opinion amongst them, but the observance of it is notoriously confined, comparatively speaking, to a very small portion of the community.

8. In fact, while the prohibition in all probability will meet with no resistance, and with but little, if any dissatisfaction even from those most interested in the performance of it, beyond what they now feel at the restrictions to which it is at present subjected, there are strong grounds for supposing that those who pass their lives under the continual liability of being exposed to this ordeal, would in their hearts hail the abolition with joy. The widows, whom the exertions of the magistrate succeed in saving from the flames, have often, as is well known, when restored to a natural state of mind, expressed the most lively gratitude for such interference, and the same sentiments have been as warmly expressed by their relations and friends. It may therefore be justly inferred that the love of life so common to all, and from which it is clear from the above facts that they are not exempt, would induce them generally speaking to view with gratitude a prohibition, which by taking away from them the power of self-immolation, removes the disgrace which would otherwise attach to the non-performance of it.

9. As justice, humanity and policy therefore all combine to recommend the abolition of this barbarous practice, it only remains to be considered by what process it can with the greatest degree of certainty and facility be accomplished.

10. It will, of course, be desirable to avoid every kind of procedure that might lead to what would assume the appearance of a religious struggle between the government and its subjects. It will therefore be necessary to have recourse to mild rather than to harsh measures, and instead of attempting to prevent the performance of the rite by armed interference, to proceed by legislation. Considering the length of time during which it has been openly tolerated, and the idea, founded both in religion and habit, that it is meritorious, the law should be as lenient as possible consistently with the object in view, and it will be sufficient perhaps at first to render the offence of being accessory to the loss of life by assisting in the practice in question, a high misdemeanour, liable to discretionary punishment as such on commitment to the court of circuit. It appears to me that the offenders should be brought to trial before that court in preference to being punished by the magistrate, because the latter being in a manner personally concerned in putting down the practice, will be looked upon as prosecutor, and therefore in a matter of so much delicacy ought not to be the judge; and because the more deliberate and impartial the proceedings, the deeper and safer will be the impression made by the prohibition on those who are liable to be involved in its consequences.

11. The only danger is in violence and provocation. At a place like

Benares, where the Hindu population is extremely numerous and bigoted, a ferment might be excited by an ill devised attempt to prevent a suttee by force, whereas by the mere proclamation of the law, leaving the people after due warning to proceed at their peril, it is probable that they would in most cases, especially after the law had been carried into effect on previous occasions, discontinue of their own accord. It must be expected that suttees will for some time to come clandestinely take place, as murder and robbery still do notwithstanding the laws enacted to prevent them, but as in the former case discovery will be inevitable and punishment certain, the perpetration of it must quickly be put an end to. At all events if suttees must continue, it is far better that they should be committed against the law, than under the sanction of it.

12. There is nothing I should think to apprehend from the Hindu portion of the army, respecting which I feel it incumbent on me to speak. If the plan above mentioned be adopted, it can seldom or never be necessary to call them in for the support of the civil authority, but if it should, there can be no doubt that they will do their duty. This is not merely conjecture, as in the religious disturbance which took place at Benares in the year 1809/10, they were called upon to defend the Mahomedan places of worship against the furious and combined assaults of the Hindu population at large, and although the provocations which gave rise to that disturbance must have been keenly felt by them, yet they conducted themselves throughout in a manner as I was myself a witness, which to use the words of the court of directors on that occasion, 'conveyed no less encomium on the officers by whom they had been trained to so superior a state of discipline, than on the men who so conspicuously exemplified its excellence.' There exist no grounds I imagine for supposing that their conduct will not be equally soldier-like and praise-worthy, if called upon again to support the local authorities under similar circumstances.

13. With respect to the pilgrim tax, I am not disposed to think that its repeal would operate in the least degree towards reconciling the Hindus at large to the abolition of suttee. The officiating Brahmins, unless they should succeed in extorting from the pilgrims in addition to their present emoluments, part of the amount now collected by the public officers, would certainly not be pleased with the repeal, as the arrangements for the purpose of facilitating those collections have a direct tendency to sustain their influence and authority. Moreover the pilgrims themselves, although they would doubtless feel glad at being relieved from the immediate pressure of the tax, yet that feeling would be considerably diminished if the repeal were to be accompanied by any relaxation of the precautions taken for their general protection and convenience, while collected together in such vast multitudes for the performance of their religious ceremonies.

14. Upon the whole therefore, it may be doubted whether such repeal, especially after the tax has been so long established, would be

viewed in the light of a public benefit, and it is possible that it might be considered the reverse. But the probability is that it would be regarded in its true point of view, for the people are not deficient in penetration on such subjects; and if they should discern that it had been coupled with the abolition of suttees merely for the purpose of reconciling them to the measure, they would look upon it as an act of temporary expediency, and might apprehend that at some future period when it had answered the immediate end for which it was intended, they would be again subjected to it. Moreover, if they really attach importance to the rite on religious principle, it may be justly doubted perhaps, whether their feelings at being deprived of it, could be in the least influenced by such considerations.

15. I beg however not to be understood as advocating the continuance of the pilgrim tax. On the contrary, I should heartily rejoice on general principles to hear of its repeal, as, for the reasons you have stated, it would in the course of time, bring pilgrimage into disrepute, and rid the country of the numerous evils with which it is attended. But as a means of reconciling the Hindus at large to the suppression of suttee, it would, I am persuaded, have little or no influence.

16. If suttee is to be abolished, I hope it will be done openly and avowedly. I hope that the people will be let to understand that it is put down because it is our duty to put it down—and because to get rid of it in any other way being utterly hopeless, we are bound as the ruling power to tolerate no longer such barbarous and inhuman practices, even though founded on their religious doctrines. The higher the ground we assume, the less will be the danger of opposition. There is nothing that the Hindu has so much tact in discovering as the necessity of obedience, and if the thing be boldly and undisguisedly attempted, and a firm determination evinced to carry it into effect at all risks, it will be at once accomplished—but an endeavour by pecuniary sacrifices to conciliate the community into acquiescence, would be liable to misconstruction, and encourage perhaps complaint and combination, in the hope of extorting further concessions.

96. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

India House. 11 April 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 27 August 1829

... The new directors commenced yesterday. Mr. Loch chairman and Mr. Astell deputy chairman. Mr. Marjoribanks (I may state to you less privately) is a little sad at not having been brought forward and he has taken rather a jaundiced view of the whole of last year's proceedings. One point your Lordship will have perceived in the copy of the dissent which I forwarded and from the frequent discussions I

have had with him I'm sure he will so express himself to your Lordship in a letter which he had written and which accompanies this. I mention these comparatively trifling points because it may enable your Lordship to cast aside any views which may be pressed upon you in opposition to measures of economy either emanating from your government or proceeding from the majority of the court here, and that in your communications to Mr. M[arjoribanks] the *more general* the better. I am sure your Lordship will receive every possible support from the chairs and the court in any plans of reform and economy that may be proposed. The late war led to an imperceptible increase of charge in almost every department which is only felt in the aggregate, and without a minute investigation as proposed in your Lordship's minute, will not be discovered. The principle which it recognises, is so sound in itself that if the enquiry is but conducted with reference to it the result will effect the reduction of all useless establishments, the full employment of all that may be maintained, and the preventing the useless outlay of a single rupee.

Upon the point of the charge of political residency I think your Lordship will have seen in the hints of the then intended despatch as to the general expenditure from hence, which despatch had since been sent, that the attention of government was directed to that object. Individually, I may perhaps be permitted to express to your Lordship the serious gratification with which I have contemplated the great and important measure which your Lordship has adopted. I'm satisfied that nothing short of such a step would have prevented the appointment of a commission sooner or later from hence for the same purpose as will now be better and more effectually attained on the spot by parties fully conversant with every subject. The welfare of India—the happiness of its immense population and the blessings of British rule are the leading principles which must be kept in view and any system which shall militate against the extension of them must be amended or abolished. I really believe the existing system has done much and well administered could do much more—but it does require at the hands of those who fill the high and responsible station of the governor-general and the several governors to act with firmness and determination and to oppose with all authority the evils which have crept in from time to time, and it is no less incumbent upon the authorities at home, be they who they may, to support all measures which shall be formed on such principles. It is rumoured that the charter may come under discussion next session. It is absurd to speak of the E.I. Company as a body who ever has had or ever could have the power of opposing any measures which ministers and the legislature may conceive. But for carrying on the immense machine as it at present exists, the interests of the whole must be paramount to the few and certainly so far as any pecuniary benefit has accrued to the *East India Company* as such it is ludicrous to speak of its 10½ per cent in all or rather 5¼. It is not, so far as they are concerned, even a money question, beyond the capital

of their stock, which has certainly been the foundation of the empire that has been raised. With the interruption of the China trade the commercial part of the concern has long ceased to be a gain, and it will be more a matter for government than the Company to consider as to what may be the future plan. The present is a system of checks—it has effectually led to more of probity and honour in conducting the affairs than formerly existed. It may stand in need of alteration, but it will demand great caution in introducing any change which shall put to hazard the immense empire which has been brought under British rule. I hope your Lordship will pardon these few hasty observations. I shall have the honour of addressing your Lordship by the Company's regular ship in about 3 weeks.

I have received some private letters and packets which I forward. . . .

97. *Lord Combermere to Bentinck*

Puri. 19 April 1829

My Lord,

If I have somewhat delayed in replying to the letter your Lordship did me the honour of addressing to me, on the expediency of abolishing the practice of suttees, the delay has not been caused by a want of participation on my part in the lively interest in the question, which your Lordship has so forcibly and so appropriately expressed; but from the conviction that I could add but little to the information you had collected on the subject.

2. I need not express my concurrence in the wish which every rational being must feel for the discontinuance of a practice as abhorrent from humanity, as it is at variance with the maxims, principles and usages familiar to every Englishman.

3. Yet while I cordially applaud the motives which have induced your Lordship to institute the enquiry, and shall anxiously hope that its result may enable you to carry into effect the enlightened views which have led to it, I must, at the same time, acknowledge my inability fully to appreciate the grounds, or satisfactorily to discuss the arguments, on which the justice and policy of those views have been considered questionable.

4. I am not, indeed, a stranger to the pertinacity with which men adhere to the most erroneous opinions, when such opinions are apparently sanctioned by the dictates of conscience, and by the concurrent testimony of those to whom they look up with reverence. But, *I am* too great a stranger to the peculiar characteristics by which the Hindu religion is said to be interwoven with the social polity blended with it, giving to the latter the sacredness of religious feeling, superadded to the confirmed associations of usage and habit, to offer a *decided* opinion, how far a measure, susceptible of misrepresentation, might cause the

belief that it was but a preliminary step towards that general change, to which the widely extended population subject to our rule, is considered to be universally opposed.

5. Were I, indeed, to be guided by my own judgment, founded on some experience, and opportunities for observation, in other countries; or were I to rely on the opinions of those, whom, on questions more peculiarly dependent on the actual scene of my public duties, I must necessarily consult; I should anticipate nothing hazardous in the silent, but immediate, prohibition of the practice.

6. I shall venture to add, that if time is to be considered the great innovator, I would fain hope, that the many changes of which the higher classes of the Hindus have hailed the introduction, have watched the silent progress, and have acknowledged the beneficial result, will have prepared them for an additional change, the object of which will probably not be misunderstood by those who have had the best opportunities of weighing the motives by which the British government is habitually influenced.

98. *John Loch to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

India House, London. 20 April 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 26 August 1829

My dear Lord,

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Your Lordship wrote to me particularly about steam vessels and irrigation. Upon both subjects I entirely agree in your Lordship's views. Before I received that letter we had sent a despatch about the pilot service in which we rather discouraged making up so many steam vessels at Bengal, but that was from the great expense and the very little apparent use made of steam by government. But I have no doubt your Lordship will give it a fair trial without an unnecessary outlay, my great doubt and difficulty is how are you to keep the machinery in order, as the inconvenience of sending to this country for everything you want will be very great, but your Lordship will soon see all the advantages and disadvantages and let us know them. Your Lordship gave me a hint what you thought of the Penang government. We had been considering the same question and we have now sent out a despatch which puts that government at your disposal. If you think we have gone too far, your Lordship will of course modify our plan until you hear again. But it appears to me with a communication by steam, that there can be no difficulty in managing those presidencies from Bengal with great ease by which we get clear of the expense of a government. It was not carried in our court as you may suppose without some difficulty but I am convinced it will be for the advantage of the public. The pilot service at Bengal was taken up in the first place from its great expense,

and in the second place to show we had no feeling in this country in favour of patronage, when it was supposed to stand in the way of improvement. It is rather a difficult question but I have no doubt your Lordship will manage it with judgment. It is certainly the worst port I ever knew therefore perhaps not to be placed on quite the same footing as most others but at present it costs the government too much and I have no doubt may be put on a much better footing.

The despatch on the army which must have arrived some time, I trust your Lordship will approve. It gives the Company's army considerable advantages and I hope the saving will be of some moment.

I have read the minutes on central India and I am perfectly satisfied the arrangement proposed for Malcolm's going there would not have answered. If any alteration is necessary a lieutenant governor for that part of India under the immediate control of Bengal appears to me the most advisable but perhaps it would have been better still if the governor-general had his residence there and a lieutenant governor at Calcutta. But this is out of the question with our finances in their present state.

I am very glad to find your Lordship is so well satisfied with your councillors; by the time this reaches India Mr. Blunt will be in council and I hope he will prove acceptable to your Lordship, I assure you he was appointed from believing him to be a man of talent and from no other reason.

We have nothing new here, they talk of bringing on the charter question next year but I doubt it being possible. The sooner the question is settled the better as it weakens our present government from the uncertainty of future measures. As far as I can judge the thing, government have no wish for any great change but whether the country will force them to make an alteration in the present mode of carrying on the Indian government is yet to be seen. I will not at present enter into a defence of our present system but this I can assert, whatever may be our capacity we have but one anxious wish which is to do that which we conceive will be most beneficial for India, and with this strong feeling on my mind I cannot help seeing that India is far from being in a comfortable state. But to enter on that large subject at the end of a letter of which I dare say your Lordship is already tired, would be worse than useless. I must therefore reserve it for some other opportunity. I hope your Lordship will have the goodness to keep up the correspondence which you have been kind enough to commence. I have written to your Lordship perfectly confidentially and of course in my individual capacity. Trusting your Lordship will retain your health . . .

I congratulate your Lordship on the Catholic question being settled so triumphantly at last.

P.S. If your Lordship is still of opinion that a civil engineer would be useful may I request you would mention it in some public despatch. I

have often thought it would be of the greatest use but I have some fear of a new establishment as one man would feel himself lost in that great empire and would want assistants. If your Lordship continues to think one necessary it shall have my support.

99. *Bentinck's minute on European officers in the service of Indian states*

29 April 1829

With reference to the injunctions of the honourable court regarding the employment and allowances of European officers in the service of our native allies, I proposed on the 17th of October last, that the residents at Hyderabad and Nagpur should be instructed to furnish returns conveying information on all points essentially connected with the court's orders. We have been provided with those documents and upon them have been framed by the military auditor-general comparative statements exhibiting the allowances which the several officers would in a military capacity be entitled to, if they held equal commands or performed similar duties in the honourable Company's service.

I will avoid for the present the question touching the expediency of allowing European officers to discipline and command the troops of native powers in alliance with the British government, and will confine myself to the consideration of the orders of the honourable court contained in their letter in the military department. In this despatch it is enjoined that all persons not in the Company's service who have received commissions in the service of the Nizam or raja of Nagpur since the receipt of a letter dated 21st of January 1826 shall be immediately removed from their situations; that no officer shall be permitted to continue in the service of native powers in any situation after he has attained the regimental rank of major in his own service; and that officers employed in the service of native powers shall not be permitted to receive (pay excepted) staff or regimental allowances superior to those of an officer of the same regimental rank similarly employed at this presidency.

Our subsidiary arrangements engage us to provide a specified force for the purpose of protecting against external and internal enemies, those native states who have acceded to that system. The expense of the force has for the most part been met by a cession of territory adequate to the payment of it. In addition to this force, the native chiefs are bound to keep up a certain military body of their own. Upon this supposition that this part of their force was inefficient, the Nizam and raja of Nagpur have been induced to place it under the control of European officers, selected and appointed by the British authorities and paid under the supervision of the resident, from funds provided by the state to which the troops belong. The difference of expense to the native

powers between keeping up an army so organized and an army such as is generally maintained by native chiefs, must be considerable. The honourable court are intent upon relieving the finances of those states from every superfluous charge arising out of that system and I cordially concur in their most just declaration that it is our undoubted duty to protect the revenues of our native allies as sedulously as we would those of our own government.

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100. *Petition of the missionaries to Bentinck*

Calcutta. May 1829

My Lord,

Your Lordship's late very liberal and condescending invitation to all classes of the community to furnish your Lordship with any suggestions tending to the general improvement of the British dominions in the east, combined with a confidence in the benevolence of your Lordship's character and the enlightened principles of your administration, emboldens us, the missionaries of the Gospel of various denominations in Calcutta and its neighbourhood, humbly to bring to your Lordship's notice two subjects of incalculable importance as connected with the welfare, both moral and natural, of the native population of India. First, female immolation, secondly the state of the law with regard to the inheritance of those amongst the natives who may embrace Christianity. The former has been so fully treated in an article of a missionary periodical work published at Serampore under the title of *The Friend of India*, that we beg your Lordship's permission to adopt the sentiments, and, as far as practicable, the language of that article on the present occasion. We need not inform your Lordship, that by the inhuman and iniquitous practice to which we allude, nearly one thousand of the most helpless, the most to be pitied, of the human race, are destroyed annually in the presidency of Bengal alone.

The supreme authority would not destroy the life of any of these females without a regular trial, and a view to the general benefit of society; can it then come within the province of a few private individuals to sacrifice a life which civil power ventures not to touch? If the widow destroys herself voluntarily she is guilty of an act which our laws have declared infamous by branding the memory of the self-murderer. Whether this be done as a punishment to the dead, or as a warning to the living, it implies, that self-murder ought to be prevented where the intention is previously known. But even if the fact of immolation be not self-murder, it must be an act of murder on the part of all those who assist in it. But your Lordship need not be informed, that the

moment a purely religious rite infringes on the laws of society, its character is changed: it is transformed into a civil crime.

. . . . . .

If it be advanced that the Hindus think this a religious rite, we would respectfully suggest, that under no government is the privilege of deciding on the nature of crimes and punishments delegated to the subject, more especially with regard to actions which render him obnoxious to justice. If the Hindu who burns his innocent mother brings himself to think it a religious action, the civil authorities, to whom the preservation of her life is committed, over which life he has not even a shadow of a right, are undoubtedly not obliged to think so too. The sacred principles of justice are not to be abrogated, because private individuals are mistaken in their notion of the worship which is acceptable to the Deity. The admission of such a principle would rend asunder the bonds of society; for if the highest crime, that of murder, may go unpunished when committed under a religious pretext, it would be difficult to say what crime would be consistently punished in India. There is scarcely any species of abomination which the Hindu code does not sanction under some shape or other. But the whole course of judicial proceedings in British India demonstrates, that the government never acted on these principles.

But the abettors of this cruel rite will tell us that the Hindu law commands this murderous practice. This we must beg leave to deny. *Manu*, the parent of Indian *jurisprudence*, for whom the natives entertain such veneration, that the Brahmin who possesses not, with his shalgram, a copy of his laws, is said to have forfeited his religious privileges; Manu, respecting whom it is acknowledged, that what is contrary to his injunctions is not law, commands not female immolation, but on the contrary prescribes rules for the conduct of widows during the term of their natural existence. . . . If it be pleaded, that succeeding Hindu commentators have partially countenanced it; for the honour of the British government we can reply that it has never taken those authors for its rule and guide, and substituted their precepts for the principles of justice. It has never put to death every sudra who has molested a Brahmin, by bringing an action against him for debt, robbery or adultery. It has not cut off the hands of every sudra who has seized a Brahmin by the neck; it has not poured melted lead into the ears of every plebeian who has listened during the last sixty years to reproaches against these twice-born favourites of heaven. Yet these injunctions, however contrary to reason, to humanity, and to the peace of mankind, are positively contained in their code. It has not listened therefore for one moment to these books, but has defended the natives from the bloody rigour of their own laws: and in no case we are persuaded would your Lordship see a greater propriety of adhering to this noble course than in that which affects the widow and the fatherless.

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The *second* subject of confessedly great importance, to which we deem

it our duty most respectfully to solicit your Lordship's serious consideration is the present state of the law of inheritance, as affecting those Hindus who embrace Christianity.

According to this law a Hindu on becoming a Christian or Mussulman is considered as having lost caste, and hence is declared to have forfeited all the property he possessed at the time he changed his religion, be that property ancestoral or acquired.

Mr. W. H. Macnaghten, whose intimate acquaintance with the subject is universally allowed, when consulted some time since, as to whether conversion to Christianity would exclude a Hindu from inheritance, was compelled after reference to the best authorities on the subject, to declare his opinion, that such would be the consequence; the conversion necessarily creating incompetency to perform the obsequies, the performance of which is the foundation of all claims to inheritance.

. . . . . .

This being the universal interpretation of the law, persons becoming Christians in Bengal have been aware that a legal decision would be against them, and have in consequence constantly submitted to the total loss of their property on embracing the Christian faith. . . .

. . . . . .

It is scarcely necessary for us even briefly to notice to your Lordship, that the embracing a new religion is no offence in civil society, nor to prove that the becoming a Christian in particular cannot be allowed under a Christian government to be a crime deserving of punishment at all, much less of punishment so severe, or that through the constitution of Hindu society the profession of Christianity in *other* respects (as loss of friends, employment, home and reputation) is attended with injuries sufficiently serious to excite commiseration, and enough to deter many convinced of its truth from a step involving such distressing results—or that by this provision, however numerous may be the persons among the community converted to Christianity who have been in respectable circumstances, they must all be suddenly reduced to a state of total destitution and beggary, and thus a whole community be established to become a burden, instead of a blessing to society.

Nor do we think it necessary on this case any further to refute the objection, that the government being pledged to administer justice according to Hindu law, interference with this law would infringe the *toleration* guaranteed to our Hindu fellow subjects. It is evident from the instances referred to in our remarks on the burning of widows that the duty of the government has always in *its own view* been bounded by the limits of *justice*, and that by every principle of *toleration*, abstractedly considered, a Hindu is no more justly subject to the loss of property on becoming a Christian, than a Christian or Mahomedan would be on embracing, as some have done, the profession of the Hindu faith. We feel convinced that your Lordship's generous mind will shrink

from allowing such a punishment any longer to deter from investigation an enquirer after a purer faith, or to visit him on embracing it.

We are aware however, my Lord, that the difficulties attending an improvement of the system are alleged by some to be insuperable. To several most respectable members of the Company's service we have mentioned the subject, and all unite in deploring it as a crying evil, but the way of obviating the difficulty does not appear so evident. Permit us, my Lord, most respectfully to suggest two ways, one of which is more particularly in accordance with the former practice of the government, and the other in close connection with the improved state of feeling in the Hindu community.

As to the first, we beg to observe, that besides many other great improvements of the Mahomedan code (on which penal law as administered by the honourable Company is founded) introduced by Regulation IV, *1822, one very important and salutary alteration, very much* in point has been introduced in the case of murder by Mussulmans. By the Mahomedan code it is enacted that no Mussulman should be liable to condemnation for murder *unless one of the witnesses* be a *Mussulman*. This restriction being justly deemed contrary to impartial justice, a regulation was passed by which the mufti is directed to give his opinion, whether the accused is guilty, or not guilty, by the evidence, *had the witnesses been Mahomedans*: and sentence is passed accordingly. Might not with equal propriety a Hindu pundit be directed to give his opinion as to the share of *property* which would have belonged to any individual becoming a Christian, *had he remained a Hindu*, and that property be secured to him accordingly.

As to the second plan referred to, your Lordship will permit us to remark, that by the Hindu law 'eunuchs and outcasts, persons born blind or deaf, madmen, idiots, the dumb, and such as have but the use of a limb, are excluded from a share in the inheritance'. Sir W. Jones' translation of the Institutes of Manu, Ch. IX, p. 207. It is remarked on this passage by Mr. W. H. Macnaghten in his Mahomedan Law, page 89, that 'these absurd provisions seem to be entirely obsolete at the present day'. With one exception we subscribe to the truth of this remark. We are aware, that by *sufferance* no disqualification among those mentioned *excepting the loss of caste*, is allowed to operate; but we beg permission to bring to the notice of your Lordship, that it is by *sufferance* only that individuals themselves, or their ancestors in such circumstances have entered on the property, or are permitted to retain it; and that therefore any ill-disposed person has the power legally to annoy and probably to disinherit them. This itself is a state of society far from being desirable and is to our knowledge felt to be so by many respectable Hindus, who are aware from their knowledge of the law, of the jeopardy in which their continued possession of the property they enjoy is thus placed. We may add too that although the loss of caste ought no more to operate as a disqualification than the other causes now become obsolete, yet that as the law is understood

and recognized, and a convert to Christianity as such, is the object of religious enmity, it will in *his* case no doubt be always enforced so that he must, as such converts have always hitherto done, submit to entire deprivation of his property, without the hope of redress in the courts. But if your Lordship in council were pleased to issue a regulation, stating that as in accordance with the improved state of Hindu feeling most of the various disqualifications mentioned above (and the still more ridiculous mentioned by Mr. Macnaghten as sanctioned by the same authority) had become obsolete, it appeared desirable for the protection of persons already in the possession of property and to prevent future litigation, to enact that *none* of them should be allowed to operate, but that property should descend in the proportions directed by the Hindu law irrespective of those disqualifications, the difficulty would be obviated, much to the satisfaction of the great body of Hindus, and if thought expedient without the appearance of even a reference to Christianity.

We presume not by the above to dictate in what way your Lordship should remove the injustice of which, on behalf of numerous converts to our common faith, we have ventured to complain, but it appeared but proper for us to exhibit some feasible plan of removing the supposed difficulty, with the hope of satisfying your Lordship that it is by no means insuperable, and that its removal is in strict accordance with the former practice of government in similar cases of injustice, and need not excite the least dissatisfaction on the minds of our Hindu fellow subjects.

In connection with this subject we beg to submit to your Lordship's notice, the anomalous situation of converts to Christianity from the Hindu or Mussulman faith, as it regards the *succession* of the property they may acquire after their conversion. After this event the laws of inheritance of the different religions to which they were before subject cease to affect them; and we are given to understand, they are not expressly recognized as subject to the British or any other code. As their numbers are every year increasing, therefore, it may probably appear to your Lordship of importance that some definite enactment on the subject should be promulgated. We content ourselves with merely referring to the subject, leaving it to your Lordship's better judgment to make such arrangements regarding it as your Lordship in council may deem most expedient.

We beg permission to add that should it be your Lordship's wish after perusal of the preceding letter to enter into conversation on the subject to which it relates, the Reverend Dr. Carey and the Reverends Messrs. Yates and Hill, will at our request be prepared to do themselves the honour of waiting upon your Lordship at any time your Lordship may be pleased to appoint.

101. *William Astell to Bentinck*

India House, London. 5 May 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 26 August 1829

My dear Lord,

I lately received from India (and I suppose from Hyderabad) an anonymous letter enclosing a paper, of which I now transmit a copy,[1] purporting to contain a list of the civil, military and medical European officers in the Nizam's service, specifying their official designations and the salary received by each respectively; also the amount of patronage derived by the British resident from those appointments. It is of course impossible to make any official use of a paper of this kind, but I think it right to put your Lordship privately in possession of it; for, if the information which it professes to convey approximates to accuracy, I have no doubt that your Lordship will concur with me in opinion that a system so onerous to the Nizam, so open to abuse, and I fear so discreditable to our own character, cannot too soon undergo revision.

The attention of the Bengal government was last drawn to the subject in the court's despatches in the political department dated the 7th May, and in the military department dated the 28 May 1828; and the subject was more fully discussed in the court's political letter of the 21 January 1824. To the two more recent despatches we have not as yet received any reply. Indeed there has hardly been time enough for answers to reach us in the ordinary course of correspondence.

In writing to you in my individual capacity I can only say that the system appears to me most objectionable, as an uncalled for and unwarrantable interference with the just rights and expectations of the higher class of the Nizam's own subjects; as imposing upon our ally a heavy burden which his finances are ill able to bear, and which is attended with no proportionate advantage to ourselves; as vesting in the resident more power and patronage than it is safe to delegate to any subordinate functionary; and as placing the individual officers employed under him in situations of great trust without adequate securities for their good behaviour. The advantage, indeed necessity, of availing ourselves, as far as practicable, of native agency are every day becoming more apparent. To this point I adverted in the letter which I addressed to your Lordship in January last; and it is one to which I am persuaded that you are sensibly alive.

The object which I have principally in view in my present address, is to draw your Lordship's attention to the subject to which the letter I now enclose has reference, as one of no little importance to the national interests and particularly to the character of our government.

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 23rd December, from which I regret to learn that dis-

101. [1] Omitted.

satisfaction has been created by the execution of the court's orders placing the troops at certain stations on half-batta. The subject, however has been so completely discussed, and so fully considered in its various bearings, that I was pleased to observe that no hesitation was felt in carrying the orders in question into execution. Under your Lordship's judicious administration, I cannot allow myself for a moment to believe that any unpleasant consequences will result from the measures which the court have seen it proper to adopt.

When I first heard of the intention of your government to appoint two finance committees, I was apprehensive that the reductions which might be recommended by the committees would not be commensurate with the expense attending the prosecution of the necessary enquiries: but from the manner in which your Lordship speaks of the measure, and the high characters of the several gentlemen who have been appointed members of the committees, I am inclined to the opinion that good will result to the service at large from the proposed investigation.

In regard to the question of the purchase of indigo, while it must be matter of regret that difficulty should exist in procuring a supply on account of the Company, it would be a still greater source of regret were any purchases effected at the price demanded by the holders at the time when your letter was written; the speculation would be most ruinous to the Company.

102. *Campbell Marjoribanks to Bentinck*

London. 5 May 1829

My Lord,

I have had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 14th August. It afforded me much pleasure to hear from your Lordship that you and Lady William had arrived safe, and although her Ladyship was recovering from the sufferings of a sea voyage, they had not been so great as I was apprehensive might have occurred knowing that her Ladyship was inconvenienced on that boisterous element. Since the receipt of your Lordship's letter I have been grieved to hear of the accident you met with at Barrackpore from a fall from your horse. I earnestly hope all bad effects have long ere this ceased to trouble you.

Nothing could be better taken, or received than your private communication to the chairman, and which produced the best effect on the court. It is a good rule, but, if I may be permitted to suggest to your Lordship, in practice I would adhere only to that which had taken place in lieu of stating what you may have in contemplation. To be frank with your Lordship, the opinion and confidence in our court has not in the least diminished since you left us, on the contrary, it has

gained ground, and in all the private letters I have seen from India which are not few, you stand as high in the estimation under your Lordship's rule as your best friends can wish.

The necessity of economy, consequently the reduction of establishments, civil and military, has much occupied the court during the last year. Much has been said in the despatches, a great deal of which I have not gone with. I hope they may not be inconvenient to your Lordship, who must be so much better a judge on the spot to regulate matters, than is a body at a distance. The government in the straits of Malacca appeared to me to be undefined and not well considered and called for a dissent from me which I understand is forwarded to your Lordship for your private consideration.

My Lord Dalhousie's appointment to the command of the Indian army, you will have heard long ere this. I have known him these five and thirty years intimately, he is a frank, honourable, honest man, also firm, and I shall be disappointed if you do not find him a colleague that you may place the greatest reliance on.

With regard to what you have in contemplation about the college, the prevailing opinion in our court, or with people in general, as far as I can form an opinion, the shorter the period the young men are permitted to remain in Calcutta the better, the more to the advantage of the service and to the individuals themselves.

The British politics I have little opportunity of being able to form a judgment on, or of the state of things, but I would say they were queer. The Catholic question appears to me to have broken up all the elements of party, how they are to get together again is beyond me to calculate. There is much to do by our Great Duke who certainly possesses the opinion of the natives at large. At *present* his difficulties are great, as it would appear that in the manufacturing districts and indeed in all grades of society, persons are thrown out of employment, and that evil growing, and in the last quarter or two the revenue appears falling off and this I am afraid is also considered upon the decline, but upon these matters you have no doubt much better and abler correspondents than I can possibly be. These are my own impressions, who have not much means of forming an accurate opinion, perhaps, but they are mine.

Do me the honour of presenting my respects to Lady William and believe me to remain, etc.

103. *Lord Ellenborough*[1] *to Bentinck*

India Board. 19 May 1829

My dear Lord,

Lord Melville has had the goodness to communicate to me several of your letters and yesterday your letter of the 16th December 1828.

It gives me great satisfaction to observe how entirely our views coincide. The whole spirit of your government is exactly what I approve. I have no doubt you find much opposition to the economical reforms you are carrying into execution. However, the reforms must be made. We must bring the total expenditure here and in India within the income so as to be enabled to reduce taxation. India cannot rise under the pressure of the present taxation and to make the people of that country consumers of the manufactures of England, we must first make them rich. That object is remote indeed, but we must endeavour to attain it. The first tax I should wish to see amended is that levied on the transit of commodities. I believe we agree upon that point.

We have done all we can do from hence for the improvement of the cotton of India. I hope you will never lose sight of that object. It is to the raw material alone that we can look for remittances and the substitution of Indian for American cotton would not only benefit India but produce great political advantages which no one is better able to appreciate than your Lordship.

I hope you will turn your attention to the silk too. At present the silk of India is essentially inferior to that of Italy and of China. Would it be impossible to improve it by the use of a different worm, and by some change in the management?

I have read with much pleasure the sentiments of your government with regard to the native army in the military letters of the 29th November 1828. You will have seen by one letter on the subject of the civil staff appointments given to military officers how desirous we are that every regiment should have a sufficient number of officers constantly present. I wish I knew how I could make it more worth a man's while to be a good regimental officer, to be acquainted with, and attentive to his men, known by them and loved by them. I would make a regiment a great family. I hear things which shame me very much on the subject of the present state of the army. Do all you can to make the service popular with the natives.

103. [1] As his published *Political Diary* reveals, Ellenborough was bombastic, masterful, vain and ambitious. He saw the India Board as a stepping-stone to the Foreign Office. The court of directors of the Company he regarded as merely providing information and advice through the India House machine, with perhaps an occasional right of veto, and it was only a matter of time before he came to blows with them. He also did not hesitate to write in a peremptory style to Bentinck, warning him for example 'that if he should not be economical one will be found who is'. Ibid. I, 207, 273.

Ellenborough believed in a dynamic, expansionist policy in India. See Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 261–75.

I fear there has crept into the civil as well as the military service a low tone of moral feeling. It must be our endeavour to restore the high feeling of honour which once ruled both services. I am told the civil service 20 years ago was purer, and the army the happiest in the world. It seems to me that there is a disposition here to censure too strongly and to punish too mildly. They would use terms which would slur a man forever and yet not renounce him. I have corrected in some measure the former of these faults.

In all probability we shall during the summer and autumn arrange the terms on which the government of India is in future to be conducted. I consider the question of trade to be only subordinate. We have a great moral duty to perform to the people of India, and must, if possible, give them a good and a permanent government. In doing this we confer a greater benefit upon the people of this country than in sacrificing the interests of India to the apparent present interests of England. The real interests of both countries are the same. The convulsion which would dissolve their connection would entail much loss upon us, and bring desolation upon India.

I think I may say confidentially that under no circumstances will we consent to deprive the government of India of the power of sending away Europeans.

There is one point upon which there may possibly be yet time to obtain your opinion and upon which I shall be most happy to know it. Whatever the machinery by which the government of India may hereafter be conducted, would it not be expedient to conduct it *in the king's name?*

I should very much wish to have from you the comparative advantages of continuing the governmentship in the name of the Company and of substituting that of the king. I think you will bring a free mind to the consideration of the question; and I fear no Indian will.

There is another important question. Is it expedient to continue the present division of India into presidencies, and if to continue, is it expedient that the government in the subordinate presidencies should be conducted as now with separate governments and councils, boards etc., the whole expensive machinery of a distinct state? Shall Calcutta remain the seat of the supreme government, or shall the governor-general reside as emperor at Agra? Or shall he, like the first Turkish sovereign, have no palace but his camp and date from his imperial stirrup!

We have settled Sir J. Grant's case. I enclose a copy of the report of the privy council. The council and the chief justice of the king's bench as well as the solicitor general, consider a declaratory act quite unnecessary. If a judge, knowing the decision of the privy council should presume to state his interpretation of the law against that which is now given, my feeling is that I should go at once to the king and advise his immediate recall.

I think one of the acts of next session will be an act to consolidate

the laws which govern the supreme and country courts. I am inclined to repeal and re-enact, to divide the great subject into separate acts, each relating to a distinct branch, to adopt also the recent improvements in the language of legislation—to simplify everything.

It will give me great pleasure to hear your opinion of the points I have in mind and all others connected with the government of India. I trust you will preserve your health and be long enabled to retain your situation. I sincerely assure you that I do not know the man in whom I should place more confidence than I do in you, or whose government would, in my opinion, afford greater prospects of advantage to India and to England. You have a great work before you, and many difficulties to surmount, but upon the success of your actions depends a large portion of the prosperity of England, and what is of yet higher moment, the moral condition of eighty millions of people.

I entirely rely upon your zeal, your firmness and your discretion and you may rely upon the determined support of the board of control.

104. *Bentinck's minute on European settlement*

30 May 1829

The sentiments expressed by Sir Charles Metcalfe have my entire concurrence; and when we adopted the recent resolution to permit the occupancy of land by Europeans, it was by no means my intention to rest upon that measure as a final one, still less that the grounds assigned for its adoption should be regarded as embracing the general question of the policy to be observed in respect to British settlers. Believing the diffusion of European knowledge and morals among the people of India to be essential to their well being, and convinced that the development of the natural resources of the country depends mainly on the introduction of European capital and skill, it has always been my wish and intention that the above question should be fully considered and discussed, and that the result of our enquiries and deliberations should be submitted at an early period to the authorities at home. But the resolution referred to did not seem to require that we should enter upon so wide a field: our immediate purpose was merely to enlarge the operation of certain rules already partially in force, and the effect of our determination will only be to permit that which is now done covertly, to be done openly. I feel however much indebted to Sir Charles Metcalfe for having thus brought the general subject before the board, and I gladly seize the opportunity of recording the views and sentiments with which I regard it.

We need not, I imagine, use any laboured argument to prove that it would be infinitely advantageous for India to borrow largely in arts and knowledge from England. The legislature has expressly declared

that truth: its acknowledgment is implied in the daily acts and professions of government, and in all the efforts of humane individuals and societies for the education of the people. Nor will it, I conceive, be doubted that the diffusion of useful knowledge, and its application to the arts and business of life, must be comparatively tardy, unless we add to precept the example of Europeans, mingling familiarly with the natives in the course of their profession, and practically demonstrating by daily recurring evidence the nature and the value of the principles we desire to inculcate, and of the plans we seek to have adopted. It seems to be almost equally plain, that independently of their influencing the native community in this way, various and important national advantages will result from there being a considerable body of our countrymen, and their descendants, settled in the country. To question it is to deny the superiority which has gained us the dominion of India: it is to doubt whether national character has any effect on national wealth, strength and good government: it is to shut our eyes to all the perils and difficulties of our situation: it is to hold as nothing community of language, sentiment and interest, between the government and the governed: it is to disregard the evidence afforded by every corner of the globe in which the British flag is hoisted: it is to tell our merchants and our manufacturers that the habits of a people go for nothing in creating a market, and that enterprise, skill and capital, and the credit which creates capital, are of no avail in the production of commodities.

It is possible, however, that the actual condition of things may be regarded by many as sufficiently satisfactory to render questionable the wisdom of any great change, of which the effects are not precisely anticipated; and probably the effects of the measure of giving increased facility to Europeans to settle in the interior, with permission to hold land, may be more generally considered to involve so much hazard of evil, as to counterbalance its admitted advantages. Now what is the actual state of the country? Do we not every day perceive how little our officers possess the knowledge necessary to their good government, and how much there is wanting between them that community of sentiment and purpose, without which there can be no good government? Are not the files of our civil courts loaded with arrears of business? Does there not prevail so much lying and litigation as to prove either great defects in our tribunals, or a lamentable demoralization in the people, or more truly both? Is it not generally considered to be impossible, without a burdensome stipendiary police (almost as strange to the people as ourselves), to contrive the means of preventing the organization of gangs of plunderers, such as once spread terror through many of our districts? Do not the police establishments, which, chiefly from the want of courage and concord in our native subjects, are thus thought necessary for the prevention of crime, lord it oppressively over the communities of whom they ought to be the aids and instruments? Are not the native officers in all departments alleged to be guilty of much extortion and corruption? Do not the zamindars and

revenue farmers often cruelly grind the cultivators? Do not several revolting and brutalizing practices still prevail among the people? Is there anywhere the prospect of our obtaining, in a season of exigency, that co-operation which a community, not avowedly hostile, ought to afford to its rulers? Is it not rather true that we are the objects of dislike to the bulk of those classes who possess the influence, courage, and vigour of character which would enable them to aid us? Do our institutions contain the seeds of self-improvement? Has it not rather been found that our difficulties increase with length of possession? In the midst of financial embarrassment, are we not constantly called upon for new establishments involving fresh burdens? Is not the agriculture of the country, in most places, conducted with a beggarly stock and without skill or enterprise? Are not its manufactures generally in a degraded condition? Is not commercial intercourse spiritless and ill-informed? Is there a single article of produce, excepting those which Europeans have improved, that is not much inferior to the similar productions of other countries, and can the difference be traced to circumstances of soil and climate? One great staple manufacture being supplanted, is there not reasonable ground to apprehend a failure in the means of effecting the returns, without which no profitable trade can exist, especially in a country tributary to another, as India is to England? Do not the cultivators and manufacturers and merchants alike labour under an oppressive rate of interest, which, with a languid condition of trade, unequivocally evinces poverty and want of credit? Is there not, as indicated in Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute, imminent danger of our failing to realize the income which is necessary to maintain the establishments required for the protection and good government of the country, to say nothing of roads, canals, seminaries, and public improvements of every kind?

The answers to these questions must, I apprehend, be such as to imply that the present condition of things is far from being that with which we could justifiably sit down contented. They must equally, I am satisfied, if rendered in full sincerity and truth, evince that the required improvement can only be sought through the more extensive settlement of European British subjects, and their free admission to the possession of landed property.

No stronger argument can be adduced in favour of the present proposition than is exhibited by the effects which European skill and machinery have produced *against* the prosperity of India. In the last despatch in the commercial department from the India House, dated 3rd September 1828, the court declare that they are at last obliged to abandon the only remaining portion of the trade in cotton manufactures, both in Bengal and Madras, because through the intervention of power-looms the British goods have a decided advantage in quality and in price. Cotton piece-goods, for so many ages the staple manufacture of India, seem thus for ever lost. The Dacca muslins, celebrated over the whole world for their beauty and fineness, are also annihilated

from the same cause; nor is the silk trade likely long to escape equal ruin. In the same despatch the court describe the great depression of price which this article sustained in consequence of the diminished cost of the raw material in England, and of the rivalry of British silk handkerchiefs. The sympathy of the court is deeply excited by the report of the board of trade, exhibiting the gloomy picture of the effects of a commercial revolution, productive of so much present suffering to numerous classes in India, and hardly to be paralleled in the history of commerce.

If all the ancient articles of the manufacturing produce of India are swept away, and no new ones created to supply this vacuum on the exports, how will it be possible for commerce to be carried on, and how can any remittances on private or public account be made to Europe? If bullion alone is to supply the balance, soon will the time arrive, when, under the increased value that scarcity must give to money, it will no longer be possible to realize the revenue at its present nominal amount. It is therefore the bounden duty of government to neglect no means which may call forth the vast productive powers of the country, now lying inert from the want of adequate encouragement. It may be confidently asked, whether to the natives singly we may look for success, and whether any great improvement has been ever introduced not exclusively due to European skill. To those who so feelingly deplore the misery of the Indian manufacturer, it will be consolatory to know that a prospect exists of better days, with a hope also that her staple commodity, the cotton manufacture, may still be rescued from annihilation. Mr. Patrick, an 'Englishman', is at this moment erecting a very large manufactory for the spinning of cotton-twist by machinery, to be moved by steam; and it is not irrelevant from the object of the present paper to observe, that these great works are erecting upon his own estate, held in fee-simple, under a grant from Warren Hastings. Hitherto the Bengal cotton has been held unfit for conversion into twist, but an improved kind has been lately cultivated, which it is supposed will be quite fit for the purpose. An improved species of tobacco has also been grown, bearing double the value of the native tobacco, and likely to vie with that of America. To whom again is the commerce of India indebted for these new resources in her commercial distress? To Englishmen only, is the triumphant answer. Specimens of both these articles have been sent to the vice-president of the board of trade.

It remains to enquire whether the giving more facility to Europeans to settle in the interior, with the power of acquiring landed property, is likely to be attended with any, and what, hazard of evil. On this point I confess my present sentiments differ considerably from those I once held, and the circumstance makes me with the more confidence oppose myself to opinions held by persons for whom I cannot but entertain a sincere respect.

The apprehension of evil from the extensive settlement of British subjects in the interior of the country seems to rest chiefly on the

supposed character of the natives, and on the assumed disposition and conduct of our countrymen. It has been stated that the former are exceedingly jealous of any interference by strangers, and singularly averse to change; and it has thence been argued that the frequent resort of our countrymen, while it would fail to produce any useful alteration in the habits and sentiments of the people, would almost certainly occasion alarm and discontent, if not disturbance.

The views of the native character in which such references have been founded must, I think, be now admitted to require considerable modification. I shall not dwell on facts drawn from their history under the dominion of our predecessors, nor on the various changes which Hindu communities appear to have undergone, independently of any impetus from without. Yet the facility with which they have submitted to the successive conquerors of the country; the relation in which many of the most influential persons and classes among them have stood to foreign rulers; the habits which many of them have borrowed from the Moslems; the divisions existing among them; the rise of new sects in comparatively modern times; the frequent instances that are met with by our revenue officers of numerous village zamindars professing the Moslem faith, though they distinctly trace their origin to a Hindu ancestor, and still retain the name and pride of high caste; all these circumstances powerfully contradict the notion that there is something immutable in their sentiments and condition. Recent events, and the occurrences now passing under our eyes, still more clearly justify the persuasion, that whatever change would be beneficial for our native subjects we may hope to see adopted, in part at least, at no distant period, if adequate means and motives be presented. I need scarcely mention the increasing demand which almost all who possess the means evince, for various articles of convenience and luxury purely European; it is in many cases very remarkable. Even in the celebration of their most sacred festivals, a great change is said to be perceptible in Calcutta. Much of what used, in old times, to be distributed among beggars and Brahmins is now in many instances devoted to the ostentatious entertainment of Europeans, and generally the amount expended in useless alms is stated to have been greatly curtailed. The complete and cordial co-operation of the native gentry in promoting education, and in furthering other objects of public utility; the astonishing progress which a large body of Hindu youth has made in the acquisition of the English language, literature and science; the degree in which they have conquered prejudices that might otherwise have been deemed the most inveterate (the students in the medical class of the Hindu college under Dr. Tytler, as well as in the medical native school under Dr. Breton, in which there are pupils of the highest castes, are said to dissect animals, and freely to handle the bones of a human skeleton); the freedom and the talent with which in many of the essays we lately had exhibited to us, old customs are discussed; the anxiety evinced at Delhi and Agra, and elsewhere, for the means of instruction in the English

language; the readiness everywhere shown to profit by such means of instruction as we have afforded; the facility with which the natives have adapted themselves to new rules and institutions; the extent to which they have entered into new speculations after the example of our countrymen; the spirit with which many are said to be now prosecuting that branch of manufacture (indigo) which has alone as yet been fully opened to British enterprise; the mutual confidence which Europeans and natives evince in their transactions as merchants and bankers; these and other circumstances leave in my mind no doubt that our native subjects would profit largely by a more general intercourse with intelligent and respectable Europeans, and would promptly recognise the advantage of it.

As to the practical effect, much must of course depend on the circumstances, character and conduct of the persons who might settle in the country. Let us then consider how far, on this head, there is any just ground of apprehension. It has been supposed that many of the indigo planters resident in the interior have misconducted themselves, acting oppressively towards the natives, and with violence and outrage towards each other. Had the case been so, I must still have thought it just to make large allowances for the peculiar position in which they stand. They have been denied permission to hold lands in their own names. They have been driven to evasion, which has rendered it difficult for them to establish their just claims by legal means, or they have had to procure the plant required by them through a system of advances, which in all branches of trade is known to occasion much embarrassment, and to lead to much fraud. They have possessed no sufficient means of preventing the encroachment of rival establishments, still less of recovering their dues from needy and improvident ryots. Further, we must not forget that the restrictions imposed upon the resort of Europeans to this country have operated to compel the houses of business often to employ persons in the management of their concerns in the interior whom they would not have employed if they had had a wider scope of choice. It would not be wonderful if abuses should be found to have prevailed under such circumstances, or if the weakness of the law should have sometimes led to violence in the assertion of real or supposed rights. But under all the above circumstances of disadvantage, the result of my enquiries is, a firm persuasion (contrary to the conclusions I had previously been disposed to draw) that the occasional misconduct of the planters is as nothing when contrasted with the sum of good they have diffused around them. In this as in other cases, the exceptions have so attracted attention, as to be mistaken for a fair index of the general course of things. Breaches of the peace being necessarily brought to public notice, the individual instances of misconduct appear under the most aggravated colours; but the numerous nameless acts, by which the prudent and orderly, while quietly pursuing their own interests, have contributed to the national wealth, and to the comfort of those around them, are unnoticed or unknown. I am assured

that much of the agricultural improvement which many of our districts exhibit may be directly traced to the indigo planters therein settled; and that as a general truth it may be stated (with the exceptions which, in morals, all general truths require to be made), that every factory is in its degree the centre of a circle of improvement, raising the persons employed in it, and the inhabitants of the immediate vicinity, above the general level. The benefit in the individual cases may not be considerable, but it seems to be sufficient to show what might be hoped from a more liberal and enlightened system.

It is imagined, however, that British subjects, if admitted freely to resort to India, and to occupy land, would colonise in great numbers; that, becoming too strong for the government, they would violently invade the rights of the people, and at no distant period throw off their allegiance. It is supposed, in short, that we should have exhibited here results similar to those which occurred in the Americas; that the original inhabitants of the country would be subjected to violence and oppression; and that the colonists, if not swept away by insurrections of their own creating, would soon claim independence, and assume an attitude of hostility to England.

Now, without presuming to pronounce what the course of centuries may produce, under the great changes which British India is, I trust, destined to undergo, we may, I think, confidently assert, that there is no analogy to support the above anticipation of the effects which will flow from an increased facility to Europeans to settle in the interior of this country.

In respect to climate, India may be described as a tropical country, in which the European cannot safely labour in the field, excepting at particular times, and in which the northern races appear, after a few generations, to lose much of their physical hardihood. The mountainous tracts, in which a more congenial climate is to be found, present no surface to support any large population. It is already, in all the districts that would invite the adventurer, a densely-peopled country. The land is in most places distinctly appropriated by individuals. The rights of private property are recognised not less clearly than in Europe, and the modes of transfer not less fully defined. Its inhabitants are industrious, accustomed to all kinds of severe toil, readily turning their hands to new arts, frugal in their habits, patient of exertion in the pursuit of gain. Living and rearing families upon little, in a climate suitable to their constitutions, they present to the manufacturer and the agriculturist a singularly cheap supply of labour. They seem to have a peculiar aptitude in accommodating themselves to the various tempers of their masters, and fidelity to their trust is generally held to distinguish them, even when otherwise ranking low in the scale of morals. In the more warlike classes, there is presented to the government the means of maintaining a large force of excellent soldiers. In almost all classes, excepting the lowest, it may field able instruments of civil government. With strong local attachments, there is no feeling of

patriotism to excite their enmity to strangers, or to bind them together in one common enterprise. Their paternal village is dear to them. The name of country, in a large sense, is unknown. Their religion (I speak of the Hindus) is even more a cause of division among themselves than of separation from others. Rival sects may contend, but, undisturbed, they will never apparently find cause of hostility in the religious practices of those who profess a different creed. The spirit of Hinduism is exclusive, not offensive. These last-mentioned circumstances, which have in all ages rendered it comparatively easy to subjugate India, seem calculated to facilitate the settlement of our countrymen among them; but they must at the same time operate to prevent such settlement from assuming the shape ordinarily exhibited on the introduction of a new race into a country. While the Hindu religion is maintained there can be no mingling of races, such as has occurred in other countries; and the line of separation would probably long survive after the original cause had ceased. The Christian rajput is not more likely to forget his origin than those who are now found professing the religion of Mahomed; and all the circumstances above enumerated appear to render it in the highest degree unlikely that Europeans would fill India in such numbers as to colonise, in the ordinary sense of the word, or as to acquire the power of setting government at defiance; nor is it more probable that the habits and pursuits of the settlers would incline them to violence.

Without adverting to the difficulty of transporting any large number of labourers to so distant a country, India, I may remark, offers no advantage to the European who has only his labour to bring to market. In providing himself with the comforts necessary to his existence, he must here expend a sum that would much more than purchase an equivalent of native labour; and the comparative value of the latter must increase with improved skill and knowledge. In agriculture, the chief branch of national industry, and that on which the population mainly depends, it is impossible to economise labour to the same extent as in manufactures; especially where a tropic sun and periodical rains exert so powerful an effect on the vegetable world. And the climate must, in almost all our districts, confine the European husbandman to the work of general superintendence. In all branches of industry, indeed, it is European capital, skill and example which India requires, and for which she offers a market. European labour is not wanted, and could not be maintained. The settlers therefore must be men of capital and skill. They must consequently be few in number, contrasted with the population of the country. A labouring class who should attempt to settle would perish. There is no scope for wild adventure. The acquisitions of the settlers must be made in the face of an established government, and under fixed laws. Wealth can be found only by industry working with superior skill or superior credit.

So far indeed from fearing too great an influx of Europeans, I confess my apprehension is that no encouragement we can hold out will induce

them to resort to India in the number that seems to be desirable. Nor does there seem to be any sufficient reason to assume, that even if much more numerous than I conceive possible, they would be disposed, or if disposed, able, to resist the government and oppress the people. He who looks to derive an income from such speculations as would occupy them, is not likely to find his advantage in scenes of violence and civil commotion. Excepting to the wild tribes, who can bear the climate of unhealthy fastnesses, there is no country in the world perhaps that presents fewer facilities to those who would enter upon a contest with the established government, even though commanding the active co-operation of a considerable proportion of the people; and such co-operation could scarcely be looked for by those who had raised themselves by oppressive means. Ages indeed must elapse before the descendants of Europeans can be so numerous as to be formidable to a government that consults the interests and possesses the attachment of its subjects, even supposing them to retain the vigour and distinctive characteristics of their ancestors. While they are few in number, no one seems to deny that they must side with the government: and the argument I am contesting seems to admit that the natives will suffer from injustice only when the new settlers and their children are strong enough to set them and the government at defiance.

But is there, in truth, any reason for considering the interests of the two parties distinct? Have we not hitherto found, that where the field has been equally open, the accumulation of wealth by the natives has fully kept pace with that of our countrymen; nay, that the former, as being the most necessary to their joint concerns, and the most keenly alive to the means of forwarding his private interests, has generally had the advantage? Is it not extravagant to suppose, that within any period of time on which it would be reasonable to speculate in prospective legislation, the natives can be superseded by Europeans, or their co-operation slighted?

The whole indeed of the objections to the settlement of our countrymen which I have been now considering rest on a train of argument, in meeting which the chief difficulty is that of so stating it as to bear the semblance of sound reason. If an enemy to our faith and nation were to urge it, starting with the assumption that the government would league with the settlers in a scheme of injustice and spoliation, one could easily imagine that he might find materials of plausible and insidious declamation; but it does seem to be strangely paradoxical when the same conclusion is drawn by an Englishman loving his country, and justly proud of it.

But it may be said that the danger lies in the union of the British settlers with the natives of the country; and this is a more intelligible ground of argument. It assumes, however, a vast change to have occurred in the frame of society, such as can scarcely be looked for in centuries to come; I might almost say a vast improvement, which would imply that the time had arrived when it would be wise in England to

leave India to govern itself. For assuredly, if we suppose the distinctions of tribe and caste to have ceased, and conceive these rich and extensive regions to be filled with an united people, capable of appreciating and asserting political freedom, we must complete the picture by imagining that England has (voluntarily or involuntarily) ceased to withhold privileges she has taught them to exercise. So long, however, as our countrymen and their Christian descendants are few in number, and that must be for centuries, they must cling to the government, even supposing, what is not likely, that they have no closer connexions with England. Nay, even community of faith and language, or of language alone, will, I conceive, tend to bind the possessors of it to our interests (if we do not utterly neglect theirs) by a tie stronger than that which connects the Hindus of different castes and sects, and will, if they be numerous, greatly strengthen our hold of the country. The British settlers and their descendants, at least the more wealthy of them, will probably maintain a very close connexion with the mother country. Some will reside in it; many will visit it; many will send thither their children to be educated; many will look to it as the place of retirement from active life; all will depend upon it for much of their comfort and wealth. Their relation to the government will be proportionably close. And that the residence in the interior of the country of any considerable number of such persons in the capacity of landholders and merchants would add to the efficiency and strength of our government seems to me to be certain. They would open to us much useful information now difficult of attainment. The complaints of mismanagement on the part of the local authorities would be made with comparative freedom. The growth of discontent might thus be nipped in the bud; projects of disturbance would be more readily discovered; the local influence of our countrymen, and the sentiments of those who had acquired from them our habits, our language, our knowledge or our creed, would operate to break the current of any general feeling adverse to our rule. In each individual we should, on the occurrence of any emergency, have an active and well-informed agent for local purposes. Their number, though altogether feeble when opposed to the arms and unaided by the resources of the state, might powerfully reinforce our means of putting down internal or resisting external hostility. In the civil branch of government they would present a cheap and excellent substitute for much of the existing expensive and inefficient establishments. Our police might then really be founded on the only good foundation, the influence and authority of local residents. In our courts of judicature we might then hope to introduce, with comparative facility, the best institutions of our country. Can we doubt that they would add largely to the wealth of the country, and greatly facilitate the realization of the revenue necessary to its security and good government? or can we imagine that they would not powerfully contribute to the diffusion of knowledge, which would raise the moral and intellectual condition of our native subjects, and to the introduction of arts, machinery and works of

skill, calculated to enlarge the productive powers and correct the physical disadvantages of the country?

I have not particularly adverted to the Mussalman portion of our subjects, because I do not imagine that any stress has ever been laid upon the class in the present argument, because it appears to me to be self-evident that an increase in the number of British or Christian inhabitants must diminish the risk of danger and trouble from them, and because I believe that, so long as they profess the intolerant doctrines of their prophet and remember the station they once held, their hostility can only be neutralized by their interests and their fears and by their knowledge of our power.

I do not of course overlook the circumstance, that in proportion as Europeans resort to the country in greater numbers, the increase of the mixed race must be accelerated. But this I by no means regard as a source of danger. Quite the contrary. The race in question must necessarily be much more closely connected with the nation of their fathers, by community of language, habits and religion, than with the people to whom their mothers may have belonged, among whom, if Hindus, they must hold the lowest rank, and by whom, if Mussalmans, they are little likely to be respected. It is, indeed, from association with the governing class that they must chiefly look for station, wealth and influence, within any period to which we can reasonably extend our speculations.

I am aware that there exists in many quarters an uneasy feeling in respect to the East Indians. It seems to me to be greatly misplaced. Their number is inconsiderable. The evident disposition of all who raise themselves to opulence and consideration is to take their place with Englishmen according to their rank. The lower classes are not politically to be distinguished from natives, excepting that, as Christians, they are, of course, nearly allied to us. That many individuals of the class are discontented and unhappy is, I fear, true. Their condition is in several respects an unhappy one. Their education has not, I believe, been hitherto, generally speaking, judicious. There has been little opening for their enterprise, and they have not shown much enterprise in using the opportunities afforded them. There are some striking exceptions, but these are themselves the first to admit the general truth. I should greatly rejoice to see a wider field opened for the industry and skill of the class in question; and such will, I think, be one of the happy effects of affording a greater facility to Europeans to settle in the interior and to occupy lands. Fathers will thus have the means of giving useful and profitable employment to their children to a much greater extent than they now have; and the wants of European settlers and their families will soon create various demands now unknown to the country, in supplying which the industry of all classes will find a ready market.

On whatever side therefore the subject is considered, the more does it present the prospect of advantage from the free resort of Englishmen to India. On one supposition only can I entertain the apprehension of

danger. Undoubtedly, the presence of our countrymen, and the knowledge which they are likely to diffuse, will render the people more conscious of their rights and better able to understand the duties of their governors. Were it our purpose to pursue a course of injustice, to withhold from the people the privileges they may fairly claim and could advantageously exercise, to sport with their lives, their properties or their feelings, by arbitrary acts, by grinding extortion, or by capricious innovation, we should act most unwisely in permitting one British subject to enter the country, excepting as an accomplice in the scheme; we should be acting madly in spreading abroad the lights of knowledge. But our designs being benevolent towards India, let us not withhold what best would serve her. Our duty being to maintain the dominion of England, let us not reject the best means of confirming it. Our care being equally the interests of both countries, let us not exclude those who would best promote and combine them.

With the above sentiments, I must of course feel most anxious that the state of the law should be so amended as to oppose no obstacle to the settlement of British subjects in the interior. It is clear that if any large number of that class become proprietors of land, or reside for other purposes at a distance from the presidency, many serious inconveniences may be experienced, unless they be subject, with the rest of the inhabitants, to the authority of the local courts. The defects in the legislative provisions relative to civil suits must therefore be amended. The jurisdiction of the criminal tribunals now confined to trespass and assault must be extended. The doubts that attach to both branches must be removed. It would be the height of absurdity to argue, from the inefficiency of our existing institutions, against the admission of Europeans. The remedy, it is clear, is not the exclusion of these, but the reform of our system.

Further, it appears to be no less evident that the authority to be exercised by the supreme court should be better defined, and its progress regulated. How this can best be done I do not now propose to discuss. Before leaving Bengal, I desired the secretary to prepare materials for our deliberation; and I hope soon to learn that considerable progress has been made in the work. My present impression is that the supreme court, instead of standing isolated from the government and from the local tribunals, should be rendered a component part of our judicial establishments, the whole being remodelled, with many alterations, into one harmonious system; and that the government (in conjunction possibly with one or more of the king's judges) should be vested with power to legislate equally for all classes, Europeans and native. By such a plan all difficulties might easily be conquered, and all the doubts and embarrassments now incident to the acts of a legislative body, separated by half the globe, would be obviated. But even should parliament, in its wisdom, reserve to itself the power of legislating for India (the local legislature would in any event remain subject to the control of the home authorities), there may not, I trust, be any

serious difficulty in obtaining the enactment of such laws as may afford to all classes equal protection, and as may secure for all the cheap and prompt administration of justice by able and independent judges adequately controlled.

105. *Bentinck's minute on Fort William College*

2 June 1829

In the despatch of the honourable court dated the 19th December 1827, in reference to the embarrassments of the civil servants and to the college at Fort William, the following decision is given in the 23rd paragraph upon the question of maintaining that institution.

Para 23: Upon the whole we find ourselves compelled to convey to you our opinion, that the disadvantages above enumerated more than counterbalance the benefits of the Calcutta college, and that it is expedient to take measures for the discontinuance of that institution. We are unwilling however to issue peremptory orders for this purpose without having the fullest information, which you may have been able to collect, on a question to which we attach so much consequence.

24: We therefore authorize you, if you shall see sufficient reason for differing from the conclusion to which we have arrived, to suspend the execution of our directions during a further reference to us of such facts or arguments as may not already have been stated in the former correspondence on the subject, but if on consideration your opinion should coincide with ours, we wish that the measure should be carried into effect without delay.

It is with great satisfaction of mind that after the most deliberate consideration of all the information and facts belonging to this question, I have come to the decided conviction, that we should avail ourselves of the sanction allowed by the honourable court to suspend their order for the abolition of the college. Indeed a different conclusion would have cost me a greater sacrifice of feeling than almost any act which I could be called upon to perform. All my old prepossessions were strongly in favour of this institution, and these were not derived from the admiration which I then entertained for its illustrious founder,[1] but from the more solid proofs of success evinced in the decided superiority over their fellows of those writers of the Madras presidency who had been educated in the college; and with this superiority of acquirement was also combined a high and elevated tone of feeling and great zeal in the public service, qualities of more importance perhaps to the welfare as well as character of our administration than even a knowledge of the languages.

There is another feeling connected with this subject, that operates

105. [1] Marquis Wellesley, governor-general, May 1798–Aug. 1805.

forcibly upon me. In every part of the civilized world, education and institutions for the advancement of knowledge and science are the boast of the present day. Even in Calcutta itself, we have a Hindu college, consisting of several hundred students and among them many whose acquirements in European science are truly astonishing.

There is also in the Mahomedan college numerously composed, the youth of which are equally remarkable for their diligent and successful pursuit of eastern literature, Mahomedan law, anatomy (a new and important study) and other arts and sciences, as well as for their exemplary conduct. Is it fitting and decorous that it shall appear to this enlightened society, that the English youth alone are incapable of education? That such is the idleness and extravagance of this selected class, that even under the very eye of the government, the college has been found to be useless and the hopes of instruction fruitless? Such must be the inference from the discontinuance of the college. But for myself, I cannot subscribe to the necessity of a conclusion so humiliating and so derogatory from the character and credit of our administration.

The honourable court have, in my opinion expressed a well-founded apprehension, that the discipline of the college has fallen short of what it ought to have been. I have taken great pains to make myself acquainted with the working of this machine, and I do not hesitate to say, that want of discipline, and insubordination appear to me to be the sole cause of the failure of the institution, if it can be said to have failed, which I very much doubt.

In agreeing with the honourable court in this opinion, I do still more strongly in another so justly described in the last paragraph of their despatch. 'Upon the whole our opinion is, that you have the grand instruments of reform, the means of influencing the minds of those whom you are to employ in your own hands, and that they consist in the power which you possess of appointing or not appointing to the emoluments of office' (and then, stating how this check will operate in preventing idleness and extravagance in the young, and pecuniary embarrassments in the service generally they add) 'nor can we doubt, far less despair, that these natural, appropriate and powerful remedies, judiciously and undeviatingly applied, will be attended with the happy consequences which it is our object to secure'.

It certainly cannot but appear utterly absurd and ludicrous to a military man like myself, accustomed to the facility with which great bodies of men are kept in perfect subordination, to observe the almost admitted fact, that for twenty-five years, a few writers have held at naught all the authority of the supreme government, and have rendered unavailing all its efforts to accomplish this desired object. In the military service of the Company, no such difficulties occur. Military law is as effectual here as elsewhere. For the control of the civil servants, the same powers are not exactly available, and those that do exist are in many respects unsuitable and ineffectual. When there is a great command of credit and of money, the suspension from pay and

allowances, so far from being of any advantage, only produces the greater ultimate evil of increased embarrassment: of the same nature, as to any immediate effects, is the threat of non-employment. Every writer knows that sooner or later he must be in possession of a good appointment, the salary of which he flatters himself will make good the losses of present idleness and dissipation. It is a curious fact, that however glaring the imbecility, the idleness, the profligacy or the want of principle, there is not an instance of expulsion from the college, since its *first establishment*, and well therefore has it been said by the court that the controlling authorities have not done all that they might have done for the enforcement of order and discipline, and with the same truth might it have been added that there was too much reason to apprehend that the good of the service had been made to give way to considerations of personal interest. The most powerful of all remedies is suspension from the service, and the enforcement of it seems to be indispensable in cases of incorrigible idleness and disobedience of orders; still for youthful follies, and particularly in the commencement of a career, no government would willingly resort to so severe a sentence. But notwithstanding all this, I am at a loss, with the court to comprehend the inadequacy, hitherto experienced, of the immense means of reward and punishment at the command of government, coupled with a further check, for immediate effect more useful than any other, of instant removal from the capital, and more particularly also if the personal interest of the head of the government, which he must always have so many indirect ways of evincing, is actively and cordially interposed. I am aware that this opinion somewhat arraigns, too presumptuously perhaps, the conduct upon this point of preceding governments. But it was their lot for the most part to have their whole time engrossed by a continued succession of great and important transactions, as well of foreign policy, as of actual war. It is our happier fortune to be enabled to devote our whole attention to the civil administration. That the system requires improvement, that it fails in producing those benefits to the people to the extent which the anxious desire of all the authorities, both here and in England, has ever had in view, no one can deny; but the agency has perhaps been still more inefficient than the system itself, and as there is no escape from ignorance and incapacity, where all places and appointments are a monopoly in the hands of a privileged few, it does become a most serious duty on the part of the state to render as complete as possible, the capacity for government, of those to whom for so many years, the destinies of this great empire must be committed.

Before I proceed to state the very few alterations which I think necessary to give to the present institution (for it is not regulations and fine words and speeches, but rather the practical execution with mildness and firmness of those already existing which is really wanting) I will take the liberty of adverting shortly to the only alternative left to us in India, if the college is to be discontinued. A mufassal education. It

is admitted by all that the college presents a facility for the acquisition of languages in its able professors and munshis, which is unattainable out of Calcutta. In the country also are wanting those excitements to fame and distinction, which emulation alone can generate. There may indeed be less extravagance in the country, though it by no means appears clear, and the contrary is distinctly asserted, that the embarrassments of the civil service were quite as great before, as since the establishment of the college. The same credit derived from the certain anticipation of great station with high salary, and the means of patronage will produce the same effect both in town and country. Where the disposition exists, money will always be had with the difference that in Calcutta the creditor is a respectable European agent receiving 10 per cent. interest added to the charge of life insurance, while in the other he is a native, if a mere lender of money, taking 24 per cent. interest, and if a speculator on the future distress and favour of his debtor, a still more ruinous connection. That there will be more idleness in the mufassal, I verily believe. To my judgment, the distinction between Calcutta and the mufassal is very much the same as in England exists between school and home education, with the advantage in favour of the latter, of parental interest, instead either of no protection at all or of that of a perfect stranger, who can have no interest in the welfare of the young man, and if his habits happen to be irregular, will probably feel him to be a sort of incubus imposed upon him, and will treat him with neglect and dislike. I am disposed also to place little reliance upon examinations of proficiency made elsewhere than in the college itself. I attach also much importance to commencement of residence in Calcutta. I admit that there is a chance of evil, but the evil, great as it may be, may in my opinion be averted, while the good cannot otherwise be attained. The high offices of government and of the law are necessarily filled by men of the first abilities and integrity. Society receives its tone from them, and practically it is highly useful, that the young men just from school, with no formed ideas upon public conduct, should receive their first impressions from the high minded sentiments which I sincerely believe very generally to prevail. There is also this further advantage that by the character developed at the college, the government is enabled to gain the only certain knowledge of the real qualifications of all its younger servants. I will merely add further that to my mind, the idea of a mufassal education is so unsatisfactory, that if the college at Calcutta is to cease, I cannot but think it would be infinitely better to accomplish the object in England by rendering a knowledge of specified languages an indispensable condition to eligibility for a writership. There can be no reason why as great perfection in the languages of Hindustan should be more unattainable in London, than those of Europe are found to be to the Hindu and Mahomedan youth in Calcutta. The same stimulus alone is wanting. In Calcutta with the natives, office follows qualification, in England, with the writer it precedes it. Herein consists the whole secret of failure and success.

I see nothing in the different systems pursued at Madras and Bombay, which seems to entitle them to any preference to that of Bengal. Annexed to this minute is a memorandum marked (A) describing the different plans and their effects, pursued at the three presidencies. The following extract from a minute of Mr. Lushington dated the 7th of January 1828 seems to demonstrate an almost complete neglect of the Persian language, considered both at Hertford and in Calcutta to be so necessary an attainment.

'I hear with regret and surprise that the whole number of the whole civil service who aspire to any knowledge whatever of the Persian language does not exceed nine. It will afford me sincere pleasure to find that I am misinformed in this calculation, but I fear that the deteriorated state of the service in this respect is to be found in the regulations of the college, which almost proscribe the study of that language, thus paralysing and rendering abortive all the anxious pains and expense so properly bestowed upon it at Hertford College.'

I have now to beg the attention of the council to the paper marked (B) which shows the average expense of the education of each writer during the last three years to be 6,621 Rs. or £660 per annum, to which must be added a further charge (since most properly discontinued) of 4,000 Rs. or £400 to each writer for outfit, repayable by retrenchment of the excess of allowances above 500 Rs. per mensem. This debt is without interest. It must also be recollected, that this charge of £660 for education in India, follows no inconsiderable expense under the same head in England. The sum above stated even for a single year forms no small amount, as compared with the cost of instruction elsewhere. But when from mere idleness, the public finance is to bear this load for an indefinite period, although the time fixed by the rules of the college as sufficient for the acquisition of two languages is eight months, the abuse must be universally admitted to be intolerable. It will scarcely be credited that young men so paid and so idle, have been permitted heretofore to remain in college, a dead weight upon the country, 4, 5, 6, and 7 years, before they chose to qualify themselves. This term has been since abridged, but even now, there are many who have been in the college for one and two years, without passing in any language.

I bring forward this view of the case in order to justify my recommendation to the honourable court, that those writers who shall abuse this unexampled liberality and indulgence, or shall be incorrigibly disobedient, idle and extravagant, shall after a sufficient trial and suitable admonition be suspended from the service, and sent to England. It might still be better, if the young man so conducting himself could have the option of being transferred to the military service, in which a stricter discipline might rescue him from ruin, and might save his family from pain and disappointment; while to his patron perhaps, the power of replacing him might fairly be granted. I am quite satisfied of the necessity of much more power than as yet the government have thought

itself justified in exercising. Every day we see instances of young men, who remain for weeks in Calcutta after their order for departure; who, when rusticated, leave their stations without permission, and continue as inattentive to their studies as before. In the army, this disregard of authority would in the first instance expose the delinquent to arrest, and a perseverance in the same course to dismissal from the service. These irregularities require to be checked by a more active and direct control; and this may be obtained by placing all the writers, whether stationed in or out of Calcutta, until they have qualified themselves, under the sole superintendence of a single officer, and by bringing more into play the personal authority of the governor-general. The only alteration of any importance therefore which I have to propose is, that the secretary to the college council shall be vested with the immediate control and superintendence of the conduct of the students, whether stationed in college or in the mufassal. That he be authorized to enforce upon his sole authority all statutes and standing orders, that he have the power of communicating with all public officers, and that all instances of disobedience or irregularity be immediately reported through the college council for the orders of the visitor.

There are some minor regulations respecting the discipline of the college, which will be better introduced, when the report upon the same subject required some time since from the college council, shall be received. It may be submitted as a question to the college council, whether the conditions of qualification are not placed at too high a standard, and the examination uselessly severe. For the great mass of students just so much knowledge as will enable them to do the common business of their office is all that is requisite, and the sooner they can be engaged in practical business, the better. Encouragement might at the same time be properly held out to those who aspired to greater distinctions in oriental literature, and whose talents and good conduct left no doubt of their intentions; to these a prolonged residence in Calcutta might be safely and advantageously permitted. Immediate removal to the country, upon the very first appearance of the idleness and expensive habits should be more strictly enforced. It may also be considered whether out of Calcutta it may not be possible to establish some better kind of surveillance over those who may be rusticated. I should propose that it shall be a standing regulation of the government, that every writer without exception, after having passed the college, shall remain three years with a collector or commissioner, that he may make himself acquainted with the real business of the country and with the manners and character of the population.

The court in the same despatch, paragraph 20, have observed, 'It is your duty to make real unfitness an invariable ground of expulsion from office, and as there is no species of unfitness, the consequences of which are more to be apprehended than that of pecuniary obligation and dependance, there is none which you will be less excusable in treating with undue indulgence.'

An occasion seems to offer which requires an application of the preceding orders. In paragraph 15 of Mr. Stirling's minute he states that there are three or four writers whose disposition to extravagance has never been surpassed, and who whether the college of Fort William had existed or not would equally have contrived to plunge themselves irretrievably in debt. Under the preceding orders of the court, we are debarred, and very properly so, from ever employing individuals so circumstanced, but without employment it is impossible for them to pay their debts. In short they are, and must ever remain excluded from the service. If the court's orders are to be acted upon, one of two things must be done, either the individuals must be informed that they cannot be employed until their debts are paid, and they must take their own measures for effecting the object, or their names must be sent to the court, who may inform their friends and parents of the disqualification under which they labour and of its consequences. This is a dilemma which I beg the members of council to take into their consideration.

(Enclosure in the above)

Memorandum A.

The chief particulars in which the establishment of Madras and Bombay for the instructing of the junior members of the civil service agree or differ from that of Bengal.

The college of Madras like that of Calcutta is superintended by a board consisting of three members but there are no professors, public examiners or secretary, the examiners' duty being performed by the members of the board of superintendence assisted by the translators of government. The salary of the students in general is less, as well as the expense for house rent than in Bengal. The progress of the students at Madras does not appear to be so rapid as it is in Bengal. At the former presidency since the year 1820 not so much as an eighth part of the students passed in two languages in the course of a twelve month and at the latter more than one third in the same space of time. There are two public examinations and two private ones yearly in the Madras establishment. In the Calcutta college there is a general examination every two months and an intermediate one at any time when the professor of any language recommends it for an individual as likely to pass in that language.

At Madras each student is required to select and study one of five languages; in Calcutta he must study two, Persian necessarily, and either Bengali or Hindi.

At Madras the junior civil servants are expected to make themselves acquainted with the regulations of government relating to the revenues and administration of justice, books for the purpose being furnished them at the public expense. This is not required in Bengal.

At Madras it is optional to study at the presidency or under a civil servant in the interior but in the latter case the students must attend the presidency examinations. At Madras on admission into college the salary of each writer is fixed at 175 Rs. and increased progressively at the recommendation of the board of superintendence to 260 and 360 rupees. The first of their advances being made for particular progress in one language and the second for proficiency in two languages; both may be granted at any time within three years after the admission of the student into college. The junior servants receive in addition to the above sums that of 50 rupees per mensem for house rent. At Madras a student qualified in one language can be appointed to such subordinate situation as the governor in council thinks proper, and those qualified in two languages to such offices as the law permits them to hold. No student to remain longer in college than two years or until the examination immediately following the expiration of that period. A reward of 3,500 rupees is granted to any student who within a period not exceeding 3 years shall have acquired a thorough knowledge (something probably like that which in Bengal entitles a student to a degree of honour) of one or more of the languages, studied under the sanction of the board, shall have obtained the highest rate of allowance for proficiency in two languages, shall have passed a satisfactory examination in the regulations, and shall be recommended to government as distinguished for general propriety of conduct whilst in college. At Madras the punishment for *neglect of study for 2 years* appears to be rustication as at this presidency. Head native masters for teaching English and other languages at Madras, and any number of natives not receiving pay, may be admitted to study at the college, for the purposes of general education and obtaining employment. There are likewise at the establishment of that presidency different classes of native law students.

BOMBAY

The writers for Bombay, on their reaching that presidency and in the event of their not having friends to live with, are provided with houses or tents, and servants by the chief secretary of government, the expense so incurred being recovered by deductions from their salary. The secretary of the civil examination committee, supplies them with copies of the orders of government respecting their studies, and provides them with munshis, and they are permitted to reside at the presidency on condition only of presenting themselves for examination within four months after their landing. Failing to do so, and to pass the examination, they are sent into such part of the interior as the governor in council may direct. The officers under whom they are placed are called upon to furnish quarterly reports as to their attention to study and general conduct. The students as at Madras are expected to make them-

selves acquainted with the regulations of government relating to the revenues and the administration of justice. The first examination in Hindustani to be passed at latest at the end of a twelvemonth and the 2nd in Marathi or Gujarati, at latest at the end of 2½ years. At Bombay as at Madras, there are no professors, nor public examiners, but there is a committee of examination, the junior member of which is secretary with an establishment of munshis, competent to teach the different languages of that presidency. A student who has passed in Hindustani alone, may be appointed to a subordinate situation, and afterwards to a superior one, on passing in the Marathi or Gujarati languages. The prizes granted for certain degrees of proficiency are much the same as in similar cases are conferred in Bengal, but it appears by the papers now laid before the governor-general, that no person has hitherto presented himself as a candidate for those prizes.

215 students have been admitted into the college of Fort William, since June 1820, 42 into the Madras establishment and 96 into that of Bombay within the same period. There does not appear to be any good grounds for supposing that the examination in any two of the oriental languages taught at the different presidencies, is more difficult at either of the other two, than it is in Calcutta. On the contrary there is reason to believe that the opposite of this is really the fact: and yet even in the neglected state of the college of Fort William 86 students or more than one third of the above number of 215, were reported qualified for the public service, by a competent knowledge of two of the prescribed languages, in less than a twelve month. At Madras there were only 5 out of 42, or less than an eighth part, declared similarly qualified, in an equal portion of time, and at Bombay where the examination is believed to be much easier than it is at Madras, the progress towards the second degree of qualification appears to be much slower than at the last named presidency. In this degree, or in a knowledge of Marathi and Gujarati, it seems that only 13 of 96 students have passed in 8 years, that a year is commonly allowed to acquire Hindustani and 2½ years this language and one of those above mentioned. The system of employing the Madras and Bombay students in subordinate situations, after they have passed in one language, is different from that of Bengal, and this renders it difficult to form an exact comparison between the expenses of the three establishments. If the students of the former establishment requiring two years for instance to qualify themselves in two languages had the same salaries as those of Bengal, it is evident that the expense attending the instruction of each, must be rather between 7 and 8,000 than between 3 and 4,000 rupees.

(Enclosure in above)

Memorandum B.

Memorandum showing the average expense of the education of each writer during the last three years.

In the year 25/26 the expenses of the college of Fort William, exclusive of the salaries of the students amounted to:—	1,36,497 . 13 . 5
In 1826/27	1,26,500 . 9 . 1
In 1827/28	1,39,636 . 10 . 7
Rent of the writers' buildings for two years at 140 Rs. for each of 19 sets of the rooms in them	95,760 .
Salary of 114 students for 3 years at 300 per month	2,56,470 .
	7,54,865 . 1 . 1

And this sum divided by 114, the number of writers in three years, will give an average expense for each writer of 6,621 rupees.

106. *Resolution of Bengal government on Fort William College*

2 June 1829

Resolved that the college of Fort William on its present footing under the option left to the government by paragraphs 23 & 24 of the letter of the honourable court of directors dated 17th December 1827 be maintained. That with a view to remedy the existing evils, which are principally to be ascribed to the want of discipline and to insubordination, and to secure the full benefit which the institution is so well calculated to afford, the governor-general in council is satisfied of the necessity of establishing a more entire and direct control, by placing all the writers, whether stationed in or out of Calcutta, until duly qualified under the sole superintendence of a single officer subject to the direct authority of the governor-general.

It is accordingly further resolved that the secretary to the college council shall be vested with immediate control and superintendence of the conduct of the students whether stationed in Calcutta or in the mufassal. That for breaches of any of the statutes or standing orders that officer be empowered to admonish and advise the offender and that he be required to bring all instances of an aggravated nature or repeated irregularities of a lesser grade to the direct notice of the visitor, by whom the necessity for laying the circumstance before government with a view to the removal of the offending party from the presidency will be determined on, or such other notice taken as the cases may appear to require. Upon all points not connected with the discipline of the college, the secretary will as heretofore report to the college council and obey their orders. That that officer be likewise authorized to correspond with the magistrates and other civil officers under whom

the students, who may have been removed, are placed, respecting their studies, pursuits and general conduct.

Resolved that it be recommended to the honourable court that such writers as may prove after a sufficient trial and the failure of the less severe degrees of punishment to be incorrigibly disobedient, idle and extravagant should be suspended the service and sent to England, reserving to the individual the option of being transferred to the military branch of the service in which a stricter discipline may rescue him from ruin, and save his family from pain and disappointment.

107. *William Astell to Bentinck*

India House, London. 5 June 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 8 September 1829

. . . . .

Since the date of my last letter to your Lordship, I have had the pleasure to receive the duplicate of your letter of the 12th January last upon the subject of suttees; a question which I have always been accustomed to regard as one of peculiar delicacy and difficulty, and my sentiments upon which I am happy to find are in unison with those you have expressed. Whenever the subject has been brought forward, I have deprecated discussion, and invariably opposed any legislation upon it in this country. I should be doing myself injustice could I suppose that there was the slightest necessity to say anything with respect to my desire to see this horrid practice put an end to. I give full credit to the local government for an anxious wish and endeavour to devise some means for its suppression, and in their judgment I place every confidence. You may depend upon my best exertions to induce the proprietors to suspend for the present any discussion of the question; but there are some whose zeal so far outstrips their discretion that I fear it will not be an easy matter to keep them quiet.

In the house of commons however last night when further papers were moved for, the subject was touched upon very temperately; and I would hope that shewing, as these and the former papers do, that the court and the local authorities are actuated by a sincere desire for the suppression of the practice, any proceeding that might embarrass your government will be avoided. I read your letter privately to the court of directors, and the effect it produced was just such as your Lordship would have wished.

. . . . .

108. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

India House, London. 6 June 1829

My Lord,

The despatch of the two last regular ships of this season for Bengal affords me the opportunity of transmitting to your Lordship the 3 last numbers of the *Mirror of Parliament* and to express to your Lordship the general gratification which has been felt at the last account by the *Marchioness of Ely* which announced your Lordship to be recovering from the severe attack which your Lordship had suffered in January. I can unfeignedly assure your Lordship that the members here individually and collectively felt most anxious till the arrival of the account by the *Ely* which had in a less particular manner reached me via [?Bordeaux] two days previously. I forwarded to Lord Gosford the letter from Lady William which reached me last Sunday and his Lordship was good enough to give me a line stating your progressive amendment which I sincerely trust was fully and satisfactorily completed.

Your Lordship's private letter to Mr. Astell as chairman on the subject of suttee was most acceptable as that gentleman will kindly assure your Lordship.

The letter on the intended alterations in the revenue and judicial branches was received last week. It is thought by some to be a greater change than was originally contemplated. Its effect will be to produce greater efficiency and I should suppose ultimately to open the way for the more extended employment of natives in the administration both of revenue and judicial matters, and whenever such a measure can be securely and judiciously introduced it is one that the governors of the country seem called upon by every principle of justice and humanity to adopt.

A general expectation prevails that discussion will be entered upon next session as to the renewal of what is called the charter. A universal stir has been making amongst the commercial and manufacturing classes for a full admission both to India and China. To the former country they have now unlimited access—but their object is to induce the Company to abandon the India trade and to effect the remittance required to meet the political charge in this country on account of India by a remittance through private merchants by bills at a certain rate against the goods.

The fact is that unless a change can effectually ensure the realization of 8 millions annually at home—there is no doubt but that the country will be losers by the change, putting out of consideration any view as to the labour now discharged by the executive body here controlled by the India board.

£3,000,000 pol. charges annually
£4,000,000 revenue paid to government on tea
£1,000,000 interest on Drs. capital stock.

Much has been said in parliament as your Lordship will perceive in perusing the last numbers of the *Mirror* on India subjects, and last night Lord Lansdowne again adverted to it on presenting a petition from Liverpool. There is one point on which the chairs would be exceedingly glad of information and that is as to notions so much held up of colonization in India. It seems certainly on the first blush of the question that colonization may be all very well for a country where the population is thinly scattered or where there may be few or none, but in India where there is so large a population the idea seems absurd. Moreover the settlement of Europeans in India with the view of producing machinery etc. would not only supersede the natives in what little remains to them, but we should be really doing harm to our own country, the produce of which wants a mart and not competition. Lord Ellenborough laid on the table of the lords a variety of accounts last night on which occasion Lord Lansdowne made some remarks. I send your Lordship the *Times* of today which contains them and also some observations from Mr. Wynn as to [?juries].

Parliament is to be prorogued on the 12th inst., so at least it is said . . .

The Earl of Dalhousie dines with the court on the 26th before his departure which is fixed for the *Pallas* the first week in July.

Sir Sidney Beckwith goes out as commander-in-chief to Bombay next month.

I beg to renew my best acknowledgement to your Lordship for your kind notice of Captain John Hull. I trust that the accounts which we are daily expecting by the *Regent* will be entirely satisfactory.

P.S. I have omitted to allude to the accounts which have reached [me] privately on the subject of the half-batta. It appears that great discontent has been created by it and Col. C. S. Fagan put into my hands the copy of the memorial from the artillery officers. It is felt that your Lordship acted decidedly and properly; there was no alternative after the letter of February 1828. Nevertheless I cannot help thinking it was a matter to be regretted that any hazard of discontent should have been ventured when the real saving was so comparatively trifling. The fault if any lies at home: but the tone and grounds of objection on the part of the officers is not only objectionable but ill founded—facts do not bear them out when they allude to 1801. . . .

109. *Bentinck to John Loch.* Private and Confidential

Calcutta. 7 June 1829

Dear Sir,

In my last I informed you of the very general and deep discontent which the half-batta order had produced throughout the army. I am sorry to say this feeling has not subsided and were the occasion to offer, I should not be much surprised at the occurrence of some open act of

insubordination. I enclose the copy of a letter I received a few days ago from a very respectable officer of the medical profession, a stranger to me. I thought it possible that he might be influenced by some other feeling than that of honestly making a useful communication, but my enquiry induces me to give implicit reliance to his statement. I have reason to know, that the fact as regards the absence of the officers belonging to the Barrackpore and Dum Dum [units] from the ball given at the government house on the occasion of the king's birthday, is perfectly true and I have no doubt that the cause assigned is equally correct. A short time ago, while at Barrackpore, I invited five out of six of the commanding officers of corps to dinner. They all declined coming. Their answers were civil, and as I do not require, like my predecessors, that my invitation should supersede any existing engagement, it was not necessary for me *to know* the cause of their refusal. But you will allow that such conduct betokens a most improper spirit. I have felt great doubts of the best course to be taken upon this occasion. My crime is simply to have carried into execution an order, which Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst declined doing. This is my sole crime. These commanding officers, in order to mark their displeasure, join in a sort of round robin measure of sending of the governor-general, and their own immediate commanding officer, as governor of the garrison of Fort William, to Coventry. This act, if avowed, would constitute so gross an insult to authority both here and in England, that it would be impossible to meet it with any half measure. But, on the other hand, if any decided step were taken, I do not feel at all certain that an explosion would not take place. Colonel Conway, the adjutant general of the Madras army and who filled the same situation during the Madras mutiny, assures me that the language of the officers and all the signs of the times are precisely the same as at that period. It is not wise to provoke unnecessarily such consequences, but at the same time, might not the evil be checked by a timely interposition of authority, and is not that time arrived? I must again invoke your perfect confidence and must beg that the contents may be confined to Mr. Astell alone. You will find by a reference to the proceedings of government upon this question, already before you, that the commander-in-chief advised the government to revoke the order upon the ground that the discipline of the army might be affected by it. When I read the despatch, I could not believe the possibility of such a consequence from so trifling a cause. I viewed it as a libel upon the army, and I looked upon the assertion as the incautious expression of an injudicious advocate, rather than as a matter of fact. The truth is, that whether from a natural sympathy or from not anticipating the extent of the evil [they] have rather encouraged than checked these discontented feelings. Lord Combermere is an excellent well-intentioned person but he is no man of business. He is very much in the hands of those about him. At the present time Colonel Fagan possesses his entire confidence. Colonel F. is a clever man, but his judgment is not equal to his abilities, and he is

described as fond of popularity. It has been proposed to send him as a delegate on the part of the army to represent their grievances to the home authorities. Colonel F. employed Mr. Bayley privately to ascertain my sentiments upon the measure, and enclosed at the same time a note from Lord Combermere approving it. I thought it my duty, at once and in the most unqualified terms to condemn the proceeding. In these times in Europe, military delegations cannot possibly be viewed with a favourable eye by anyone. When the officers in the king's service are not even allowed to *memorial*, what would be thought of the Bengal army, not satisfied with the exercise of a liberty forbidden by the king to his own troops, but taking the shape of a deliberative body, and electing a representative. I can conceive the possibility of the local government pursuing a course of measures so unfavourable to the interests of the army, as to justify perhaps the deputation of one of their own body to implore the interference of the court. But now what use can there be for a delegate, when the commander-in-chief and the members of the government are favourable to their cause.

You cannot fail to perceive that this disposition to listen to a delegate by the adjutant general, with the commander-in-chief's approbation, will have had any other effect, than that of encouraging this improper manifestation of feeling and complaint. The language from the beginning to the army ought to have been: be satisfied with very earnest representation of your case through the government to that authority from whom the order emanated; await patiently and respectfully their decision and rely with confidence upon the most good and kind consideration being given to your case.

If you look at our answer to the commander-in-chief's letter advising us to retrace our steps, you will find that these were the sentiments which we then expressed. I am afraid that no corresponding communication was made to the army. Perhaps the government are to blame for not publishing an order to this effect.

However Lord Combermere will be here in the course of a fortnight. When with us I am assured he will adopt all our impressions. I have never sat with him in council, but all bear testimony to his cordial desire to support the government, and as far as I have had the means of judging, I am satisfied that this is the truth. I shall have the pleasure of writing to you again in a few days, when I shall be glad to be able to take a more favourable view of things than present appearances seem to warrant.

110. *Colonel Conway to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 7 June 1829

My Lord,

I have thought much on the subject you did me the honour to mention and I feel it my duty to submit to your Lordship the result of my reflections. It seems evident from the concurring testimony of the letter you showed me and the general rumours in circulation that a spirit of discontent and insubordination prevail in the army, and that the language, too frequently held, is not only offensive to authority but progressing towards a more serious character and will soon, if not checked, assume that of mutiny! . . . It must be admitted, that their quiet indulgence in such unlicenced and unmilitary proceedings is likely to gather strength and advocates by being unnoticed, for, it will be the object of the promoters of party and faction, to disseminate the belief, that forbearance is the effect of intimidation and not of any generous consideration. An early check with a simultaneous admonition to the whole, would seem therefore the most fit remedy in the present incipient state of dereliction from duty! and, I am sanguine in my belief that it will have its effect! and the examples at first made, however painful, will avert the necessity of more rigorous measures at a later period. If then, I may take the liberty to offer my advice to your Lordship I would suggest, as a prelude, the measure you propose of giving to the five commanding officers and staff, the opportunity to apologize, for the offence or insult offered to your high authority by promulgating so insubordinate and offensive a *reason* for excusing themselves from accepting your invitation to dinner. These officers are, I fear, badly advised and they are the instruments of a discontented and radical faction at the presidency both in, and out of the service! It will therefore be proper, to be prepared for the negative! and the more prompt and decisive the measure is, the better the results; for, human nature is such, that the effect of all measures of example or appeal to the mind and principles is, like a new play brought to the stage, dependent on the actors' casting and performing their parts with feeling and conduct suited to the sentiment and morale of the plot. Unfortunately, I fear your Lordship has few such characters as the times and circumstances of your government require, to record the prompt and well devised measures you may adopt, but, it is the commander-in-chief's duty to be present and support your measures by his own example and acts; and, if necessary the government must call upon him to do so. If therefore the field officers and staff at Barrackpore decline your kind offer to accept an apology, I should follow up the measure by sending the two lieutenant-colonels to England and requiring the commander-in-chief to supersede the three majors in the command of their respective corps, by appointing effective lieutenant-colonels to them! and declare the majors unfit and unworthy, from

their pernicious and dangerous example, to be entrusted with the command and conduct of any corps. The staff officer might be remanded to his regimental duty, to learn subordination and respect for authority. These measures, with a veritable explanation in general orders by government, and an appeal to the professional pride and self interest of the officers of the army; to give a cheerful obedience and pay proper respect to their superiors and await with respectful patience the decision of the home authorities, will, I hope and think, have a happy effect! if generals and other officers in command are, at the same time, called upon to suppress all insubordinate conduct and to report offenders against good order, subordination and respect for the authority of those placed over them.

The liberty of the press must be viewed by every Englishman as a wholesome check upon tyranny, oppression or misrule in a country like England, but it cannot be denied that the principle is scarcely applicable either to the people or constitution of any other country and, in a settlement like this, or any other in India, where we are all servants, it is dangerous beyond expression and is, in fact, the servants arraigning the government they serve, for 'The Public', are but a few adventurers living under the licence of the government they assail. I therefore hope, I may not be trespassing on the duty I owe your Lordship, in expressing my hope, that this branch of the subject so connected with the submission of the civil line of the service, and so influencing the temper, subordination and conduct of the army may receive your early consideration for, I am satisfied, that it is the public prints which have inflamed the minds of the officers and, that the sentiments of the *Hurkuru* are indited by parties interested in the issue and influenced by the vanity of being considered the champions of the rights and injuries of the army. Delicate as I must feel, as a soldier, any advertence on my part to the duties of the commander-in-chief, yet, your Lordship's confidence removes from my mind every scruple, because my duty to your Lordship is paramount. I therefore venture to express my belief, that his excellency's present retirement is much influenced by those who feel that his presence at the seat of government would deprive them of their weight; and, while this state of things exists, his influence, authority and example over the army are not only lost to the scale in which they ought legitimately to exist, but give the belief that he is the advocate of the cause and approves and supports the proceedings of the army! Beyond these considerations, the commander-in-chief may hereafter urge the want of confidence evinced by the government towards him in not affording the opportunity to him, to record its views at such a crisis! and it has certainly now arrived when he ought to be, both as the head of the army and as a member of the government, cordially co-operating in the great and important object of checking the growing sedition in the bud! for, it must now yield to legitimate authority or, overwhelm the government in all the difficulties of extreme measures. It appears to me then, to be due to

yourself, to your government and to Lord Combermere personally, to call him by the earliest means to the active execution of his duty as commander-in-chief, and to partake in the deliberations at your council table as a member of the government expressly placed in council to be the military adviser of it and to support its measures in his military character, however he may differ in opinion from the secret deliberations at your board. I cannot therefore but view his Lordship's absence, at such a crisis, as the unhappy effect of pernicious influence, which must decay by his presence in council and the deliberate reasoning on facts divested of party influence; and I shall therefore rejoice to hear that he is on his way to Calcutta! where alone, his high rank and character can support the measures of government and the authority of his office as commander-in-chief! for, as long as he is in retirement, his influence is lost to government and his opinions, no doubt misrepresented, are supposed to favour the discontents of the army. Added to all these evils, the generals and officers commanding will feel doubtful in the measure of their conduct, while deceived as to his excellency's sentiments and views of the case.

I am sure your Lordship will pardon, and attribute to the true feeling which guides me, the freedom of this address and I feel proud in the belief, that I need not make a merit of offering the duty I owe to your Lordship and the government, but I may assure you that under any circumstances or crisis, my humble services will be, with zealous fidelity, at your Lordship's command.

111. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft

Calcutta. 10 June 1829
Recd. 30 December 1829

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you for several most valuable communications received by the China ships which arrived in May, subsequently by those to Madras. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge your very great kindness and you will have the gratification of knowing that they have greatly assisted me in the most odious duty in which I have been engaged, of enforcing the orders of the court relative to reductions, by which I am sorry to say, I have, I fear, incurred universal dislike. But I have done my duty, and this connection as I know from dreadfully dear-bought experience is the only consolation that defies all contingencies. I trust however on the other hand that the court will do their duty also, and will support their servant who upon principle alone has deemed obedience to be a paramount duty under the given circumstances. In a new case I shall always assume the utmost latitude of discretion, but where the whole case has been more than once before them, and returned for execution, pray let the court know that

I shall obey their orders, but that the responsibility must be with them. Here it seems to be a crime to be subordinate. These are not the principles, civil or military, in which I was educated. The fact, my dear sir, is, that in your civil and military service there is but little discipline; but I promise you that in my hands, though it may not much advance, it shall not retrograde and let me be best judged by my actions. It is a monstrous concern that I have on my back; but I am not the least afraid of it; and give me but fair play and neither the interests or honour of the Company, or my own fair name and honour which I value still more, shall come much the worse out of the trial. Excuse this effusion but I am grievously beset on all sides and my feelings require a rest, and it is right that those who give the orders should know their effect. In this situation which I fill, truth and justice must guide my opinions. The half-batta order was a mis-judged one, I have said so, to those who issued it. The manner of its reception by those to whom it was addressed has been indecent, insubordinate and unmilitary. I have so told them. I now beg that the next decision may be deliberate and well-advised and that nothing may be done until the report of the supreme government, upon the statement of the relative conditions of the armies of the three presidencies, which has been long since called for from the finance committee, and not yet sent in, but immediately expected, shall have been sent in to the court. I ask this in the name of justice, of discipline, and of the due support of constituted authority. I hope my letters to the chairman will put him in possession of the real state of things and of the unpleasant contingencies to which we are exposed. I apprehend no dangers, I consider the officers to be powerless; the Madras mutiny proved it: but I trust I have too much knowledge of the world and too much experience, not to be able to prevent things from coming to the same extremities. I have the power and it is sufficient, and no indiscreet warmth on my part shall betray me into any act that shall weaken the authority belonging to my position. I feel that I am coping with children.

You will see that I am rather provoked. Pray excuse me.

112. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck*

India Board. 15 June 1829

My dear Lord,

We have all been subjected to much anxiety by the accounts of your serious illness. The latest accounts were favourable—still we shall expect with real interest the news we hope soon to receive of your Lordship's entire recovery. No greater misfortune could befall India than that of being even temporarily deprived of your services.

The new regulation of your Lordship's government for the creation

of commissioners of revenue and circuit has been recently received. The subject of the revenue and judicial administration of India is one of which I as yet know very little. I feel however its paramount importance, and as far as I am enabled to form an opinion I concur altogether in the expediency and in the wisdom of the new system which your Lordship has introduced. I wished the chairs to send up to me their reply immediately as I was desirous of having the whole subject brought before me, but they seem to prefer deferring their reply until they receive an account of your new regulations respecting the administration of civil justice. The tide of public feeling runs very high against the monopoly of the China trade—less so I think but still a little too strongly in favour of what is called colonization. The public has been grossly deceived as to the circumstances attending all the American trade to China and as to the returns which have been received from the trade of individuals to India the account we have just presented to parliament will if fairly looked into have the effect of dispelling much error on these subjects. We have not yet presented any accounts relative to the finances of India, and not half of those which are in preparation as to Indian and Chinese commerce; but as regards the tea trade of [*illeg.*] Europe and that of the subjects of the U.S. to China and to India, the accounts contain all the information that can be desired.

I will take care that a copy of these accounts shall be forwarded to your Lordship as soon as they are printed.

I have written officially to the chairs suggesting that their law officers should proceed at once to form an act consolidating the provisions of the several acts which establish the jurisdiction of the supreme courts, and another act of consolidation for the country courts. These I have desired to have at the end of September, that I may have full time to communicate upon the subject with the lord chancellor and the judges before the commencement of term.

There is an idea of making Sir Sidney Beckwith provisional successor for Sir J. Malcolm in the event of his death or resignation. It would be an appointment purely temporary. I hope your Lordship and Lady William will like your new bishop. He is a very good man. The church approved of him very highly.

113. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House. 20 June 1829

My dear Lord William,

Nothing except anxiety for my own son under similar circumstances could have exceeded that which I have lately felt not only on your but on the public account. We knew you had been very ill—but some private letters killed you, and two ultra Tory papers, the *Morning Journal* and the *Standard*, proclaimed with their usual confidence that despatches had

arrived announcing your death. By accounts however to 14th of February we have enough to know that you are not only recovered but in full vigour of intellect.

Your reform in the superintendence and control of the revenue and judicial systems and your intention to remove the seat of government to Meerut for a time have astonished some people not a little—but your exposition of the causes that have induced a resort to such measures is the real sore. You have, perhaps wisely, said less on the latter point than I wished might have been said for you know I have long thought, notwithstanding all that has been reported to the Company, that the internal administration in Bengal is rotten, or in other words radically bad. To the principle of the reform measure I have no objection, though I think you might and will improve upon it. I doubt if the commissioners can properly superintend the revenue and police and act both as circuit judges and commissioners under Reg. 21, but you can easily remedy this defect if you find it one. I cannot help thinking that you may eventually come to Sir C. Metcalfe's proposition which is plain, distinct and simple. Poor Munro looked eventually to getting rid of all the circuit courts by making the commissioners both civil and criminal judges in their respective zillahs, but civil judges in cases only of appeal from the native judicial authorities. There would then be in each zillah native judges, commissioners or munsiffs, as many as need be, taking cognizance of civil lists to any amount, with an appeal in all cases above a certain amount to the zillah judge, his decrees to a certain amount to be final—all above that amount appealable to the sadar court. The collector with all his native servants acting as magistrates as at present, punishing himself to a certain extent and committing all other offenders for trial before the zillah judge, who might also have a superintending and controlling power over the collector and magistrate and this perhaps has some advantages over Metcalfe's plan—but you will be better able to judge what is necessary and best when you return with your council from your expedition to Meerut. This measure has excited some astonishment among the old Bengalis. Some doubt the legality of the measure—and others question it, saying why no one else ever thought of such a move. The papers however are only just arrived. There is no saying therefore what may be the ultimate opinion come to upon it. You will probably be told you should have consulted the court in both cases and have many doubts thrown out as to the working of the plans but as far as I can see both measures will be approved. I can easily see that many dread the exposé that will be made of the actual disorganized state of things in the interior. You must not however mince the matter in showing up present evils. Your justification will much depend on it. The time is certainly unpropitious as every exposure of maladministration now will be turned against the Company. For one however I am such an advocate for the truth that I have no fear. At any rate you have gone too far to recede and I shall look most anxiously for all your communications from Meerut. It is curious

enough that only the day before your Meerut minute arrived I was foretelling that ere long we must have had an exposé of the inefficient state of our internal administration. I concluded this must be the case from the evidence I had collected from the records of certain expressions which slipped out from the minutes of your self, Metcalfe, Bayley etc. on the subject of reforming the control, but I confess I did not contemplate your adopting as decided a measure as moving the seat of government though it is one that has often been talked of and seems calculated to lead to so much good that I should not be surprised if you found it right to remain there.

The half-batta station measure has created considerable sensation in the army from what we hear. The only way to cure which is to show that we are determined. I am afraid however that your commander-in-chief has added fuel to the fire by letting his opinion against the measure be known. This is wrong. Differences of opinion in a cabinet should never go beyond a cabinet.

I am not at all satisfied as to the intention of government regarding our charter. In fact I do not believe they have made up their minds. My fancy is that while professing to wish we should continue the government they will make such material alterations in the system of home government as to disable us from any effectual control. If for instance they were to profess to take from us the army, to reserve to themselves entirely the appointment of governors, or to keep the key of our treasure we should in either case be no longer able to govern.

The Chinese question as regards us in particular I have always looked upon as a money question. It is our pecuniary resource in aid of the government of India. If it be taken away any deficiency of India revenue must be made good by direct taxation at home. In other respects the decision on the question affects the government more than us, for while we have less than a million per annum dependant on it they have 3½.

Lord Dalhousie is to be sworn in on Wednesday next and goes out in the *Dallas* frigate, lately *Fitzclarence*. I am glad to hear he places such entire confidence in you.

You will have heard of the decision of the privy council on Sir J. P. Grant's appeal against the acts of the Bombay government. As far as it goes it is highly satisfactory and must do much good but a declaratory bill is preparing to be brought in next session which will clearly define the powers of the king's courts.

We have sent you out authority to make advances on the consignment of goods to us as one means of obtaining a remittance. The real object is to devise the means of getting what money we want from India without resorting to the home trade, if you may so call it, which we now carry on from thence. On many accounts it is desirable we should leave that trade to the private merchants but until we find some other means of getting our funds home we cannot do so. I doubt if you will get much at the rate of exchange we have laid down and I think an advance

of $\frac{2}{3}$ the value is too much, but the general principle I think is right. Should it not answer however can you suggest any other means by which we can accomplish the object in view?

I am very anxious for your opinion on the effects of the permanent settlement in the Bengal lower provinces, where it has now prevailed for thirty years and more. It has over and over again been reported that great good has resulted from it, but all the evidence I have seen goes the other way. As regards the zamindars only most of the old ones have been ruined by it. Those who succeeded them may have done better—some may have amassed wealth—but has this wealth been of any benefit—have the zaminders laid it out in improving their estates? Or has the expenditure of it in other ways in any way contributed to the improvement of our revenue by increasing the revenue derived from other sources. I should say no in both cases. My idea is that most of them hoard what they do not expend on themselves or apply it to the worst of purposes, the corruption of our Europeans and native servants under the pretence of lending it to them.

That cultivation has increased I have no doubt for population must have increased greatly, but are the great body of the cultivators or ryots to any and what extent better off than they were, except in being protected from external war? Internal security I take to be as bad as ever, for though heinous offences may have diminished, the number of people who live by crime appears to me to be full as great as ever and the internal disorganized state of the country proves this more than anything.

I see no probability of an increasing revenue from any other source than land and if this be so it requires no other argument to show the impolicy of declaring that we will never take more than a certain amount from that source.

An idea prevails here that Malcolm will leave India the end of this year and a disposition shown lately to appoint J. P. Courtenay as his successor tended to confirm the belief, but I have heard nothing more about it lately. Malcolm is far from popular with our court but the chances are we may *not* get so good a man. We have lately allowed Malcolm to try the experiment of trial by jury if it may be so called. His plan is rather to call in the aid of natives as assessors, and in that way I have no doubt they may be made very useful, for in understanding, sifting, selecting and approximating evidence we have no chance with them.

Home politics you will hear of from better authority. The ministry is certainly a great jumble. The Duke is everything—all his colleagues are cyphers—and one can only account for their going on at all by supposing that they merely do as they are bid.

114. *Bentinck's minute on retrenchment in the Straits settlements*

23 June 1829

Upon laying before council the reductions made in the military establishment of the incorporated settlements of Penang, Malacca and Singapore by a resolution of the governor-general in council at Penang, I expressed my intention of recording at a future period my sentiments upon the system of government, now in force at that presidency.

I expected that long ere this, we should have received Mr. Fullarton's report upon the decrease of expense, which according to the outline contained in his memorandum, under date the 1st February and accompanying my minute of the 17th March, he considered it practicable to make in the civil department. It would have been satisfactory to have known the precise amount, to which the excess of expenditure beyond the income will be brought by those arrangements. But a sufficiently accurate calculation may be formed from the data in our possession, of the amount of that excess, or in other words, of the extent to which the charge of those settlements are a heavy and, as I think, an unnecessary incumbrance upon the general finance of India.

The paper no. 1, exhibits the total revenue and charges according to the latest returns received previously to my embarkation for Penang.

The military reductions made subsequently may be estimated at about two lakhs, and I assume as much more in the civil and general branches of the service, the outline of which is included in Mr. Fullarton's memorandum, etc., which he undertook to make after my departure. The general deficit may then be stated at about fourteen lakhs.

It must be observed, at the same time, that no very correct information upon the military disbursements could be obtained at Penang, as considerable payments for family money, military stores, and various other items, are made at Madras, and never enter into the accounts of the Penang presidency. It must be also added that as the strength of the regiments is to be lessened by casualties only, the estimated reduction will only be gradual.

I will here notice a remark sometimes made in abatement of this great deficit, that the troops belong to another presidency, and as they would be maintained at any rate, they ought not to be included in the charges of Penang. This is altogether a fallacy. In peace, these troops can never be withdrawn consistently with the good order and security of the settlements, and in time of war their numbers must necessarily be increased. They can therefore never be available for the service of the presidency to which they belong. The military force thus employed forms a distinct charge belonging only to these settlements; for it is obvious, if the settlements were abandoned and the troops withdrawn, a corresponding reduction in the army of which they made a part, ought immediately to take place.

The question then to be considered is whether the frame of a great government, with its numerous departments, and of a great judicial system, with all the forms and offices of English courts of law, are required by the existing state of society, and by the present or anticipated importance of those possessions to the British empire. If this question be answered in the negative as I affirm it would be by all, whether in the service or out, who have any local knowledge the next question is, whether that more simple form of administration, which prevails in the whole of the territory subject to the British government on the continent of India is not much better adapted to the peculiar condition of the inhabitants of those settlements; and whether every object of protection and justice for the people, and of security for the government may not be accomplished at a cost commensurate, or nearly so, with the income.

The arrangement of 1805 by which a governor in council was established for Penang, then our only possession, contemplated great public advantages; a large naval arsenal, the collection of a great agricultural population, and the concentration of all the commerce of the eastern seas. The annexation of Malacca and Singapore in 1825 gave additional importance to our position in those seas, and it was reasonable to presume that under our protection, agriculture as well as commerce must necessarily flourish and that ample resources would be obtained for the payment of the civil and military establishment.

But time has enabled us to appreciate exactly the nature of these settlements and has shown the error of some of these original calculations. We now know that unlike the continent of India, there is a most scanty population, consisting, with the exception of province Wellesley, of a few indigenous inhabitants and chiefly composed of individuals of all nations attracted in part by trade, but principally by the money spent by the government and the troops. To the principal object of the first establishment at Penang, 'the construction of a naval arsenal', the safety of the anchorage and other local circumstances were certainly favourable. The high price of labour however, double and treble the amount of that in India, must always discourage the attempt. Both Penang and Singapore are almost wholly covered with jungle, the effect of a hot sun upon a soil moistened and refreshed by almost daily showers. More luxuriant vegetation cannot be seen. But the jungle which the Empire has obtained has hitherto set cultivation at defiance. Although at Penang the land has been granted in perpetuity at a small quit rent, and at Singapore the most favourable terms of occupation have been offered, little or no inroad has been made upon the jungle. It was the opinion of Mr. Bonham, the collector at Singapore, a very active and intelligent officer, that success was hopeless, because ordinary produce would not pay the expense of clearing the land, and articles of higher value could be grown at a less price in Sumatra, Java and the other islands. Except in province Wellesley and the districts round Malacca, there is no revenue derivable from land. All being free

ports, there are consequently no custom duties, and the whole income is the produce of the monopolies of gambling, opium, spirits, &c., &c., farmed out to the highest bidder....

These statements of the income and the population, and more particularly when regard is had to the composition of that population, need not the support of any arguments to prove the total uselessness of a large *civil establishment. Where there is no revenue from land or customs,* where the excise is farmed, what employment can there be for its officers? On the spot the fact is candidly admitted that there is nothing to do. But the evil does not stop here, because where there is an establishment to be provided for, if there is not work to be done, places will *nevertheless be created, the abolition of which as we know well from* present experience is a most obnoxious task and will seldom be executed without the interposition of some superior authority or some extraordinary pressure. This is the case everywhere as well as at Penang. The present governor had made great reductions and was cordially disposed to meet the wishes of the supreme government. Indeed it may justly be said of Mr. Fullarton that it would be difficult to find a public servant in whom the same zeal, experience, abilities and integrity are to be found united.

What has been said of the unsuitableness of the civil establishment applies with much greater force to the judicial part of the system. The expense of administering justice in the three settlements, amounts to near two lakhs and fifty thousand rupees, one half of the whole income of the three settlements. *If the population had been entirely* English and entitled as such to the benefit of English law, some cheaper mode of administration would be indispensable. But the Europeans as will be seen by the statement (and of these a few only are of unmixed blood) do not form 1/100 part of the population and to subject the 99/100 to a law, the language of *which is totally unknown to them,* and the provisions of which are probably understood only by the learned judge himself, is an arrangement consistent neither with reason nor justice. The people ought to have the means of becoming acquainted with the code, by which their actions are to be judged and upon which their lives and property depend. *Can anything be less adapted to a* society always changing and itinerant, and making use of our ports as places of barter rather than of residence than the slow process of English law, with all its intricacy, its technicalities and fictions. In the presidencies of India, where the law of England is perhaps equally inapplicable, the understanding of the law may be obtained, at a dear rate indeed, from legal advisers, but such is the poverty of our possessions to the eastward that no barrister, and only one attorney, has yet settled in these islands. Surely under such circumstances the simplest code, the most summary process, the least formal and the earliest decision, in short some tribunal like a court of requests is all that can be necessary. The chief local civil officer as in our zillahs in India would amply suffice for the purpose. If it were thought necessary to preserve any

part of the judicial forms heretofore existing the civil officer might be assisted by magistrates from among the residents and all appeals and capital offences might be tried before the chief commissioner, as in India, whose authority would extend over the three settlements.

It is curious to contrast the expensive and complicated management of these comparatively valueless and thinly inhabited settlements, with that of the rich and populous districts under the Bengal presidency. . . . In Bengal, a single officer would more than suffice for the performance of all the civil and judicial duties belonging to the Penang presidency, if the population were united. Their separation into these distinct and distant settlements, necessarily triples the agency, but a commissioner or principal collector for the general superintendence, with three collectors and as many assistants, would form an ample civil establishment for every purpose, these officers to be paid at the rates fixed by the regulations of the presidency from which they are supplied.

Mr. Fullarton in his memorandum has discussed the question whether the establishment for these settlements should be distinct and separate from the other presidencies, or should form a part of one of them. Upon the proposed reduced scale, I think there can be no doubt that economy as well as efficiency would be much promoted by its incorporation with either Madras or Bengal. By being assimilated to a collectorship, all accounts would go for examination and audit to their controlling presidency and all those establishments which must otherwise be formed on the spot would be completely saved. The effect of the peculiar climate of the regions upon the duration of human life rather than their unhealthiness, which probably is less than on the continent of India, must be taken into consideration, and seems to render very desirable an interchange of functionaries between those settlements and the continent of India. I was told at Penang that the civil servants upon that establishment had prayed the honourable court to reduce the term of service entitling them to the benefit of the retiring fund, from 22 to 18 years, upon the ground that out of forty-seven officers, seven only had been able to complete a residence of eighteen years. The cause is no doubt to be found in the constant dead pressure upon the constitution of an unvarying though equal high temperature, the enervating effects of which are not counterbalanced by the invigorating intervention of any cold weather however short.

It became a subject of enquiry from Mr. Fullarton, whether the connexion with Madras or Bengal was the most desirable. The reasons evidently preponderated in favour of the latter. The communication by sea between Penang and Madras is never favourable, for in each monsoon when the wind is fair one way, it is always foul the other. There is also little commercial intercourse between the two sides of the bay of Bengal. There are considerable importations of piece goods from the coast to Penang, but they are brought over generally at one trip by the Company's China ships, and the merchants who bring them return in a body in a single ship with the proceeds. There is no

continued intercourse as from the straits with Bengal. The steam navigation in Bengal also affords at all seasons a short passage. Mr. Fullarton will no doubt have made known to the honourable court the decided change which his opinion had latterly undergone in giving a preference to the Bengal over the Madras sepoys. One reason assigned by him was on the score of the less cost of a Bengal sepoy, but upon this head there seems to have been a miscalculation. The difference is certainly in favour of the latter, but it is too inconsiderable to weigh against any decided advantage in the employment of the other. But a much stronger and in my judgment a completely decisive reason is in the fact of the very low estimation in which the Madras sepoys are held by all the natives of the eastern coast from Ava to Singapore, a fact confirmed by all the authorities. The Burmese have the most sovereign contempt for them in consequence of their conduct in the field, but the same feeling in the other countries is founded upon the positive inferiority of the Madras sepoy as compared with the natives, whether Malays or Chinese, in size, in bodily strength, in activity and energy of mind. The contrast is very great and very manifest, whereas the Bengal sepoys, being men of larger stature, of higher caste and bearing, command great respect and I would strongly recommend their being substituted for the coast troops. To the service they would have no objection.

In recommending that a station hitherto occupied by the troops of one establishment should be relieved by those of another, I cannot help adverting to the great inconvenience and even to the great increase of expense which arises from the necessity imposed by the court's orders of always employing the troops of the same establishment in the same places. This necessity is produced by the contest between establishments, by the fear if this or that station is taken away from this or that army, that a corresponding reduction of regiments or the loss of a command for its superior officers may follow. In the present recommendation, I certainly have no desire to favour one at the expense of the other, and I only advert to the fact now (intending to dwell upon the subject more at length hereafter), for the purpose of inviting a declaration of the authorities at home to the armies of India that they consider their three armies as one in respect to all future reduction and increase. The local servants can then make such distribution of the troops as the general convenience may require without exciting jealousy and alarm. The substitution of Bengal troops for those of Madras at Hyderabad was estimated some time ago to produce a saving of about two lakhs of rupees.

I cannot conclude this long minute without entreating pardon for the presumption of which I may appear guilty in thus condemning a system so long sanctioned by my superior authority. But I venture confidently to assert that no impartial and independent authority having had an opportunity of personal examination can come to a different conclusion upon the utter unsuitableness and most unnecessarily costliness of the present arrangement. Having this conviction it would

have been always my duty to have stated it but more especially at this moment of financial distress, when the same end can be better accomplished with a saving of ten or twelve lakhs of rupees.

115. *Lord Ashley*[1] *to Bentinck.* Private

India Board, London. 24 June 1829
Recd. 10 December 1829

My dear Lord William,

I have taken the opportunity of sending you a few lines by Lord Dalhousie. I am rejoiced to hear of your restoration to health and active employment. I am sincerely rejoiced, not only in the common sentiments of rejoicing that anyone should have arisen from the bed of sickness, but because I regard your ideals and energy as likely to create for India a new century of happiness and advancement.

I go along with you heart and soul in your projected reforms. I have never read any document with greater pleasure than the last which contained your own minute and those of your council on the necessity of remodelling, as it were, the whole civil service throughout Bengal. Your system must ultimately be productive of economy, a great point doubtless in all government—but it must likewise have a far more splendid and exalting result, it must call for and redouble native agency, not only increasing the number but elevating the quality of attainable officers. From what I have heard I am inclined to believe that your opinion agrees with mine; both duty and interest required us to confer upon the people of India every benefit, moral and political, of which they are capable. To exclude a man perpetually from your confidence is not the way to make him either ambitious or *worthy* of attaining it.

I have employed a great deal of time in reading and enquiring as to the fitness of the natives of India to participate in the trial of their brethren, not in the *strict and rigid form* of a *jury*, but acting upon the spirit and principle of that institution. The greatest names and experience have recorded an opinion that patience and zeal and persuasion might work prodigious effects towards the naturalization of the systems in many parts of the empire, and that wherever received, it would not fail to produce a rich harvest of moral improvement. On this head I have conversed much with my two friends Loch and Letch, and the result of my representations has been a despatch to Bombay enjoining the government to institute the system experimentally. The detail will, of course, rest with the local authorities, who may empanel the natives either as assessors, or as a panchayat, or as a jury. Two points there are which I hope will be entirely rejected in the application of our system to another country, the establishment of a mystic number,

115. [1] One of the India Board Commissioners.

such as twelve, which is frequently inconvenient and wholly groundless in reason, and the necessity of a *unanimous* verdict. I did not take up this opinion to indulge a theory; it appeared to me the best means for the correction of the various defects which must inevitably be found in the judicial system of men who administer the laws of a country which, in spite of all our exertions, is and must yet remain more abstruse than the wildest hieroglyphics.

Pray, my dear Lord, turn your mind to think whether even Bengal might not have a share in this new policy.

I rejoice to say that you have the board of directors warmly in your favour notwithstanding the powerful force of Bengalis at the *India House*. For the feelings of our office here I cannot answer; I will answer for my own, and I am glad indeed of the present opportunity to send them in praise, if you think that the praise which I can bestow is at all worthy of your consideration. My office has given me the lead in the h[ouse] of commons on Indian matters; so you see I am become more of a person than I was when you left England. If I can render you any service I shall be very happy to do it.

116. *Court of directors to the Bengal government*

India House. 25 June 1829

Para. 1. Our last letter to you in this department was dated the 11th instant.

2. Sir William Rumbold, Bart. has been permitted to proceed to India for the purpose of arranging his affairs.

3. You will distinctly understand, however, that this permission is granted subject to the same conditions and restrictions as were prescribed in the case of Mr. George Lamb by our despatch from this department, dated the 15th February 1826.

4. The sole ground on which this permission has been granted to Sir William Rumbold is to enable him to recover debts from individuals but by no means to afford the opportunity of endeavouring to establish claims on the Nizam's government. We cannot therefore too strongly impress upon you the necessity of paying particular attention to our instructions on that subject in the above mentioned despatch of the 15th February 1826 and in others of subsequent dates and of giving corresponding instructions to the resident at Hyderabad with reference to the present case.

5. There is one point, however, which is noticed in the despatch of the 15th February 1826, vizt. the possibility of applications to the Nizam's government for its assistance to enforce the claims of Messrs. Palmer & Co. upon individuals and which applications are required to be preferred through the resident. We are aware that for the recovery of private debts recourse to the minister as the superintending and

controlling authority over the local courts of justice may in some instances be necessary; and as we do not wish to interpose any obstacle to the recovery of any such debts, if justly due, we do not object to the trustees or partners of the house having access to the ministers for that purpose provided such communications do not take place without the knowledge and sanction of the resident, and provided also that he be present on such occasions, if he shall think fit. We trust that he will insist on knowing the nature and full extent of all such communications —that he will take care to limit them to the sole object of the recovery of private debts; and above all that he will prevent the grant of any territorial assignments to the Nizam's government, and will take care 'that, the accruing revenues of the state be not liable to any charge nor pledged in any respect' for the liquidation of debts alleged to be due to Messrs. Palmer & Co. or the partners individually.

6. We also prohibit you from appointing Sir William Rumbold to any office or employment under your government; and should he obtain or solicit any office or employment under the government of his highness the Nizam or any other native prince you will not fail to instruct the resident to remonstrate against such appointment.

117. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House. 25 June 1829

My Lord,

By the chartered ship despatched today I transmit to your Lordship the last number 41 of the *Mirror*—42 will close the session. Parliament was prorogued yesterday and I send a copy of H.M. speech on the occasion.

Lord Dalhousie was sworn in yesterday as was Sir [Sidney] Beckwith and dined with the court of directors. All the ministry met them.

In my last by the *Catharine* I mentioned to your Lordship that the minute as to the removal of the government to central India had been read in court on the Wednesday. I may now mention to your Lordship confidentially that some legal doubts are taken as to the power of moving the government and it is very questionable whether the members of council are anything out of Calcutta.[1] Moreover the policy of the move is questioned westward. The governor-general can act anywhere. The intentions avowed by your Lordship are fully appreciated, as being for the real welfare of the public interest, but on any vital and important changes of system I would venture to suggest reference to me before a final arrangement is made. A despatch is in preparation on the minute of your Lordship; it most probably may be in the secret

117. [1] This refers to the suggestions of Bentinck that the governor-general and council should travel widely, and that the centre of government should be moved from Calcutta to the north-west. See 3 July 1829.

department but its object will be to deprecate any material or radical change, at least without reference home. I mention these points that your Lordship may be prepared to receive an official intimation on the subject. The matter as to the grant of lease to indigo or silk manufacturers up the country which last appeared in the public prints though not arrived officially has occasioned some surprise westward as it appears to be the first step towards colonization, a measure which the majority deem to be most undesirable. I shall have the opportunity of addressing your Lordship by a ship at the commencement of next week.

118. *Lord Amherst to Bentinck*

Grosvenor Street. 27 June 1829

My dear Lord William,

I avail myself of Lord Dalhousie's departure to acknowledge and thank you for your kind and interesting letters of the 15th September and 16th December. I cannot tell what may happen hereafter, but hitherto my anxiety about persons and things in India has not begun to subside, and I read with undiminished interest all that you tell me respecting the arrangements which you have already adopted and the plans which you have in contemplation. Of late however you yourself have been the chief object of our anxiety, for at one time very sinister reports reached us of the state of your health. These indeed did not long remain uncontradicted, and letters in your own handwriting have since set the minds of your friends at ease. The papers are now sending you to the eastward, and I own I should be very glad that you found leisure for directing your attention to that quarter, and ascertaining how far the expectation of our possessions there soon ceasing to be a [burden] to us is likely to be realised. I cannot but think that the mugs will some day or other make a good border population, and that our present eastern frontier will be found to be a better defined and more secure one than we ever before possessed. How the Tenasserim provinces will turn out remains yet to be seen; but the population was increasing when I came away, and I think that coast may hereafter prove a good field for European enterprise. We have lately heard that you have it in contemplation to move, with the government, to Meerut. You will see much to interest you in that part of India; but with respect to climate, I do not know that I should not generally prefer Calcutta as more equable, and I think you will be struck, on your return, with the luxuriant beauty of Bengal after the arid plains of the Doab. But it is time I should talk of England.

Our last session of parliament will be a memorable one. I believe you and I have always voted on the same side on the catholic claims. If so, you will rejoice with me on the measures adopted by government

no matter whether people were taken by surprise or not. Having settled this important question, people's minds will now be occupied with the stability of the government, and I think it seems a general impression that the Duke must endeavour to add a little strength to his administration before the next session of parliament. Certain it is that there exist the elements of a formidable opposition. From what ranks he is likely to recruit is more than I can pretend to say; but I must say that I, for one, feel very strongly that it is incumbent on those who have always advocated the catholic claims not hastily to desert the Duke at a moment when his concession of those claims has caused so many of his friends to separate themselves from him, and thereby caused his weakness, if weak he shall be found to be. Lord Rosslyn's appointment to the cabinet means, I suppose, that Lord Grey will support government. It has been rumoured that the speaker is to retire with a peerage, I know not why, unless to make way for other arrangements, for we ought to have many years work yet out of the speaker. The funds do not yet seem to indicate that we are likely to have war though until peace is made between Russia and Turkey no man can say that such an event is very improbable. Portugal is as unsatisfactory as ever, but still I do not see how we are to interfere against the majority of the nation. I wish I could say our internal concerns were flourishing, but it does not seem to me that such a term can be applied either to our commercial, manufacturing, or agricultural concerns, and I am not political economist enough to understand how a redundant population without work is not an enormous evil. We shall have plenty of talk about India this evening, for Lord and Lady Dalhousie, the Bishop, Mr. Elphinstone and others are coming to dine with us, and will be charged, as you may imagine, with a number of messages to yourself and Lady William—not that I ought to conceal from you that Lady Amherst meditates articles of impeachment against you for slaying the shrubs round Government House—on the other hand she feels as thankful to you as I do for your kindness to Mr. Raleigh, and as I and all Lieut. Foley's friends do for your ready attention to my recommendation. I have scarcely room for my kind remembrances to Mr. Bayley and Sir Charles Metcalfe and for my most earnest wishes for your happiness and prosperity in all your public and private concerns,

P.S. I am just going to *council*—at the Royal Asiatic Society.

119. *Court of directors to the Bengal government on the transfer of the seat of government*

India House. 3 July 1829

Para. 1. Our last letter to you in this department was dated the 1st instant.

2. We received on the 17th of June, per *Prince Regent*, your letter in this department dated the 14th of February last, transmitting a minute recorded by the governor-general on the 10th of that month, in which the members of council are stated to have expressed their concurrence announcing his Lordship's 'intention to propose if no unpleasant occurrence should take place to the eastward (of which there is at present not the most remote chance in the opinion of that best of authorities Sir Archibald Campbell) that the government shall in the course of the present year be removed for a time to the north-western provinces.' And in the concluding sentence of the minute it is said 'By the removal of the troops to other stations Meerut will afford ample accommodation' for the government and its attendant functionaries.

3. The reasons assigned for this proceeding are that 'the presence of the supreme government in the north of India will not only be useful in enabling its members to come to the most satisfactory and expeditious conclusion respecting central India' (the government of which has been declined by Sir John Malcolm) 'but upon many other questions regarding both the revenue and judicial administration' of our own territories which still remain unsettled. After adverting to the result of his own observation in regard to the internal administration of the country during a late visit to a few of the districts in Bengal, his Lordship observes 'Although my late visit will have been attended with some public advantage yet I am perfectly aware of my own comparative uselessness when separated from the experience knowledge and talents of my colleagues as well as of the chief and confidential officers of government. I might go alone as other governors-general have done to the upper provinces, but I hope never to be separated from the council; and in the discussion and final arrangement of the various and complicated questions connected with central India I consider their presence to be indispensable.'

4. We are perfectly sensible of the goodness of intention which induced you to resolve on the very important and unprecedented measure of removing for a time the seat of government from Calcutta; and we are quite satisfied that nothing but a thorough conviction of the urgency as well as the utility of the measure could have led you to determine on its adoption without a previous reference to us. The only objection which appears to have particularly struck the governor-general was the expense of moving the government with its departments. We fear that expense will indeed be considerable, added to which will be the inconvenience and the interruption to public business which cannot fail to result from the measure. We are not without hopes however, that the determination was not acted upon without consulting the best law authorities to which you had access, as to the legality of the proceeding on which doubts immediately occurred to us after perusing the governor-general's minute.

5. We accordingly directed the opinion of the Company's standing counsel to be taken upon the subject, and we herewith transmit a copy

of it, from which you will perceive that Mr. Sergeant Bosanquet is of opinion 'that the governor-general in council is not authorized to remove the seat of government to any of the provinces at a distance from Fort William.'

6. Should the government therefore, have been removed from Calcutta before this despatch reaches you, we direct that, immediately on the receipt thereof, the members of council do return to Fort William and that the governor-general should he think fit to remain in the provinces, do nominate one of the members of the council to be vice-president, and deputy-governor of Fort William under the powers conferred by the 53rd section of the act of 33rd of George III, chapter 52. We should equally have given these directions had it appeared that the removal of the supreme government from Fort William was authorized by law.

7. Although the measure contemplated by you is stated to be of a temporary nature, yet the reasoning in the governor-general's minute would seem to lead to the permanent removal of the supreme government from Calcutta. On a point so important, we think it right to make you at once acquainted with our deliberate opinion.

8. If all India were under the rule of an independent sovereign, some situation might perhaps be selected for the seat of government possessing greater advantages than Calcutta. Even in that case, however, the experience of past ages would deter a prudent sovereign from establishing the seat of empire at Agra or at Delhi, or anywhere near the frontier of the north-western provinces, in a position in which it would be exposed to the sudden incursion of nations of cavalry, and to the first brunt of any hostile movement of the powers bordering upon India. But India is governed by a distant maritime power, and the position of the seat of government must be considered with reference to that peculiar circumstance.

9. Calcutta, as the seat of government, has the advantage of a certain communication by sea with the country on which India depends; and it has the further advantage of being placed at the greatest distance from all the powers whence attack can be apprehended on the side of Hindustan, and of being protected more especially towards Ava by rivers which our naval means must enable us, at all times, to command.

10. It is unnecessary for us to observe upon the enormous expense which would be occasioned by the permanent removal of the supreme government from Calcutta, and upon the loss which would be occasioned by the abandonment of the existing establishments erected at so great a charge. On the considerations we have already adverted to, our opinion is decidedly formed, and we now signify to you that it is fixed that Calcutta shall continue to be the residence of the supreme government.

120. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck*

India Board, London. 6 July 1829

My dear Lord,

Your Lordship will receive by the *Dallas* a letter on the subject of the projected removal of the supreme government from Calcutta and another on the subject of the new resolution respecting leases in both of which I have, with extreme regret, been obliged to express an opinion that the measures adopted by your Lordship's government will not be beneficial to the public service. I communicated with the Duke of Wellington upon both points and I think it right to mention that his opinion is in entire conformity with that intimated by the court.

Your Lordship will soon receive a letter directing the disbanding of the six extra regiments which on the 16th August 1828 were converted into regular regiments and numbered from 69 to 74. The interests of the officers have been attended to and fully provided for.

I rejoice that the session being over I shall now be enabled to devote myself entirely to the affairs of India. I see that there is a great deal to be done. The state of your finances is most alarming and if it be possible the opportunity must be taken before the meeting of parliament for exhibiting them to the country in a less disadvantageous point of view than that in which they would at present appear. The circumstance which surprises me most is the little attention which the local governments seem to have paid on too many occasions to the orders of the court of directors. They seem to forget that these orders are the king's orders transmitted through the channels of the court and of this board. It will be my endeavour to introduce into every branch of the Indian service the same subordination and the same perfect arrangements which the improvements of late years have introduced into the king's service, regard being always had to the greater distance of India which makes it necessary that more latitude should be given in the execution of orders and more discretionary power vested in the local authorities than is granted many of the king's colonies. The situation of Ceylon however is not any different from that of India.

I am quite sure that in this endeavour the home authorities will receive the zealous co-operation of your Lordship, and that in India as well as in England all the king's servants will exert themselves equally with the common object of furthering the public service.

121. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House. 7 July 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 11 December 1829

My dear Lord William,

In a late letter I told you that some of the late acts of your government had created a good deal of sensation here, but that as far as I could then see—though fault might be found—they were not likely to be altogether disapproved. I was then alluding to your proposed removal of the seat of government and the alterations you have made in the controlling and executive departments of the revenue and judicial branch of business. Another act—your resolution to allow Europeans to hold lands for any purpose, of which we only know by-the-by from your government gazette—has alarmed the opponents of colonization very much. Although I see much less to find fault with than many here, I must admit that you are marching too fast and undertaking I fear more than can be well done all at once, but I must condemn and shall protest against the forced construction which has been put upon your acts in the shipload of [*illeg.*] which you will receive herewith. It augurs no good—and brings to my mind what passed at a public dinner some months ago—of which I wrote to you at the time. I shall send you copies of my protests when I have sworn them in.

I mean to contend with regard to the removal of the seat of government that it was only an intention to propose—that you showed all possible deference by reporting that intention the moment you proposed it—that the proposition even was to depend upon circumstances —and that you had no idea of acting upon it until you should know the court's sentiments.

As to the holding of lands by Europeans, I shall contend that you have only followed the practice of your predecessors—that the whole blame does not rest with you—and that the court themselves are as much to blame as anyone—if anyone is to blame.

122. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough*

Calcutta. 8 July 1829

My dear Lord,

With the store of oriental learning at your command, you can easily strip the enclosed (which has appeared in one of the daily papers and copied I presume into the others) of its masquerade dress; and you will probably be then able to recognize an old acquaintance.

With reference to this clashing of jurisdiction and to the prodigious

inconvenience in so many ways which is felt on every side from the introduction of English law and English courts, and the total inapplicability of the present system, we are about to enter into a full discussion of all those doubtful questions with the supreme court. It will be carried on in the most friendly spirit and with the sole desire on both sides to avoid future difficulties and to present to the authorities at home, a *whole view* of the case, with such alterations as may remedy the existing evils. I am not without hopes, that the government and the supreme court may be agreed on many points, and where we differ, the discussion will at least enable you the better to judge between us.

123. *Court of directors to the Bengal government on European settlement*

India House. 8 July 1829

Para. 1. Our last letter to you in this department was dated the 24th ultimo.

2. We now address you on a subject which although it has not been brought regularly before us by any direct communication from you, is of so much importance that we deem it imperative upon us to make you acquainted with our sentiments upon it without delay. We allude to the application which appears to have been made to you on the part of certain merchants and indigo planters to extend the power of holding land on lease for the cultivation of indigo and the measures upon which you have resolved in consequence of that application.

3. You will know that the authority in England as well as your predecessors in the government of India have always regarded the question whether Europeans should be permitted to hold any permanent interest in land as one of the most serious in Indian policy nor has there been any measure, in their opinion which required more mature deliberation and cautious proceeding than one by which Europeans would be permitted and entitled to mix themselves with the natives to acquire a power among them liable to abuse, and at the same time to acquire an interest which did not immediately depend upon the connection between India and England.

4. You have decided this important question yourselves and have carried your concessions upon it to an extent, which, as far as we are at present informed is almost unlimited. You seem to have done so without previous deliberation and you have certainly done so without waiting the result of that reference to us, which upon a matter of this paramount importance it was your duty to make. There are undoubtedly questions of importance which must occasionally arise which will not admit of the delay of a previous reference to us, and where great

advantages may be gained by a speedy decision, but this case was one in which nothing was to be gained by precipitation, and in which every consideration should have dissuaded you from.

5. The permission granted by you in 1824 to certain Europeans to hold portions of land on lease for the purpose of making the experiment whether coffee could be advantageously cultivated in Bengal cannot and must not be drawn into a precedent. The duration of the leases granted even for that purpose, we deemed unnecessarily long, but as the quantity of land applied for was limited, and a doubtful experiment stood in need of peculiar encouragement, we by our letter of 10th September 1828 sanctioned the indulgence which you had thought expedient to grant. We also considered that the case of coffee was peculiar, a considerable outlay being necessary to form the plantation, and a number of years elapsing before it yields any return. A certain length of tenure is required by these circumstances for the profitable cultivation of coffee: but these circumstances do not exist with regard to indigo. The cultivation of indigo is annual, and a single year or at most a few years will indemnify the cultivator for the expense he has incurred. We observed that, at the time of granting the leases for the experimental cultivation of coffee, a strong line of distinction was drawn, and very properly, by the officers of your government between the case of indigo, and that of coffee. By the minute of Mr. Trower under date 25th of March 1823, we see that the utility of any lease to the cultivator of indigo was altogether denied.

6. But it is not merely because you have permitted the granting of leases to Europeans of too extensive a duration that we disapprove the measure which you seem to have recently adopted. The resolution of government under date 7th May 1824, passed on the occasion of the leases granted for the experiment of the coffee planters laid down a system of rules which were very well adapted to obviate the evils and inconveniences which were likely to arise from the presence of Europeans as landholders among the native population of India. Among the securities thus provided that contained in section 19 of the above mentioned resolution appeared to us of peculiar importance, as it enabled you at once to relieve the government and the people from the presence of any person who might make a mischievous use of the privileges granted to him. This section, with the two which follow and are connected with it, you have most unadvisedly omitted in the resolution to which we are now adverting.

7. Whatever may be the future misconduct of a planter, which the ordinary operation of the law may not reach (and you know to what an extent of annoyance and oppression such misconduct may proceed) you have left to yourselves under the system which you have now adopted, no remedy but that of sending the individual out of the country; a remedy which ought not to be resorted to except in extreme cases, and the application of which to the case of an European leaseholder, you have rendered peculiarly delicate by not reserving to yourselves

the power of cancelling, in the event of his misconduct, the lease you have given him the power of possessing.

8. We do not think it necessary to state at any greater length our opinion of the errors involved in the proceeding to which we are now referring. It remains however that we communicate to you distinctly the course which we desire you hereafter to pursue.

9. We direct that all the rules laid down, and all the securities provided by the resolution of government dated 7th May 1824, shall be strictly observed in the case of every permission granted to an European to hold land on lease for the purpose of cultivation.

10. Under these securities we do not object to your granting permission to Europeans to hold lands on lease in their own names, for the cultivation of indigo and other agricultural products.

11. The length of the leases must in all cases be regulated with reference to the nature of the cultivation and must not be greater than may be necessary to afford the undertaker the prospect of a fair remuneration for the capital he may expend. The leases must not in any case exceed the duration of 21 years, without a previous reference to us, and our express approbation.

12. It is not less important in the case of the transfer of leases than in that of the original grant that government should be satisfied in regard to the respectability and good character of the individuals who are to hold them, and therefore the permission of government must be rendered necessary to every transfer of a lease held by an European.

13. We trust that the extent to which government may be committed, by any actual engagements under the proceeding which we have thus been compelled to disapprove, will not be extensive at the time when this letter shall reach you. We doubt not that you will be anxious to retrace your steps as far as it is practicable and we are sure it is altogether unnecessary to direct that your future proceedings relative [to] this important affair shall be regulated in strict conformity to the instructions you have now received.

14. The opinion we have intimated to you upon this important question has been framed by us deliberately; and is in entire unison with that of his Majesty's government.

124. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

London. 8 July 1829
Recd. Calcutta. 11 December 1829

My Lord,

I have already intimated to your Lordship that a despatch would sooner or later be prepared on the subject of the resolution granting licence to Europeans to hold lands in India. It has been passed and

signed and goes out by the *Dallas* now at Portsmouth, with Lord Dalhousie and the Bishop of Calcutta on board. The enclosed is a copy of the despatch which I send for your Lordship's perusal. The policy both westward and here is though against any measure which could tend in any degree to encourage colonization, or commit them on the question, and it is apprehended that the measure of the Bengal government repealing at the same time the clauses 19, 20 and 21, seem to give encouragement and countenance to the scheme. I had almost hoped that the November despatches might have reached Calcutta before your Lordship has gone up the country but now I fear it will not be the case.

In another packet by the chartered ship *Eliza* I have sent a copy of the printed report of the appeal committee of Sir J. P. Grant from Bombay, and also the last number of the *Parliamentary Mirror* which closes the session.

I fear that the above mentioned despatch may in some degree interfere with your Lordship's views but this I may state most unreservedly that while there is a difference of opinion on some points all unite in giving to your Lordship the fullest credit for views and intentions which have for their object the best interests of the public and the Company, and in the judgment of some there is no doubt at all that the court will be put into possession of all the reasons which have operated with your Lordship in the adoption of the measures in question which may place them in a very different light from that in which they now appear. All I would entreat is that your Lordship will be assured that so far as the court of directors are concerned your Lordship may rest satisfied of support provided no measure which involved a radical change and for which there is no immediate or pressing necessity, be finally adopted before reference is made to them.

125. *Bengal government to the supreme court on the need for a legislative council*

14 July 1829

Honourable Sirs:

In pursuance of the intention stated in the concluding paragraph of our letter of the 13th instant, we have now the honour of communicating to you the views and sentiments which we entertain in regard to the measures to be pursued for the adjustment, among others, of the important question discussed in the despatch addressed by you to the secretary to the board of commissioners for the affairs of India.

2. Previously to the receipt of that letter, the defective state of the law relating to the jurisdiction of the king's court, and to the powers

of the government and of the tribunals established by its authority in the interior of the country, had for some time occupied our attention.

3. In regard to almost every provision of the British parliament, whether for defining the legislative authority of the governments of the several presidencies, or for prescribing the course to be pursued by them in the executive administration, questions have arisen of a very embarrassing nature. The rules applicable to the sadar diwani and nizamat adalat, and to the subordinate native courts, which rest on parliamentary enactments, though few in number, have given rise to many doubts and difficulties. Those relating to the rights and obligations of individuals are not more free from obscurity.

4. On several important points the question of the jurisdiction of his Majesty's courts appears to be involved in doubts, productive of alarm to our native subjects, of embarrassment to the local governments, and discredit to our country. In some instances it seems to us, that those courts have been compelled, by a construction of the law contrary to the probable intention of the legislature, to extend their jurisdiction in a degree inconsistent with the public convenience; and we cannot but perceive that a delay which must attend a reference to England, for the purpose of removing such doubts, or of reconciling the obligations of the law to the exigencies of state expediency, might be attended with the most afflicting consequences. In cases, moreover, in which the co-operation of the king's court is requisite to the validity of the laws and ordinances of the local governments, there exist no means, short of an application to parliament, of insuring consistency of proceeding at the several presidencies, however essential to the public interests. The legislative powers vested in the several governments, in their application to British-born subjects, and to persons of all nations and persuasions residing within the cities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay (some of whom have no recognized law of marriage or inheritance), appear to fall in several respects short of what the exigency of the case demands; and the present system, under which rules and ordinances applicable to those cities are passed, seems to be open to many and serious objections.

5. The good fortune which this presidency has enjoyed does not materially lessen our sense of evil, since it is obvious that the mischief of an inapplicable law can never be cured by the wisdom and moderation of judges bound to obey it. We can only therefore derive from the circumstance the gratifying assurance, that in soliciting your aid and advice, our representation will be met with a cordial desire to concur in every measure that may appear calculated to promote the interests of our country.

6. While we are strongly impressed with the defectiveness of the existing law, as applicable to the state of things for which it was designed to provide, we see abundant reason to conclude, that the changes which have recently occurred, and those which may

soon be anticipated, are likely to render its imperfections still more glaring.

7. The new Insolvents Act must apparently give rise to many cases very inadequately provided for. Some parts of the law for the improved administration of criminal justice, appear to contemplate the existence of institutions not known to the country and if increased facility be given to Europeans to settle in the interior, and to acquire landed property, a measure which we deem essential to the best interests of England and India, it is clear that many and serious inconveniences must be experienced, unless they be liable, with the rest of the inhabitants, to the authority of the local courts.

8. In deliberating on the means of correcting past omissions, and of providing for the exigencies of the future, we are forcibly struck with the apparently insurmountable obstacles that present themselves to the attempt of accomplishing those objects by a parliamentary enactment for the several cases. To hope that all the points which will arise can be anticipated by any scheme of prospective legislation, would be visionary. To expect that the matters which have actually presented themselves can be provided for by parliament, without giving occasion to many new and intricate questions, would be to overlook the result of all past experience. It will be equally at variance with all the conclusions which we should draw from general reasoning. Even in legislating relative to things most familiar, with all the advantages of full discussion by the parties interested, and all the information acquired by the daily business of life, it is seldom that the consequences of a law are fully anticipated.

9. With such impressions, we cannot resist the conclusion, that it is a matter of the most urgent expediency to have in this country an authority legally competent to legislate for all classes and all places, subject to the political authority of the honourable East India Company; and this persuasion, the facts and observations stated by you in the despatch to which we have already referred, are calculated powerfully to confirm. Now, in the present circumstances of the country, there seem to be no elements for a legislature, excepting the government and his Majesty's courts; and it seems to us that the concurrence of both is, for a variety of reasons, highly desirable. In other words, we should propose, that the members of the supreme government and the judges of the supreme court of Calcutta should be constituted a legislative council, with power to enact laws for the guidance of all courts, whether established by the king or by the local government, within the territories of the East India Company, and for the regulation of the rights and obligations of all persons subject to their authority.

10. By these means we should hope that the defects of the law, as now existing, might be speedily and safely corrected, without imposing upon you any burdensome additional labour, or requiring from you any duty inconsistent with the most complete independence in your judicial capacity.

11. We should anticipate very great benefit from a change by which the judges of your court would be constitutionally empowered and authorized to afford us the full benefit of your experience and legal knowledge, and by which they would, equally with the members of the government, have a voice in regard to the expediency of all proposed laws, instead of being confined, as now, to a decision on the question of their repugnance or otherwise to English law, after the government has committed itself by their enactment.

12. The registry and publication of such laws in the supreme court, with the same right of appeal to the king in council, might be made, as now, in the case of rules and regulations for the good order and civil government of the presidency; the judges of the court having, however, as such, administrative functions only. Any argument against a proposed law (supposing the parties to appear and oppose it) to be heard, if heard at all, before the supreme council, constituted as above, from which the appeal to his Majesty in council should lie.

13. Coming to the above conclusion, as to the general measure to be adopted for remedying the defects of the existing system, it does not appear to be necessary for us to enter into any detailed explanation of the circumstances under which those defects have practically developed themselves, or of the specific rules and regulations by which we should propose to apply a remedy. It may not, however, be irrelevant to state, that we are informed that the persons whose case has been submitted by you to his Majesty's government had, previously to their being put upon their trial in the supreme court, been tried by the court of circuit, three of whom were acquitted by the judge of that court for want of proof, and one was ordered to be discharged by the nizamat adalat, on a reference from him, on a failure in jurisdiction, in consequence of the stolen property having been found in the prisoner's possession within the limits of the town of Calcutta. It may also be proper to take this opportunity of remarking, that the criminal law, as administered by the nizamat adalat and the subordinate courts in the interior of the country, retains but little of the Mahomedan code, whether in respect to the laws of evidence, or the punishment annexed to offences; and that we most anxiously desire to adopt all practicable improvements in the constitution and forms of those courts, so as to obviate every reasonable objection against the extension of their jurisdiction to all cases which can be expediently subjected to that of your court.

14. The immediate object, however, of the present address is to solicit a communication of your opinion on the general question. And should your sentiments concur with those we entertain, as to the expediency and necessity of enlarging the legislative powers of government, we shall be much obliged if you will further state your conclusions to which a consideration of the subject may lead you, in regard to the mode in which such powers could best be exercised, and the limitations to which the exercise of them should be subjected.

15. We have directed our judicial secretary to furnish you with all the

papers which we have had under consideration on the present occasion, and with any others to which you may desire to refer.

126. *S. Goss to Major Benson*

Calcutta. 20 July 1829

Sir,

I respectfully beg you will take an early opportunity of laying before the right honourable the governor-general my plan of draining Calcutta.

The public, both Europeans and natives, have long suffered by the nuisance and inconvenience of bad drainage of the town. The stagnant drains and pools have been long suffered to sink into the ground a small portion only having been drained off; the rest remains and produces a stench abominable at times, and particularly in hot evenings, considered by the natives who live over these drains at that time, and [? at night], most unwholesome. I have studied a plan to get rid of this nuisance which has existed for so many years. I trust to be able to make it appear a plan capable of achieving the desired effect.

It is proposed to make deep covered drains where these nuisances principally exist, and to have smaller drains leading into them from the numerous lanes, gullies, and main buildings contiguous. The main drains should be so constructed as to admit the tides at all seasons of the year, and to have four feet of water at their furthermost extremity from the river, then the water will have sufficient force on the ebb-tide to carry the contents of the drain with it into the river. The first main drain might be commenced to the south of the custom house wharf and continued through the custom house premises conducted under the main road till it would arrive at the entrance of Bow Bazar street. From there I would propose to make two drains branch from it one to turn at the corner of Cossitollah and go in a direct line from there through Emambarry, and the drain that is to the north of Wellington Square, and from there up to the Circular Road, the other branch to turn in through or in the rear of the Tiretta Bazar and go in a direct line from there, through Chunam Gully, and Old Boitacannah street, till it could arrive at the Circular Road. It is generally known in Calcutta that these lines which I have pointed out for the main drains abound with all sorts of nuisance, and believed to be more so there than any other parts of Calcutta.

The main drain at the custom house should run as far as possible into the river that there might not be any ill effects produced from it on the Strand Road, or on the custom house wharf. It is proposed to make the bottom of this drain about two feet above low water, and nine feet wide, as far as Bow Bazar, the two branches seven feet wide

each, the top of the arch about one foot below the surface of the Strand Road. The drains should be tunnelled right through or rather come to a round point in the centre of the bottom as thus U and having a descent of four feet from the Circular Road to the river. I have no doubt of its carrying all the filth away with the ebb tide and leave the drains quite clean.

Having given this outline I now speak of the fatties, or necessaries. As they [have] been hitherto managed [they] have by far proved a greater nuisance than the above mentioned drains or the filthy tanks or anything else that I have seen in Calcutta from the great annoyance that the inhabitants contiguous to them constantly experience each day as they are cleaning, as well as the passengers on the roads through which the soil is carried to Jackson's and Amratollah ghats. To get rid of this nuisance the public necessaries ought to be erected right over openings left in the main drains for that purpose. Particular attention should be paid to this part of the work, but in cases where the drain runs under the main road for any distance there should be small spots of land picked out for the purpose of erecting necessaries on, as close to the main drains as possible, and not more than 150 yards apart. There would be no inconvenience whatever felt from them were they erected close to the public road.

Should the above plan be objectionable or difficulties put in the way of it, which might be the case, I certainly think that a far better plan than the present one, would be to have large wells sunk at least 200 feet deep at different and distant spots that might be thought desirable and convenient. These wells should be built of masonry and terraced over. The size and manner of their construction can be hereafter arranged. I have erected several of these, one for myself, and also for other gentlemen in Chowringee. I don't at all urge this as a better plan than carrying it off by drains but consider it much better than the present plan. These wells would be no annoyance to the public; they might require cleaning once in two or three years. One could be tried as an experiment, the expense would be trifling.

Captain Schalch a few years ago proposed draining Calcutta by large sewers from the river into the lake. I doubt if this would have the desired effect. By Captain Schalch's levels in the dry season the highest rise of the river above the lake is eight feet. The highest tides in January 1828 at Mr. Kyd's yard was fifteen feet and lowest tide 9 feet 7 inches.

Allowing the spring tides in January to rise fifteen feet, that is eight feet above the level of the lake, consequently the remaining seven feet are below the surface of the lake. The bottom of the drain at the lake should be six inches above the surface of the water and would require a descent of at least one foot six inches from the river to the Entally canal. Say the tides in January between the springs to rise ten feet there would only be one foot of water to carry off the contents of the large drain into the lake.

Explained

At low water the river is below the surface of the lake	7 feet
The bottom of the drain risen at the Entally canal above the surface of the water .	„ – 6 inches
Descent of the drain from the river to the lake	1 foot 6 inches
Remaining one foot —— —— ——	1 foot
	10 feet

Making in all ten feet equal to the rise of the tides between the springs in January

However in case of very heavy rains coming on during the wet seasons, when the tide was flowing, the large drain might get choked from the number of small drains running into it from the lanes and gullies on both sides. To prevent the ill effects of this, there might be a drain introduced from the main drain across the Circular Road, the bottom of this drain to be on a level with the highest rise of water in the river in the dry season, then any sudden overflow of water would have a passage at both ends.

Should the above suggestions be favoured by the approval of his Lordship I would be happy to undertake the performance of the work which I have no doubt but I would be able to do it as cheap and equally as good as any other professional man in Calcutta.

P.S. The exact levels of the line that the intended drains should run through ought to be correctly ascertained before the work was carried into execution. I cannot speak positively as to the levels, for I have not the means of taking them, but should his Lordship be pleased to sanction my getting them from the lottery committee, I can then speak more correctly on the proposed plan. However the levels do not at all affect the latter part of the plan of making large wells of masonry to receive the filth from necessaries.

127. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 22 July 1829

. . . I am the devoted advocate of publicity and my whole labour is to make the principal facts of government understood. But the direction of this publicity in India must, I conceive, continue for a long period in the hands of government—what is published must be fact, and authentic as far as relates to all branches of its administration. I can recognize no right in civilians or soldiers to comment upon public measures but in a

prescribed and public form or by private communication to their friends or superiors in office. Their becoming correspondents with editors can have no advantages that balance the injury to subordination and discipline that is caused by such practice. Though I can see in our Indian presidencies a most respectable British community, I can yet recognize no public that can be admitted to call to its bar the government of the country and to proclaim abroad its opinions on the necessity, wisdom and even justice of the acts of the rulers. A free press in England appears to me even in its licentiousness indispensable to the very existence of our constitution. Without it that opposition would die to whose efforts we owe the continuance of our liberty, but we neither require, nor can we bear anything in the shape of opposition to the actual administration of this distant empire. Our power will be found with all union and support not more than sufficient for its great function. Our checks upon it must not be compounded of radical editors, dissatisfied [?rice] merchants or interested indigo planters. Such may, forsaking [*illeg.*] pursuits to become the monitors and censors of governors and judges do mischief to authority but they can give it little support. They are led by vanity and by a wish for personal importance to call for a free press and the toleration of government is soon put to the proof by seeing such press employed in calumniating its highest officers, in fomenting faction and in espousing the cause of all that are discontented. This your Lordship will say, is nothing more than a repetition of what I have published upon this subject, but I repeat it to state that what I have observed in the last few years of the Calcutta papers has confirmed my former opinion and quite satisfied me that a free press according to the understanding of that term in England is no more suited to Bombay, Madras or Bengal than the British oak is calculated to thrive amid the cocoa-nut trees of Salsette, the sands of Pulicat or the salt plains of Tamlook. There is no other person I know to whom, filling your Lordship's situation, I would state my sentiments so fully and so freely, on a point on which I think it likely you may entertain some difference of opinion. But I persuade myself it is only as to the degree. I am disposed to give every possible latitude, but there are limits which should not be passed, though I can well understand, there are reasons that make your Lordship at this moment adverse to every unpopular exercise of authority that might increase the clamour and bold spirit of discontent that has been raised by the measures which it became your duty to carry into execution.

I was much gratified by the kindness of your last letter. Full well can I appreciate all you have had and all you may probably yet have to encounter. I can also quite understand from my knowledge of your character the temper and consideration for individuals as well as bodies of men with which you have hitherto acted, but I must fear you will be yet forced upon proceedings repugnant to every kind and generous feeling of your mind. I am, however, satisfied that if you are provoked beyond sufference you will do justice to your high name and

teach foolish, insubordinate, and factious men that it is not alarm at their menaces that has restrained you from the full and rigorous exercise of your power but I must hope, though I do not expect it, that you will be spared so painful an extreme.

128. *Bentinck's minute on roads*

27 July 1829

I beg leave to lay before council a report upon the road to Benares, prepared at my request by Mr. Stockwell, the late postmaster-general, whose zealous endeavours to improve his department give him an additional title to the esteem in which he is so justly held as a meritorious public officer.

. . . . . .

Had we indeed the means at command, I should incline to spare no expense in conferring on our remotest possessions the convenience and beneficial consequences which result from an easy and free communication between different parts of the country. The advantages of good roads are common to, and are felt by every description of individuals; for without ready intercourse, internal commerce and improvement are embarrassed or at a stand. These observations are obvious, but I apprehend too little regard has been paid to the improvement of roads in the interior, free and easy access to which from principal marts, conduces more in every country to the welfare of the community at large than almost any benefits that can be conferred.

I have obtained some information regarding the state generally of part of the roads in Bengal, and had intended to prepare a memorandum respecting them. The particulars however are too varied and scattered to permit, amidst other avocations, my reviewing the subject in the manner I could wish. Feeling however persuaded that, in some districts, the roads are susceptible of improvement at no very serious expense, I am desirous that in Bengal proper and in Bihar, executive officers, who if I am not mistaken ought in pursuance of the court's orders to have the supervision of them, may be instructed to report upon the actual condition of the existing principal thoroughfares in their circles. They may state how obstacles and inconveniences can be best got rid of, and what expense, with reference to bridges, drains and embankments will be required to put the roads in a passable state of repair. I see no objection to similar reports being called for upon the state of all the roads in our territories.

Two civil officers in each division of the country might also be requested to furnish a joint report on all roads and thoroughfares within their jurisdiction. They might offer their opinion as to the objects which seemingly dictated their original foundation, the purposes to which as

means of agricultural and commercial intercourse they are now subservient, the advantages likely to attend their improvement, and the effect the condition of the roads may be supposed to have on the supply of the markets, and on the price of articles. They may favour us with their opinion, whether it be probable that zamindars, land-proprietors, merchants and others have sufficient perception of their true interests to estimate the benefits of certain and easy land intercourse and whether they would, in any manner or in any degree, be disposed spontaneously to aid in the improvements of roads.

P.S. In the upper and western provinces, where heavily laden wheel carriages are in constant, extensive and general use, might not, in the renewal of leases or when the time comes for arranging a permanent settlement, some provision be made for securing the co-operation of zamindars and others in the construction of roads and works of utility, and in the repair of roads more efficient than is now given to them?

129. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private

Dapooree. 28 July 1829

My dear Lord William,

Your letter of the 6th instant reached me three days ago. I should have answered it sooner but have been suffering under rather a severe bilious attack which I got at Bombay and neglected. I am now better. I have written to Bombay for such documents of Mr. Elphinstone's as are upon record regarding his minutes on the press, and they shall be forwarded. Most entirely do I think your Lordship right regarding your rejection of the proposition of delegates and I can hardly yet persuade myself [as] to the reality of the facts you privately communicate as to the party meant to be deputed and what is still more extraordinary the party by whom this proceeding was approv'd! ! ! These are not the days for delegates. They were received, it is true, by ministers from the Bengal army thirty-six years ago, but that bad example on the part of Mr. Dundas had for its excuse the monstrous and acknowledged grievances of the Indian army!—their having no equal rank with the king's, the oldest Company's lieutenant or captain being below the youngest in his Majesty's service; Company's officers not being allowed to go home on leave or when sick without forfeit of pay, and many other just causes of complaint. Add to this when a remedy was meant to be applied, these delegates had the fullest information on all points that it was necessary to understand, and without them it would have been difficult to form the regulations of 1796.

The Madras officers in 1809 were [?pushed] into their crimes by superiors who from alarm, or repentance, left those they had encouraged to be plunged deeper and deeper by the young, the thoughtless and the

violent. They had my sympathy and it was exercised, but not to encourage them in opposition to government or to cherish vain hopes of success in their guilty contest, but in efforts to induce government to give them any opportunity of redeeming their own errors and of returning (without what they conceived was disgrace) to the path of duty. Such sympathy as honourable and meritorious men merit, the Bengal officers will I am assured meet with from your Lordship, but beyond that conciliation or concession on the grounds they have placed their claims of rights and compacts would not be more ruinous in its consequences to government than to the army itself. Supposing, an extreme, that they evinced a power to enforce their demands, would the government of England leave such strength unbroken, and what are the means of this body of officers to enable them to dictate the terms of their continued service either to the government of India or England? I deprecate events which would be attended with ruin to many excellent though misguided men, but there is either no danger to the empire in their combination or [?they] are of a magnitude that cannot be too soon encountered and overcome. With regard to the question of a free press in India there cannot be an instance of its eventual danger more striking than what has recently occurred at Calcutta in the case of the army. Every crude effusion, every violent proposition, every fallacious calculation, has found a ready place in the columns of the newspapers, and the editors, anxious among other motives to keep and increase subscribers have added their own articles to vindicate the justice of the officers' claims and the injustice of government—anxious no doubt, to transfer the charge of injustice to the court of directors; and it is a cherished spirit of hostility to the latter body, which induces many persons (and some of no slight influence) in your city of palaces to fan this flame and to keep alive by every means a spirit of discontent to aid their allies in England in their clamorous efforts against the renewal of the charter. Had it not been for these recurrent exciting causes, the first impressions made by your Lordship's orders would before this have been weakened instead of strengthened as I believe them to be—but this result, under the circumstances your Lordship was placed, could perhaps neither be foreseen nor avoided and it may be a case in which you, with a knowledge of much of which I am ignorant, deemed the remedy worse than the disease and if you are ever forced to act you will have one advantage—you have carried kindness, consideration and forbearance to the utmost verge.

There is not, I can pronounce with confidence, the slightest feeling that implies justification of the course pursued by the Bengal army in any part of the officers or civil servants or the European inhabitants of this presidency, and with regard to myself I can only state that the sentiments I have given are what I should be proud (if ever called upon) publicly to avow and that I should be too happy in appending on this as on all occasions what slight support I can to your measures.

130. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Private. Draft

Calcutta. 2 August 1829

You will have seen by the memorials of every regiment in the Company's service as well as from the proceedings of goverment the universal discontent which the half-batta order has created. I have not been without my fears that this feeling might not have shewn itself in some open act of mutiny. As far as the officers dared to show disrespect to myself as head of the government, for having carried the orders of the authorities at home into effect, they have done so. It was necessary to check those proceedings, and it was done with success; but had I been obliged to vindicate the authority of government by any decided measures, I feel by no means certain that resistance would not have been offered. I have written a full account of all these proceedings confidentially to the chairman, in order that he might have it in his power to contradict any false statements that might be made to the court. The chairman will show you my letters if you wish to see them but as these transactions have had no consequence, and are not likely to have any, I am particularly anxious that no notice, unless it be necessary, should be taken of the communication. Lord Combermere is now with us, cordially supporting and most anxious in every way to meet the wishes of government. He is a most good-natured easy man and it is not possible to have a more agreeable colleague.

I am sorry to say that great discontent still prevails, and with the great extent of retrenchment that has been made, a different result could not have been expected anywhere: but in India, where every man's object whether civil or military, is money and money alone, the loss of a rupee is not compensated by any gain of rank or honours. I have been much struck with this fact. The language and feeling of the army has been very unmilitary and highly deserving of censure. The order in its effect was a very unlucky one. The allowances curtailed had been enjoyed for above 25 years; all expenses founded upon that standard perhaps in the great majority exceeding it, for the military are as much indebted as the civil service. A sudden reduction necessarily causes great individual suffering. As a saving to the state, it is nothing, at present not amounting to more than 60,000 Rs. per annum, and when fully operating will be under two lakhs; as a measure of equalization with reference to the other presidencies it is quite misapplied. I hope that some change will be made, but the clamour so improperly raised ought not to be immediately yielded to, and I hope nothing will be done until a report is made by the supreme government upon the statement of the relative condition of the armies of the three presidencies, which has been called for from the finance committee which has not yet been sent in but may be immediately expected.

I am sanguine in my expectation that you will be satisfied with our efforts to reduce the expenditure within the income. It is a most

odious operation, but it shall be rigidly persevered in and injunctions shall be carried into complete effect. I hope in 1830/1 that the state of the finances will bear a very different aspect.

There is nothing unsatisfactory in our political relations within or without our territories. The Nizam is dead. His successor is well spoken of, and seems to wish to resume the administration which for so many years has been virtually in the hands of the British resident. A [?wish] of private communication has been made by Chandu Lal, the minister, to the resident, whom we have directed to wait upon the Nizam and to ask if this communication was or was not made with his consent. The council are quite agreed upon the expediency of complying with the Nizam's wishes. Indeed we could not well object, if so disposed, but deprecating as I do this kind of interference (when our own safety, and that of our ally no longer requires it) so mortifying to the prince and all the principal persons of the state, and tending to put our own name and authority in a false position, I shall be very glad to be rid of the charge.

Appa Sahib, the ex-raja of Nagpur, has lately reappeared in the field. This event has not caused the least alarm or sensation, and he is again returning to his former place of refuge. He is a poor creature and there is every reason to believe that some intrigue at the Delhi residency has brought him forward. We have been under the disagreeable necessity of suspending from his office Sir E. Colebrooke one of the oldest, and a very distinguished servant of the Company, pending an investigation of charges of disgraceful corruption and venality against the persons belonging to the residency, among whom Lady Colebrooke is much implicated. Her reputation of Pindari propensities is too notorious. But Sir Edward has been supposed to be a man of honour, and to be the dupe of those around him. But the unwarrantable measures he has taken to suppress enquiry and to protect his servants, place his conduct under great suspicion.

Central India and Malwa are subject to occasional quarrels of neighbours but they immediately submit to our interposition. We have been at issue with Malcolm about the extent of interference to be employed in the affairs of these states. I knew little of the subject when the question was sent for our decision; but a year's experience has quite convinced my mind of the correctness of the views taken by Sir C. Metcalfe and the supreme government.

As Sir Charles's name has been accidentally introduced, I hope you will allow me to say (indeed it is my duty so to do), if it should at any time be the desire of his Majesty's government to bestow one of the presidencies upon a Company's servant, I conceive no man in India can have a stronger claim to that honour than Sir Charles Metcalfe. He is very able, upright, high minded, very firm while very conciliatory, and extremely careful of the public money. I have no doubt of his being the first man in India, and by the side of Malcolm. I think he has a truly independent mind, far above all jobbing and has most enlightened views of all questions of Indian policy. He would now be an admirable

governor for Bombay whereof economy is so much required. I write this without his knowledge and without any intention of ever saying that I have done so.

There have been some slight insurrections in the Khasi hills, dividing Sylhet from Assam. Two officers were murdered. Mr. Scott is the commissioner for those districts. He asked for no assistance. The insurgents are only armed with bows and arrows.

The recent order of the secret committee for the retrocession of the Tenasserim provinces is under our consideration. The great difficulty and a very great one it is, [is] the location elsewhere of between 30 and 35,000 inhabitants who cannot safely be left to the vengeance of the Burmese authorities. Notwithstanding the security guaranteed to persons similarly circumstanced by the treaty of Yandabo[1] every man has been sacrificed who has fallen into their hands. The length and expense of the war solely attributable to our own excessive bad management has led to an idea of the strength and [*illeg.*] of the Burmese nation totally unfounded. They are barbarians, whom no treaty will bind, whose actions are not to be measured or calculated upon the ordinary feelings and principles of civilized states and whom a sense of fear can alone keep in order. Notwithstanding their continued promises, there are still 15 lakhs of the contribution unpaid. We propose sending an officer to make a peremptory demand of the arrears and to sound their disposition as to the Tenasserim provinces. My doubt is whether they will give a rupee or an inch of land in exchange, desirous as they certainly are for their restoration. But the mere expression of a wish to part with them will receive some extraordinary construction which will indispose them to any adjustment. It ought to be the very reverse and would be so with any European power.

This settlement has been thrown into great consternation by the discovery of a very extensive forgery of Company's paper. Bonds to the amount of 12½ lakhs of rupees have been already presented at the treasury. It has been effected by natives, and the signatures of the secretaries to government and those of all the other endorsers, so well imitated as not to be distinguishable from the real ones, even by the [*illeg.*] themselves.

I hope you will destroy the very useless, [*illeg.*] and extravagant system of administering the settlements to the eastwards. They are very discreditable to the Company's government.

We have just heard the glorious intelligence of the King's assent being given to the Catholic bill. I congratulate you most cordially upon this forever memorable act of the present cabinet.

130. [1] The treaty was made with the British by the Burmese in February 1826 following their defeat and the loss of Rangoon.

131. *Bentinck's additional minute on roads*

8 August 1829

In continuation of my minute of the [27th] ultimo, I recommend that means be adopted for having traced upon a skeleton map of the Bengal presidency all the different roads, distinguishing the roads already made from those under construction, of the roads made, those of earth only from those that are metalled, of those making, by whom and at what estimated expense, and where there are and are not bridges.

A sketch of this kind would show at one view what is done and should any design for the general improvement of intercourse by land be eventually concurred in, would enable government to put its whole means, in whatever shape, on one connected line of operation.

132. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House, London. 8 August 1829
Received Calcutta. 14 May 1830

My dear Lord William,

The talks about your proposed removal of the seat of government and your determination to grant leases for the cultivation of indigo were subsiding but the papers have now given us a notice published by your private secretary inviting information and opinion from all description of persons and particularly from that respectable class of gentlemen, the indigo planters. This has revived the hubbub and again subjected your measures to animadversion. It is said there was no occasion to proclaim thus publicly your wish for information and to do so from persons unconnected with the government; that you might have invited and got every thing worth having in a more quiet way; that the publicity of the notice looks like inviting people to complain; that you will become unpopular with every one whose advice you do not follow, and that you will get a mass of representations written from interested persons which will puzzle more than aid the measures of government.

I can have no doubt as to the goodness of your intentions. I have as little that if you had sought information privately, and from such persons only as from established character are likely to give it of a useful nature, that you might have collected some that might have aided your deliberations, more particularly if you directed their attention to particular points and rather for facts more than opinions. But I am afraid there is some truth in the observations which are made as to the publicity of the notice, which I regret the more from the handle it gives to those who seem disposed to cry you down.

I know an old Indian governor who remarked that no sooner do we get a new governor than some party abroad or at home sets their wits to work to see how they can *get rid* of him, but [I] think what has passed will induce you to consider well before you resolve on any further innovations or new measures other than what may grow out of the court's own despatches, which on most points have given you a very wide latitude of action. Implicit obedience to orders from home seems to be more than ever expected nowadays, but I am afraid there is a disposition to carry this principle too far. You must however in some cases exercise your own discretion, but you will of course in such cases feel confident that you are acting upon safe grounds.

I believe my dissents to the two late censures passed upon your proceedings have been forwarded to you without any intimation from me. I am not sorry for this as there might have been objections to my sending you them myself. I shall I hope continue my endeavours to prevent injustice being done to you and I feel confident that if due time had been taken to consider the subjects so much inconsiderate fault would not have been found.

The court have resolved not to disband the 6 regiments and were so unanimous on the subject that I think any disposition to do them away which may have existed will subside. We must however by degrees, I think, get rid of the idea that the sword and nothing but the sword will preserve our dominion in India. We cannot [deny] it was right to pay the expense of such preservation but we ought by degrees to set more upon good government than the sword, for our reliance upon that weapon has induced us on many occasions to adopt measures we should not otherwise have dared to resort to.

133. *Sir E. Ryan*[1] *to Bentinck*

Garden Reach, Calcutta. 12 August 1829

My dear Lord William,

I have made such alteration in the preamble to the regulation as occurred to me. It seems desirable to view the practice of suttees rather in the light of a usage or custom than as forming any part of the religion of the natives; it is I believe so when commanded as a religious duty, but is considered as a meritorious act for which the husband and wife with their relations will be rewarded by a long period of happiness in a future state. If this view is correct, I think this declaration should appear in the preamble.

The circular orders of the nizamat adalat in April 1813 and January 1815 contain I believe all the rules and restrictions which government

133. [1] Ryan, Sir Edward. Puisne Judge, Supreme Court of Calcutta, 1826. Chief Justice of Bengal, 1833. *D.N.B.*

has issued, there being no systematic regulation relating to this subject. The principle on which these rules are stated to have been framed 'is to allow the practice in those cases in which it is *countenanced* by their religion and to prevent it in others in which it is by the same authority prohibited'. It seems therefore desirable that it should appear that the rules and restrictions were passed merely to compel a strict compliance with their own usages and customs and not [that] the government had intended to restrict or modify their usages; it then follows that all regulations and restrictions are ineffective in enforcing a compliance with their *own* usages and that in consequence the government determines to abolish the custom altogether.

I presume your Lordship has read Mr. Hamilton's minute enclosed in a letter to the court of directors dated the 3rd of December, 1824, and which is the best paper I have seen on the abolition side of the question. He expressly states the practice to be no part of the religion of the Hindus and refers to several tracts written by Ram Mohan Roy. He also states that the '*highest*' authorities in Hindu law consider the practice as illegal. His minute, should you not have referred to it, is printed in Longman's parliamentary abstracts for 1825. To show that this practice is far from being general throughout the provinces subject to this presidency it gives a calculation showing that annually about 250,000 females are widows, of whom little more than 600 [immolate] themselves. . . .

It may probably be a matter of some difficulty to decide upon the precise form of the preamble but I should conceive that none of the provisions of the regulation itself should require amendment. As far as I am capable of forming an opinion they seem to me in every way the best that could be adopted.

134. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

[Seroor]. 12 August 1829

My dear Lord William,

I send you an extract of a private letter from Colonel Macdonald. The public despatch has not yet reached me but will be transmitted.

I am on my way to Ahmednagar where the artillery have been recently sent. It is the most eligible of all positions for the government which must be moved from that cotton shop Bombay, or at least we must get [out] our large military departments, otherwise we shall never be able to make essential reductions in establishments and followers whose pay will be kept up in a manner injurious to the public interest and injurious to the presidency, while their root is in a commercial seaport where labour of body and mind are necessarily high from competition and demand in the market.

I am quite angry at our secretaries for not sooner furnishing copies of Mr. Elphinstone's minutes but expect them today.

P.S. I shall not plague your Lordship more about nazarana. I am glad the question about the jagirdars is referred home. I shall give my sentiments fully to the directors and I know your Lordship will pardon the freedom with which my duty must make me observe upon opinions so contrary to those I entertain upon this important subject. I do not expect ultimate success for, in England as in India, while members whine over the effects of our old routine systems and cant for ever upon the necessity of native aristocracy, they are startled at the means proposed to correct the evil if these are contrary to their general conclusions about the nature of man, hereditary feelings of hostility, and what not general nonsense, or disturb one rule by what they term an innovation upon an established system of ten or fifteen years of age. And above all they revolt at the prospect of the diminution of one rupee of revenue, forgetting what may be saved if the objects aimed at are attained and we gain a better feeling than we have now in the hearts of all classes of our subjects.

135. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

13 August 1829

My dear Lord William,

I send the papers which the secretary has sent regarding the press and the governors leaving the presidency, but they appear to me to contain nothing. I have written to know whether Mr. Elphinstone recorded his sentiments on abolishing the office of censor or on the transmission to England of Mr. Fariday's complaint of the judges of the supreme court.

With regard to the powers your Lordship can exercise when absent from Calcutta, I thought they must be defined by usage, for every governor-general since 1796 has, I believe, gone up the country at least once during the period of his administration. With respect to the expression *in the field*, I have no doubt of the meaning of that term applied to Bengal. It is always found in old records as designating stations beyond the [*illeg.*] never when troops being considered in the field draw double batta. Though these good days are gone as far as the batta is concerned, the same interpretation may still be given of the term in the act, and I should think your Lordship will be safe considering yourself in the field when in provinces occupied by troops that are considered in field stations. This interpretation may, however, be contrary to what a lawyer would give, but in all cases where I find usage as a guide, I should refrain from referring to a race of men so bound to confuse themselves and others with vain efforts to explain

and reconcile the voluminous and contradictory statutes that swell an Indian code, but I speak on this subject with deference, never having before had a doubt entertained as to the powers of the governor-general when absent from the presidency; but at the same time I have always considered these powers must be exercised singly unless he took the whole government with him. I believe there is no example of such a division of authority as your Lordship appears to contemplate, nor do I clearly see how it would be practicable. One member of council with the governor-general would merely be an adviser; he could not record his opinion and if that objection was obviated, he would always, if he differed in opinion, be in a minority. Supposing the commander-in-chief joined, the council board might no doubt be assembled anywhere within the Company's territories, but then there could be no vice-president at Calcutta, and if a member of council was left there he could only have such power as would be delegated to any other public servant; he must cease to have any voice or share in the government of which he is a member.

These are the conclusions to which I came on discussing this subject with a view to the probability of one council being held next hot weather at our new colony in the mountain of Mahabaleshwar of which I have obtained a cession from the raja of Satara, for the express purpose of legalizing the proceeding. I shall write to Bombay and obtain any further information I can and must conclude by again professing my ignorance on all points that turn upon interpretations and misinterpretations of the clauses of our abounding statutes. I consider myself safe where I have the example of my predecessors and commit no acts that can involve direct violation of clear and understood law.

136. *Bentinck's minute on Burmese policy*

22 August 1829

The despatch of the secret committee under date the 23rd of December 1828, directs first, that a favourable opportunity may be taken of opening a negotiation with the king of Ava for the retrocession of the provinces south of the Salween ceded by the treaty of Yandabo.

Secondly, that the possession of the islands on the coast may be retained but left to the decision of the supreme government, if retained; that a fortified post should be established to protect the watering place at Hastings harbour, and measures taken for securing the entire possession of that fine port; that a survey of these islands shall be made together with a full report of the navigation of the whole coast.

Thirdly, that those provinces should be disposed of either by sale, or by exchange for territory improving our frontier or that of our allies,

the island and harbour of Negrais suggested upon the ground that no good water is to be found to the northward nearer than Diamond Harbour.

Fourthly, that the emigrants from the Burmese territory, who have claimed our protection, must be secured from ill-treatment. No doubt is entertained that satisfactory pledges to this effect may be obtained from the king of Ava.

Fifthly, to obtain information as to the best means of carrying on offensive operations along the whole line of our frontier, in the event of a renewal of war.

The direction contained in the 5th paragraph has been anticipated. The valuable opinion of Sir Archibald Campbell upon the whole question, was the last of the many good services which that officer has rendered to this country. The plan of operations which he has recommended must meet the approval of every military man. The same information has been required from those best acquainted with the other parts of the Burmese frontier.

The view I had taken upon my first arrival of the nature of the Tenasserim provinces corresponded very much with that which is contained in the despatch of the secret committee. The expenditure far exceeded the income, no prospective benefit was held out as a counter balance against present loss, the possibility of collision with new and distant half barbarous nations was always to be apprehended, and might entail, as the Burmese war has given us sad reason to know, immense expense, and in the event of war in India a portion of our naval and military force became diverted from the general defence of the empire.

On the other hand, exclusively of the orders of the court at that time forbidding any step to be taken without their further directions, considerable difficulties seemed to embarrass a determination to relinquish these provinces. To whom were they to be given? What equivalents should be demanded? Could the population be safely left either with the Burmese or Siamese; if not with either, how was their security to be provided for? If these provinces were to be retained, how was the expense to be reduced within the income and by what means could their general welfare be promoted, and to what degree of risk of collision and future war should we be exposed from neighbouring states. The orders of the court having determined the main question, I feel that it will be wasting unnecessarily the time of the council to lay before them the information and conclusions which my visit to the eastward enabled me to form. In the prudence and wisdom of the court's orders, it is impossible not to concur. But at the same time it is difficult, on the score of humanity, civilization and of the general improvement of mankind, not to feel deep regret at the great evils existing in those countries, which our departure is likely to perpetuate, and which, under the influence of our paramount power, might, at no great distance of time have been removed. As no Indian sovereign ever wielded the same

extensive sway, as well by land and sea, as that now possessed by the British government, it is not useless to know the good which it is capable of achieving, although the accomplishment may not enter into present combinations or belong to present times and circumstances. At the hazard therefore of being tiresome, I will take the liberty of submitting my sentiments upon the various considerations belonging to this question.

There is no part of India more favoured by nature than the eastern coast of the bay of Bengal, or rather of that space contained between the 1st and 17th degrees of north latitude, beginning with Singapore and terminating with Moulmein. This tract of country is very similar to Malabar and Kanara, possessing a comparatively mild climate, great fertility of soil, many navigable rivers and good harbours, various mineral products, and an active and athletic population, those in the northern part particularly not fettered by the prejudices which on the continent of India are so adverse to general improvement. Unfortunately through this great extent, which might otherwise contribute so much to the general promotion of commerce, there prevails a dreadful condition of society, each state and chief making war upon his neighbour, and the conqueror, here as in Africa, leading the population into captivity. Since we have been in possession of these provinces, many hundred persons who had been forcibly removed by the Siamese, have been restored to their homes.

The whole range of sea coast, not excepting Penang itself, is exposed to the continual incursions of large bodies of pirates, plundering all those who are unable to resist, and seizing those who cannot escape and selling them as slaves. The consequence of this universal system is that the whole coast and the numerous islands adjacent to this long line of coast is entirely denuded of inhabitants, and throughout the greater part of our voyage there was no appearance of commercial intercourse.

A very different and improved state of things must have grown up by our occupation of so large a space in this region as the Tenasserim provinces, while in conjunction with the incorporated settlement to the eastward, the Indo-African slave trade, now unchecked, would have been more easily suppressed. The position of our Tenasserim provinces, filling the interval between Ava and Siam, necessarily prevented hostilities between those countries, and the Packchan river, our boundary, 60 or 70 miles south of Mergui and said to be navigable within 40 miles of the gulf of Siam, would enable us, were we so disposed, to prevent any attacks of the Siamese on the Malay peninsula and our own possessions to the southward. To the best ends to which great power can be applied, those of general pacification, our retention of these provinces would have been peculiarly favourable.

The immense expense of the last war, and the great loss of life with which it was accompanied, strongly urge the expediency of avoiding a recurrence of the same contingency, but when the events of that war are enquired into much of this apprehension will immediately vanish.

Annexed to this minute for the sake of more easy reference are the answers of Sir Archibald Campbell, dated 16th and 20th February 1829, to the questions relating to the future military operations, and to other circumstances touching the provinces, and a letter of Mr. Maingy, dated 8th of April 1829 upon the same subjects. In giving his opinion of the amount of force that would be sufficient for the subjection of the Burmese power, hitherto considered so formidable, Sir Archibald Campbell says (para. 7, Feby. 16th) 'I should enter upon this service with every certainty of success, with three to four thousand Europeans, two or three native corps, with details of artillery, cavalry'.

It must be recollected that Sir A. Campbell considered the native corps to be useless in the field, because with the exception of the body guard, they had always been beaten by the Burmese. Although Sir Archibald's unfavourable opinion of the sepoys was justified by the events of the war, I cannot subscribe to the inference drawn from the past, that the same effects will again be expected. I think, even in regard to the last war, it may fairly be questioned whether by other management and by giving to the first operations of the sepoys the support of an adequate European force, their superstitious fears of the magical and supernatural powers of the Burmese might not have been easily overcome. This precaution was entirely neglected, and unhappily the complete discomfiture of the Madras troops ensued, and for ever after the Burmese held them in contempt.

Sir Archibald confirms this opinion of the adequacy of the proposed force by observing (para. 18) 'this detail may be thought too limited for the invasion of a powerful country, *but at no period of the late war, had I anything to the amount of it available in the field*, indeed in two or three of our engagements my whole force did not exceed *one thousand five hundred effective rank and file under arms*'. When we place by the side of this curious fact of the sufficiency of so small a force, the immense cost of the expedition, we must indeed deeply deplore the millions of money and the thousands of lives so unnecessarily sacrificed, through our entire ignorance of the country, and consequent mismanagement. The local difficulties from these causes were extreme, and few men besides Sir Archibald Campbell would have had sufficient perseverance and courage amidst every discouragement to overcome them. The Burmese individually, were certainly active and brave, but as a military nation they are thoroughly contemptible. In the field they were always beaten. I quite agree with Sir Archibald in the easy success of any future hostilities with the Burmese government.

Nor, as taken singly, should I have considered the great excess of expenditure as a sufficient reason for relinquishing these provinces. As long as the contribution remains unpaid it may not be advisable to make any reduction of our military force, which might diminish the fears inspired by their presence. But this object gained, I cannot conceive the necessity of a single man for any other purpose than the maintenance of internal tranquillity. To talk of a force on our part, who are

the stronger power, being required to overawe the Burmese, who are the weaker, and while they on their part think it unnecessary to employ a single man for the same purpose, seems to me, as a general principle, to be perfectly absurd. If the king of Ava was advised to invade the Tenasserim provinces, and was discovered to be collecting a force on our frontier, our first measure would be to ask an explanation of this assemblage, and if the answer were not satisfactory we should defend our provinces, not by sending a force to their protection, but by marching directly upon the capital of Ava. With these sentiments I should have proposed, had we kept the provinces, that the charge should have been kept within the income. In the first instance, until the depredations on the Salween had been completely checked, I might have kept half a regiment of Europeans, but subsequently, one battalion of Bengal sepoys, with a good police force would, in my judgment, have been ample for the preservation of good order. For a part of the civil European, I should have substituted native agency. I believe these provinces are capable of considerable improvement; the great present obstacle is the want of population. But under the guarantee of our protection, if assured of permanency, many settlers would have come from all parts of India, especially the Chinese, than whom it is not possible for a state to have more industrious and intelligent subjects, and as being good consumers, more productive contributors to the public revenues.

In the execution of the orders of the secret committee there should not be the smallest difficulty. The Burmese must eagerly desire the restoration of provinces, by which their wounded pride would be gratified, their revenue improved, and the opportunity would again be given to them of conquering, plundering and enslaving their weaker neighbours. The inference seems most reasonable that for advantages like these, if not an equivalent, at least some kind of return would be willingly granted. And at any rate that a sufficient security could be obtained for the good treatment of the population which might be left behind, and whose labour to them must be a considerable source of profit. With any civilized state, acting upon the ordinary calculation of self-interest, under the influence of even the smallest degree of honesty and common sense, a satisfactory arrangement would at once be made. But we have, unfortunately in this case, to do with a barbarous government, imprudently false and perfidious, and most vindictive and cruel. We have the testimony of both Sir Archibald Campbell and Mr. Maingy to the shameful manner in which the sixth article of the treaty of Yandabo, stipulating that no-one should be molested for his conduct during the war, has been violated. Sir Archibald says 'No-one that remained after the war (and nearly the whole of them did so) has escaped decapitation or some other cruel death, together with a number of their relations and followers'. Mr. Maingy confirms the preceding statement. He writes 'there is a long list of myothugyis and others, between Yandabo and Rangoon, who were connected with our army

during the war, and who were induced to stay, upon the strength of the 6th article of the treaty of Yandabo, and who have since been executed on one pretence or other. Indeed it is a notorious fact that the Burmese officers have been particularly active in tracing out those women who were connected with our officers during the war, and in extorting from these poor natives whatever property they may have become possessed of.'

In the payment of the contribution, the same disregard of promises has been manifested.

The 5th article of the treaty of Yandabo, dated 24th of February 1826, stipulates to pay a crore of rupees. By the additional article, the British commissioners 'for the sake of rendering the 5th article as little irksome and inconvenient as possible to the king of Ava, consent to the payment of the crore by instalments'. 25 lakhs immediately; 25 lakhs in one hundred days, when the British army was to evacuate the dominions of the king of Ava.

The remaining moiety of the crore by equal annual instalments, in 1826 and 1827, the whole to be paid up by the 15th of March of the latter year.

But in June 1827, ambassadors being sent to treat with Sir Archibald Campbell, upon this and other unadjusted questions, a further term was granted for the payment of the two last instalments, of the third to the 24th of October 1827, and of the fourth to the 31st of August 1828. Sir Archibald upon communicating to government this new engagement writes 'of their adherence to which, I entertain not the most distant doubt'.

Notwithstanding this promise to liquidate the whole demand in August 1828, it was only in that month that a beginning was made to pay the 4th instalment, and at this date, August 1829, fifteen lakhs are still due.

I adduce these facts, to which innumerable others might be added, that have occurred in the course of our negotiations, in order to explain to the authorities at home, the real character of the government with which we have to deal, because it is upon that character that our difficulties depend.

Our position is a most curious one. We want to get rid of provinces much desired by the Burmese, and we in reality want nothing in return but the freedom from molestation of the people we leave behind us. The equivalent suggested in the secret committee's despatch, are in fact perfectly useless to us. Since our possession of Arakan, the island of Ramree gives to our shipping both the port and the water on the east side of the bay of Bengal, which was supposed by the secret committee to be nowhere procurable between Negrais and Diamond harbour.

In the event of another war, Negrais might be of service as a rendezvous for our shipping, if we attacked Rangoon, but the possession in time of peace would become another point of contact with the Burmese.

Matthew's islands also, and Hastings harbour seem to offer no advantage. Mr. Maingy asserts, and his opinion is supported by personal inspection, and is confirmed by the information I obtained on the spot, that fresh water may be obtained in many of the other islands. In obedience to the orders of the secret committee, it will be proper to direct that in the ensuing cold season, Captain Ross should be required to complete the survey of the coast and of the islands, of which a small part only remains unfinished.

With respect to the improvement or rounding of our own boundaries, or of those of our allies, I am not aware that we have any wish to satisfy upon this head.

As far then as our own territory and interests are concerned, we have nothing to ask in the way of transfer, and in respect to sale, Mr. Maingy thinks that the expectation entertained by the Burmese, that it is our intention to withdraw from the provinces when the contribution shall be paid up, will prevent any pecuniary offer for that which they expect to obtain for nothing. The same opinion equally precludes the hope of an exchange. Under any case however, the Burmese government will in my opinion offer nothing in exchange, either in money or in territory, unless perhaps of such parts of the cessions under the treaty of Yandabo as we may already possess, but upon which, for the sake of the present question, they may raise a claim. I hope the future may bely these anticipations.

The whole and sole object then that we have to accomplish is a retreat for the population who cannot remain with security under the Burmese government. If this asylum could be found in our own territory, I should say let us declare at once that the provinces shall be given back, when the fourth instalment is paid.

But it appears at present doubtful whether a suitable location can be provided in any of our own districts for so great a number of refugees, estimated to amount to between 30 and 35,000. By the word suitable, I mean where a subsistence can be procured, by the cultivation of land, in a climate not positively unfavourable to health.

So totally different is the climate of the coast south of Rangoon from Bengal, that to transplant them to any part of the lower provinces, if sufficient space could be found, and still more to Arakan, would be to consign these unfortunate persons to certain destruction. The island of Ramree is an exception, and it is proposed that Mr. Maingy shall examine it upon his return. I quite agree with him as to the total unfitness of both Singapore and Penang. Mr. Maingy has made no mention of province Wellesley,* but as he passed some years in it, I presume that he includes it in Malacca to which it is annexed, as unsuited to the present object. Perhaps it might be well to communicate with Mr. Fullarton upon the accommodation which province Wellesley may afford.

* *Note.* Since writing this minute I have seen Mr. Maingy who says that his remarks had reference to Wellesley Province, the extent of which does not extend 84 square miles and already contains a population of 22,000 souls, or 285 persons to a square mile.

Mr. Maingy has judiciously suggested, as combining the objects contemplated by the court with a suitable establishment for the refugees, the exchange of the Tenasserim provinces for Negrais, with the adjoining tract of territory of Bassein. In the event of failing in this object, he has proposed as the only alternative left, to retain Tavoy and Mergui, but this proposition it will not be necessary to consider till all attempts have failed to obtain a location out of the provinces.

I beg leave then to recommend that a negotiation shall be entered into, according to the instructions sent to us, for the exchange of the Tenasserim provinces for Negrais, with a portion of the adjoining territory to be hereafter specified.

The secret committee have justly impressed upon us the necessity of conducting this negotiation with the utmost circumspection, management and discretion. To start at once with a proposition for the surrender of these provinces, would probably create impressions the most adverse to success. There is no extravagant interpretation in favour of their own power that their conceit would not put upon conduct that apprehensions alone could produce in their own case, if similarly circumstanced. I am quite satisfied with Sir A. Campbell that there is no hold upon that government, but through its fears. It will be long before we shall have again so successful a negotiator as that officer, who carried his point by holding his watch in one hand, and his sword in the other. Do what we will with the Tenasserim provinces, we must still have the Burmese for our neighbours in other less accessible parts of our territories, where the means of checking and revenging any insult is much more difficult than across the Salween. But to keep the Burmese in order, we must always act upon the principles, and after the example, of Sir Archibald. It was upon this conviction, equally entertained by every authority upon the spot, that I took upon myself when at Moulmein, to order the commissioner, if a repetition of the same acts of plunder and murder took place respecting which all remonstrance had hitherto proved unavailing, to pass the Burmese frontier, and to seize the offenders, giving due notice to the Burmese government that I had issued such an order. With the same feeling, I perfectly concur in the opinion of Mr. Maingy that in case of insult from any of the troops or followers of Oozinah, his quarters should be beaten up, as the only means of restraining his insolence and preventing his incursions. In words and in actions, our superior power must be ever displayed. In the expectation, however, of our early relinquishment of these provinces, these strong measures may for the present be suspended.

I am of opinion therefore in concurrence with Mr. Maingy, that Major Burney should be despatched from him to the court of Ava, to demand in a high tone, the reasons of their disregard of the agreement made with Sir A. Campbell for the final payment of the 4th instalment, and at the same time, to intimate the extreme displeasure of the British government at the outrages committed by the Burmese, both in Arakan, and in the neighbourhood of Moulmein, to demand that the

complete liquidation of the payment be made by an early given date, and if protracted beyond that period, that a portion of territory, Rangoon for example, shall be assigned to us as a security for the money. By urging this conditional point strongly, the subject of territorial exchange may be more naturally introduced, their feeling generally about their present and former possessions may be sounded and by keeping Negrais out of sight, and pressing for Rangoon only, it may become more easy (altho' I feel little hope of success except under the power of compulsion) to obtain the former. It is possible that the government of Ava might think the cession of Negrais to be a good exchange for a part or the whole of the remainder of their contribution, or a portion of arms and ammunition, in addition to the Tenasserim provinces, might incline them to accede to our wishes: but however this may ultimately turn out, I think in the first instance Major Burney's mission should be confined to two points: payment of the fourth instalment, and an expression of displeasure at the outrages from the Burmese territories to which our subjects are exposed, and of our determination as before expressed, to take redress into our own hands. All other propositions should be carefully avoided on our side, and if made by the other, Major Burney should say that he would report them, but distinctly declare that he had no authority to treat about them. It will be of importance to consider whether Major Burney should come away, after having settled for the payment of the last instalment, or await our further orders.

137. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 3 September 1829
Received Calcutta. 14 May 1830

My dear Lord William,

The court and the board are completely at issue on the question of disbanding the 6 extra regiments. The court unanimously [resolved] not to disband, but to leave it to your government to do your best in the way of retrenchment. The board insist on disbanding, and in concentrating a deal of criticism which, if deserved at all, belonged to former governments, upon yours. We protested in a body against both points. The board still insist, we protest again and shall finally move the whole responsibility upon government. This I suspect is only the beginning of a series of warfare, the effect of which no one can say, but I do not think it can do the East India Company any harm.

Many thanks for your letter from sea concluded at Singapore. I suspect Mr. R. Grey's legal opinion about removing the seat of government is the correct one, but if the measure was to be countermanded I am better pleased it was put on the ground of illegality.

Take care and avoid novelties. That is, take care not to introduce them without sanction from home, for there is a strange disposition to catch at anything. It is no very difficult thing to see what certain [persons] would be at, but I must not venture in a letter to say all I believe.

8th Sept.

I am not without hope that our general remonstrance may postpone any decision against the 6 regiments for the present—and if so it is not likely the subject will be agitated again.

We are in a singular state in Europe. The Russians nearly at the gates of Constantinople and in command of the Euphrates and no one stepping forward to help the Turks, with arms at least. We should not I think be justified in doing it single handed and I suspect we have never been able to get the French and Austrians to join us in any strong measures against Russia. I have had a fancy in my head from the first, that European Turkey will be partitioned, but what [will we] get? There is an idea here that the route per the Persian Gulf and up the Euphrates to Bur and thence ahead to the Mediterranean will be the best communication with India. The navigation of the Red Sea is difficult, dangerous and tedious and the land journey by the other route very little longer through a better country.

12 Sept.

The board have yielded. The 6 regiments are to be retained but they still insist in the criticism passed upon the governments. I enclose an extract of that part of the despatch.

14 Sept.

I am off with my family to Paris on Wednesday. They winter there but I must return to my duties in about 3 weeks.

138. *Bentinck's minute on military retrenchment*

12 September 1829

The object proposed from the institution of the military finance committee is the introduction of well ordered and uniform schemes of economy into the establishments of the three presidencies. The progress of this important work is inconsiderable in comparison of what might be expected, and is probably to be ascribed to the difficulty the committee experience in collecting, combining and arranging the various scattered materials which must form the basis of any system to be eventually adopted. But the revision of establishments by the strictest

rules of economy must not be postponed in consideration of any plans we may expect the committee to suggest: we should rather endeavour to circumscribe the range of its labours, and release it from needless discussion and embarrassment in minor points, by lopping off all apparently superfluous establishments, at least of the Bengal presidency.

By these considerations and the urgency which compels this government to look for the means of retrenchment in all directions, I have been induced to examine, as opportunities offered, several items of military expenditure, with a view of discovering what charges would admit of curtailment, with the least public inconvenience. In the execution of this task, a reference to the origin and progress of some existing establishments has shewn, that from small beginnings they have, by changes and additions, imperceptibly grown into enlarged departments; and it is well known, that when establishments have attained to a state of completion, their existence, however questionable their utility, comes to be regarded with passive acquiescence, owing to the natural reluctance which is felt to dispossess incumbents of their appointments and emoluments.

. . . . .

139. *Bentinck's minute on the removal of the seat of government to the upper provinces*

15 September 1829

In my minute of the 10th of February last, I stated the reasons which induced me to recommend as a measure of public advantage, the removal, for a time, of the seat of government to the upper provinces. The board were pleased to concur in the opinion.

I shall now proceed to consider the manner in which this resolution can be carried into effect with the least expense and inconvenience, with due regard to the different enactment of the legislature, and without prejudice to that part of the public business which must be translated at Calcutta, requiring immediate despatch, and not admitting of a reference to a distant authority.

The government never having left the presidency, and certain expressions in the acts of parliament seeming to connect the presence of the government with the local position of Fort William, I deemed it right to consult both the chief justice and the advocate general upon the legality of holding the council elsewhere than at the presidency. The answer of the former was that there was nothing which could make the acts of council less legal or effectual in law, on account of its being held at any other place than Calcutta, if the place should be at the time annexed to the presidency of Fort William, according to the

provisions of the 39 and 40 Geo. III, c. 79. 1. The advocate general was of the same opinion. The law therefore opposes no objection to the measure.

The secretaries to government have, by my desire, prepared a statement of all the business belonging to their respective departments, separating those parts which necessity or convenience requires to be transacted at the presidency. It will be seen that much must remain to be done here, that there are questions relating particularly to finance, and to the Company's investment, of very considerable importance, which must fall to be decided by a local authority.

Upon reflecting upon these statements, and the numerous details which they seemed to comprehend, I felt, at first, very unwilling to disturb the existing order of things, and to remove that protection and superintendence which the long established residence of this government has afforded to the interests and concerns of the great mercantile community of the capital. My impression then was that this object, as well as those other advantages to the upper provinces expected from the change would be attained by the continuance of the council at Calcutta, under the direction of a vice-president, while I, with the assistance of Sir Charles Metcalfe, by virtue of the powers vested in the governor-general, when absent from the presidency, might transact that part of the business belonging to central India, to the upper provinces, and to our political relations in general. But to make the second part of the arrangement even practicable, it was first to be determined if the acts confer any such power upon a governor-general.

33 Geo. III, c. 52, and c. 54 enacts that when *absent from his own government of Bengal*, if he judges it necessary to issue orders to any of the said governments, or presidencies in India, or to any of the officers or servants acting under the authority of the said presidencies, it shall and may be lawful for him to issue the same, etc.

These are his powers when he is *absent from his government of Bengal.*

It seems doubtful whether, when within the government of Bengal, the separation of the governor-general from his council was ever contemplated and if contemplated, whether it was intended, that any independent authority should be exercised by him.

In Auber's *Analysis*,[1] a work that must be considered of the highest authority, it is stated,—If the governor-general should be *in the field*, not attended by a council, all the governments and officers are to obey his orders, he alone being responsible.

Upon consulting with the advocate general, it is his opinion that there is not to be found in the statutes any grounds for the foregoing assertion. The act of Geo. III, c. 40, was enacted for the purpose of legalizing a resolution of the governor-general in council, vesting in Earl Cornwallis extraordinary powers (among others, those contained in the 33 Geo. III, c. 54, above cited), during the continuance of the war with the Tipu sultan. By sec: 4, these powers are to have

139. [1] Auber, P., *Analysis of the Constitution of the East India Company.*

continuance till three months after the termination of the said war. By the following section, the same powers, with the same restrictions, were given to his successor, Sir William Medows and to any other person, who might succeed to the said offices of governor-general and commander-in-chief. The act therefore seems clearly made for the occasion, and as clearly made to cease with it.

It is impossible, however, not to suppose that this silence, as to the independent powers to be exercised by the governor-general when in his own government, but absent from his council, must be one of those omissions and inconsistencies so often met with in acts of parliament relating to India; because it is quite unintelligible, how a power, deemed necessary in the two smaller and least important presidencies, should be held to be useless in the third, far surpassing the others in extent, wealth and political importance. The advocate general, upon another occasion, adverting to the doubts and obscurity so often arising upon similar questions, makes the following remark. 'I have commonly found that the statutes relating to India, require in a particular degree, to be interpreted by a comparison of one part with another, and that the only way to give them effect, is to put a liberal construction upon them.' And entertaining precisely the same view, I confess that I should not hesitate for a moment, in acting out of council, upon my own sole authority, in the same manner that the governor-general may act in council, without the concurrence of his colleagues, provided that the same causes existed. 'That the interests of the Company were essentially concerned' but upon the best advice, I have come to the firm conclusion, that this authority ought only to be exercised on emergencies, and not for the purpose of carrying on the ordinary routine of business, and consequently that there can be no constitutional substitute for the governor-general in council in the general administration of the government.

The governors of Fort St. George and Bombay are placed precisely in the same situation as the governor-general within his government of Bengal. Out of council, they are vested with no independent authority. It appears, notwithstanding, that upon every occasion of leaving the presidency for any considerable time, all the late governors, Mr. Elphinstone, Sir Thomas Munro and Sir John Malcolm, *apparently* upon their own responsibility have issued proclamations, declaring *that during his absence, he will exercise all the powers vested in him by law when in council*. I annex to this minute, copies of three documents issued by each of these officers, in the same form and to the same purport.

I have been desirous of seeing the minute given by Mr. Elphinstone, the first author of this proclamation, explaining the nature of the powers thus assumed, as well as the reasons by which he justified an assumption of authority not sanctioned by the statutes. At present, I confess myself quite unable to comprehend the meaning of this proclamation. I have obtained Sir Thomas Munro's minutes recorded upon three different occasions, when he visited the mufassal, but I

find no discussion upon the principle of the measure, and I suppose he felt justified by the precedent established by Mr. Elphinstone.

I have purposely introduced these doubtful questions, in order that upon the renewal of the charter, the home authorities may take the occasion of exactly defining the extent of authority intended to be granted to their governors. I should conceive that it would be quite sufficient to give to the governor-general, and to the governors of the subordinate presidencies, the same power under the same restrictions, which is granted to the governor-general, when absent at either of the other presidencies.

There being no alternative but the removal of the supreme council itself, the next point for consideration is the manner of providing an efficient representative of the government at the presidency. I apprehend that there can be no question of the competency of the governor-general to delegate any part of his powers to a subordinate authority. Various and important as many of the details to be disposed of at the presidency, will be, they cannot impose a greater responsibility than has often been conferred upon civil and military officers at all the presidencies. Upon many occasions, they have been armed with the whole powers of the government, and practically beyond the reach of its control. There are no doubt many men under this presidency, with whom this great trust might be safely lodged; but when contemplating how much of the actual duties of the government will devolve upon our representative, that, independently of local business, he will have to communicate and correspond with the governments of the others, with the supreme court, with the officer in command of his Majesty's navy, that in our relations with Ava, questions of great difficulty may arise, demanding a prompt answer, I think we should not be justified in not naming a member of the supreme council. In Mr. Bayley, we should have, in addition to every other qualification that can be desired, the benefit of a colleague, intimately acquainted with our views upon every topic, and disposed, cordially and ably, to co-operate with us, upon every occasion, for the general good. I would propose that upon the departure of the government, Mr. Bayley should have the designation of deputy governor of Fort William, and that he should be authorized whenever he shall be desirous of having advice upon any urgency, to summon for such occasion, only, the provisional councillor, and any other senior merchant, whose names shall be subscribed to the proceedings. The designation must, I presume, proceed from my authority, the powers and duties from that of the governor-general in council.

I do not feel quite confident that in thus detaching a member from the council, there may not be a degree of infringement upon the statute, which enacts 'that the whole civil and military government shall be vested in a governor-general and three councillors'. It is clear, at the same time, that the constant presence of this number is not even contemplated by the law. In the 34 clause of the same act, it is said

'if any (which must be taken to mean even more than *one*), of the members of the said council shall by any infirmity, or *otherwise*, be rendered incapable of acting or of attending to act as such, and the governor-general shall be desirous of having the advice of a full council upon any urgent business, the governor-general shall have full power and authority to call in any provisional councillor, or, there being none such upon the spot, any senior merchant to assist etc.' (which seems to mean only one, although there may be *two* vacancies in council). In practice, also, the council is very rarely full. The commander-in-chief must be frequently absent, and for very long periods. The governor-general's absence, for many months, has often occurred, and sickness must occasionally keep away each member of council. Mr. Ibbetson, one of the members of council at Penang, was lately detached to Batavia on public duty, and in reference to the proposition entertained by the authorities at home for transferring central India to the government of Bombay, the principal and only recommendation of that measure was the frequent presence of Sir John Malcolm, the governor in those provinces, with the knowledge on their part, and the avowed intention on his, to take upon himself a very large assumption of authority, independent of his council. In truth, the council of Bombay would have had little else to do than to approve or disapprove Sir John Malcolm's measures. All these circumstances induce me to think that the proposed arrangement for conducting the business at the presidency, as far as the integrity of the council is concerned, is not contrary to any legislative enactment; I may further add, that should the occasion arise, in which the advice of a full council might be desired, the governor-general will always have at his command the services of one of the ablest and most upright of the Company's servants, in the person of the secretary of the territorial department.

I have said nothing in the present paper, upon the more important question, naturally suggested by this discussion, as to the best permanent position for the seat of government. The present temporary arrangement, formed for a specific object, will serve as an experiment, to show all the advantages and disadvantages belonging to a more extensive measure. When our possessions had but a limited extent, Calcutta would have been well chosen for the capital, even if circumstances had not already presented it, ready made to our hands. But since the Company have emerged from the narrow limits of their factory, and have become the sovereigns of the whole of India, the position of the government at the farthest extremity of its territory, seems peculiarly ineligible, most unfavourable to control and good government, and rendering impossible the prompt and quick interposition of command, which, in cases of emergency, is so essential to our security. The lower provinces may be governed by any authority. They are inhabited by the most submissive population in the world. Their revenue and judicial administration have been established between thirty and forty years, and since that period their progress in improve-

ment and good order have never been disturbed. A good government may forward their prosperity by ameliorating the police, the internal communications &c., but they have not, and cannot be a cause of alarm or anxiety to the reigning power.

Let us say that the line which divides the lower from the upper provinces is distant 600 miles from Calcutta, and that here is the beginning of a totally different order of men and things, demanding the utmost attention and care of the government. An unsettled revenue, a warlike population, new judicial institutions, the great misgoverned kingdom of Oudh, and the many ill-regulated states in central India, extending above eight hundred miles further. Let it be recollected that throughout this space, the communications are very imperfect, that the rate of the dak averages less than three miles per hour; that there is not a post carriage or post horse in the country; that all travellers except those going by dak at a heavy expense, must go by daily marches, like the caravans, or an army in the field, with tents and complete establishments of servants and cattle, that the conveyance by water is equally slow, months being required to do what in all European countries would occupy not a tenth of the time. We may, I hope, expect much improvement in the use of steam, and in the introduction of carts and horses for the conveyance of the mails, instead of runners; but this must be the work of time, and, for the present, we must consider things as they are.

Under such circumstances, even were the governors and the governed of the same colour and nation, did the population only equal the largest of the kingdoms of Europe, were they united with the same bonds of interest and common feeling, even then to place the seat of government at the distance of a thousand miles from the centre of its greatest cares and interests, could hardly be deemed *safe or rational*; but in our strange and anomalous position, where our whole security derives nothing from the advantages common to all other states, but almost wholly consists in superior vigilance, despatch and control, what can be more extravagant than to place the chief civil and military authorities exactly on that spot, where they must be the least capable of performing their duties with success.

Sir John Malcolm and others, upon the express ground of the unavoidable inefficiency of an administration conducted by so distant an authority, have suggested the formation of a separate local government for central India, and the adjacent parts of the upper provinces. The importance of those chiefs and states has been, in my opinion, dressed up with a certain degree of poetical imagery, which the daily despatches of all the political agents residing at those durbars, seems completely to contradict. But even were it so, I should still say, that the occasional visit of the supreme council to the north-west of India in the immediate neighbourhood of those states, would give more satisfaction and confidence than any other arrangement whatever. To such periodical inspections the superior salubrity of the climate will be

always a sufficient inducement, while in the progress of the government through the provinces, much benefit may be expected.

I trust further to be able to lay before the board in a few days, an estimate of the expense of the removal of the government, according to the proposed plan, which will show that the expense will be comparatively trifling.

140. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe* Confidential. Copy

Calcutta. 16 September 1829

Dear Sir Charles,

I have recently received a letter from Lord Ellenborough,[1] expressing an anxious desire to promote by every means in his power the welfare and happiness of the great Indian population, subject to British government. His benevolent and excellent sentiments I shall give in his own words.

'We must bring the total expenditure, here and in India, within the income, and so much within the income as to be enabled to reduce taxation. India cannot rise under the pressure of present taxation, and to make the people of that country consumers of the manufactures of England, we must first make them *rich.* That object is remote indeed but we must endeavour to attain it.' And again 'We have a great moral duty to perform to the people of India. We must, if possible, give them a good and permanent government. In doing this we confer a greater benefit upon the people of this country, than in sacrificing the interests of India to the apparent present interests of England. The real interests of both countries are the same. The convulsion which would dissolve their connection, would entail much loss upon us and bring desolation upon India.'

Lord Ellenborough asks of me a full and unreserved communication of any sentiments or suggestions which I may have to offer, in furtherance of these truly sound and statesmanlike views.

Anxious as I must be to answer to this call, but sensible, at the same time, of my own incompetency to the task, I can only obtain the information Lord Ellenborough wants by a recourse to greater experience and knowledge. In this difficulty, I confidently apply to you for that assistance, which no man in India is better able to afford.

Lord Ellenborough's remarks embrace two objects. First, a good and permanent government. Secondly, such reduction of taxation, by reduction of expenditure, as will elevate the condition of the population.

Upon the first point it may be as well to begin with a question which will probably form a prominent subject in the discussion—viz. whether it would conduce in any respect to greater efficiency or effect, that the

140. [1] See letter of 19 May 1829.

government should be administered in the name of the king. We are the sovereigns of India, and those who like myself are of opinion that British supremacy cannot be too strongly and too decidedly declared by an assumption of all the attributes of sovereign power, by a coinage bearing the British arms—by a British code, and by encouraging the acquisition of the British language, the key to all improvement, may conceive that the name of the king is essential to this impression. But if it be true, as I believe it to be, that the local government is everything and the distant controlling authority nothing, that the first is viewed as the source of all good and evil, and that the latter is neither seen nor known, I apprehend that the denomination is a mere matter of indifference, and that whether the name of the king or Company be used, the effect will be precisely the same. The name of the king hitherto has been unfortunately associated with the evils of the supreme courts, and with the still greater evils of appeals to the privy council.

The next question would seem to be, whether it is expedient to continue the present division of India into distinct presidencies, with the expensive machinery of separate councils and boards.

Would it not conduce to greater efficiency and unity of action, and with less cost of management, were all the presidencies, now touching each other, formed into one government, having under it as many great functionaries as convenience might require, and subordinate to these again, minor commissioners, controlling several districts, like the principal collectors in Madras, or the commissioners lately established in Bengal?

Under such an arrangement, where should be the seat of government? Should it be permanently stationed in some central spot with all its departments around it, or might not the departments remain at Calcutta, under some delegated authority, while the government itself might be moveable, for the purpose of better superintendence and control?

Is it possible by any other arrangement (I much doubt it), to contrive a governing authority combining, in a greater degree, the advantages of deliberation and discussion with promptitude of execution, and preventing the evil effect of contradictory counsel and action, by giving to the head of the government the power of acting on his own responsibility?

Supposing the three presidencies to remain as at present constituted, would it not be of advantage that the supreme council should exercise a more direct control over the subordinates? At present the latter are subordinate in name, but independent in fact. Legislation, expenditure of the public money and all the functions of government are performed without the approbation of, or any reference to the supreme authority. Their acts are only made known to us through the copies of their despatches to the court of directors, when after the act is done, it becomes extremely inconvenient to interfere. Hence arises great dis-

cordancy, not only in legislation, but in every part of the system, and we have frequently seen the very orders of the court, intended to have equal application to the whole of India, differently interpreted, and differently executed in the three presidencies. Would it not be better that the supreme government should *superintend, control* and *direct* (the words of the act) not *occasionally* only, but *always*, the proceedings of the inferior presidencies, that these proceedings should be transmitted direct to the supreme government, for their orders, copies of the correspondence being sent to the home authorities? In this manner there would exist a direct and prompt control, and the examples, lately exhibited at all the three subordinate presidencies of long continued dissension, to the manifest disadvantage of the public service, during a reference to Europe, would have been probably altogether avoided, or at any rate, prevented from going to extremes, by the prompt interposition of an impartial and paramount authority. Would it not be more satisfactory also to the home authorities, in forming a judgment upon all Indian transactions, to have before them the opinion and comments of their highest and most confidential servants?

Intimately connected with good government, is the agency by which it is administered. I am disposed to think highly of the integrity of the civil service. It may not have the same high bearing as in the time of Lord Wellesley, but this effect was then produced by the peculiar circumstances of the times, which have in a great measure ceased to operate, but I have no doubt that the high principles, at that time so powerfully encouraged and called forth, still continue to influence the great majority of the service, and that there can never be any difficulty, with a government commonly alive to the importance of the subject, to maintain them in full vigour. It cannot be said however that the country is well governed. The instruments are very defective. But I propose shortly to lay before council an analysis of our administration, as regarding European and native agency; and I will not now anticipate the consideration.

Closely connected also with this same subject, is the administration of justice, admitted by all to be greatly defective, to be slow, expensive and unsatisfactory to the people. The police again is universally condemned as a source of general oppression. Our communication with the supreme court will place before the home authorities a complete view of one part of the inconvenience now experienced from conflicting jurisdiction, and the proposition expected from Mr. Bayley, for the greater despatch of business in the interior, renders any enquiry into this subject unnecessary at present.

The army again is a delicate and difficult feature in our political picture. Here also the question with which we started, may be repeated. Would the exclusive and direct authority of *the king* create more military spirit, and a higher degree of efficiency? I purpose enquiring of Sir Jasper Nicolls, Sir S. Whittingham, and one or two other officers the truth of a report, that the Company's officers in general desire to be

transferred to the crown. They have heretofore seen and felt the superior advantages in point of promotion, which the king's officers, to their prejudice, have enjoyed. On the other hand they have held, free from intrusion, the exclusive possession of civil, military and political appointments, but if the separate protection of the court of directors were withdrawn, this monopoly could scarcely be expected to continue. I rather lean to the opinion that *one*, and that the highest authority would best ensure a greater degree of discipline and military feeling, but then again if the sepoy army remains a separate and distinct branch of the service, and the officers not transferable from the European to the native troops, as I apprehend must be an indispensable restriction, would not the same circumstances produce always the same effects, and must not there continue a decided inferiority in that part of the army, which has not the same opportunities of general service and distinction, which cannot enjoy the same portion of the national interest, and with whom, money and not fame, must, from the natural force of circumstances be the ruling object? But, however this may be, might not a great saving be made by the formation of the three separate armies and establishments of the three presidencies into one? Much more in favour of this measure might be added. The whole of the Indian military arrangement is made upon the supposition that each presidency is a distinct country, with its separate interests and separate *enemies*. Whereas Madras has no hostile frontier, and nothing within or without to disturb its tranquillity.

If we are to employ native agency upon any large scale it will be indispensably necessary to cut off every European functionary, civil and military, whose services can be dispensed with.

Pray answer as much or as little of this as you please. Your own judgment will suggest much better than I can do, the points upon which information may be most useful to a stranger to the working of this great Indian machine, who is most anxious to promote its improvement and the general welfare.

141. *Bentinck's minute on military retrenchment*

17 September 1829

The honourable the court of directors, after instructing us to reduce two troops of each regiment of light cavalry and two companies of each regiment of native infantry of the line of each presidency, direct that the native officers and non-commissioned officers, extra to the new establishment, shall serve in their respective ranks and regiments as supernumeraries until absorbed by casualties.

Under the operation of this arrangement a [complete] stop is put to promotion, the slowness of which has been frequently assigned among the causes of indifference or dislike to the service. And doubtless the

diminished field of promotion, as a consequence of the late reductions, is extremely to be regretted, when we consider the small number of higher posts in our army offered as rewards for mature merit and services. At the present moment we may reckon upon having in each regiment at least two jamadars and four havildars, and in every company some naiaks and old sepoys extremely sore from their disappointed hopes of profiting by casualties and getting advancement; if means more immediate in their effect, than that which time and absorption may afford, can be devised for relieving this uneasiness, and for diffusing general satisfaction, they merit attention.

With a full conviction that the lively interest entertained by the authorities at home for the welfare of the native army, will induce them entirely to approve of our adopting measures tending to promote the good humour and attachment of the sepoy, I venture, with a view of dissipating any feelings of disappointment over which the discouraging circumstance of the late reform of troops and companies may have left him to brood, to suggest that we relieve the cavalry and infantry of their supernumerary native officers, commissioned and non-commissioned. It may facilitate the reception of this suggestion to recollect that the reduction of troops and companies was coupled with the satisfactory announcement in favour of European officers, that they were thenceforth eligible to promotion by brevet, and entitled to the rank of colonel on attaining the command of a regiment, without any corresponding [?privilege] having been extended to the native portion of the army.

It has been repeatedly remarked of late years, that there is an evident deterioration in our sepoys particularly of the Bengal presidency, as exhibited either in personal inferiority of character, or a falling off in their public spirit, energy and high military feeling. The correctness of the remark is a question of great importance; but one which my limited opportunities of comparing the present state of the Bengal native army with that of earlier periods do not enable me to determine. The few Bengal regiments I have seen, are composed of men whose stature, appearance, and conduct indicate their having been recruited from the respectable classes and military tribes of the population. But constituted as our native army is, we have no right to expect that it can be actuated by such sentiments as public spirit, and high or energetic military feeling. These principles are nowhere the characteristics of mercenaries, and in that light our native soldiers must be viewed until we can persuade ourselves that the government itself is believed to rest its base upon the interests and affections of the people at large. In the meanwhile all that circumstances sanction our calculating upon with confidence in regard to the sepoys are, loyalty and fidelity to their employers and attachment to their officers. These principles may be implanted and supported by reasonable indulgences and liberal arrangements on the part of the state, but can only be nurtured into strength and fruitfulness when the views of government are seconded

by the efforts of the European officers, whose duty it is to cultivate, by attention and friendly intercourse, the confidence and affection of their men. I am not aware that it is the case, but if there are any military regulations in force, or any internal regimental arrangements which interfere with the easy and uninterrupted access of men to their officers, or have for their object the treatment of sepoys too much in the spirit which obtains for the maintenance of discipline amongst European soldiers, they ought to be amended as unsuitable to the character and condition of the natives who compose our armies.

But to return to the present state of the army with respect to promotion, its condition may be greatly ameliorated by the introduction of the measure to which I have adverted, viz. the relieving of the cavalry and infantry, of the three presidencies, of their supernumerary commissioned and non-commissioned officers, to be accomplished by the immediate removal of them to the non-effective establishments. So far as the Bengal army is concerned in this arrangement which will prove economical to the state, I am assured that the supernumeraries may be disposed of in the manner intimated greatly to the satisfaction, advantage, and efficiency of the army generally, and much to the gratification of those who will be transferred to the pension, which is felt and acknowledged by the native soldiery to be a most desirable retreat. The financial results of this proceeding in Bengal will be an immediate saving to the extent of 220,000 rupees per annum. Against this large immediate saving must be set as a counterbalance, but by no means to a great extent, the expense of filling up by fresh promotions all regimental casualties as they may hereafter occur. It will be obvious

	Per Mensem	
About 160 subadars of cavalry and infantry on regimental allowances	10,720	
Do ——— Do ——— Do on pension ———	4000	
Difference between monthly pay and pension ———		6720
About 160 jemadars of cavalry and infantry on regimental allowances	3970	
Do ——— Do ——— Do — on pension	1920	
Difference between pay and pension ———		2050
About 800 havildars on regimental allowances ———	11,200	
Do ——— Do ——— Do on pension ———	5600	
Difference between monthly pay and pension ———		5600
About 800 naicks on regimental allowances ———	9600	
Do ——— Do ——— Do —— on pension ———	5600	
Difference between monthly pay and pension ———		4000
Total monthly difference between the pay & pension of supernumeraries		18,370
		12
Total difference for the year ———		220,440

however, that this proposal has not economy alone in view, its main object is to confer a boon which the welfare of the native army asks at our hands.

Under the presidency of Fort St. George I am told no difficulty will

be experienced in relieving that army of its supernumerary commissioned and non-commissioned officers. It has been affirmed to me indeed that the measure will be quite as acceptable there as in Bengal to all parties interested in its adoption. Its effects however upon the military expenditure at Madras will not prove so favourable as in Bengal, owing to the different mode of disposing of men whose efficiency for service in the field is impaired. Such men are, when not too feeble for military employment, transferred in the first instance to veteran battalions on full pay, and thence, as infirmities and years incapacitate them for any employment, to the pension on half pay. We must therefore reckon that the whole of the supernumeraries, whose removal is contemplated, will be posted to the veteran battalion, on full allowances. The only relief therefore to be expected in favour of the finances is the difference between the half and full pay of those who may be deemed fit objects for transfer from veteran corps to the pension. These it is expected will amount to about half the number of the existing supernumeraries. The immediate saving may be set down at 60,000 rupees a year.

At Bombay owing to the different system established for invaliding native troops, no saving can I apprehend, be expected from the adoption of the measures I propose. That system appears to be as follows. Commissioned, non-commissioned native officers and others of the native infantry, are pensioned on the full pay of their rank after a service of 30 years. All persons proving unfit for duty in the line within the period of 30 years, are placed, and in the enjoyment of full pay, on the strength of those establishments which occupy the numerous small forts found in the Bombay territories. If men of that establishment after 20 years service become quite past the power of performing any duty, they are pensioned on three-fourths of their regimental pay. To the cavalry branch of the Bombay troops however other rules apply; and a wide difference is made between the amount of pensions granted to men from Hindustan and to those from the midland and southern provinces of the peninsula; the men recruited from Hindustan receiving lower pensions than the dekhanies by nearly one half. These peculiarities, which obtain in the Bombay mode of invaliding, will not it is supposed obstruct the operation of the measures I suggest.

If the proposal to remove all supernumeries of the ranks sanctioned from the effective strength of regular corps be concurred in, I would suggest, with reference to Bengal, that committees constituted as usual be forthwith assembled for invaliding, from each regiment of cavalry and infantry of the line, as many subadars, jamadars, havildars and naicks as are extra to the establishment. In the execution of this duty the utmost care should be taken that the least efficient of each grade be selected for removal to the pension establishment; but in all cases of doubt as to the relative efficiency of individuals, the wishes of the parties should be consulted. As we are entitled to expect that, on the present occasion, each corps will get rid of all its inefficient commissioned and

non-commissioned officers, to the extent of the supernumeries, I recommend that, under ordinary circumstances, invaliding from these ranks be suspended for the next four years at least. Exceptions will of course be admitted in favour of those who became incapacitated for duty from the effects of wounds or of injuries.

The governments of Fort St. George and Bombay may be informed of the measures we adopt in pursuance of the suggestions I have offered; and of our desire that they pursue a like course with the supernumeries of their native armies, to the extent that their respective systems will admit. They may be requested to explain how the arrangements proposed will be likely to operate on their military expenditure, and whether they will prove as acceptable as I anticipate to the armies whose best interests they are intended to promote.

142. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 26 September 1829

My dear Lord William,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 7th and Mr. Bax's of the 9th September.

I observe that you have determined the Madras troops are to remain in this country. I only hope if that is to be the case some definitive arrangement will be made respecting the exercise of the control and command and to what extent we are to pay, beyond what is actually required.

Mr. Bax alludes to increase of appointments at Bombay. I know not what it can be except pursers and masters in the marine but I shall when I hear from Bombay explain fully. The changes in the marine shall early be shewn to have produced great savings and in this and other departments if your Lordship gives me six months before I bring full statements forward, I pledge myself to shew reductions of expense *lakhs* beyond what could be saved by any cutting of salaries. I am now almost finished with a revision of every branch of the commissariat and in it alone one year will show the enormous difference of expense from sleepy ill-understood systems, and simplified arrangements.

In our revision of the invalids we have saved near 60,000 Rs. per annum though we shall expend 20,000 of that in an increase of our boys and an establishment of native officers' sons. I had a ceremony in installing our killadars the day before yesterday that will long be remembered by our native troops and I can hardly believe the heart given to those by a measure which does not entail an expense of one thousand rupees per mensem.

I shall have one lakh per annum reduced from the auxiliary horse who will be brought to eight hundred. The branch of the Deccan survey, not trigonometrical, closes in May which will save 40,000 and

thenceforward all but the most scientific part of surveys will be carried on by East Indians and natives. The pay of labourers in public works in the Deccan is reduced one rupee each man and our dhobi [?branch] the same. Artificers and public followers of all kinds will follow, and my personal labour is now directed to remove all I can from that sink Bombay. First because I shall have everything done cheaper and next because I shall have a return and [*illeg.*] by the money spent in the provinces and all is lost that is spent at Bombay, or at least produces little benefit to the state and tends to profit none but a corrupt and pampered community.

I send Sir Frederick today a minute changing the system of remount and have told him the principle upon which I proceed.

I had reduced our horse artillery troops to 80 men before the order of the court and got rid of cart horses and mules with foot artillery. I had in contemplation to replace our two extra corps with natives (whom we must have for they are our effective invalids) in the course of this year but as it is your Lordship's desire I shall hasten their dissolution.

I may have written too freely about the Nizam's corps but as I found I was writing to a governor-general without any predilection for patronage, I wrote without reserve. There would be difficulty and perhaps it would be impolitic at the present period to reduce any of our regular corps or any of our establishments but were any of these establishments to be ever added to either from wars or change of relations as to subsidiary aid to the Nizam, I should certainly recommend extra corps. Those on this side of India have been singularly efficient and the difference of expense between them and regular corps is very great.

In conclusion, I have only to beg your Lordship will allow me time to proceed gradually in my work of revision and reduction and I will forfeit every pretension to capacity for my station if I do not produce fruits of true economy that shall unite an improvement in efficiency with a reduction of expense, but this must be judged not from a column in an accountant general's statement for 1828/9 but results in 1830/1.

143. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private

Dapooree. 27 September 1829

My dear Lord William,

I forgot in my letter of yesterday to mention our sappers and miners as a reduction determined upon. The corps has from the first been upon a bad footing, but much pains has been taken with them and we mean to restore a part as aids to our engineers in time of peace, who now greatly to the public loss are much dependent on the bazar for overseers, clerks and all aids in erecting [*illeg*].

That your Lordship may not misunderstand me in what I have

stated about the Nizam's corps and their brethren at Nagpur I must clearly state a principle I have ever maintained and ever acted upon where I had power in such cases, which is when not under the pressure of emergency to have the army of no native ally filled by British officers. To supply corps regular or extra for payment in cession or money subsidy, where required for defence or military occupation but to leave the organization, station and employment of all other force whether required for state, for revenue or to preserve internal peace, to the native state, insisting only when enabled to do so, on certain bodies of horse being kept up and regularly paid subject more to the superintendence than minute military command of an European officer when their services were required in co-operation with our troops and at all times to be mustered and inspected by the chief political authority or by those under his orders nominated to this duty.

This is the footing of the Mysore horse. It is that on which the horse of the Gaikwar's contingent are placed and it is that on which we shall soon have an efficient body of the horse of the southern jaghirdars. These horse are sufficiently under the native prince or chief to gratify his pride, our guarantee for their existence secures sufficiently their attachment to secure faithful and efficient auxiliaries on occurrence of war, and men who would, if drove to despair, be dangerous to the peace of the country are kept in service.

I know all the arguments that are used for keeping up *half caste armies* but I also know that jobbing patronage has been their chief support. It is folly to tell me that regular troops to whom we appoint officers and secure their pay can be viewed in any other light by the Nizam of Hyderabad or the raja of Nagpur than British troops. These princes must feel it a mockery to have them otherwise designated and there can be no reason why they should not assign the revenue or pay the money they cost for British troops differently organized. This brings the question into a narrower compass and we have only to examine it as it affects our own interests having these auxiliaries upon the present system, or their place supplied from the regular army of the state. The auxiliaries are filled by officers who have recommended themselves or are recommended by others. To those that are of the king's and Company's service and add to length of service merit, these services have offered a fund of reward and this appears to me the solitary argument for their continuance. They are the bane of all young men of the regular army. They give habits of expense and of laxity in discipline. Junior officers are raised for a period above their condition and on a change occurring which sends them back to regimental duty with diminished pay, they are, generally speaking, discontented and useless. With respect to half pay officers and military adventurers who form the residue of the officers of such corps, I am decidedly of opinion [that] the military profession is the last in which we should encourage Europeans to engage who do not belong to the king's or Company's troops in India.

With the prospects we have of peace the armies of the three presidencies may perhaps be all deemed too large. In the present state of affairs and with the charter on the point of being discussed and the probability of changes in the constitution of the army it would not appear advisable to reduce any regiment of the number sanctioned from England but it would be an equal saving if the duty now performed by auxiliaries which are in fact (whatever they may be named) British corps, was done by our superfluous regular corps and if these were found unequal, extra corps upon their present footing of a European commandant and an adjutant would be found quite effective and would constitute a much more available force both for peace and war than that we now inflict upon the Nizam and raja at double the cost.

I am no advocate for sudden measures nor do I desire to recommend any plan that in its operation is to bring [?suffering] upon deserving individuals, but if the suggestions I have offered upon this subject are thought worthy of attention a change may be put in progress that will, if I am not mistaken, combine great decrease of expense with increase of efficiency. The Nizam or raja of Nagpur will pay no more than at present for all the service the troops now *called theirs*, perform. Our armies will not require reduction, and we shall be able if required to increase our strength without further expenditure. The attainment of these objects will justify the most liberal arrangements towards those who suffer and many corps would perhaps remain with a change in their constitution, which would incorporate them with our troops. I mentioned before that I should recommend extra corps and I can honestly state that these from their commandants being usually well selected are often equal to all the duties of our best regulars, and a batallion at Ahmadnagar which I recently inspected and which it is now contemplated to reduce performs all its duties as completely as any corps in the division. In the event of a severe war an increase of European officers would no doubt be desirable and indeed, according to alterations in the service, indispensable, but no danger can result from our always having a proportion of our native force composed of such corps.

I must apologise for this long letter. It is the last I shall write upon a subject of both delicacy and importance. I can only add it is one that I never should have touched upon if I had not known your Lordship to be free from every motive but that of a desire to promote the public interests.

144. *Bentinck to John Loch.* Private and Confidential

Calcutta. 30 September 1829

Dear Sir,

Nothing relative to the discontent of the army, to which my letters of the 7th and 29th of June had particular reference, has come publicly before me, till within these few days. Lord Combermere has shown me a letter from Sir S. Whittingham, commanding the Cawnpore division, transmitting an application from two officers, Captains MacNaghten and Home, on behalf of the officers of the division, requesting the permission of the commander-in-chief to hold a general meeting for the purpose of electing delegates to represent their grievances and to defend their interests in England. An assurance was given that nothing prejudicial to good order or offence to government should take place at the meeting. Sir J. W. in communicating this letter expressed in strong and becoming terms the obvious objections to the proposition. I have the satisfaction of saying that with this letter Lord C. sent me the draft of an answer from the adjutant general to Sir J. W. disapproving the meeting, declaring the sentiments of the supreme government to be much opposed to any such measure, and pronouncing it to be quite unnecessary as he, the commander-in-chief had been and always would be the warm advocate of the interests of the army both here and in England. I have not heard of any answer having been received from Sir J. W. in reply to this communication. I rather suspect that in some way or other representatives will be appointed by the Bengal army. But the discountenance of the authorities here, the expense of a deputation from India and the possible risk to the individuals composing it will probably lead to the nomination of a committee of officers actually in England, and of the two this will be the least objectionable arrangement.

I believe upon the information of [the] adjutant general, that the discontent of the officers is deep and deep-seated. I am very anxious that Lord Dalhousie should accompany the government up the provinces. Our united presence at the [?field] stations may be very useful. I am much disposed to think that the same inclination prevails in the upper provinces as I stated in my former letters to exist at Barrackpore and the lower provinces. The adjutant general observed that he was sure that the feeling would not show itself in any overt act, and I am sure of this also, but more from the conviction that I will not submit to it, than from any just sense of what is due to their own characters or to mine.

. . . . .

I told you in one of my former letters that I was quite sure when Lord C. came among us, that he would receive all our impressions and act entirely in the spirit of the measures of government, and he has done so.

145. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough*

Calcutta. 1 October 1829

My dear Lord,

It may be interesting to you to receive an abstract of the sketch estimate of the three presidencies for 1829/30—although salt and opium are uncertain as to their results, still I hope Bengal will not be below the sum stated. I am pretty confident that Madras will exceed it, while Bombay is, I am told, likely to exhibit a still more unfavourable balance. I have not time to add more at present.

Sketch estimate of the three presidencies for 1829/30 [in rupees]

	Receipts	*Disbursements*	*Surplus*	*Deficit*
Bengal	124,231,000	106,166,000	18,065,000	
Madras	49,182,711	48,856,800	325,911	
Bombay	23,199,200	33,102,000		9,902,800
Total	196,612,911	188,124,800	18,390,911	9,902,800
			9,902,800	
		Net surplus	8,488,111	

146. *Sir Charles Grey's minute on a legislative council for India*

2 October 1829

1. The propriety of submitting to the authorities at home the proposal of a legislative council in India, is the main subject on which the judges are invited to give their opinions by letter from the governor-general in council of the 14th July 1829. At present, three distinct powers of legislation are vested by express enactment in the governor-general in council, and the governors in council of the other presidencies. The 13 Geo. III. c. 63, ss. 36, 37; and 39 and 40 Geo. III. c. 79, ss. 18, 19; and 47 Geo. III. sess. 2, c. 68 ss. 1, 2, purport to empower the governor-general and governors in council, for the good order and civil government of the settlement at Fort William, Madras and Bombay respectively, and all places subordinate thereto, to make any regulations not repugnant to the laws of the realm, and to enforce them by reasonable fines, forfeitures and corporal punishments: but such regulations are not valid, unless the supreme court of the presidency

will register them. An appeal lies against them to the king in council; and even without appeal, they may be set aside by his Majesty, under his sign manual. The 21 Geo. III. c. 70, s. 23 and the 37 Geo. III. c. 142, s. 8, and 39 and 40 Geo. III. c. 79, s. 11 and the 47 Geo. III. sess. 2, c. 68, s. 3, give a power to the governor-general in council, and governors in council, which in the first statute is limited to the regulation of provincial courts, with a proviso that the expenses of the suitors shall not be increased. But in the 37 Geo. III. c. 142, s. 8, the same power is mentioned as a power of making 'a regular code', affecting the rights, persons and property of the natives and others amenable to the provincial courts. These laws also, I suppose, may be disallowed by his Majesty in council, but they are not directed to be registered in the supreme court, and in practice, I apprehend, are from time to time altered, according to orders from the court of directors and the board of commissioners for the affairs of India. Lastly, by the 53 Geo. III. c. 155, ss. 98, 99, and 100, the governor-general and governors in their respective presidencies, with the sanction of the court of directors and the board of commissioners, may impose duties and taxes within the towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay; for the enforcing of which taxes, regulations are to be made by the governor-general and the governors in council, in the same manner as other regulations are made; which manner, as I have shown above, is twofold; and the statute supplies no further directions to the governor-general and governors in council to guide them in their choice between the two courses. For the levying of fines and forfeitures for breaches of these regulations the advocates general of the Company are directed to file informations in the supreme courts and the recorder's court at Bombay; but the recorder's court has since been abolished; and in the letters patent by which the supreme court has been substituted in its room, it is declared that the court has no jurisdiction in any matters of revenue either within or beyond the limits of the town of Bombay. Besides these three powers of legislation, a general power of altering the revenue and of imposing new taxes has been exercised within the provinces, and is alluded to more than once in acts of parliament; but as there is no act which expressly confers it, I suppose it rests on the grant of the diwani, and on those statutes by which general powers of government and of ordering the revenues have been given or continued to the Company for limited periods.

2. These powers cannot be said to be remarkably well defined. The exercise of one of them has been extensive, beyond what seems to have been at first foreseen by the legislature; and it is not that which in 1713 was designed to be the only one, which has in fact been the most considerable. That which was established by the 13 Geo. III. c. 63, has been almost a barren branch; and that which was given in 1781 expressly for the purpose of making limited rules of practice for provincial courts, has produced a new and extensive system of laws for a large portion of the human race. I do not mention this with any purpose of

blame. I do not doubt that in most respects the results have been beneficial, and perhaps the course which has been pursued could not have been avoided; but it may be doubted whether the parliament would approve of its being infinitely extended exactly in its present direction. That large powers of legislation must continue to be exercised in India, will scarcely be questioned by any one who will look into the many volumes of regulations which have been made by the governor-general in council in the last five-and-thirty years. What a variety of subjects are comprised in them to which it would have been a hopeless task to have solicited the attention of the British parliament! But the question is, to what extent and in what manner may a subordinate power of legislation be best established? The most limited form in which this question presents itself, is, whether it would not be better that those regulations, which not only the law, but usage, now requires to be registered by the judges of the supreme court, should be passed in a council at which they or some other persons appointed by the crown or parliament should assist; and I have not much hesitation in saying that it would be better. It is desirable to keep the judicial branch of the government in a great degree distinct from the legislative; but the separation of these two is not of so much importance as that of the judicial from the executive; and a complete insulation of any one of the three persons is a refinement of government which has never yet been attained, probably never will be, and if it were possible, would not, perhaps, be beneficial. The king who is an integral part of the British legislature, can, of himself, in almost any case, take away the effect of a sentence of any court of criminal jurisdiction in England. The house of lords, which is another integral part of the legislature, is also the highest court of appellate jurisdiction, and has a capacity of original jurisdiction in some criminal cases. By bills of attainder and pains and penalties, the whole legislature at times has acted with all the powers of a court of penal justice, and with some more. The Welsh judges, the master of the rolls, the masters in chancery, and the judges of the ecclesiastical and admiralty courts may sit in the house of commons; the lord keeper and all judges who are peers sit in the house of lords. The twelve judges are called upon to declare the law in that house, as well as in the three courts at Westminster; and they can scarcely so restrict their opinions as not to influence in some degree questions of expediency as well as law. The king in council is, for many purposes, both the legislature and the appellate court of judicature for several of the colonies: and in Canada and Ceylon and New South Wales, and at the Cape of Good Hope, I believe that judges are members of legislative councils constituted under recent acts of parliament. It seems to me, therefore, that there is nothing to prevent the parliament, if it should think fit, from imposing upon the judges of the supreme courts in India the duty of assisting to form the regulations, on the legality of which they are even now required to decide before they have any force. For the expectation that some inconveniences might be

prevented, and that advantages might be obtained by the judges assisting in this way, many reasons are to be found in the lame results of the existing arrangement; in the questionable legality of some of the regulations, and especially in the history of the stamp regulation, which must be fresh in the recollection of the government. But I am aware also of certain inconveniences which would be peculiarly connected with the introduction of the judges of the only court in which British law is administered into a legislative council, which must of necessity be subordinate not only to British legislation, but in many respects to British law. Incongruities of relation between the ordinances of any subordinate legislature and the primary laws of the United Kingdom might be overlooked or misapprehended in a council, even though judges might belong to it: and these being afterwards ascertained by the keenness and vehemence of public censure, the legislative judges might have as judges to condemn what as legislators they had sanctioned or recommended. In other instances, where the legality of a regulation might be merely doubtful, they would be suspected of an inclination to support the work of their own hands. To avoid, at all events, the possibility of the judges being compelled against their will, by a majority in the council, to pass any regulations which might be justly liable to such objections, it would seem to be almost necessary that they should retain amongst them that power of prevention which they now possess by means of their right to refuse registration. If the supreme court, however, were to become a court of only appellate jurisdiction, there would be less objection than at present against any legislative functions of the judges. Upon the whole, I express my opinion, that it would be better that the judges should assist in council in passing regulations, than that they should have only, as at present, the right of directing or forbidding the registration of them; but that in some way or other they ought, in that case, to retain the power of preventing the council from passing regulations incompatible with the basis of any laws which, as judges, they might afterwards have to administer.

3. This opinion, inasmuch as it applies only to those regulations which in usage have been confined to the town of Calcutta, covers but a small portion of the subject offered for our consideration. Ought there to be in India one or more legislative bodies for all India? What limits ought to be put to their power? Should it deal with everything which is the subject of the law? Should it legislate for all classes of persons? To what review should its ordinances be subjected? Of what persons should it consist? By whom should they be appointed? For what periods of time? What rights and powers should each of them possess?

4. That there must be a power in British India of passing some sort of regulations for every part of it, seems to be indisputable. The first and most obvious limit of such a power is, that it should not make any ordinance inconsistent with any act of the imperial parliament applying to India. Another is, that the power must not extend to the alteration of any part of the unwritten law of the British constitution, on

which depend the relations of British India or its people with the United Kingdom. It must not in any way vary the law of treason, or affect any rights of the crown or of parliament, or those which may be derived by any foreign state from treaties entered into by them with the British crown. Some other specific limitations would probably occur upon further consideration of the subject; but I have no reluctance to declare my opinion, that by a general and vague prohibition against enacting any thing 'repugnant to the laws of the realm' an Indian legislature must be so embarrassed as to be incapable of acting with any good effects. Those words, which are employed in the 13 Geo. III. c. 63, s. 36, had long before been used as limitations of legislative powers granted to governments in the American and West Indian colonies; but in some instances they have been afterwards abandoned; in others they have been disregarded; and in others they have been productive of embarrassment and confusion. They are so loose that no two lawyers construe them in the same sense. Some will affirm that any wide difference is a repugnancy; others, that no two laws which can exist are repugnant to each other; some, that we may not make regulations præter legem; others, that they may be made præter, but not contra, legem. These points were contested before the privy council upon Mr. Buckingham's appeal against the press regulations; and after the supreme court at Calcutta and the privy council had decided that the regulations at Calcutta was not repugnant to the laws of the realm, it was decided that it would be repugnant at Bombay by Sir Edward West; than whom there never was a judge of purer integrity, nor usually of a more accurate perception in matters of law. If we construe the words as meaning only an incompatibility with some primary law or some statute of the United Kingdom, applying to the place in which any new regulation may be proposed, it is not easy to bring within the limitation which they would impose, the laws passed in the American plantations and in the West Indies, by which the slavery of negroes was constituted, and Christian men and women, down to a very recent period, were bought and sold in markets, and were either inherited as real estate, or were bequeathed by will as part of the live stock of the testator. Yet those laws were not only permitted to stand, but on several occasions, in the course of the eighteenth century, were taken by the British parliament as the basis of additional laws; and all persons are bound to consider that they were not incompatible with the laws of the realm. It has for some time been known to the parliament that in this country the government have felt themselves obliged to permit women to burn themselves to death, and others to assist them. It is quite clear also that no legislation for India could at present be applied to the Mussalman or Hindu population without acknowledging the usage of polygamy amongst them, and the rights of inheritance resulting from it. Other instances might be adduced, but these, perhaps, will be sufficient to show, that the due consistency of Indian law with the law of the United Kingdom cannot be provided

for by loose and general prohibitions of a repugnancy between the two; but that it ought to be secured by specific limitations of the subordinate legislative power.

5. It seems to me desirable, that within this presidency, at least, there should be but one legislative council, and that its power of legislation should extend to all persons as well as places. I do not mean that it would be possible at once, or within a given time, to subject all persons or places to the same law: but approaches might be made towards that distant end: and in the meantime the troubles produced by different streams of law running in adverse directions within the same channels, might be more easily managed than at present. The maintaining of British law, and the rights of the British crown, and of British persons, by one sort of legislation, whether it be in or out of India, and of Hindu and Mahomedan institutions and the supposed interests of the Company, and of the Hindu and Mahomedan inhabitants of the province by another, only perpetuates the confusion and disorder of the system which comprehends these unreconciled elements. Rather than that so many sorts of law should continue to work together in the same places, I would prefer to see each presidency divided into two or more districts, in each of which there should be a different but a single and uniform system of regulations. A district extending fifty or sixty miles round Calcutta in every direction might be a country large enough at present for the permanent residence of any British capitalists or adventurers who might be permitted to establish manufactories, or to superintend any other speculation or establishment; yet not so large but that a journey of less than four-and-twenty hours would bring a person from its extreme limit to the capital. Within this circuit might be established for all persons the law which is now administered by the supreme court. It is far from being merely English law, and is the only law in Calcutta whether for British persons, Hindus, Mahomedans, or any others. In the bulk of the provinces, the regulations of government, and that system of law which is administered by the sadar diwani and nizamat adalats, might be the sole law of all persons who might chose to be the inhabitants thereof: and in other provinces, if it were necessary, some modification of this latter system, or martial law, if severe necessity should require it, might be established or discontinued by proclamation. I am aware that the first thought which will strike many persons upon this suggestion will be that of 'the Irish pale'; but from the differences of the time and place and circumstances, and improved principles of government, I should expect the immediate consequences to be very different. I offer the suggestion only as something less inconvenient than the present state of the laws in India, and as a temporary expedient; and if it were adopted, it would be necessary to provide, by specific regulations, for the execution within each district of the process of the courts of the other. An active and efficient legislature, with powers extending over all persons and places, would make it unnecessary to resort to any such

measures; but on the other hand, it may be doubted whether the present state of things, which I believe to be unexampled in the history of the world, can last much longer. Throughout the greater part of India there are to be found some individuals at least of four distinct classes, each of which is supposed to live under a distinct system of law, and to have different rights and different duties, but none of them accurately defined. There are persons born in the British Islands, Hindus, Mahomedans, Asiatic Christians, and besides all these, there are in many parts, foreigners and subjects of Great Britain, who have been born neither in the British Islands nor in India, as to whom, I believe, there is no one who, consistently with usage, can say, with any just confidence, what law it is which applies to them. Hitherto it has been possible to make a shift; but as the native Christians, British and colonial persons, and foreigners shall increase in numbers and pervade India, a result which must gradually take place, matters may be brought to such a pass as would scarcely be tolerable.

6. By every one who is at all acquainted with India, it will be felt at once, that in forming a legislative body, all notions, for a time beyond the foresight of man, must be excluded of any election by any class of the people, and for the present, of the admission of any Indian persons. The utmost which can be expected now, is that a legislative council should include persons of the British class, who would feel it to be their duty and inclination to look to the preservation, in their due proportions, of the rights of the several bodies politic in whom the sovereignty and powers of government are vested, and to the promotion of the common interest of all classes of the people, and of the several interests of each, and who might be expected to be able to supply the various information which would be required in legislating for such a subject matter, and such complicated relations as India and its people present. There might be first the governor-general and his council. Secondly, either the existing or some former judges of the supreme courts, or some other English lawyers; and these ought, not in name only, but in reality, to be selected by the crown. Thirdly, the bishop of Calcutta, or in his absence, the archdeacon, unless some of the considerations which I have before suggested, should be thought to be inconsistent with the bishop's taking a part in the general proceedings of the council. Fourthly, one or more of the civil servants learned in Mahomedan and Hindu law, and familiarly acquainted with the government's regulations, the habits of the natives, and the institutions through which the provinces are governed; these might be nominated from time to time by the governor-general. Lastly, it seems to me desirable that the governor-general should have a power and option of appointing annually one merchant or planter, being a natural-born subject of the king, of substance and respectability, and who should have resided at least five years in India. Under these arrangements there would probably be found in every member of the body respectable talents and acquirements; in all (unless it might be

some one newly arrived in the country) a considerable knowledge of Indian affairs; but especially in two out of the four members of council and in other civil servants by whom also, and by the judges or English lawyers, sufficient legal information ought to be supplied; each of the others would bring his peculiar store of experience and knowledge. In all there might be a tolerably impartial regard to the interests of all classes of persons; but as the government of India is at present constituted, it might be expected, perhaps, that it would be the inclination, and peculiarly in the power of two of the members of council and of other civil servants, to watch over the rights and interests of the Hindu and Mahomedan population and the East India Company; of the judges or English lawyers to guard those of the crown and of the British population, of which the trading interests might be further attended to by a member appointed annually from that class. In addition to a general charge of ecclesiastical affairs, and of Christian institutions for the promotion of knowledge and religion, the bishop *might be expected to extend his especial care to the class of native* Christians. The governor-general would regulate the whole; and he alone ought to have the power of appointing the meetings of the council for legislative purposes, and certainly ought to have a 'veto': but for the reasons stated in paragraph 2, it seems to me that the judges, or other English lawyers appointed by the crown, ought amongst them to possess a similar power, or that of suspending a regulation until the authorities in England could be consulted in cases in which any primary law of the United Kingdom should appear to be violated. Indeed, whilst the government of India rests upon its present basis, that of a temporary possession of the territories and revenues of the East India Company, it is neither probable nor desirable that the crown should ever consent that the members of a legislative council appointed by the Company, should have the power of altering the constitution of the king's courts, in opposition to the opinions of the judges. Whatever may be the use of the supreme courts in other respects, their existence, whilst the government of India is moulded in its present form, is preservative of the dormant rights of the crown; a vast and delicate matter which I do not wish to bring into discussion.

7. The most important, perhaps, of all considerations connected with this subject is that of the review to which all the acts of such a legislature ought to be subjected from time to time, and of the control to which it ought to be liable at all times. It is an extremely inconvenient plan to [require] the scheme of a law to take two voyages of 14,000 miles each, and to be approved of in England before it is to have effect in India; but still worse if it has subsequently to be tendered in India for registration. It might be provided, that every act of an Indian legislative council should, within one month, be sent to the court of directors and the board of commissioners, and that in the next session after the receipt of it in England it should be laid before parliament; and that the court and the board should have the power of repealing it within

one year from the time of its having been made, but with a proviso that all persons should be [absolved] for any acts done under the regulation before notice of its repeal should have been given in some specific manner. But a far more important and beneficial provision would be, that the Indian council should, once in 7, 10, 14, or 20 years, form into one body of laws, and submit to parliament the whole of the existing regulations, in order that they might be sanctioned or amended. It would be desirable also to provide for the universal and accurate publication in India of all regulations as soon as they should be passed; which perhaps would most easily be accomplished by confining to some one printing-press the privilege that only regulations printed at that press should be received as evidence or taken notice of in the courts of justice, to which privilege, conditions for a sufficient and proper publication throughout India might be annexed.

147. *Bentinck's minute on a legislative council*

10 October 1829

The judges of the supreme court agreeing with the government on most of the essential points, little remains for consideration here but the particular arrangements by which what is proposed may be best carried into effect.

The detailed exposition given by Sir Charles Grey of the circumstances under which the court has hitherto acted, able and excellent in every respect, is particularly valuable as exhibiting in the strongest light (if we may at all argue from the past to the future) the utter hopelessness of setting or keeping things right through the operation of acts of parliament passed at home; and the principle advocated by him, of maintaining the complete subordination of the local legislature to the parliament, will equally, I imagine, be recognized as one of undeniable necessity. . . .

The measures which he suggests for practically enforcing this principle, appear to be well calculated to secure that and other objects of importance, viz. the early and punctual transmission to England of all laws passed in this country, and the periodical incorporation of them into a digested code.

And the conditions by which it is proposed to limit the powers of the local legislature, corresponding in substance with most of those suggested by Sir E. H. East, seem to be unobjectionable. The proviso, which is peculiar to the latter, that the law shall be equal to all classes, in matters of common concern, had better, I should think, be omitted, chiefly because it is one of those generalities of which the particular effects cannot be immediately anticipated, and also because it seems to imply a suspicion of injustice, scarcely consistent with the delegation of powers such as are proposed to be given.

With respect to the constitution of the proposed legislative council, there is greater room for doubt. If, as appears to be admitted, every notion of representation must, for the present at least, be relinquished, it may, I think, be questioned, whether the choice of legislators should go beyond the members of the supreme council and the judges of the supreme court. I cannot think it would be right to bring into such an assembly the chief minister of the Christian church. There seem to be many reasons to be urged against such an arrangement in India, which it is unnecessary to particularize. The information as to the Hindu and Mahomedan codes, with a view to which it is proposed to appoint one or more civil servants learned in those laws, may probably be as well obtained, when required, by other means, unless the supreme court as is proposed by Sir Charles Grey, should be composed partly of judges appointed by the crown, and partly of judicial servants of the Company; so likewise I should think that, with caution and publicity in the proceedings of the legislative council, the interests of the British merchants will be effectually secured; and except we could adopt the principle of representation, which seems out of the question, it would not, I think, add to the weight of the council, or the confidence of the public, to associate an individual or subordinate functionary with the members of government and the judges of the supreme court. It should be remembered that its laws are designed to have effect at all the presidencies. If any addition were made to the existing established authorities, which I consider for the present to be inexpedient, I should infinitely prefer native gentlemen, whose rank in society and great wealth seem to entitle them to the distinction; while the council itself would derive from their knowledge of the character, manners and feelings of the natives, that information which the most experienced Europeans so imperfectly possess.

On the whole, therefore, it would, I conceive, be right to constitute the council as proposed in the letter of the 14th July.

A veto, it is agreed, shall belong to the governor-general; and the limitation of the power of the council being rendered specific (the vague words 'repugnant to the laws of the realm' must be carefully avoided), it would seem to be unobjectionable and proper to allow the judges the power of suspending any enactment which might appear to them to be incompatible with the laws they are bound to administer. It is a fundamental principle of the arrangement proposed by government that the acts of the legislative council shall extend to all places, and to all descriptions of persons.

Provision should of course be made for the due publication of all proposed laws, and parties interested in opposing them should have full opportunity of stating their objections, either by petition or by argument, authority being also reserved to the governor-general in council of appointing committees or commissioners specially to enquire into and report upon all matters necessary to a just determination on the expediency of any law.

The promulgation of laws subsequent to their enactment must also of course be fully provided for.

. . . . . .

Even the general principles, how far the rules of English laws and process shall be maintained, or a simpler system adopted, stript of its technicalities, shall be substituted; to what extent the English language shall be allowed or enjoined; whether Englishmen shall be permitted to claim any and what special distinctions as to the form of trial, or the tribunal to which they are subject, and especially in what cases and within what tracts trial by jury shall be introduced, would require separate and deliberate consideration: and the peculiarities of every province; the expediency of having local rules, distinct from, though of course subordinate to, all general laws; the means of recording and maintaining local usages, where proper to be maintained; these and various other points must be discussed before we can attempt to lay down a general scheme for the better administration of justice throughout the wide regions that will be subject to the proposed legislative council.

The necessity of a legislative council having been thus established, it would seem right that we should request the aid of the judges in preparing a scheme for the execution of the measure, to be submitted for the approval of the home authorities.

In the event of the proposition for a legislative council not receiving the sanction of government or parliament, it would be desirable that we should provide for that contingency, by requesting the judges to suggest, for our concurrence, such alterations in the present act as may correct the inconsistencies, and may remedy the inconveniences, which have been so fully detailed in the various communications upon the present subject. It would seem impossible for the home authorities, as experience has hitherto abundantly proved, to furnish the details which a plan of so extensive a nature must require.

148. *Minute by Sir Charles Metcalfe on the future government of India*

11 October 1829

In attempting to form an opinion as to the future government of India, it would be useful to know whether the East India Company's charter is to be renewed or not, and if renewed on what terms.

The general question must of course be considered, with reference to the interests of India and the British empire, and not merely as it may affect the Company.

But the fitness of the Company to undertake or retain the government of India must in great measure depend on the terms of the future charter, supposing one to be granted.

Public opinion in England seems to have determined that the monopoly of the China trade shall not be renewed.

If that is to be admitted, as the acknowledged basis of any new settlement, will the Company, in that case, be able to carry on a profitable trade with China, notwithstanding the competition of private merchants?

Whatever it may be able to do for a time by its established influence, it seems impossible that the expensive trade of the Company can long stand against the economy and enterprise of individuals.

It is notorious that during the operation of the existing charter the Company has been supported by the China monopoly alone. All the Company's profits have been from that source exclusively. The Indian trade has been a losing concern. The territory of India has yielded no surplus revenue. It has not even paid its own expenses; and a great increase of debt is the result.

When therefore the profits of the China trade shall cease, there will be no funds to cover the loss of the India trade. That trade must cease also, as it ought to have done long ago. There will be no funds to pay the dividends of the proprietors.

There will be nothing left to be continued to the Company, except the sovereignty of India. The Company will cease to be a company of merchants with a profitable trade; and, if permitted to survive, will become a company of sovereigns, with a territory already in debt, not able to bear its expenses, and loaded with the additional burden of the dividends, if dividends are still to be paid, and if not, the capital must have been returned to the proprietors and the Company must have ceased to exist.

But dividends can only be paid with propriety from profit. A territory in debt yields no profit. Then there can be no dividends. The proprietors of India stock must lose it all, principal and interest. What then becomes of the Company?

It is difficult to comprehend what position the Company can occupy after the loss of the China trade.

And what will the nation gain by taking India out of the hands of the Company? An addition of millions to the national debt, and a territory that cannot pay its expenses.*

Yet no purse but that of the nation, will be able to support this expensive concern; for that of the Company cannot, after the loss of the China monopoly; and in fact has only done so hitherto by borrowing.

Borrowing cannot go on for ever. And an attempt to make India pay its own expenses under all circumstances, might cause the loss of the country.

Our hold is so precarious, that a very little mismanagement might accomplish our expulsion: and the course of events may be of itself sufficient, without any mismanagement.

We are to appearance more powerful in India now than we ever

* 'I cannot agree in this opinion' [Bentinck].

were. Nevertheless our downfall may be short work.* When it commences it will probably be rapid: and the world will wonder more at the suddenness with which our immense Indian empire may vanish, than it has done at the surprising conquest that we have achieved.

The cause of this precariousness is, that our power does not rest in actual strength, but on impression. Our whole real strength consists in the few European regiments, speaking comparatively, that are scattered singly over the vast sphere of subjugated India. That is the only portion of our soldiery whose hearts are with us, and whose constancy can be relied on in the hour of trial.† All our native establishments, military or civil, are the followers of fortune. They serve us for their livelihood, and generally serve us well. From a sense of what is due to the hand that feeds them, which is one of the virtues that they most extol, they may often display fidelity under trying circumstances; but in their inward feelings they partake more or less of the universal disaffection which prevails against us,‡ not from bad government, but from natural and irresistible antipathy; and were the wind to change, to use a native expression, and set in steadily against us, we could not expect that their sense of honour, although there might be splendid instances of devotion, would keep the mass on our side, in opposition to the common feeling, which, with one view, might for a time unite all India, from one end to the other.

Empires grow old, decay, and perish. Ours in India can hardly be called old, but seems destined to be shortlived. We appear to have passed the brilliancy and vigour of our youth, and it may be that we have reached premature old age. We have ceased to be the wonder that we were to the natives, the charm which once encompassed us has been dissolved, and our subjects have had leisure to enquire why they have been subdued. The consequences of the enquiry may be seen here after.

If these speculations are not devoid of foundation, they are useful in directing our minds to the contemplation of the real nature of our power, and in preventing a delusive belief of its impregnability. Our greatest danger is not from a Russian invasion, but from the fading of the impression of our invincibility from the minds of the native inhabitants of India. The disaffection, which would willingly root us out, exists abundantly. The concurrence of circumstances sufficient to call it into general action may at any time happen.

* 'This is very possible' [Bentinck].

† 'Perfectly true. The disproportion between the European and native army is quite unintelligible in point of policy. We have a much *greater force* of the latter than we want for our actual defence, even if no increase of the former should take place. But supposing the army reduced to the lowest requisite amount, *even then* a portion of it might be advantageously converted into an European force. Thirty instead of twenty thousand Europeans, would, I think, completely establish the security, which under possible, but not probable, circumstances might vanish in a moment. The Company's European regts. ought not to survive the charter. They are equally expensive as the king's troops and very inferior' [Bentinck].

‡ 'I fear there is truth in this remark' [Bentinck].

The most obvious mode of strengthening our power in India would be by a large increase of our European forces,* but as we could not find funds for the consequent expense, that measure is impracticable.†

Whether we maintain or lose India, does not depend on its being governed in the name of the king or in that of the Company. Our fate most probably will be the same either way. But as long as we retain possession, we are bound to do all the good in our power to our subjects. Although the hope of gaining their attachment be utterly vain, we may often mitigate and neutralize their disaffection; and by the longer continuance of our rule, that feeling may be less predominant as seems already to be the case in our oldest possessions, where the inhabitants have been habituated to our government for more than one generation. Even however under a certainty of permanent disaffection our duty towards the governed is the same. We are bound to give them the best government in our power.‡

Will India then be best governed by continuing the channel of the Company, or directly by the ministers of the crown?

As concerning the native population of India, it seems to be a matter of indifference, for whatever improvements can be introduced into our local administration, may be equally effected in the one case as the other. Even now India on all great questions is governed by the board of control. Any obvious improvement could be introduced, if it did not violate the Company's charter. And it would only be necessary, in the new charter, to take care that no stipulations were admitted, which might preclude the power of improvement.

Although it seems to be a matter of indifference to the native population, whether India be governed through the Company or directly by the ministers of the crown, it is not so to another class of subjects.

The Europeans, British, settled in India, and not in the Company's service, and to those might be added generally the East Indians of mixed breed, will never be satisfied with the Company's government. Well or ill-founded they will always attach to it the notion of monopoly and exclusion; they will consider themselves comparatively discountenanced and unfavoured; and will always look with desire to the substitution of a king's government. For the contentment of this class, which, for the benefit of India and security of our Indian empire, ought greatly to increase in numbers and importance, the introduction of a king's government is undoubtedly desirable.§

It is also desirable on another account. The existence of king's courts and a Company's government produces the appearance of disunion in our administration. The relative positions of the courts and the government are misunderstood, or are not what they ought to be. The judges themselves seem to conceive, indeed in some instances have

* 'Certainly' [Bentinck].

† 'I am not of this opinion. The difference of charge is not much more than 2 to 1. How much greater the efficiency!' [Bentinck].

‡ 'Excellent doctrine' [Bentinck].

§ 'I think this opinion well founded' [Bentinck].

openly declared, that they are here purposely to check and control the Company's government, and that they are above the government, which can only approach their high tribunal as a humble petitioner. This state of things does not exist in any other country. Everywhere else the courts of justice, even where perfectly independent, as they ought to be, in their judicial decisions, regard themselves as forming a part of the general administration of the country. Nowhere else would they dream of bringing the government of the country into contempt, for their own exaltation. This assumed superiority of the king's courts is encouraged and insisted on by the European population not in the Company's service; and a wrong feeling on the subject will always exist, until the difference of king and Company be abolished, by the introduction of a royal government.*

The present difference between the king's and Company's armies is another inconvenience, which the establishment of a government directly on the part of the crown would obviate. This difference is disliked chiefly by the king's officers serving in India, who see those of the Company in possession of all staff offices, excepting the few belonging exclusively to the king's troops, and are also precluded from numerous advantageous and honourable employments in civil branches of the service, which are open to Company's officers. It is just that it should be so, while the two armies are constituted as at present and entirely separate; but if an amalgamation could take place, without injury to either party, it is desirable that such distinctions should cease; and the establishment of a king's government would tend to produce that effect.

A king's government is also the one which is most likely to be permanent, as the Company's, held under a charter, must be liable to periodical changes and revisions, whether for renewal or subversion.

These are the reasons which occur to the mind in favour of the introduction, ostensibly as well as really, of a king's government: and on the other hand, there do not appear to be any reasons of a permanent character in favour of the continuance of the Company's government, as far as India alone is concerned. But, in the first instance, the natives perhaps, distrusting the consequence of the change, would rather prefer the continuance of that government to which they have been accustomed; and, as has been before remarked every improvement in local administration may be effected through the medium of a nominal Company's government, as well as through any other form.

On the whole the king's government seems preferable; but whether the government be king's or Company's the prospect of improvement is not flattering.

The revenues of India are not equal to the support of its expenses, and judging from past experience are not likely to become so. We may and we must reduce our ordinary expenditure within our income; but we have a heavy debt to discharge, and we have no security against

* 'Much truth in this remark' [Bentinck].

future wars, which must increase our financial difficulties. There is little hope of a permanent reduction of establishments. There is a continual tendency to increase. Some branches of revenue are likely to fall off. There is no satisfactory assurance of great increase in any others. The sea customs, now exceedingly low, are susceptible of improvement, but it can only be by levying higher duties on the trade with Europe to which the merchants of England would object. There is indeed the remote prospect of increase of revenue from the increased influx of Europeans; but this is at present speculative;* and whether an increase of revenue or, in consequence of more expensive establishments, an increase of expense will be the result of the extension of the European population, is uncertain.

It is therefore to be apprehended, that the government will not possess the power of reducing taxation, as it will hardly have the means with its present revenue of supporting its expenses. The former may be the less regretted, as the effect of reducing taxation, in any shape in which it would have to be accomplished, is far from certain. The only branch of our taxation, that can be called excessive, is the land revenue, the chief resource that maintains the state. A reduction in this, justly apportioned, would contribute to the comfort of the mass of our subjects, the village population, but would not make them wealthy. If apportioned without great care, and strict regard to justice, it would not even promote their comfort, and might probably do them injury. That reduction, however, whatever would be its consequences, we are not in a condition to afford. Our government in India is not a national government, that can rely on the affections of its subjects for defence against foreign invasion. It is the curse of a government over a conquered country, that it cannot trust the people. Our subjects are internal enemies, ready at least for change, if not ripe for insurrection. The best affected are passive votaries of fate. We retain our dominion only by a large military establishment; and, without a considerable force of British troops, the fidelity of our native soldiery could not be relied on.

It would be difficult to calculate what force precisely is requisite. It is easy to see that for security we have not too much. It seems that we ought to maintain all that we can pay;† and to pay we require all the revenue that we can raise. A reduction of taxation for any beneficial consequence appears to be hopeless.

No government perhaps ever made a greater reduction of taxation, or, in other words, a greater sacrifice of the right to acknowledged and usual public revenue, than did the Bengal government, prospectively, in 1793, in what was termed the permanent settlement of the land revenue. But what was the consequence of this sacrifice? It did not benefit the mass of the population interested in land. On the contrary it practically destroyed their rights. It only transferred the revenue of

* 'And, it may be added, distant' [Bentinck].
† 'I am not quite of this opinion' [Bentinck].

government to some individuals, who had no title to it, without any beneficial effect on the public interests as far as is perceptible to common observation.*

If reduction of taxation, and improvement as its consequence, are not to be expected, from what other quarter may improvement be looked for?

From none suddenly. It is to be hoped that our government is gradually producing improvement: that we are progressively enlightening the minds of the natives: that security is promoting wealth: and it may reasonably be expected, that the increase of European settlers will have very beneficial effects.† But improvement can only be gradual. No change in the administration of the government can produce any sudden effect. The local government has always been disposed to improve the condition of the people. Barring restrictions on the settlement of Europeans, which seems to have been most unwise, but has progressively been much relaxed, no obvious improvement for the benefit of the people, consistent with the receipt of the revenue necessary for the maintenance of our power, has been, or would be, neglected under the Company's government. There has been no want of benevolence either in the government or its subordinate officers; but the means of improvement are not obvious.

The most obvious, but that hitherto much disputed, is the admission of Europeans to settle and hold property in India. Their settlement has never been entirely prohibited, and latterly has been facilitated and encouraged; but the removal of remaining restrictions on their lawfully acquiring and holding property is necessary; and for their satisfaction the cessation of the power possessed by the government of sending them out of the country is indispensable‡. The existence of this power is dwelt upon by them as the greatest hardship to which they are subject. They profess to regard it as destroying the value of all property,§ even if they were allowed to hold it, and rendering their situation so precarious as to preclude the probability that anyone possessing capital would voluntarily expose himself to the danger of losing it, by becoming subject to the exercise of this arbitrary power.

These obstacles removed, and the settlement of Europeans allowed to take its natural course, progressive improvement is the result that may be anticipated. There must be added the abolition of those unjust distinctions which exclude the products of India from the markets of the United Kingdom, the consequences of which abolition are incalculable, and may be immense. It is impossible to foresee to what extent

* 'Quite true' [Bentinck].

† 'Certainly' [Bentinck].

‡ 'I much doubt the expediency of the cessation of this power: the government from the nature of our power must be absolute' [Bentinck].

§ 'This is their opinion: but *how few* cases of transmission have occurred in latter years. When Europeans increase in number, the occasions calling for the exercise of this power must be more frequent. On the other hand, public opinion every year gains additional strength, and the probability of abuse of power much less likely. But this individual hardship cannot be admitted for one moment to outweigh the certain public danger if the power were withdrawn' [Bentinck].

the resources of this productive country may be drawn forth, by European enterprise, skill and capital. These are our best prospects of improvement.

The extensive establishment of European settlers would give us also a strength in the country, which we do not at present possess. We have no root; were our troops and civil authorities by any disaster driven out of a province, there would be no vestige of us left. No part of the population is interested for our return or leaving any trace of our existence. It seems wonderful that the policy acted on in a conquered country should have been to exclude our own countrymen from acquiring influence among the people. It may be too late to prevent the injurious effects of such a policy; as the operation of a more natural course must be slow, and the greater part of a century has been thrown away.

The increase of European population will necessarily be accompanied by considerable changes in our judicial administration. Europeans must be made amenable to provincial courts. It will probably be necessary to introduce attorneys who have had education and practice in English law. The distinction of king's courts and Company's must be abolished. All must be united in one system. There must be a local code for India, and a local legislature. All our subjects, European, Christian, native Christian, Hindu, Mahomedan, foreigner etc. ought to be under one code of laws in whatever concerns them in common, retaining their own in whatever is peculiar to each sect.*

The East Indians of mixed breed ought to be placed on the same footing with British subjects.† They are now held to be natives, and although Christian are subject to Mahomedan law.

Whatever improvement may suggest itself as obviously beneficial and practicable will no doubt be adopted, either at the time of that great change, or previously. But it is less difficult to perceive that there are defects in the administration of justice, than it is to render it perfect. The present judicial establishment is more expensive than might be needed for administering justice to the native population according to their own simple method: but contemplating an accession of European population, we can hardly look to a more economical establishment. We must universally provide such courts as will give satisfaction to European as well as native subjects; and this may not be possible without an increase of expense.

The police establishments from the same cause will probably have to undergo great changes. The police at present is understood to be generally efficient. It is no doubt in some respects a source of annoyance and oppression to the people, as is almost every part of our native official establishments: but it is very difficult to rectify this evil. Many

* 'I cannot imagine a difference of opinion upon these points' [Bentinck].

† 'I cannot see the justice or policy of giving to East Indians any advantages over the natives. They possess no superiority in education, and are much inferior in wealth and importance in society' [Bentinck].

gentlemen have made the attempt with the best intentions, but generally with little success. Power and the abuse of it seem inseparable in our native establishments. The theoretical remedy which has been frequently advocated is to raise the characters of our native servants by augmenting their allowances. The scheme is impracticable, because it would be ruinous, even if there were any hope of success in its object, which may be doubted.*

Much has been said of late of native agency, which, if it be meant thereby to exclude European superintendence and vigilance, seems visionary and utterly impossible. If it is to be combined with European direction, the native agent must remain much the same as he has always been, a subordinate officer with a moderate salary. We cannot afford to pay double for native agency and European surveillance. All that has been written in favour of the extension of native agency, is indefinite and rather unintelligible. All our subordinate agents are natives. It is surprising how little Europeans have been employed in the lower affairs of the state. The use of natives in the exercise of considerable functions in the judicial department is great and increasing; but they remain subordinate and moderately paid. If it be intended to substitute native for European agency in the higher offices, the attempt will fail. When native agency predominates we shall be turned out of the country.† We are not here by the will of the natives. Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis. European agency must still occupy all important positions, for we cannot depend on the agency of natives.

They have never been excluded from any employment in which it has appeared that they could be serviceable. Nor is it necessary to exclude them now or hereafter. Neither is it expedient to force them unnaturally into new employment, for the sake of a theory. Let them be employed whenever it is deemed desirable. But it does not seem natural that the increase of European population and the extension of native agency in the higher offices should advance together. The patrons of the one can hardly be the advocates of the other.

It must be doubted, whether even the civil service will be able to retain its exclusive privileges, after the extensive establishment of European settlers. At present the whole administration of the Company is conducted or superintended by the members of this singular service, destined to the performance of the most important duties in the dawn of manhood. They are not generally deficient in integrity, or application to business, or benevolence to the people. What is most wanted is heartfelt zeal for the public interest, rarely perhaps to be found in every body of men. On the whole it may be doubted whether the duties performed by the civil service could be better performed under any other arrangement by the same members; but the necessity of employing unfit men

* 'I entirely differ from these sentiments as well as from those in the following para.' [Bentinck].

† 'I cannot agree to this conclusion. If the civil and military power, as under the native governments, were united in one and the same person, this remark might be just. We can only lose India by a general defection in our army' [Bentinck].

in highly important offices is peculiar to this service, and demands correction.*

If all the young men sent out for service in India were originally appointed to the army, the government would be able to select those best qualified for the civil service, and on the disappointment of its expectations in any instance, could remand a person unfit for civil business to duties more suitable to him.†

This arrangement however possibly might not agree with the future disposal of the army; which ought to be transferred to the crown. Its existence as a separate body calling the Company master, and yet having no respect for the Company, or its authorities, is incompatible with that spirit of subordination and discipline and loyal devotion, without which an army may become dangerous. The Company's army has always done its duty in the field nobly; and no army in the world perhaps has a higher tone in that respect. But it exists in a state of continual discontent, from the comparison, which is ever before its eyes, of the scantiness of military allowances with the large salaries of the civil service; and is driven almost to frenzy‡ by any attempt to reduce those allowances already considered too small. Therefore the late orders from home, reducing the batta of the Bengal army at some stations, besides being severe on present incumbents, were most unwise, because they were sure to excite a feeling, far outweighing in mischief any good that could possibly be expected from carrying them into effect.

The Indian army although it be taken under the crown must nevertheless continue in some respects a separate body, that is, it must be officered, as at present, by officers brought up in its own bosom. Officers from the European portion of his Majesty's army ought not to be transferred to the direct command of native troops; but officers from the Indian army might be allowed to purchase, or to be renewed, into the European army, and the prospect of this at some period would form a bond of connection between the two services; which might be strengthened by putting the officers of both services on the same footing, from the time of their ceasing to be regimental officers, that is from their promotion to be general officers, giving to the Indian officer the privilege, in common with the European officer, of being eligible to serve his country in the fields of Europe. At the same time the staff in India, and the employments now held exclusively by Company's officers, ought to be common to both branches of the king's army; nominations to be made, not at the horse guards, but by the authorities in India, from officers serving in India with the exception of general officers who might be appointed, either from home, or from the service in India.

The Indian armies of the three presidencies could not probably be

* 'This correction is wanted to a great degree. It is the necessary effect of monopoly' [Bentinck].

† 'This would be a great advantage, not of course incompatible with patronage' [Bentinck].

‡ 'Too true!' [Bentinck].

united, under present circumstances, without considerable inconvenience and dissatisfaction. Union is otherwise desirable, and would facilitate any reduction of the army that might be practicable. Considering the composition of the native portion of the several armies, and the necessity of attending to locality in posting them, the difficulties of a change seem to preponderate, but may not be insurmountable. If to be effected, the union might most easily be made after the transfer of the Company's army to the crown; because then such arrangements might accompany the measure, as would lead the officers to regard themselves as members of the British army generally;* and not as merely belonging to the army of a particular presidency, with isolated interests, which is the feeling that now prevails, and would render any attempts to join the three armies at present unpopular.

This question may in some degree depend on the previous determination of another, namely, whether the present division of India into distinct presidencies, with the expensive machinery of separate governments and councils shall be maintained.

No single government, as the Indian governments are at present constituted, would be equal to the management of the details of internal administration of all the three presidencies. The supreme government is not fully adequate to it in that of Bengal alone, notwithstanding the aid of several subordinate boards;† and would be more efficient for general purposes if it were relieved from the greater part of those details.

The system of separate presidencies seems in some respects to work well and to justify an entire change would require some obvious and great advantage which is not manifest.

But it is undoubtedly requisite that there should be a unity of authority and that every part of India should in every respect be under one supreme government.

There might be in each of the three presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay a deputy governor and a board for internal administration: and over all a governor-general with a supreme council.‡

This seems at first sight a more expensive arrangement than the present, but as the local governments would be limited to internal administration, the subordinate boards which at present exist in the several departments might be wholly or partially dispensed with.

Each presidency might require a separate commander of the forces; but there might be a commander-in-chief for the whole, who should be equally commander-in-chief for all the troops, and not as at present commander-in-chief for the king's troops only and commander of the Company's forces in Bengal alone.

The commander-in-chief ought to be a member of the supreme

* 'A very just point' [Bentinck].

† 'It is impossible to get through even the reading of the details of this presidency' [Bentinck].

‡ 'A deputy governor the officer commanding the troops and one civil councillor would seem sufficient' [Bentinck].

council in which all important political and military questions would be determined; but the commanders at the respective presidencies need not be members of the presidency boards, as the business of the subordinate governments would be confined chiefly to local civil administration, in which the commanders of the forces could be of little use. The boards might be assisted, if necessary, with military knowledge, by having a military officer as secretary in the military department, as is already the case in Bengal.

The nomination to appointments, or what is commonly called the patronage, in all the forces, ought to belong to the commander-in-chief; and the patronage of the three governments to the governor-general. This is necessary for the due influence of these high authorities, for without the power of dispensing benefit, they would be of little consequence personally in the estimation of the community.

Whenever circumstances will permit, that is whenever the governor-general may be a general officer of sufficient military rank, it will be better that he should also be commander-in-chief. In this conquered empire, where the army forms so preponderating a part of the European community, the existence of a separate head to the army creates a power, which sometimes becomes a sort of rival to that of the governor-general. Either the commander-in-chief acquires popularity at the expense of the governor-general, or both are unpopular. The periods of greatest discontent in the army will be found to have been when the offices were separate. The army has been best pleased when they have been united.

This union of the two offices is not suggested as an arrangement in no instance to be deviated from; it is supposed that the function of authorities would generally be advantageous; but if a rule had existed, excluding from the governor-generalship every person who could not be commander-in-chief, we should have lost the administrations of Lord Wellesley and Warren Hastings.

The supreme government might consist of the governor-general, the commander-in-chief, and two other members. Civil or military servants from either of the three presidencies to be eligible to the supreme council. More members from other professions might be added for legislation. One or more secretaries, as need might be, to be attached to the supreme government, and taken from any of the presidencies.

The subordinate governments might consist of a deputy governor and two members of the board at each presidency. The members of the board to be selected from the civil servants of the same presidency.

Officers of the Indian army to be eligible, as well as officers of the British army, to the offices of commander-in-chief and commanders of forces.

The nomination of governor-general, commander-in-chief, deputy governors, commanders of forces, members of the supreme council and members of presidency boards, and general officers on the staff, to be made by the home authorities. All subordinate appointments to

emanate from the governor-general or the commander-in-chief in India. The government at home must be careful to leave inviolate to the government in India the power of selecting its agents in the administration of the country, and to limit the selection nearly as at present to persons duly qualified by local education in the civil or military service of the state in India.

The supreme government ought to possess the power of controlling and directing the subordinate governments in the details of the internal administration of the several presidencies, whenever it may see fit to interfere, as well as in every other respect. The presidency governments in short to be thoroughly subordinate; to report their proceedings to the supreme government, and to have no separate correspondence with the home authorities, unless to convey intelligence when it may be useful for them to do so.

Political, military, financial affairs, legislation, and all general interests would come within the peculiar province of the supreme government; which would be the more efficient for its duties by being relieved from the details of internal presidency administration.

The ordinary seat of the supreme government might be as at present in Calcutta which is certainly the capital city of British India. But if a central position be preferred, Saugor offers itself as nearly the heart of India. It would however be inconvenient and expensive to make a new capital, and centricality of position is of the less consequence as the supreme government ought to have the power of moving wherever its superintendence might be most required.

The subordinate governments also ought to have the power of moving within the limits of their respective territories, under the orders of the supreme government.

The seats of the subordinate governments would be naturally at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Or if the seat of the supreme government were at Calcutta, that of the local government of the Bengal presidency might be at Allahabad or Monghyr; but this arrangement cannot possibly throw on the supreme government the local administration of affairs at Calcutta, and so far diminish its efficiency for general government, by involving it in internal details.

149. *S. R. Lushington to Bentinck*

Madras. 25 October 1829

If you agree with us in thinking that the resident and the troops should be withdrawn from Travancore you can reserve this larger packet for perusal at a period of more leisure: but if you determine still to keep a resident and troops then I must trouble you to read these papers, and I think they will satisfy you that things cannot go on peacefully and prosperously there between the present resident and raja.

If you adopt our recommendation I shall request Colonel Morison to give me his aid at the presidency in framing the details of the new treaty. I propose to employ him afterwards in revising our ordnance establishments where his experience, professional talents and great capacity for business will enable him to render good public service here, and furnish an example of judicious reduction that may be followed perhaps with advantage at all the presidencies in that expensive branch of our expenditure.

I hope you will decide upon Travancore before you go and send us your decision quickly. The sooner Colonel Morison is away from Travancore the better, for he is too fastidious to make fair allowance for the natural feelings and desire of the young raja, and in showing such a decided preference for the old rani he creates a party against the new government. You will see that the quarrel with the raja has been upon a most [trifling] point, whether his own father should have a seat when the son was enthroned, and when he visited the resident.

You will see my dear Lord from the copy of an answer to Mr. Swinton's letter that we have felt no embarrassment in regard to Travancore on account of the reference to the court respecting Tanjore. There is no analogy in the two cases; but we think that your secretaries sometimes adopt a line of rebuke which we as a good servant of the honourable John Company do not stand in need of. I only want to know your wishes to execute them con amore.

We have no monsoon yet, but hope and think it is brewing; and may heaven send us a good one for it prevents many evils.

I send a little sketch for your consideration as the basis of a new treaty, which can I am sure be made whatever you think reasonable and just.

150. *F. Wilder to A. Stirling*

Nagpur. 25 October 1829

My dear Sir,

I duly received your letter of the 30th ultimo, and should sooner have returned an answer; but as the proposal conveyed in that communication was of a nature I had never anticipated, and the particular object of the reference to me was to ascertain the raja's free and unconstrained sentiments on the subject, I deemed it proper, before making any reply, not only to have a personal conference with his highness, but also to obtain his unreserved wishes in writing, after having full time for deliberation.

It was the more necessary to sound the raja regarding this proposition before pronouncing an opinion how it be received by him, because his highness had never, on any occasion, expressed the slightest

dissatisfaction with existing arrangements. Some of the articles of the treaty giving the British government a power of interference in all matters connected with the management of the country, his highness once or twice mentioned a wish might be modified, as also that the amount of the expenses he might be called upon to contribute, agreeably to the 11th article, might be limited to a fixed sum; but the transfer of the army he never entertained the most remote idea of, and never expected anything beyond the restoration of the districts reserved by us for its support, on the expiration of the five years settlement in June 1832.

However, though the raja has always appeared contented with matters as they exist at present, I felt confident he would eagerly embrace any terms that placed him as a sovereign prince in the possession of his whole territory, and the command and patronage of his army, and accordingly when I communicated to his highness the substance of your letter, he at once declared himself most ready to pay into the British treasury a subsidy of eight lakhs of rupees per annum on the conditions therein offered; viz. that the present treaty be so modified as to put him on an equal footing of independence with other princes of similar rank and importance; that the whole territory be transferred to his entire management and control, and he be only required to provide a sufficient number of troops for the ordinary protection of his subjects and the performance of internal duties, the subsidiary force being made available, as agreed by the fourth article of the treaty, for the protection of the Nagpur dominions and maintenance of the public peace; and that the subsidy of eight lakhs be considered as absolving the prince from all further pecuniary demands of every kind whatsoever.

The raja being himself extremely anxious for this arrangement, it is not at all possible that he will alter his mind; but, as I am always in the habit, after an interview on business, of sending his highness next day the substance of the conference in writing, in order to obtain a reply under his own signature, and thus prevent misconceptions which so frequently occur when the communications are merely verbal, I have thought it as well to take this precaution in the present instance. At the same time, I have given the raja fully to understand that as I was simply desired to state my opinion whether I thought the project would be agreeable to him or not, without any authority to communicate it, he must not consider anything as final, until proposed in a more regular form.

But, although the plan will undoubtedly be advantageous for the British government in a pecuniary point of view, and the raja likewise is desirous of its accomplishment, I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous in recommending that it should not take place till June 1832. By that time the present five years' settlement of the reserved districts concluded under our guarantee will have expired. Again, the capability of the raja for so extended and responsible a charge will be

better ascertained after further experience how he manages what he has already, and by that period also we shall be able with more confidence to judge whether a probable continuance of the present tranquil state of affairs will safely admit of the arrangement, while the delay, moreover, of another two years and a half will under the measure be less severe upon the officers of the auxiliary force, whose prospects will suffer such a shock from this sudden and unlooked for change.

Under any circumstances, it will be impossible, without great confusion of accounts to make over the remaining territory until the close of the current year in June next, and should government consider postponement beyond that date to be unnecessary. I hope the raja may be allowed, on the force being disbanded, to grant a donation of six months' pay and batta to the officers and three months to the men, with indemnification to the former for the heavy losses they will sustain by the relinquishment of all their property here. I trust also that the local officers, who are very few in number and who will thus be thrown upon the wide world again, may be pensioned. The raja has assured me of his willingness to meet any proposal from government to this effect, and considering the valuable and efficient services which have been performed by the auxiliary force, as well as the material benefits which his highness will derive from an arrangement so totally unexpected by him, I really think this may be permitted with perfect propriety.

Being anxious to embark for Europe in January, which I find I shall not be able to accomplish, unless I leave Nagpur for Calcutta the first week in that month (a few days sooner than I originally intended), I shall be extremely obliged by your favouring me with an early reply to this letter, should government have any instructions they wish me to execute before I quit. A modified treaty on the terms proposed can easily be drawn out and settled before I go, as well as any other engagements on the part of the raja which may be necessary in consequence; and, as Captain Gordon has been and always will be present with me at my interviews with his highness and therefore will be fully acquainted with the whole proceedings of the negotiation, that officer will very well be able to carry the arrangements into effect after my departure.

151. *Bentinck's minute on army retrenchment*

28 October 1829

I have not had leisure to enter upon a deliberate examination and comparison of the European commissioned staff of the armies of the three presidencies with a view to equalization and retrenchment of any thing that appears unnecessary, but it has occurred to me from a cursory inspection of the army lists and of a return of the staff of the

Madras army with which I have been favoured by Colonel Conway, that judging from corresponding departments in Bengal, the number of staff officers employed under the government of Fort St. George is in some cases excessive. I should strongly suspect for instance that the sixteen pay masters specified in the accompanying return,* cannot have full employment, unless needless labour be imposed upon them through unnecessary division of offices and complication of accounts, when I find that the whole disbursements of the Bengal army are carried on by seven pay masters. I should also conceive that the departments of the quarter master general† and judge advocate general‡ at Madras might, with reference to the state of the corresponding departments in Bengal, be expediently abridged. I may at least venture to say, that there cannot be any essential call for the distinct appointment of a deputy judge advocate general of his Majesty's forces at Madras. No such office exists under the presidencies of Fort William or Bombay, nor have I ever heard it surmised that inconvenience of any kind is experienced from the want of such a functionary. What may be the precise nature or extent of the duties which fall to the lot of the deputy judge advocate general of his Majesty's troops at Madras to perform I am not apprised. One should think the discharge of them may be provided for by the ordinary establishments, as at other presidencies; and certainly if the necessity for maintaining this appointment be not more apparent to others than to myself the sooner it is abolished the better.

I have not had time, as I have stated, nor am I disposed at present to go through the establishments of the several presidencies for the purpose of forming any opinion as to how far they are efficient and economical in their general constitution and in their subordinate details, on which points indeed it is difficult to speak without more extensive and minute local knowledge than I at this time possess. I shall therefore add only a few more remarks, respecting the Madras staff, to which, in conjunction with the above, I would recommend that we request the attention of the government of Fort St. George.

I perceive from the Madras army list that the officers commanding the Hyderabad, Jalna and Nagpur forces, have each on their staff a Persian interpreter, a post master, and a staff or cantonment surgeon. The first of these appointments will not be found among the staff of any of the Bengal field forces, nor can the officer commanding the troops at the places just enumerated have much occasion, under the present circumstances, for a Persian interpreter, although, during a period of war, or when it happens that a military commandant is invested with political functions, the aid of a Persian interpreter or assistant may be

* 13 of the first class, 3 of the second—and further, the interpreter and quarter master of each corps is also a pay master.

† *1 qr. mr genl. 2 deputies*, 4 assistt. and 7 depy. assistts. that is 14 officers, in all attached to that dept. while in Bengal, we are restricted by the court's orders to 8—viz. 1 chief 1 deputy 2 assistants and 4 sub assistants.

‡ They have at Madras one depy. judge advocate genl. more than we have in Bengal, exclusive of the depy. judge advocate genl. of his Majesty's troops.

advantageous. The second appointment, that of post master, is held under this presidency as deputy on a small salary by one of the staff of the force, such as the deputy assistant adjutant general, brigade major, pay master, etc; and the duties of the third are in like manner performed by the senior regimental surgeon present, with a monthly allowance of 30 rupees. The Bangalore troops have also I observe an officer of the rank of captain taken from his regiment to perform the duties of post master, and another of the same rank to execute the very little I am told there is to do in the barrack department at that place. These seem to be instances of a lavish multiplication of appointments, which merits notice, especially with reference to the state, as to absentees, of the 18th and 49th regiments of Madras native infantry, to which the post masters (captains) at Hyderabad and Bangalore belong, these corps having each four captains absent on staff employ.

The events of the last few years having stripped the presidency of Fort St. George of much of the political importance it formerly enjoyed, it may be assumed I think that the influence of a smaller force than the existing one, of artillery, cavalry and infantry, would serve to uphold respect for our government in that quarter, and to secure throughout the Madras territories, of which the population bears no proportion whatever to that of Bengal, the maintenance of regular judicial and fiscal administration. To follow out this assumption would lead me to examine how far Madras troops might advantageously occupy any of the stations now assigned to those of Bengal or Bombay, or vice versa, or to enquire what strength or distribution of force may be required for that presidency; but avoiding these questions, I would only now wish to offer for the consideration of the Madras government whether the rifle battalion which is a corps extra to the establishment and officered from regiments of the line, may not be dispensed with, and also whether their two battalions of pioneers of ten companies each do not admit of revision and curtailment.

The rifles corps being deemed remarkably efficient, the Madras military authorities will feel a natural repugnance to disband or disperse amongst other regiments, so well organized a body of men, who have passed thro' the stages of drill and discipline which fit them for the expertness of rifle service. But the difficulty may be compromised, and the reluctance to reduction, so far as this corps is concerned, subdued, if it be suggested that the rifle battalion might be numbered and inserted into the line, in lieu of any infantry regular regiment which may be selected to be broken up instead of it, transferring bodily the European commissioned officers to the rifle regiment. This suggestion is merely thrown out to obviate those objections to reduction which may arise from unwillingness to part with this select corps of the Madras infantry.

With reference to Bombay, I have reason to believe that Sir John Malcolm is framing a scheme for reducing its military expenditure, which will embrace the disbandment of two extra infantry regiments borne on that establishment.

As regards the details of departments and establishments I entertain no doubt that, as they continue to be sifted, we shall at each presidency be able to avoid many expenses which are now incurred from our keeping up equipments which a more accurate knowledge of particulars will probably show to be unnecessary. On all minor points much must certainly be left to the judgment of the local governments; but if the principle of the equalization of the pecuniary condition of the three armies be at all admitted, I know nothing more likely to promote the working of it, than the mutual communication of all financial arrangements having direct reference to the forces, whether their tendency be to increase or diminish the charges. I am quite clear upon one point, viz. that no new general or regimental staff appointment (European or native) should be created, that no addition should be made to the allowances of branches of the staff or of individuals composing them, nor establishments be augmented at the sister presidencies, without previously imparting the measure for the consideration of the supreme government. Without some arrangement of this description it will be impossible ever to assimilate the three armies in many important particulars, or to place their rules and regulations, their pay tables, their equipments, or their general systems and subordinate details upon anything like a corresponding footing, or gradually to prepare and pave the way for that junction, union, or general equalization which must sooner or later undoubtedly take place.

The perusal of Bombay general orders of the 19th ultimo gave rise to some of these observations. I learn from them that the honourable the governor in council has authorized, under certain circumstances, advances to officers for the provision of quarters, on the following scale:—

To Field Officers . .	2000 rupees
Captains	1500 —
Subalterns	1000 —

These advances are to be repaid by monthly stoppages of house rent allowance. The supreme government might not have objected to the concession of this indulgence, had the expediency of it been submitted for their consideration, but partial measures of this kind are apt to prove embarrassing, as exhibiting the several governments under the appearance of being actuated by different dispositions towards their military servants. In the same sheet of general orders I find it directed, that a staff salary of five rupees per mensem be established for the situation of hospital orderly in a native regiment, in addition to the regimental allowances of the individual holding the appointment. In the Bengal army no such situation as hospital orderly exists, nor does any inconvenience result from the non employment of a native soldier in that capacity. We might request from the Bombay government some information relative to the duties which a hospital orderly is required to perform, and whether, as connected with the arrangement, any

reduction has taken place in the number of servants attached to regimental medical establishments.

I have no apprehension that in any quarter it will be objected, that the drift of my proposal to require the sister presidencies to submit for the consideration of the governor-general in council all contemplated creations of new staff appointments, all additions to allowances, and augmentations of establishments, is to throw into our hands more influence and pervading authority in their military matters than we possess under the existing method of doing such things. I need scarcely declare that, in making the proposal, I am actuated by no other motive than a desire to co-operate with the governments of Fort St. George and Bombay, in doing away with inconvenient distinctions, and in bringing gradually and imperceptibly into practice that principle of equalization which the court of directors consider of paramount importance, but which it were idle to expect can ever come into operation, so long as the military systems are conducted by independent agents.

I now propose that the views I entertain on the several topics adverted to in this minute be communicated to the governments of Fort St. George and Bombay, that we forward to them at the same time statements of military reductions and additions which have taken place in Bengal since the 1st of January 1828, that they furnish to the supreme government and to each other similar statements of their respective military revisions, and that corresponding periodical communications be made in future every third month.

In writing to the sister presidencies relative to the subjects I have mentioned, it may be proper to ask, whether the establishments of dooley bearers at Madras and Bombay, and of guides at the latter presidency, could not be put upon a more economical system than that on which the designation they bear of 'corps' leaves one to think they exist. The terms, 'corps of dooley bearers,' 'corps of guides,' are not familiar in Bengal, and convey the notion that these classes of servants are organized upon some permanent scheme of regular dependence and co-operation, which implies considerable expense. Such may not be the case, but to be assured that it is not so, without some important countervailing advantage, will be satisfactory.

152. *W. Bird to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 29 October 1829

My Lord,

The accompanying statement contains all the information I possess in regard to the several points adverted to in your lordship's communication of yesterday's date. I may be able at Benares and Allahabad to obtain further particulars if requisite, but the statement I believe will

be found substantially correct, although having been drawn up entirely from memory, it is unworthy perhaps of being implicitly relied upon by your lordship as an authentic document.

Enclosure in the above

The practice of drowning at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna originates in the relaxation, permitted at that place in favour of incurable disease and old age, of the prohibition contained in the Hindu law with respect to suicide. It does not appear that any expectation of advantage temporal or spiritual is connected with it, but is had recourse to merely in order to get rid of life, by those who are tired of it. Prayagu, by the Hindus commonly called Pryag, and by the Mahomedans Allahabad, is a place to which Hindus from all points of India resort to bathe, it being supposed by them, that three sacred rivers, the Ganges, the Jumna, and the Saraswati, unite their streams here.

No return of the number of persons who annually drowned themselves at this spot, before Mr. Colvin put an end to the practice, is supposed to be procurable. It was allowed to go on uninterfered with, and almost unattended to by the public authorities, until put a stop to as above mentioned. No accurate information, therefore, could probably now be obtained even on the spot, in regard to this point. The number however must have been considerable, if it be true, as stated by Ward in his view of the history and [customs] of the Hindus, that in the year 1806 he was informed by a learned Brahmin, that within the space of two months passed by him at Pryag, thirty persons drowned themselves. But the period of the year is not mentioned, and it may possibly have occurred at the annual fair, held in January, when these drownings were most frequent.

The practice was put an end to about 8 years ago, by secretly removing the boat, which, from some cause or other, had acquired the exclusive privilege of being made use of on these occasions; precautions having been taken to prevent any other from being substituted instead of it. The people who from time to time came according to custom to drown, finding no boat, and nobody to assist them in procuring one, successively went away; and the practice, though previously subsisting from time immemorial, has, since the adoption of this simple expedient, been wholly discontinued.

Some time afterwards, the owner of the boat, who it is understood was a woman, petitioned Mr. Colvin to be compensated for the loss of the *oboli*, from which she derived her subsistence previous to the discontinuance of the practice, and Mr. Colvin accordingly applied to the Benares provincial court for permission to make her an allowance of 5 rupees per annum, but the application was refused, and no further notice has since been taken of the circumstance in any quarter.

153. *Bentinck's observations on the estimated savings of the three presidencies, 1829–30*

30 October 1829

Exclusive of Europe stores, which, being brought into our accounts as a receipt from England and a territorial disbursement here, form part of the charges stated in the accountant general's estimate, the advances made in England during the past 6 years, appear to have averaged about £1,500,000 and altho' under the present act the territory has the benefit of a more advantageous exchange in its accounts with commerce, we must I apprehend, in looking to futurity, take the pound sterling as equivalent at the lowest to ten rupees. Unless therefore, what is not likely, the home charges shall be reduced, we shall require a local surplus of at least 1½ crore to keep things square. It would be no more than prudent to seek an addition of 50 lakhs to meet contingencies and to provide for the liquidation of debt so that we can scarcely be said to have placed the finances of the country on a solid footing until we shall have secured a local surplus of 2 crore of rupees.

Now the sketch estimate for the current year holds out the prospect of a surplus to the amount only of Rs. 8,400,000, and of the receipts for which credit is taken 2,240,000 rupees form no part of our permanent income. On the basis of that estimate therefore we can only reckon upon a surplus of 6,160,000 leaving the sum of Rs. 13,840,000 to be provided for by reduction of charge or increase of revenue, in order to reach the position on which I have above assumed it to be necessary to place the finances.

If, following the principle adopted by the honourable court in their letter of the 12th December 1827, we compare the estimated charges of the current year, exclusive of Europe stores and of advances for salt and opium, with those of 1823/24, we shall find, in the estimate an excess of Rs. 14,779,000 still remaining to be retrenched in order to place the finances in the position indicated by the honourable court.

This result appears to show that I have not exaggerated the exigency which government has to meet, by requiring a net surplus of 50 lakhs and by adding to the home charges, the excess, which (estimating these charges in rupees) the alteration I have thought it prudent to anticipate in the rate of exchange, would occasion, and that on the whole we should not rest satisfied with a surplus of less than 2 crore.

A superficial examination of the several items of which the receipts and charges are composed, would enable one to exhibit grounds for anticipating a considerable amelioration in future years, supposing the tranquillity of the country not to be disturbed. But we shall still apparently be left at a great distance from the point indicated by the home instructions, unless some decided and early steps be taken to expedite retrenchment. It will not suffice to ask whether it be desirable to maintain this or that thing. It seems to be now necessary for the government distinctly to ascertain what amount of income it can securely reckon upon, and

then to decide how the deficiency is best to be supplied; starting with the determination that it must at all events be supplied without the further accumulation of debt already ruinously heavy.

With the above impression I would suggest, that the civil finance committee be authorized to extend the sphere of their enquiries to every item and cause of charge, without exception, and that the estimate for the current year be sent to them, that they may in communication with the accountant general, endeavour to lay before government a clear view of its future financial prospects, to show the precise annual deficit to be provided for, and to submit such arrangements as may appear to them best calculated to secure a surplus of income to the amount required by the instructions of the court of directors. It will be proper that the committee should on this occasion be instructed to regard themselves and to act rather as the confidential advisers of government than as a distinct board. I would further beg leave to suggest that a copy of this minute and of the statement annexed to it, be sent to the governments of Madras and Bombay, that they may be distinctly apprised of the extent of the difficulties which have to be overcome, and that they may clearly perceive the necessity of the constant and strenuous co-operation of all the local governments in the prosecution of economical reform, if we would fulfil the injunctions of the home authorities or avoid the most ruinous embarrassment.

154. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Private. Copy

Calcutta. 1 November 1829

My dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 5th of May, containing an anonymous letter from Hyderabad representing the burdensome nature of the European establishment annexed to the contingent and the further extension of the charge by the resident beyond what it was under Sir Charles Metcalfe. I called upon Mr. Martin[1] for an exact state of all the appointments, salaries etc. The return made to you is not correct and Mr. Martin has I think satisfactorily accounted for the additions made to it. But I entirely agree with you in every sentiment respecting the system itself. I cannot expect for my satisfaction that you will expend uselessly so much of your valuable time as the perusal of the accompanying papers would require, but otherwise you would see how entirely my previously recorded sentiments concur with your own; and I promise you, whether the contingent be kept up or not the cost shall be much diminished and the corps shall be made to assume as much as possible, its natural native character. In time of danger, it might be necessary for our safety, to make all civil and

154. [1] The political resident.

military administration European, but now to appropriate to ourselves individually every lucrative situation, cannot be good policy. I am told that the Nizam does not intend as was reported, to ask that the control of the troops shall be given to him, as well as of the civil administration, but he will probably do so ere long; and I shall be glad that when he does so that we may not have the responsibility of enforcing his arbitrary measures.

Upon the subject of our foreign relations I have to communicate for your and Mr. Loch's information as well as for that of the court, if you should judge fit, that a modification of the treaty of Nagpur has been submitted to the raja and has met with his cordial approbation. The substance is this. By the former treaty we reserved certain districts, yielding thirty lakhs of rupees for the payment of the contingent, which is entirely officered by Europeans and wholly under our command. The amount may be between 4 and 5,000 men. Any surplus revenue was paid into the raja's treasury. It has been proposed to deliver over to the raja the entire management and revenue of the reserved districts and the ordering and arrangement of the military force leaving to him to keep up as much force as he may think sufficient for internal tranquillity and paying to us the sum of eight lakhs of rupees upon the same principle as obtains in all our treaties with the rajput states towards the general defence. All parties will be gainers, the raja in rank, consequence, independence and revenue, and we in relief from interference and responsibility, a more just and liberal policy as regards the employment of natives in native states, and an useful addition to our revenue. It will be necessary perhaps to reserve a right of resuming the management in case of grievous oppression on the part of the raja or his successors. The example of Oudh suggests this precaution; and it may be right to stipulate that a body of horse shall be part of his military force, as in Mysore, but these points have not yet been considered. I shall be disappointed if you do not feel equal satisfaction with myself in this arrangement, which without impairing deprives our paramount power of its offensiveness, and establishes solid grounds of attachment and gratitude. The financial benefit is, in my judgment, of inferior consideration.

155. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Private. Copy

Calcutta. 5 November 1829

My dear Lord,

On the 2nd of November I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 15 of June and feel much gratified by its contents.

Upon many of the questions contained in your letter, our present and preceding despatches will have given you much information.

Upon that of colonization, you will already have received the opinions of council. I never felt a more decided conviction upon any subject. The introduction of European schoolmasters or teachers of all the improvements in agriculture, in moral management, in manufactures, in the use of machinery is one of the greatest benefits that can be conferred upon this country. In all these arts, India has made no improvement; she is as she was, ages ago, and altho' I hear much of the blessings of British government I know not what has been done deserving that appellation, except the establishment of tranquillity; but a consequence of this has been a general levelling of all classes, and the destruction of almost all persons of rank and consideration. I have prepared for your inspection a map showing the *roads* throughout these territories. This is one great index to the state of improvement: it is perhaps that improvement of all others that most promotes the general welfare. Upon this, in Europe, there is no difference of opinion, and I think you will see with astonishment how little has been done. You must always recollect that the government here are the real landowners. When I talk of improvement I really believe that there is not one middle-sized county in England, in which there is not more laid out on general improvement in one year, than in all the three presidencies put together. Since the peace I have been entirely devoted to country pursuits. Farming, canals, drainage etc have been my hobbies, and here, war and foreign politics being no longer our chief avocation, I look at all this country as a great estate, of which I am the chief agent, whose principal business is to improve the condition of the tenantry and to raise the income, not by rackrenting and subletting, but by bringing into play, by judicious management and encouragement, all the resources which its soil and circumstances abundantly offer. The greatest impediment to the execution of these plans is the difficulty of locomotion, the impossibility of seeing with one's own eyes, the actual circumstances, without which it is impossible to form a certain opinion: but I shall do as much as I can, and an approaching escape from the details of the presidency will give more time and leisure for more important business and objects.

You have, my dear lord, a most useful responsibility imposed upon you in providing, upon the renewal of the charter, the best possible government for India. I shall do my utmost in obtaining for you the best local opinions upon the various subjects that interest us in this country.

Please excuse this scrawl.

156. *Bentinck to Peter Auber*

Calcutta. 5 November 1829

My dear Sir,

Since I had the pleasure of writing to you I have received your letters of the 7th and 15th June, which are exceedingly gratifying as marks of your continued kindness and as conveying to me the satisfaction and assurance that the court are not displeased with our measures. I can assure them that we have been hard at work and I flatter myself, that the records which are the best witnesses will give ample proofs of my earnest endeavours to contract the public expense and to enable us to go before parliament upon this score with confidence and security. Of course, our reductions give great dissatisfaction but it has been some consolation for me to learn the truth of what I always apprehended, that had we not done the business ourselves, a parliamentary commission would have been sent out from England!

I always urged this probability upon the attention of the people here, and that the [work] of such a body ignorant as they must be of India, even if they had been old Indians, lopping at random, right and left, would have left them much greater sufferers than at present, and with much less advantage to the public. Now I will venture to say without the fear of contradiction that if the United Kingdom were searched throughout you could not select men more efficient, able, independent, and more imbued with the necessity of a great reduction in our expenditure, than the present finance committee (civil, I mean). Mr. Hill is a great acquisition. I never saw him before, but what I have seen makes me think highly of his character and talents. It is only a pity that the renewal of the charter is coming upon us so quickly and that we cannot have before you all the information which we are collecting and which is so indispensable to a complete understanding of our many vast and complicated questions; and without this how are you to legislate?

Lord Dalhousie is not yet arrived, but we expect him hourly. I had intended to have left this for the upper provinces on the 15th but for the state of the army. I cannot go away without seeing the new chief. I am told that it is much desired by the staff to prevent his lordship going up with us. But there never was a time when the presence of the commander-in-chief was so necessary, not only there where is the main body of the army, but in close connection with the government. It would have been lucky, had the supreme civil and military power been lodged in one hand. I venture to think that things would not have gone the lengths they have done. I am however most happy for my own comfort that such an arrangement is impossible. . . .

I am sorry to say that the investigation into Mr. Ricketts'[1] conduct is not terminated. His own admissions quite suffice to remove him from office, and was I near at hand, I would put an end to the enquiry,

156. [1] Ricketts, Charles. Political resident at Lucknow, Oudh.

which occasions so much scandal, and the appearance [*illeg.*] and weakness which his letters present, so different from those he usually writes, could almost justify them not proceeding further.

The state in which Mr. Ricketts has left the Lucknow residency is beyond measure discreditable; but he is the weakest man alive, I hope he may not be corrupt, but great suspicion attaches to him.

. . . . . .

Will you be so good as to communicate to the chairmen all that I may not have already included in my own letter to them.

157. *Bentinck's minute on* sati

8 November 1829

Whether the question be to continue or to discontinue the practice of suttee, the decision is equally surrounded by an awful responsibility. To consent to the consignment, year after year, of hundreds of innocent victims to a cruel and untimely end, when the power exists of preventing it, is a predicament which no conscience can contemplate without horror. But on the other hand, if heretofore received opinions are to be considered of any value, to put to hazard, by a contrary course, the very safety of the British empire in India, and to extinguish at once all hopes of those great improvements affecting the condition, not of hundreds and thousands, but of millions, which can only be expected from the continuance of our supremacy, is an alternative which, even in the light of humanity itself, may be considered as a still greater evil. It is upon this first and highest consideration alone, the good of mankind, that the tolerance of this inhuman and impious rite can, in my opinion, be justified on the part of the government of a civilized nation. While the solution of this question is appalling from the unparalleled magnitude of its possible results, the considerations belonging to it are such as to make even the stoutest mind distrust its decision. On the one side, religion, humanity under the most appalling form, as well as vanity and ambition, in short all the most powerful influences over the human heart, are arrayed to bias and mislead the judgment. On the other side, the sanction of countless ages, the example of all the Mussulman conquerors, the unanimous concurrence in the same policy of our own most able rulers, together with the universal veneration of the people, seem authoritatively to forbid, both to feeling and to reason, any interference on the exercise of their natural prerogative. In venturing to be the first to deviate from this practice, it becomes me to shew, that nothing has been yielded to feeling, but that reason, and reason alone, has governed the decision. So far indeed from presuming to condemn the conduct of my predecessors, I am ready to say, that in the same circumstances, I should have acted as they have done. So far from being chargeable with political rashness, as this departure from

an established policy might infer, I hope to be able so completely to prove the safety of the measure, as even to render unnecessary any calculation of the degree of risk, which for the attainment of so great a benefit, might wisely and justly be incurred. So far also from being the sole champion of a great and dangerous innovation, I shall be able to prove that the vast preponderance of present authority has long been in favour of abolition. Past experience indeed ought to prevent me, above all men, from coming lightly to so positive a conclusion. When governor of Madras, I saw, in the mutiny of Vellore, the dreadful consequences of a supposed violation of religious customs upon the minds of the native population and soldiery: I cannot forget that I was then the innocent victim of that unfortunate catastrophe, and I might reasonably dread, when the responsibility would justly attach to *me* in the event of failure, a recurrence of the same fate. Prudence and self-interest would counsel me to tread in the footsteps of my predecessors. But in a case of such momentous importance to humanity and civilization, that man must be reckless of all his present or future happiness who could listen to the dictates of so wicked and selfish a policy. With the firm undoubting conviction entertained upon this question, I should be guilty of little short of the crime of multiplied murder, if I could hesitate in the performance of this solemn obligation. I have been already stung with this feeling. Every day's delay adds a victim to the dreadful list, which might perhaps have been prevented by a more early submission of the present question. But during the whole of the present year, much public agitation has been excited, and when discontent is abroad, when exaggerations of all kinds are busily circulated, and when the native army have been under a degree of alarm, lest their allowances should suffer with that of their European officers, it would have been unwise to have given a handle to artful and designing enemies to disturb the public peace. The recent measures of government for protecting the interests of the sepoys against the late reduction of companies, will have removed all apprehension of the intentions of government; and the consideration of this circumstance having been the sole cause of hesitation on my part, I will now proceed, praying the blessing of God upon our counsels, to state the grounds upon which my opinion has been formed.

We have now before us two reports of the nizamat adalat with statements of suttees in 1827 and 1828, exhibiting a decrease of 54 in the latter year as compared with 1827, and a still greater proportion as compared with former years. If this diminution could be ascribed to any change of opinion upon the question, produced by the progress of education or civilization, the fact would be most satisfactory; and to disturb this sure though slow process of self correction would be most impolite and unwise. But I think it may be safely affirmed, that though in Calcutta truth may be said to have made a considerable advance among the higher orders; yet in respect to the population at large, no change whatever has taken place, and that from these causes at least

no hope of the abandonment of the rite can be rationally entertained. The decrease, if it be real, may be the result of less sickly seasons, as the increase in 1824 and 1825 was of the greater prevalence of cholera. But it is probably in a greater measure due to the more open discouragement of the practice given by the greater part of the European functionaries in latter years; the effect of which would be to produce corresponding activity in the police officers, by which either the number would be really diminished, or would be made to appear so in the returns.

It seems to be the very general opinion that our interference has hitherto done more harm than good, by lending a sort of sanction to the ceremony, while it has undoubtedly tended to cripple the efforts of magistrates and others to prevent the practice.

I think it will clearly appear, from a perusal of the documents annexed to this minute, and from the facts which I shall have to adduce, that the passive submission of the people to the influence and power beyond the law, which in fact and practically may be and is often exercised without opposition by every public officer, is so great, that the suppression of the rite would be completely effected by a tacit sanction alone on the part of government. This mode of extinguishing it has been recommended by many of those whose advice has been asked, and no doubt this, in several respects might be a preferable course, as being equally effectual, while more silent, not exciting the alarm which might possibly come from a public enactment, and from which, in case of failure, it would be easy to retreat with less inconvenience and without any compromise of character. But this course is clearly not open to government, bound by parliament to rule by law, and not by their good pleasure. Under the present position of the British empire moreover, it may be fairly doubted, if any such underhand proceeding would be really good policy. When we had powerful neighbours and had greater reason to doubt our own security, expediency might recommend an indirect and more cautious proceeding, but now that we are supreme, my opinion is decidedly in favour of an open, avowed and general prohibition, resting altogether upon the moral goodness of the act, and our power to enforce it, and so decided is my feeling against any half measure, that were I not convinced of the safety of total abolition, I certainly should have advised the cessation of all interference.

Of all those who have given their advice against the abolition of the rite, and have described the ill effects likely to ensue from it, there is no one to whom I am disposed to pay greater deference than Mr. Horace Wilson. I purposely select his opinion, because, independently of his vast knowledge of oriental literature, it has fallen to his lot, as secretary to the Hindu College, and possessing the general esteem both of the parents and of the youths, to have more confidential intercourse with natives of all classes, than any man in India. While his opportunity of obtaining information has been great beyond all others, his talents

and judgment enable him to form a just estimate of its value. I shall state the most forcible of his reasons, and how far I do and do not agree with him.

1st. Mr. Wilson considered it to be a dangerous evasion of the real difficulties, to attempt to prove that suttees are not 'essentially a part of the Hindu religion'—I entirely agree in this opinion. The question is, not what the rite is, but what it is supposed to be; and I have no doubt that the conscientious belief of every order of Hindus, with few exceptions, regard it as sacred.

2nd. Mr. Wilson thinks that the attempt to put down the practice will inspire extensive dissatisfaction. I agree also in this opinion. He thinks that success will only be partial, which I doubt. He does not imagine that the promulgated prohibition will lead to any immediate and overt act of insubordination, but that affrays and much agitation of the public mind must ensue. But he conceives, that, if once they suspect that it is the intention of the British government to abandon this hitherto inviolate principle of allowing the most complete toleration in matters of religion, that there will arise, in the minds of all, so deep a distrust of our ulterior designs, that they will no longer be tractable to any arrangement intended for their improvement and that the principles of morality as well as of a more virtuous and exalted rule of action, now actively inculcated by European education and knowledge, will receive a fatal check. I must acknowledge that a similar opinion as to the probable excitation of a deep distrust of our future intentions was mentioned to me in conversation by that enlightened native, Ram Mohan Roy, a warm advocate for the abolition of suttees, and of all other superstitions and corruptions, engrafted on the Hindu religion, which he considers originally to have been a pure deism. It was his opinion that the practice might be suppressed, quietly and unobservedly, by increasing the difficulties, and by the indirect agency of the police. He apprehended that any public enactment would give rise to general apprehension, that the reasoning would be, 'While the English were contending for power, they deemed it politic to allow universal toleration, and to respect our religion; but having obtained the supremacy, their first act is a violation of their professions, and the next will probably be, like the Mahomedan conquerors, to force upon us their own religion.'

Admitting, as I am always disposed to do, that much truth is contained in these remarks, but not at all assenting to the conclusions which though not described, bear the most unfavourable import, I shall now enquire into the evil and the extent of danger which may practically result from this measure.

It must be first observed, that of the 463 suttees occurring in the whole of the presidency of Fort William, 420 took place in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, or what are termed the lower provinces, and of these latter, 287 in the Calcutta division alone.

It might be very difficult to make a stranger to India understand,

much less believe, that in a population of so many millions of people, as the Calcutta division includes, and the same may be said of all the lower provinces, so great is the want of courage and of vigour of character, and such the habitual submission of centuries, that insurrection or hostile opposition to the will of the ruling power may be affirmed to be an impossible danger. I speak of the population taken separately from the army, and I may add for the information of the stranger, and also in support of my assertion, that few of the natives of the lower provinces are to be found in our military ranks. I therefore at once deny the danger in toto, in reference to this part of our territories, where the practice principally obtains. If, however, security were wanting against extensive popular tumult or revolution, I should say that the permanent settlement, which though a failure in many other respects and in its most important essentials, has this great advantage at least, of having created a vast body of rich landed proprietors, deeply interested in the continuance of the British dominion, and having complete command over the mass of the people, and, in respect to the apprehension of ulterior views, I cannot believe that it could last but for the moment. The same large proprietary body, connected for the most part with Calcutta, can have no fears of the kind, and through their interpretation of our intentions, and that of their numerous dependants, and agents, the public mind could not long remain in a state of deception.

Were the scene of this sad destruction of human life laid in the upper instead of the lower provinces, in the midst of a bold and manly people, I might speak with less confidence upon the question of safety. In these provinces the suttees amount to 43 only—upon a population of nearly twenty millions. It cannot be expected that any general feeling, where combination of any kind is so unusual, could be excited in defence of a rite, in which so few participate, a rite also, notoriously made too often subservient to views of personal interest on the part of the other members of the family.

It is stated by Mr. Wilson that interference with infanticide and the capital punishment of Brahmins offer a fallacious analogy with the prohibition now proposed. The distinction is not perceptible to my judgment. The former practice, though confined to particular families, is probably viewed as a religious custom; and as for the latter, the necessity of the enactment proves the general existence of the exception, and it is impossible to conceive a more direct and open violation of the shastras, or one more at variance with the general feelings of the Hindu population. To this day, in all Hindu states, the life of Brahmins is, I believe, still held sacred.

But I have taken up too much time in giving my own opinions, when those of the greatest experience, and the highest official authority are upon our records. In the report of the nizamat adalat for 1828, four out of five of the judges recommended to the governor-general in council the immediate abolition of the practice, and attest its safety.

The fifth judge, though not opposed to the opinions of the rest of the bench, did not feel then prepared to give his entire assent. In the report of this year, the measure has come up with the unanimous recommendation of the court. The two superintendents of police for the upper and lower provinces, Mr. Walter Ewer, and Mr. Charles Barwell, have in the strongest terms expressed their opinion that the suppression might be effected without the least danger. The former officer has urged the measure upon the attention of government in the most forcible manner. No documents exist to shew the opinions of the public functionaries in the interior, but I am informed that nine-tenths are in favour of the abolition.

How again are these opinions supported by practical experience?

Within the limits of the supreme court at Calcutta, not a suttee has taken place since the time of Sir John Anstruther.

In the Delhi territory, Sir Charles Metcalfe never permitted a suttee to be performed.

In Jessore, one of the districts of the Calcutta division, in 1824 there were 30 suttees, in 1825—16, in 1826—3, in 1827 and 1828 there were none. To no other cause can this be assigned, than to a power beyond the law, exercised by the acting magistrate, against which, however, no public remonstrance was made. Mr. Pigou has been since appointed to Cuttack, and has pursued the same strong interference as in Jessore, but his course, although most humane, was properly arrested, as being illegal, by the commissioners. Though the case of Jessore is perhaps one of the strongest examples of efficacious and un-opposed interposition, I really believe that there are few districts in which the same arbitrary power is not exercised to prevent the practice. In the last week, in the report of the acting commissioner, Mr. Smith, he states that in Ghazipur in the last year 16, and in the preceding years 7 suttees had been prevented by the persuasions, or rather it should be said by the *threats* of the police.

Innumerable cases of the same kind might be obtained from the public records.

It is stated in the letter of the collector of Gaya, Mr. Trotter, but upon what authority I have omitted to enquire, that the peishwa (I presume he means the ex-peishwa Baji Rao) would not allow the rite to be performed, and that in Tanjore it is equally interdicted. These facts, if true, would be positive proofs at least that no unanimity exists among the Hindus upon the point of religious obligations.

Having made enquiries also how far suttees are permitted in the European foreign settlements, I find, from Dr. Carey, that at Chinsurah no such sacrifices had ever been permitted by the Dutch government; that within the limits of Chandernagore itself they were also prevented, but allowed to be performed in the British territories. The Danish government of Serampore has not forbidden the rite in conformity to the example of the British government.

It is a very important fact, that though representations have been

made by the disappointed party to superior authority, it does not appear that a single instance of direct opposition to the execution of the prohibitory orders of our civil functionaries has ever occurred. How then can it be reasonably feared that to the government itself, from whom all authority is derived, and whose power is now universally considered to be irresistible, anything bearing the semblance of resistance can be manifest. Mr. Wilson also is of opinion that no immediate overt act of insubordination would follow the publication of the edict. The regulations of government may be evaded, the police may be corrupted, but even here the price paid as hush money will operate as a penalty indirectly forwarding the objects of government.

I venture then to think it completely proved that, from the native population, nothing of extensive combination or even of partial opposition may be expected from the abolition.

It is however a very different and much more important question, how far the feelings of the native army might take alarm, how far the rite may be in general observance by them, and whether as in the case of Vellore, designing persons might not make use of the circumstance either for the purpose of immediate revolt, or of sowing the seeds of permanent disaffection. Reflecting upon the vast disproportion of numbers between our native and European troops, it was obvious that there might be, in any general combination of the former, the greatest danger to the state, and it became necessary therefore to use every precaution to ascertain the impression likely to be made upon the minds of the native soldiery.

Before I detail to council the means I have taken to satisfy my mind upon this very important branch of the enquiry, I shall beg leave to advert to the name of Lord Hastings. It is impossible but that to his most humane, benevolent, and enlightened mind, this practice must have been often the subject of deep and anxious meditation. It was consequently a circumstance of ill omen and severe disappointment not to have found, upon the records, the valuable advice and direction of his long experience and wisdom. It is true that during the greater part of his administration, he was engaged in war, when the introduction of such a measure would have been highly injudicious. To his successor, Lord Amherst, also the same obstacle was opposed. I am however fortunate in possessing a letter from Lord Hastings to a friend in England upon suttees, and from the following extract, dated 21st November 1825, I am induced to believe that, had he remained in India, this practice would long since have been suppressed. 'The subject which you wish to discuss is one which must interest one's feeling most deeply; but it is also one of extreme nicety. When I mention that in one of the years during my administration of government in India, above eight hundred widows sacrificed themselves within the provinces comprised in the presidency of Bengal, to which number I very much suspect, that very many not notified to the magistrates should be added, I will hope to have credit for being acutely sensible to such an

outrage against humanity. At the same time, I was aware how much danger might attend the endeavouring to suppress, forcibly, a practice so rooted in the religious belief of the natives. No men of low caste are admitted into the ranks of the Bengal army. Therefore the whole of that formidable body must be regarded as blindly partial to a custom which they consider equally referable to family honour and to points of faith. To attempt the extinction of the horrid superstition, without being supported in the procedure by a real concurrence on the part of the army, would be distinctly perilous. I have no scruple to say, that I did believe, I could have carried with me the assent of the army towards such an object. That persuasion, however, arose from circumstances which gave me peculiar influence over the native troops.'

Lord Hastings left India in 1823. It is quite certain that the government of that time were much more strongly impressed with the risk of the undertaking, than is now very generally felt. It would have been fortunate could this measure have proceeded under the auspices of that distinguished nobleman, and that the state might have had the benefit of the influence which undoubtedly he possessed, in a peculiar degree, over the native troops. Since that period, however, six years have elapsed. Within the territories all has been peaceful and prosperous, while without, Ava and Bharatpur, to whom alone a strange sort of consequence was ascribed by public opinions, have been made to acknowledge our supremacy. In this interval, experience has enlarged our knowledge, and has given us surer data upon which to distinguish truth from illusion, and to ascertain the real circumstances of our position and power. It is upon these that the concurring opinion of the officers of the civil and military services at large having been founded, is entitled to our utmost confidence.

I have the honour to lay before council the copy of a circular addressed to forty-nine officers, pointed out to me by the secretary to government in the military department, as being from their judgment and experience the best enabled to appreciate the effect of the proposed measure upon the native army, together with their answers. For more easy reference, an abstract of each answer is annexed in a separate paper and classed with those to the same purport.

It appears—first, that of those whose opinions are directly adverse to all interference, whatever, with the practice, the number is only *five*. Secondly, of those who are favourable to abolition, but averse to absolute and direct prohibition under the authority of the government, the number is *twelve*. Thirdly, of those who are favourable to abolition, to be effected by the indirect interference of magistrates and other public officers, the number is *eight*. Fourthly, of those who advocate the total, immediate and public suppression of the practice, the number is *twenty-eight*.

It will be observed also, of those who are against an open and direct prohibition, few entertain any fear of immediate danger. They refer to a distinct and undefined evil. I can conceive the possibility of the ex-

pression of dissatisfaction and anger being immediately manifested upon this supposed attack on their religious usages; but the distant danger seems to me altogether groundless, provided that perfect respect continues to be paid to all their innocent rites and ceremonies, and provided also, that a kind and considerate regard be continued to their worldly interests and comforts.

I trust therefore that the council will agree with me in the satisfactory nature of this statement, and that they will partake in the perfect confidence which it has given me of the expediency and safety of the abolition.

In the answer of one of the military officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Todd, he has recommended that the tax on pilgrims should be simultaneously given up, for the purpose of affording an undoubted proof of our disinterestedness and of our desire to remove every obnoxious obstacle to the gratification of their religious duties. A very considerable revenue is raised from this head; but if it were to be the price of satisfaction and confidence to the Hindus, and of the removal of all distrust of our present and future intentions, the sacrifice might be a measure of good policy. The objections that must be entertained by all to the principle of the tax, which in England has latterly excited very great reprobation, formed an additional motive for the enquiry. I enclose the copy of a circular letter addressed to different individuals at present in charge of the districts where the tax is collected, or who have had opportunities from their local knowledge of forming a judgment upon this question. It will be seen that opinions vary, but upon a review of the whole, my conviction is that, in connection with the present measure, it is inexpedient to repeal the tax. It is a subject upon which I shall not neglect to bestow more attention than I have been able to do. An abstract of these opinions is annexed to this minute.

I have now to submit for the consideration of council the draft of a regulation enacting the abolition of suttees. It is accompanied by a paper containing the remarks and suggestions of the judges of the nizamat adalat. In this paper is repeated the unanimous opinion of the court in favour of the proposed measure. The suggestions of the nizamat adalat are, in some measure, at variance with a principal object I had in view of preventing collision between the parties to the suttee and the officers of police. It is only in the previous processes or during the actual performance of the rite, when the feelings of all may be more or less roused to a high degree of excitement, that I apprehend the possibility of affray, or of acts of violence, through an indiscreet and injudicious exercise of authority. It seemed to me prudent, therefore, that the police in the first instance should warn and advise, but not forcibly prohibit, and if the suttee, in defiance of this notice, were performed, that a report should be made to the magistrate, who would summon the parties and proceed as in any other case of crime. The sadar court appear to think these precautions unnecessary and I hope they may be so, but, in the beginning, we cannot, I think, proceed

with too much circumspection. Upon the same principle, in order to guard against a too hasty or severe a sentence, emanating from extreme zeal on the part of the local judge, I have proposed that the case should only be cognizable by the commissioner of circuit. These are, however, questions which I should wish to see discussed in council. The other recommendations of the court are well worthy of our adoption.

I have now brought this paper to a close, and I trust I have redeemed my pledge of not allowing, in the consideration of this question, passion or feeling to have any part. I trust it will appear that due weight has been given to all difficulties and objections; that facts have been stated with truth and impartiality; that the conclusion to which I have come is completely borne out, both by reason and authority. It may be justly asserted that the government, in this act, will only be following, not preceding the tide of public opinion, long flowing in this direction: and when we have taken into consideration the experience and wisdom of that highest public tribunal, the nizamat adalat, who in unison with our wisest and ablest public functionaries have been, year after year, almost soliciting the government to pass this act, the moral and political responsibility of not abolishing this practice far surpasses in my judgment that of the opposite course.

But discarding, as I have done, every inviting appeal from sympathy and humanity, and having given my verdict, I may now be permitted to express the anxious feelings with which I desire the success of this measure.

The first and primary object of my heart is the benefit of the Hindus. I know nothing so important to the improvement of their future conditions, as the establishment of a purer morality, whatever their belief, and a more just conception of the will of God. The first step to this better understanding will be dissociation of religious belief and practice from blood and murder. They will then, when no longer under this brutalizing excitement, view with more calmness, acknowledged truths. They will see that there can be no inconsistency in the ways of providence, that to the command received as divine by all races of men, 'No innocent blood shall be spilt', there can be no exception, and when they shall have been convinced of the error of this first and most criminal of their customs, may it not be hoped, that others which stand in the way of their improvement may likewise pass away, and that [with] this emancipation from those chains and shackles upon their minds and actions, they may no longer continue as they have done, the slaves of every foreign conqueror, but that they may assume their just places among the great families of mankind. I disavow in these remarks or in this measure any view whatever to conversion to our own faith. I write and feel as a legislator for the Hindus, and as I believe many enlightened Hindus think and feel.

Descending from these higher considerations, it cannot be a dishonest ambition that the government of which I form a part, should have the credit of an act, which is to wash out a foul stain upon British

rule, and to stay the sacrifice of humanity and justice to a doubtful expediency; and finally, as a branch of the general administration of the empire, I may be permitted to feel deeply anxious, that our course shall be in accordance with the noble example set to us by the British government at home and that the adaptation, where practicable, to the circumstances of this vast Indian population, of the same enlightened principles, may promote here as well as there, the general prosperity, and may exalt the character of our nation.

158. *Bentinck's minute on a uniform currency for British India*

10 November 1829

Since the letter from the court of directors relative to the currency of British India was received, the several commissioners of revenue and circuit in the lower provinces have been written to in order to ascertain in what coin the rents of the cultivators are usually paid and how far those persons are subjected to extra demands on account of batta or discount.

The answers of all but two have been received and tho' they are not so full and particular as could be wished, the general result appears to be that in most of the divisions a certain batta is taken on all rupees and that in many places the rents of the cultivators are paid either in short weight rupees or in rupees of sorts which of course render such an adjustment indispensable.

The commissioner for the division of Shahabad, Saran and Tirhut states that 'rupees of different sorts are paid by the ryots in this division and batta is invariably taken when the rupee is not full weight or sicca, that Calcutta rupees and Fatehgarh rupees are also current, the latter more particularly in the western parganas of Shahabad, that Calcutta rupees are most prevalent in Saran and are scarce in comparison with other coins in Tirhut'.

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On the whole we may conclude that already the ryots are, in the payment of their rents, very generally subjected to a charge on the plea, real or assumed of the depreciation of the coin paid by them, and it does not appear to me that the evil would be in any material degree aggravated by the introduction of the Farukhabad rupees. It consists in the necessity, real or supposed, of a valuation of the coin paid as rent, for in any adjustment of that nature the poor and ignorant must necessarily suffer. But the introduction of another coin bearing a defined relation to the sicca rupee and receivable at the public treasuries equally with that rupee would not I conceive afford any new opening to abuse. Nay in so far as the remoter districts of Bihar are concerned the change could scarcely fail to be beneficial to the ryots,

since by giving currency within those districts to the coin that prevails in the adjoining province of Benares, the means of providing the money required by government would be essentially facilitated. The same result might be looked for in Chittagong, from the establishment of a general currency, if as may be inferred from the prevalence of Arcot rupees there, the local demand is partly supplied, directly, or indirectly, from the Madras territories, and in Cuttack (from which division no report has been received) one cannot doubt that the convenience of all classes would be much promoted by the arrangement, which would give uniformity to the legal currency of that and the adjoining districts of Madras.

Nothing indeed can well be more unreasonable or impolitic than to maintain between districts belonging to the same government and divided from each other by an arbitrary line only, a distinction in the currency which must seriously impede their commercial intercourse. For we thus in effect impose a considerable burden on the trade with all the disadvantage of a direct tax but without any countervailing benefit to the public finances, and the pressure of this burden will of course in some degree be aggravated by the abolition of the local mints. The very fact that the bullion* carried to Benares and the Farukhabad rupees now coined in considerable quantities in the Calcutta mint, for remittance to that quarter, have to pass for about 500 miles thro' the provinces before they can be turned to use, seems alone sufficient to demonstrate the great expediency of a change.

On the many other advantages of convenience and economy which would result from our having one uniform currency for British India it appears to be unnecessary to enlarge. The present letter of the honourable court leaves little to be said on the subject; and in former despatches from that authority the measure was decidedly advocated. Here indeed it may be proper to remark that the omission of the government to discuss the matter in detail in their letter of July 1826 is stated to have arisen in a great measure from the persuasion that the arrangement was one which the honourable court had themselves resolved to direct, unless objections to it should be urged by the local governments and satisfied that no objections could be urged of such importance as to hinder the adoption of a measure of admitted utility, the governor-general in council imagined that the main point for consideration was how it could best be effected, not whether it should be at all attempted. The same consideration appears to have influenced the mint committee who are understood to have been quite unanimous in thinking that one currency should be established for the whole of the British India, and both the government and that committee were of opinion that the real difficulty of the question lay in its application to

* Almost all the private bullion coined at Benares, averaging about Rs. 2,350,000 a year appears to have been imported at Calcutta, and, in the past month (October) in consequence of the approaching abolition of the Benares mint, bullion to the value of Rs. 639,000 has been received at the Calcutta mint for coinage into Farrukhabad rupees. A large amount is expected in the current month.

the pay of the military, because on that point alone was the government embarrassed by any departure in our past arrangements from the clear principle of intrinsic value. Hence to that point the discussion was mainly directed. But it is to be regretted that the other questions which are agitated in the court's present despatch were not also fully considered, and to those questions I shall now particularly advert.

First as to the effect of the proposed measure on the zamindars of the lower provinces.

It will not I imagine be urged that there is anything in the permanent settlement to bind government to maintain in perpetuity any particular currency, and it seems indeed to be clear that every well-founded objection will be obviated if we do not demand from those who have to pay us revenue a larger quantity of pure silver than they have stipulated to pay in sicca rupees nor fail to provide an adequate supply of the currency in which the revenue is to be discharged. Now under the proposed arrangement there will be no ground of complaint on either score, and, seeing how largely Bengal exports its agricultural produce prices must rapidly accommodate themselves to the altered valuation of the currency. Nor does it appear likely that the measure should be mistakenly considered by the zamindars and others in the lower provinces as a violation of engagement. They are quite familiar with the difference in value of the sicca and the sonat rupee, and many of the wealthiest and most influential of them will, as public creditors, have the opportunity of perceiving that the government applies to demands against itself the same principle as it enforces upon its debtors. The circumstances of Benares to which the court refer in the 24th paragraph of their despatch were different. There the provincial rupee had always been issued from our treasuries at par with the Lucknow and Farukhabad currency. The change was of course to be effected much more rapidly than is likely to be the case in Bengal. The zamindars are generally much more ignorant and disposed to turbulence. Those among them who or whose relations belong to the native army would at once have suffered a loss upon all remittances of pay, and discontent might naturally have been excited if the rupee, which had been issued to them as equivalent to the sonat rupee, was declared to be of an inferior value when tendered to our collectors. Not only therefore were there peculiar grounds to apprehend misapprehensions that are not likely to occur in the lower provinces, but complaints might probably have been urged which could scarcely have been treated as destitute of foundation. For the increased demand of government would not have been accompanied by any corresponding augmentation in the sums paid by it to those who had demands against it.

The probable effect of the proposed arrangement in the interests of the ryots I have already had occasion to notice in stating the results to be drawn from the communications of the several commissioners. Without asserting that on this score no inconvenience will be occasioned by a change in the currency of the lower provinces, I cannot for a

moment hesitate in deciding that the inconvenience will not be such as should hinder the adoption of a measure so importantly beneficial to government and to the country.

It appears to me to be out of the question to issue the proposed new currency 'on the principle of nominal value', excepting in regard to the servants of government whose salaries, when paid in that coin may still appear to constitute an adequate remuneration for their labours. It is scarcely therefore necessary to consider the difficulties which the court of directors have anticipated as likely to arise if such a principle shall be followed. But it is satisfactory to observe that one material obstacle to the projected measure has been removed by the resolution passed in February last fixing the allowances of all civil servants in sonat rupees, with the exception of the few whose salaries have been fixed by act of parliament. This exception embraces so small a number of functionaries, that no stress need be laid upon the circumstance. As far as the service generally is concerned we may assume that the object contemplated by the honourable court in the 35th paragraph of their letter has been accomplished; and on the whole I think that the expediency of establishing one uniform currency for British India should again be strongly urged upon the home authorities.

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159. *Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute on* sati

14 November 1829

I cordially concur in the proposed prohibition of the immolation of Hindu windows on the funeral pyres of their husbands.

I do so, not without some apprehension, that the measure may possibly be used by the disaffected influential and designing of our subjects, to inflame the passions of the multitude and produce a religious excitement, the consequences of which, if once set in action, cannot be foreseen. But there is reasonable ground to hope, that the prohibition will be submitted to without resistance and, if it be carried into effect tranquilly, and be not made an engine to excite insurrection in the early period of its operation, I have no fear whatever of its causing any danger remotely. It is not of a character to create ultimately any bad feeling. Its humane and benevolent motive must be acknowledged by all who are not blinded by religious prejudice. The longer it continues in operation unopposed, the more certainly the Hindus will become reconciled to it. The longer they see that it is not accompanied by any attack on the innocent rites of their religion, the less they will be alarmed by the apprehension of such an attack. It may perhaps be made use of in times of disturbance, like our killing cows, or any other practice offensive to the Hindus, as a rallying cry

to make common cause among them; but even for that purpose, after its novelty has ceased, it would be less influential than other things already existing; and would not of itself cause any general commotion, that would not be as likely to happen, the people being predisposed that way, whether this measure were adopted or not.

I expect that the time will come when it will be universally acknowledged by the people of India as the best act performed by the British government. My only fears or doubts are as to its early effect; and those are not so strong as to dissuade me from joining heartily in the suppression of the horrible custom by which so many lives are cruelly sacrificed.

160. *Bentinck's minute on the Nagpur treaty*

15 November 1829

I have the honour to lay before the board the copy of a suggestion submitted to me by the secretary in the Persian department, relating to a proposed modification of our treaty with the Nagpur government which appears to me calculated to improve very materially the state of our relations with that court; to promote the interests and welfare, as well as to gratify the feelings of the raja, and at the same time to secure a considerable pecuniary advantage to the honourable Company. Entirely approving the principle of the measure, I desired Mr. Stirling to address a demi-official letter to the resident, a copy of which and of his answer accompany the present minute.

I need scarcely observe in this place, that the political arrangements which have long subsisted at Nagpur were framed after a virtual conquest of the country by the British arms, and on the occasion of our elevating the reigning sovereign to the masnad, as a matter of favour. Our right to annex such conditions as we might think proper to the gift, on voluntarily restoring the territory thus placed at our disposal, to its native chief, was unquestionable. I believe too that the system then introduced, and subsequently confirmed and recognized by the treaty of December 1826, has well answered its principal object, that of establishing, on a firm and durable basis, the internal tranquillity of the Nagpur dominions, and that it was productive of incalculable advantage both to the prince and his subjects, by providing an energetic, efficient and honest administration, during his Highness's minority.

Viewed, however, as a permanent system of political relations and arrangements; it must be acknowledged that the existing treaty of Nagpur, in several of its provisions, presses heavily on the raja's resources, and is little consistent with our declared wish and resolution of restoring the Bhonsla to the rank and station of one of the substantive

powers of India. Whilst we have relinquished to the possession and management of the native ruler, territory yielding only about 26 and 72 lakhs per annum (including the city customs) we retain in our own hands, for an indefinite period, four of his districts, assessed at 17 lakhs. The entire army of the state of Nagpur is to all intents and purposes, a British force, at the exclusive command and disposal of the representative of the British government, and its expenses, coupled with those of the civil administration, absorb the whole produce of the reserved territory, with exception of a very trifling balance set apart to meet contingencies. Even in that portion of the country which has been given up to the raja, he is not allowed to exercise independent authority. Our treaty not only reserves to the British government a right of advising his Highness on matters of importance and of seeing that our advice is followed, but it also binds him to admit our interference in the minutest details of his internal administration; to conduct his affairs at all times by ministers in our confidence and responsible to us, as well as to himself in the exercise of their duties in every branch of the internal administration, and even to be guided by the resident in filling up appointments to his civil establishments, and in regulating the expenditure of his court and household. Should the reserved districts at any time be transferred to his Highness, he is not to be trusted with any power over, or direct intercourse with the tributary chiefs and zamindars of the country whose affairs are to be conducted, as before, through the medium of the representative of the British government.

It is scarcely to be imagined that the state of thraldom thus imposed, and which has no parallel in our engagements with any other of the native powers of India, should not some day prove irksome and galling to the raja of Nagpur. At the same time, I am not aware that the treaty, as it stands, is productive of any very striking or apparent benefit to ourselves, or secures to us that degree of advantage, to which we are fairly entitled from our alliance with a government circumstanced like that of Nagpur. In the actual condition of India, we do not require the services of the auxiliary force, organized and maintained in a state of the most complete efficiency, at so large an expense, in addition to the subsidiary force which under the treaty is applicable to the general protection of his Highness' dominions and the maintenance of the public peace. Admitting that the existing arrangements are the best calculated to ensure the certainty of lasting good order and profound tranquillity within the Nagpur territory it is still possible that these advantages may be purchased at too dear a price, nor does it appear to me that the British government can be said to have a deeper interest in the internal peace, prosperity and good government of the state of Berar, than of any other of the allied powers in central India.

Influenced by the above considerations, it occurred to me that as suggested in the paper submitted by Mr. Stirling, it would be an arrangement of mutual convenience and advantage, if Articles 8 and 9 of the Nagpur treaty were commuted and Article 10 considerably

the conditions of the quinquennial leases granted to the patels, ryots and others by the British authorities in his Highness' name, as also the engagements and settlements (if there are any such) concluded by our officers with the tributary chiefs and zamindars of the Nagpur dominions. He is already bound by a similar engagement in regard to that part of his territory which was transferred to his Highness at the beginning of 1828.

3. I am of opinion that, conformably with the raja's wish and the policy on which we now act, of relieving the native princes of India in alliance with the honourable Company, from every degree of control and interference in their internal administration, which can be avoided, the 10th article of the Nagpur treaty should be essentially modified. It appears to me necessary and desirable to retain only so much of it as will leave us a right of offering advice to his Highness and his successors on all important and material questions, whether relating to internal or external concerns. It is in my judgment no less expedient and essential that a farther reservation should be stipulated for, which will give us at all times the means of rendering our advice effectual and of enforcing attention to it, in cases of determined disregard. We are under a responsibility to the people over whom we have given the raja power, and may fairly demand from the prince who owes his existence to our support, that the authority we have conferred and continue to uphold shall not be flagrantly abused and perverted to purposes of gross and systematic oppression. But all experience in Oudh and elsewhere, evinces too clearly that a simple provision binding the native state to act in conformity with our advice, is not a sufficient check upon the evils of grievous and intolerable misrule unless some means are superadded of practically enforcing compliance with our recommendation, and no provision occurs to me so simple, effectual and, all things considered, unobjectionable as to retain the power of reverting to the appointment of British superintendents, whenever a case of gross maladministration may arise in particular districts, or throughout the country generally, in defiance of our counsels and remonstrances, endangering the public tranquillity and striking at the root of the resources applicable to the fulfilment of the raja's engagements with the British government. I propose therefore that Articles 12 and 13 should, in substance, stand. It may however be distinctly explained to the raja, that the above right of resumption, although reserved by treaty, is not to be exerted, except in extreme cases, such as we confidently trust will never occur during his Highness' reign. And, in truth, the favourable reports uniformly made by the resident of the character and disposition of the young prince; the unusual aptitude and capacity which he has displayed for business, and the success which has hitherto distinguished his management of the territory already transferred to him, do afford a reasonable and satisfactory ground of hope, that he may be safely entrusted with the government of the whole of his territories, and that under his administration, Nagpur will continue to

exhibit the rare and gratifying spectacle, of a prosperous and well governed native state.

The maharaja has expressed to Mr. Wilder great solicitude to be relieved from the undefined pecuniary liability to which he is eventually subject, by the 11th article of the treaty, and he seems indeed to expect that the payment of the subsidy will absolve him from all further requisitions of the nature therein contemplated. I would propose that an attempt be made to substitute the following defined and specific arrangement, in lieu of the provision to which his Highness objects. It appears to me to be an object of considerable importance, that the raja of Nagpur should be bound, on the principle of our arrangements with the state of Mysore, to keep up a certain defined force of the best description of native irregular horse, and that such portion thereof as is not required for the internal duties of the country, should be liable to serve with the British army in the event of war, receiving batta in compensation of the extra expenses of their maintenance, when employed beyond the frontier. The present strength of the horse attached to the auxiliary force is stated in the latest returns at 3 corps of 100 each; and I think therefore that it may be proposed to the raja, in commutation of the 11th article, that he should engage to maintain at all times in a state of efficiency, and subject to the above condition, a body of not less than 1000 sillahdar and Maratha horse disciplined after the native fashion, commanded by his Highness' own officers, and subject exclusively to his authority.

Being aware of no special or particular advantage which results from the continuance of the 15th article of the treaty, and as the tenor of it has been objected to by the raja, I would recommend that it be altogether omitted. The intimate connection which must ever continue to subsist between the British government and the state of Nagpur, will be sufficient, under almost any imaginable contingency, to secure to our troops access to the raja's strongholds, for purposes of defence and protection, whether we maintain an express stipulation to that effect or not.

If the foregoing propositions meet the concurrence of the board, I would recommend that the resident at Nagpur be instructed to enter on a negotiation with his Highness the raja accordingly.

161. *Minute by Sir Charles Metcalfe on Nagpur*

17 November 1829

I entirely concur in the proposed modification of our relations with the state of Nagpur for the following reasons:

1st. Because I am strongly attached to the principle of giving to every prince, whom we acknowledge as holding sovereignty, the government of his dominions unfettered by our interference.

2nd. Because in the present state of our finances, I consider a tribute of eight lakhs of rupees per annum as more valuable, than the advantages which we possess in the arrangements now existing.

Concurring for these reasons, I nevertheless am of opinion, that in relinquishing our authority over the military force of the Nagpur state, we make a considerable sacrifice of power, the possession of which was calculated to prevent disturbance in that portion of India as well as to aid in maintaining our general supremacy, and in assenting to the change proposed, I am not much influenced by reliance on the continuance of the state of tranquillity at present apparent. I conceive the tranquillity of India, under British rule and supremacy, to be, as was heretofore said of Ireland (the simile though stale is too applicable to be rejected) like that of gunpowder. The [?keg] looks peaceable, but the requisite spark applied would at any time produce an explosion. The records of this government shew repeated instances of our congratulating ourselves on a state of tranquillity, which has been instantly followed by war. Who supposed when thousands, the flower of our native army, were discharged in 1802, that the events of the same year would involve us in war with the confederated Maratha powers? Who supposed, when a triumphant peace succeeded a glorious war at the end of 1803, that in a few months we should see our troops roused, and the gem of our conquests, imperial Delhi, besieged and nearly wrested from us by a contemptible enemy? Who imagined when the Earl of Minto closed his successful and beneficent government, during which our power had been extended and strengthened without war, and our finances greatly improved, leaving British India in peace and prosperity, that the next year would bring into the field against us native troops superior to our own native soldiery, compel us to look for victory to superiority of numbers, and drive us to apply to the king's colonies for all the European troops that could be spared? Who foresaw when the Marquess of Hastings retired from his splendid administration, justly exulting in the unprecedented extent of our power, the establishment of our supremacy and the flattering state of our finances, that the same year was pregnant with a war, the most expensive [so far] which produced a sensation over all India amounting to an expectation of our immediate downfall, as if all previous proofs of our power were forgotten and of no account?

I make these remarks in order that I may not be understood as supposing from the present state of tranquillity that we can relinquish power without incurring risk: but not with any intention of qualifying the assent, which, without reservation, I give to the proposed measure, for the reasons before stated.

162. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House, London. 19 November 1829
Received Barrackpore. 15 May 1830

My dear Lord William,

The batta question has made a great noise and the court have long been, and still are placed in a very awkward situation of not being able, from the want of official notice, to say anything on the subject, for not a line have we yet from your government on the subject. My conclusion is that you must have submitted the whole case—memorials—home, but that the ship that has them has been delayed. There are those however, who from their non arrival, begin to suspect the transmission of the papers may have been purposely delayed (a thing not uncommon under former governments) or that the secretaries have been dilatory. All this is the more felt as it is one of those questions of appeal that ought instantly to be decided on. What that decision may be, there is no saying. Many, nay most, seem to wish the deed had not been done, but having been done after so much deliberation and after all Lord Hastings' objections to it had been considered it is not so easy to recede. The *manner* in which the question has been taken up by the army and in which they have endeavoured to raise a public clamour against it, and the course taken by your commander-in-chief, whose object seems to be to make himself popular, are further difficulties in the way of concession, and would lead the world to suppose we yielded to bullying. I confess I feel this so strongly that the inclination of my mind is to stand our ground. For after all the grievance is but a partial one and the Madras and Bombay armies would be on our side. A decision to abide by our orders might and perhaps should be accompanied by some boon equally applicable to the whole army, and not peculiar as the batta is to a part of the Bengal army only.

I much regret also that you have not officially acquainted the court with the reductions you are making, for while the other governments are getting credit for their exertions in that way we know nothing of what you are doing except from private letters which give you all the odium inseparable from a reduction of allowances.

I am afraid as I told you before that you have not sufficiently seen your way in your late reforms in the revenue and judicial systems and that you may have adopted before you made sure of the means of carrying it into execution—My comment here has been suspended in expectations of Mr. Bayley's plan for reforming the local administration—but that has not come—I myself did not expect it so soon for the impression in my mind is that Bayley is dilatory and undecided to a fault.

Poor Munro, whose memoirs will soon be out, says in one of his letters that it would have taken him two years had he gone to Bengal to look about and satisfy his own mind as to what was wanted, and

could be reformed and that he would have done nothing till he had fully adapted his means to his end. I believe this would have been wise.

Pray endeavour to keep the court apprised of every public act, and let the reasons for it be fully stated with all possible despatch for we are sure to hear of every movement of your government privately, with all the objections urged by clamour against it which leads to a prejudgment of the case before the government tells its own story.

The present course of retrenchment is no doubt grievously felt but there is no help for former governments have entailed the necessity on the present. The Company's servants not only get all there is among them but a great deal more. This more must be lopped off. Both ends must be made to meet. What more would they have? The natives have more reason to complain than any one. What say you to the result of the war between Russia and Turkey? It seems decided as to the downfall of the Turkish power and as far as that goes I am one of those who do not grieve. But what is to become of Turkey in Europe and Turkey in Asia? I suspect the result, as far as we can yet see, has arisen from the great powers of Europe not having been able to agree among themselves as to any one line of conduct to prevent it. They have in fact been jealous of each other, and the whole, I have long thought will come to a partition between them. The obvious policy would have been to have set up a new power in Turkey independent of all the European powers or guaranteed by all of them—but here again jealousy comes in the way.

When I was lately in France I was more delighted with Prince de Condé's ministry establishment at Chantilly than anything here. I think I have heard you speak of it. It is generally thought the present French ministry cannot stand, but Polignac I think may. The influence of the priests is growing too rapidly there and the jealousy of young Bonyparte and the fame of Old Bony, are much too conspicuous. The Bourbons therefore must be on their guard or I would not ensure their succession many years. They have a sure game however to play if they only knew how to play it.

The policy at home seems to be—if policy it can be called—to leave things to right themselves and in most cases I have often thought that parliamentary interference has done more harm than good.

Our charter—I have no idea whether any or what plan is in agitation, I believe none and that much will depend on the temper of the times, but there are evident signs of a wish on the part of government to get all the power they can into their own hands as long as the checks of the board over the court and the court over the board is preserved unimpaired. I care for little—but if our independence is to be destroyed and the whole power is to be thrown into the hands of government, by making us a mere board of excise or customs, adieu to all good government.

The pamphleteers on both sides have commenced the usual warfare

of words, and I hope you have left orders for such squibs to be sent to you.

163. *G. Swinton to F. Wilder.* Official

Calcutta. 27 November 1829

Sir,

You have been already apprised by my demi-official letter dated 30th September last, of the improvement contemplated by the right honourable the governor-general in the state of our relations at Nagpur, if the proposed alteration should appear to you likely to prove acceptable and gratifying to the raja. From your reply dated 25th ultimo, it is evident that the raja considers the project highly beneficial to his interests, and is anxious to enter upon the formal discussion of it; and I am now therefore directed to communicate the following instructions for your guidance in negotiating with the raja of Nagpur a modification of the treaty of 13th December 1826.

2. The first proposition to be tendered to his Highness's acceptance, is the commutation of his obligations under the 8th and 9th articles of the existing treaty, for a money payment or subsidy of sonat rupees eight lakhs per annum to be liquidated by quarterly instalments; in consideration whereof the reserved districts will be transferred to his Highness's management, and the army made over entirely to his own authority and disposal, the British officers employed in the Nagpur service being at the same time withdrawn.

3. For the reasons stated by you, the governor-general in council is of opinion that the transfer of the territory should be postponed until the close of the current fasli year or the month of June next, but his lordship in council sees no sufficient ground for deferring the execution of the proposed arrangement until the expiration of the existing quinquennial settlement. The measure of disbanding the auxiliary force as at present constituted, should be at once put in train, in view to affording the earliest practicable relief to the finances of the state of Nagpur; it being of course understood that the raja is expected, like every native ruler, to provide in their room and from his own funds, a national force adequate to the ordinary protection of his subjects and the performance of internal duties.

4. The raja of Nagpur must of course pledge himself to respect and abide by the condition of the quinquennial leases granted to the patels, ryots and others by the British authorities in his Highness's name, for the remainder of the period during which they have to run. His Highness must similarly bind himself to adhere to the engagements and settlements (the nature of them should be specifically reported) which have been concluded by our officers with the tributary chiefs and zamindars of the Nagpur territory; but that provision of the treaty

which declares that in the event of the restoration of the reserved districts to the native government, the British authorities shall continue to be the medium of conducting all affairs with those chiefs, is no longer to remain in force.

5. In concurrence with his Highness's wishes, and as an essential part of the proposed change of relations, which has for its object to place the raja of Nagpur on a footing more consistent with his rank and dignity, as one of the substantive powers of India, and to remove all engagements unnecessarily fettering his freedom of action and independence, the right honourable the governor-general in council is quite prepared to consent to a very considerable modification of the 10th article of the existing treaty, altho' it will still be necessary to retain the right of advising the raja and his successors on all important and material questions, whether relating to internal or external concerns; as also the means of rendering that advice effectual and of enforcing attention to it, in case of continued and determined disregard. His lordship in council observes that we are under a responsibility to the people over whom we give the raja power, and may fairly demand from the prince who has received his throne from us as a voluntary gift, that the authority we confer and continue to uphold, shall not be flagrantly abused and perverted to purposes of gross and systematic oppression. All experience in Oudh and elsewhere evinces too clearly that simple provision binding the native state to act in conformity with our advice, is not a sufficient restraint upon the evils of anarchy, oppression and misrule: and that to render our counsel really useful, the means should be kept in our hands of practically enforcing it. The mode which occurs to his lordship in council as the most simple, effectual, and all things considered unobjectionable, for accomplishing the above purpose, is to retain the power of reverting to the appointment of British superintendents, whenever a case of gross maladministration may arise in particular districts or throughout the country generally, in defiance of our repeated advice and remonstrance, endangering the public tranquillity, and placing in serious jeopardy the stability of those resources from whence the raja's engagements with the British government are to be fulfilled. The governor-general in council proposes therefore that a provision founded on the above principles and considerations should be substituted in lieu of articles 10, 12, and 13.

6. In tendering this alteration, you will be pleased distinctly to assure the raja, that the right of offering advice through the British representative, is intended to be reserved for matters of importance, and is by no means to extend to the minute details specified in article 10, or indeed to any control over the regulation of his household expenditure, the selection of his ministers and officers, and their conduct in their several departments. With respect to the power of eventual resumption, it is manifestly designed to be brought into exercise in extreme cases only, such as his lordship in council confidently trusts can never occur during his Highness's reign. In truth, the favourable reports uniformly

received from you of the character, disposition and capacity of the ruling prince, and of the good sense and moderation which mark all the measures of his reign, have had no inconsiderable influence in determining the government to release him from the restrictions imposed by subsisting engagements; and the governor-general in council entertains a firm expectation that under the proposed alteration in the condition of our relations with the court of Nagpur, his Highness will not disappoint the hopes we have conceived of his virtues, talents, and desire to promote the welfare and happiness of his people.

7. The solicitude expressed by the raja to be relieved from the undefined pecuniary liability to which he is eventually subject by the 11th article of the treaty, appears to the governor-general in council to be quite natural; and in consideration of the payment of the subsidy, his Lordship agrees to the following modification thereof: viz. that the raja of Nagpur should bind himself, on the principle of our arrangements with the state of Mysore, to keep up a certain defined force of the best description of native irregular horse, which shall be liable to serve with the British army in the event of war, receiving batta from the honourable Company in compensation of the extra expense of their maintenance, when employed beyond the Nagpur frontier. You will propose therefore to the raja an article in lieu of the 11th by which he shall engage to maintain at all times, in a state of efficiency, and subject to the aforementioned condition, a body of not less than one thousand Maratha horse, organized and disciplined after the native fashion, commanded by his Highness' own native officers, and subject exclusively to the authority of the Nagpur government.

8. It appearing that the raja objects to some of the terms employed in the native version of the 15th article of the treaty, and being aware of no special or practical advantage which results from the maintenance of its provisions, his Lordship in council conceives that it may be very well altogether omitted. It is conceived that the intimate connection which must ever continue to subsist between the British government and the state of Nagpur, will suffice, under almost any imaginable contingency, to ensure to our troops access to the raja's strongholds for the purposes of defence and protection, whether we maintain an express stipulation to that effect or not.

9. Article 11 which regards the Nagpur subsidiary force, and all other articles of the treaty, not included in the above observations and instructions, will of course remain in full force. To aid you in the completion of the depending arrangement, I am desired to transmit herewith a draft of the articles it is proposed to substitute, for those which are to undergo modification.

10. The claims and situation of the officers heretofore in the raja's employ whose interests will be materially affected by the above change in our position at Nagpur, has not escaped the consideration of the right honourable the governor-general in council and the sentiments of governments regarding the arrangements to be made in their behalf, on

their withdrawal from his Highness' service will be communicated to you in a subsequent de patch. Under the resolution now taken it will not be necessary to introduce the revised scale of pay and allowance for the officers of the auxiliary force communicated in the chief secretary's dated 14th August last.

164. Sati: *Regulation XVII, A.D. 1829 of the Bengal code*

4 December 1829

A regulation for declaring the practice of suttee, or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindus, illegal, and punishable by the criminal courts. Passed by the governor-general in council on the 4th December 1829, corresponding with the 20th Aughun 1236 Bengal era; the 23rd Aughun 1237 Fasli; the 21st Aughun 1237 Vilayati; the 8th Aughun 1886 Samvat; and the 6th Jamadi-us-Sani 1245 Hegira.

The practice of suttee, or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindus, is revolting to the feelings of human nature; it is nowhere enjoined by the religion of the Hindus as an imperative duty; on the contrary a life of purity and retirement on the part of the widow is more especially and preferably inculcated, and by a vast majority of that people throughout India the practice is not kept up, nor observed: in some extensive districts it does not exist: in those in which it has been most frequent it is notorious that in many instances acts of atrocity have been perpetrated which have been shocking to the Hindus themselves, and in their eyes unlawful and wicked. The measures hitherto adopted to discourage and prevent such acts have failed of success, and the governor-general in council is deeply impressed with the conviction that the abuses in question cannot be effectually put an end to without abolishing the practice altogether. Actuated by these considerations the governor-general in council, without intending to depart from one of the first and most important principles of the system of British government in India, that all classes of the people be secure in the observance of their religious usages, so long as that system can be adhered to without violation of the paramount dictates of justice and humanity, has deemed it right to establish the following rules, which are hereby enacted to be in force from the time of their promulgation throughout the territories immediately subject to the presidence of Fort William.

II. The practice of suttee, or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindus, is hereby declared illegal, and punishable by the criminal courts.

III. First. All zamindars, taluqdars, or other proprietors of land, whether malguzari or lakhiraj; all sadar farmers and under-renters of land of every description; all dependent taluqdars; all naibs and other local agents; all native officers employed in the collection of the revenue and rents of land on the part of government, or the court of

wards; and all munduls or other head men of villages are hereby declared especially accountable for the immediate communication to the officers of the nearest police station of any intended sacrifice of the nature described in the foregoing section; and any zamindar, or other description of persons above noticed, to whom such responsibility is declared to attach, who may be convicted of wilfully neglecting or delaying to furnish the information above required, shall be liable to be fined by the magistrate or joint magistrate in any sum not exceeding two hundred rupees, and in default of payment to be confined for any period of imprisonment not exceeding six months.

Secondly. Immediately on receiving intelligence that the sacrifice declared illegal by this regulation is likely to occur, the police darogha shall either repair in person to the spot, or depute his mohurrir or jamadar, accompanied by one or more burkundazes of the Hindu religion, and it shall be the duty of the police-officers to announce to the persons assembled for the performance of the ceremony, that it is illegal; and to endeavour to prevail on them to disperse, explaining to them that in the event of their persisting in it they will involve themselves in a crime, and become subject to punishment by the criminal courts. Should the parties assembled proceed in defiance of these remonstrances to carry the ceremony into effect, it shall be the duty of the police-officers to use all lawful means in their power to prevent the sacrifice from taking place, and to apprehend the principal persons aiding and abetting in the performance of it, and in the event of the police-officers being unable to apprehend them, they shall endeavour to ascertain their names and places of abode, and shall immediately communicate the whole of the particulars to the magistrate or joint magistrate for his orders.

Thirdly. Should intelligence of a sacrifice have been carried into effect before their arrival at the spot, they will nevertheless institute a full enquiry into the circumstances of the case, in like manner as on all other occasions of unnatural death, and report them for the information and orders of the magistrate or joint magistrate, to whom they may be subordinate.

IV. First. On the receipt of the reports required to be made by the police daroghas, under the provisions of the foregoing section, the magistrate or joint magistrate of the jurisdiction in which the sacrifice may have taken place, shall enquire into the circumstances of the case, and shall adopt the necessary measures for bringing the parties concerned in promoting it to trial before the court of circuit.

Secondly. It is hereby declared, that after the promulgation of this regulation all persons convicted of aiding and abetting in the sacrifice of a Hindu widow, by burning or burying her alive, whether the sacrifice be voluntary on her part or not, shall be deemed guilty of culpable homicide, and shall be liable to punishment by fine or by both fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court of circuit, according to the nature and circumstances of the case, and the degree of guilt

established against the offender; nor shall it be held to be any plea of justification that he or she was desired by the party sacrificed to assist in putting her to death.

Thirdly. Persons committed to take their trial before the court of circuit for the offence above mentioned shall be admitted to bail or not, at the discretion of the magistrate or joint magistrate, subject to the general rules in force in regard to the admission of bail.

V. It is further deemed necessary to declare, that nothing contained in this regulation shall be construed to preclude the court of nizamat adalat from passing sentence of death on persons convicted of using violence or compulsion, or of having assisted in burning or burying alive a Hindu widow while labouring under a state of intoxication, or stupefaction, or other cause impeding the exercise of her free will, when, from the aggravated nature of the offence, proved against the prisoner, the court may see no circumstances to render him or her a proper object of mercy.

165. *Bengal government to the court of directors on* sati

4 December 1829

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6. Your honourable court will be gratified by perceiving the great preponderance of opinions of the most intelligent and experienced of the civil and military officers consulted by the governor-general, in favour of the abolition of suttees, and of the perfect safety with which in their judgment the practice may be suppressed.

7. A few indeed were of opinion that it would be preferable to effect the abolition by the indirect interference of the magistrates and other public officers, with the tacit sanction alone on the part of government, but we think there are very strong grounds against the policy of that mode of proceeding, independently of the embarrassing situation in which it would place the local officers, by allowing them to exercise a discretion in so delicate a matter. To use the words of the governor-general, we were 'decidedly in favour of an open avowed and general prohibition, resting altogether upon the moral goodness of the act, and our power to enforce it.'

8. Your honourable court will observe that the original draft of the regulation was considerably modified before its final enactment, and that it was deemed advisable, at the suggestion of the judges of the nizamat adalat, to omit the distinction originally made between misdemeanour and culpable homicide, in being accessory to a suttee, and also in the degree of interference to be exercised by the police-officers. Upon the fullest consideration of the objections taken by the court, we determined that it would be better to leave the apportionment of punishment to be regulated by the commissioners of circuit, according

to the nature and circumstances of each case, and that separate special instructions should be issued to the police-officers, as well as to the European authorities, to ensure a moderate and lenient exercise of the powers vested in them respectively by the regulation.

9. Finally, also, we were induced by the advice of the nizamat adalat to leave out a provision that the Mahomedan law-officers should not take any part in trials in cases of suttee. We were disposed to think that the attendance of the law-officers might be liable to misconstruction, and afford an opening to objections which it was desirable as much as possible to avoid; at the same time the opinion of the court against excepting the offence in question from the ordinary course of trial, was doubtless entitled to much weight, and upon the whole we were willing to be guided by their judgment in omitting the section altogether.

10. We beg to refer your honourable court to the enclosures contained in the letter from the registrar of the nizamat adalat under date the 3d instant (No. 21), for the special instructions above noticed, which have been issued to the commissioners of circuit, the magistrate, and the police-officers for their guidance.

11. In conclusion we venture to express a confident expectation that under the blessing of divine providence the important measure which we have deemed it our duty to adopt will be efficacious in putting down the abhorrent practice of suttee, a consummation, we feel persuaded, not less anxiously desired by your honourable court than by every preceding government of India, although the state of the country was less favourable in former times than at present, for its full and complete execution. It would be too much to expect that the promulgation of the abolition will not excite some degree of clamour and dissatisfaction, but we are firmly persuaded that such feelings will be short-lived, and we trust that no apprehension need be entertained of its exciting any violent opposition or any evil consequences whatever.

166. *W. Fane to Bentinck*

Calcutta, 5 December 1829

My Lord,

I beg to return the paper, given to your Lordship by Ram Mohan Roy, which you did me the favour of forwarding to me for my perusal. My employment, hitherto, in the public service having been confined almost entirely to the supervision of the revenue details of a district, I have had but few opportunities of informing myself of the general questions which the revenue system of the country involves, connected with measures of legislation; and I am therefore in a great measure ignorant of the views that have been taken by the best informed persons of questions of this character, as well as of the result of the discussions that I know they have frequently undergone.

The best mode of protecting the cultivating classes from the undue exactions of the persons entitled to demand rent of them has been the object I fancy of the anxious consideration of every government that has existed in Bengal since the formation of the permanent settlement, and many schemes have been at different times devised, and in part carried into execution, with a view to the accomplishment of this purpose:—but as no record was formed of the subordinate land tenures that existed when the engagement was entered into with the zamindars; and local custom (of which there were neither authoritative expounders nor authentic writings, public or private) was made the sole rule of law by which the courts were to be guided in their judgments in disputes between landlords and tenants, it is not much to be wondered at that an almost universal change in the relation between such persons followed the introduction of a system by which property in land was in fact transferred from the government to individuals; for it is in my opinion a mere misnomer to acknowledge any other party than the government proprietors of the soil whilst it continues to regulate its justified demands of rent (taking by principle nearly the whole) by the means which each successive year provides for its payment.

The proposition submitted to your Lordship by Ram Mohan Roy for remedying the fundamental and, I am afraid now irremediable error that was committed at the permanent settlement—that of neglecting to ascertain and define by law the relative rights of landlord and tenant—is simple enough in principle; but having little in it in the shape of justice to recommend it for adoption, it seems hardly deserving of any consideration.

He proposes that the government should declare the rents now paid by the cultivators of the soil in the provinces permanently assessed fixed for ever at their present rates; a measure which, setting aside all other objections that must readily occur to such an arrangement, the government of Bengal has, I imagine, at this time, just as much title to adopt as it would have to enact a law fixing the rate of rent that proprietors of houses in Calcutta should in future demand from those who may engage to occupy them.

By Regulation 1 of 1793 government reserved to itself the right of adopting any measures that might be found necessary for the protection of the cultivating classes, but the measures contemplated were such I conceive as were connected with the introduction of an efficient system of judicial administration, having for its object the protection of all persons professing an interest in the land, and especially of those the most helpless against the unjust usurpation or violation of their rights. The creation of new obligations, or the modification or limitation of those that existed at the period of the permanent settlement, or might subsequently arise out of the new system then introduced by any such sweeping indiscriminating ordinance as Ram Mohan Roy has recommended, could never, I imagine, have been for a moment in the contemplation of Lord Cornwallis or his council.

All that can be done at this distant date, for the benefit for all classes connected with the land and its rents, the great cardinal error having been committed, and being now irremediable, is, I think, to give to the country as cheap and efficient an administration of civil justice as the state of society in it will admit of, and for this purpose I believe your Lordship now has some measures under your consideration.

167. *Bentinck to Peter Auber*

Calcutta. 14 December 1829

My dear Sir,

Pray accept my warmest acknowledgments for your very kind letters of the 9th, 20th and 27th July per *Zenobia* and *Lady Flora.*

I confess I am greatly surprised at the manner in which the granting leases to Europeans and the temporary removal of the government have been received by the authorities at home. The minute subsequently received upon the first subject, will I hope, have explained away the totally erroneous opinions that seem to prevail upon this subject. By the measure in question we simply removed *forms,* equally inconvenient to the settlers and to the government. In the mufassal these indigo planters have been long settled. You know perfectly well that every man has got leave either from the court or, if refused, from the board to settle in India. You must know also that for several years past, the local governments have never refused any one permission to settle, whether he came from home licensed or unlicensed. The court cannot be ignorant of these facts, or that all these indigo planters are in possession of great tracts of lands either by purchase or by lease, not in their own names certainly, but in the names of natives. What we have done then has been solely to allow to be done openly, what they have hitherto done secretly; thereby fixing upon them the responsibility to which as proprietors they ought to be liable, and relieving them from the necessity of a collective agreement with a native by whom they were often cheated. But after all such is still the cumbersome nature of the restrictions already maintained, that hardly any application has been made for the permission granted. Be assured, that the court and the government are behaving under an old exploded prejudice upon this point. Likewise in respect to the conduct of those interlopers, as you view them, you have conveniently (pardon me) endeavoured to make out a case against them by calling upon the magistrates in the interior for reports upon their conduct and other particulars. Observe what will be the result. First—these reports will be generally favourable as I have reason to think. Secondly—by way of retort the agents here have sent a printed circular of which I hope to be able to enclose a copy, calling upon all the indigo planters to report upon the administration of the Company's affairs in the mufassal, upon the police, justice, etc.

Be assured that without the use of any exaggeration they will make a strong case out of defective government: a case, however, much more for the prohibitory order against our temporary removal to the upper provinces.

I cannot think your advocate's law to be a very good law, but it is clear that there was nothing in the act prohibiting the measures, and as it was supposed to be actually in progress why not allow it to proceed, forbidding a repetition of it, without leave from the court; a most salutary measure has in consequence been frustrated. Nobody I think can be acquainted with the rules nor circumstances of these provinces without feeling that the close inspection of them and the application upon the spot, of the greatest experience and the highest talents to eliminate corrupt and defective parts of our general superintendence and system would be most advantageous. Look at central India, look at the disgraceful conditions of our two great residencies at Delhi and Lucknow; look at the court of Oudh, requiring as Mr. Maddock wrote word in an especial manner the presence of the governor-general. Look again at your unsettled revenue management in the upper provinces, about which no two men agree. Look again at the whole of your police management, beyond measure oppressive and the administration of justice universally complained of. All these are immense questions, to be best settled upon the spot in communication with the executive officer and above all with the natives of character. How could I, as governor-general in my single capacity, perhaps with one or two secretaries come to a decision upon these vast and different subjects? But if we wanted in fact all those blessings of which so much is said and so little done, it is my duty to bring to bear upon them the wisdom and ability of our ablest officers. I would certainly have gone up alone, doing the best I could, and appointing a vice-president according to the court's orders, but I felt that I could not with propriety, after the discontent which had prevailed in the army, separate myself without inconvenience from the new chief authority. I have seen enough to be convinced that the less the commander-in-chief is absent from the government, the better. Had Lord Combermere, than whom there cannot be a better disposed man, been in his seat in council the dissatisfaction and its consequences to the half-batta order would not have gone to the length they since attained. It is quite curious the efforts made by the staff to prove the impossibility of Lord Dalhousie accompanying the government, but I determined that everything should be ready for him and that no difficulties should exist. His presence, with that of the government at the great stations would at this moment have been most useful.

I am glad to say that all is quiet. The government of Ava about whom there have been unfavourable reports, has latterly shown most friendly and favourable disposition.

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168. *The petition of the Hindus against the abolition of* sati

19 December 1829

We the undersigned beg leave respectfully to submit the following petition to your Lordship in council in consequence of having heard that certain persons taking upon themselves to represent the opinions and feelings of the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta have misrepresented those opinions and feelings and that your Lordship in council is about to pass a resolution founded on such erroneous statements to put a stop to the practice of performing suttees, an interference with the religion and customs of the Hindus which we most earnestly deprecate and cannot view without the most serious alarm.

With the most profound respect for your Lordship in council we the undersigned Hindu inhabitants of the city of Calcutta beg leave to approach you in order to state such circumstances as appear to us necessary to draw the attention of government fully to the measure in contemplation and the light in which it will be regarded by the greater part of the more respectable Hindu population of the Company's territories who are earnest in the belief as well as in the profession of their religion.

From time immemorial the Hindu religion has been established and in proportion to its antiquity has been its influence over the minds of its followers. In no religion has apostasy been more rare and none has resisted more successfully the fierce spirit of proselytism which animated the first Mahomedan conquerors.

That the Hindu religion is founded like all religions on usage as well as precept and one when immemorial is held equally sacred with the other. Under the sanction of immemorial usage as well as precept Hindu widows perform of their own accord and pleasure and for the benefit of their husbands' souls and for their own the sacrifice of self immolation called suttee—which is not merely a sacred *duty* but a high privilege to her who sincerely believes in the doctrine of her religion—and we humbly submit that any interference with a persuasion of so high and self annihilating a nature is not only an unjust and intolerant dictation in matters of conscience but is likely wholly to fail in procuring the end proposed.

Even under the first Mussalman conquerors of Hindustan and certainly since this country came under the Mogul government not withstanding the fanaticism and intolerance of their religion no interference with the practice of suttee was ever attempted. Since that period and for nearly a century the power of the British government has been established in Bengal Bihar and Orissa and none of the governors-general or their councils have hitherto interfered in any manner to the prejudice of the Hindu religion or customs and we submit that by various acts of the parliament of Great Britain under the authority of which the honourable Company itself exists our religion and laws usages

and customs such as they have existed from time immemorial are inviolably secured to us.

We learned with surprise and grief that while this is confessed on all hands the abolition of the practice of suttee is attempted to be defended on the ground that there is no positive law or precept enjoining it. A doctrine derived from a number of Hindus who have apostatized from the religion of their fore-fathers who have defiled themselves by eating and drinking forbidden things in the society of Europeans and are endeavouring to deceive your Lordship in council by assertions that there is no law regarding suttee practices and that all Hindus of intelligence and education are ready to assent to the abolition [of them] on the ground that the practice of suttee is not authorized by the laws fundamentally established and acknowledged by all Hindus as sacred. But we humbly submit, [on] a question so delicate as the interpretation of our sacred books and the authority of our religious usages none but pandits and brahmins and teachers of holy lives and known learning *and authority ought to be consulted and we are satisfied and flatter our*selves with the hope that your Lordship in council will not regard the assertion of men who have neither any faith nor care for the memory of their ancestors or their religion: and that if your Lordship in council will assume to yourself the difficult and delicate task of regulating the conscience of a whole people and deciding what it ought to believe and what it ought to reject on the authority of its own sacred writers that such a task will be undertaken only after anxious and strict enquiry and patient consultation with men known and reverenced for their attachment to the Hindu religion the authority of their lives and their knowledge of the sacred books which contain its doctrines. And if such a satisfactory examination should be made we are confident that your Lordship in council will find our statements to be correct and will learn that the measure will be regarded with horror and dismay throughout the Company's dominions as the signal of an universal attack upon all we revere.

We further beg leave to represent that the enquiry in question has been already made by some of the most learned and virtuous of the Company's servants whose memory is still reverenced by the nations who were under their rule and that Mr. Warren Hastings late governor-general at the request of Mr. Nathaniel Smith the then chairman of the court of directors (the former being well versed in many parts of the Hindu religion) having instituted the enquiry was satisfied as to the validity of the laws respecting suttees—that a further and similar enquiry was made by Mr. Wilkins who was deputed to and accordingly did proceed to Benares and remain there a considerable time in order to be acquainted with the religion and customs in question, that his opinion was similar to that of Mr. Warren Hastings and that this opinion was since confirmed by Mr. Jonathan Duncan whose zealous and excellent administration in Benares and other parts of Hindustan will long be remembered by the nations with gratitude.

In the time of Lord Cornwallis some of the Christian missionaries who then first appeared in this country secretly conveyed to the council some false and exaggerated accounts of the suttee practice and first advanced the assertion that it was not lawful. His Lordship in council after enquiry and by the assistance of Mr. Duncan was satisfied of its lawfulness and was contented to permit us to follow our customs as before.

In the time of Lord Moira and Amherst a number of European missionaries who came out to convert Hindus and others renewed their attack upon this custom and by clamour and falsely affirming that by compulsive measures Hindu women were thrown into the fire procured the notice of government and an order was issued requiring magistrates to take steps that suttees might perform their sacrifice at their pleasure and that no one should be allowed to persuade or use any compulsion. On the concurrent reports of various gentlemen then in the civil service that in all instances which had come under their cognizance the widows went to the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands cheerfully, these governors-general were satisfied and no farther interference was attempted.

The ratified measure last adverted to did not answer the object proposed and it proved (as we humbly submit) the unpolicy of interference in any degree with matters of conscience.

The fact was that the number of suttees in Bengal considerably increased in consequence within a short time—and in order to ascertain the cause a reference was made to the sadar diwani adalat who could assign no satisfactory cause to account for it. Though it might perhaps have occurred to gentlemen of so much experience that the interference of government even to this extent with the practice was likely by drawing to it the attention of the native community in a greater degree than formerly to increase the number of votaries.

From a celebrated instance relating to suttees that we immediately hereafter beg leave to cite your Lordship in council will find that on the occasion alluded to no other good was obtained by an attempt to prevent the widow burning with her deceased husband than that religion was violated and to no purpose a suttee. In the time of Lord Clive his diwan raja Nobkissen endeavoured to prevent a widow performing the sacrifice by making her believe that her husband had been already burnt and when she discovered that she had been deceived offering her any sum of money that might be required for her support as a recompense but nothing would satisfy her she starved herself to death. His Lordship then gave orders that no one should be allowed to interfere with the Hindu religion or customs.

Independent of the foregoing statement your Lordship in council will see that your predecessors after long residences in India having a complete knowledge of the laws and customs of Hindus were satisfied as to such laws and never came to a resolution by which devout and conscientious Hindus must be placed in the most painful of all

predicaments and either forego in some degree their loyalty to government and disobey its injunctions or violate the precepts of their religion.

Before we conclude we beg to request your impartial consideration of the various acts of parliament passed from time to time since the reign of his Majesty George the Third and which have ever since been strictly preserved. The substance and spirit of which may be thus summed up viz: that no one is to interfere in any shape in the religion or the customs of Hindu subjects. These acts conceived in the spirit of trust wisdom and toleration were passed by men as well acquainted at least as any now in existence with our laws. Our language our customs and our religion have never been infringed by the wisest of those who have here administered the powers of government and we trust will be preserved for the future as for the past inviolate as they are a most solemn pledge and charter from our rulers to ourselves, on the preservation of which depend rights more sacred in our eyes than those of property or life itself—and sure we are that when this most important subject has been well and maturely weighed by your Lordship in council the resolution which has filled us and all faithful Hindu subjects of the honourable Company's government with concern and terror will be abandoned and that we shall obtain a permanent security through your Lordship's wisdom against the renewal of similar attempts.

And your petitioners shall ever pray for. . . .

169. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Edward Grey.* Copy

Government House, Calcutta. 21 December 1829

My dear Sir Charles,

Permit me to explain in a few words my view of the objects we ought to have in view.

The great evils under which we labour are, first, a double and conflicting jurisdiction and secondly, if I may so term it, a doubtful and distant legislation.

It seems to me of little consequence to our present deliberation in what hands the supreme authority is hereafter to be placed, whether in the king alone or in the king and Company conjointly, or whether the Company are to carry on their trade or not. With these questions I conceive we have nothing to do, and that in giving weight to them, we are giving substance to shadows.

Our business seems to be, to present to the home authorities such a scheme for making laws and for administering them, as will best suit the condition and circumstances of the *whole* population black and white, native and European. It is for the authorities in England to adjust the authority by which the local government is to be controlled, and to prevent in that arrangement any delegation of powers to the court of directors (supposing the court of directors to be continued),

which shall be incompatible with the independence of the judges to be chosen by the local government qua the Company as traders, or with the prerogative and authority of the crown.

Upon the assumption that the constitution of the controlling authority is to remain as at present, it appears to me that the proposed plan takes no powers from the king's court that it has at present, but, on the contrary, very much increases them.

It will have its exclusive jurisdiction over European functionaries as before; it will be a court of admiralty. It will be in addition, the supreme court for the whole instead of one-fiftieth part of the population, and while it retains its independence of the local government, it will be coequal with it in point of legislation.

The proposed plan is perfectly simple, and is no great deviation from the present arrangements.

The powers of the two supreme courts are consolidated into one.

Calcutta retains its English law and its trial by jury, under one judge or recorder, to be appointed by the crown. It would be better to give it a new code, criminal, to be applicable to the whole of India.

The local courts will all remain as at present, liable only to such alterations as the government now has, or the legislation council will have hereafter, the power to introduce.

The only novelty required is the formation of a tribunal by which Europeans can be tried in the muffassal.

Is not this the whole case? Where is there the difficulty?

170. *Nilmoney Dey to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 21 December 1829

My Lord,

May I beg the favour of your Lordship to recollect that I mentioned that the victory over the Mussulman rule and the permanence of British possession of India is wholly owing to the virtue of Company's servants and not their ability, as likewise any harsh measures taken respecting suttee, should be productive of trouble with complaints of injustice.

To avoid any causes of dissatisfaction on the part of the petitioners, an extension of virtuous disposition is requisite, and before your seeing some of them, I wish I may be allowed to have some conversation with your Lordship respecting a better feasible plan which [will] probably be carried without prejudice.

If it is agreeable to your Lordship be pleased to desire Captain Benson to inform me what hour is most suitable to your Lordship's convenience that I may have the honour to wait accordingly.

In the event of your Lordship's finding any words in this to be inconsistent, I hope it may be attributed to my want of knowledge, as

it is with no other view that I trouble your Lordship and my infirm head, than to make myself useful to such a personage as your Lordship.

Enclosure in the above

A virtuous woman in my family prefers worship and constant prayers for her salvation; but observes that by stopping the practice of suttee the government is to prove tyrannical.

Two women, daughters and wives of high kulin brahmins, resident in the village named Bally over the water, on being asked why don't the widows of kulin brahmins prefer pure life to the practice of suttee which is supposed as an offence of self murder, replied, that the state of chastity is so tedious and frightful, that no wise one of her sex would like to observe it, as the first step thereof requires to subdue passions which cannot be effected, as there are a thousand attacks of vanity on the human creation, specially on the female world. The fire of hell is more painful than the burning of a mortal frame, which must fall itself. She goes on to observe, that a suttee woman lives in the life of her husband—on the decease of her husband nothing would dissuade her, and that it is not in the power of wisdom or philosophy to fathom the creation of God Almighty—why some poor, why others rich, why some enjoy good health, and why others are troubled by perpetual sickness—so the death, birth, pleasure, and pain depend on him alone, any person attempting to resist a misfortune cannot succeed unless God assists him.

Question: God has created diseases and medicines to cure them, why a sensible man would not take advice of a professional physician and take such medicines as prescribed to him.

Reply: A doctor is not able to cure his family and his own body. One medicine has effect in one instance, and fails in others. If the medicine or medical people could prevent death or sickness none would die, it is therefore to be considered every thing proceeds from, and return to our father above.

Question: Can you persuade a woman resolved to be a suttee, to make her wish known some days before her husband's death?

Reply: I believe not, as it is universally known, that no woman could or would disclose her secret previously, because none can suppose, what is to go to her lot; but in the event of her declining it after declaration should prove disgraceful to her surviving family.

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171. *James Calder to Capt. Benson*

[? January] 1830

My dear Benson,

The difficulty of getting most natives to keep to their promises is most annoying, and must be particularly so to those who have not had much experience of their laxity in such matters. I was again yesterday evening promised that both the pandits would wait on you today—they require Dwarkanath Tagore[1] to accompany them and he has been constantly engaged of late tho' I find him more sensible of the value of time and punctuality than any of his countrymen. I do hope they will see you tomorrow forenoon.

Ram Mohan is entirely occupied in getting signatures to the native address and both it and the Christian address altho' profound should be presented at the same time.

172. *James Calder to Capt. Benson*

[? January] 1830

My dear Benson,

I am sorry to say that Ramchandra Surma, the head pandit of the college who is of Ram Mohan Roy's school and was expected to sign the address of abolitionists, has been prevailed upon to sign the anti-abolition petition but I am assured his real sentiments are with the abolitionists. Ramcomar Sen is leading away all those connected with the colleges to the abolition out of compliment to H. H. Wilson to whom he owes everything. I think it would be desirable for his Lordship to converse with Ramchandra Surma of whose views on the suttee question I shall let you know more on Monday. I do not recollect at present any particular Hindu whose name I would recommend adding to the list, unless that of Prusona Comar Tagore, the brother of Dwarkanath Tagore, who is remarkably intelligent and better read and informed in English literature than his brother, and a useful opponent of the suttee.

By the bye, hearing of the dismissal of Mr. Sage a name that has too long been a blot on the list of civil servants, it strikes me that it would be appropriate to bring forward at this moment as a powerful reason for the abolition of suttees the horrible anecdote of that same Mr. Sage having given his magisterial sanction (and that when he was out of the jurisdiction to which he belonged), to the sacrifice of a Hindu widow

171. [1] Tagore, Dwarkanath, ?1795–1846, established the agency house of Carr, Tagore & Co. in 1834. He became the first Indian J.P. He was an active reformer.

under the age permitted by the suttees, and that for the sum of 800 or 900 rupees which was all the bribe he received for so horrible an act of injustice. I can give you the details of the case if you wish, for I was an observer of the scene and traced the corrupt means, and laid the which before Mr. Adam then (in 1818) chief secretary. Excuse this long hasty scrawl.

173. *John Loch to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

London. 1 January 1830

My dear Lord,

Overwhelmed with business as I am at this moment I have not time to do more than thank your Lordship for your letters by the *Andromache.* They are most painfully interesting; the state of our army is deplorable; they have placed us in a situation of the greatest difficulty whereas if their conduct had been more temperate there would have been none. We shall anxiously wait your Lordship's next communication on this subject after your having received the report of the revision committee. I feel peculiarly anxious upon the subject of this report as it may either assist us out of a serious difficulty or place us in a still more embarrassing situation than we now stand should we be unable to concur in the view taken. Your Lordship may depend upon our giving the whole question our most mature and deliberate consideration. Although we have only within these few days received your despatches on this important question, we had heard sufficient to impress my mind with the difficulty and delicacy of the question and I requested Lord Ellenborough to consult with the Duke of Wellington and make it a secret cabinet question. The conduct of the officers has been such as to make concession difficult and this is generally felt. It is no longer the half-batta question but the discipline of the army that requires our consideration, but whatever decision the home authorities come [to], your Lordship may be satisfied that the question has been well considered in all its bearings.

The conduct of Lord Combermere has been far from that which ought to have guided him on such an occasion. In my opinion he has done the army infinite mischief in not checking their violence and un-officer-like conduct at first. We should then probably have had a temperate representation such as we ought to have had. Your Lordship has been placed in a most difficult situation and the conduct of the officers at Dum Dum and Barrackpore [was] perfectly inexcusable but your Lordship has acted with great wisdom on the occasion as it would have been impossible to have calculated what might have been the consequence of severity on the excited feelings of the army at that time.

The deputy chairman who is in Bedfordshire has sent me your Lordship's letters to him. Many of the topics I should be glad to go fully into with your Lordship if I had time.

I am very sorry to hear what your Lordship says of Lady Colebrooke. The want of honour and honesty if it should gain ground in India will shortly overturn our government in that country. I hope Appa Sahib will not lead us into any expense. Your Lordship I am glad to see takes a favourable view of our finances for the year 1830/1. We are rather gloomy on the subject here. I hope your Lordship will prove right. In fact it is our great and principal difficulty. It meets us at every turn, and I fear your new system relative to the opium will not place you in an [easy] situation as I fear it will diminish your revenue and although your ultimate reductions will be great it will be some time before they operate.

I hope your Lordship will excuse this hurried and confidential note.

The letter I had the honour of receiving from your Lordship shall only be seen by Lord Ellenborough and Mr. Astell as your Lordship desires.

174. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Private

Worthing. 2 January 1830

My dear Lord,

I received on the 29th ult. your letters of the 6th and 8th of July and of the 2nd of August. The chairman has communicated to me confidentially your letter to him respecting the conduct of the Company officers at Barrackpore and the general feeling of the Bengal army.

It is very hard upon you to be made to suffer for the errors of your predecessors. It is not your obedience to positive orders but the disobedience of preceding governments which has led to your undeserved unpopularity. The people in Bengal seem to have supposed the local government was an independent government and the conduct of that government on too many occasions must have tended to confirm the error by making it appear that they themselves thought so. There seems to have been of late years much laxity of control both in England and in India. It will require some years and the constant pressure of the same firm hand to re-establish the full authority of the government; and to restore a proper tone to the minds of the civil and military servants of the state in India. The constitution of the Indian government is such that there is nothing in its appearance to conserve. It has not the usual prestige of power, but it still has its reality, and means must be taken to make those who condemn its authority feel it. For the re-establishment of the general government in the opinion of its servants the home authorities and the local authorities must act together. It is only their united strength which can accomplish the necessary object. I say the necessary object, however, I feel satisfied that the present connexion between India and England can only be

maintained by obedience there—by support here, and by a respected government. Your Lordship may act fearlessly in the path of duty for you may be assured that the king's present government is not one which will abandon a faithful public servant whose firm and conscientious discharge of his public duty may make him the object of attack.

The worst feature in the aspect of affairs in India seems to me to be the want of high, gentlemanlike feeling in society. It is that which it is most difficult to combat and reform. The mode in which the commanding officers at Barrackpore showed their dissatisfaction with your conduct was not only culpable as an act of insubordination, it was ungentlemanlike. The betraying of my private letter to the editor of a newspaper showed the existence of at least one man in high station (for to none but in high station would the letter have been confidentially communicated) who was not a man of honour.

I am not sorry however that the letter was published. It will have done some good.

I again feel the necessity of effecting an economical reform in India. I am sure the people of England will not quietly bear the imposition of a burden upon themselves for the purpose of carrying on the government of India; and should you not succeed in making such reductions as may bring the expenditure within the income we shall be forced to reduce with a rough hand. I hope we may not be driven to this necessity, for I do not think the rough hand would be very quietly borne even when applied under the direction of public opinion and of parliament. When I look at the enormous increase in the charge of collecting the revenue and at the enhancement of all civil expenditure which have taken place within the last few years I cannot but think that in bringing back all these charges to their former amount you have the means of producing even a surplus revenue. When the variations in the seasons are adhered to and the effect they have upon the revenue is considered I think it will appear that for security the receipts in average years ought to cover all the charges in Indian account both in India and in England and have, in time of peace a surplus of one million sterling. I do not want that surplus for the diminution of debt so much as for the reduction of taxation, for I am satisfied we never can derive the full benefit from the possession of India until by diminishing the public burden, we allow private property to grow up in the country.

The directors have had the good sense to say nothing about the half-batta question, and we leave it altogether to the chairs. The chairs have expressed a wish to hear the opinion of the cabinet to guide them; but before I read your private letters, I had suggested the expediency of coming to no decision until we got the report of the finance committee upon the comparative situation of the three services.

I am very happy to see that your government have not adopted the unconstitutional and unstatesmanlike ground taken by former governments on this question. That you will not hear of the union of the army

as *claims of right*. I wrote to Lord Wellesley, by whom the arrangement of giving full batta instead of half-batta and quarters was made, and I asked him whether any compact was then understood to have been made with the army. Lord W. said no—he neither did make any, nor could he have made any, it was beyond his powers. The reduction of double full batta in Oudh and the granting of full batta in the cantonments specified, were measures taken on separate grounds of policy and economy. No statesman could have given a different answer. I am very happy that no mischief has happened to Mr. Scott in the course of the bow and arrow insurrection in Assam. I have a high opinion of his useful abilities. He is a very prominent man. I was much struck by the report of Lt. W. Hislop, assistant to the resident at Delhi, on the opium arrangements in central India. It is the best written paper I have read since I have been at the India board. You could not do otherwise than give up the treaties and return freedom to the trade, but I fear you will find at least, for a year or two, that your benefits from the opium monopoly fall off very much. I hope every attention will be paid to the *making* of Bengal and Bihar opium, which seems to have been much neglected and to have lead to an inferior production. I expect great over-cultivation and over-speculation in opium in Malwa upon the restoration of freedom. They will look only to the high prices given before the treaties by the Bombay purchases on the Company's account, prices perfectly unjustifiable, and which can hardly have been honest and they will expect the same price as now. The consequence will I fear be a minor reduction of price.

I perfectly coincide in your view of the expediency of allowing the Nizam to govern his own dominions if he wishes to do so. Apprehended injury to ourselves or the general peace is the only just ground of interference which must always be [?difficult] and is I fear usually unsuccessful, I mean unsuccessful as regards the welfare of the people. I hope we shall receive the opinion of the judges of the supreme court in time to consider them before the bill for consolidating the acts relating to their jurisdiction is brought in. You know the *vis inertiae* of prejudice upon the matter of the British law and can appreciate the difficulties in the way of any better system. If I can lead others my way you shall have a better system.

175. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Private

India Board. 12 January 1830

You will receive probably at the same time with this letter, a despatch in the secret department directing your government to obtain information as to the designs and progress of the Russians[1] in central

175. [1] Ellenborough had exaggerated notions of the magnitude and immediacy of the Russian threat to British India, asserting soon after his appointment that 'The invasion of

Asia, to adopt measures for the thwarting of such designs, and in aid of those measures as well as for commercial purposes, to endeavour to secure to our commerce the free navigation of the Indus and its tributary streams. You will see that a mission must be sent to Ranjit Singh. Much will depend upon the ability and energy of the officer employed. Lt. Munro, who is, I believe, now stationed at Ambala, has been highly spoken of lately in one of the letters from Bengal. He is personally known to Ranjit Singh, and if he should be otherwise an eligible person, I think the circumstance of his being the brother of a secretary of state will give effect to his mission. However this is a point upon which your Lordship can form the best judgment.

I feel the greatest interest in the opening of the navigation of the Indus. I hope to see the day when the manufactures of this country carried up the Indus by steam, and perhaps by the same power up the Sutlej, may be transported by camels to the Jumna and thus distributed over the north-western province of India by turning all the difficulties which attend the navigation of the Jumna and the Ganges, and descending instead of ascending those streams.

I think it was rather hard upon Lord Hastings to decide that the land he restored should be called not by his name but by that it had first borne. If your Lordship should restore the canal which once connected the Sutlej with the Ganges and thus with the Jumna, it shall not be my fault if it does not forever bear the name of Bentinck.

176. *R. Fullarton to Bentinck*

Prince of Wales Island. 16 January 1830

My Lord,

. . . The public despatches will explain the lamentable state to which our revenues have fallen owing principally to the late decisions of the court in respect to the excise revenues, both Mr. Ibbetson and myself are of opinion that they are fully supported by the act of 54 Geo. III cap. 105 and many decisions are on record made by former *professional* judges to the same effect. It is hoped therefore that the steady enforcement of the penalties will before the period of next sale of the farms have restored their operation in the fullest extent.

The circumstances of the land revenue brought about by the court are still more provoking, all the irregular and confused titles having been called in and exchanged for regular grants, the lands held without any right or title whatever were discovered, the holders were then warned of the situation in which they stood without title, they were told

India . . . is not only practicable but easy, unless we determine to act as an Asiatic power. We should occupy Lahore and Kabul.' *Political Diary*, II, p. 123. Later in December, 1829 he crowed 'We shall have missions to Sind and Lahore, and a commercial venture up the Indus . . . in short, all I want.' Ibid., p. 150.

of the danger of being ejected from their lands, the court of directors having forbidden the further alienation of land in perpetuity, leases varying from two to ten years were offered to them and eagerly accepted, they came to the land office a hundred at a time and willingly signed the deeds fully explained to them, and a business in process for more than ten years was finally adjusted. In an evil hour there came a Calcutta attorney to practise in the court, on the first demand of rent he and his jackals set the people up to dispute the validity of the leases, they subscribed about four times the sum that would have paid all their rents to try the question, one case was brought into court to set aside the lease and compel the government to give them permanent grants, free of rent, the latter part was rejected, but the lease was set aside on technical informalities and directly contrary to evidence, in short it could not be proved that the Malay man signing the lease actually did pronounce the magical words, 'I declare this to be my act and deed' or pronouncing it did actually understand its meaning. The deed was invalid! The decision of course affected only one case but was made out to bear on all, we have now therefore more than three hundred occupants of upwards of three thousand acres who will neither pay rent nor quit the land; hundreds of Chinese have poured in and taken possession without any permission in actual dispute of orders, and being in possession, we were told such confers a title and nothing can be done. Nothing can be more plain clear and simple than the provisions of the charter, it expressly provides and enjoins the court to attend to the circumstances of the country, but what is plain clear and simple never can suit an English lawyer or an English judge, and instead of taking the case as it stands, we have all the jargon of the land tenure of England introduced with its incidents. Should any case come before me, I certainly shall give a due latitude to the provisions of the charter and reason thus. The king was the sovereign and like all Malay sovereigns was also the proprietor of the land, what he was, government became, no title can be good unless it emanates from the proprietor and no other title exists on this island, no actual possession can bar the right of government because there have been issued from time to time proclamations innumerable forbidding and interdicting the occupation of the land without written title or permission, but all this is only one of the many inconveniences resulting from the absence of local legislation adapted to the circumstances of the country....

177. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 1 February 1830

My dear Lord William,

I have been apparently very unmindful of you lately, for I know not when I last wrote, but as I know Mr. Auber writes you from time to time and conclude he can only write for the purpose of giving you an outline of what is going on here, I have persuaded myself that there was little left for me to add.

The batta question still remains in abeyance tho' the memorials and other papers have been here for some time. The wish you have expressed not to have it decided till you send us the report of the committee on the comparative allowances of the armies of the three presidencies is made use of as an excuse for indecision, though I cannot help suspecting there are other causes for delay. I confess I do not see—after the conduct of your officers—that that report, be it what it may, ought to have anything to do with the question, which is now become one of subordination and obedience to superior authority. In such a state of things I would enforce the order at all events. I would leave it to the discretion of the governor-general to make an example of some of the mutineers, for they deserve no better appellation. I would pledge the home authorities to support him in so doing and after discipline was properly restored I would then, but not till then, take the relative allowances of the different armies into consideration. If the Bengal army should prove the worst off, which I cannot believe, I would make up the difference in some other way. The scene going on under your eyes resembles very strongly that which old Lord Clive was a witness to, and some of his letters written at the time are well worth referring to. Your army has ever since been too much of a deliberative army. Now or never it must cease to be so. Grievances when they have them they have a clear right to represent but the *mode* of doing it makes all the difference. If done in a proper spirit of subordination it is even commendable—if otherwise it is rebellion. I never have been able to understand or believe in the inadequacy of army allowances. They may be inadequate to the *prevailing extravagances of the day*, but no government can grant pay adequate to such fancies. The only remedy is for the officers, as they must, to dispense with them, and it will then be found I believe that their pay is adequate to every necessary comfort. I cannot believe otherwise knowing as I do, the many instances in which even subalterns live creditably and still save money to send home to their families. It is true that those who marry and have families of their own may be puzzled to make both ends meet, but if they will marry on such inadequate means they must take the consequences for no government can regulate its pay on a scale adequate to the expenses of large families.

What would these men have, are they blind enough to suppose they could benefit by throwing the state into convulsion? Do they flatter

themselves they could govern and rule all India themselves as an independent country? Do they think the natives will submit to this, and what is to become of them if they fail as they assuredly would? The Company's servants get among them already much *more than* all the revenues of India. What would they have? Do they want not only to ruin themselves but all those at home who are connected with India, for what would become of the Indian debt, of the home debt, of all the pensions and superannuation of their brother officers, if they persevere in their infatuation? I have no patience with them when they run mad in this way. I am very much of Sir Thomas Munro's opinion—vide page 255–256–265 [of] Vol. 2 of his life, and his letter to his sister in Vol. 1 wherein he describes his own life as a subaltern.

The mutiny at Madras in Sir G. Barlow's time was fomented and carried on principally by the junior part of the army, for the senior had lost all control over them. It is the same now very much I suspect. Why was this? I have always thought because the senior were too ill, the juniors too well off. I have always said the only remedy for this is to make the command of a corps a desirable object for any man to hold, but the commonest staff appointment even now is better than the command of a corps, and regimental duty is consequently scouted. This is the great evil, though I admit there are many minor ones. The remedy is obvious.

I grieve to see how ill you are supported or rather how much you are opposed in this and other matters. You ought not to be left with such a burden on your shoulders. You should be manfully supported from home and you should have about you men who, though they differ from you occasionally, will support all measures when they are once determined on, whether they like them or not. If a strong government ever was wanted it is now, and I would make it strong even if I sent people out from home to help you. Unless something is done to effect this object I hope you will not remain long, for though I know you will console yourself with the feeling that you have acted honestly and done for the best, you cannot govern with any comfort to yourself or benefit to the state.

I have told you before and think still that you are attempting too much by touching too many things at once. Retrenchment alone is an odious and irksome task. It impinges the mind, the feelings and the exertions of all public servants. I would have postponed all other reforms till all that was necessary to be done in that way was done and men's minds began to be reconciled to the inevitable necessity. There are many things to be sure that must be attended to in the meantime, but I would do no more than is absolutely necessary, in addition to such measures as might be positively ordered from home, but you have got on hand the reform of the revenue and judicial system, the question of interference or non-interference, the Malwa opium, and lastly the press, with some other knotty points, all upon your hands beside retrenchment.

Parliament meets on Thursday. The India committee will it [is] said

be appointed immediately, but I do not think it will lead to any result this year. There is a good deal of noise working up among the landholders, the merchants and the people in general from want of employ, from the difficulty of getting work and employing money, and the India committee appears to me intended as one of the subjects for all parties to play with, and divert their attention from other matters. I hear a great deal of useless talk and see as much useless writing, but as regards the state of the country I do not see how legislation is to mend it. The late war has thrown us all out of our places. We must return to what we were, or nearly so. I can see no other remedy, we shall all once again in times mend. We must conquer our present extravagant notions and modes of living as your officers must do, and I cannot think we shall be any the worse for it. Our pride and vanity may be mortified, but that may do good to many for we have all too much of it. I believe myself the Duke, though he has in no way committed himself would not be unwilling to allow the present constitution for the government of India remain pretty much as it is at present, but I do not think he will act upon that feeling if public opinion should be very strong against it. For myself I would give up everything but the exclusive supply of the home market with *tea*. I would not object to doing away all the Company's commercial establishments in India and buying what we want in the market as we do indigo, and if I saw any other way in which we could ensure our remittances from India I would even give up all trade to and from India altogether. I would reform our court in many ways, as well as the mode of electing the directors, but in no way diminish their power.

The state of your Bengal civil servants is not the least difficult you have to contend with. All superannuated, totally inefficient servants should be got rid of. No one should be employed in a district, to any of the zamindars or other inhabitants of which he is indebted and any one who hereafter borrows money of a native of his district or has property in it should be liable to dismission from the service. As to these, the far greater number probably, who are indebted to agency houses, we cannot say they shall not be employed, but we may say those who get in debt hereafter shall not be. I was once in debt to be sure to the amount of 200 pagodas, but how different was my situation. I had only 20 pagodas or 70 rupees a month for the first year I was in India and had getting into debt been forbidden the probability is I should have saved so much more money.

Mr. Loch's reign is drawing to a close. Astell will be in the chair next year. I certainly shall not be with him, but I cannot say who it will be, though I think Mr. Wigram or Campbell. I guess the latter but it depends on circumstances.

The course you have taken about Malwa opium has alarmed many on the score of revenue, and though what is done cannot be undone you will probably be told you should have referred such a large question home before deciding it. If non-interference is to be the principle here-

after I am quite sure the Malwa opium affair was as much opposed to it as light to darkness.

You will have soon a very able review of the proceedings of late years in Rajputana. The conclusion come to is that there is no alternative between non-interference and complete interference but the preference is given to the former. How far the higher powers may agree to this we shall see when the draft comes back. My own idea is that whatever experiments we may try, the result sooner or later will be that nearly all the states within our northern and n.w. boundary, will eventually come into our hands, after being impoverished to the last degree by misgovernment and when they will not perhaps pay the expense of management. It would I am sure be better for all parties if such states were at once incorporated with our own and the chiefs treated as the nabob of Arcot and raja of Tanjore, but we must submit I suppose to the public feeling against aggrandisement and pay the penalty of such submission. There is a great difference however in my opinion between extending our territory *beyond* our *frontier*, and incorporating states *within that frontier* with our own. Against the former there can be only one opinion but inasmuch as the Carnatic if an independent power would be extremely inconvenient in the midst of our own possession, so will other independent powers be within any other part of our limits. I am not unwilling nevertheless to give the native states the chance of managing their own countries, for I am satisfied if they would do, it would be better for their people and for us, but I almost despair of their success.

Mr. Fitzgerald certainly retires from ill-health. [Horner] succeeds him. I hate a stock jobber as a minister however clever, but clever he certainly is, or rather he is a good plodding man of business which is all the Duke wants. Other changes are talked of, but I do not believe in them. Lord Ellenborough's letter to Malcolm has lately been published in *The Times*, and has made a great newspaper [noise] but he thinks too highly of himself to care much about it I should think. He is certainly the most fanciful president we ever had. He is clever no doubt. I wish he had more common sense and better judgment. In the scandalous world there is as usual much going on . . . Whether Leopold will go to Greece or not seems uncertain, but I have reason to believe he dislikes the idea on every account. I should be astonished if he did not. For my own part I think the idea all wrong, for if we send a king we must support him there, and this would make us a principal in all future eastern squabbles, of which there are no doubt many in embryo.

Lushington has acted wisely in taking Mr. Hill back so quickly. He will be wiser still if he makes use of Mr. Graeme's services. He will I hope get clear of the trammels in which he was caught by Munro's enemies, and thus may do very well, but he stays too long in the Nilgiri hills ever to do much good, except for himself. I have no idea who will succeed Malcolm.

George [Strachey] is in town and left some message to be sent to

you which I have forgot but it was of no importance. I am all alone in London, my family are in Paris. We have had six winters here in one. Not less there, but they have all been well which is more than they have been here for many years. It's a miserable life I lead without them, but when a man has 13 children and very small means he must submit to many privations for their sakes.

178. *Minute of Bentinck on canal construction*

2 February 1830

1. Possessing no scientific knowledge of civil engineering, I shall no doubt be considered guilty of great presumption in venturing to submit to council a scheme for the construction of works of great magnitude and expense, connected with that art. I may be permitted, however, to say in my defence that during the last fourteen years I have been constantly and actively employed as a commissioner for drainage and navigation in the great level of the fens. During this period, very extensive improvements in the rivers Nene & Ouse have been and are still going on, under the direction of Mr. Telford and the late Mr. Rennie, the latter of whom has been succeeded by his sons, Messrs. George and John Rennie. These undertakings have been in several sessions of parliament, the subject of long and warm contention. The opinions elicited upon these occasions from the first engineers, together with a long practical observation of the progress and result of these measures, could not but impart some knowledge at least of general principles. The local features of that part of England bear a striking analogy to those of Bengal. There exists the same lowness and flatness of surface; the same liability to inundation, both from the upland and tidal waters; the same difficulty of drainage; and the same impediments to navigation from the constant formation of sand banks, arising from the ever varying and enlarging channels of its rivers, and unfortunately, the same unhealthiness of climate. But there is this material difference, that here a gigantic character pervades the whole. The immense Ganges fed by its many tributary streams and all taking their rise in the highest mountains of the world, varying in depth from 40 feet, in the rains, to less than 3 feet, in some places, in the dry weather, running a course of above 1,000 miles has been hitherto quite uncontrollable by the art or science of man. It may however be questioned whether the sands which obstruct the mouths of the Bhagiratha and Jellinghi, at the point of separation from the Ganges, their parent stream, and which during the dry weather positively interrupt all navigation, might not yield to the superior experience and science of European engineers. But, be this as it may, in both cases the principle upon which alone any improvement can be made, must be precisely similar, and upon the present occasion, I feel confident in the correctness of the suggestion I have to offer only

so far as it has nothing of novelty in it, and that it is in strict conformity with the principles and is in great measure an exact copy of works planned and executed by the great engineers before mentioned.

2. My project has reference to the canal, which is to connect the salt water lakes with the Hooghly. This plan originated with the late Major Schalch, and is now in execution under the direction of Captain Prinsep. This work is one of great utility, very much required by the commercial interests of Calcutta, and must prove a source of prosperity to the country in general, as well as of revenue to the government.

3. Highly however as I think of the general measure, it strikes me that the line of the canal may be greatly improved, and that with this improvement, may be connected the execution of another object of equal utility and advantage with the canal itself, namely the draining and warping up the salt water lake, the area of which comprises eighteen and a half square miles or about 12,000 acres.

. . . . . .

5. The change, which I have to recommend in this plan, is that the new circular canal, instead of terminating at the Entally canal shall be continued round the lake, and as close to it as possible, and shall enter the creek at deep water below Bahmunghatta; that the lake shall be drained and subsequently warped up. The red line on the map No. 2 marks the direction of the proposed new cuts.

6. Before proceeding further, it will be necessary to a due understanding of the question of drainage and navigation, which have to be considered, that a statement should be given of the levels of Calcutta, of the adjacent country, and of the surface and bottom of the salt water lake, as compared with the high and low water mark, in ordinary and spring tides and during the freshes, in the Hooghly; in the lake, and at Bahmunghatta. In the gauge table annexed to Captain Prinsep's answers to certain questions put to him by me, this information will be found.

7. It will be observed that the believed lowest bed of the salt lake is at 2—that the depth is from 1½ to 2 feet and nowhere exceeds 2½ feet, that the neap tides in the Hooghly in March are ft. 5 in. 4, and the lowest springs in March, ft. 7 in. 5, below the lowest bed of the lake, in the one case giving ft. 3 in. 4 and in the other ft. 5 in. 5 fall. It is evident from this, that the complete drainage of the lake, either into the Hooghly itself, or into the canal is perfectly practicable.

8. The warping up of the lake is a still more easy and certain operation, in as much as in the months of March, April and May, the springs in the Hooghly are ten feet higher than the lowest bed of the lake, and the highest rise of the river in August and September is between 15 and 16 feet; vide daily register of tides in the Hooghly at Calcutta from 1805 to 1828 by James Kyd Esqre.

9. Nor can a doubt be for one moment entertained of the great superiority of a deep canal of fixed and even dimensions, with high banks serving as roads and towing paths, over a navigable shallow

channel, through an open lake, only to be kept open by the use of a dredging machine, and not having the benefit of a lateral embankment, except it be made at a considerable expense.

10. In consequence of the height of the freshes in August and September, exceeding the surface of the lower part of Calcutta by near six feet and the adjacent plains between seven and eight feet, it was necessary to erect lock gates at the mouth of the canal. This precaution would not be requisite, if the canal was cut over the dry land and the sides raised to a level, if thought more secure, of the banks of the Hooghly itself; I consider these locks to be objectionable, in as much as, when shut, they produce a suspension of the current and a consequent deposit of silt. It may be expected that this process of silting up, so great in the Entally canal, and in the adjoining part of the lake, may be much diminished, when by the new canal, the tides will ebb and flow daily, and that during the rains, there will be a more rapid current. This will no doubt be the case in the overland cut, and I think it not impossible that the bottom of the new cut, by the effect of the scouring of the water in its confined channel, may be brought to the same depth as the Hooghly at one end, and the creek at the other, or between 15 and 20 feet at low water mark. This can never be the case in the channel in the open lake, in which the current, being unconfined, will spend much of its force, and if a rapid current is not to be obtained, the silting process may be greater than before; because the water by which the lake and the Entally canal are now filled is exclusively tidal and clear; whereas the waters of the Hooghly bringing down the upland collections of a thousand miles, and passing during the latter part of its course through the rich loose soil of Bengal contains a greater portion of deposit matter than the Humber or any of the rivers flowing into the great estuary between the counties of Lincoln and Norfolk.

11. It is necessary to notice Tolly's nullah, which is now the only communication from the Hooghly and Calcutta with the Sundarbans, and all the districts to the eastward bordering on the Ganges and Brahmaputra. The crowded state of this canal, even to excess at all times, proves the want of additional accommodation to the general commercial intercourse by inland navigation. By a reference to Captain Prinsep's memorandum and diagram marked No. 6, the great imperfection of this channel will be at once seen. At each extremity of its course in the deep creek to the east and the Hooghly to the west, there is great depth of water, which would probably be preserved throughout the nullah itself, if its course was less tortuous, if the waters were properly confined by banks, if the dimensions throughout were of equal width, and if bridges having an insufficient water way, did not by interrupting the rapidity of the current, create a formation of sand banks. The free ingress of the rains produces no inconvenience at the mouth of the nullah, or to the surrounding country by inundation.

12. The drainage of Calcutta has always been an imperfect operation, but the proposed continuation of the circular canal will not affect

this paper, and I will only generally say, that I think it susceptible of very great improvement.

13. The drainage of the salt water lake is obviously so easy a measure with the fall into the canal at low water, that nothing need be said of it.

14. Warping is a process entirely unknown in India, and I conceive it would be very important that an opinion of some engineer of eminence in England conversant with the practice as observed in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire should be obtained upon this part of the subject. Captain Prinsep in the paper marked No. 7 has given a very ingenious plan for the gradual silting up of the lake. I feel, however, confident that a much better mode of effecting this object may be pursued. In my judgment, the lake should be *first* drained. When the water has been completely let off, it will be seen whether it is necessary to warp it up or not. It is essential in order to render this improvement conducive to one main end of its execution, the general health of Calcutta—that there should be no stagnant water whatever. The next point to examine is whether the soil will be sufficiently good not to require the amelioration which warping would produce. It would also be necessary before the warping took place, that all the marine jungle should be entirely rooted out. If the expense of making the banks and sluices etc. incident to warping* could be saved, the profit of the undertaking would be proportionately great.

15. I now come to the financial part of the plan.

16. Captain Prinsep states the cost of the new circular canal to be about ten thousand rupees, or £1,000 per mile. The distance to be cut is eight miles or 80,000 rupees, £8,000. No locks are necessary, as the country is a dead flat. Some drains through the banks might be necessary, but if these were estimated at 20,000 Rs. or £2,000, the expense would probably be more than covered.

17. The lake according to Captain Prinsep's estimate contains 18½ square miles equal to 12,000 acres or 36,000 Bengal bighas. The lowest rent of their lands near Calcutta is 2 Rs. per bigha; I take the lowest amount of rent, as well as produce of the lowest value. Such land might reasonably be expected to grow indigo, cotton, or sugar. The yearly produce at 2 Rs. per bigha would be 72,000 or £7,200 or very nearly equal to the whole cost of the cut. Mr. Dampier the commissioner of the Sundarbans, in whose jurisdiction the salt water lake is situated, estimates the quantity of bighas at 60,000 and the rent at more than 2 Rs. But it will be safer to take Captain Prinsep's estimate.

18. I think that the general salubrity of this great city, and the vast

* *Note*—In order to work up the salt water lake to a level with the surface of the surrounding country, it will be necessary that the water introduced from the Hooghly on the canal should stand two or more feet above the present surface of the lake. To effect this, a bank of this height must be made round the lake. To start with, one bank of the new canal will perform this service, and round the remainder there must at any rate be made a catch-water drain to receive the drainage water now discharging itself into the lakes and the earth from this drain will without much additional cost surround the whole circumference of the lake.

improvement to navigation by a good canal, instead of a shallow channel through the open lake are objects of such superior importance that I put all gain and profit out of the question. But it would be satisfactory at any rate, even without any prospect of collateral advantage, that so much good could be attained at so little cost.

19. It is necessary to remark that the salt water lake has been disposed of, in perpetuity, paying a rent of about 4,000 rupees to government. The profit to the zamindars, as I learn from the commissioner, from the fisheries, from reeds and from lands from which the waters have receded, amounts to about 16,000 rupees. I learn from the same source, that the proprietors would not be unwilling to sell their property; there is a doubt whether the land as well as the water and the right of fishery belongs to the zamindar or to the sarkar, the right is about to be tried.

20. I would beg leave to propose that this minute with its accompanying documents, may be submitted to the honourable court, with my humble request that the plan may be laid before Messrs. Telford and John and George Rennie for their opinion upon its practicability and for such suggestions and directions as they are so well enabled to give, for its execution. I propose these gentlemen, because having been the engineers in the works to which I have been a party, they will better understand my meaning.

21. I would further propose if the court should feel doubtful of the practicability, or if satisfied upon that head, should be unwilling to undertake it, that they will permit individuals, including their servants, to embark their money in the work.

22. It would be fair, I think, that one half of the expense of the new proposed cut, should be borne by the Company in return for the improved navigation and the greater increase of tolls that accrue therefrom. The proprietors of the salt water lake would of course continue to pay the same jama to government as heretofore.

23. I would further beg leave to state my conviction of the incalculable benefit that might be derived from the deputation to India, for two or three years, of an eminent civil engineer, well acquainted with all the improvements of latter years, who should visit our territories and report upon the possibility of calling forth the hidden and dormant resources of our immense empire, by the skilful application of improved science and modern invention.

179. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Gandochea Border of Kathiawar.
15 February 1830

My dear Lord William,

I shall be anxious for an answer to the reference on the Baroda question as early as you can give it. I regret the view my excellent

colleagues have taken of this subject but I can account for it from reasons it is not necessary to enter upon. Men become accustomed from habit and routine to give an importance to offices and establishments that once did but have ceased to belong to them. Besides, presidency men hate delegations of high authority to provincial officers and delight in multiplicity of agents, which increases expenses in the ratio that it decreases efficiency. My colleague Mr. Newnham, who thinks I am too lenient with that infatuated prince Syaji talks of the practicability of reducing the numbers of the contingent and grounds his reasoning for such a measure upon the profound tranquillity of this quarter and his minute reaches me when every man I could muster of the contingent on its present footing and about one thousand of our own troops are in the field against a fanatic who, with no means but the farrago of a proclamation I sent your Lordship finds no difficulty in exciting two thousand of our own subjects and others to attack and plunder our villages. The measures I have adopted will render the Gaikwar contingent one of the best and most efficient bodies of men for this quarter. This will save the cost of more troops and I am further positive that, without losing influence or strength the remodelling the political establishments of this part of our territory will save nearly one lakh [of rupees].

180. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 16 February 1830

My dear Lord William,

Here we are parliament met again, and a curious state it is in. Whigs, Tories and Liberals all paralysed, some voting with, others against ministers. There were some long faces occasioned by the formidable opposition made to the address, but it was composed of such rude materials it could not stick together, and the opponents except occasionally perhaps where they may chance to agree, will soon dwindle into nothing. The Duke seemingly will have his own way, or have nothing to do with it. After all the speechifying the only point at issue was as to the degree of distress existing in the country, and as I am sure I have seen much more I think ministers were right as to the [?country] gentlemen as no two on the opposite side can agree as to what they would have and the Duke has determined to have no change. I conclude we shall go on as we do. The landed interest must have their share of suffering, but we all suffer, they have no particular reason to complain. The fundholders will suffer I think by the reduction of the 4 per cents and if we go on for many years more at peace I expect to see a 2½ per cent stock. The Duke I should say is a decided liberal and as a proof of it he is getting into office and power, if there be any power to

those under him, many of the minor Whigs—your friend Lord Wharncliffe's son, F. Lewin, Abercrombie &c.

Huskisson upon some points seems decidedly in opposition, and with him Lord Palmerston, C. Grant and others. But in fact there is no opposition now as a fixed regular party and the Duke is dictator. I do not know but this may do good for a time but it is so contrary to all our notions, that I cannot think it can last many years and certainly not after the Duke has had his day, which day however I hope may last for years.

We have got a very fair commission on India affairs and though ministers will not avow their intentions there is clearly an indication in our favour on their part. I do not think and indeed do not hope that there will [be] no change for many matters may be mended but unless there is something more than common clamour against the China trade I do not think there will be any very material alteration and none respecting either the press or colonization—so your radicals had better hold their tongues. Your officers have I think put it out of the power of the home authorities to rescind the batta order, by their mutinous conduct, nor I fear will they be brought to their senses till some examples have been made. This deliberative spirit which has been growing up since the days of Lord Clive and too often I am sorry to say encouraged by the misconduct of our court must be checked and now or never. They must not expect to get support from clamour at home. Times are altered: that will not succeed now.

Since I last wrote you I have read all your opium papers and think you have done quite right. How the court can disapprove after their draft about non-interference, which by the by is not yet a despatch, I don't know.

I hope we shall have a good account of retrenchment and income from you soon, for at present it only comes in scraps and some people are disposed to think it will amount to little. There must however be the means of making great retrenchments in India without effecting the efficiency of the public service. It is an irksome task however and I really pity you, ill-supported as you are by your colleagues, and I will add from home. Prince Coburg will go to Greece after all, but I have good reason to know he does not like it. I should wonder if he did. If we are bound to support him there I much doubt the policy, for though the other powers may at first join in the guarantee yet in case of future quarrels with them the protection of him and his kingdom must fall upon us.

I wish the question between Spain and South America were settled too. I have always been afraid that essay of poor Canning might lead to some connivance so Lady Spain might recover her colonies, but I will hope for a better result.

Ireland is certainly thriving. As to your civil servants I fear the evil of debt can only be secured by degree, but I never would employ one who was in debt to a native, an inhabitant of the district he is in, or

even in a neighbouring district, and I would let it be generally known that anyone who gets so in debt in future shall be suspended. The agency houses have got a good lesson and suffered severely. They will take care how they lend in future.

The boys who will not learn languages and are otherwise ill disposed had better come home. Those who cannot learn but are otherwise well disposed might be tried and might become useful servants, though not good oriental scholars. Many of our good servants at Madras have known little more of the languages than what they picked up from living among the natives. I quite agree with you that the college has failed more from the non-inforcement of discipline than from any other cause. A relaxed administration indeed for many years past has been the cause of all the evils under your government and nothing but a firm and at the same time considerate hand can put things to rights. Mr. Serjeant Bosanquet is made a judge, and William Adam succeeds him on our council. Astell will be chairman next April and Mr. Campbell deputy.

181. *Bentinck's minute on Hyderabad*

17 February 1830

It is with the utmost reluctance that I find myself compelled to return to the Hyderabad question as connected with the house of Palmer and Company. I had hoped and believed that, under a moderately judicious exercise of his powers, the resident at Hyderabad might, without difficulty, have carried into effect the object contemplated by the court's orders of the 12th of March 1828, but so far from this desirable result having been effected, every step in the progress of this case has brought with it greater perplexity and difficulty, and such have been the just grounds of complaint in my opinion against the apparent indisposition of the resident towards the house, that without involving this government in a degree of pecuniary responsibility which the admissions contained in their orders would seem equitably at least, if not legally to establish, I see not how we can replace things as they were, except by resuming the consideration of the subject of those orders de novo, and by placing the execution of our instruction in the hands of a different resident.

It is necessary to recapitulate that part of the orders of the 12th of March 1828, which bear upon the present questions. The court states 'that it may be questioned whether the relation in which the trustees stand towards the debtors of the late firm, has not been rendered less favourable by the use made of the opinions previously transmitted' the court express 'their decided wish that the trustees and the debtors should stand in the same situation they would have occupied, if the opinion of the law officers had not been taken and promulgated and it

is further added that their object is to remove any just cause of complaint by the trustees, that the recovery of the debts of the late firm is obstructed by the use that has been made of a law opinion which has since been reversed, and therefore we desire that such orders may be given as may be deemed expedient in order to remove the impression created by the communication of the 17th of October 1828.'

Mr. Martin, in answer to the reference made to him in consequence of this despatch says 'that he had no hesitation in stating his opinion that the doubts entertained by the court with respect to the continued existence of an impression unfavourable to the interests of the creditors are entirely without foundation and that the notification of the subsequent opinion operated to restore the parties to the relative condition in which they stood antecedently to that promulgation' and he supports this opinion by the fact that the trustees though the instrumentability of the court of justice will [pay] interest at the rate of 24 per cent.

Subsequently in answer to certain assertions of Sir William Rumbold in a letter dated 29th of December 1828, which were at variance with the proceeding opinion, the resident explains that he can discover no sufficient reason for modifying the opinion which he had previously expressed. He then proceeds to state that for the purpose of exhibiting more distinctly the grounds on which the relief of the propriety of adhering to that opinion is founded, it is proper to observe that the question to which it relates, is susceptible of a division into two branches, one of them respecting the immediate and the other extending to the remote consequences of the promulgation of the law opinions.

As regards the first branch Mr. Martin observes that 'it seemed to be admitted that an impression immediately unfavourable to the interests of the late firm, had been created by the promulgation of the orders of government dated 17th October 1823' and that with reference to the second so far as the impression produced by the promulgation of the law opinions related to the illegality of the rate of interest which they prohibited, he had, as before stated, no hesitation in declaring his belief that it has been totally removed by the subsequent declaration of the twelve judges; and that he was satisfied in this point of view the trustees of the late firm stood in the same position to their debtors which they would have occupied if the first unfavourable opinion of the law officers had not been promulgated.

Here then it appears from the resident's statement, that an unfavourable impression did exist, and, as is so strongly put forward by Sir William Rumbold, it is clear that for some years at least (that is during the interval between October 1823, and the promulgation of the opinion of the twelve judges) the proclamation of the government, denouncing the legality of the proceedings of the house, must have had a very injurious effect upon the interests of the creditors of the firm. Indeed it is difficult to think otherwise. It was necessarily a signal and an authority to every debtor to withhold payment.

The court now desire that the creditors shall be placed in the same

position as if no such proclamation had been issued. Sir William Rumbold's letters have represented, at great length, the opposition and counteraction experienced by the trustees on the prosecution of their claims, the great injury sustained in various ways by suspension of all operations on their part in consequence of the promulgation of the law opinions and declare that unless the trustees receive the benefit of that direction and control which the resident exercises over the affairs of the Nizam's government, generally they cannot obtain justice, or that even the decrees given in their favour should be executed, and in his last communication he states that the supposed indisposition of the resident towards the trustees, in consequence of their proceedings against the Mir Munshi, had operated most unfavourably to the settlement of the concerns of the late firm, and he claims in consequence, the protection and interposition of the government.

In desiring that the creditors may be placed in the same situation as if no promulgation of the law opinion had been issued, the court's intention is solely to remove the obstacle which such promulgation had raised to the prosecution of their claims. Upon the claims themselves, they give no opinion but notwithstanding this silence, a very important question must necessarily fall to be mooted; and it is this, if the government by an act pronounced to be illegal has rendered thereby fruitless, during several years, all the endeavours of the trustees to realize their claims, does or does not any responsibility attach to the act? And a second question also occurs, if such has been the consequence of this illegal act have or have not the party so injured a right if not to entire separation, to some assistance at least, as far as may be perfectly consistent with justice, towards the accomplishment of their object. It must be observed that the court have not, with Sir Charles Metcalfe, declared that the firm has already received more than the full amount of their claims. The present orders on the contrary admit that there may be still unsettled and therefore possibly just claims, and this very admission does, in fact, throw open the whole question to enquiry.

There is another point deserving of consideration. The restrictions on the intercourse of the trustees of the firm with the ministers are evidently founded upon the opinion which Sir Charles Metcalfe lately gave for opposing the return of Sir William Rumbold to Hyderabad, the overpowering power of that firm over the minister. This influence no doubt had existed, and had overruled that of the resident, Sir Charles Metcalfe himself, but this superiority was principally owing to the authority of the supreme government, by which it was confidently, and perhaps truly believed to be backed. I am aware that at this distance from Hyderabad, and with the little information I possess beyond that which the official papers afford, I am unable to form any very correct opinion, but the conclusion to which I have come, from a perusal of the documents is very decided, that at present the firm possesses no influence whatever, that there is no such thing as justice to be expected from the courts of law at Hyderabad, and further, if the firm have any *just*

demands of which I do not pretend to have any opinion whatever, that the realization of them can only be obtained by the interference of the resident with the Nizam's government.

In the mean-time an incident has occurred which may very much disturb the course that these proceedings might otherwise have taken. Heretofore the British resident has been the actual ruler of the country, and the minister, Chandu Lal, entirely under his orders. Such, I am satisfied has been the relation of the latter to Mr. Martin. Now the Nizam, who has recently ascended the *masnad*, has assumed the reins of government, and of course the full power of settling this or any other question relating to Hyderabad no longer exists, and it remains to be seen what degree of compliance in this or any other affair, the new ruler may be disposed to pay to the wishes of the supreme government.

I beg here to repeat that I consider my concern in this transaction, not to ascend, in point of date, beyond the order of March 1828. It is with the execution of those instructions that I have solely to do, and I have deemed it unnecessary to read any part of the many volumes occupied by this unfortunate transaction. I could not indeed have done otherwise, without neglecting much other business. If I now advert to transactions of a date anterior to those orders it is, that it may not be said to me hereafter, 'you saw plainly the object of our orders, if you were convinced that the causes which some years ago made the restrictions contained in those orders expedient and necessary no longer exist, why did you not adopt our instructions to the change, and save the government from the liability to which you acknowledged that you considered it exposed'.

If I were called upon to say the best and the justest procedure to be taken upon the present state of things, it would be an arbitration between the trustees of the firm and the debtors under the direction of the government, all parties agreeing thereto, and the Nizam consenting to enforce upon his subjects, the decision of government, there might be some difficulty in arranging the terms of such a settlement, but I confess I see no other plan by which this question can ever be fairly adjusted.

But it seems to me not requisite, for the present to travel so much out of the line of our orders, and all I should recommend now to be done is to take from the creditors of the firm the cause of complaint that they have against the apparently hostile feeling of the resident to their interests.

Of Mr. Martin, I wish only to speak with respect. I believe him to be a man of honour and integrity. He has certainly talents, and in all the situations which he has filled, he has received the approbation of government. In his conduct towards the creditors of the firm, I have no reason to think that he has been actuated by any unfair feeling and if a different inference may be reasonably drawn by the public, it is because he has not applied to circumstances affecting himself and the other parties, these rules which every man of plain judgment and

common sense would have adopted on a similar occasion. When the Mir Munshi was charged by the trustees, with having a corrupt understanding with their opponents, for the purpose of exercising an undue influence to their prejudice with the resident and the minister, any other man would at once have seen the prudence of avoiding all possible appearance of unduly protecting the individual in whom, as his colleague munshi, and his confidential agent in all communications with the Nizam's darbar, he might be supposed to feel a peculiar interest. Any other principal would have wished such an investigation to have been conducted in entire independence of himself, but Mr. Martin restricts the committee from giving any opinion upon the case and instead of informing the government of such charges having been preferred and the course adopted by him, he allows them to hear of the enquiry from general rumours, and subsequently sends a laboured report consisting of one hundred paragraphs upon the first charge only, the purport of which is to prove that in his opinion, the Mir Munshi is not guilty on that charge. At a subsequent period, and when an order to the same effect had been already despatched to him by government, he directed the committee to give an opinion upon the guilt or innocence of the munshi, but no report has yet been received. That Mr. Martin did not in this case adopt that plain and simple course of proceeding, which so obviously suggested itself, I am inclined to ascribe merely to that want of judgment which so often prevents men from rightly deciding when they are themselves concerned, but with the public, measures like these, adopted out of the common course of proceeding can only be ascribed to a desire to bring off the munshi.

Still more injudicious, and still more fatal to his character for impartiality and sobriety of decision, do I consider his assumption of an authority not belonging to him, in removing the trustees from the Nizam's service, for an alleged act of disrespect to himself, several days after the offensive letter had been written and when the case was actually under reference to the government. If Mr. Martin had been acting under the directions of those who have so strongly condemned the proceedings of the authorities, here and at home towards the firm of Palmer and Company he could not, by possibility have done an act so completely confirmatory of such imputations. Upon the charge of disrespect against the trustees referred to us by Mr. Martin, I am of opinion that they are perfectly innocent. It was a duty they owed to their constituents to make the representation and from a perusal of their letter together with Mr. Martin's reply, it appears to me that their complaints which amounts to this, that the tendency of the events described was calculated to raise a general belief of the munshi being powerfully supported by the resident, and of his being himself, adverse to the cause they advocated was not without foundation. I recommend that such be the answer given to that references.

Upon a whole view of this case, my conviction is, that in order to place the trustees of the firm in the position directed by the court to

deprive them of any additional ground for complaints of ill-usage and unfair treatment, of which advantage may be taken, and at the same time to depart as little as possible for the tenor of the orders most recently transmitted to us, I am of opinion that the situation of resident at Hyderabad ought to be committed to another officer, unconnected with the transactions, and from whose reports we may be better able to judge if any and what relaxation of the restrictive orders of the court may be necessary to effect the objects therein contemplated. Satisfied, at the same time, that Mr. Martin's intentions have been always upright and honourable, and anxious therefore to inflict upon his feelings as little pain as can be avoided, I recommend that he be transferred to the residency at Delhi.

I should have been happy, had it been in my power to have recommended the confirmation in that office of the acting resident, Mr. Hawkins, but [not] after the remonstrances of the king of Delhi, which tho' perhaps exaggerated are sufficiently supported by Mr. Hawkins' own report to evince that from his first entrance into the office, he has been constantly engaged in a miserable squabble with the king, upon points of etiquette and state, totally opposed to that considerate and kind, if no longer necessary policy of respecting the dignity and of treating with respect that fallen family.

182. *Bentinck's minute on the transfer of the seat of government to the upper provinces*

22 February 1830

The honourable court's despatch under date the 3rd of July, forbidding instantly and peremptorily, the removal, though but for a time, of the government to the upper provinces, has excited in the greatest degree, my surprise and disappointment. It is not that I venture to question the propriety of a decision founded upon an assumed illegality of the measure proposed. If the law of the Company's law officer was good law, it was no doubt as imperative upon our superior authorities to forbid a violation of an enactment of the legislature, as it would have been wrong in us, under the expectation of whatever benefit, to have acted in contravention of it. We however had high authority for the construction of the law under which we acted which will constitute a sufficient justification of our conduct, and it is to be hoped that this, as well as many other points of doubt may be settled in the new charter. But my surprise was great when I read the declaration, that even if the removal of the supreme government was sanctioned by law, the same directions would have been equally given, because it seems to me to be tantamount to saying that such is the satisfactory state both of our internal administration as well as of our foreign relations, for the good conduct and order of which we are the guarantors as to call for no particular enquiry

and investigation. I trust that my minute of the 8th of August may have removed some of the misconception upon the actual condition of our vast empire which can have led to such an opinion. In that paper, I alluded generally to facts and circumstances, offering as I thought obvious and incontrovertible deductions. I will now explain them in detail, and I beg it be borne in mind that the defects of our system are not of my own discovery. I find them universally admitted and recorded. Let it be borne in mind also, that it is no utopian plan of improvement and perfection that I wish to introduce. It is, on the contrary, because no suggestion has been made by the most experienced for the correction of these admitted imperfections, that I became convinced of the incalculable advantage and indispensible necessity of an investigation upon the spot, to be conducted by the government itself, aided by its ablest and most confidential servants, in conjunction with the local authorities and in consultation with the most respectable and intelligent of the native population, and happily the honourable court in all their late despatches have condemned that unaccountable policy by which the agency of natives has been deemed to be useless and their advice as almost a degradation to consult.

The present despatch communicates the fixed determination of the home authorities that Calcutta shall continue to be the residence of the supreme government. The apparent haste with which this opinion seems to have been expressed would indicate the belief that some measure of positive arrangement for the actual removal of the seat of government had been in our contemplation. I may not only appeal to my minute of the 8th of August, but to my subsequent communications with the president of the board of control in confirmation of my assertion, that the measure was, in its nature, exactly what it professed to be, one of enquiry and inspection, and upon the other question, from what point the eye of the local government could best revise and control the whole machine, that not only did I give no opinion, but, up to this moment, I can truly say, I have not ventured even to form one. Indeed with certain modifications, I am inclined to agree with the despatch, that the nominal seat of government with all its officers and its material, had better remain at Calcutta. But I also must add, that to fix it there irremovably, as a literal construction of the court's orders infers, is totally incompatible with the good government of these extensive regions. I insert in the margin,* a comparative table of the distances between London and some other capitals of Europe, and between

* From Calcutta

	Miles
Allahabad, the point of separation of the upper from the lower provinces	464
Lucknow	563
Cawnpore	586
Agra	761
Meerut	823
Ajmer	908
Delhi	927

From London

	Miles
Vienna	833
Warsaw	892
Petersburg	1200
Moscow	1392

Calcutta and some of the distant parts of our own frontier. I have excluded Madras, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Bombay, all within the jurisdiction of the supreme government, all more distant than the places specified, and each nearer to any other point in the Bengal presidency than to Calcutta.

It is a most just remark in the court's despatch that it would not be prudent to place the seat of empire at Agra or Delhi, or anywhere near the frontier of the north-western provinces exposed to the sudden incursion of nations of cavalry and to the brunt of the hostile movement of any powers bordering upon India. But prudence equally opposed the other extreme. If France and the Austrian empire were subject to our government, if the extreme point of that empire extended to Warsaw, less distant than Calcutta from Delhi, surely London would not be deemed the most eligible position for its government, nor would any apprehension of the Cossacks of the Don deter the selection of a more centrical spot.

It is true, also, that India is held by a distant kingdom, but for every purpose of general government, whether of internal administration, or of security against foreign attack, it must be managed to all intents and purposes as if it were under a separate and independent sovereign, care only being taken to keep open a communication with its sea ports, the emporium of its wealth and commerce, and the place of arrival of supplies and aid from Europe. But it does not seem to admit of a question, if the day ever unfortunately arrives, when after a succession of defeats, the British army shall be obliged to abandon its upper provinces, that the line of its retreat must necessarily be into the Deccan, there to unite with the armies of the Madras and Bombay presidencies. Under a course of disaster like that which I have supposed, it might be doubted whether if the retreat of the army were upon Bengal, the native army could be kept together at all, composed as it is almost entirely of natives of the upper provinces who entertain a particular dislike to the climate and water of this low country.

To the Deccan they have not the same objection. The greater difficulty also of equipping in Bengal an army and reinforcements landing in Calcutta, than in the Deccan, if they should land either at Madras or Bombay would also be a great consideration. With the main army must also go the government. I make these observations in order to show that the security of Calcutta upon the ground of distance is not quite so valid as first appearances might lead one to imagine.

Having given the distances from Calcutta, I now insert* the population and revenue of the upper and lower provinces, by way of showing their vast importance. Of the high spirit and manly character of this population, I have spoken in my minute of the 8th of August.

	Population	Revenue
* Lower Provinces	37,577,929	74,143,427
Western ,,	20,000,000	42,122,608
	57,577,929	116,266,035

An appeal to the supreme executive authority everywhere is an indispensible condition to good government and may be said to form the natural right of every people. It will be conceded at once, that in no part of the world can this privilege be more necessary or more prized; there is not a day that numbers of petitioners from every part of the adjoining provinces, and occasionally great bodies of men do not come down to demand redress of their grievances. Is not this right entirely denied to the millions of our subjects living beyond Allahabad? And is not, as far as those provinces are concerned, the protection, the countenance and the paternal regard of the supreme government, totally null and lifeless? Recent circumstances have also too strongly shown the inefficient control of so distant an authority. If there had been any authority in the upper provinces, vested with the special powers of superintendence would it have been possible for the disgraceful system of corruption so long in successful operation at our principal residencies of Delhi and Lucknow to have passed unnoticed? It is very material here to enquire how it has happened in these instances, that delinquencies like these so notorious upon the spot, should so long have been withheld from the knowledge of the supreme government. If I were to judge of the character of our European agency and of the merits of our general administration by the absence of complaint, a degree of perfection might be inferred, unchallenged in the history of mankind. I have a very favourable opinion of the general integrity of the civil servants, but man is the same imperfect and fallible creature everywhere, and in India more than elsewhere requires a check upon his weaknesses and passions. I am also decidedly favourable and indeed deem the arrangement indispensible, that all high employments which are to be filled by Europeans should be exclusively confined to a service appointed for that purpose. But this exclusive privilege will have more or less of the defect of all monopolies, where the want of competition destroys the great excitement to energy and distinction. The administration of the Bengal territories consisting of forty millions of people is confined to about 400 individuals present in India, of which number 100 have not been three years in India. As the selection of these individuals is not in the first instance subjected to any very rigid test as to capacity as their subsequent course in the college in Calcutta sufficiently proves, it follows of course, that in the body there must be the usual proportion of incapacity and disqualification, greatly aggravated by the effects of climate, the impossibility of control and a general absence of due subordination in the service at large. I beg leave to lay before council the copy of a circular letter addressed by my private secretary to all the commissioners, illustrative of the sentiments I am now expressing. Why then of the maladministration that must be inherent in a system like the present do we hear little or nothing from the upper provinces, and very much less than in the lower provinces; it is because there is no general controlling authority on the spot, because the distance to the presidency and dislike to the climate precludes the possibility of direct

intercourse with the supreme government, because there is no press and no independent European opinion in the upper as in the lower provinces, which can make itself heard, and lastly from the natural unwillingness and from the odium too obviously attaching to the act, felt by all men and more particularly in a society so exclusive as this is to expose the misdeeds of a member of the same service.

I give in a separate paper an abstract showing the proportion of military force in the upper and lower provinces, central India and the Saugor and Narbada territories being comprised in the former. Half the European troops in Bengal ought properly to be transferred to the upper provinces, where it will be seen that near two-thirds of the numerical strength of the army are stationed. Independently of recent occurrences which render attention to this branch of our service peculiarly necessary it will always be prudent to have the fact in view that this is a foreign army, and that in its superior force, against which there exists no counterpoise in the small amount of our European force there exist the means, at any moment of ejecting us from our empire. I mention this, not as a danger which I apprehend, but as one that is possible, and against which no practicable precaution can prudently be neglected.

Having explained my views of the inadequacy of the present system of protection and superintendence, I will now more particularly specify some of those great questions of civil government, which have hitherto baffled the ability and experience of preceding boards and councils, comfortably located at Calcutta, but most imperfectly informed of the circumstances of those distant provinces, as well as of the rights and usages of those for whom they had to legislate. If this be really the fact, I shall be warranted in maintaining that the ordinary routine of administration has hitherto failed and that the *dignus vindice modus* is arrived, when it becomes the government to use its utmost endeavours, and to bring all the experience and talent that it can command, to bear upon the admitted defects of various parts of its internal and external policy.

I place first and foremost among these questions, the settlement of the revenue of the upper provinces, amounting to some millions sterling and concerning, individually, near twenty millions of our subjects. A short history of the various and contradictory regulations at different times enacted by government will show the perplexity in which this subject has always been and continues to be involved, and will present upon the whole, a result, little creditable, I fear to the word government, unfavourable to the general improvement of the country, disappointing to all classes of people and not flattering to the general efficiency of the revenue servants.

In 1803, when the provinces ceded by the nawab of Oudh, came into the possession of the British government, a proclamation was issued under the authority of the governor-general in council, notifying that a settlement of the revenue [was to be made] with the zamindars or other

proprietors for three years, at the expiration of which another settlement for three years was to be formed and after the sixth year for a further term of four years, when it should be made permanent for such lands as might be in a sufficiently improved state of cultivation to warrant the measure, on such terms as government should deem fair and equitable. This arrangement appears to have been made upon Lord Cornwallis' model of a decennial settlement, to become afterwards perpetual. The principle of the settlement is altogether vague and uncertain, left entirely to the disposal of government, the only point that is not so, is the promise of permanency at the expiration of ten years.

In 1805, a regulation passed making the same provision for the settlement of the conquered provinces and of Bundelkhand annexed in the interval to the British territories.

In 1807, considerable abuses having been committed by the executive officers, a board of commissioners was appointed for the superintendence of the settlements and for the general control of the collectors, and it was further provided, although the period for the formation of the permanent settlement had not arrived, that the amount of the assessed revenue (jama) in the last year of the settlement immediately ensuing both in the ceded and conquered provinces should remain fixed for ever, in case the arrangement should receive the sanction of the honourable the court of directors.

The court of directors most properly withheld their sanction from the proposed anticipation of the permanent settlement, because with the imperfect knowledge which was then possessed either of individual rights, or of the real resources of the country, a greater mass of evil to the population in general, as well as a greater loss of revenue to the Company, would have been perpetuated, than even in Bengal under the permanent settlement. But in the same regulation, which withheld the court's sanction to an earlier period than ten years, it is specifically enacted that the rule by which the permanent settlement should be made at the expiration of the ten years, should be in full force and effect.

This rule was however not adhered to. At the end of the ten years, no permanent settlement was made, and all allusion to this so frequently given assurance has been subsequently dropped. By Regulation XVI of 1816, the existing settlement was allowed to run on for five years, which at its expiration was renewed for five more, under Regulation IX of 1818. Such was the state of the revenue arrangements in 1822, when the leases under the regulation of 1816, were about to expire.

In truth the same objections existed to the formation of the permanent settlement at the expiration of the decennial term as at the earlier period which was not sanctioned by the court. But in addition to these, vast abuses had taken place. Most of the settlements had been made upon no detailed enquiries. Great inequality of assessment and much and severe over-assessment ensued. Bundelkhand was ruined by the excessive settlement under Mr. Waring and has never recovered

from it. Bareilly still suffers from the same over-assessment by Mr. Trant. The commission of the most abominable and extensive frauds took place by means of transfers and sales, in collusion with the public officers, to the vast prejudice of the village communities.

To remedy these grievances and to declare the principles upon which these settlements should hereafter be made, and to define, settle and record the rights and obligations of the various persons possessing an interest in the land, was the object of Regulation VII of 1822.

We are now in the year 1830, twenty-seven years since the greater part of the upper provinces came into our hands, seventeen years from the close of the decennial term when it was expected that the settlement would have been so complete as to allow a confirmation of it in perpetuity, and eight years since the passing of Regulation VII of 1822, which was to have brought all these unadjusted points to a final termination, and if it be asked what progress has been made in this long period, I fear the answer must be unsatisfactory, that there is no prospect whatever of an accomplishment of the task, and that under the present measures, a century perhaps might not suffice for the purpose.

The settlement required by Regulation VII of 1822, and the orders of government framed upon it, are raiyatwar. Under Messrs. Fraser, Newnham and Fane and a few others, much has been done, but generally speaking, the revenue officers do not understand the business, and are averse to the labour which so much detail necessarily imposes. The language of this day is precisely what I remember in 1805 and 1806 to have been applied by the older part of the Madras civil service to Sir Thomas Munro's raiyatwar system, viz., that it was impracticable. I was glad, however, to learn from Mr. Russell, that the opinion at Madras is now unanimous in its favour, but it must be recollected that Sir Thomas Munro, the father of that system, was a most able man, that for near thirty years his genius presided over it, and when absent the temporary introduction of some supposed better substitute only confirmed the superiority of his own. For thirty years all the revenue officers may be said to have been brought up in the same school and under the same master, and hence the facility at Madras of executing what was there in 1805, and now here is considered to be almost impossible.

In the meantime the evils arising from this slow and interminable process are very great.

1st. The government has pledged itself to raise none of the rents of none of the land, until the revised assessment is made, and hence a very great loss of revenue.

2nd. The landholders are kept in a constant state of agitation by the surveys and valuation most costly to them, which are always going on, and which end in nothing.

3rd. Improvements cannot be made when the proprietor knows not the rent that he will have ultimately to pay.

4th. All individual rights and particularly of the lower orders remain undefined, and are at the mercy of their stronger superior, whoever he may be.

I honestly confess myself completely at a loss to know how to extricate the government from this most discreditable and injurious predicament, but I was sanguine in thinking that the government when it had gone through the several districts, and had communicated with all its officers and the most intelligent of its subjects would have been enabled to have come at last to the most satisfactory conclusion, of which so perplexed and difficult a question is susceptible. That something must be done is clear, but out of this jungle, I have seen no man hardy enough as yet to point out the path.

Another question equally important and equally baffling and hitherto not much less unsatisfactory is the administration of civil and criminal justice, with the police. Enough upon these points has already and lately been placed upon the records to need more to be said upon them. But with the acknowledged defects belonging to all these branches, it would have been most useful to have ascertained by personal enquiry, how the new system of civil commissioners has answered. Most anxious was I also to have communicated with the different judges upon Mr. Bayley's plan for the more extensive employment of native agency, before I came to any definite opinion, and Mr. Bayley also strongly recommended me previously to obtain this information. In this, I am grievously disappointed. The police has been most efficacious in maintaining order, and in putting down the greater combinations for the commission of crime by bands of dacoits and thugs, but this very power has been on the other hand greatly abused and next to over-assessment, operates most oppressively upon every rank and description of persons.

A third and most difficult subject is the state of Oudh, and all those most difficult questions of interference by the paramount power, which are so frequently arising and which alone and distant from my colleagues, I should have infinite difficulty in deciding. Upon the broad line of non-interference, my mind is completely made up, and the same view is exactly taken by the authorities at home. But nice distinctions continually offer themselves, as in Saugor lately, and in similar instances of cruelty upon their subjects by petty chiefs, not subject to our jurisdiction though under our control and protection, where humanity and civilization requires an interposition which the exercise of an independent authority, on the other hand, forbids. In respect to Oudh, the misgovernment prevailing there must be put an end to. But with so weak a sovereign, how can this interference be effectual, and his rights as an independent prince be maintained? The court of directors, in declaring it to be an imperative duty of the government to reform the abuses existing in Oudh, have suggested as a means, that until this be done, we should refuse the assistance of our troops for the collection of the revenue, but the king collects his revenue without our assistance, and therefore this, as a negative measure is of no avail. What

are we next to do, if the King does not comply with our advice? It is a great embarrassment that need not now be discussed, but which I had flattered myself might have been settled by the presence of the government at Lucknow.

Before I proceed to the concluding part of this minute, it may be necessary to reply to a remark that might be made to me. 'If you thought the presence of a superior authority so necessary in the upper provinces what prevented you from going? The legislature contemplates the absence of the governor-general, probably for such purposes, and the court in their despatch, ordering the return of the council, adverted without objecting to the plan, as regarding your own movements.' My answer is, that it was my opinion well known to my colleagues, that with reference to the discontent prevailing in the army, and to other circumstances connected with it, and to the change about to take place in the command, I could not properly separate myself from the seat of government.

I will now conclude by venturing most respectfully to urge the home authorities to reconsider their orders, and to adopt some arrangement which shall give to me when absent, the aid and advice of my council. It is not that I have any fear of responsibility or have any objection to the exercise of the great powers which the legislature vests in me when absent, nor am I insensible to the greater personal convenience of travelling without the incumbrance of a government, but my ambition is, with the aid of my colleagues and all the other constituted authorities, to promote the cause of good government, and my desire is that the success of the administration over which I have the honour to preside shall be tried by the result as it may affect the happiness and prosperity of India and the character of our country.

I admire the form and efficiency of the supreme council, as formed by law. To divide it is to make both divisions of it weak and inefficient and that part of it composing the vice-president in council infinitely the most so. It is erroneously imagined because this immense empire is easily governed, that therefore it is easy to govern it well. The very reverse is the right conclusion.

The orders of the home authorities directing that the seat of government shall remain at Calcutta have been executed, and their directions for the appointment of a vice-president in council, when I go away, shall be strictly obeyed, but in spite of these orders, and my own intention most rigidly to execute them, the very arrangement which I had the honour to recommend, will, by the very force of circumstances, virtually have effect. The commander-in-chief, without the communication from me of any opinion upon the subject has expressed to me his desire not to be the vice-president, in order that he may have an opportunity of inspecting his army, an intention which under all circumstances, I consider not only to be the most judicious, but imperative also. With the vast proportion of our force that must always be in the upper provinces, it seems questionable, whether this is not at all times the

proper station of the commander-in-chief, and in practice, the greater part of his time must necessarily be spent there. On the other hand, we have had occasion to know the extreme inconvenience that arises from the separation of the chief military authority from the deliberations of council. The commander-in-chief will therefore be in the upper provinces at the same time with myself. It will thus happen that the head of the army and the head of the civil government forming the majority of the council will be together. The powers that a governor-general can exercise, when alone, are very illdefined, and what may be the relative position of the vice-president in council and the governor-general is one of the many omissions of legislation in respect to India, but the governor-general can never be divested of his principal responsibility. Hitherto he has always separately conducted the political business and has issued such orders as he thought proper in other matters when circumstances required, and I imagine, that the wisest plan to follow in the arrangement of the business to be separately performed by the governor-general and the council below, will be that which shall seem best for the general interests and most likely to promote the good of the service, each referring for the opinion and confirmation of the other, when the nature of the business may not require particular despatch. But under the circumstances of the governor-general and the commander-in-chief being together, I will ask any man acquainted with the routine of the business under this government, whether in point of fact, though not nominally, the government will not be in the upper provinces, and all business of importance will not there be settled. I infinitely prefer the unity of the council, and its presence there, where all great questions must be disposed of, not only for the sake of the better decision that always follows discussion, but because in all matters relating to foreign politics and to central India, the aid of Sir Charles Metcalfe's personal knowledge both of things and individuals would be to me most invaluable, and if the arrangement I solicit might be granted for this occasion only and for this object, I can answer that the court would never regret the act.

As the expense of the removal of the government has been a cause of apprehension, I annex a statement of the whole charge taken from the accounts of the commissary general and the heads of departments, that would have been incurred during the whole period of its absence computed at fourteen months. Of this charge a reduction may certainly be made in the Persian and political office, but I am satisfied the smallness of the amount for the civil branch will be seen with surprise. The commander-in-chief with his headquarters must go up at any rate, and therefore ought not properly to be said to belong to this particular measure. This expense is also susceptible of great reduction. I cannot avoid drawing the attention to a comparison of time and expense between the moving on the Ganges by boats under the old system and by steam. Lord Amherst's voyage to Allahabad occupied above three months and the expense amounted to near thirty thousand rupees.

The expense per steamer is only 3,500 rupees and the time twenty-two days. The boat allowance to Allahabad for a colonel amounts to as much as the whole charge of removing the governor-general and his suite per steam. Lord Amherst's whole suite went by water, whereas a part of mine, the season favouring, went by land, so that the comparison is not exactly correct, but the deduction of a third would probably much more than cover the difference.

If the court are pleased to listen to this request, I would further beg that their answer may be communicated without delay, in order that such of the council and of the secretariat as will be left behind in the first instance, may join me as early as possible.

183. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Draft

Gorakhpur District. 23 February 1830

My dear Sir,

I have written to Mr. Loch forgetting that you will be chairman when my letters reach England but as he will necessarily communicate what I have written, to you, I have only to request your good offices with the court in favour of the request which I have ventured to make.

In a minute I have recorded upon the subject of the court's orders prohibiting the removal of the council from Calcutta, I have urgently solicited a reconsideration of their orders, or at least a modification of them, if for the present occasion only. I am particularly desirous of having Sir Charles Metcalfe's assistance in the decision of many questions connected with the dependent states, which must come before me when I am in upper India. No other person possesses the same knowledge of men and things in that part of the north as he does. In urging as I do, perhaps too pertinaciously a measure already so decidedly condemned, I beg to assure the court that I am influenced by no other motive than a decided conviction of the public good that would arise from it. As far as I am personally concerned, to travel alone would be infinitely more convenient and to exercise the great powers vested in me when absent cannot be disagreeable but though such exercise of powers may be legal it cannot be constitutional, and what is more to the purpose, it cannot be so useful as that which is directed by the deliberations of a council as well composed as that over which I have the honour and good fortune to preside. You will see that Lord Dalhousie has begged not to be vice-president when I leave Calcutta, and the consequence will be that for about 16 or 18 months, sir, the two most influential members of the government, forming a majority of it, having duties and powers and a responsibility that must remain with us, shall be together in the upper provinces.

Now, sir, may I request you to refer to those gentlemen, members of the court who belong to the Bengal service, whether under these cir-

cumstances all the important business must not necessarily be transacted where we are and whether in fact, tho' not in name, the supreme government will not be in the upper provinces, although in obedience to the court's orders a vice-president will be appointed, and in every other respect they shall be strictly carried into effect, and it is not only questions of importance, but much of the detail of business cannot otherwise than go through the governor-general. When absent the political business has always been transacted by him. In the respect of the military business it will be much more convenient, I think, should it pass first from the commander-in-chief to the governor-general than from the commander-in-chief to the vice-president in council at Calcutta to be by him referred to the governor-general and to be returned by him again to Calcutta. With the strict control, that it will be seen I have exercised over the military expenditure, the vice-president in council would I know refer every doubtful question of finance to me as he equally would every proposition of the commander-in-chief purely military. With respect to that great question which is paramount to every other in importance, the settlement of the land revenue in the upper provinces, as it cannot be arranged as I had hoped, on the spot by the governor-general in council it will be necessary to entrust it either to a special commission or to a portion of the revenue board, reporting directly to the governor-general who will be on the spot. Now with all humility, I venture to think, that a council always united, with the power of locomotion and with authority to appoint a commission during its absence for the performance of such duties as may require immediate despatch will be safer and more efficient than the coexistence of two separate authorities, whose respective powers and duties it is impossible to define.

The upper provinces are by far in every point of view the most interesting portion of the British territories and tho' possessing a population of near 20 millions and a very large revenue it is the only part which has not the benefit of a local superintending authority, to which the natives can have immediate and personal recourse. This privilege has not been denied to Bombay and even at an amazing expense, tho' possessing only 5 millions of people and a very inadequate revenue, or even to the inhabitants of the petty incorporated settlements of Prince of Wales Island, etc.

I have received a letter from the Persian secretary informing me of the arrival at Calcutta of a vakil from Nagpur, the bearer of letters from the raja and the bai, expressing their great satisfaction at the arrangement which has just been concluded and expressing their cordial thanks.

I have made enquiry everywhere on my route, and particularly at Benares, if the abolition of suttee has created any unpleasant sensations, and I was pleased to find that no such feelings were known to exist by any of the public officers.

May I beg of you to communicate to the court as much of this letter as you may deem proper.

184. *Sir Charles Metcalfe's minute on the removal of the seat of government*

5 March 1830

I have the honour to concur in the sentiment expressed by the governor-general, in the minute which has this day been read in council, as to the expediency of giving authority to the supreme government to move from the presidency, whenever its presence may be required in any of the provinces subject to its rule, or in any of the territories of dependent states. I intend, however, to confine my remarks to this question, and to treat it generally, without entering on the wide field of discussion presented by the several topics touched on by his Lordship in support of his argument.

I do not propose to advocate the permanent removal of the seat of government from Calcutta to any other quarter. The enormous expense which would attend such a measure appears to me to be a decisive objection against it; and I am not aware that the speculation has ever been seriously entertained, with any view to its practical execution.

But I am thoroughly convinced, that whenever the public service requires the protracted absence of the governor-general from the presidency, excepting the cases of his proceeding to another presidency or commanding an army in the field, he ought to be accompanied by the council. In other words, that the government ought in any case to remain united, and as complete as possible, and not be divided into separate authorities, acting with ill-defined relative powers.

The provision of a vice-president in council must originally have been designed for the case of the governor-general's absence at another presidency, or beyond the limits of his own presidency, when he ceases to exercise the functions of local government. In such a case the vice-president in council becomes the local government of the Bengal presidency, and bears nearly the same relation to the supreme government that the governor in council of a subordinate presidency bears under ordinary circumstances. In the cases supposed, the supreme government is either transferred with the person of the governor-general to another presidency, or is vested solely in his own person wherever he may be.

. . . . . .

185. *Bentinck's minute on military retrenchment*

20 March 1830

If our measures of economy recognise the discontinuance of merely useless expenses, they will go but a very little way, in as much as no establishment and scarcely any outlay is wholly useless. In examining

heads of military expenditure with a view of ascertaining what can best be spared as least essential, the two native invalid battalions on this establishment present themselves to notice as almost entirely useless. Detachments of these corps, as I have recently witnessed, are quartered at stations* where now there is either no duty for them to perform, or where the presence of troops of the line renders them unnecessary. Nor in the manner in which our forces are distributed, coupled with present favourable prospects of undisturbed tranquillity, are there garrisons or detached posts in which adequate employment can be found for invalids. They must therefore, under the ordinary circumstances of this period, be looked upon as pensioners enjoying the pay of effective soldiers, and as now organized involving almost all the expense, for arms, accoutrements, clothing and contingencies, incident to a regular corps.

Under this view of the subject, when there is no opening for them to make any return of services, I feel confident we ought not to burden the military department with such an item of unprofitable disbursement as the dead expense of maintaining, at more than double the charge of an equal number of pensioners, an effective establishment of invalids.

I therefore recommend that the 1st and 2nd battalions of native invalids may be broken up on the 1st of May next, and the members of them be placed from that date on the usual pensions. This proposal will I feel persuaded meet with the concurrence of the board, as the adoption of it will diminish the annual expenditure by about a lakh and forty or fifty thousand rupees. Neither will this arrangement in the slightest degree impair the efficiency of the army, nor trench upon the reasonable claims of the individuals who come under its operation. Indeed, I am clearly of opinion that, for the most part, the native soldiery, when no longer able to undergo the fatigue of active service, greatly prefer the pension of retreat at their own homes, to the pay of invalids with the obligation of performing garrison duty under the constraint of discipline, which is to be sure in these corps sufficiently lax.

The retrenchment of expenditure by this measure will I have no doubt equal the sum at which I have just estimated it; notwithstanding there should be a few individuals to whom long, faithful or distinguished services may give just pretensions to expect, from the liberality and bounty of government, the enjoyment of higher rates of pension than would be conferred in ordinary course. Taking the strength of the two native invalid battalions from the muster rolls dated 1st October last, and calculating the monthly expense accordingly, the computation will be found to give for these two corps a monthly charge against government of [?sicca] rupees 24,324. This sum includes pay, half-batta, staff establishments and clothing, but is exclusive of the regimental

* Monghyr, Buxar, Patna } These I have lately visited

pay and allowances of the European invalid officers doing duty with the invalid battalions. By transferring the same number of men, to the invalid pension establishment, on the reduced rates of pay, the total monthly expense would be [?sicca] Rs. 11,956 per mensem, or per annum sicca rupees 143,472.

To cover any loss or expense to which native officers, non-commissioned officers and privates of the invalid battalions may be exposed on being disbanded, I would propose to grant, in addition to all arrears, a donation of two months half-batta to each, to defray the charges of a journey to their homes, and as remuneration for the habitations they may leave. Distributed as these corps now are in detached companies and smaller details, every possible attention should be paid to the personal convenience of the native officers and men in carrying into effect orders for the breaking up of these corps. Those stationed at a distance from the headquarters of their battalions should not be forced to join for settlement of accounts. The whole business of fixing pensions, discharging arrears, and furnishing documents, can be equally well accomplished at the places where men are on duty, by which the necessity of long marches will be avoided.

The interests of such European officers now commanding battalions of native invalids, as retired from the effective branch of the army under circumstances and expectations which entitle them to consideration, should meet with attention corresponding with that shown to the case of officers deprived of commands by the suppression of provincial battalions.

I have on a former occasion intimated, that in my opinion the military establishments of Fort St. George are on a scale very considerably exceeding the force required for the conservation of the national interests in that quarter of the British territories. Over and above their large body of regular troops, the Madras army list enumerates four veteran battalions. These corps are organized I conclude much upon the plan of the Bengal invalid battalions; which were established, I imagine, on the supposition, that it was never intended the services of a soldier should be lost to the public until feebleness rendered transfer to the pension indispensable, and upon the principles on which their military establishments are founded.

I take for granted that the proposal I have advanced is in conformity with the sentiments of the honourable court, who in the 79th paragraph of a military despatch dated the 28th May 1828, observe in stating their objections to an increase of native invalid battalions, that the first difficulty is to find adequate employment for them; and that after all, the native soldiers themselves, when past active service, prefer the present pensions at their homes to the pay of invalids with the obligation of performing garrison duty.

Although however invalid battalions, composed of native officers, non-commissioned officers, sepoys etc. who have become unfit for field duty, but are still deemed equal to do garrison and other minor duties

within the provinces, must under the ordinary circumstances of present period be considered unprofitable servants, they may on the contrary in time of exigency prove a useful and economical branch of the service, making an abundant return for their expenses by enabling the government to keep the effective army more available for field service by withdrawing it from the performance of duties to the discharge of which this inferior and cheaper description of force is equally convenient and applicable. As emergencies or pressure of war may recur, all pensioners not wholly incapicated by age, wounds or infirmity from discharging easy garrison duties, should be considered a reserve liable to be called upon and embodied into corps, companies and detachments, at any military stations near their respective homes where government may find it convenient to place them for the temporary protection of cantonments, buildings etc. etc. With a view to such possible eventual and occasional employment of pensioners, the pay masters of stipends might be instructed to prepare and preserve correct rolls of all men of the several ranks, whose infirmities do not entirely disqualify them from bearing arms, such as a carbine or sword and pistol. I am not aware that objections exist to the employment of native military pensioners, in any capacity for which they are fitted, under the civil authorities, or as subordinate servants in the commissariat or other branches of the military department,—such persons having a pension at stake in addition to the hire for their labour, might perhaps be advantageously used as select burkundar to guard small treasuries, opium godowns, custom houses and property rooms under magistrates etc. If it have hitherto been considered irregular for pensioners of the native army to engage in civil or unmilitary offices and labour, in order to obtain more comforts than their bare stipends place within their reach, all restrictions should be removed and facilities afforded (capricious charges being guarded against), for realizing pensions on the spot where the individual may have obtained employment.

Considering the waste of constitution inseparable from the harrassing duties and severe exposure to which the troops were subjected during the wars of the past ten or fifteen years, which of course tended greatly to swell the invalid and pensions lists, the military auditor general's abstracts, accompanying his letter of the 25th November last, do not exhibit so formidable an increase to the pension expenditure as might have been apprehended. Whilst, however, we look with anxiety on a large outlay in this respect as it regards our finances, we cannot but be sensible that a liberal policy in legislating for the native army is well repaid by the fidelity, attachment and devotion which experience has proved to be thereby secured.

If peace be preserved, as no transfers from the native commissioned and non-commissioned ranks are to take place for three or four years, I should hope the outlay on account of military pensions of retreat will in due course be materially diminished.

186. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Private

Calcutta. 22 March 1830

My dear Lord,

I have only time to write a few lines by the *Lady Nugent* to report the measure we have resolved to take, in consequence of the call for assistance, which has been made upon us by the select committee at Canton.

We consider the proceedings of that committee to be in the highest degree injudicious and hazardous. It does not appear to us that either the state of the trade or the conduct of the local government justified the extreme measure of suspending all commercial intercourse: nor do we see, if the Chinese authorities persist in their determination, how the select committee can extricate themselves from their difficulties if permitted to do so at all, without great loss of character and consequence, and without an aggravation of all the evils which it was intended to correct. All the private letters from China speak despairingly of the issue of this contest: and the possible effects of this state of things upon the interests of the East India Company, as well as upon the revenue and the feeling of the people of England, cannot be contemplated without the utmost dismay.

We could not hesitate a moment in affording our best service upon this most embarrassing occasion. We have resolved to communicate to the select committee without delay the entirely different view taken by the supreme government of the course that ought to have been followed, and to offer our mediation for the purpose of effecting an amicable adjustment with the viceroy of Canton. It was desirable to depute upon this important mission, an officer whose high consideration would give the greatest weight to his representations and advice both with the select committee and the local authorities. Sir Charles Metcalfe has kindly volunteered his services. He will sail in the course of four or five days in a steamer for Canton, which he may be expected to reach in about thirty days from the time of sailing.

The two propositions made to us by the select committee, of addressing the emperor of China direct, and of sending four ships to be employed in the China seas, appeared open to great objections.

From the very imperfect information sent to us by the select committee, Plowden's dissent[1] being entirely omitted, we are not sufficiently masters of the case, to offer a remonstrance against the conduct of the Chinese governor. The orders of the court of directors have prohibited any direct intercourse from India with the court of Pekin. In an emergency like the present, a strict compliance with these instructions might well be dispensed with, if any good were likely to arise from it, but we have no reason to suppose, that our representations would command more attention than those of the secret committee, while such a remonstrance, coupled with the appearance of several men-of-war in

186. [1] Plowden, Charles, president of the select committee at Canton.

the China seas, might be considered as indications of hostility, and might add to the difficulties of the present position. Our total ignorance of Chinese affairs and feelings, and the seemingly mistaken calculations of the select committee upon the probable conduct of the local government strongly discourage the recourse to any active or offensive measure. By confining our intervention to conciliatory representations only, if we do not accomplish the object, no obstacles will have been thrown in the way of such further steps as the government at home may think fit to take. And eventually should a more decided conduct, and an appearance of menace be judged advisable, it will be infinitely more prudent and satisfactory to receive in the report of Sir Charles Metcalfe, in whose opinion we can place implicit reliance, a previous confirmation of this line of policy.

I hope his Majesty's government may approve of our determination.

187. *Bentinck to Peter Auber*

Calcutta. 24 March 1830

My dear Sir,

As the *Thalia* which sails on the 27th is a faster sailer than the *Lady Nugent* I shall merely acknowledge with best thanks your letter of the 14th October. I have written to the chairman respecting our intention to send Sir Charles Metcalfe immediately to China to endeavour to settle the unfortunate differences between the viceroy and the select committee. It appears to be little short of madness to have pushed matters to such extremes at this particular juncture. A worse piece of service could not have been done to the E.I. Company by its most violent enemy. A strong case no doubt exists against the local government in respect to the Hong merchants. But surely at any time it would have been better, before having recourse to the last measure of suspending the trade, to have committed the authorities at home, and not hastily and unnecessarily to have exposed their own numerous ships and commerce, as well as that of all India to such immense peril and loss. There may arise the necessity to require all at once a complete change of system and [*illeg.*], as to a stranger must seem to be the case, with all the odds against us to take up a position, from which there seems to be no retreat. All opinions here concur in the excessive imprudence of these measures. I am sanguine in thinking that Sir Charles will be able to rescue the committee from their embarrassment, if it should still continue.

I hope they will listen to him. From the scantiness of the information given to us by them, they evidently did not wish for our opinion, while they asked for our support. In looking at their despatch to us you will see the stupid remark, in favour of sending king's corps, and that their representations would have more weight and authority, if the factory

was supposed to have the protection of the sovereign. What an argument does not this afford to the opponents of the Company?

The court's last despatch respecting the 6 regiments amuses me not a little. I was much concerned for not discovering the obvious inference and meaning of the former orders, that if the officers could not be transferred bodily to the local corps the 6 regiments were to be disbanded altogether. I am sure this interpretation must come from a new board of control and have been forced upon the court, for certainly no such alternative ever occurred to the mind of any one member of council, and I think I can venture to affirm, that it was equally remote from the imagination of the late president of the board of control and of all and every director by whom the said despatch was signed. Might I beg as a matter of curiosity that you would ask the secretary if this conjecture be not correct.

188. *Court of directors to the Bengal government on army discipline*

31 March 1830

Para 1. In our military letter of the 28th May 1828, we directed that officers periodically stationed at the presidency, Berhampore and Dinapore should receive half-batta; with house rent at the rates fixed in 1814 instead of quarters.

2. We received on the 22nd of December last your letter of the 1st of May 1829 with the memorials of certain officers of your establishment on the subject of those orders as promulgated by you on the 29th November 1828.

3. We have perused those memorials with pain and disappointment. There prevails, in too many of them a tone of disrespectful remonstrance little in accordance with that propriety of feeling which we thought had been the pride of the Bengal army and inconsistent with the principles of military subordination which it is the first duty of officers to inculcate and to maintain.

4. We did not expect that our European officers would so soon have forgotten the various measures which have of late years been adopted either by us or by our intervention for their advantage and honour. We did not expect that the dissatisfaction exhibited in the memorials would have been excited by an order which partially affecting the allowances of a small portion of the army during a tour of service at certain cantonments forms a part of a measure of military policy and of a general system of necessary economy.

5. That order was also consonant with justice, for our officers have been altogether misled in supposing that either in 1796 or in 1801 there was any compact between the court of directors and those who were then, or who might thereafter engage in their military service.

6. It is an undoubted right inherent in all governments to augment or reduce the allowances of public servants as the circumstances of the state may require.

7. The discontinuance of double batta in Oudh was ordered by us in August 1801 on grounds of policy as well as economy. On the same grounds it had been abolished by the Bengal government in the previous April. We knew not of their act, nor they of our intention.

8. In their letter of the 28th May 1801, the Bengal government announced to us the substitution of full batta for half-batta and quarters at certain stations and they stated that this measure rested on economical calculations.

9. We approved of both measures; but of each on its separate grounds. No connexion between them ever existed in our minds.

10. But while we thus shew the misapprehension into which many have fallen upon this point and distinctly uphold the justice of our recent order and our inherent right to alter the allowances of our officers as circumstances may deem to us to require, we at the same time acknowledge their claim to our favourable and indulgent consideration.

11. We acknowledge their services and we know that notwithstanding the transient feeling of dissatisfaction which has been excited in their minds by misrepresentation and exaggeration of what has been done and by the most unfounded apprehensions for the future, they are still prepared on all occasions loyally to perform their duty and to proceed in their accustomed course of military honour.

12. We are sure that on reflection they will feel that it is our duty to take an extended view of all the branches of all our establishments, and to devise and enforce that system which upon full consideration may appear best calculated to promote their general interests.

13. We have yet a further duty; that of effecting such reductions of expenditure as may enable us to conduct our affairs without the imposition of new burdens upon the people of India, or the demand of aid from the people of England.

14. We are satisfied that we may obtain this object by a firm perseverance in temperate measures of economy and we are gratified by the persuasion that we may effect all that is required of us without diminishing in any degree the efficiency of the service or the respectability of our officers which it will at all times be our first wish to preserve.

15. Your conduct in promulgating and enforcing our orders is entirely approved.

16. We have communicated all the documents connected with this subject to the Duke of Wellington, whom the officers of our army must admit to be the first authority upon all military matters and who has the further advantage of being practically acquainted with their peculiar circumstances.

17. We are authorised to state that the Duke of Wellington and his Majesty's other ministers, who have also considered this question,

unanimously concur with us that our orders of May 1828 must continue to be carried into execution.

18. You will communicate the whole of this letter in general orders to the army.

189. *Sir Charles Metcalfe's note on Gwalior*

2 April 1830

The regent Bai at the court of Gwalior has called on the governor-general by letter to acknowledge her as regent for life.

To do so would be to sanction a usurpation.

A successor to the late maharaja having been appointed by adoption, he will be the lawful prince and ruler of the state whenever he may reach the age at which princes in India are admitted to exercise sovereign power.

To give any pledge to the Bai, that her rule would be acknowledged after that period, would be a violation of the right of the young maharaja.

The plainest course would seem to be to answer the Bai's letter, by laying down the law, which established the maharaja's right, and informing her that the British government cannot be a party to its infringement.

If the law be disputed, there will be room for further discussion: but I am strongly impressed with a belief, that the right of the young prince, at the proper age, according to the law and practise of Hindu states, is indisputable; and I conceive that it will be salutary to declare at once the determination of the British government not to countenance the projected usurpation.

The refusal now to acknowledge the Bai's regency for life, thus prematurely claimed, would not involve us in the necessity of enforcing the maharaja's right, if at the proper time he should not be able to maintain it, with the aid of the chiefs of the state.

To withhold acknowledgement of an usurpation, or of any assumed power is a privilege ever used by every civilized state, and is quite distinct from an active interference to enforce a lawful right.

In order to assert both the principles by which our conduct would be guided, the answer to the Bai's demand might be expressed according to the spirit of the following.

'It is not the practice of the British government to interfere in the affairs of foreign states, and it is not our intention to interfere in the affairs of the maharaja's government; but as it is the undoubted right of the maharaja to take the reins of government into his own hands when he may arrive at a proper age, your request to be acknowledged as regent for life is an improper one; and cannot be acceded to.'

This declaration would leave us at liberty to act as policy might dictate at the time of trial.

Should the young maharaja be able to assert and maintain his right, there could be no hesitation on our part in acknowledging the rightful course.

If it should happen, either from his incapacity, or from any other cause, that the chiefs of the state should concur in approving and supporting the continuance of the Bai's regency, there is nothing to prevent our accommodating ourselves to that order of things.

If the strength of the party be so divided as to threaten convulsion and civil war, we may withdraw our resident and leave them to settle the dispute as they can.

If the presence of our resident should afford an undue support to the Bai, we might withdraw him on that account.

If the mere expression of our inclination or the ordinary exercise of our influence by advice should be sufficient to establish the maharaja's right without opposition there would be no objection I conceive to our aiding the just cause to that extent, provided that there were no manifest incapacity on his part, that would render even that degree of assistance inexpedient.

The Bai on the receipt of the answer proposed, would either determine to retain her present power, and to take her chance of accomplishing her designs hereafter; or she would, as is talked of, resign.

In the latter event, we might leave it to the chiefs of the state to determine with whom the right of the regency would rest during the maharaja's minority, or to elect a regent, if there were no one legally entitled to the office.

Their wishes might point to Bula Bai, the sister I think of the great Mahadaji Sindhia. That lady has always been highly respected by them, but is now perhaps too old to undertake such duties.

Daulat Rao's widow, Roukma Bai, whose claim was said to be legally superior to that of the present regent, would doubtless have a party in her favour.

It would I conceive be most advisable to leave the chiefs to settle the new regency, in the event of Bauza Bai's resignation, without interference on our part.

190. *Bentinck's minute on policy towards China*

3 April 1830

The select committee at Canton in their despatch of the 11th of January have called upon this government as 'the supreme representative of British power in the east' for their assistance in protecting the commercial interests of the East India Company in China, and have

requested first, that we will address a remonstrance direct to the emperor via Nepal.

Secondly, that we will solicit the admiral, commanding the naval forces of these seas, to detach four men-of-war to Canton.

The avowed objects of these two measures, are to repress within bounds the encroaching spirit of the Chinese local authority, to impress the conviction that their unwarrantable oppression will not be submitted to, and, at the same time to give additional weight to the representations of the select committee, by publicly showing that they have the protection of the sovereign of Great Britain, while the ships might be employed in enforcing their orders for the suspension of all commercial intercourse by the British trade of India with China.

The measures here proposed for our adoption involve not merely an interference in affairs, which have been entirely separated from our authority, but demand also a degree of responsibility which nothing but the clearest conviction of the necessity of the case could authorize us to assume. It was incumbent upon the select committee, when asking our support to proceedings of so novel a character and pregnant with consequences of such extreme magnitude, to have laid before us all the information, which, as perfect strangers to the affairs of China, we necessarily require for our own satisfaction and guidance. It could hardly have been expected that we should have pledged the character and consideration of this government, by a public remonstrance, without a thorough understanding of the question under discussion, and with a complete [ignorance] of the data upon which the calculation of failure or success must have been founded.

The only despatches received from the select committee are dated the 21st of December, the 11th and 19th of January.

It is in the letter of the 11th of January that the select committee communicate their causes of complaint against the Chinese local authority, and their having had recourse to the suspension of the trade as the only means of obtaining redress. This statement has nothing to support it, but the mere authority from whence it proceeds. It is not accompanied by any documents. The correspondence with the viceroy is not transmitted, and though I know from a private letter from Mr. Plowden, the president of the select committee, that he has not concurred with his colleagues, his dissent, a document of the utmost importance, which would have put us in possession of the other side of the question, has been entirely unnoticed.

It is quite clear that upon the point of the reduced number of the Hong merchants, and upon the non-performance of their engagements, the select committee and the merchants in general, have a strong case of grievance. There are other points also no doubt which require correction. But wholly unacquainted as we are with the manner in which the business between the factory and the Hong merchants is conducted, as well as with the politics, interests and feelings, both of the subordinate Chinese agents at Canton and of the imperial cabinet of Pekin, it is

quite impossible for us without much more explanation than the despatch of the 11th of January affords, to comprehend the whole subject, or rightly to appreciate the grounds upon which the select committee have acted.

It was important that we should have been made acquainted with the following facts.

1st. In what manner and to what extent the interests of the East India Company were affected by the present state of things, and whether the evil was of that vast and pressing nature as not to admit of the delay of a reference.

2nd. In what degree the withdrawal of the trade would affect the private interests of the viceroy and the resources of the state, how far the intended recourse of Mr. Elphinstone to the same measure had influence over the determination of the viceroy, and how far that intended act received the sanction of the court of directors.

3rd. What reason is there to suppose that the representations of the supreme government will have more effect than those of the select committee? On what grounds is it now concluded that the cautious policy of not admitting ships of war, and of excluding all possible chance of collision or cause of offence, hitherto so successfully pursued and, in a very recent instance, strongly recommended by a preceding select committee, is erroneous and unnecessary? And above all, what is the foundation of the security, that this bolder measure of intimidation, by a remonstrance from the supreme power in India, backed by a naval force of his Majesty, will ensure success? And, in the event of failure, it should have been informed in what manner a safe and honourable retreat might be effected.

To supply in some part the omissions in the correspondence of the select committee, I have to lay before the board, extracts of two private letters I have received from Mr. Plowden dated the 16th and 24th of January, describing the different view taken by him of the conduct of the Chinese authorities, and expressing his dissent from the opinions and measures of his colleagues. It is impossible for me to estimate the force of the facts and reasons, because we are unacquainted with them, which induced the majority of the select committee to reject the course recommended by Mr. Plowden, which apparently reason, moderation and policy would strongly dictate. I do not therefore pretend to judge the conduct of the select committee. But at the same time, it is difficult to understand what objection there could have been, before proceeding to extremities, which might place the best interests of the Company and of the state in jeopardy, to have awaited a reference to the home authorities. As the case now appears, we have engaged in the contest under a combination of the most adverse circumstances.

Mr. Plowden in his letter of the 24th of January, expresses an opinion that the Chinese government will persevere in their resolution and the application of the select committee for our assistance would seem to infer on their part, a doubt of the success of their measures. It is

impossible not to contemplate a continuance of the present suspension of the China trade for any long period, as one of the greatest calamities that could befall both the East India Company and the nation, and it is undoubtedly our bounden duty to afford our best aid and endeavours to re-establish this great source of revenue and comfort to Great Britain.

My opinion of the inexpediency of the two propositions of the select committee will have been sufficiently evinced by the preceding remarks. Were measures of intimidation justified by the proceedings of the Chinese government, which appears not to be the case, we, at any rate, uninformed as we are, could not lend ourselves, without the sanction of our superior authorities to so radical a change of the peaceful policy hitherto invariably and successfully followed, which has carefully abstained from all display of power, and thus strictly adhered to the maintenance of the simple character of a commercial factory, but I am of opinion, that the restoration of the trade may be easily affected through the mediation of the supreme government, and that the interposition of an authority supposed to be superior and no party to past proceedings may both save the humiliation of a retreat, if such should be eventually necessary, and be equally acceptable to the Chinese government who whatever may be their assertion, cannot be indifferent to the continuance of so lucrative a traffic; the advantage of this course will be, that in the event of failure, no additional obstacle will have been thrown in the way of such measures as the authorities at home may think fit to adopt. After the call that has been made upon us by the select committee and the obvious difficulty of their situation, I cannot but calculate a ready disposition on their side to listen to our advice, but it will be proper to provide for an opposite contingency. The importance of the occasion requires that we should depute upon this service an officer of the highest consideration. The offer of Sir Charles Metcalfe to undertake this mission leaves nothing to be wished for upon this point, and will be received with equal gratification by the council and the home authorities. His name is not unknown in China, and I anticipate from the select committee that willing attention to his opinion which his reputation so strongly invites. I annex a draft of the instructions which I propose to be given to him, and which will render it unnecessary for me to extend the limits of the present minute.

191. *Court of directors on policy towards* thagi

6 April 1830

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7. We observe with deep concern that notwithstanding the repeated complaints of the superintendent of police, and the local magistrates, the inhabitants of our districts adjacent to Oudh have scarcely any

protection from robbers harboured in that country. As long as the plunderers are countenanced by the zamindars and police officers of Oudh, it will be impossible for our magistrates to give that protection to the people which we are bound to afford them. We consider it highly discreditable to the British government to suffer with impunity such long continued depredations on its subjects, and, if it has not been already effectually accomplished, we positively direct that immediate steps be taken to induce the Oudh government to co-operate with you for putting an end to them. We have to remark that several of our districts, especially Azamgarh, Gorakhpur and Allahabad, have been infested not only by common robbers but by refractory zamindars, and by large bodies of insurgents from Oudh, and that the officers of the king of Oudh have made predatory exactions from our merchants. It may perhaps be necessary to require of the king that adequate police establishments, supported by strong parties of military should be stationed at convenient places along his frontier the whole expense of which should of course be borne by his Majesty, and that any of his subjects who may be found to have been concerned with the robbers as accomplices, should on proof of their identity, as in the case of the principals themselves, be delivered up to our courts for trial. You will of course have attended to the orders conveyed to you in our political letter of the 1st October 1828; and we hope to hear that instead of confining yourselves to useless and ineffectual representations to the king of Oudh, you will have adopted some decisive measures so that his subjects may no longer plunder ours with impunity. We desire that the necessary steps may be taken to prevent depredations in our districts by inhabitants of the Rampur jagir.

8. We are sorry to perceive a great increase in the reported numbers of murders by thugs. In cases coming under this denomination the persons murdered who are commonly travellers or pilgrims are first stupified by drugs clandestinely put in their food, and then robbed. In some instances the persons so plundered have survived, but they have generally been found dead in wells or in fields by the road side, stabbed or strangled. There are instances of this crime in several zillahs of the western provinces, but in most of them it is unknown. In Cawnpore, Fatehpur and Allahabad, it has been most frequent and the police have scarcely ever been successful in tracing the offenders. The reports in regard to this offence in some of the districts are very vague. Bodies of persons found in such a state that it could not be known whether they had been murdered or not are given as cases of murder by thugs. It is stated by the magistrate of Fatehpur, a district in which these offences are common, that in the course of a year in his jurisdiction not less than 120 persons fall into wells, it may therefore be suspected that in many instances persons are reported to have been murdered by thugs who have in truth died from some accident. On the other hand, it is often stated in the superintendent's reports that several bodies have been found in a field or in a well, and these are set down altogether, as a case of murder by thugs, and, although in the figured statements the

number of cases of murder by thugs in the two years 1826, 1827, is said to be 96, the number of persons reported to have been murdered by thugs is 174. We are by no means satisfied with the proceedings of the public officers in regard to offences of this class. Their exertions have been but too plainly unsuccessful yet we know no reason why some effective measures might not be adopted by an able and zealous magistracy with a sufficient police establishment, so that many of the offenders might be detected and the crime in a great degree put down in places where it was most prevalent. We trust that you will endeavour to have the reports of the cases of thugs classed as accurately as possible in the statements, and that you will exact from the local officers a strict attention to their duties in regard to the discovery and apprehension of the offenders.

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192. *Bentinck's minute on financial retrenchment in the Straits settlements*

27 April 1830

In considering Mr. Fullarton's sentiments upon the new scheme of administration for Penang and its dependencies, it will be unnecessary for me to revert to any of the arguments contained in my minute of the 6th of June, which in reference to the amount of revenue, to the number and condition of the population and to the general interests of the empire were adduced to show the useless expense and unsuitableness of the existing civil and judicial establishments. The despatch of the honourable court, under date the 7th April has given a satisfactory confirmation to these opinions.

Penang having a good port, in war might be of use to us, and if in the hands of an enemy would, as well as Malacca, be greatly destructive to our eastern commerce. Both these places in time of peace are of little advantage to us. Singapore on the contrary, becomes every day of greater importance, but it must be viewed as merely a great bazar, where all the surrounding people come to barter the produce of their respective countries, all the rest of the island being a mere jungle, and having therefore neither an agricultural or manufacturing population, it has nothing of its own produce to export.

The great error committed with respect to these possessions, and I fear the same remark is equally applicable to another more important part of our territories, I mean Bombay, has been never to have thought of putting in force that homely maxim of cutting your coat according to your cloth, or in other words of reducing the expenditure within the income. We now see what might always have been done in these settlements, and that the equalization of receipts and charges has been, nearly, if not quite practicable. I doubt very much whether the same

effect might not be attainable in Bombay, if a positive injunction to the same purport, were issued from the home authorities. Governments will not, I may almost say, cannot, reform themselves, and we see another consequence of an unlimited credit upon the purse of another presidency (for unlimited it always proves to be in spite of any order to the contrary, because if an establishment exists it must be paid) that *there* will always be the least attention to economy. Compare the list of accumulated places held by each of the numerous useless individuals composing the establishment of these eastern settlements, and let me ask, if any other presidency presents the same extravagant expenditure. No doubt the feeling has always been, what does it signify, we can draw upon Bengal. In like manner and precisely from the same causes, it will turn out, that Bombay ranks next in the general expensiveness of its administration. The general subject of the civil government of India will ere long be brought before us by the finance committee, but I have been unwilling to let this opportunity pass of bringing the question before the home authorities.

Attending then to the principal considerations, population and revenue, as the only criterion by which the extent and sufficiency of an establishment can be judged, I give in the margin the last returns of each in the three settlements:

Population		*Estimated Revenue*	
Prince of Wales' Island and province Wellesley	57,207	Prince of Wales' Island and province Wellesley	252,183
Malacca	22,000	Malacca	64,672
Singapore	18,819	Singapore	214,287
Total . . .	92,026	Total . . .	531,142

The first question upon which we are required by the court to decide, is whether there shall be three separate residencies or whether the administration of the three shall be vested in one resident, with a suitable number of assistants. Mr. Fullarton has given his opinion in favour of the latter plan, and it seems to be so clearly the more eligible arrangement, that I need add nothing further upon this point.

Mr. Fullarton has recommended Malacca as the residence of the chief authority, as being centrical. But as I would propose, that the *Diana* steamer should be permanently allotted to the service of these settlements, the distance then becomes of little consequence, while, the increasing importance of Singapore, its proximity to Java, as well as to those countries to the eastward from whence the great resort to the island principally arises, strongly point it out as the most eligible seat of government and for this reason I give it a preference.

I would propose for the present the following arrangements for Singapore.

The resident should receive 36,000 Rs. per annum, everything

included. The first assistant to the resident 24,000 and the second Rs. 7,200.

For Prince of Wales Island and Malacca assistant to the resident 30,000. Second assistant 7,200.

At Prince of Wales Island an additional assistant may be required for province Wellesley.

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193. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House, London. 3 May 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 31 August 1830

My dear Lord William,

Your letter of the 2nd December reached me some weeks ago and before I proceed to other matters let me thank you and my friend Lady William for your great kindness to my young protégé H. Metcalfe, whose parents feel deeply indebted to you both for preventing as far as you could a union between parties, who however amiable, could only by such union entail much misery upon each other, and upon the parents of the youth at all events. You will probably hear from the father, as I thought it better he should convey his own feelings and wishes himself, than that they should be communicated through me.

I am not surprised that you cannot comprehend the apparent panic under which the order prohibiting you from moving up the country with your council—and from granting *lands* to Europeans—was issued for I cannot even to this day comprehend it otherwise than by supposing that a predisposition had long existed *somewhere*, to take the first opportunity of finding fault with you. An apprehension however has for some time been entertained that you are disposed to proceed too fast with innovations upon old customs and measures of reform and that a time of general retrenchment and army discontent was not the time to introduce such changes even if they were right in themselves in as much as public servants when in a state of excitement, are seldom willing agents.

The governor who does little beyond carrying on the normal business in the old humdrum way will certainly get on most quickly during his term but if all were to act on this principle we should never have amendments and I should be sorry to see you going on in that way. You cannot however be too cautious in commencing most proceedings. Your *commissioners'* system I think I told you had alarmed some of the old school here, some of whom for want of better argument maintain that you should not have introduced it without the previous sanction of the home authorities. For myself though, I think you will be obliged to make amendments before it works well and that you will have difficulty in working at all, from the inefficiency of your servants. I am glad to see

any change, so satisfied am I that the wheels of government were so clogged, they would otherwise have come to a standstill.

We have lately received your and Sir C. Metcalfe's minutes on the subject of colonization, which were written before you received the court's orders on the subject of granting lands to Europeans. I protested against those orders not because I am an advocate for colonization or for introducing European zamindars, but because in what you did you merely extended a principle which had been introduced by your predecessor and sanctioned by the courts. Your colonization minute created much alarm at first and even now many regret that you should have adopted a course of argument so much in accordance with feelings of the free merchants in India and the advocates for undermining the Company here. Still, however, I contend that you have only given an opinion, that whether such opinion is palatable or not, however it may be regretted, you would not perhaps have done your duty unless you had recorded it, and that you have done and even do now *act* in furtherance of it, especially after the prohibitory orders sent from home. The whole subject however is now under the consideration of parliament and common candour requires that the opinion of the local authorities should be known. Although therefore I do not agree with you on some points I cannot blame you for recording your sentiments. The great fallacy of your minute appears to me to be that while you and we are now doing everything we can to bring the natives forward into almost all situations in the revenue and judicial departments, you seem to suppose that one of the good effects of colonization will be to introduce Europeans in the course of time into those very situations. The effect would be to turn the natives out and again degrade them. Then again I have strong objections to the introduction of European zamindars. In some points however I am much inclined to agree with you. I believe the internal state of the country is such as to require some radical remedy, and that no temptation you can offer will ever induce many capitalists to go and colonize there, but if the latter position be true how can you look to their going there in sufficient numbers to be of any use in the administration of government?

As far as regards manufactures and trade, there is no doubt the skill and enterprise of individuals has been and will be useful. There is no restriction even now to persons of capital going out for such purposes, but how few instances are there of such persons wanting to go. No one but [mere] adventurers ever ask leave, and little or no capital goes, or will go, as long as it can find a better chance of employment either in Europe or America. After all, however, perhaps the greatest impediment of colonization is the state of the law and I confess I see no means of reconciling that to European minds without the extension of the king's court all over India, which I dread more than anything.

You will see that with regard to the batta question you have been tho' tardily, very firmly supported from hence and if it be true as is supposed, that ministers were averse to the original order, you may

consider this support as resolute and final. I could have wished with reference to the trying situation you have been placed in that the approbation of your conduct had been more cordial and encouraging, for I am not without apprehensions that you may even yet be obliged to make some examples among your military radicals. If you are however, and select proper objects I have no doubt you will be supported. The evidence going on before the commons on the Chinese question is certainly against us. It could not indeed be otherwise, for unless the monopoly can be maintained on the grounds of political expediency we have no other to stand upon. I am for giving up everything except the exclusive supply of the home market. This would allow English ships to go to China and do all that Americans and other foreigners can do. This would no doubt lead eventually to a further opening but it would perhaps be a safer course than opening the trade at once. Our minds are nevertheless directed to the means of making both ends meet in India without the aid of the China trade, for I conclude we shall give it up altogether, should it be thrown open and a means can be devised for effecting the necessary remittance from India. We shall probably give up all trade to and from there also.

The king has been seriously ill for some time and there seems to be but one opinion, that he cannot last long, some reckon weeks, others days. I do not apprehend any change beyond perhaps strengthening the present administration, and strength it sadly wants especially in the house of commons. There has been much distress at home, but it has been sadly exaggerated. Government I think has done all it well can do, except perhaps in point of reduction of expense. The administration however of the home government is generally approved of, but our foreign policy is as generally questioned. We know so little however of what the Duke is about that all parties argue more from suspicion than from any knowledge of facts. One thing however seems pretty evident that we have fallen much in the opinion of foreigners, not so much of foreign governments perhaps as of the people.

There are as you may suppose ship loads of private complaint coming home against retrenchments. I wish something more in that way were done in Bombay, but it is all talk there. You stand well upon the whole with the court, though there are several who are ready enough to pounce if they saw a good opportunity.

I have been in very indifferent health since the winter closed, but am mending. Still however I am not up to any great exertion of body or mind....

194. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft

Calcutta. 6 May 1830

Dear Sir,

The *Fairlie* arrived on the 19th April and the *Dunira* on the 1st May, the latter bringing me your most interesting communications from 1st to 4th, dated 1st January.

I am not aware of having neglected the best of the occasions which frequently offered, at the same time of writing to the chairman. It is very unfortunate that at a moment of such anxiety so much delay should have taken place in the arrival of our letters.

I also very much regret the disappointment that will have been felt from the non-appearance of the promised report of the finance committee. The truth is that this report was not given in till the middle of September and was so voluminous and unsatisfactory, as in no respect to give us the least aid in getting out of our difficulties. I have before explained the unlucky constitution of this committee, and the little expectation of benefit, that was anticipated from it. The discord prevailing in the committee became generally known; the agitation in the army was much helped on by the hostility towards the Bengal army supposed to be entertained by the majority of the committee, and I was glad, and I deemed it prudent, to consign their labours as soon as possible to oblivion. As I have before mentioned, it was my intention to have resumed, at an early opportunity and in a different form, the consideration of our military expenditure. I proposed to have sent for Col. Morison from Madras, whom I had asked for in the first instance from Mr. Lushington, but whom Mr. L. for some reason or other did not choose to allow to come and for Lt. Col. Hough, the adjutant general at Bombay, described by Mr. Bax as being eminently qualified for the task. In the upper provinces, I expected to have more leisure than here, and with the opportunity I should then have had of becoming intimately acquainted with the greater part of the Bengal army and in communication with all the senior officers in command, I expected to have been able with the aid and advice of these officers (Morison and Hough), together with that of my own military secretary, Capt. Benson, a most efficient and intelligent officer, to have devised some plan that might have been worthy of the court's consideration. It is not simply the pay, as depending upon a principle of equalisation which requires adjustment, but the whole distribution of the Indian army is quite unsuitable to the altered circumstances of India. We go on as if we had separate frontiers and separate enemies, whereas all India now virtually composes one empire, and in Madras particularly, where once we required a large army for defence and offence, at this time we only require just as much as is necessary for the preservation of good order. But this, and many other good projects have been betrayed by the court's order prohibiting our removal from Calcutta. I shall still, though late, persevere in my intention, and Col. Morison

has been ordered for this and for the Travancore question to Calcutta.

May 9th. The *James Taylor* having made little progress down the river, I have kept my letter open, and will revert to a subject contained in your letter. Nothing can be more correct, both as to the fact and the concept of it, than your opinion of the insubordination and impertinence of control on the part both of the civil and military services. With respect to the first I am doing what I can, but with our immense extent and distance, it is hardly possible even to know, much less to control what is doing; and the fellow feeling existing in the service, not counterbalanced by any independent and bold opinion on the part of the public, operates unfavourably; but I think highly of the body as a whole. With regard to the army, I can do still less with them and unless there is a vigorous commander-in-chief, I know not how improvements can be expected. Such a character, strongly supported by me, might effect much. Nothing can be more unlucky than the inefficiency from illness of Lord Dalhousie, and still more so, as when he goes up to the country next month, he must necessarily be under the sole guidance of Col. Fagan. But if he should be removed, as he may possibly be under the court's recent orders upon the subject of his letter to Capt. Benson, which subject is now under enquiry, I know not who his successor will be; for his deputy, Col. Bertram though a clever man, is quite unfit to be chief, from his indolence and want of straightforwardness in all his dealings. He has the bad without the good of Fagan's character. You will have seen already how little obedience to authority is counted a virtue. I therefore have strongly insisted upon a strict adherence to the regulations on our own part, as well as on that of the other governments, and I trust the court will not omit to support me upon such occasions. Nobody that does not see closely this machine, can have an idea of the degree in which feeling for individual interests domineers over those of the public. . . .

What you say of my predecessors is perfectly true. Lord H[astings][1] cared little for principle in his selections for public appointments. The civil administration also was a matter quite of secondary concern. Lord A[mherst][2] was an amiable man in every respect, but it was a government of secretaries, he had no confidence in his own opinion, knew nothing of the real business of his charge, and the little energy of character that he might have had was much destroyed by that ill-fated Ava war, and his severe domestic affliction, which was coupled with much ill-health, completely subdued him. Now it is quite certain that the props of good government are very much weakened. I can assure you that I have much to annoy and disgust me and often look forward with anxiety to the hour of my liberation.

194. [1] Governor-General, 4 Oct. 1813–13 Jan. 1823.
[2] Governor-General, 1 Aug. 1823–18 Mar. 1828.

195. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Government House, Calcutta. 6 May 1830

My dear Sir Charles,

I begged Mackenzie to make a note upon the question of giving relief to the mercantile community. I am exceedingly averse to the principle, and I go along with the court in their objections to the measure. On the other hand, if it were proved to my perfect satisfaction, which at present is not the case, that this act on the part of the government could alone save the whole commercial structure from ruin, I should not then hesitate in giving it. We can talk the subject over in council tomorrow.

196. *Bentinck to Sir George Walker.* Copy

Calcutta. 13 May 1830

My dear Sir George,

I have to apologize for having left so long unanswered your letter, which tho' it has no date, that can reproach me with the exact period of my neglect, yet I cannot conceal from myself, that it has been above a fortnight in my possession. I will now give you the best opinion I can form upon the question you have submitted to me, whether in the absence of the governor, you do not succeed by right and custom to the command of Fort St. George. I do not conceive this a very easy point to decide, and you will see by what I am about to state, how very little my authority is worth. I have had occasion lately on reference to the projected removal of the supreme government to the upper provinces, to give two opinions upon the powers of governor-general and governors.

The first was, that a governor-general, when within the territories subject to the presidency of Fort William had no power to appoint a vice-president, and that he had only this power when out of his territories, that is when he was in one of the other presidencies or in some other province or place under a separate authority. Since recording this opinion, but before it reached England, I received the orders of the court, that, in the event of my going to the upper provinces I should appoint a vice-president. My opinion therefore is declared to be erroneous.

The second opinion was, that a governor of Madras or Bombay, upon leaving the presidency, has no right, as has been the custom frequently at Bombay in the time of Mr. Elphinstone, and at Madras in 1822, to *declare in council*, apparently upon his own authority, that one of the members shall be vice-president and that he himself shall exercise certain powers. My conjecture is, that the legislature never contemplated the absence of the governor; certainly no provision has been

made for the contingency, and I conceive, when the governor is absent from whatever cause, the government necessarily devolves on the remaining members of council. I have asked Mr. Hill why in 1822 Sir Thomas Munro used one form of proclamation, which was discontinued ever afterwards. Mr. Hill informed me that in 1822 Mr. Wood was chief secretary. Upon the next occasion of Sir Thomas's leaving the presidency he (Mr. Hill) filled the appointment, when he pointed out to Sir Thomas the illegality of his former proclamation. Sir Thomas was convinced, and subsequently he simply announced his absence and that the government would be carried on by the remaining members of council. Mr. Hill confirmed your assertion that Sir Thomas upon every occasion verbally transferred the command of the fort to you. I do not think that I can take the same view either with you or Mr. Lushington. It strikes me that the analogy which you wish to establish between Madras and Portsmouth or Gibraltar does not hold. These latter are military fortresses, and the command of the troops necessarily devolves upon the senior officer. The analogy might better apply to the Tower or Windsor Castle. But it is unnecessary to go to Europe for analogies when you have a complete precedent in Fort William. The governor-general is commander-in-chief of Fort William. When he absents himself, he must appoint a vice-president from among the members of council, and that vice-president, although a civilian, becomes ex officio *deputy governor* of Fort William, the office which you wish to hold in Fort St. George. The command of Fort William is not a simply military command, it is part of the supreme authority, and the governor-general cannot divest himself of it. The vice-president is only *deputy governor* and it may be doubtful whether any other person can legally be appointed to that office. The command of the troops is quite distinct from the command of the fort. The government of Madras having no authority to appoint a vice-president, who alone, by analogy with Bengal, could be the deputy governor, I cannot think Mr. Lushington wrong in his opinion that he cannot divest himself of his authority. But, if, as I conceive probable, he like myself, in his capacity of commander-in-chief of the fort, is made by his commission subject to the authority of the governing council, then the council at his recommendation, may appoint any officer to command the troops in the fort; but such officer whether the governor was present or absent, would be solely under his command. I think the same of all the other powers of the governor, whether present or absent they equally remain with him. The analogy of Bengal bears out this inference, because, when the governor-general is absent, he carries with him more even of his ordinary authority, than when in council,—all the government's officers being directed to obey his orders. I have made too long a story of this; I will only add, that I am confident Mr. Lushington could have had no intention to annoy you. I know that he entertains for you great regard and respect; and after all it is the intention alone which could give importance to a question in itself of no consequence either to you

or to him. I shall be glad to know how far you may agree in my view of the case. It is not difficult to be in error upon Indian matters, such is the loose manner in which all legislative enactments are drawn.

197. *Bentinck's minute on the agency houses*[1]

14 May 1830

The information submitted to the board having satisfied us that there exists an urgent necessity for the interposition of government, if we would prevent the failure, not of some but probably of all, the principal houses of agency, I wish to state the chief considerations that induce me very reluctantly but very decidedly to conclude that we ought to afford the solicited aid, together with some remarks of wider application, that arise out of the discussion. The general sentiments expressed in the honourable court's despatch of the 2nd April 1828 have my entire concurrence, so that, in coming to the above conclusion, I have not only had to weigh the paramount obligation of obedience to the instructions therein conveyed, but to combat the previous conviction of my own mind.

There is no doubt that the state of things out of which the necessity for our interference has arisen, is (to use the words of the despatch) hollow and dangerous, and if an immediate change could be effected, through the failure of the established houses of agency, without very great mischief to the public interests, or if our interference were likely materially to impede the gradual change which it is desirable to effect, I should not have felt myself justified in departing from the strict letter of the court's injunctions. I am satisfied however that the consequences of such a failure as is apprehended would be of the most mischievous description and there appear to be reasonable grounds for thinking that the desired change will be gradually effected and that at no distant period, when of course the government will be free to act upon those just principles of commercial policy which the honourable court have inculcated, and from which nothing but the strongest sense of a necessity, arising out of the special circumstances of the country, has induced me to depart.

The degree in which the trade of this country depends on the principal agency houses cannot be precisely stated without a more minute enquiry than there is time or authority to institute. That it would be very extensively affected by their failure is however certain. Of the indigo, produced in the last season of which there is any detailed

197. [1] By 1830 there were at Calcutta seven principal and three secondary houses of agency, and twenty smaller mercantile houses. Between 1825 and 1830 the house of Palmer & Co. mismanaged its business, over-speculated, and over-issued its money. It was hard hit by the current commercial crisis in England and in January 1830 it went bankrupt. Within a year Alexander & Co. and Mackintosh & Co. also ceased payment and sixteen of the smaller houses became insolvent. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 277–8.

account, amounting in the aggregate to 149,285 mds., it appears that 108,603 mds. were consigned to the firms specified in the margin:

Alexander & Co.	27,464
Palmer & Co.	24,665
Fergusson & Co.	22,159
Colvin & Co.	15,593
Cruttenden & Co.	13,469
Mackintosh & Co.	5,353

And in the correspondence with the board of trade in 1827, when relief was last granted to the merchants, it is stated that, out of about 2 crore of advances, Rs. 16,000,000 were issued by the six principal houses. Of other articles, of import and export, we have not the same particular information. But there is no doubt that a very considerable portion of both pass through the houses in question. The trade in [*illeg.*] and the manufacture of rum depend, I believe, upon support from them in at least an equal degree with that of indigo. Of the shipping belonging to the port of Calcutta, consisting of 91 vessels, they are stated to have the managing ownership or agency of 59. The steamers, not belonging to government, are theirs. The chief dockyards I understand, belong to them or depend upon them for support. The Fort Gloucester establishment, the success or failure of which will be very important to the country, is in a similar predicament. The same remark applies to the Burdwan collieries, to the establishment on Saugor Island, of which, the society having already exhausted its funds, the clearage appears to depend on the success of the individual speculators. Of the inferior merchants and European manufacturers and traders throughout the country, a great proportion are understood to lean on the principal houses of agency, and generally I should say that (excluding government concerns) the funds required for the different schemes, in agitation or in progress, for the improvement and extension of the manufactures and agriculture of India, must be collected and supplied by them.

It must be superfluous to state how large a mass of property would be lost to the country by any sudden interruption in the course of the commercial dealings that hinge on the solvency of those houses. For there is no other class of capitalists to take their place, and of many things the entire destruction will be the consequence of a stoppage for a single season. Already I understand, nearly two-thirds of the indigo advances have been made on which a very great loss would necessarily ensue.

That the public revenue must suffer from any general derangement of the commerce of the place, it must be superfluous to urge.

I will not dwell upon the distress to individuals and especially of many who have retired from the public service because, apart from the general circumstances, which determine the character of the commercial capital of the country, such a consideration ought not perhaps

properly to sway us, and because the circumstances of the case as affecting the creditors of the several houses must have been fully present to the honourable court when their despatch of the 2nd April 1828 was written.

Some of the considerations which bear importantly upon it, may not have presented themselves and to these I shall now advert.

In the despatch above mentioned, the honourable court have justly regarded the system according to which the commerce of the country is conducted, as one which it is very desirable to remedy. But it appears to me that the mischief deplored is the necessary consequence of those principles by which their government has ordinarily been guided. In the dread of evils, to the existence of which no-one formerly gave more strongly credit than myself, but which the most careful and diligent enquiry into the subject during my present residence in India has led me as entirely to disbelieve, British subjects were long denied free access to the country. Even yet they are subject to many restrictions, adverse to the growth of capital and skill and credit. They have been debarred from the purchase and permanent occupancy of land, and under the existing system of government are equally excluded from all public employment, both of honour and emolument. Those belonging to the service have been even more restricted in the employment of their capital. Their settlement in the country has been pointedly discouraged, if indeed any discouragement were necessary where there is so little to attract. Under such circumstances, it could not have been expected that British capital should abound, or that British capitalists not enjoying any share of authority or power, should remain in the country an hour longer than was necessary to accumulate a fortune proportioned to their (real or fancied) wants, and the tardy and feeble efforts made to raise the natives to the capacity of supplying their place, have as yet had little influence on the general course of commercial dealing. Hence, it has necessarily resulted that those branches of trade which require British skill or an extensive knowledge of commercial relations, have generally been conducted by gentlemen who like the Company's civil and military servants, have started with little or no capital and have mainly depended upon funds borrowed on the mere strength of character and on the assurance of that liberal income with which the agency of extensive concerns rewards the labours of honourable and intelligent men. Hence the unavoidable occurrence of embarrassment, to the most prudent, when anything occurs to disturb the confidence usually reposed in them, and this, without their having in any degree extended their speculations beyond the assured demand of the market. Hence the possibility of their failure, if a panic such as is stated to have been occasioned by the bankruptcy of Palmer & Co., should long and extensively prevail, although, but for such sudden and unforseen interruption, they would have not only redeemed all their obligations to others, but also accumulated an ample fortune for themselves.

It would manifestly be very advantageous, if the commerce of the

country rested more on the foundation of real capital, especially those branches which require the fixed investment of stock and which are consequently liable to be ruinously deranged when there is a sudden contraction or withdrawal of the funds, by which such stock has been provided.

With a numerous body of capitalists whose credit was subsidiary merely to their proper stock and with those different gradations that naturally find their place in a well-ordered society all the ordinary commercial and agricultural transactions of the country would acquire a character of solidity which can never belong to speculations almost wholly conducted upon borrowed funds and under a system which forces the exporting merchant into immediate dealings with the poorest description of cultivators dependent on the advances made from such funds for subsistence and the means of production. The enterprise of the community might then be steadily directed to the improvement of the natural resources of the country, in comparative security against those reverses to which many most beneficial schemes are now exposed. The violent fluctuations to which the money market is so frequently exposed would cease or would rarely occur. The interest of money would be more justly regulated by the advantages to be derived from its employment, instead of being unduly enhanced in consequence of real and fancied risks, and the trade and revenue of India, resting on the broad basis of national wealth, would no longer require to be bolstered up by measures such as that to which we have now had recourse.

Already in consequence of the greater freedom given to trade a considerable change has been effected at the presidency. The privileges that were formerly confined to the Company and a few agency houses are no longer restricted to so small a number. There are now several establishments supported by British capital who receive extensive consignments from England, and effect their returns independently, and the transactions both of the European and native community exhibit a decided progress in enterprise and knowledge.

One thing only seems necessary to the full and speedy attainment of that healthy and vigorous condition of things which we seek to establish, I mean the free permission of British subjects to settle in the interior and to acquire a property in land under a suitable system of law. On this subject I need not now enlarge, since we have already had occasion to discuss the matter at length, and I trust the honourable court will concur with us in promoting a measure fraught with such vast advantages to England and to India. The necessity under which we are now placed of interfering to support mercantile credit, is but one of the many evils that result from the unnatural barrier which our restrictive measures have opposed to the progress of improvement. I cannot believe that such measures will be persisted in; I cannot imagine that England will longer continue to neglect a field of such promise, and in the confidence that we shall witness at an early period, a great and beneficial change in the commercial relations of the country, I feel

the less reluctance in yielding to the present exigency at the sacrifice of principles which such a change will indisputably establish.

198. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Private

India Board, London. 15 May 1830

My dear Lord,

I regret that you determined to return to Calcutta when you found the government could not leave the presidency. I am afraid it must have been very inconvenient to you personally to change your plans. The lawyers had no doubt that the government must not leave Calcutta.

I have to thank you for the interesting papers you obtained from Sir Charles Metcalfe and Mr. Holt Mackenzie, and for your own valuable annotations. I have only shown the papers in strict confidence to some members of the government and to Mr. Elphinstone, who has added to their interest by his own observations upon the several important points referred to.

I conclude that you receive regularly the evidence taken before the two committees. In all probability the session will terminate before the commons can enter upon the field of India or the lords upon China. We are now examining as to the means of improving the cotton and the silk of India. The delegates of the manufacturers are to send me memos. upon these points and to find witnesses. As to cotton, I think we have done everything a government can do, as a government.

It is for your consideration whether in making the investment it may not be expedient to purchase the cotton in the field, and to cleanse it and preserve it from the weather ourselves until it can be packed and shipped. Some cotton which the government received in kind in payment of revenue some years ago was cleansed by their own people and fetched a much better price than what had been purchased. The cotton lately sent to England from New South Wales is much finer than the American and sells for 2d or 3d a lb. more. It might be as well to ascertain what sort it is and to import a quantity of the seed into India. I am sure you must be as anxious as I am to improve the cotton of India. It is every day of more importance to us to do so, not only for Indian interests but English independence.

We shall send you, I think, in a public letter directions with respect to silk and the evidence we have lately had upon that subject. It appears that the worm degenerates in India, and that the reeling is defective. There is too much attention given to the production of a great quantity of silk and the quality is little regarded. It is thought, however, that the silk of Bengal might be as good as the finest silk of Italy. Pray give your mind to this subject. It will be necessary to import new worms and perhaps the reeling may be improved by strict measures with those employed in directing the Company's silk establishments. I have read

the papers relative to Sir E. Colebrooke with great disgust. We have desired our solicitor and the court will desire their counsel to consider whether we cannot put into motion against Mr. Ricketts the unwieldly machine of the great parliamentary court. We shall do nothing to it beyond the giving publicity to the accusation and bringing into action the power of public opinion here. We shall, I hope, soon receive the draft bills proposed by the judges. The question of law becomes every day more important, and more difficult. As yet I have not heard one practical suggestion for bringing the European and the native under a law both will be satisfied with.

It is intolerable that a great government delinquent should escape punishment yet how can you punish with a court 1,100 miles from the witnesses? I have thought of attaining for the government the power of deporting a judge of the Indian court in cases of importance like that of Sir E. Colebrooke for instance, to try an English extortioner by his own law on the spot; but as nothing can be done in the present state of parliament time will be afforded for considering well the second plans which may be offered. I am not at all surprised you have had so few applications for permission to hold lands on lease. I see no more reason why an indigo manufacturer should be an indigo planter than a manufacturer a great farmer. The union of the two trades is probably in both cases prejudicial, and in India where generally both indigo manufacturers and planters are men trading with borrowed capital obtained at exhorbitant interest such an union would most seriously increase the risk of the agent and his creditor. I imagine there must be few indeed who grow indigo and do not manufacture it. It is not probable that the cultivation of the soil will attract capital nor is it desirable that hundreds and thousands of ryots should be deprived of their present possessions and a few European speculators substituted for them. I think you will see that the preservation of the articles in the coffee regulations which you had omitted will materially facilitate the exercise of the power of deportation which you are yourself of opinion it would always be necessary to retain.

The indigo manufacturer has a permanent interest undoubtedly in his buildings, but those he may without much difficulty dispose of to the speculators who succeed him. He could not so easily dispose of extensive landed property. He would become attached to his possessions and renounce England. It is against that renunciation of England that we must always guard, besides if he obtained that property with borrowed money how much more would the risk of the man who lent it, the banker, be increased. He could not at one convert the land with all its improvements into an equivalent in money but he may convert the indigo as I conclude has been in many instances done lately. I cannot but think that the same capital employed in the purchase of the produce of the soil will be more beneficial generally than it would be if sunk in agricultural improvements. The demand leads to these improvements which will be much better made by monied zamindars and

others than by Europeans, that is much better for the interest of India and of England and probably just as well in reality.

199. *Bentinck to Duke of Wellington.* Draft

Calcutta. 17 May 1830

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I have not troubled you with any letters, because all I had to communicate has been regularly transmitted to Lord Ellenborough. Our principal business has consisted in the reduction of expenditure, no easy task in any country, but specially odious in this, where one common feeling of interest pervades the whole society. For this operation we are still engaged, and I trust we may not have entirely disappointed your expectations. The civil finance committee is composed of able men, perfectly conversant with the affairs of the three presidencies—examined almost every branch of the public expenditure, and their reports in general will be found extremely satisfactory now if the establishments have been excluded from their investigation. I have thought that at this great distance, the more completely the real working of the system could be unfolded to the view of the home authorities, the more satisfactory must it be to them, and the more useful to us.

I regret very much the indisposition and absence of the commander-in-chief. We have no tidings of his health since he sailed for Penang. Besides the uncertainty of a repetition of the same attack which very frequently happens and with which he had been threatened before his departure, his constitution is so much disabled by his first shock, that I have very little hopes of his being able long to retain the command. Change of air may so far restore his strength as to enable him to go to the western provinces in the cold season, and to pass the summer of 1831 in the hills, but I am convinced he will never venture to encounter another hot season in the plains. His opinion of his own case has never been favourable, but he has the impression that the relinquishment of the command on the score of health might argue an unfitness for further active service, and against this inference, his manly and military feelings strongly revolt. It is in consequence of this uncertainty as to his health and strength, that I strongly urged to Sir Herbert Taylor the expediency of having at hand an efficient officer to fill the vacancy in the command, should it unfortunately occur: and I venture to represent the same opinion most strongly to your Grace.

The discipline of the Bengal army has been, I suspect, always at a much lower standard than in the armies of the other presidencies. More than ever is a strong and sensible head indispensable to the restoration of subordination and a good and right tone of feeling. It might have been expected, that a confirmation, not yet arrived, of those orders

which have excited so much agitation and discontent, should lead to some unpleasant result. No apprehension need be entertained. The officers are well aware of the condemnation passed upon their proceedings in England, and must be convinced that a perseverence in the same line of conduct would be their ruin. They must know also, how powerless any combination among themselves, even if unanimous, must be, unless it had the co-operation of the men under their command. The Madras mutiny proved the facility of separating the men from the officers. They have indeed no common interest; and at present, if I am rightly informed, that feeling of attachment which once united the European officer and the sepoy so strongly together, is greatly weakened: But the cause has never been explained to my satisfaction.

I cannot conclude without congratulating you upon the success of your administration, and more especially of that measure the Catholic question, the necessity of which no man in his senses seems now to dispute, and the result of which has surpassed the expectations of the most sanguine. As for this distant portion of the administration confided to my unworthy hands, I trust, that if it cannot add to, it may be found at least not to have detracted from the high reputation which the British councils have attained under your Grace's direction.

P.S. Lady William is very well and begs to be kindly remembered. I have taken the liberty of sending by the *Reliance*, Captain Timins, via China, a Malay kris of curious workmanship, bought at poor old Palmer's sale, which I hope may not be considered unworthy of a place among the curiosities of Apsley House.

200. *Bengal government on the Agricultural and Horticultural Society*

18 May 1830

In the 44th paragraph of our despatch dated 26th June 1828, we adverted to the proceedings of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society and we submitted to your honourable court a copy of our correspondence with that society as connected with the appropriation of the amount subscribed by us in aid of the funds of the institution.

2. We now proceed to solicit the attention of your honourable court to the further proceedings of this interesting establishment, and at the same time to explain the degree in which we have availed ourselves of its co-operation in devising measures to promote the cultivation and growth of various articles of raw produce calculated for the home market; as urged in your honourable court's despatch in the general department dated 8th July 1829.

3. The proceedings noted in the margin contain the result of the application submitted by the society for the assistance of government

in providing a spot of ground in the vicinity of the presidency for agricultural and horticultural experiments. We trust your honourable court will approve the manner in which we have met the wish of the Society and will not object to the expense incurred for that purpose being Rs. 130 per mensem exclusive of a remission of the rent of the land, amounting to Rs. 103.6 per annum.

4. Our attention had been directed to the importance attached by your honourable court (as declared in your despatch to the Bombay government dated the 18th of February 1829) to the object of promoting the cultivation of cotton and tobacco of a superior description and we intimated to the society our disposition to co-operate with them in any measures that appeared likely to conduce to the above end as well as to improve the quality of other staple materials calculated for the home market. From the reply of the society it was evident that without pecuniary aid from government, it would be impossible for the society to stimulate the exertions of those who might otherwise be disposed to second their views or to reward the most successful cultivators of raw products of a superior quality. We accordingly placed at the disposal of the society a sum of Rs. 20,000 for the above purposes, and we required from them more particular information in regard to the proposition for granting a sum annually for the same purpose. It will remain with your honourable court, this information being before you, to determine whether grants for the above purpose shall be continued annually and to what extent.

5. In this stage of our proceedings, your honourable court's despatch in the general department dated 8th July 1829 reached us. On reviewing our previous proceedings in connection with the instructions of your honourable court, we were of opinion that any experimental cultivation of cotton in the manner suggested by your honourable court, would less effectual and less likely to produce results upon which any extensive improvements could be calculated than by leaving the cultivation to private capital and enterprise when stimulated and assisted by the proceedings of the society and encouraged by the rewards which the grant made by government would enable them to hold out for successful exertions.

6. We accordingly resolved to depend chiefly on the exertions of the society for the attainment of the important objects contemplated and we propose to entrust to them the distribution of the seed which your honourable court have intimated your intention of sending to this country, a sufficient quantity being reserved for distribution to zamindars and other capitalists of approved character in Bundelkhand and other districts, the soil of which may be favourable to its growth. The machines for cleaning cotton we propose similarly to entrust to the care of the society, after they shall have been exhibited at the town hall during a period sufficient for the purposes of public inspection.

7. As suggested in the 7th paragraph of your honourable court's despatch, a supply of cotton seed has been obtained from the Tenasserim

provinces, and sent for experimental cultivation to the society and to the commissioners of Bundelkhand, Cuttack, Assam, Sylhet, Chittagong and Arakan.

8. The proceedings of the annexed date contain a report from the Agricultural and Horticultural Society, submitting the plan which they propose to adopt for the distribution of the amount placed at their disposal; the arrangement appears to us very judicious and calculated to elicit much useful information as well as to secure the exertions and co-operation of enterprising agriculturists in furthering the views of your honourable court. We have accordingly approved the plan of distribution, altho' we could not concur in the view taken by the society as to the expediency of granting a bounty on the exportation of cotton of a superior quality. The society's suggestion for establishing an experimental garden we have reserved for future consideration.

9. The further information contained in your honourable court's despatch dated 9th December 1829 has been communicated to the society and they have been requested to report whether they have invited communications from individuals to the effect suggested in our resolution of the 29th December last and what may have been the result of that measure.

10. We have also informed the committee that if they should be of opinion that the design of making an experiment in this species of cultivation by means of individual agriculturists is hopeless and that success cannot be anticipated from any plan without the assistance of government to be afforded in the manner and on the principle described in their secretary's letter of the 21st ultimo, it was our desire that they should ascertain, where a piece of ground could be had to the extent of 500 bighas to be farmed or purchased on reasonable terms, and which might be found favourable to the growth of the superior articles of raw products which it is intended to be introduced.

11. Our further proceedings on this subject will hereafter be separately communicated to your honourable court. In the mean time we beg leave to transmit to you (in a small cask to your secretary's address) a supply of tobacco produced from Virginia seed sown in the garden of the Agricultural Society. The method pursued in its cultivation and preservation is that generally adopted by the Americans. We would suggest that the tobacco in question may be subjected to examination at home, and that the report made upon it be forwarded to this country, for our own and the society's information.

201. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck*

India Board. 22 May 1830

My dear Lord,

I have had a calculation made of the price at which the Company's tea would have sold in each of the last six years had they sold at the

upset price, and on comparing the amount with that of the sums actually realised I find that on average of the three years ending in 1826 the difference was £700,000. Since the price of tea has fallen so much that there has been a gradual diminution of the difference and in the last year it amounted only to £370,000. Now this difference may be considered as the cost of the monopoly, a thing fairly assumed that the private importer could sell with a fair profit with the upset price of the Company, partly on account of the greater charges of the Company's freight and partly because the teas of the private merchants would be sold a year sooner and thus have a year less of interest.

I do not apprehend that, as it is by coffee, the consumption of which is more than trebled within these few years and now amounts to 16½ millions of pounds, the price of tea is likely to rise, so that the monopoly would appear to have ceased to be a source of primary assistance to India.

Your Lordship's minutes showing the extent of reduction you think necessary in order to place the finances of India on a safe footing has been printed for the two committees. I thought it right that they should see how correctly you viewed the financial position of the country you govern, and how zealously you were determined to work for its improvement.

The subject of a lately received suggestion of your government that the rate at which the interest of certain loans is remitted to England during the pleasure of the court, should be reduced, had been for some time under our consideration. It had first been proposed to take away the option of payment in England altogether, then to reduce the rate of exchange to some point near, but rather above the market rate in order to keep the payment of the remittance out of the hands of the agency houses. However, both these plans had been suffered to rest from the apprehension that it would at the moment be undesirable to do anything which could increase the discontent in India. I think it is now almost a year since the first plan was proposed, and about three or four months since the last was laid aside. The receipt of your suggestion has revived the subject. The probability is that you will soon be informed that the option of receiving payment of the interest of those loans in England is taken away altogether. Of course, this must remain secret till the letter is received carrying the public information. If you should obtain evidence of Mr. Rickett's corruption I hope you will send it over in such a form as to enable us to proceed against him here. What we now have is unusable.

202. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck*

India Board, London. 22 May 1830

My dear Lord,

I have explained to Captain Everest[1] who proceeds to India on the 5th of June as surveyor-general, the general nature of the information I am anxious to obtain with regard to the Indus and the country of Sind, the rivers of the Punjab and the roads leading from the Indus to Afghanistan. I have likewise intimated to him that instructions will be sent out directing the survey of the line of the ancient canal which connected the Sutlej and the Jumna with the view of ascertaining whether we cannot re-establish the water communications which existed in former times between the Sutlej and the Jumna. I have put him generally in possession of the military and commercial objects we have in view. I think you will find him a very zealous and I believe he is an able man.

I am afraid as his five years expire on the 12th November and he does not sail till the 5th of June he may be on hand for a time—however, I hope he will be fortunate enough to have a good passage, and at any rate that you will somehow or other manage that no technicalities shall postpone the commencement of his useful service.

203. *R. Campbell to Bentinck*

India House, London. 27 May 1830

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 19th & 21st December with a copy of the minute recorded by your Lordship when proposing the removal of one of the assistants to the envoy in Persia for which I beg to offer my best thanks. I am too well acquainted with the motives which influence your Lordship's conduct not to be convinced that on this as on all occasions they have reference solely to the public good, no matter who the person might be to benefit by the measure adopted by your Lordship. I am unacquainted with the circumstances which led to the difference between the envoy and his first assistant, and only know the fact as stated in Sir John Macdonald's letter to your Lordship of the 21st July last. Whatever the causes of that difference may have been, it is clear that the public interests could not be promoted by a forced union of men whose minds appear to have been so much estranged, and consequently that it became necessary to remove either one or t'other. Your Lordship will see with pleasure by the despatch from the court that they duly appreciate the merits and services of Sir Henry Willock, with reference to the two matters mentioned in the latter part of your Lordship's letter

202. [1] Later Sir George Everest, after whom the highest mountain in the Himalayas was named. 1830 surveyor-general of India.

of the 19th December, viz. the temporary removal of the government and the grant of leases to Europeans. I would beg leave on the first of these propositions to observe, that independently of the legal objection, doubts were entertained whether the contemplated advantages of the course intended to be pursued would have equalled the inconvenience and embarrassment which it was believed would result from the withdrawal, even temporarily, of the chief authority from the lower provinces. It was also thought that to effect much good a mere ambulatory inspection would hardly have sufficed, it might have afforded opportunity in the line of its route for the redress of individual grievances, but would probably not have furnished means of acquiring better information of what might conduce to the general interests that ought to be obtained from the reports of intelligent functionaries resident in the provinces intended to be visited; it would have been impossible for the government to see all, and to draw general conclusions from transient views or partial inspections might, it was apprehended, produce more evil than good. The expense too in the present state of our finances was a consideration and some were apprehensive, tho' I did not think with much reason, that the members of the government might be exposed to personal risk in a remote corner surrounded by a turbulent population, and not far removed from the dominions of an active and enterprising chief. It was in short presumed that there was no benefit which could result from the *temporary* removal of the government that might not be equally accomplished by your Lordship attended by a few able practical men. With respect to the grant of leases to Europeans involving as it seems to do the question of settlement, and ultimately of colonization, I need not observe to your Lordship that it is a subject upon which the sentiments of some of the ablest men, and of those most anxious to promote the welfare of India have very much differed; for my own part I have always been friendly to the measure of permitting respectable Europeans, under certain restrictions to resort to India, being satisfied that their skill, enterprise and industry would facilitate and expedite the development of the resources of that country; but for this purpose it does not seem necessary to allow them to acquire such proprietory rights as would probably not only lead themselves, but render them the means, however unintentionally, of seducing others into error; for if by the resort of Europeans as settlers to India, by the application of their superior intelligence, and by competition with each other, produce of whatsoever kind, destined for exportation, should, as it unquestionably would, be reduced to its level of value, the encouragement for increased production would necessarily cease, and those who had left their own country in the expectation of turning their skill and industry to profitable account would find themselves reduced to the necessity of labouring in an uncongenial climate for a bare subsistence, in the endeavour to obtain which considering their wants and habits they would most likely fail when brought into competition with the simple and frugal native. The

introduction therefore of the inferior class of Europeans to any extent beyond what might be required as overseers or assistants I would see with great regret, believing that it would end in disappointment and even ruin to themselves, and in serious evil to the natives, whose morals instead of being improved would, I think, be deteriorated by the association, the British character be compromised and the moral influence which has hitherto so powerfully aided us in the government of India be destroyed. Beside these considerations it is to be apprehended that the introduction of Europeans in large numbers would greatly impede if not, altogether prevent, what seems acknowledged on all hands to be our duty as well as our policy, the bringing forward natives to share in the various departments of the administration and to participate in the honours and emoluments of office. The introduction of Europeans appears to me incompatible with these views; the identity of religion, language, manners and habits, a natural leaning towards our countrymen, and the solicitations of friends would almost always obtain for them a preference over the natives, who would see in every fresh importation new means of perpetuating their exclusion, and would thus be deprived of all motive for endeavouring to qualify themselves for public employment.

Your Lordship will perceive by the despatches from the court that they entertain a just sense of your Lordship's endeavours to reduce the public expenditure; it is an unpopular but a most necessary work. The president of the India board seems disposed to order the immediate abolition of the college at Calcutta, the court on the contrary are inclined to make a further trial of it on the plan of management suggested by your Lordship. The late commander-in-chief was, I learn, much dissatisfied with the reception he met at this house. He has been furnished at his own request with a copy of the letter to Bengal of the 31st March censuring his conduct.

204. *Bengal government to the court of directors on European settlement*

Fort William. 1 June 1830

1. Our last despatch in this department was dated the 18th ultimo.

2. In the 12th paragraph of our letter of the 8th September 1829, we informed your honourable court that the magistrates and joint magistrates throughout the provinces had been called upon to furnish, in a prescribed form, the details necessary to enable us to prepare the special report of British subjects and other Europeans residing in the interior, or holding lands or factories for the cultivation or manufacture of indigo, required in the 23rd paragraph of your honourable court's letter dated the 26th August 1828.

3. The information was called for on the date noted in the margin;

but up to the month of December the returns had been only partially rendered; and, in pursuance of the governor-general's minute, recorded on the 16th of that month, further information was called for from the local officers, and they, as well as the commissioners of circuit and the nizamat adalat, were required to state their opinion, whether it is necessary, for the effectual subjection of the indigo planters and their servants to the control of law, that further legislative provisions should be made in addition to those which already exist.

. . . . .

6. It will afford satisfaction to your honourable court to learn from those documents, that the local officers generally entertain a very favourable opinion of the character of the European planters. They are represented as kind in their treatment of the natives around them; and, with few exceptions, the local officers do not consider any new enactments necessary for their subjection to the control of law.

7. The court of nizamat adalat observe, that the only measures calculated, in the judgment of the court, to secure the proposed object, would be either to enhance the powers conferred on the justices of the peace by section 105, of the 53d Geo. 3, c. 155, or to make it lawful for the government to appoint commissioners for the trial of British subjects charged with affrays, from time to time as occasions may arise for such proceedings. The court are, however, by no means prepared to advocate the expediency or necessity of either of those measures. The instances which have been brought to the notice of this court, in which British subjects have been personally implicated in cases of affray of serious nature, have been rare. For the suppression of minor offences of this description, the magistrate, in his capacity of justice of the peace, is already armed with sufficient powers, while the establishment of any anomalous jurisdiction, authorized to inflict heavy penalties, without the intervention of trial by jury, would obviously be regarded with extreme jealousy, and be attended with many inconveniences.

8. Mr. Ross is of opinion, that British subjects residing out of Calcutta should be rendered amenable to the criminal laws of the country enacted by the government, in common with the natives. He thinks, that in the very few instances that would occur of Europeans being brought to trial, a jury, composed half of natives and half of Europeans or descendants of Europeans, might even now be assembled; and that, were Europeans freely permitted to settle in the country, any difficulty in assembling a jury so composed that might at first be experienced, would soon cease to exist. The subject has engaged our serious attention, and we hope to be able to submit, in a very short time, the result of our deliberations, in concurrence with the judges of the supreme court, upon this very important question.

205. *William Astell to Bentinck.* Private

London. 3 June 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 8 October 1830

My dear Lord,

The despatch of China ships with troops affords me an opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's letters to me of the 20 September and the 1st and 5th November; and of your letter to Mr. Loch of the 5 December which, having quitted the chair, he placed in my hands.

It has been to me, as I am sure it has to the court at large, a source of much satisfaction to find that the result of the enquiries instituted by you with respect to the practicability and safety of suppressing 'suttee' enabled you to give effect to the wishes so generally felt and expressed for the accomplishment of that object; and I trust that the expectation your Lordship entertains of the absence of all danger, and of a due estimate on the part of the natives of the motives by which the government has been actuated, will be amply realized. Indeed if the reports in the public prints are to be relied on, your Lordship has already received from a large body of the native inhabitants of Calcutta, a most gratifying proof of the sense which they entertain of the decision of government upon this subject.

Your Lordship's forcible representation of the evils resulting from the nature of our subsidiary engagements, clearly pointed out the necessity of attempting a reform of the system which I shall be much pleased to learn has been effectual.

In my letter to your Lordship of January last I intimated my anticipation of the entire approval by the court of your Lordship's conduct in relation to the half-batta question. A perusal of the court's despatches of the 31 March 1830 will I hope have convinced you of the correctness of my anticipations. I can assure your Lordship that the approbation of the court was no mere form of words; and could you have been present at our discussions you would have no cause to regret the firmness and perseverence with which you maintained the enforcement of the court's orders. There is one point connected with this subject to which, although unnoticed in the court's despatches, I cannot avoid alluding—viz. the dangerous appeals, which were circulated by means of the India newspapers, to the excited feelings of the army. Your Lordship is I perceive no advocate for restrictions upon the press; but I must none the less give it as my opinion that too great latitude to its freedom has in this case been allowed, and express my conviction that some steps might and ought to have been taken to control it. I am, generally speaking, a friend to free discussion; but I cannot divest myself of the apprehension that if such unbounded licentiousness (I can designate it by no other term so appropriate) be continued to be permitted, great embarrassment, if not danger, to our government will be the consequence. Upon the subject of the connection of the Company's

servants with the press, we shall probably see it proper shortly to address your government.

How lamentably have your Lordship's predictions respecting Mr. Ricketts been fulfilled! And how disgraceful are the transactions which have been disclosed in the course of the investigation into the conduct of Sir E. Colebrooke! The court's despatch of March last which acknowledged the receipt of a part of your proceedings in the case of Sir E. Colebrooke will prove our desire to uphold the purity and integrity of our service; and individually I have no hesitation in saying that the further documents recently arrived fully confirm the propriety of the decision to which you finally came.

I must request your Lordship's particular attention to the court's letter in the territorial finance department, dated the 19 ulto. containing a review of the finances of India for 1826/7, and of the regular estimate for 1827/8: and in connection therewith, to their letter of the 10th March last respecting the great increase in the civil charges. These despatches will I think, be of great service to you in the task of 'revision and retrenchment', in which you are engaged; and will convince you of the extreme anxiety which is felt here in regard to the state of our finances. The consignment of bullion (all of which I hope is now on its way hither) from India will materially assist us in meeting the demands upon the home treasury. In fact I hardly know how we could get on without it.

Several questions of vast importance connected with our Indian administration are either now under consideration or must shortly come under our review. The Calcutta college, the changes in the revenue and judicial system, the retiring scheme for the Company's officers, the condition of the half-castes, etc., but with respect to them I must refer your Lordship generally to the court's despatches.

P.S. I have of course been favoured with a visit from Lord Combermere, and at his Lordship's request I have acquainted him with the sentiments of the court on the half-batta question, as conveyed in their despatch of the 31 March. Lord Combermere expresses much surprise at the view taken here of his conduct.

I feel it proper to apprise your Lordship that the reception which he has met with must have been anything but satisfactory to him; and a complete change must have taken place in the opinions entertained by the authorities at the other end of the town, if his reception there has been more cordial than with us.

206. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Draft

Calcutta. 4 June 1830

The loss of poor Stirling.

Lord Dalhousie's health not improving. Very much affected by the storm—fresh loss of blood. I hear he talks of England but altho' this would be his best plan, I do not think he will leave his post if he can help it. Even in his present inefficient state he is far better than any substitute that we should otherwise have. All this is very unfortunate, but there is no remedy for this evil.

We have been obliged to adopt a measure in direct disobedience to the court's order for the relief of the houses of agency, which have been threatened with general ruin. It includes both European and native consequent upon the failure of Palmer's house. Instead of abating, alarm after the first shock had passed has been continually increasing, and the unanimous opinion of the council has been that the interference of government has been indispensable to save the whole commercial capital from entire destruction. Nobody can object more strongly to this measure on principle than myself, and I concur in all the reasons advanced by the court in support of their orders. But there existed a great and overwhelming necessity which in my judgment could not have been disregarded without the sacrifice of the best interests of India. Such is my honest opinion formed upon the most careful and deliberate consideration of the whole subject.

But at Bombay we have still to deplore an enormous deficit and which has greatly disappointed my hopes of a favourable financial result for 1830/1.

Local finance committee going on well—Have recommended great reductions at the other presidencies, but I do not feel authorised in compelling the other governments to carry into effect the recommendations of the committee, when they may not approve, altho' we may entertain a different opinion. I feel that we should be exceeding the control which tho' sanctioned by law, it has not been the work of the court nor indeed the custom that the supreme government should exercise over the other presidencies. . . .

207. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough*

Calcutta. 10 June 1830

My dear Lord,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 2nd January which I received on the 11th of last month.

I regret extremely the disappointment as well as the delay, that may have taken place, in consequence of the non-arrival of the report of the finance committee. This paper was not sent in to government till some

months after it had been expected, and long after the time when I had supposed that a decision would have been made upon the half-batta question in England. There had been much disagreement in the committee, which had led to a continuance of the agitation that had so long and so unhappily prevailed in the army at large. The report was not satisfactory, and did not offer that impartial and unprejudiced view of the subject, upon which a decision regarding points so important, could have been confidently formed. The consideration of the report was therefore suspended for the present. The expectation also of direct intercourse with the principal officers in command of stations and with the greater part of the army, during the tour I then projected, made me anxious to defer my own opinion till I could have the opportunity of forming it upon these more certain data. All these hopes and many others were frustrated by the orders countermanding the removal of the government. It was impossible for me under the then existing circumstances to separate myself from the headquarters of the army. In the meantime, tho' the question of the relative condition of the three armies remains and must remain for some time longer undecided, yet other subjects belonging to the discussion of a finance committee have not been neglected. I have been desirous of submitting my sentiments upon the whole subject, pay, constitution and distribution of the army of India, which in my judgment is ill adapted to present circumstances: but to do this, I require more information than I at present possess, but I hope to make this report so as to reach you long before the next session of parliament.

I enclose a memorandum showing the probable result of the sketch estimate for 1830/1. It is more favourable than similar statements for former years, but still there is much remaining to be done. To the best of my belief, this calculation is under-rated. There cannot be a better proof of the impossibility of maintaining the Malwa opium system, than the fact, that (notwithstanding the odious interference of our value) no less than 9000 chests have been smuggled, while the Company's *exclusive* and *entire possession* of the whole amounts only to 3500 chests.

Some disturbance is apprehended in Sylhet from Sing who is suspected of having instigated the murder of the raja of Cachar, with a view to the possession of his country. This would be an atrocious act, which we could not allow to pass with impunity. But neither the act, nor the intention have been as yet proved, and may, I trust, turn out to be unfounded. We have requested Mr. Scott to take cognizance of the affair and it cannot be in better hands.

208. *Bentinck to W. Astell.* Private

Calcutta. 10 June 1830

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 18th January reached me on the 28th May per the *Nance*. It had been expected with much anxiety and I need not say how much I am gratified by your approbation and encouraged by your promise of support. It has served as some compensation for the painful feeling that the discharge of my duty had occasioned, but I will not dwell upon the past nor consume your or my own valuable time with useless lamentations over the past.

I am very anxious for the decision of the court on the half-batta question. I regret the disappointment you will have felt in never having received the report of the finance committee. You will have seen in one of my letters of September, that this committee had not achieved my expectations. Of its failure I have before stated the cause and need not repeat it. It was very long before their opinion upon the points submitted was given in. The report was exceedingly voluminous and altogether it was so unsatisfactory in its character and was composed so much in a party spirit, unconscionably so, and had at the same time added so much to the existing irritation, that it was thought better to postpone for a time the consideration of it. Without other information and advice, I could not confidently give an opinion upon the great questions at issue. In my projected tour then immediately about to take place, I hoped to have gained a knowledge of the real state of the army and of all that bore upon this particular question, by personal communication with all the principal officers. This plan was not realised and so much time had already been lost that I conceived this paper to be no longer required for the decision which I conceived must already have taken place on the half-batta question. But I am much to blame, for not having at the time apprised you of these circumstances. Much of the business of the military finance committee has been now performed by my military secretary under my own immediate directions and the other branches of the subject will be taken up, . . .

Lord Dalhousie's state makes no progress. I doubt very much his tiding on to the cold weather unless he has a change of climate to which he is much advised. He is in a very unsatisfactory state; he will probably end in going to Penang. . . .

All quiet in India. Impossibility of maintaining the opium system in Malwa. Of 12,500 chests exported only 3,500 belonged to the Company —the rest smuggled.

Extraordinary season.

Loss of poor Stirling.

209. *Major-General Sir S. F. Whittingham*[1] *to Bentinck.*
Extract

Mussooree. 16 June 1830

Nothing in my opinion, would so powerfully tend to prevent the increase of the pension list as far as concerns H.M. troops in India, as grants of land to soldiers in these hills in lieu of pension.

The expense of transporting soldiers to Europe from India, for mere change of air, is very great, and necessarily acts as a check to a remedy which if applied in time, might save many a good man from death, or from becoming a burden to the country! Fortunately a substitute has been found which with proper support, offers to the convalescent soldier, the advantages of a mild and salubrious climate at an expense almost below consideration. The convalescent depot at Landour has now been submitted to trial for three successive seasons, and in most of the proper diseases of India, promises to be unmingled advantage, while to the mere sufferer from languor and debility, it ensures the full vigour and energy of the European constitutions. The scale of trial has been hitherto too confined to do much good to the European army in general; but were its benefits more extended and its advantages systematically arranged the necessity of sending soldiers to Europe for change of climate, would be totally superceded. I have never seen a finer or better climate. We are now in the hottest season of the year, yet the thermometer never rises above 70° and I sleep under two blankets.

Between the ranges of Landour and Mussooree about half way before you come to the valley of the Dhoon, there is sufficient space of cultivable ground to furnish many cottagers with a home, and a small piece of land.

On the eastern and western side of Landour, at Dumoultree, or Budaragh, cottages might be carried to any extent, and, eligible situations pointed out as far as water and climate are concerned, and it would be easy to trace and execute a good and practicable road from the Dhoon Dhera.

On the lower falls of the Mussooree range there are many eligible situations for settlers.

The settlers on these hills should not however, in general, be old and worn out men; but discharged soldiers still equal to mental and bodily exertion. They would find occupation in the cultivation of the lands granted to them, and in breeding and rearing poultry of all kinds, which would meet a ready and profitable market at Mussooree and Landour. Pigs also would yield a good return, and dairies would be equally useful to the public and advantageous to the farmer. By applying themselves to horticulture they would render a benefit to society

209. [1] Whittingham, Sir Samuel, 1772–1841. Q.M.G. India 1821–5. Commanding officer, Meerut and Cawnpore divisions of the army. Military secretary to Bentinck 1833–5. C.-in-C Madras 1840.

and ensure profit to themselves, and potatoes might be cultivated to any extent. Hay also might be made at the proper season, in considerable quantity, and well behaved Europeans might hope to be taken into the service of gentlemen having estates on the hills, as overseers.

The line between Rangepoor and Dehra in the valley, is considered healthy, and by no means inimical to European constitutions. Rangepoor is held to be a very healthy situation, perhaps preferable to most in the Dhoon. The water from spring wells is remarkably good.

There is a low range of hills running from Rangepoor into the Dhoon, which would afford accommodation to many families of settlers without incommoding the natives or cultivators in any way.

An inn might be established at Rangepoor to the great accommodation of travellers and the profit of the innkeeper.

A school for the education of the children of the settlers might be instituted at little expense, and the beneficial results cannot be doubted.

Indeed all this part of the country is peculiarly adapted to colonization by British soldiers; but this most desirable object should be immediately connected with that of preventing the increase of the pension list, at least as far as India is concerned, by substituting a grant of land in lieu of pension, to such invalids as might be deemed not entirely beyond labour, altho' for medical reasons, considered unfit for military service.

210. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

London. 17 June 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 8 October 1830

. . . The whole of your Lordship's proceedings as to the Calcutta college have been under review and the promptitude and earnestness with which the matter has been taken up by your Lordship is fully admitted. It appears to be the determination, weighing all the points, that the college shall *be abolished*, the young men to be attached to some experienced servants, and reports are to be made of their progress in the languages. The despatch is in preparation. . . .

211. *Minute on hill stations*

17 June 1830

The reports of Captain Lloyd, Captain Herbert and Mr. Grant unanimously concurring in representing Darjeeling to be peculiarly qualified for a sanatorium for the lower provinces, as originally suggested by Mr. Grant, the commercial resident at Malda, it seems unnecessary to advance any other reason for carrying the measure into

effect, than the great saving of European life and the consequent saving of expense that will accrue both to individuals and to the state.

The immediate outlay of money that this measure might require would be the making a convenient communication to the proposed site of the sanatorium, and the creating a barrack for the accommodation of a certain number of European invalids, who would also afford protection, if it should be wanting, to the residents.

If the council approve the proposition, the first step to be taken is to obtain the consent of the Sikkim raja, to whom this tract was given out of the conquest from the Gurkhas, to the establishment. It is impossible to say what may be the feelings of a semi-barbarian like the Sikkim raja upon a measure which shall bring the power of the British government in closer conjunction with the seat of his authority. This first impression will probably be that of fear, lest we should be going there either to punish the past, or to prevent the future cruel abuse of power, of which he is said to have been guilty. On the other hand he may possibly have more confidence in us than in the Gurkhas, his ancient enemies, and may possibly be glad to have an intermediate post between his and the Gurkha territories, which may also protect him against his own subjects who have become refugees in the Gurkha dominions. The point however is to ascertain exactly what his disposition and sentiments may be upon this question, and I would therefore recommend, that Mr. Smith, the judge and magistrate of Rangpur may be directed to communicate to the Sikkim raja the desire of the British government to establish a sanatorium at Darjeeling and if the raja is willing to give his consent, to ascertain the terms upon which the arrangement would be most satisfactory. Mr. Smith should be informed, that the re-transfer of so much of the territory as may be required for the purpose to the direct authority of the British government would be by far the most eligible, and a compensation in money the most convenient to us in every respect.

Arrangement must be made in the judicial department for providing for the execution of Mr. Smith's duties during his occasional absence upon the proposed mission.

212. *Robert Campbell to Lord Ellenborough*[1]

India House, London. 21 June 1830

Though we were aware that the legislature has not formally vested the secret committee with the right of remonstrating against instructions to the Indian governments prepared by the commissioners for

212. [1] A copy of this letter was also sent to Bentinck. Ellenborough urged the need for extensive British interference and control in the internal affairs of the Indian states, contrary to the attitude of the East India directors, and of Bentinck. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 268–74.

the affairs of India, and are aware of your Lordship's objections, as expressed in conversation, and by letter, against receiving *officially* the representation of what appears to us exceptionable in the draft of the secret letter transmitted from the board on the 9th of June, we think it due to the freedom, which we wish should characterize our communications with, and to our respect for, your Lordship, to make you acquainted, beforehand, with the reasons, which will probably induce us to leave it upon record that we only sign the letter ministerially, and are no parties to some of the sentiments which it conveys. Though this produced some delay it is the less to be regretted, as no opportunity for transmitting this, and the subsequent letter of the 19th June to India has occurred since the transmission of the letter to the India House.

The act of the Bengal government, to which the drafts, above alluded to, refer, consists of two parts;—1st relieving the raja of Nagpur from the control which the British government has exercised over a part of his dominions; and 2nd taking from him, in return, an annual payment of eight lakhs of rupees.

The last mentioned part of this transaction is no doubt, liable to a diversity of opinion, and we do not think it necessary, at present, to enter upon the question, which if we had been previously apprised of the measure, we should have approved of this part of it or not.

With respect, however, to the part first mentioned, namely receding from control over a native government, as far as is consistent with the security of our own government, this has been long recognized by the authorities at home, as our true policy, in respect to every native government still existing in India, and has been enjoined upon the Indian government by unvarying instructions, both public and secret, for a series of years. We confess, that we are so far from concurring in a condemnation of this course of policy, that we concur with your predecessors and ours, in approving it, and think it is our duty to do all that lies in our power to prevent it from being altered.

We also think it incumbent upon us to [illegible]te, that, so far as the language of the draft conveys a censure of the Bengal government for withdrawing its control from the government of the raja, we are unable to adopt it; because we think that our governments in India are bound, in pursuance of the instructions which they have received, to omit no opportunity of adopting measures of this nature, whenever they think it can be done with safety.

There is still another consideration which we beg leave to submit to your Lordship, and which pressed upon our minds as a matter of great weight: that when any important course of policy deliberately adopted, and long pursued is to be changed, it ought to be done with great deliberation, and with a full communication of the grounds upon which the change is adopted, and that in the deliberation upon such a change in the policy of the Indian governments, the court of directors ought to be parties. It appears to us, that this is clearly the intention

of the legislature, and that they are divested of their legitimate share in the government of India, if this is denied them.

This is a very summary indication of the reasons which render us averse to the signing of such a letter as that, the draft of which you have forwarded to us. It appears to us to be sufficient in the meantime to apprise your Lordship generally with the state of our sentiments; and a more detailed exposition can be made if it should hereafter appear to be necessary.

213. *Bentinck's minute on steam navigation*

21 June 1830

It will be evident to any person who examines with attention the proceedings of this government for the past two years, connected with river steam navigation, that the branch of the subject in respect to which our information is most defective, and yet which meets us in every turn, and has hitherto presented most obstructions to the success of our endeavours to introduce this grand invention upon the rivers of India, is the method of adapting the steam power with most advantage. We possess but few engines, and these are mostly of the same or nearly the same kind; they are all in full employ in vessels or in other works, and we can make no experiments with them without losing their service in the interval. When a point has been established in respect of the navigations, such for instance, as the necessity of reducing the draught of the vessels used in the upper navigation to a maximum of two feet, we have only the weight of our present engines to assume in calculating the necessary displacement and consequent dimensions of the vessel to be built. It is now more than a year since the marine board were directed to procure from Captain Forbes, our superintendent of steam engines, and the best officer acquainted with these machines in the country, a descriptive indent of several to be written for from England for purposes of river navigation. Such an indent has never been furnished, and there is no blame to Captain Forbes that it has not; for, imperfectly acquainted as he must be with the progress of home improvements in this particular branch, with his information necessarily six months in arrear, he cannot ascertain that the engines he might describe would be sure to be the best that could be put to hand. An experiment is making to ascertain whether one engine may not suffice. Upon the result of this much will of course depend; but it may only suggest further experiments, and will still probably leave much more to be done before we shall be able to come to any satisfactory determination as to the best means of attaining the end we have in view.

Fortunately the voyages that have been made, and the information accumulated in them, have given us a distinct perception of the end to

be aimed at. We know that we require manageable vessels of considerable power of engine, and consequent velocity, but not drawing more than two feet water for the maximum. It is my wish to combine with our efforts to attain this object, by means to be employed here, a reference to the ingenuity and science of Europe, as applied daily to the improvement of steam engines. I do not think it would be sufficient to state our wants in correspondence and reports, to be submitted through the court of directors, to scientific machinists and engineers in England, but being well aware that much will be gained even by this, I have desired that the result of the experiments made, and an abstract of all that has been done hitherto in connexion with this subject, shall be collected and put together in a shape to be printed and circulated, in order that the consideration of others may be invited to a matter to which I attach so much importance, and that opinions may be gathered upon it in all quarters.

For our particular purpose, I think it will be necessary, in addition to taking those steps to draw attention to the subject, that some one intimately acquainted with its details should be induced to proceed to England, and put himself in communication with the scientific men that may be selected or indicated by the court of directors as most worthy of their confidence, in order that if any points should be omitted, or imperfectly explained in the statements made from hence, the requisite information may be supplied on the spot, and by keeping up a correspondence with those employed on the scheme in India, at the same time that he hold a constant intercourse with the engineers at home, this officer may be the means of securing the most perfect unanimity of plan and of execution in whatever may be attempted.

For these reasons I am induced to propose that Captain Johnstone be directed to proceed to England to superintend and assist, under the instructions of course of the court of directors, the preparation of steam engines, and the plans of vessels to carry them, adapted to river navigation in this country.

214. *Robert Campbell to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

East India House, London. 24 June 1830
Recd. Rajmahal. 24 October 1830

My Lord,

Lest your Lordship should suppose that the sentiments expressed in the despatch of the 9 instant from the secret committee to your Lordship in council are those of the persons who signed that despatch, I beg leave to enclose a copy of a letter which the chairman and myself thought it right to address to the president of the India board, but which has not induced any change in the notions (I think erroneous) that he entertains on the subject of the treaty concluded by your

Lordship with the raja of Nagpur. In regard to the ancient tribute of eight lakhs to be paid by that state, my own opinion entirely coincides with that expressed by your Lordship in your remark of the 15th November last, others however think differently. I hope and believe that the present arrangement will conduce to the welfare of the people of Berar, and to the careful and proper independence of the Bhonsla, without either compromising our supremacy or leading to any of the evils anticipated in the secret despatch.

215. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Draft

Calcutta. 28 June 1830

My dear Lord,

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 26th September enclosing the Duke of Wellington's upon the line of operations to be taken in any public war with Ava. There can be no doubt of the perfect correctness of these opinions. The only question may be as to the practicability of making a road through the jungles between Chittagong and Arakan which are intersected by numerous inlets from the sea and which are [*illeg.*] deadly pestilential, but in the cold season an officer of the Q.M.G's. department will be sent to report upon this question as upon the whole of the frontier from Arakan to Sylhet.

Sir Edward Owen has been directed by the admiralty to report upon the best station in the bay of Bengal including Ceylon for a naval dockyard. From the surveys and the reports of the officer directed to examine the harbour, he is very much disposed at present to give preference to the island of Ramree on the Arakan coast. There is an excellent harbour, accessible in both monsoons, and completely sheltered. As a dockyard and arsenal, it can easily command any supply of shipwrights, or artificers and labourers from Calcutta; as a naval position, it is better suited than any other for the protection of our commerce and of our possessions to the eastward and would afford peculiar advantages in a war with Ava; as a military post, it could obtain immediate aid and to any extent from Bengal. It is also a convenience, that the supreme government would have the means of daily communication with the officer who would be in command. Any arrangement by which the intercourse between the supreme government and the principal naval authority could be facilitated, would tend in my opinion very much to the benefit of the public service.

216. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 29 June 1830
Recd. 24 October 1830

. . . All that in the *secret despatch* will be reaching your Lordship on the subject of the Nagpur treaty, the modified arrangements of which we received in the secret department about a fortnight since. The chairs do not agree in opinion or views with Lord Ellenborough. And in truth I think nothing is wanting but a fair opportunity to get rid of him. His haste and indiscretion counterbalance all his talents which are considerable. Sufficient has been shewn publicly of his want of judgment and I do hear that it has led to some very inconvenient communications. . . .

217. *Bentinck to Revd. Jolliffe.* Copy

Calcutta. 1 July 1830
Recd. London. 2 November 1830

Dear Sir,

It is at a very late hour that I only now thank you for your letter of the 16th March 1829, upon the subject of a steam communication between India and England and recommending by preference the entire sea route by the Cape of Good Hope. The subject is now under much discussion in India and at a late meeting held in Calcutta, it has been determined to enter into a new subscription for the purpose of promoting the plan to which you give the preference, and to aid Mr. Waghorn, a very respectable and trustworthy person and perfectly conversant with his profession, in carrying this measure into effect.

As I am well aware how active and patriotic a part both you and my excellent friend Sir Edward Bankes have taken in this and all the great national works under execution for some years past, I will take the liberty of giving you my opinion upon this question.

In the first place, if there was to be only one route left to our option, I should certainly prefer that by the Red Sea, as being the shortest, the quickest, and the least liable to accidents.

But I am of opinion that considering the great importance of India to England, and its great resources, both these routes ought to have its steam communication, that by the Cape, at present, for letters only, that by the Red Sea, for letters and passengers. I mean that the vessels going by the Cape should be post office packets, built for despatch and all their tunnage exclusively allotted to coals. Hereafter, when, as may be reasonably expected, ingenuity will discover a means of obtaining the same power with a much smaller proportion of coal, then vessels may be constructed of sufficient size to offer the same accommodation,

as the regular traders and your large class of steamers; and then I have no doubt that passengers would for the greater part, prefer the route by the Cape, by which they would avoid the inconvenience of a transhipment, of a land journey, of perhaps the plague, of the quarantine, and of other doubtful contingencies.

As things are at present, I am sure the public in general will prefer the Red Sea, because the Bombay government will sooner or later provide good and efficient steamers; and all those who have gone by this route, speak lightly of the difficulties. It is much to be regretted that the *Hugh Lindsay*, built for this especial purpose, turns out to have been constructed upon some erroneous principles, so that she cannot carry a sufficiency of coal without the sacrifice of all accommodation, and without a great diminution of the speed which such powerful engines ought to produce.

With respect to the expense of the two routes, that by the Cape must be borne by the post office, and the excess of expense, not covered by the charged postage, to be carried to the account of the Indian government, a vessel sailing every six weeks or two months from Europe would sufficiently answer every purpose.

On the Red Sea route, the communication might be more frequent, and would be much less costly as it would be performed by two sets of steamers, European and Indian, and those would be ample from the side of India. I should think the European side might be well undertaken by private adventure, but in India, this, like every other great expensive undertaking, with the present limited amount of disposable capital, must be at the charge of the Indian government. A steamer might sail every month from Bombay, or perhaps Cannanore, and three steamers and perhaps a fourth, would be quite sufficient to ensure the constant and punctual arrival of the vessel at Cosseerar, Suez, so as to prevent disappointment and delay to the persons exchanging vessels in the further prosecution of their voyage.

I have now given you my sentiments at length upon this very interesting subject and if it should be in any way useful in enabling you to advise better means by the use of steam to facilitate the intercourse between the two countries, you will in so doing perform a great public service.

I beg to be most kindly remembered to Sir Edward.

218. *Colonel J. Young*[1] *to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 4 July 1830

My Lord,

. . . I wish therefore to see neither Ounsby's nor Martyn's here. I wish to see as many wards or districts as possible, that poor creatures

218. [1] Member of an agency house in Calcutta who appears to have known Bentinck when on service in Sicily. Young held progressive, pro-Indian and utilitarian views.

may have protection and justice brought near their doors, and not lose a day or two or three days' value of labour (their only property) while besieging the office of a single police officer, and put off as they are from day to day. I wish to see those wards under the control and daily visitation of a chef de police who shall be [unable] to do harm, having no peculiar command or charge, and nothing to do but to check subordinates, . . . In Paris as in London the district system is preferred.

If your Lordship will choose hardworking, humble, needy men to fill the subordinate ward magistracies, rising on a scale of *fair* salary, and require them to pass an examination in Hindustani and Bengali within 3 months *after* their appointment, you will have fitting instruments; if not, not.

I trust you will not lose sight of the scheme, for it is your own, of putting in one or two native gents and one or two Anglo-Indians in the commission of the peace as non-stipendiary or honorary magistrates with some others. They would at all times have the privilege of entering and sitting down with any stipendiary magistrate, and if it were only to forward the great object of accustoming them to self-respect and self-government, periodical sessions or meetings in full bench should be held, at which those men should attend and vote, whether for the nomination of a petty functionary, or for deciding house tax appeals, etc.

I think if your Lordship wishes to reward infinite merit in one of the few specimens we have of an honest and thoroughly disinterested careerist, you would like to mark the opinion of the government by making the excellent Mr. David Hare an honorary magistrate. He is a grand juror therefore qualified.

Ram Mohan Roy is of course the first to be thought of for the representative (in our municipality) of the natives. It would *perhaps* (only perhaps) not be right to appoint that pre-eminently *English* babu, Dwarkanath Tagore, because he is in public employment already, and a salt officer.

To satisfy the party who hate European interlopers and love burning of ladies, it will be expedient to put in one of the bigot party to counterbalance liberalism in religion and politics. Rada Kant Deb perhaps (the litterateur) would be a fit person. Neither he nor Ram Mohan Roy are persons following any vocation, but live on their fortunes. It is no easy matter to find such men in this place, possessing at the same time knowledge and *English* knowledge in particular.

Still more difficult is it to find these requisite qualifications among the Indo-British race in their present state of advancement as to property, there is not one to put in comparison with the worthy and enlightened James Kyd.

I mention the names of these various persons because your Lordship seemed to wish me to do so.

I have scarcely ever ceased to ruminate on some things which fell from your Lordship on Saturday. One in particular both surprised and

grieved me. It was the very contemptible opinion you expressed of the natives as munsifs or sadar amins. Allow me to say that I am thoroughly suaded it rests wholly with ourselves, or rather with your Lordship, to have a 'supply' of that article like every other exactly equal to the 'demand' in quality as well as quantity.

Your Lordship's frank avowal of your conversion from ancient and cherished opinions touching the admission of Europeans and our taking some root in the country, I heard with the most sincere pleasure, and I offer my humble mite of praise, which will have some value in your eyes, because I have not concealed from your Lordship how much I venture to differ from you in many others of your opinions. Would to God that you were not still of the Munro sect in Indian political economy! Whether I am right or wrong, I am at least most honestly and thoroughly of opinion that the doctrines of that sect are incompatible with the prosperity and advancement of any country; and in this I include that variety of the genus, Munro, which is professed and sophistically and lengthily vindicated by my friend Holt Mackenzie, the arch mystificator who has contrived to persuade so many successive administrations in India, that the *two* questions 'how much will you take from the land'? and 'from *whom* will you take what you do demand'? are *one* question and are [intimately] connected in the issue.

All these dogmas appear to my humble conception radically and fundamentally wrong. Their practical result is unfortunately to continue the English government in the position of other Asiatic governments, a machinery for extracting the utmost rent possible from the estate, and to make every really great question of interest to society, subordinate to the grand object of extraction.

219. *Bentinck to W. Astell.* Copy. Private

Calcutta. 5 July 1830

My dear Sir,

The affairs of Palmer & Co. are destined to cause everlasting embarrassment to all who come in contact with them. I had flattered myself that by confining myself strictly to the point, as laid down in the court's orders I ran no risk of being forced into the large sea of Hyderabad politics, in which so many have made shipwreck. I know nothing of the cases. I care nothing for the parties. I think it not unlikely that this Sir William Rumbold is a great intriguer. I am sure he is a very active and persevering agent. And am quite sure that the covenant given by Lord Hastings originally to Sir William Rumbold to go to Hyderabad was a most commendable act. And I am free to confess that to my apprehension, neither the conduct of the court of directors, nor that of the government here have been directed by that cool and deliberate judgment, or regard for justice which could have been desired. Do I

mean now to say, that among these numerous actors, I am alone free from blame, that I alone am not bitten with the mania of partisanship, and that the removal of Mr. Martin from Hyderabad upon my own authority is in no degree attributable to any excited feeling? I have certainly endeavoured not to be misled by any unfair bias; but we are at best but bad judges of our own actions and with you will the answer to these questions best be left. But to save you the trouble in the first instance of searching the records for the grounds of my resolution upon this occasion, I take the liberty of enclosing the copy of a letter I wrote to Mr. Martin, detailing the reasons which have induced me to remove him from Hyderabad. Major Stewart has been appointed his successor, and a more discreet and able officer is not to be found among our civil and military functionaries and I anticipate with some confidence that a straightforward course on his part will restore all the parties to their proper places. On the last council day Mr. Martin's letter was read, transmitting the termination of the enquiry into the conduct of the munshi, and though the committee, who had been engaged in this wretched work since the month of August had pronounced him guilty of corruption, Mr. Martin chooses to send this individual down to Calcutta, here to receive the decision of the supreme government on his case. Why this especial regard for his feelings? Why was he not to be exposed and punished upon the theatre of his misdeeds? Mr. Martin throughout has shown extreme weakness: fortunately his character for honesty is so well established as to be proof against all his own attempts to destroy it.

I am happy to inform you, that a hope has at last arisen, that a reform in the affairs of Oudh may take place without any direct interference on our part. The king has recalled to the council of regency, Zaheed Hakim, formerly minister to Saadat Ali. He is a very able man, and if the King gives him his confidence, which present difficulties in spite of his own weakness and folly may force him to do, I have no doubt of correcting the existing misrule by which all our neighbouring districts suffer so much inconvenience and injury. We have been careful in withholding from the king all advice in the selection of his minister. Mr. Maddock's conduct gives us great satisfaction.

We have received very satisfactory intelligence of Major Burney's reception at the court of Ava. We have no official despatch from him.

The immense quantity of Malwa opium that has found its way to Daman in the present season, to an extent surpassing all expectations, has brought a recommendation from the civil finance committee that a free import by land to Bombay, upon payment of a duty from 175 to 200 per chest shall for the future be allowed: and this arrangement will probably be adopted. The subject is very ably and fully described in the report and an expectation is expressed that by the proposed duty at Bombay and by increasing the growth in our own territories we may realise, with the annually augmenting demand, a still greater revenue than heretofore. But with all our efforts, it will be prudent to consider

this means of revenue as uncertain and precarious and one upon which it would be quite delusive to calculate in regulating our expenditure. Major Burney mentions a certain fact which has come to his knowledge since he has been in Ava that a great deal of opium is consumed there which is actually grown in China; it is of very inferior quality and fetches about ¼ of the price of that of Bengal.

We have had an exceptional quantity of rain which has done much injury to the indigo crop. The season has been extremely healthy.

220. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 6 July 1830

My dear Lord William,

You will continue anxious about the settlement of the dispute with Sir John Grant—a friend of his has enclosed a copy of a letter from him to your Lordship of the 19th of June and expressed a hope that this with an assurance from Sir John Grant would prevent extremes. This came to me in a private form.

I replied that the whole affair was now in the hands of government which had taken a line 'to which it was compelled and from which it cannot concede'. No assurance which Sir John Grant could give in whatever form, nor the knowledge which I now have from his letter to your Lordship of Lord Ellenborough having in September 1829 consented to an arrangement by which Sir John Grant was to resign and practice at the bar in Calcutta can justify me in departing from the plain terms of an order such as I have been the medium of conveying dated July 1830. The petition of the directors might have been anticipated in September 1829 and Lord Ellenborough viewing matters as they then stood might have assented eventually to a proposition of Sir John Grant's friends but circumstances may have occurred between September and February to alter Lord Ellenborough's view of the subject; but supposing he had not changed his mind, is it not possible that the deliberate decision of his Majesty in council may have put it out of Lord Ellenborough's power to accomplish any kind wish he had to accommodate Sir John Grant? I have received private communications from Lord Ellenborough of a date prior and subsequent to the decision of the king in council but there is not a word of Sir J. Grant's resignation, nor any sentence from any quarter public or private that gives me a latitude of action or the slightest right to construe the order differently from what it is expressed.

Placed under the circumstances I have described, I think I have done much in taking [care] Sir John Grant should know that if he recognizes the order under which government act, pleads the state of the season as an excuse for not proceeding direct and desires to go to England by the way of Calcutta and pledges himself to depart on or

before the 1st of September for the latter port, I will recommend compliance with his wish to the board, but I have plainly stated that his wishes must not be expressed in the tones of his late communication, nor must the accepted resignations, nor expected counter orders be mentioned for admitting such for one moment. To have [insisted] would be admitting a departure from the clear and positive order upon which we are acting.

If Sir J. Grant has no aims but his declared ones and if he is confident in his expectations of leave to remain at Calcutta he will assuredly see in this course much indulgence. It offers him a safe and honourable mode of avoiding extremes, but after (when labouring under accusation) taking his seat upon the bench and the language he has held to government and others, I must entertain doubts of what he will do. His object evidently has hitherto been to impress a belief that he resigns because he was not supported, not that he is recalled because his conduct was disapproved. I have evidence of the efforts made to impress our agitated natives of rank with the former impression and some of them already believe that he goes to exercise greater influence in these affairs and probably to rise to higher rank. These you may say are mere delusions. They are so [beset] with weak and ignorant men they work a world of mischief. His recall will do more good in allaying trouble and in restoring to government the means of keeping men from ruining themselves than can be described, for it will take from intriguing and venal men the pretexts they now have of exciting opposition to the civil government. With this view neither the fact nor the grounds of his recall can be permitted to be either smoothed or misrepresented.

221. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft. Private

Calcutta. 9 July 1830
Recd. 25 November 1830

My dear Sir,

This goes by the *Susan* which takes the first consignment of the teas transferred from the unfortunate *Bridgewater*. There were some difficulties as to responsibility in disposing of the cargo, but I hope we have decided rightly.

I have written to the chairman. There are four subjects which I have not mentioned to him. One, however, the determination of Lord Dalhousie taken yesterday to go to Penang and not to return to Calcutta until the middle of October. He has had an alarm of a recurrence of his attacks within last week. The change of air offers the only chance of his being able to remain in India. He will retain the command while to the east-ward. The adjutant general and all other staff will remain at the presidency, so that any unforeseen emergency can be at once provided for. The order of the court respecting the writing of the celebrated

letter to Captain Beatson has been disposed of by council. Colonel Fagan admitted having given a copy to his son-in-law, who being called upon declared that he had furnished no copy to anyone else. This acknowledgment of Col. Fagan brought him within the letter of the court's orders, and I hold him [subject] to the penalty agreed by the court, unless he could prove, as I am quite satisfied he was, [that he was not] the real source of the disclosure. That letter had not been in my possession two days, before it became known, although by me or Capt. Benson it was not shown to anyone. My colleagues differed with me and the question has passed by.

I am much surprised at the non-arrival of the Madras China ships. They had not arrived on the 1st, tho' the *David Clarke* which left Portsmouth on the 7th, the day preceeding the appointed time of sailing of the *China Mercy*, reached Madras on the 17th March. I perceive on the 3rd March, you received accounts of the Canton dissensions. I hope they may not have embarrassed you. The event may cut both ways but I think it more unfavourable than otherwise to the Company's interests.

We continue to make great reductions which will be reported in due course. The great deficit in the land revenue at Bombay, amounting to 30 lakhs, has disappointed my calculations. My excellent friend Lord John likes his own way of doing everything and tho' he has not been idle, yet economy is not his peculiar forte, any more than with his, in other respects, inimitable predecessor and while the charges have had at Bombay a tendency to increase beyond the other presidencies, no corresponding accumulation has taken place in the revenue. The reports of the finance committee have made a complete exhibition of many of these charges, which will require the serious attention of the court. The Bombay government ought to be placed upon an inferior establishment, or made a dependency of Bengal. The deficit, 97 lakhs, ought to pay the whole charges and I verily believe it may yet.

The *Indian marine* was I fear, not a happy thought. Why increase an expense there, when all our incomes have disappeared? I write to you without reserve. Our establishments are all unnecessarily large; they absorb all our revenue, for the benefit of Europeans; the natives and the improvement of India are necessarily neglected. You are quite of the same opinion at the India House, and I hope we shall be made, if we are not disposed, and empowered and encouraged, if we are to carry these wise and good intentions into effect.

The commercial distress is relieved but is not past. Confidence is by no means restored. I hope the court may view favourably our conduct upon that occasion. I have no doubt of the imperious necessity which demanded our interference.

222. *Bentinck's reply to the petition on* sati

14 July 1830

The governor-general has read with attention the petition which has been presented to him: and has some satisfaction in observing that the opinions of the pandits consulted by the petitioners confirm the supposition that widows are not, by the religious writings of the Hindus, commanded to destroy themselves; but that, upon the death of their husbands the choice of a life of strict and severe morality is everywhere expressly offered: that in the books usually considered of the highest authority it is commanded above every other course; and is stated to be adapted to a better state of society; such as, by the Hindus, is believed to have subsisted in former times.

Thus, none of the Hindus are placed in the distressing situation of having to disobey either the ordinances of the government or those of their religion. By a virtuous life a Hindu widow not only complies at once with the laws of the government and with the purest precepts of her own religion, but affords an example to the existing generation of that good conduct which is supposed to have distinguished the earlier and better times of the Hindu people.

The petitioners cannot require the assurance that the British government will continue to allow the most complete toleration in matters of religious belief; and that to the full extent of what it is possible to reconcile with reason and with natural justice they will be undisturbed in the observance of their established usages. But, some of these, which the governor-general is unwilling to recall into notice, his predecessors in council, for the security of human life, and the preservation of social order, have, at different times, found it necessary to prohibit. If there is any one which the common voice of all mankind would except from indulgence it is surely that by which the hand of a son is made the instrument of a terrible death to the mother who has borne him, and from whose heart he has drawn the sustenance of his helpless infancy.

The governor-general has given an attentive consideration to all that has been urged by the numerous and respectable body of petitioners: and has thought fit to make this further statement, in addition to what had been before expressed as the reasons, which, in his mind, have made it an urgent duty of the British government to prevent the usage in support of which the petition has been preferred: but if the petitioners should still be of opinion that the late regulation is not in conformity with the enactments of the imperial parliament, they have an appeal to the king in council, which the governor-general shall be most happy to forward.

223. *Bentinck to James Salmond*[1]

Calcutta. 16 July 1830

My dear Sir,

Your letter of the 8th May 1829, making mention of your nephew in the Penang establishment, and containing various interesting subjects ought to have had an immediate acknowledgement. I have however never lost sight of your nephew's interests, and altho' he was not included in the revised establishment as recommended by Mr. Alladair, still, I trust, by the leave we have given to those out of employ, to whom the pension may not be acceptable, to remain in the incorporated settlements, till provided for by vacancies, that none eventually will be very much disappointed. If the court should be further pleased to listen to our recommendations that the whole establishment may be transferred bodily either to Bengal or to the three presidencies generally, all in such case will be greatly benefited. I am quite confident, the measure would excite no dissatisfaction in India, and so not materially interfere with the patronage at home. The orders for this arrangement appear to have been hastily prepared as various points are omitted, very material for our future guidance.

The state of the army has been a sad and sore subject, and has poisoned all the happiness which I had expected to have enjoyed in my government. I was quite aware of the impression these transactions could only create in England and of the unfavourable result that must ensue both to the character and interests of the Indian army. But I was always singular in these anticipations. The fact is, that public opinion and feeling cannot be the same here as in England. The early age and unformed opinions of those who come out, and their long rule and great separation from the mother country make it impossible. There by the continued discussion, by direct contact and [*illeg.*] with a large enlightened society, [we see] that the human mind in England has undergone such rapid changes, and, as I think, has made such advance in improvement. Here everything is stationary. If you had been here last year, you would have had your memory pleasingly delighted with the same language and the same scenes, that took place at a certain period of the last century. . . .

Whatever these orders may be, and however unsatisfactory, I apprehend no unpleasant consequences, but those who witnessed the almost mutinous conduct of the officers last year might not unreasonably calculate upon some display of irritated feeling. Under the possibility of such an occurrence how peculiarly unfortunate we are to be without a commander-in-chief, to have as his substitute a most inefficient officer, and to have the command of the army really placed

223. [1] Salmond, James. Military assistant, East India House, 1809–37, son-in-law of the well-known former chairman of the Company, David Scott. See Philips, *Correspondence of David Scott*, 2 vols., *passim*.

in the hands of that adjutant-general, of whose conduct in those transactions you have already heard too much. Lord Dalhousie is about to sail immediately for Penang. He is very unwell and I very much doubt, whether he will be ever able to resume the command.

I will take another opportunity of writing to you upon the subject of the constitution and distribution of the army. It is a very large question and one upon which I am not quite prepared at present to enter. I had hoped by this time, with the assistance of the military finance committee, to have come to some settled opinion as to the amount of the establishment, most consistent with economy and efficiency. It is quite clear that there are many more regiments than are necessary, or than would have been kept up, except from consideration for the interests of the officers. Cannot both these interests be reconciled? This is the question. I think they can....

224. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 18 July 1830

My dear Lord William,

I am very much obliged to you for the kindness which has led you to think of me on this occasion. I shall not envy Lord Clare, nor anyone who may be Sir John Malcolm's successor; for the duties of the next governor of Bombay will I conceive be very unpleasant. The only thing that I shall regret will be being left in Calcutta, whether as vice-president or member of council, instead of attending your Lordship to the upper provinces; both because I regard a member of council as reduced to insignificance when separated from the governor-general, and because my power of usefulness, if I have any, must be greatest in the scenes to which you are going. I do therefore deeply lament the orders from home which condemn me to Calcutta.

225. *Court of directors on the abolition of the Calcutta college*

20 July 1830

. . . . . .

3. We shall first of all advert to your determination with respect to the Calcutta college.

4. In our letter of the date above recited, we had declared to you that upon a review of the evils resulting from a residence in that college, as those evils had by yourselves been brought before us, we had very deliberately come to the conclusion that the benefits derived from such residence were not a compensation for the disadvantages

connected with it; but we forbore to issue positive instructions for the abolition of the college, and left to you the power of suspending the execution of our orders if you should not regard such a measure as advisable till the reasons upon which your dissent might be grounded were seen and considered by us.

5. The members of your government have not been unanimous on the question; but a majority, the governor-general and Mr. Bayley, have concurred in opinion that the college should be maintained. We shall make some observations on the premises from which they state their conclusion to have been drawn, and which have been deemed by them more cogent, certainly than they have appeared to us.

6. In the language both of the governor-general and of Mr. Bayley, more particularly of the governor-general, a supposition appears to be implied not in accordance with the state of the case. The advantages spoken of seem to be those of education generally, and we are not surprised at the strong terms in which under that conception the governor-general expresses the pain he should feel in contemplating the loss of the institution. But the college of Calcutta is not designed for general education; and it would be rating its value infinitely too high to admit any such idea in forming your estimate of it. General education is otherwise provided for and it is understood to have been previously completed by those who enter the college of Calcutta. The institution in question is calculated only for the purpose of importing such a knowledge of two languages of the country as may qualify young men destined for the civil branch of the public service, to hold that intercourse with the natives which the proper discharge of their duties may require.

7. The only real advantage then which can be ascribed to the college, is its superiority for teaching the native languages. That in an institution, where the best teachers are assembled and emulation is excited, there are advantages; we very readily admit. There are, however, also disadvantages, because young men may excite each other to the acquisition of bad as well as of good habits, and it is by effectual superintendence alone that such results can be averted.

8. We are happy to see that there is no endeavour on the part of any of the members of your government to palliate the failures which have been witnessed in the progress of the institution: the case is different with the members of the college council in whose language there appears an unwillingness to admit that there is any material defect in the college, or that better conduct on the part of the junior servants could be expected under any other mode of instructing or employing them. We have with regret arrived at the conclusion that there are no advantages connected with education at the college even under [the rules] which you have judiciously placed it, which can compensate for the evil of assembling together young men destined to administer the government of an empire in a situation where the cupidity of money lenders affords to every one of them the means of gratifying every passion, and thus

brings into peril the comfort, the respectability and the independence of their future lives.

9. It is our duty towards our young servants to place them no longer in the midst of temptation which few are able to resist. It is our yet higher duty towards the many millions subjected to our rule, to take all possible care that those by whom they are to be immediately governed shall be persons of the purest and most unsuspected character. We therefore direct that on the receipt of this letter you do, without any unnecessary delay, adopt measures for the abolition of the college.

10. With respect to the young men we desire that they may be immediately attached to such of our more experienced servants as may seem to you to possess the qualifications best calculated to draw forth whatever may be good, and to check whatever may be evil in the dispositions of those committed to their charge.

11. You will require a quarterly report of the progress made by each of the young men in languages, and you will desire to be furnished with observations upon the general conduct and ability of each. You will require the strictest impartiality in these reports, and mark with your severest censure any deviation from it.

12. You will make such arrangements as appear to you to be best for the examination of the young men.

13. Before you decide upon having any such examinations at the presidency you will consider whether the conveniences, whatever they may be, of that arrangement, may not be more than counterbalanced by the injurious effect upon the young men of even a short residence at Calcutta.

14. We come now to the important question; what is the course to be pursued with those young men, who after a reasonable time allowed them for the acquisition of the necessary languages, are still found to be unqualified, a question which you have left to our decision.

15. The opinion seems to be generally entertained that a period of twelve instead of eight months should be allowed for acquiring the necessary knowledge of the native languages. This, therefore, we think it proper to grant. We think that even after this time, a short period, with warning should still be allowed, before the sentence of incapacitation is pronounced. We therefore direct, that if, among those who are examined, there is any one whose proficiency cannot be certified at the end of twelve months, he be informed that three months more will be allowed to complete his qualifications, but if at the end of that period, he is still incompetent, he will be sent to England as unfit for the service.

16. So many obvious objections present themselves to your proposal of allowing to those declared unfit for our civil service, the choice of passing into the army, that we have not hesitated to adopt the simple expedient of sending such unqualified individuals back to their friends. Intimation will of course be made in future, to those whom it may concern, that appointment to office in the civil branch of our service,

will henceforth take effect only after passing a good examination in India.

17. That important part of your letter still remains which relates to the course to be pursued in regard to those individuals who are involved in debt. We are sorry that on this subject it is not possible here to lay down so precise a rule for your conduct. The question is complicated. We cannot name any particular sum, and command that in every case in which the debts of an individual amount to so much, he shall be deemed unfit for employment, because we know that what would be an overwhelming embarrassment to one man would not be so to another. The pressure of debt affords powerful temptations to the abuse of the trusts which you confide to your civil servants, and is always accompanied, not only by discredit, but by danger. In considering however, whether an individual is rendered unfit for trust by the temptations arising out of pecuniary difficulties, the amount of debt is but one part of the consideration, the character of the individual is another.

18. What is to be determined, is, whether the trusts which are implied in the offices to which the civil servants are appointed under your government can be safely confided to such and such an individual. It is obvious that as much of this question as relates to character must be resolved by you, and can hardly ever be judged of with any approach to certainty here. The decision therefore must necessarily devolve upon you, and we desire and enjoin, that whenever a case of pecuniary embarrassment shall occur, which may appear to you to render doubtful the fitness of any individual to discharge the trusts belonging to his offices, the question do immediately receive your most serious attention; that you endeavour by all the means in your power to form an accurate estimate of the character of the individual, and of the probability of receiving from him faithful and efficient services, under the obstructions which he has created for himself: and as often as this probability appears to you to be taken away, that you do not hesitate in pronouncing his incapacitation and final exclusion from office.

19. It is undoubtedly our wish that in the exercise of this essentially discretionary power, nothing harsh or oppressive should take place; on the contrary, that it should be exerted as tenderly as is compatible with the due attainment of our object. You are however, bound in deciding such a question, to consider yourselves charged with a great public duty in which the interests of millions are concerned, and with a responsibility which will demand the exercise of firmness, no less than of discrimination.

226. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 22 July 1830
Recd. Calcutta. August 1830

My dear Lord William,

I am most anxious for an answer to my despatch about Baroda affairs. By the report of the finance committee which you have sanctioned and recommended, I conclude the substance of my propositions are approved, but unless you specify your approbation of the commissioner being stationed at Ahmadabad instead of Baroda and of Syaji not being brought to justice on the ground of his conniving at the murder of children, I shall have my counsellors in opposition on this point.

All is going on well at Baroda and I pledge myself that my plan acted upon in a firm but conciliating manner will (now there is no hope from the lawyers and Parsi rogues of Bombay) put everything to rights in a twelvemonth. Syaji and the resident drive together in a curricle, such is my bazar report.

227. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft. Confidential

Calcutta. 23 July 1830
Recd. 17 December 1830

My dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letters of the 6th, 12th and 17th March from London received on the 18th of this month via Madras. We have no tidings yet of the *Castle Huntley*.

I ask with great anxiety for the court's decision on the half-batta question. I have orders but they are so unpleasant, [that] in all probability [they] will not be received with any feeling of respect; but I am satisfied that no open manifestations of sentiment or conduct of a different tendency will take place. But it is a curious and unlucky occurrence, that at this moment when energy and decision in the hands of the army might be peculiarly wanted, we have no commander-in-chief and that the senior officer on the staff is quite inefficient. And further that the command of the army is really in the hands of *Col. Fagan*. Bad as this arrangement is, I am not aware that any other could have been made without producing a state of things, productive of much inconvenience in many ways, and not giving for the present more efficiency to the command. Lord Dalhousie has been ill and almost ever since his arrival, and subsequent to his paralytic attack he has been obliged to depend upon his staff. Colonel Fagan has gained as complete possession of his confidence, as

of that of Lord Combermere, and all that he knows of the army and of past [custom] is from this source. I can give you no better idea of the extent of this confidence, than by the following fact. When Lord Dalhousie had at last determined to go to Penang, his intention was to have gone unaccompanied by any of his staff; to have separated himself from all business, desiring not to be unnecessarily distracted—and to leave the whole business of the army to be carried on by the adjutant general in his name. Penang is by the recent annexation of it to Bengal, within the limits of this presidency and so far Lord Dalhousie could legally exercise his command—but it is distant above twenty degrees of latitude from Calcutta and [in] the knowledge of his being there it would have been impossible to have maintained the fiction of his presence: and the validity of acts and orders done in his name would have been open to question. I represented the great inconvenience of such an arrangement, and it was immediately given up. But this fact shows the entire confidence placed in Col. Fagan to whom his chief was thus disposed to delegate all his powers during an absence of nearly three months.

July 27. The ships not having sailed, I will add a few lines. No new arrival from Europe. I thought it right to anticipate and to provide for the possible removal of Col. Fagan from his office, as the adviser of Lord Combermere, and from the notoriety of his wishing to be the delegate of the army to England. I represented these facts to Lord Dalhousie that if such order arrived it must be obeyed; and that with reference to the possible agitation which the orders on the half-batta question might renew, it became urgently necessary in his absence, and with so weak a substitute, that the adjutant general should at least be effective.

I then told him of the unfitness of the adjutant general for this charge, and that Lord Combermere had declared just before his departure that he would not appoint Col. Beeston as adjutant general. I also mentioned him Brigadier Lumley as fit for that station. . . .

Lord Dalhousie has proposed another officer, Lt. Col. Craigie who is personally known to him, whom he would wish, in the event of the contingency arising, to be nominated temporarily to the charge. Lt. Col. C. is an able and honourable man, and to his appointment there is no objection, but he would not be equally popular and indeed as fit, as the other, who is quite a soldier and would be a decided upholder of discipline and of the honour of the army. On the other departments, I have nothing at present to communicate. Everything to the eastward is going on more satisfactorily than at any preceding period. I propose to leave Calcutta for the upper provinces early in October. I fear I shall not obtain the assistance of Sir Charles Metcalfe, which is now the more necessary since the death of poor Mr. Stirling, who was thoroughly conversant with all our political relations and was considered a prudent and excellent secretary. I shall take Mr. Prinsep in his place. Mr. Swinton goes home in the next year. He is a wealthy man, but his

office may be more efficiently filled. I intend as vacancies offer, to surround the government with the best men the service can afford.

I beg you will have the goodness to show this letter to the chairman, beyond whom I am desirous that what has been said of Lord Dalhousie may not transpire.

228. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Rajmoli. 27 July 1830

My dear Lord William,

I have received your Lordship's letter of the 20th January, I calculate this will reach Calcutta about the period of your return.

You will receive voluminous references on our Baroda affairs. I cannot add to what I have officially stated. My opinion and acts have been alike deliberate. While I have effectually provided against the peace and strength of the [government] being injured by the conduct of an infatuated and deluded prince, I have pursued a line that as far as I can judge gives him the only chance of reform, that saves the Gaikwar family from ruin and that prevents the injury to our reputation that would result from more violent proceedings.

I regret that my civil colleagues should differ from me so much as they do on some points: but I can resign my judgment, as I have told them, to none but your Lordship in council. I can reconcile myself to kill princes in fair fight, but I cannot be a party to the torturing of them to death, and that, I believe, would be the effect of the measures Mr. Newnham suggests. Besides, the unhappy ruler has lost all that political consequence that can render such extremes necessary. He has neither army, revenue, nor influence to an extent that requires such expensive personal superintendence. If, after all the warnings he has had of the consequences of violating our faith, he is so infatuated as to persevere in an evil course, extremes must be resorted to, but these are much to be deprecated and every means should be taken to avert the necessity of their adoption.

The difficulties which present themselves at Lucknow are not dissimilar in some of their features to those at Baroda, but the concern is very much larger; though, on the other hand, you are not embarrassed with these numerous pledges of protection of life and property to his Majesty of Oudh's subjects, as we are to those of the Gaikwar.

Questions of the nature on which your Lordship desires my opinion, depend so much upon local circumstances and personal characters that it is difficult to judge them in such ignorance as I am upon these points: but I will nevertheless, in compliance with your Lordship's request, state what I think upon the subject.

None of our alliances presents such strange vicissitudes as that of Oudh. It has survived the folly and extravagance of its rulers, the

venality and corruption of ministers, and the intrigues and jobs of Europeans. Its independence in its internal administration was at one period on the eve of destruction from our schemes of an improved judicial system. A contrary extreme in our policy appears to have at the moment involved it in all the evils consequent to unrestrained power exercised by a weak sovereign acting by the counsel of low and wicked advisers.

I noticed* in my last edition of the *Political History of India* the condition of affairs at Lucknow at the period that work was published, and I particularly referred to a letter from the secretary of government to the resident in which the principles on which the alliance was grounded appeared to me laid down with much perspicuity and soundness. I have neither that letter nor any Lucknow papers with me: but it is of little consequence, as I can well imagine the changes that have recently occurred from the causes to which your Lordship alludes.

With respect to present principles of interference with our native allies, I have fully expressed my sentiments on many occasions, and particularly in my minute† under date the 26th Dec. 1828 regarding central India: and my opinions recently given on Baroda affairs must, as far as general principles and natural feelings of native princes are concerned, apply to those of Lucknow.

Before entering upon any particular case, it is most essential to look through it, and to fix our minds at the commencement in a decided manner upon the objects we desire to attain.

Supposing it to be your Lordship's resolution to keep the internal administration of Lucknow under its native prince, you cannot expect that the subjects of that state will always have equal happiness and security; that will vary with the character of prince and their ministers: but if my experience is correct, we may calculate that protected as they are from external attacks and from any very outrageous injustice by our power and general control, the inhabitants of the territories our allies have enjoyed, and will enjoy, as much of content and comfort, and particularly the superior classes, as those of our own provinces. This is contrary to common opinion and to recorded statements; but it is my firm belief. Supposing, however, this not to be the case, we must adopt a principle that will go rapidly to the establishment of direct rule all over India, before we can admit that our system of government being better is a legitimate ground for the establishment of our authority over any country now governed by native princes. The maintenance of the latter, however, is in my opinion both politic and just. Deprived of all power to contend with us in war, they still possess (as long as we leave it to them) a sufficient stake in the empire to make them and their adherents take an interest in its tranquillity. Their kingdoms and principalities offer an asylum and employment to classes of men who could not yet reconcile themselves to our mode of rule. For these

* Vide Polit. India Vol. 1, page 429.
† Vide Paras 15, 16, 17, 18.

reasons, I must dread the too rapid advancement of our power over what remains to natives as an evil. I am sickened with that mawkish morality that argues upon the sin and inhumanity of our tolerating abuses and misrule which we have the power to correct, and in which, from possessing that power and not exercising it, we are said to become in a degree implicated. I neither admit the facts nor the deduction. I could mention provinces in every part of our territories in which over-assessment, the power of adalat, and inefficient police, have produced more discontent, degradation, suffering to the inhabitants, than I ever knew under native government: but supposing this not the case, we cannot admit our right to carry the privilege of giving advice and modified interference stipulated by treaty, to go under any circumstances short of hostilities, extreme public danger, or the violation of faith, to the establishment of a right to assume the government of the country, with the prince with which our treaties are contracted.

Concluding these to be your Lordship's sentiments, as well as mine, the question is narrowed as to the best manner of preserving the native government of Lucknow, of seeing faithfully fulfilled our positive engagements, and of ameliorating the condition, or lessening as far as we have the power the sufferings of the subjects of our ally from his weakness or tyranny. We cannot refuse him the aid he is entitled to by treaty, but we have a right, which should be rigidly maintained, not to allow our aid to be used for unjust purpose. We cannot prevent our protection affording him the means of abusing power that he would not otherwise possess: but if his conduct is systematically bad, we may on good ground abstain from granting him aid, in a degree that must effect some reform through the distress and embarrassment in which he would probably become involved. In the event of his not being able to quell disturbances he had excited, and the general peace of the country becoming disturbed in a degree that affected our own provinces, interference would become unavoidable. Such a state of affairs would render a prince incapable of fulfilling the obligations of the alliance: but even in this extreme I would rather see him deprived of power and another placed on the masnad or assume his territories than attempt to govern them through a residency and a minister in opposition to the nominal head of the state. Our condition forces upon us many expedients of administration; and this latter has been often tried: but I am quite satisfied that it is from many causes the very worst species of rule that can be adopted, both as it affects the temper and happiness of the people and the good name of the British government.

With these opinions, I certainly cannot advise your Lordship to inflict a minister upon the king of Oudh to whom he is hostile, and he will be hostile to anyone who has our decided support. The person he selects may be a bad character, but this is a general term, and may be given to men whose agency, as far as intercourse with us is concerned, might fulfil the purposes of the alliance which is all we want. The important point is that such a person should have his sovereign's

confidence, not ours. His ways and those of his master may be secret and crooked, ours are, or should be, open and straight. The native ruler and his minister may look for advantages in corrupt intrigue: the more we are removed from the appearance of mixing or even stooping to counteract them, the better: but this is adverse to the interested views of all who serve, or are dependent upon a British residency at a native court: their labours, for obvious motives, are incessant to produce another order of affairs: their object is to have a minister who relies upon their real or supposed influence with their superiors: they calumniate all who do not conciliate them. I never had a native servant employed as a medium of intercourse: but I have no doubt that, like others, I have occasionally been the dupe of men, who have had hourly opportunities of assailing me: but the efforts of my life have been to avoid the consequences of such influence. I have kept a broad line, have personally been at all times easy of access, have seen or heard everyone, cared little about the character of those with whom I communicated, being more anxious to wean a bad man from his ways and to render him, if he had any sense, the instrument of keeping his weak master tolerably right, than by proscribing him, rendering him hostile.

At Baroda, I had to support, not to introduce, a system, and I am compelled to continue the course that had been commenced; because to recede after what had passed, was to give a triumph to men who would be certain to impute my conduct to motives very far from the true ones, and to rush upon such impressions further into error.

From what your Lordship states, I conclude your condition is not, as to this point, dissimilar at Lucknow. Supposing, as your Lordship does, the king insists upon Ram Dayal continuing minister, or appoints one equally bad, you must either determine to assume in fact, though not in form, the conduct of his administration, and dictate the nomination of a minister who shall act as the resident wishes; or if you deem, as I do, this an extreme which nothing but danger to the public peace will warrant, you must limit your interference to matter of actual necessity. If he continues his mal-administration, and unfriendly conduct, you might withdraw aid as much as possible; deprive him of the European part of his establishment, if he has any that enjoy favour or influence; let the marked displeasure of the English government be upon him; and if it can be done without injury to the public service, let the British representative reside elsewhere than in the city. Nothing can be more galling to our dependent allies than being continually goaded by these large establishments of their conquerors, half of which are employed in watching and recording their follies and crimes. If there is real political danger, such residencies must be maintained in proximity and in the exercise of active supervision: but if not, their position does more harm than good, for it is a fruitful source of intrigue, and mixes our name with every local transaction in a manner that often decreases than advances our reputation. This, however, is a part of the subject which

unacquainted as I am with the details of business at Lucknow, I cannot judge: nor am I informed as to the amount of force at Lucknow, or the political interests which might be affected by its removal.

Whatever measures your Lordship may pursue will after all in a great degree depend upon the agent who has to carry them into execution. If a weak man, the tempting scene will lead all to impose upon his weakness, if able but of unconciliating manners or temper, he will, by constantly fretting them place the king and council in array against him, if difficult of access and a *bahadur*, he will, whatever be his experience and knowledge, certainly fail in doing more than persuading government of the necessity of leaving the crown to the king of Oudh, but of making the British representative viceroy over him! If the resident adds to efficiency some other qualifications, humility of heart, kindness in manner and is easy at all periods of personal access, he will eventually work a reform in the worst of native courts: but he must keep aloof from all intrigue; he must hear no complaints beyond what his duty absolutely requires of the native ruler and his ministry; he must give no private audiences and be content to make many sacrifices to impart good feeling and confidence. Such a man, if he conducts the intercourse with a ruler and his ministers himself or through a good assistant, and has great toleration for the deviations of native princes and their ministers from what we deem the right path, may be trusted in close contact with a native court: but in the condition these now are, and our altered relations, I should on the whole prefer the resident being at some distance; if that was not attended with a great diminution of his means of performing indispensible duties. It will afford us a better chance of preserving the native state alive. It subjects our reputation to less injury: for where evil measures are adopted that we cannot prevent, it gives no political strength in the contrast, instead of mixing our name with misrule.

This letter is so long that I must defer other subjects. I wish I could have done more than give very general opinions upon this question: but I have no doubt your Lordship will discover some expedient to mitigate, if not to remedy, the abuses of the Lucknow durbar. Time is a wonder-worker everywhere, and nowhere a greater one than in India: and in all political arrangements, it is wise to give the old gentleman fair play, and not lose his aid by running him out of breath.

229. *Bentinck's minute on opium cultivation*

30 July 1830

The change of policy we have recently determined upon in respect to the revenue derived by government from opium, the produce of Malwa; that is, the abandonment of all restrictions on growth or transit, and the confinement of the government revenue to a duty merely

equivalent to the advantage of the direct routes to Bombay, must have the effect of encouraging production of the drug in central India to the point, when, all the most favorable soils being fully occupied, the costs and charges of growing opium on inferior shall, with this transit duty and freight, equal the selling price in China, reduced through the augmentation of the supply. As this is the market that regulates the price and profit, and its demand cannot be unlimited, the point at which further production must cease in Malwa, will be sooner arrived at, in proportion as the supply from Bengal is extended; on the other hand, it will be again for the revenue derived at this presidency from the article, tending in some degree to compensate government for the certain loss from the abatement of price, if the augmentation of quantity, producing the effect of stopping further cultivation in Malwa, can be made wholly from the resources of this presidency. For the original cost of the opium in Bihar and Benares is little more than half the lowest price at which government could ever purchase in Malwa; even upon the assumption therefore, that consequent upon the measures recently adopted, the merchant of Bombay will be able to carry the Malwa drug to China, at half the price it has cost him heretofore to take it there, the Bengal article would still compete successfully with it, though charged with a duty levied in the form of monopoly, by purchase and resale equal to half that cost; if the augmentation of quantity lowering the price to the scale assumed be made wholly from Bengal, the present revenue from this source would be nearly maintained, the difference in the selling profit per chest being made up by the quantity sold.

Influenced by these considerations, we resolved, coincidently with the abandonment of the monopoly scheme in Malwa, to take measures for increasing the production here, and the only question is by what means to seek this increase.

Through the board of customs, salt and opium, we can command the best exertions of the agents in Bihar and Benares, and of their deputies, who are the collectors of the several districts. The attention of all these officers has been for some time particularly directed to this end; but I doubt if this is sufficient for the purpose government has in view. It seems to me, that our object should be, not to force into poppy cultivation the less favourable soils of the countries already white with poppy, but to seek the introduction of this produce in tracts where its growth has hitherto been prescribed or discouraged. The district of Rangpur has heretofore been tried as an agency, but without much success, which was owing I am told quite as much to the character of the agent employed, as to any natural unfitness of soil or climate for the growth of the drug, for although unequal to Bihar and Benares, the tract from Purnea eastwards has heretofore yielded opium, and might there is little doubt again be made to furnish a supply adapted at least to local consumption and abkari purposes, so as to leave for exportation all the superior produce of the more favoured provinces. I submit this however

as a question for the council to consider at leisure. In case measures should be put in train to make this experiment, a separate agent might be required to superintend and prepare the opium of this wide tract; but I do not at present mean to recommend any measure of this kind, for I think the western provinces which are more assimilated in climate and soil to Bihar, hold out a fairer promise than these eastern rice districts.

With a view to ascertain the resources of the north-west, particularly of Rohilkhand and the Doab, I propose that it be made a particular instruction to the branch of the western board about to accompany me, to turn their attention to the subject, and that they be empowered to make thro' the collectors or any other persons or public officers they think competent, the experimental culture of the drug in different parts, themselves examining the results in the occasional visits they will be able to make during the tour, and checking and superintending the experiment in all its details. We may thus hope to obtain information entitled to implicit confidence, and acquire the means of deciding on the practicability of introducing the culture in those districts, the probable cost at which opium could be obtained there, and the quantity we might reckon upon procuring of a quality fitted for the China market or for other purposes. It has been ascertained already that opium of the very best kind can be grown in Rohilkhand, but the cost and the mode of inducing the village zamindars to undertake the culture, are points, in respect to which, the opinions of the local officers are divided; and no enquiry would be likely to prove satisfactory, that was not made by an authority, competent to direct the efforts of all into one channel, and to give uniformity to the measures and experiments attempted to be made.

230. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Copy—Extracts

Calcutta. 2 August 1830

My dear Lord,

I do not think I have much to say—I wrote to you on the 11th of last month, and I am happy to confirm [the account] I then made of the tranquil and generally favourable state of our Indian territories.

I then stated—that in reference to the subjects and orders contained in the secret despatch relative to the designs of Russia I had consulted Major Stewart. (I send copy of his letter.)

I then state, that I had consulted Capt. Murray upon the same subject and will send his answer when received.

I enclose extract from Capt. Munro's letter (dated 5 June) relative to the state of Ranjit Sing's health.

I then add 'He (Ranjit Sing) will be a great loss. He is too sensible a

man to think of attacking the British power, if the superiority [is maintained] of which he has been perfectly sensible. . . .'

Lord Dalhousie sailed ten days ago for Penang. I hope he may rally; but the general opinion of the medical men is not favourable. I entertain great doubts of his being able to resume his command, but he was resolved if some very decided change for the better did not take place, to resign the command. In the meantime nothing can be more inefficient than the present arrangement. The senior officer on the staff is perfectly incompetent: but under the circumstances of Lord Dalhousie being at Penang within the limits of his command, and his command, and his absence not being intended to exceed three months and indeed not so much, we could not make any other disposition without much inconvenience, and without some objection on the part of Lord D., who was desirous that no general officer should be appointed to conduct the details, which he thought might be carried on in his name by the adjutant general. I represented to him that the distances of above 1000 miles from the presidency, with an adverse monsoon intervening, it would be impossible to maintain a constructive presence and that very serious evil might be the result. Although I expect no inconvenience to follow the publication of the unfavourable decisions of the home authorities upon the half-batta question which has already created so much excitement, yet, I should have been well-pleased, that at such a moment the command had been in resolute hands and that I might not be a second time exposed to a repetition of the scenes of last year, and of the odious responsibility and duty which then devolved upon me.

Enclosure in 2 August 1830

J. Stewart's[1] *memorandum on the Russian danger*

22 June 1830

It is not necessary to enter on any long discussion upon the practicability of an invasion of India by Russia. It seems to be now the general opinion of those who are best informed on the subject that it is practicable: or at all events that Russia has the power to take up such a threatening position in central Asia as to render it necessary for us to adopt measures of precaution and defence, which might prove equally injurious to our interests as a state of actual warfare. It is on this supposition that the despatch of the secret committee is founded. Now it is obvious that our measures of precaution should correspond with the indications of hostility on the part of our opponents. If while no preparations are making against us we shew an anxiety to adopt preventive measures indicative of weakness, we may provoke the attack which we wish to prevent. But whenever it is really known that Russia is making preparations for an advance on Khiva or Bokhara it is high time for us to make our preparations, and to decide on the point where we shall meet them. For if ever Russia establishes a firm footing in

Bokhara I conceive that the conflict is inevitable. But the difficulties which the Russians would have to encounter in establishing their power in Khiva and Bokhara are I think greatly underrated. To say nothing of the extraordinary difficulties of the route, whether by land from Orienberg or by the Caspian Sea to the Bay of Balkan, those countries appear to be in the best possible state for resisting the invasion of a civilized nation. Their population is in a great measure composed of migratory tribes. Their governments have not yet committed the fatal error of trusting their defence to infantry and guns, and if Khiva has her 50 thousand and Bokhara her 100 thousand horse animated as they must be with hatred to the Russian name, that power will I conceive long pause before she makes the attempt to conquer such countries. In fact considering the nature of the intervening countries it appears to me that it would be a more easy enterprise for us to march from the Sutlej to Bokhara than for the Russians to do so from their frontier stations. I do not however conceive that it would be at all advisable for us to advance to such a distance from our own resources, even in the event of the Russians making the attempt contemplated. But I do think on that event that our frontier ought to be extended to the Indus, and that we ought if possible to have the entire command of the navigation of that river.

With regard to the proposal in the 3rd paragraph of the letter of the secret committee to send an envoy to Bokhara I conceive even that measure to be premature and unnecessary at present. The Bokharians are no doubt as jealous of us as they are of the Russians, and it will only be when they are under the immediate apprehension of the encroachments of the latter power that they will be at all disposed to court our alliance. In the present state of affairs it appears to me that a mission from us would be more calculated to excite jealousy and alarm than to conciliate friendship. Besides for an envoy to proceed with safety to Bokhara so strong an escort would be required, that rumour would magnify it into an army. This would prove another source of jealousy, and alarm.

That an European merchant may reach Bokhara in safety is proved by the example of Mr. Moorcroft although that enterprising traveller did not live to return. The difficulties which he experienced are likely to deter any mercantile man from risking his person and property on such an adventure. Government might no doubt send a person there in the character of a merchant trading on his own account. But for the mere purpose of procuring information I make no doubt that there are intelligent and enterprising Europeans to be found who would readily undertake the journey to Bokhara, not as agents of government or as merchants, but as mere travellers under such character or disguise as they might find it best to assume. Native agents of ability and intelligence would have far greater facilities and run less risk, I should therefore think the employment of them in the first instance preferable.

The remarks in the 8th paragraph of the letter from the secret

committee appear to me exceedingly just. The enormous expenditure which a threatened European invasion would occasion would render India little worth holding to the Company at least. The disaffection of our subjects and allies, and above all that of our native troops, is what in that case we have greatest cause to apprehend. This is a subject on which every one interested in the fate of our Indian empire must have reflected with anxiety, and any one who could devise the means of removing or diminishing that danger would deserve well of his country. For my part I confess that much as I have thought on the subject, I have never been able to think of any plan by which this danger could be much diminished. Plans may be formed for the judicious treatment and management of our native army, and schemes may be devised for securing the fidelity and attachment of our dependant allies; still I fear that in the hour of difficulty and danger these would fail us. One measure there is calculated in time to give us security against this danger. But that is one which the court of directors no doubt regard as in itself fraught with greater dangers, that is colonization. Yet without this the fabric of our power in India must ever rest on a most insecure foundation. Let us suppose only one hundred thousand Britons settled in some commanding situation, such as the Punjab, I should conceive we should in that case have little to apprehend from the disaffection of our native troops or allies, and with such a colony so situated, a Russian army would hardly venture to approach our frontier.

In the 13th paragraph the secret committee alludes to measures of counteraction by pecuniary means. If by this it is meant to subsidize the intermediate states between us and Russia, to induce them to defend themselves against the invader, I think the principle radically erroneous. Look at the amount we lavished on Persia in this way! Such expenditure appears to me worse than useless, because it is only considered as the indication of fear and weakness. When the proper time arrives emissaries should be despatched into those countries to rouse the people to a sense of their danger. Officers if required might be sent with their troops, arms and ammunition might be supplied to them, but no money should be given to them.

The plan of substituting our influence in Bokhara for that of Russia in as far as that is connected with commerce, will I imagine be found exceedingly difficult. Even if we possessed the navigation of the Indus, and could undersell Russia in the Bokhara market, a long period would be required to effect a total change in the direction of the commerce of that country, supposing no obstacles of a political nature to exist. But when we reflect that the universal impression throughout the east is that we originally assumed the character of merchants with no other object than to obtain a footing in India with a view to its ultimate subjugation, it may be conceived with what jealousy and alarm any attempt on the part of government to extend our commerce into central Asia would be viewed. No art of man could induce these nations to believe that we had not their future subjugation also in

view. With the navigation of the Indus, our commerce would no doubt gradually and silently advance towards central Asia. But let it be left to private enterprise, let government have nothing to say to it.

The dray horses certainly are very unsuitable as presents but they may be sent as curiosities, and along with them some handsome blood English horses, and perhaps a few handsome Arabian horses [sent up] up the Indus to Lahore is excellent, if it can be accomplished without involving us in hostilities with the amirs of Sind. But from all the intercourse we have had with the government of Sind I think it may be inferred, that it will oppose any such plan. Unless therefore we are prepared to send such an armament along with the vessels which convey the horses as will secure them not only against the attack of lawless freebooters, but against the power of the states itself, the expedition had better not be attempted. It would in fact in my opinion involve us in a war with Sind. This is a consequence however which I do not think at all to be regretted, provided the state of our finance will admit of our going to war; for I conceive that we shall never obtain the navigation of the Indus without a rupture with the amirs.

I question much however if Ranjit Singh himself will be at all satisfied with the proposal to send the present by the Indus. I know not if his feelings of jealousy are as strong as those of the amirs of Sind, but I suspect that instead of supporting us in our demands on the amirs of Sind to admit of the navigation of the Indus, he would unite with them in throwing obstacles in our way, if not in offering actual resistance. Government however must be far better informed of the disposition both of Ranjit Singh and of the amirs of Sind than I can be. But of this I am satisfied that the most able logician that ever existed will never be able to persuade either the former or the latter that in demanding the free navigation of the Indus we have merely commercial objects in view.

A skilful agent with Ranjit Singh may no doubt acquire much useful information, and he may be eminently useful if he can prevail on that chief to enter into our views with regard to the navigation of the Indus and its tributary streams. But in this object I think he will fail. Whenever the time arrives when from the advance of the Russians into central Asia it becomes necessary to take measures of defence, an agent should then be sent to Ranjit Singh, but he should have not less than 40 thousand men at his back. The chief of Lahore must then either come into our plans of defence, or he must be subdued. But until some more decided indication of the designs of Russia renders defensive measures necessary, I should think it our wisest policy to abstain as much as possible from any measures which may indicate the apprehension of such an event. To obtain the fullest information regarding the state of the countries that lie between us and our expected opponent is highly desirable, and for that purpose I would encourage adventurers both European and native to penetrate into these countries. But I would send no diplomatic mission, nor any merchant even, with the name

and sanction of government. With regard to the Indus, if Ranjit Singh can be brought to concur in our proposal to navigate that river the sooner coercive measures are adopted to oblige the amirs of Sind to come into our views the better. But if both these powers are decidedly opposed to this measure, it had better I conceive not be attempted at present.

231. *Bentinck to T. H. Maddock.*[1] Private. Copy

Calcutta. 4 August 1830

Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letters of the 12th and 15th July.

I beg in the first instance to express the real gratification which I feel from the conviction that after so long a period of the weakest and most disgraceful agency, the affairs of the British government are at last confided to hands, by which they will be administered ably and honourably. This expectation that your character had given me every reason to entertain, has been amply confirmed by the firmness and decision already evinced in the various difficult and disagreeable transactions, with which you have had to deal, and I feel perfectly satisfied that the sequel will serve more strongly to support these first favourable impressions.

With respect to all occurrences at Lucknow I am very anxious to be regularly and minutely informed of them. Whenever it may be inconvenient to make them the subject of an official despatch, I beg that you will report directly to myself. But I am desirous that as far as possible all correspondence should pass through the regular official channel. A public and recorded procedure is the best preservative against the unpleasant contingencies so easily generated in such a seat of corruption and intrigue as that of the Lucknow durbar.

No obligation of the supreme government is in my judgment more imperative than that of reforming the administration of Oudh, and I am determined, if possible, to effect it. It is most desirable that this should be done by the royal authority exclusively. Direct interference, which is in fact nothing more or less than the transfer of the government from the king to the resident, is, as far as my observation goes, the very worst course to be pursued. By far the better plan would be if our advice and remonstrances pass unheeded, and if oppression and misrule, under the sanction of our authority and protection should continue, at once to set aside the king, either by governing in his name, or by placing a more efficient substitute in his place. I hope and trust that no such extremity may come to pass.

231. [1] Maddock, Sir Thomas Herbert, appointed by Bentinck in 1829 to succeed Ricketts as his political resident at Lucknow, Oudh. Had served previously as resident at Bhopal, and in 1831 went to Nepal. Became member of the supreme council, 1843–9. *D.N.B.*

I feel disposed to place great confidence in the new minister. He is no doubt a man of little principle; a master of intrigue, and will make all the money he can. But he is an able and energetic man, and, as I have heard, a very good administrator. The districts once under his charge are described to have been highly flourishing and prosperous. He has to do with a wayward, conceited and almost imbecile sovereign. He must take his own course in leading such a character: if he cannot succeed, I doubt whether any other minister can.

I approve very much of all you have done regarding the ex-minister. Mr. Rickett's conduct upon this subject has been most inconsistent and in some respects quite unintelligible. His confinement of him in the first instance, was, I am satisfied, done at the express desire of the king. The story now got up must be a falsehood from beginning to end. Why Mr. Ricketts, when the minister's house and property were under our safeguard, permitted any part of the king's troops to interfere, is quite unintelligible and was very reprehensible.

Since beginning this letter I have received yours of the 25th. There can be no doubt about the rejection of the loan. Unfortunately for our reputation the native princes seem to think that money and favour are the sole objects of all our policy: and I think they are too much warranted in the belief. We are going immediately to pay off the Gwalior loan and I shall be happy to see the day when all our pecuniary obligations to native princes shall be discharged.

232. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Confidential

India Board. 7 August 1830

My dear Lord,

It was a great misfortune to us to lose on the same day Sir John Macdonald[1] and Major Hart. The declining health of the shah makes it by no means improbable that within a short period the whole of Persia may be involved in civil war. But of that state of anarchy all we wish to see arise is an independent monarchy, but an independent monarch must have some good troops, and the want of a tried leader to the Persian army may be of more serious consequence than the want of a regular envoy to our interests. Immediately on hearing of the death of Major Hart I sent for Colonel Monteith, with the intention of proposing to him to set out immediately for Persia, but unfortunately Colonel Monteith had had the curiosity to go to Algiers, and where my letter may find him, or when, if ever, in the present state of France I know not. I am now thinking of Major Davey who was formerly in Persia and who is, I understand, a very excellent officer, and

232. [1] The British government's representative with the shah of Persia, 1824–30. *D.N.B.*

not at all [Persian], a defect which has been attributed to Colonel Monteith.

The next point was who should succeed Sir J. Macdonald? It is essential that whoever does succeed him should be a man of energy and ability, discreet and firm. He must too have the entire confidence of the government here, for we are nearer to Persia than you are, and are in a position to judge more correctly of what should be done in Persia which forms a connecting link between the policy of the east and that of Europe.

Of course the first person who occurred was Mr. Elphinstone but I am sorry to say his health has led him to decline returning to Asia. The next was Mr. Jenkins who was so long at Nagpur and who so much distinguished himself there. He would have accepted without hesitation had he not been committed in an election at Shrewsbury. I heard from him yesterday and he does not absolutely decline and my impression is that he will go. If he should not, there is a very excellent man here who would set off in ten days, Colonel Briggs, the administrator of Khandesh and I am inclined to think the selection might fall upon him, but Jenkins is the man we wish to have in Persia.

You will ask, have you not thought of Sir Henry Willock? To him I have very strong objections. His known differences upon all public questions from Sir J. Macdonald would lead the Persians to suppose we had changed our views of policy; and differing as he did, I really do not see how he could act well upon the instructions he would receive. No man acts well whose heart is not in the business he is employed about. I feel I could not, unless he be very different from what I take him to be, give my confidence to Sir H. Willock and it is essential that the envoy in Persia should have the entire confidence of the board of control under which he practically serves.

233. *H. S. Graeme to Bentinck*

Nagpur. 8 August 1830

My Lord,

I have been unwilling to make any communication to your Lordship respecting the state of affairs at this residency till I should have sufficient opportunity to observe the character and disposition of the raja; though I should not have been so long silent had not the country borne the appearance of entire tranquillity and freedom from intrigue; many visits, made private at the request of the raja, have passed between us since the exchange of the first public complimentary visits. I have found him quick and ready in his observations on matters of a pecuniary nature and connected with considerations affecting his personal authority, and he has paid willing attention to such suggestions as I

have yet had occasion to offer him. There is nothing, however, extraordinary in his quickness, it is only a more characteristic feature than judgment or steadiness in him. It is understood that he wants application and regularity in business and that many of his occupations are puerile and licentious and too long pursued. I think he has been led by the suggestions of those who are endeavouring to confirm and increase a power and influence which private rather than public qualifications have lately acquired for them, to be disappointed that the restoration of the reserved districts has not been accompanied by a more perfect renunciation of interference with his sovereignty on the part of the British government. There is apparent in his acts and observations, a jealousy of that interference which though it may be ungrateful with reference to the late voluntary relinquishment of power in possession and undisputed, is yet to be easily accounted for by the natural desire of the raja, and more especially of those dependants whose ambition is at work to aggrandise itself, to be unchecked in the appropriation of the funds of the state. This wish to exclude interference was early evinced in the first communication of the emissary of the raja who met me at the second stage from the boundary of the Nagpur territories. He hoped, he said, that the same intercourse would subsist between the raja and me as had subsisted between him and Mr. Wilder, that is, that there should be frequent private, confidential interviews and that no person subject to the authority of the raja should visit the resident except by an application to the raja and accompanied by an attendant of the raja's. I laughingly told the emissary immediately that such an arrangement was out of the question, that I should be quite unable to get any true information of the state of the country if visits to me were placed under such restrictions, and that though I should be most happy to pay and receive visits in a cordial and confidential manner as often as it suited the convenience of the raja, I must consider myself quite at liberty to receive without any intermediate formality whatever, other visits I thought it desirable to receive to enable me to acquire information of the state of the country. In two or three conferences the raja's remarks were anxiously directed to the same point and I earnestly endeavoured to persuade him that my situation rendered it advisable that I should be accessible to everybody, that it was impossible that my advice in matters of importance in which it was expected to be offered to him could have the proper insight, or that it should even occur to me to give any if I were cut off from all but one source of intelligence. I begged of him to take no offence at this line of conduct which I meant to adopt. That it was very far from my intention to set up influential persons in opposition to those whom he had selected, that indeed my only desire was that the instruments selected by himself should work well and the tranquillity and contentment of the country be ensured through those means. I was very averse, I assured him, to interfere in matters of little consequence but anxious to act in the spirit of the late treaty, and by doing every honour

to him personally, and offering friendly and private suggestions when abuses were creeping in, to obtain for his own management that degree of success and celebrity as to render useless any minute interference on the part of the British government. He was apprehensive that by admitting everybody I might hear stories about him which might make an unfavourable impression, which he would not have an opportunity of removing. I told him we were all liable to such exaggerations of our foibles but that I was not eager to seek for them in him or to lay too great a stress upon them, or to use them to misrepresent him to your Lordship, or to lower him in your estimation, I was willing only to consider the general effects of his rule. If justice were impartially administered; if a moderate system of finance were maintained; if oppression in the execution of it were kept within bounds; if the troops were correctly paid, if intrigues with foreign states and aggressions towards them were restrained, he would find that no little tittle tattle I might hear would induce me to make an unfavourable report of the existing order of things. If there were otherwise anything which it would be friendly to bring to his notice, I should not hesitate, I told him, to do so privately. Mr. Wilder's situation relatively to the raja was different from mine. He had under his own control all the reserved districts with European superintendents who could keep him informed of everything. The auxiliary force was under his immediate authority. With such power in his possession the raja could not well misuse his authority in the districts which had been transferred to him and Mr. Wilder could not want either the means of obtaining information respecting the state of the country without any direct intercourse with persons of influence residing in the city. The raja was still young and inexperienced and he had for a long time, from the nature of Mr. Wilder's communications with him, expectations of being liberated from all restraint upon his power. His conduct was therefore at all times accommodating and submissive; yet it may be doubted whether Mr. Wilder has learnt the character and disposition of the raja so accurately as he might have done had he been more accessible to others, for it appears to me that his commendations of his abilities and fitness were too unqualified. The state of things which has sprung out of the abolition of the auxiliary force is no doubt more gratifying to the raja and all those men of enterprise and talent who hope for rapid preferment than the regular and methodical system of management which has hitherto prevailed. The great cause for apprehension is that oppression may be revived in arbitrary levies of land rent and other branches of revenue, and in the abuse of authority over the persons and property of individuals. Notwithstanding the reduction of the auxiliary force, and the substitution of one under the sole control of the raja, the effect of British influence can hardly be said to have ceased so long as there is a subsidiary force in the country. The raja must feel his strength in it and the population must see in it cause to despair of any resistance to oppression, in a case of emergency which might

threaten the integrity of the raja's government, if the interference of the British government in the important affairs of the state is considered to be really withdrawn. But I do not understand it to be the intention of the supreme government that this interference should be completely withheld. The last treaty provided indeed for its being exercised in cases of importance in the way of advice by the resident and for the consequences attendant upon a continued neglect of that advice. I conceive that the interference should be used so as to give as little personal offence, or to impair the dignity of the raja, as little in the eyes of the people as possible, but not to be so lax as to be ignorant of what is going on in the country, or to permit the prevalence of a system of general oppression or abuse of authority or to allow too great an accumulation of arrears of pay to be due to the troops, or a very lavish expenditure of the public resources, without endeavouring to remedy them by friendly advice. At present the resident can know little of what is going on except by rumour or by means of private agents. These sources of information are not to be neglected but they are not all that should be open to him. There should be a free and regular communication to him of every matter of importance that takes place, on the part of the raja, and some respectable person about him. He should be periodically, and as occasions occur, kept acquainted with the nature and amount of the settlements of revenues, the actual collections and balances, the civil charges, the expense of the troops and the arrears due to them, their strength and the mode of their employment on any large scale, the alienations of lands in jaghir and the state of the treasury. Without a clear insight into these matters the resident might be unprepared for any sudden disturbance, arising from causes of discontent which he ought to be able to trace from time to time or for any serious failure of the state resources. It is my intention to persuade the raja to establish now an open and confidential communication on these points as will assure me that nothing of material consequence is concealed from me while on my part I shall studiously avoid to importune and harass him on trifles. It is to be regretted that he scarcely ever sits in open court to transact business and that the little part he acts in public business at all is done in private in concert with one or two favourites.

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234. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Private

India Board. 11 August 1830

My dear Lord,

I have just received your minute on the removal of the government from Calcutta. In fact we had no choice the law being against it, but I am much more satisfied that you should be up the country by yourself than with your colleagues in the council, not only because they have

quite enough to do at Calcutta, but because I really prefer your sole judgment upon all the important matters which will come before you in the upper provinces. I state the truth. What I have seen of members of council has not given them a high place in my estimation. They are selected much more on account of their seniority than on their fitness, and seem to serve much more to embarrass the government than to enlighten them. Whenever unfortunately they have been placed in chief command bad government has been the consequence. In my opinion the chiefs of all the presidencies should be sent from home and carry out with them unbiased minds, and unprejudiced, unjobbing dispositions. We have of late undoubtedly seen at Madras and at Bombay many great men educated in India; but these have been rare and I regret to say the race of great men seems to be disappearing at least as fast in India as anywhere else. I have it in my thoughts to relieve the several governors from the controversial minutes of their councillors by giving the councillors more to do and making them what they used to be, heads of departments. I have had doubts as to the expediency of maintaining these members of council. I am inclined to think a lieutenant governor would answer all useful purposes. The governor might obtain information and opinions whenever he pleased. It seems to me he should be what heads of boards in England are in practice, although not in theory. Mr. Elphinstone than whom no one has ever been more respected by members of council, still thinks they do more good than harm, in that the good they do is this, that a governor considers more carefully his own propositions when he knows they must be immediately submitted to persons not infrequently very desirous of thwarting him and of pleasing the court by their minutes. I mean to do this for governors—they never shall see the minutes of a member of council differing from their nomination noticed in a letter from home. If the member of council says what is good in itself it will be attended to, but he must not be led to suppose he can make himself a name by being in opposition to his chief. Everything depends upon it, and here I must express my admiration of the zeal, the assiduity and the excellent intentions with which you devote yourself to the laborious and harassing duties of your great office. You may be assured that I do you full justice.

I fear the hurry and uncertainty in which we were kept from day to day from the commencement of the late king's illness has caused the omission on my part of thanking you for the very interesting comments you were good enough to send over on the notes of your colleague Sir Charles Metcalfe and of Mr. Mackenzie. I have only communicated those notes to two members of the cabinet, Lord Clare and Mr. Elphinstone—to all confidentially. The governor has had the goodness to add his memo upon the several subjects treated of.

I have placed the supreme court papers, those I have received from the presidencies, in the hands of Sir G. Munday and I shall likewise obtain the judgment of Sir R. Rice, an ex-judge of Bombay who seems

to me an able sensible fair man. I am very anxious to have a bill, which will prevent all future collisions, ready by the meeting of parliament.

The defects of the revenue arrangements in the upper provinces seem to have been frequent changes of superintendence, want of ability in the superintendent and probably overassessment. A perpetual settlement, not very wise anywhere, seems particularly objectionable in a country where it is difficult if not impossible to raise any additional sums by indirect taxation. By the perpetual settlement we cannot collect its revenue when there is a falling off of produce and cannot raise it where there is an evidence of cultivation. The revenue does not have at any time but at the commencement of the system an equitable relation to the needs of the people. Surely a twenty years' [settlement] would produce all the good effects of a perpetual settlement and avoid most of its evils.

I have long wished more of our European regiments were in the upper provinces. In the lower provinces they are really not required except as dispensable forces for service beyond sea, as in the late war with Ava, and the climate of the north would suit so much better the European constitutions. The loss of lives is terrible, and I fear the troops are often inefficient from habits of drunkenness. Pray inform me how the plan for commuting the daily dram answers. You will see a similar commutation has just been introduced into all the king's regiments on foreign service, 1d a day is the sum given—I am anxious to hear how your commissioners work. The king was inclined to make Lord Combermere a privy councillor, but on having a representation made to him of the circumstances attending Lord C.'s conduct on the batta question he then saw the propriety of not confering that mark of his favour. This is of course confidential to yourself.

235. *Bentinck's minute on steam navigation*

16 August 1830

The committee of steam navigation have solicited further aid from the government in prosecution of their original plan of establishing the communication by the Cape of Good Hope.

The question is one of great importance to the mercantile community both here and in England, and equally so in my opinion to the efficiency of that control which the home authorities have to exercise over the local governments; but I am not aware that the affairs and interest subject to the supreme government, except as far as we ourselves should be better controlled, could be in any way promoted by a steam communication with England; and therefore I do not feel that we should be justified in expending any more money upon this undertaking; the more so, because as a private speculation, I do not think it possible to succeed. The steam navigation that comes properly

within our cognizance is that which concerns the communications internal and external between the different parts of our immense empire, and which, if it can be successfully established, as no doubt it may, will constitute a great addition to our real as well as to our imagined power.

Of the two routes by the Cape and the Red Sea, it strikes me, that in time of peace, both in respect to despatch and cheapness, a decided preference is to be given to the latter. In either case, it can only be successful under the immediate and direct management of the governments at home and in India. I think it should be established upon the single principle of quickest conveyance of the public mails without reference to any set off against the charges by profits to be derived from the conveyance of passengers or merchandise. If Egypt shall become a well established and the regular route between India and England, large steamers will be provided by private speculation, and in that case the letters as at present may be conveyed by them, and the proposed post office establishment may be saved.

Of the practicability and utility of this measure there can be no doubt, and the sole consideration would be the expense; and this in part as far as the Indian half of the voyage is concerned is already incurred by the construction of the *Hugh Lindsay*, for this especial service. To keep up a monthly communication, two other vessels would be required, but smaller and less costly vessels would answer the purpose.

On the European side another steamer added to the establishment of the Ionian Islands, would seem ample, because the same vessel after dropping the mails at Corfu, would, without making any great detour, convey those intended for India to Alexandria.

The expense therefore would not be excessive, and on many occasions would be well compensated by the certain and quick intelligence of events to the authorities at home, and by the immediate return of their orders, together with an instant application of a practical remedy to the evil, whatever it might be. By the present mode of conveyance, the average communication may be taken at four months. At some seasons, it approaches nearer to five, and upon more occasions than one within the last two years, we have been above six months without any direct arrival from England. Besides, the departures of vessels are quite uncertain, and hence an additional cause of delay; and if the tedious process be taken into account which the complicated machinery of the home government renders unavoidable, before any question of importance can be decided, it is not overshooting the mark to say that the average period between the date of the letter and receipt of the answer cannot be taken at less than eighteen months. It must be obvious that such distant and tardy direction, as it is necessarily weak, so it leads to an undue assumption of authority on the part of the subordinate government. Upon financial grounds alone, how often are not expenses incurred, the raising of regiments for example, for which there would be

no pretext, if within a short period orders from home could be received? And again, is it not within our daily observation, how orders affecting personal interests, and reverting the acts of the council, are subjected even to a treble reference, for the purpose of gaining time and of evading compliance? I have had the curiosity to trace the march and countermarch of the two orders respecting the six extra regiments and the half-batta.

The dates of the different despatches will be found in the annexed memorandum.[1] The superior authority never changed its original opinion upon either of those questions; but observe the delays which this discussion caused. The former involved a sum of ten lakhs per annum, and had this correspondence been conveyed by a steam communication, one half of the expense would have been saved, which would have gone far to have paid the whole expense of the present proposition, had the measure been then introduced.

Although I prefer the route by Egypt, I am quite of opinion, that it would be perfectly practicable by the Cape, but at more cost, more risk of delay from accidents, and much more circuitous; still with so vast an interest at stake as this great empire and its better government, good policy would seem to justify the attempt by both routes.

If eventually this measure shall take effect under the auspices of the East India Company, I cannot too strongly recommend to their notice, as a person eminently qualified for the command of a vessel, Mr. Waghorn of their pilot service, whose perseverance, extraordinary exertions and respectability of character entitle him to every consideration.

236. *Bentinck's minute on road improvement*

21 August 1830

The report of the survey between Burdwan and Bihar is confined to the state of the existing roadways. It ought to have been more comprehensive, and to have embraced observations on such deviations from the present line as it might be expedient to give to a new road, carried in the general direction of the one sketched on the map, either to avoid bad ground, or to reduce the distance. To have done this however, where much of the country is covered with jungle, might perhaps have required more time than the surveyors could devote to it during one season.

It appears from the report that a communication does exist along the whole line of route, and that it is practicable during a part of the year for wheeled carriages. The survey too is so far satisfactory that it fully ascertains, not only that there is no obstacle, of any consequence, to making a direct road between Bihar and Burdwan, but that the intermediate country presents facilities for constructing and preserving a

235. [1] Omitted.

permanent one. It would be intercepted by no river, and scarcely by any but petty hill streams. In the neighbourhood of Kurruckacap the road twice crosses a small nullah named Ursee, but it appears that it might be turned north of the nullah altogether and with advantage to the general direction of the road. Again, in the descent from the Gumgee Hills to the plains of Bihar, the road twice crosses the Tuckry Nuddy, but this impediment might also be apparently avoided by carrying the road to the south of that river.

No mention being made of difficulties from abrupt acclivities or otherwise, the line of road would seem to traverse a country generally of very moderate elevation, or of which the rise and fall is very gradual throughout. The villages are more numerous than I had expected, and the cultivation appears to be considerable, chiefly rice; but regarding the soil, products, traffic, and capabilities of the tract surveyed the report is rather meagre.

By the road laid down the distance between Burdwan and Patna would be full 80 miles less than by the present route, via Hazaribagh and Sherghati, and there is no doubt that in many places the line might be rendered more direct. But even that saving of distance between Calcutta and Patna would be of very great importance in many respects. Besides the commercial and political consequences of the road as merely bringing nearer to each other the capitals of Bengal and Bihar, the benefits it would confer upon the country through which it would be conducted ought not to be overlooked.

I feel disinclined to propose any expenditure of money in opening a new thoroughfare in the direction indicated, however apparent the ultimate advantages may be, but I think the existing road merits attention as one which is susceptible of great improvement at a trifling expense. Under this impression I would suggest that a copy of the report and of the sketch should be sent to Captains Vetch and Sage, who should be desired to communicate with each other, in concert probably with Major Cheape, and to avail themselves, when the proper season returns, of opportunities for inspecting as much of the road as their leisure will permit. Captain Jones at Gaya may be employed under Captain Sage's instructions to examine the portion of the road most distant from Burdwan and Bihar. These officers should, after satisfying themselves by personal inspection, state the degree to which the present roadway can be gradually improved by the labour alone of the convicts of the neighbouring zillahs, placed under their direction. At first the labour on the road should be limited to cutting away jungle, to casing the banks of nullahs, and to levelling and here and there raising the soil. In this manner a few gangs of convicts, under qualified overseers, would I should think put the road into very tolerable order in two or three seasons. The more general raising of parts of the road, constructing water courses etc. might be undertaken afterwards, and prosecuted gradually as government could afford the means, or local circumstances might offer inducements to go on.

237. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Copy

Calcutta. 25 August 1830

My dear Lord,

In my letter of the 2nd August, I sent you a letter from Major Stewart with his opinions upon the subject of counteracting the designs of Russia, in reference to your secret despatch. You will have remarked an opinion upon the increased security that would follow from an increase to our European population. We have lately ordered a detachment of Europeans to the Khasi Hills, at the recommendation of Mr. Scott,[1] the governor-general's agent in the north-east frontier. We have sent them for the double purpose of overawing the troublesome tribes on those hills, and of ascertaining the effects of the climate upon the constitution of Europeans. Mr. Scott is a very sensible, zealous, active officer and he richly deserves the favourable opinion you expressed of him in one of your letters. He has various plans for the civilization of the natives and bringing into activity the resources of the country. The papers herewith sent explain his views: but in his own official letters addressed to the chief secretary, you will find a project for the establishment in this hotter climate, nearly approaching to those of the best temperature in Europe, military colonies. The plan, as he has framed it, seems to me wild and impracticable, but I have no doubt, that Europeans will be induced to settle in those hills, if further trial confirms the belief entertained of their healthiness; and a population once created, they will naturally, in time of danger, be ready to defend their homes and property. I have always heard that the Russian military colonies have been a complete failure. These hills will at any rate make an excellent station for an European regiment. It is close to water carriage, and with our command of steam, the troops may be quickly transported to the point where they may be required.

238. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft. Private

Calcutta. 26 August 1830
Recd. London. 11 January 1831

Dear Sir,

I have written by the *Pattison* which left town this morning to Mr. Astell, and I trouble you with a few lines per *Craven*, a Liverpool ship, which is about to sail.

We have no letters or despatches per *Thomas* from London on the 25th April, the only arrival direct since the Madras China ships that

237. [1] Scott, David, 1786–1831, commissioner in Assam. See Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography*.

sailed on the 30th March. This is a great disappointment. I wrote to you a long letter of the 27th of last month.

I really do not recollect a single fact of any prominent character which I have to communicate. All is quiet from one end of India to the other. All our political relations are going on much as usual. Our civil finance committee continues to make very reliable reports which I am sorry to observe are more easily drawn up than executed. This committee has nearly finished its business. Indeed two of its most distinguished members will leave India in the ensuing cold season, Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Hill. The latter is affording me great assistance in forwarding the co-operation which I wish to obtain from the judges in the improvement of the police of Calcutta, and in our general judicial arrangements. We could not have a court more happily constituted to draw well with the government. I am glad that Sirs John Malcolm and Grant have at last come to a compromise upon the question of the order of council for the return of the latter to England. The threat of transmission seemed to us far to exceed the intentions of the secretary of state, if immediate obedience were not given by Sir J. Grant to the order. The construction put by us, I mean both by the members of council and the judges of the supreme court, upon the duties assigned to Sir J. Malcolm, was that they were confined to the actual delivery of the letter. The judges will not allow Sir J. Grant to practice here, until some revocation of that order shall be received from home. In the event of resignation of Sir J. Grant or otherwise I hope this learned lawyer may be less troublesome at the bar than on the bench. His parting brief to the authorities at Bombay in his allusion to the slave case is very annoying. I have seen the papers this morning. They are perfectly satisfactory qua the government, but Sir John Malcolm's instructions though guarded, are not exactly in accordance with the order of government and there is no explanation of the fact of the exchange of the two boys at sea, apparently the only doubtful part of the transaction.

I must conclude for the present.

239. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Copy

Calcutta. 26 August 1830

My dear Lord

The enclosed letters from Sir John Malcolm and Captain Campbell conveyed to me the melancholy intelligence of the death of Sir John Macdonald in whom the public interests will suffer a very severe loss. He appears to have been a very able officer. These communications reached me yesterday and the despatch of the *Pattison* today prevents me from consulting my colleagues upon the question of filling the vacancy. But as my own opinion is very decided upon the course which seems under

all circumstances the most expedient, I have no doubt of the acquiescence of the other members of government in my recommendation.

Though the mission in Persia is annexed to the Indian establishment and is subordinate to the supreme government, it must be considered as virtually, both from the greater importance of its connection with the politics of Europe in respect to Russia, and from the greater facility of communicating with London than Calcutta, to be under the immediate direction of the home authorities. I recollect that Sir John Malcolm strongly urged Mr. Canning to give to the envoy a direct appointment from the crown, as increasing very much the importance of the mission in the mind of the Persian court. At the time, I strongly concurred in this opinion, and as I never knew the exact reasons of the present arrangement, the only ones that I could imagine were the convenience of separating Persian affairs from European diplomacy and of placing the charge of the mission to the debit of the Indian government. As Persia's independence can only be saved by European interference the arguments in favour of Sir John Malcolm's original proposition appear to me more conclusive than ever, and upon this ground alone, I should be unwilling to make any arrangement for filling up the appointment, without a previous knowledge of the sentiments of the government at home upon this question.

I am the more disposed to this opinion from the confidence reposed in Captain Campbell[1] by Sir John Macdonald, and by the assurance of Sir John Malcolm, who is thoroughly acquainted with the present politics of Persia, as well as with the character of the present assistant, that no inconvenience can arise from the delay, which this reference must produce in the nomination of an envoy. Major Stewart is certainly the officer in India whom I should select above all others. Public opinion is unanimous upon his superior qualifications. I do not know Captain Campbell and therefore cannot say whether he is of sufficient calibre for so important a post. If the selection rested with me, and Captain Campbell should not be confirmed from home, among others, Captain Murray, Sir George's brother, would hold a high place. But I cannot at present speak with the same confidence as I shall soon be enabled to do of his eligibility for the charge. To obtain an influence with the court of Persia, and to deter the intrigues and designs of Russia in regard to India, which can best be done by the envoy at Tabriz, requires on the part of this officer a rare union of the highest qualities. In the selection, no favour should be shown but to real merit.

A strong application has been made for the appointment by Sir H. Willock, and under the circumstances of the orders of this government not having been communicated to him till after Sir John Macdonald's death, the forbearance and delicacy of his conduct appear to me highly creditable. The feeling of the supreme council is much in Sir Henry's favour and the testimonies of approbation which he has at several times

239. [1] Son of Robert Campbell, director of the East India Company, and deputy chairman in 1830–1, chairman in 1831–2.

received from the king's government are extremely favourable. When it was determined that one assistant only should be attached to the mission, I was induced by the indisposition and want of confidence existing on the part of Sir John Macdonald towards Sir H. Willock to prefer Capt. Campbell. Sir John Macdonald never explained as he ought to have done, the grounds of this indisposition and the absence of this explanation necessarily gave rise to a doubt on the part of my colleagues, whether this supercession might be perfectly fair. His nomination however, proved to be consonant with your Lordship's opinion and upon this ground as well as upon the additional sanction of Sir John Malcolm's recommendation, I feel no difficulty in not complying with Sir Henry Willock's request.

I hope my decision in this case may meet with your approbation.

240. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private

Calcutta. 26 August 1830

My dear Sir,

Yesterday I received from your son, assistant to the envoy in Persia and from Sir John Malcolm intelligence of the death of Sir John Macdonald, and of charge of the mission having devolved upon your son. I have written today to Lord Ellenborough to say that I should not disturb the arrangement pending a reference to the home authorities. The ground I have taken for this opinion is that in Mr. Canning's time it had been strongly my feeling in concurrence with the advice then given by Sir John Malcolm, that considering the greater communication between Tabriz and London than with Calcutta, the real control immediately exercised by the home authorities over the envoy, and further the greater connection of Persian politics with Europe than with India [that] the appointment thereto [should] emanate directly from the crown. I have therefore on the present occasion thought it better not to make any appointment here, until the main question might be decided at home. This is the most favourable course I could have taken for your son's interests, and I hope, if he should not ultimately succeed, that at least he will have an opportunity of making himself known. It is only candid I should say, that with the importance attached to his mission by the king's ministers I should have felt it my duty to have selected one of the ablest men in the whole Indian service for the charge. But I was gratified nevertheless in feeling warranted by the confidence in your son expressed by Sir John Macdonald in his last moments, in entertaining the belief that no injury to the public service could arise from the delay of a reference. I beg you will communicate this information to the chairman. The letters have not yet been in circulation, and therefore for a few days the subject cannot be brought upon the proceedings of government.

241. *Bentinck's minute on press policy*

6 September 1830

The honourable court have directed the publication of their despatch No. 37 conveying their final orders on the half-batta question.

With the final adjudication of this reference at home, it is much to be desired that no revival of former discussions should take place here, and that the tone of complaint, deemed so objectionable, should not again be heard. To prevent, as far as may be possible, the publication of remarks (the disrespectful nature of which may be too certainly anticipated) that this despatch will call forth it seems necessary that a prohibition should proceed from the secretary to government to all editors of papers, from admitting into their columns any observations whatever upon this official document.

I am aware that this recommendation exposes me to two charges.

First: of omission in not having on the first appearance of discontent when the orders were originally published, adopted the measure which I now propose for the purpose of preventing the publication of opinions and remarks, tending to foment and keep alive the existing agitation and extremely disrespectful towards the authorities from whence they emanated.

Secondly: of inconsistency in now interfering with the liberty of the press, of which I have been the advocate and with which after the example of my predecessor, I have not meddled.

Upon the first point, many I know are of opinion that the public press contributed greatly to the discontent. I see no reason for this opinion. The order itself so many years the topic of discussion and of contention between the authorities in England and in India, was quite sufficient to excite universal dissatisfaction, and it is quite as clear that it could only be set at rest by a definitive resolution of the superior authority. The adjutant general of the Madras army, who was at the time at Calcutta, described the angry feeling and language so loudly expressed here, and all the signs of the times, to be precisely similar to those which prevailed before the Madras mutiny, and he anticipated a similar explosion. Let it be remarked that the mutiny did take place at Madras, and though there was not a shadow of liberty belonging to the press there, the communication and interchange of sentiment and concern was as general as if it had passed through the medium of a daily press, without the reserve which the responsibility of the editor more or less requires for his own security. My firm belief is that more good than harm was produced by the open and public declaration of these sentiments of the army. There was a vent to public feeling and the mischief was open to public view and the result is so far confirmatory of the opinion here given that no overt act took place. There is a great distinction to be made, both in the nature of the offence itself, and in the treatment to be applied to it, between the expression of dissatisfaction

on the first infliction of supposed wrong and injustice; and the clamour and censure which should be cast upon the final and solemn adjudication of the governing powers.

With respect to the second point I retain my former opinion, that the liberty of the press is a most useful engine in promoting the good administration of the country, and in some respect supplies that lamentable imperfection of control, which from local position, extensive territory and other causes the supreme council cannot adequately exercise. But I have always said and thought, that as well with the liberty of the press as of the subject, it is indispensable for the safety of the empire, that the governor-general in council should have the power of suspending the one and of transmuting the other, whenever the safety of the state should call for the exercise of such authority. I think the present case an exception to the general rule. I apprehend no positive outrage or open violence to authority, but I do apprehend the possibility of unmilitary and insubordinate language, highly discreditable to the character of the army, which the government could not overlook and which might end in a conflict between the government and its officers, that could not fail to be attended with the greatest public inconvenience.

242. *Bentinck's minute on Persia*

6 September 1830

The lamented death of Sir John Macdonald makes a vacancy in the appointment of envoy to Persia.

The politics of Persia, since the events of the last war are so much more connected with Europe than with India, and the envoy is, and must be so entirely under the control and direction of the home authorities, that I feel strongly of opinion, that the vacancy should not be permanently filled without a previous reference to the home authorities.

If it be so decided, the next question is, who shall remain in charge of the mission, Sir Henry Willock who is still in Persia, or Captain Campbell, the first assistant.

What may have been the cause of the want of confidence entertained by Sir John Macdonald towards Sir Henry Willock, and which appears to have been participated by the home authorities, I am in ignorance, but the inference is to my mind clearly deducible either that there existed a difference of opinion on Persian politics, or some counteraction of the envoy's designs, and as the views of Sir John Macdonald were entirely approved by his Majesty's ministers, I think it would be inexpedient to entrust the mission into any hands than those in which we may have the perfect assurance that the prescribed line of policy will undergo no alteration.

In Captain Campbell during his life, and in his last moments, Sir John Macdonald expressed the most entire confidence.

On the strength of this good opinion, which is strongly confirmed by the testimony of Sir John Malcolm, I am of opinion that the more satisfactory arrangement to the government at home, will be to confide the temporary charge of the mission to the first assistant, Captain Campbell.

I also beg leave to recommend that Dr. Macneil, the civil medical officer attached to the mission may act as first assistant until further orders. It is stated in Captain Campbell's letter, that this arrangement will not interfere with his medical duties.

243. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private and Confidential

8 September 1830

My dear Lord William,

Nothing but great anxiety on the subject of my late measures of reform and of my successor's having that full and cheerful aid which he will so much require at starting would make me write you again about the secretariat but many recent circumstances have tended to satisfy me of the force of what I have before written. Were I commencing my government or had one or two years, I should be easier under any change in our secretariat than I can be, when these are to be made within a few days probably of my departure and when I am to leave to my successor, all the bad temper, the jealousies and the embarrassment that a change will at the beginning (whatever effects it may have hereafter) produce. Instead of the very competent men now in office labouring to mature what has been recently done he would have two civil secretaries overloaded with work, a new military secretary looked at as an intruder into the department or a deputy of little value which would be worse. He would have two civil counsellors from whom he would have no certain support and who are far from free from that general feeling of irritation which cannot but pervade a service that has been so much reduced in appointments, and establishments. To meet all his difficulties which, considering the state of our finance and your orders and those of the court, are on the increase, he has only the secretariat, that as now constituted will enable him to overcome them, but a change that disturbed its action and lessened zeal or hurt temper would do mischief in a degree far beyond any good that could be anticipated and from reasons stated it could not be economical. There is only 23,000 Rs. between our actual establishment and the one proposed and that as I have stated can be saved if indispensable but I can honestly say that during the last two months I have had proof that the secretaries who are my commissioners and must be those of Lord Clare have discovered and checked abuses and expenses that have long

escaped notice, proving themselves in the exercise of their increased duties of investigation and control the most useful of public servants.

I am soon to quit. I shall leave none satisfied; even the secretaries of this government whose battle I have fought on public not private grounds are not so. They consider, I believe, that I compromise their claims by speaking so favourably as I do of a military man to be a military secretary, but in this as on other points, I have spoken my sentiments honestly. I see as your Lordship does its advantages, but I do not think that it is expedient to introduce it at the present period; at this presidency I plainly perceive it would be accompanied with more evil than good effects. I have learnt enough within these few days to convince me it or any change in the secretariat of this presidency would be attended with an excitement of feeling and a creation of difficulty and embarrassment in the conduct of public affairs that it is very desirable to avoid. I therefore do hope your Lordship will allow matters to rest as they are at present and allow the directors to judge the whole question with all the documents before them. I am sure this proceeding will be best for the public interests in every point of view. There is one associated with it in some degree which I shall soon transmit to Calcutta. It relates to the actual and prospective condition of the civil service of this presidency. Some measures must be taken and I think some may be adopted that will reconcile economy with a relief which, if not given will be productive of much evil to the public service—we do not want many civil servants in this quarter. I think affairs may be well administered with even fewer than are now employed, but as their numbers decrease we shall require increase of activity and talent and that can only be produced by hope being kept alive and the prospect of adequate reward to exertions. A dead or discontinued civil service will prove a useless burden of expense. The steamer goes on the 15th and you will see Sir J. P. Grant before you go up the country. He has continued to the last his efforts here to heat the kettle. I do not trouble you with any particulars. The ephemeral objects and results of late proceedings at Bombay will afford no adequate compensation to men's minds for the sacrifices made to attain them, but ungracious as many of my acts have been I have had much reason to be gratified with the European part of our little island. The natives are credulous and easily cajoled or deluded.

244. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

8 September 1830

My dear Lord William,

I have written you a long private and confidential letter under this date.

My colleagues are far from being yet reconciled to changes at

Baroda which you approved. The one upon which I am now anxious to have an early decision is that the political commissioner should have limits assigned him around his residence at the Shah Bagh near Ahmadabad within which he should have jurisdiction, not the judge of that zillah. This I consider so essential for the protection of the chiefs who visit him that if it cannot be done he must change his residence (at a good deal of inconvenience) to the Gaikwar's territories. My excellent colleague Mr. Morris would subject the angel Gabriel if he came to dwell in the Bombay province to the common process of the adalat. I am just looking at the admirable position we shall have at this place for our corps of engineers and soldiers. Never was a plan that combined so much of economy with improvement in every way. My colleagues, I am happy to say, approve of it entirely. I would not have troubled you with it as it was a mere evidence of the court's orders and that under the happiest circumstances, but as it involved a great change in an establishment, I thought it prudent *in these times* to give you previous notice and to ask your approbation which I was quite assured you would give. Nothing should have prevented this obvious and beneficial arrangement long ago but patronage, patronage, patronage. Keeping engineers where not wanted and spoiling regimental officers by making them overseers of labourers. . . .

245. *Bentinck to Peter Auber.* Draft. Private

Calcutta. 11 September 1830

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 15th May per *Andromache* received on the 1st September. The court's despatch on the half-batta question was received by the same ship, and was published 4 days ago. It was accompanied by a prohibition from the secretary to government, to all editors not to allow any comments upon it to be introduced into their papers. The officers here had been prepared for this disappointment by the private letters recently received. The disappointment is however considerable, but I hope that they have already seen the folly and uselessness of any measures of a violent character. I send this by a Liverpool ship, the *D. of Lancaster*. The *Euphrates* direct will sail in the next week, when I shall write to Mr. Astell and the effect of this order may then be better known.

I must say a word in reply to your remarks upon my minute on the more extended admission of Europeans, and adverting to the use that might be made of it against the administrators of the concerns of the Company, you think it would have been better addressed to the secret committee. Nothing certainly could be further from my view than producing any unfavourable result of this kind. I am a decided advocate for the interposition of some check between the crown and the governments

and people of India, and I know not how this can be better accomplished than by some such arrangement as that which has hitherto existed. That improvement might be made in the present system, I suppose no one doubts; but it must be admitted to have worked well. I believe India to have been better governed than any of the foreign settlements of Great Britain. I knew that the feeling of the court was against the further introduction of Europeans, but I was by no means aware of the extreme sensitiveness upon this point, that was indicated by their despatch, written upon their first knowledge through a French paper of our having allowed Europeans to hold lands in their own names and before the receipt of our official communication. You have since learnt what an innocent measure this has been, and how totally inoperative, only one individual having taking advantage of it. Sir Charles Metcalfe without any knowledge on my part of his intention, brought forward the general subject; and in recording my sentiments I conceived myself as only combating an old and injurious prejudice, but it did not occur to me then, nor do I now see, that the court or the Company have any direct interest in the question.

When Europeans were their rivals in trade, then there was a good reason for the exclusion: but now the trade is not worth having; and the only use now made of it as a bad remittance, would be improved, if their investment was bought in the open market, instead of being dearly manufactured and prepared by their own agency.

You will receive about the same time with this the estimate for 1830/1. It will I think be considered as favourable on the whole. With the exception of the opium, which, until the new system in Malwa has been tried, cannot be accurately estimated, all other items have been stated with moderation, and with every prospect of being realised and I can answer for many other reductions in the military department not included in the present estimate.

We have not heard from Lord Dalhousie since his departure on the 18th of July. A steamer sails tomorrow for Penang to bring him to the Sandhead so that he may communicate with me before my departure for the upper provinces, which will be about the middle of October.

Perfect tranquillity reigns throughout India.

246. *Bentinck's minute on Oudh affairs*

14 September 1830

In considering the construction to be put on the 4th article, as affecting the proceedings against the ex-minister, it seems to me necessary, in common fairness, to take a short view of this transaction from the beginning.

It must be called to mind that the loan of a crore of rupees made in perpetuity, by the king of Oudh to the Company, took place at a

moment of great financial pressure, and was hailed at the time as a very fortunate occurrence, that the ex-minister was then the minister; that he had been in office for many years, and possessed the entire confidence of his sovereign. Mr. Ricketts observes of him, that he was actually the reigning sovereign, that the loan was solely attributable to him, and that without him, not a rupee would have been offered. Mr. Ricketts then proceeds to say that the object of the minister in making this arrangement, was, in the event of the demise of the king, and of his own downfall, to secure for himself a certain provision under the guarantee of the British government.

. . . . . .

Of such loans and of such guarantees, there can be but one opinion as to their very objectionable character. That the ex-minister during his long official career, and in possession of uncontrolled power, was guilty of many acts of injustice and oppression is too generally asserted, not to be without foundation. But if this was the case, so much greater is the discredit of his protection becoming a condition of the loan and of a treaty. But that guarantee has been given, and from it there cannot be, without still greater discredit, an escape. My opinion therefore is, that in the investigation which is now taking place, if the ex-minister is not entitled to the complete exemption of all demands, according to the obvious meaning of the king of Oudh, as expressed in the 4th article, his case should, at any rate, be treated with very indulgent consideration.

It is upon this principle that I now proceed to give my opinion upon the decision to be passed upon the three classes of claims that are brought against the ex-minister, as specified in Mr. Maddock's despatch of the 28th July.

The first class is for the recovery of debts and the value of property purchased by the ex-minister and his dependants.

Mr. Maddock apprehends no difficulty in the settlement of these claims, except from the loss of receipts and vouchers, said to have been taken away with other property plundered at Noor Baksh.

It is to be hoped that by oral evidence, Mr. Maddock may be able to come to some satisfactory conclusion, but where he cannot, he will necessarily state the cases for the final decision of the supreme government. Where the king and the minister are the parties concerned, and excited by the strongest feelings of passion and revenge, any arrangement through arbitration, otherwise the better plan to have pursued, must be deemed hopeless; and here again we have to deplore the melancholy weakness of the late resident who while the 4th article made the British government the guardian and guarantee of the ex-minister's property, chose to commit the custody of the palace in which it was, to the king's troops.

The second class is for the restoration of lands and property alleged

to have been usurped by the ex-minister, and from which the rightful owners have been forcibly dispossessed by him.

To the reasoning of Mr. Maddock upon this class, I entirely subscribe, and I approve the mode in which he proposes to decide upon these claims. I am not quite clear that we are entitled to cause any enquiry into acts, which must be esteemed to have had the sanction of the supreme authority for the time being, but it is still desirable, when an opening is presented of remedying injustice and oppression, if committed, to take advantage of it. It is only where the decision may be doubtful, that I think the circumstances ought to be construed in the ex-minister's favour.

The third class comprehends the claims of amils and other public officers, to recover the public revenue said to have been remitted to him, and for which they have not obtained credit in their account with the government.

Supposing the fact to be as stated by the amils, it would, no doubt, be a great hardship and injustice upon them, if the king were to require a second discharge of their obligations. But the transaction passed in the late reign. The minister was solely responsible to his master and sovereign, and if the latter chose to relieve him from all accountability, in my opinion the interference of the present king, to whom the revenue certainly did not belong, is excluded by the guarantee.

On the other hand, during the time that the ex-minister served his present majesty, he is of course accountable for every act of his ministry.

Having now expressed my sentiments upon these questions I will only say generally, that a more unsatisfactory transaction as to its past or future course, never came under my cognizance. It is impossible to do justice. In excluding a variety of claimants against the oppression of the late minister, it is very likely that great injustice will be done. On the other hand, to let loose the craft and villainy of the new minister, and the revenge of this vile and imbecile monarch, will not advance one jot the ends of justice or the rights of the injured. In this dilemma of evils, I look only to our obligations with the sole view of considering how they can be most fairly and justly executed. I have laid down the broad line upon which they should be defined, but I am far from desiring a strict compliance with it. On the contrary a large latitude should be given to the resident, as to the claims to be admitted or refused, and I am in hopes, when the ex-minister is removed from Lucknow, and the king's objects of revenge are no longer attainable, that the real and just claims of individuals may be more easily brought to light, and may stand a better chance of a fair and equitable adjustment.

247. *S. R. Lushington to Bentinck.* Private

Madras. 15 September 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 1830

My dear Lord

The *Cornwallis* has just come in having left England on the 9th of June. The king was still in great danger, and I enclose in a separate paper other news. Prince Leopold I am glad to see has resigned Greece; 'a trust which circumstances no longer permit him to execute with honour to himself, benefit to Greece, or advantage to the general interests of Europe.'

With this post you will receive public letters from this government to which I beg your early attention.

From our political letter you will see that we may now safely withdraw the subsidiary force from Travancore immediately, except one regiment of native infantry. This will be attended with a saving of about 4½ lakhs of rupees, and in contemplation of this measure and of other important considerations stated in my military minute I have proposed an immediate diminution of our horse artillery which will at once effect a saving of five lakhs of rupees in that single arm of our force, and I sincerely believe strengthen and improve our cavalry and native artillery.

The extent to which we may be able to reduce our native infantry will depend upon the condition in which our regiments return from the Doab. My present notion is to reduce two regiments or at all events to make reductions in other branches equivalent to the expense of two regiments. If you concur in my reasoning upon our horse artillery say if you please so distinctly, for my gallant comander-in-chief is a great stickler for great guns.

You will see from my financial minute that we have met your finance committee, frankly and fairly. I should have been very glad if I could have had Mr. Hill's aid in discussing their several propositions. They appear to me to have made mistakes and misstatements which I have pointed out, but upon the whole they have rendered valuable public service in their suggestions which we have generally adopted, and for those which we did not deem expedient we have substituted others of greater amount.

We have still a considerable field for reduction in other branches, ordnance, commissariat and stores. Upon these I am now at work: having had strong lights thrown upon existing abuses by respectable officers during my late tour which they would not have hazarded to send in writing to me a stranger to them at the presidency; and I am satisfied that the public service, under your government, will receive corresponding benefit from your approaching visit to the upper provinces.

I shall be able, I rejoice to say, to send to the court by the next ship

another prosperous account of our finances. For notwithstanding the drought in many of our districts in the beginning of the revenue year, and the consequent failure of our land revenue in some of them, yet the extra source of collection, properly speaking our excise, have been so productive that we have more than an average year of receipt and considerable diminution of charge. The present revenue year has opened under the best auspices.

You will see from my own communications with the raja of Travancore that no doubt remains as to his real feelings towards Colonel Morison, or as to the causes which have produced those feelings. In fact he has been thoroughly duped by the brahminical rogue he introduced into the palace from the Trichinopoly commissariat office, whom no [obligation] restrained when it promised to favour the object of his ambition of becoming diwan of the country. With no confidence in Colonel Morison's diplomatic talents I have yet a very high opinion of his professional character: and as there is now a vacancy in the office of principal commissary at this presidency (which two of his brother officers senior to him in the artillery are anxious to obtain) I will, if you desire it, recommend Colonel Morison for this place which will be a sufficient demonstration of the value I put upon his services in his own line, and the difference of pay may be made up to him from Travancore so long as you keep him in Calcutta. This I am satisfied is the best arrangement we can make for the public service, for Colonel Morison's return to Travancore would reproduce confusion and discontent instead of the present perfect state of confidence and concord.

With the greatest sorrow I have received this afflicting account of poor Lady Rumbold's death. She had a premature birth, and sank under the exhaustion it produced. The enclosed letter from Sir Henry Palmer contains this heartrending intelligence.

. . . . .

248. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Confidential and Secret

India Board. 23 September 1830

My dear Lord,

I have to thank you for your letter respecting Lord Dalhousie's health and the interruption of the trade at Canton. Should Lord Dalhousie be obliged to return you shall have the very best man we can find, if you are not made commander-in-chief yourself, which I shall propose. In my opinion the whole civil and military authority should be united in the same person. I would even make a civil governor-general, captain general of the Company's army. However, I may not be able to manage this at the Horse Guards.

The wretched mismanagement of the select committee at Canton (a set of popinjays) has certainly put their honourable masters out of court upon one of the points they most valued themselves upon. They

have endangered the existence of the trade instead of being its protectors. It will be satisfactory to you to find your view of their conduct was taken in this country. You are quite right not to hear of sending ships of war.

I am not sorry Sir Charles Metcalfe did not go. Had he made the committee give way they would have no longer enjoyed any consideration at Canton, and whenever they made representations the Chinese would have held out till reference could be made to the supreme government upon which practically the responsibility for the management of that trade would have rested hereafter. You are at present very well clear of all connection with the commercial affairs at Canton.

Pray allow me to direct your attention to the management of the silk concerns of the Company. I cannot help being of opinion that they are very negligently conducted. We had before the lords' committee a good deal of valuable evidence upon the subject of Indian silk. As soon as the report is printed with the index and appendix a copy shall be transmitted to you.

You will receive a secret letter addressed to the Bombay government and taken out by Lord Clare respecting the affairs of the Gaikwar and Kathiawar. I saw Mr. Carnac and Mr. Elphinstone upon the subject and they both agreed that if what I proposed could be done the benefit would be great.

You will find in the evidence much respecting Indian cotton. It is impossible to state too strongly the importance of improving it.

I am occupied with the consideration of the all important question how the mutual regard which once existed between the European officer and the sepoy can be re-established and both made to like their service. I see my way to the objects, but the details will be embarrassing. I mean to have an officer from each presidency to consult with. The almost insurmountable difficulty is to do anything to please men who think of nothing but rupees when we have none to spare. Lord Hastings', Lord Combermere's and Col. Fagan's plans rest upon increased expenditure and we must make ours consistent with economy. Still the minutes of these officers contain a great deal of valuable matter.

In general I do not think it right to make known how much of what you receive is mine and how much the court's, but I must tell you that in maintaining the rule of service, I contended against the unanimous opinion of the directors. However, I thought that if you, who have exposed yourself to so much unpopularity by doing your duty, were not supported in a measure of economy you would be dealt unfairly by and we should have had no right to expect from you a thankless perseverance in a disagreeable course. I likewise thought it would be highly inexpedient to shrink from a measure of reform in civil allowances while we were unsparingly insisting upon military reductions. I besides think the measure good in itself as it opens a more extended field of selection for civil office. The only difficulty in dealing with the supreme court is to carry what is right. I have no doubt that the mufassal ought to be to

them as a foreign country, indeed in the opinion of good lawyers it now is so. Europeans should be in all cases amenable to the courts except where the government thinks fit to remit the suit, civil or criminal, to the supreme court.

I am sure you will do all you can to educate the natives for office and to encourage them by the possession of it. Some little risk of their failure must be run at first, but without being really responsible they do practically a great deal now through the weak or corrupt or indolent Europeans they serve. My wish is that they should act ostensibly with the honour, the responsibility and the emoluments of office. We cannot govern India financially without this change of system. We cannot govern it well without it, and we do not deserve to be permitted to govern it at all without it. Still our march must be very cautious and circumspect.

I wish you would devise some mode of elevating the character of the native soldier by civil privilege and distinction. We must keep India by his devotion and I would make that my first object. India was won by soldiers and statesmen and we must not allow lawyers to lose it. Sir R. O'Callaghan will be proposed to the king to succeed Sir George Wellers at Madras. He is a gallant officer, good tempered and firm—who will neither do a shabby or an unjust thing nor allow it to be done. Sir J. Malcolm seems delighted with Sir S. Beckwith. He calls him 'his invaluable colleague' by which I conclude he always votes with him, by far the most valuable quality a colleague can possess.

249. *S. R. Lushington to Bentinck*

Madras. 25 September 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 8 October 1830

My dear Lord

I have just completed the examination of the expense of all civil officers under this presidency on the 1st of May 1817, and on the 1st of May 1830, and this is the result of the whole

1st May 1817	46,27,015
1st May 1830	46,27,179
Difference	164 rupees!!!

Considering the many changes that have taken place in the last thirteen years, this coincidence is as remarkable as it is gratifying at this moment.

Since the 1st of May 1830 we have made some and determined upon other reductions as vacancies arise amounting to about five lakhs of rupees. I think therefore the authorities at home ought now to be perfectly satisfied with our civil retrenchments. At present I see no

further diminution that can be made without permanent injury and greater ultimate expense.

But on the military expenditure my conviction is quite different, since I have witnessed with my own eyes the perfect state of tranquillity and contentment of all our southern and centre provinces, princes and people. Although I would do nothing to disturb the feelings or excite the just discontent of either the European or native branch of the service, I am yet convinced that in our equipage equipments and stores valuable reforms are still to be made.

I am going on Monday to examine with some artillery officers the savings that may be made on the transport of ordnance and stores. Nothing has been done in this respect for thirty years, and we are now upon a full war establishment. This cannot be necessary.

I am anxious for your opinion upon my horse artillery minute. You will see from the enclosed which has come to me this morning that I correctly anticipated the feelings of my gallant colleague.

Enclosure in the above

G. T. Walker to S. R. Lushington

Bangalore. 22 September 1830

My dear Lushington,

I have given my full consideration to your minute proposing a reduction of the horse artillery but it is of too great importance to be hastily determined upon and as I feel earnest to be able to examine the case fairly I entreat you will take no further steps in it till I arrive at Madras. But earnest as I am to give you my support in making every fair saving for the Company I must acknowledge that I approach this measure with alarm. The arm in question is the most powerful and commanding which we possess and is at present in excellent condition. And you are greatly mistaken if you are led to think it can be readily renewed if once put down, as it is that of all others the longest in arriving at perfection. I think too you are under a mistake as to the reduction of this arm at home for I see there are yet 6 troops, and it is not very probable while all the European powers have been adding to theirs. Nor I confess do I admit the force of your argument with respect to the present state of the frontier of this presidency because as regards the defence of India all our armies can only be considered as one, and only divided under different leaders for the better superintendence of the parts and the greater responsibility. And never could the frontier of Bengal or Bombay be seriously endangered but this force would be required to support their armies of the sister presidencies, and this must ever be considered the most important arm. But more especially should the threatened enmity of Russia require our efforts, this must for various reasons be undoubtedly our best weapon. If however it is possible without injuring the organization that a temporary reduction of expense can be made either in men or horses I will do what I can to

meet your wishes as I am master of the details. You are however perhaps not aware that these troops are already much below their complements and have been so kept for some time

The establishment being per troop ————	233
Out of which they have noneffective ————	56
with 8 guns—actual strength ————	177
While the Bombay troops with only 6 guns have	250

I set off immediately for Mysore but hope to be at the presidency by the 1st October.

250. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private

28 September 1830

My dear Lord William,

Our failure of monopoly to which your Lordship alludes in your letter of the 20th of January proceeds from causes that are I fear not likely to cease to operate. We have neither manufacturers, trade, or *ware* and consequently little of capital or of demand beyond our own provinces. All are agriculturists. The country is overstocked with grains and the reduction of establishments and troops consequent to peace adds to distress and poverty. We are endeavouring by every means we can to remedy these evils, by encouraging natives of wealth to improve the soil and to cultivate sugar, cotton etc. But after all, our success will only enrich one part of our possessions at the expense of another and should machinery ever be introduced into India we shall do no more than exchange some more prosperity in India for misery and starvation in Spitalfields and Manchester! I am every day more convinced of the necessity of removing the seat of the supreme government from Calcutta but fixing its site is an important point. It must not be on or near an exposed frontier. It must be centrical. Quick communication with England is an important point and the recent establishment of steam vessels affects this part of the question. Supposing it at Ahmadnagar or Aurangabad (which Aurangzeb once contemplated as his seat of empire) you might receive instructions or intelligence from England in six weeks and give orders upon such which would reach every point of the empire in twelve days; at present, it would take nearly six weeks before such orders could be transmitted from Calcutta to Delhi, Bombay or Madras. It is further to be observed that orders consequent to intelligence from the Persian Gulf may soon become as important as that from the Red Sea, for the Russians must make progress eastward and we must sooner or later come in collision with them. The great point, however, is divesting the ruler of this empire of his character and duties as head of a presidency. That is quite essential to every real

reform of our administration and I think I could impose checks that would be to the full as salutary a restraint upon him as the present cumbrous and expensive form of government. These are however as yet crude speculations! . . .

251. *Ram Mohan Roy*[1] *to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 29 September 1830

My Lord,

From the kindness I have so often experienced from your Lordship I trust to be pardoned for my present intrusion in a matter solely concerning myself; but in which your Lordship's condescension has encouraged me to persuade myself that you are pleased to take some interest.

Having at length surmounted all the obstacles of a domestic nature that have hitherto opposed my long cherished intention of visiting England, I am now resolved to proceed to that land of liberty by one of the vessels that will sail in November and from a due regard to the proposal of the late Mr. Secretary Stirling's letter of 15th January last and other considerations I have determined not to appear there as the envoy of his Majesty Akbar the Second but as a private individual.

I am satisfied that in thus divesting myself of all public character my zealous services on behalf of his Majesty need not be abated: I even trust that their chance of success may be improved by being thus exempted from all jealousy of a political nature to which they might by misapprehension be subjected.

As public report has fixed an early day in October for your Lordship's departure to examine personally into the condition of the inhabitants of the upper provinces, I take the present occasion as the last that may offer in this country, for the expression of my sincere wishes for your Lordship's success in all your philanthropic designs for the improvement and benefit of my countrymen. I need not add that any commands for England with which your Lordship may honour me shall receive from me the most respectful attention and I beg to subscribe myself . . .

252. *Court of directors to the Bengal government on the education of Indians*

29 September 1830

Para. 1. Our last letter to you on the subject of native education was dated 5th September 1827, since which your letter in the Persian department dated 21st August 1829, to which we now proceed to reply.

251. [1] Ram Mohan Roy, 1772–1833. Conducted a crusade against popular Hinduism, and in 1828 founded the Brahmo Samaj as the basis of a new theism. Advocate of social reform. Visited England and Europe 1830–3.

2. The report which you have furnished to us in this letter, of the result of the measures for the education of the natives already sanctioned by us, has afforded us the highest satisfaction. The experiment of establishing seminaries for giving instruction to the people of India, of a higher kind than any which they previously possessed has been successful in a degree not merely equal, but superior to our most sanguine expectations. The great and rapidly increasing efficiency and popularity of these institutions not only affords complete proof that their establishment was called for by the state of public feeling, and by the circumstances of the times, but also conveys the gratifying assurance that the higher classes of our Hindu and Mahomedan subjects are ripe for a still further extension among them of European education and European science and literature.

3. We shall briefly pass in review the present state of each of the colleges established under your presidency principally in order that you may receive in each instance specifically the expression of our warmest approbation both as respects the general system on which these various institutions have been conducted and the particular improvements which you have successively introduced.

4. The madrasa or Mahomedan college of Calcutta has now 78 students on the foundation; the number of those who pay for their education is not stated. The progress of the students almost without exception in the various studies pursued at the college, is extremely creditable, and every year exhibits a higher degree of proficiency than that which preceded it. Admission into the madrasa having been made a subject of competition and assigned as a reward to the most deserving among the candidates, the scale of attainments which they bring with them on entering the college has been so greatly raised, that the establishment of a school preparatory to the madrasa is no longer considered necessary. The studies of the mathematical class have been made to include arithmetic and algebra, and a medical class has been established; translations into Arabic of good elementary works on both these branches of knowledge are in preparation. An English class has since been added to the college.

5. At the Sanskrit college of Calcutta, the number of pupils is now 176 and is rapidly increasing; of these, only 99 receive allowances from the college, while the peculiar studies of the place have been prosecuted with great success we are happy to perceive that very important improvements have been introduced into the course of instruction. The English language and anatomy on European principles are now taught to considerable numbers, and with most encouraging results. In the words of Mr. Wilson who examined the medical class 'the triumph gained over native prejudices is no where more remarkable than in this class, in which, not only are the bones of the human skeleton handled without reluctance, but in some instances dissection of the soft parts of animals performed by the students themselves'. The study of mathematics is also successfully prosecuted in this college.

6. But the Vidyalaya or Anglo-Indian college originally established by the natives themselves, for the study of the English language, and for education through the medium of that language exclusively, has had more decided success than either of the other Calcutta colleges. The number of scholars is now 436, of whom all except 100, pay for their tuition. The progress of these pupils is highly encouraging, the higher classes being able to compose tolerably in English, and to read the best authors in the English language. The study of mathematics both in the geometrical and in the algebraical branch has been introduced with success. Lectures are delivered in natural philosophy and chemistry, which are attended by the pupils both of this and of the Sanskrit college, and their progress is reported to be highly satisfactory.

7. The colleges of which we have sanctioned the establishment at Delhi and at Agra, have now come into operation. The native languages and laws are as yet the principal object of attention at these seminaries but an English class has recently been established at each. The elements of mathematics are also studied at the Delhi college, and at Agra many of the students study the elements of geography, astronomy and mathematics, agreeably to the European system. At the Delhi college the number of students is 199, of whom 32 form the Arabic, and 126 the Persian class; 13 are studying Sanskrit and 28 English. At the Agra college the total number is 198, of whom 129 are attached to the Persian, and 69 to the Hindu department; of these 84 only receive stipends from the college, 114 attend without any pecuniary allowance. At both institutions the reports of the progress of the students are most favourable, and it is highly gratifying to observe that Hindus and Mahomedans as well as the different castes of the Hindus, a few of the lowest excepted, mix together for purposes of education without the slightest reluctance or inconvenience.

8. The college at Benares now contains 244 students of whom 102 are on the foundation; the remainder are free students. The studies of this institution have not yet extended beyond the native languages, literature and laws, but in these the proficiency of the students is reported to have greatly increased.

9. Such having been the success of the seminaries for native education already established and the proficiency as well as the number of the students at each receiving every year a considerable increase, those institutions must now annually send forth a number of students who have learned all which the colleges where they were educated are adequate on their present footing to teach and it is therefore of the greatest importance that to these and to others of the native youth, the means should be afforded of cultivating the English language and literature and acquiring a knowledge of European science, and a familiarity with European ideas, in a higher degree than has yet been within their power. The documents now under review, afford most gratifying proofs that a scheme of this extended nature would now be warmly welcomed by the higher ranks of the natives under your

government. Of the spirit which prevails in the lower provinces, the establishment and success of the Anglo-Indian college is sufficient evidence. And we learn with extreme pleasure the opinion of the general committee of public instruction, partly founded on the personal observation and enquiries of several of their members, that 'the time has arrived when English tuition will be widely acceptable to the natives in the upper provinces'.

10. Your attention has been anxiously directed to the means of accomplishing this object, and in particular to the comparative expediency of establishing separate English colleges, or of enlarging the plan of the existing institutions, so as to render them adequate to that more extensive purpose. You have transmitted to us several most interesting communications from the general committee of public instruction, and from the local committee of the Delhi college, on this question.

11. Both the committees give a decided preference to the plan of establishing separate colleges for the study of English, and for the cultivation of European knowledge through the medium of the English language. They urge, that a thorough knowledge of English can only be acquired by natives, through a course of study beginning early in life, and continued for many years; that the knowledge of our language, and of European science, which could be acquired in a course of education mainly directed to other objects, would not contribute in any high degree to the improvement of the native character and intellect, while the native languages and literature may be adequately pursued, as a subordinate branch of education in an English college; and that anything beyond the mere elements of European science, is most advantageously taught through the European languages, with the additional recommendation that when so taught, it comes into less direct collision with the sacred books of the Mahomedans and Hindus.

12. By these arguments you have been convinced: and you have accordingly authorized the establishment of an English college at Delhi and another at Benares. The project of establishing one at Calcutta seems to have been tacitly abandoned; the Anglo-Indian college, under its present superintendence, being found capable of answering the purpose.

13. While we attach much more importance than is attached by the two committees, to the amount of useful instruction which can be communicated to the natives through their own languages, we fully concur with them in thinking it highly advisable to enable and encourage a large number of the natives to acquire a thorough knowledge of English, being convinced that the higher tone and better spirit of European literature can produce their full effect only on those who become familiar with them in the original languages. While, too, we agree with the committees, that the higher branches of science may be more advantageously studied in the languages of Europe than in

translations into the oriental tongues it is also to be considered that the fittest persons for translating English scientific books or for putting their substance into a shape adapted to Asiatic students, are natives who have studied the sciences profoundly in the original works.

14. On these grounds we concur with you in thinking it desirable that the English course of education should be kept separate from the course of oriental study at the native colleges, and should be attended for the most part by a different set of students. This however does not necessarily imply that the two courses of study should be prosecuted in two separate institutions. At the Agra college the Persian and the Hindu branches are perfectly distinct, and though some of the students are attached to both departments, the greater number confine to one or to the other. If an English department were similarly attached to that college or to the college at Delhi, the English language and literature might be taught classically and the sciences might be taught in English notwithstanding that studies of another character were pursued within the same walls.

15. It would be desirable whenever practicable to select as teachers of the English language and literature, persons competent to give scientific instruction. This has been already done in the instance of Dr. Tytler with the happiest success and we should think that our medical service must afford other individuals equally competent and equally ardent in the cause of native education. Elementary teachers of English are already attached to all the colleges under your government, except that of Benares, and you will be best able to judge in each particular instance what assistance it may be necessary to afford to the director of the English studies at the colleges in order to relieve him from the drudgery of conducting the lower classes through the spelling book and grammar.

16. While we thus approve and sanction the measures which you propose for diffusing a knowledge of the English language and the study of European science through its medium, we must at the same time put you on your guard against a disposition of which we perceive some traces in the general committee, and still more in the local committee of Delhi, to underrate the importance of what may be done to spread useful knowledge among the natives through the medium of books and oral instruction in their own languages. That more complete education which is to commence by a thorough study of the English language can be placed within the reach of a very small proportion of the natives of India. But intelligent natives who have been thus educated may as teachers in colleges and schools, or as the writers or translators of useful books, contribute in an eminent degree to the more general extension among their countrymen of a portion of the acquirements which they have themselves gained, and may communicate in some degree to the native literature and to the minds of the native community that improved spirit which it is to be hoped they will themselves have imbibed from the influence of European ideas and sentiments. You

should cause it to be generally known, that every qualified native who will zealously devote himself to this task will be held in high honour by you; that every assistance and encouragement, pecuniary or otherwise, which the case may require, will be liberally afforded, and that no service which it is in the power of a native to render to the British government will be more highly acceptable.

17. The establishment of colleges is of little use without the provision of appropriate books, both for college instruction and subsequent reading. Your greatest attention is due to this object, and we are happy to perceive that it is bestowed. A certain portion of the funds at the disposal of the general committee is employed in printing such of the books which already exist in the native languages, as are best adapted to the use of the various colleges, and other school books prepared and translated for the purpose. The Calcutta School Book Society co-operates in the pursuit of this object, and affords the aid of a portion of its funds. It is of the highest importance that the books selected should be instructive in their matter, adapted to the capacity of the scholars, and calculated to inspire a taste for further acquirements. We shall more readily sanction expense judiciously incurred for this purpose, than for any other object connected with native education, because it is the point in which your present means are most deficient, and because much of the expenditure will probably in time be reimbursed by the sale of extra copies of the works printed.

18. There are several subsidiary measures which you have adopted, and others which you propose to adopt, in order to stimulate the natives to take advantage of the improved means of education now placed or about to be placed within their reach. To these we shall now advert.

19. You have employed part of the interest of various donations which have been placed at the disposal of the general committee by the well-directed benevolence of several native gentlemen in the endowment of scholarships to enable persons who have distinguished themselves at any of the colleges to continue the prosecution of their studies, beyond the period at which their necessities would otherwise have compelled them to quit the college and enter into active life. Provided that this privilege is restricted as you intend, to young men who have afforded proof of peculiar capacity and industry, it appears to us to be a highly useful and proper mode of encouraging and facilitating their acquisition of high attainments. We trust that the adoption of this measure and the growing sense among the native community of the value of an improved education, will speedily enable you to renounce the practice of granting stipends to students who merely go through the ordinary course of instruction. We perceive with satisfaction that you have been able to reduce the stipends allowed to the students of the Calcutta madrasa, and likewise (as we infer from an expression of the committee) to those of the Agra college.

20. With a view to raise the standard of the qualifications possessed

by the natives attached to the courts of justice in the capacity of Hindu and Mahomedan law officers, and to induce candidates for these situations to qualify themselves at the government colleges, you have passed a regulation requiring that all applicants for such appointments, unless they can produce certificates of qualifications from some of the government colleges, must submit to an examination by a committee appointed for the purpose. You considered that the presidency was the only place at which the materials existed for such a committee; the examination must therefore in general be conducted by written interrogatories, and other exercises furnished by the committee of examination, and the answers are to be given, or the exercises performed, in the presence of the judge or judges of the court where the vacancy has occurred. Should this experiment succeed, you propose to extend the same regulation to candidates for the various judicial situations to which natives are eligible. And you have authorised all students of the colleges obtaining from these institutions certificates of proficiency in what is there taught, to practise as pleaders in any of the courts of law.

21. Of these rules we approve. We however think it advisable to caution you against certain dangers, the possibility of which has been suggested by experience already acquired at another presidency.

22. Mr. Walters, the acting judge of the zillah of Chittoor, represented to the Madras government, in answer to queries addressed to him respecting the qualifications of the vakils practising in his court, that the principal caution necessary in appointing them to the situation of sadar amins, was 'that they introduce no law into their decrees in cases which ought to be decided according to the established usages and customs of the country. I am induced to point out this, because in their appeals I perceive the evil to exist to an extent which should be checked and it is much better that these elementary principles should be taught them in the college than in the courts. The people of a village expect their differences to be adjusted according to custom which has obtained from time immemorial, and cannot be desirous when such customs do not interfere with any principle of justice, that they should be set aside by the operations of a law of which neither themselves nor their ancestors ever heard, and which if not unjust in its application to their case, is, in their conception, altogether unintelligible.'

23. Sir Thomas Munro in a minute which was communicated to you, and is recorded on your judicial consultations of 22nd September 1825, observes: 'The knowledge of law and acquaintance with the regulations acquired by the college students are no doubt valuable attainments but they are not alone sufficient to render a man fit for the situation of district munsiff. They will not compensate for the absence of good character, of habits of business, of application, and of sound judgment, and a knowledge of local habits and customs. The instruction received at the college is better adapted to qualify men for the duties of law officers and pleaders than for those of district munsiffs.'

24. Under your presidency the cases of a civil nature in which the courts administer laws, are almost exclusively cases of inheritance, marriage, and caste,* while even in these cases the authority of the law books is liable to be superseded by evidence of contrary custom. In criminal cases the Hindu law is entirely abolished, and the Mahomedan in a great measure superseded. It is true that the law administered by the courts is, and ought to be in the great majority of cases, the ancient law of the country, but this law is not to be found in the Hindu and Mahomedan law books. It consists as Mr. Walters has observed in 'custom which has obtained from time immemorial'. Nor is this circumstance peculiar to India; on the contrary it is common to nearly all the nations of the world. In our own country, and in all other countries of Europe the code or statute book there obtaining would convey always a most incomplete, and generally a most erroneous notion of the actual law of the country. But wherever the decisions of the courts of justice are regularly reported and quoted as precedents, a custom has no sooner received the sanction of a judicial decision than it passes into the books of reports where it may be studied and learned in the course of a legal education. In India however where this takes place to a very limited extent, the customs which principally compose the law really in force are not to be found in any books whatever; they must be ascertained by specific evidence in each case as it arises, and can be learned only in the courts themselves not at a place of education. These customs moreover are so extremely diversified, many of them varying almost from village to village, that a digest of customs however carefully executed would rarely supersede the necessity of learning in each case the custom of the places concerned from the testimony of inhabitants or from documentary evidence.

25. The book-law of the Hindus and Mahomedans being so limited in its application to the administration of justice as at present conducted we do not see any necessity for requiring from candidates for the situation of law officers or for judicial situations a proficiency in any of the branches of that law except those to which we have above adverted as being actually in force. As a qualification to be required in candidates for judicial situations a knowledge of such of the regulations of your government as they will have to administer is of far greater importance, and in this they should be subjected to a strict examination.

26. In the mean time we wish you to be fully assured not only of our anxiety that the judicial offices to which natives are at present eligible should be properly filled but of our earnest wish and hope to see them qualified for situations of higher importance and trust. There is no point of view in which we look with greater interest at the exertions you are now making for the instruction of the natives than as being

* 'In suits regarding succession, inheritance, marriage, and caste, and all religious usages and institutions, the Mahomedan laws with respect to Mahomedans and the Hindu laws with regard to Hindus, are to be considered as the general rules by which the judges are to form their decisions. In the respective cases the Mahomedan and Hindu law officers of the court are to attend to expound the law.' (R4.1793 I15)

calculated to raise up a class of persons qualified by their intelligence and morality for high employments in the civil administration of India. As the means of bringing about this most desirable object we rely chiefly on their becoming through a familiarity with European literature and science imbued with the ideas and feelings of civilized Europe, on the general cultivation of their understandings, and specifically on their instruction in the principles of morals and general jurisprudence. We wish you to consider this as our deliberate view of the scope and end to which all your endeavours with respect to the education of the natives should refer. And the active spirit of benevolence, guided by judgment, which has hitherto characterized your exertions, assures us of your ready and zealous co-operation towards an end which we have so deeply at heart.

27. With a view to give the natives an additional motive to the acquisition of the English language you have it in contemplation gradually to introduce English as the language of public business in all its departments. And you have determined to begin at once by adopting the practice of corresponding in English with all native princes or persons of rank who are known to understand that language, or to have persons about them who understand it. From the meditated change in the language of public business, including judicial proceedings you anticipate several collateral advantages: the principal of which is that the judge or other European officer being thoroughly acquainted with the language in which the proceedings are held, will be, and appear to be, less dependent upon the natives by whom he is surrounded, and those natives will in consequence enjoy fewer opportunities of bribery or other undue emolument.

28. If the question were solely between retaining the Persian as the language of public business, and replacing it by the English the change would not be *prima facie* decidedly objectionable, and we should willingly rely upon your judgment and superior local knowledge, as a security that its advantages and inconveniences would be duly weighed. But if any change be made in the existing practice it is deserving of great consideration whether that change ought not rather to be the adoption of the vernacular language than of our own, as the language at least of judicial proceedings.

29. It is highly important that justice should be administered in a language familiar to the judge. But it is of no less importance that it should be administered in a language familiar to the litigant parties, to their vakils, and to the people at large; and it is easier for the judge to acquire the language of the people, than for the people to acquire the language of the judge. You are indeed partly influenced by a desire to render this last acquirement more common but the poorer classes who are the parties concerned in the great majority of the cases which come before our courts cannot be expected to learn a foreign language, and we therefore are of opinion that at least the proceedings of the courts of justice should be excepted from the practice which you propose

gradually to introduce and be conducted in the vernacular language of the particular zillah or district unless upon consideration you should see good reasons for adhering to the present practice.

30. These objections do not apply in an equal degree to the introduction of English as the language of complimentary correspondence of arzis from natives of rank and the replies to them, and of political negotiation. But we do not think that you have sufficiently adverted to the danger of rendering the parties with whom you correspond in English dependent upon the natives (perhaps in the employment of the officers of government) to whom they would probably have recourse to explain the communications made to them, and to put their own representations into English.

31. We have observed with particular satisfaction that in addition to the donations from wealthy natives in aid of the education fund which were noticed in our former despatch you have received 46,000 Rs. from Rajas Shil Chunder and Musing Chunder Race and rupees 10,000 from Babu Gooroopershad Bose. We approve of your having allowed the subscribers to the fund to nominate one free scholar for every 10,000 rupees subscribed.

32. We approve of the intention which you express to establish, as soon as the means at your disposal admit of the expense, a college at Bareilly.

33. With respect to the elementary schools which were established by government in various parts of India previously to the appointment of the general committee we consider them of subordinate importance, instructions in reading and writing being already very generally diffused among the inhabitants of most of the territories under your presidency. We perceive that you are careful not to allow these establishments to consume resources disproportionate to their comparative utility and we recommend as the mode in which they may be rendered most useful that they be kept well supplied with instructive school books and other means of instruction.

34. You will communicate to the governments of Fort St. George and Bombay such of the papers relating to your proceedings in the department of native education as will afford to those governments a complete understanding of the general character of the measures which you have adopted or may hereafter adopt.

35. It is our wish that the establishments for native education should be conducted on the same principles and receive the same support from government at all the presidencies.

253. *A. Stirling to F. Wilder.* Official

Calcutta. 30 September 1830

My dear Sir,

In considering the existing arrangements at Nagpur, under article 8 and 9 of the definitive treaty, it has occurred to the governor-general, that the mode in which the raja's co-operation for the general military defence of the country and the maintenance of the public tranquillity, is thereby secured, is unnecessarily burdensome to his Highness, and at variance with our declared wish and policy to render the state of Nagpur one of the substantive powers of India, whilst in the actual posture of affairs throughout Hindustan it produces comparatively little real and direct advantage to the British government. It has further occurred to his Lordship that the conditions of the treaty, on which the system in force is founded, might be easily so modified as to conduce to the improvement of our own resources to secure us every advantage which we are entitled to derive from our alliance with the state of Nagpur, and at the same to promote essentially the raja's dignity, welfare, prosperity, and independence.

The manner in which it is conceived that the above important objects might be effected, is, the negotiating a commutation of the raja's obligations under the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty, for a money payment or subsidy into the British treasury, of rupees eight lakhs per annum, when his Highness' army would be made over entirely to his own control and authority, and those districts which we hold as assignments for its support, be restored to the native government.

The advantages of this plan to the raja of Nagpur, are very obvious and material. By its adoption his Highness would be placed as a sovereign prince in the possession of his whole territory, and the command and patronage of the military force of the state. The raja of Nagpur would of course be bound like all other rulers, to provide a national force adequate to the ordinary protection of his subjects, and the performance of internal duties. It is not to be supposed that he would desire, or could afford, the continued employment of British superintendents in charge of his districts, or British officers in command of his troops, and the execution of the scheme under consideration would consequently involve their general removal. The Nagpur subsidiary force would remain as at present, applicable to the general defence operation of his Highness' territory, under the provisions of existing engagements. The subsidy paid by the raja would be his contribution towards defraying the general charge of the existing protective system, and certainly it would not constitute a heavy return for the inestimable benefits he derives from the British support and guarantee.

As far as we ourselves are concerned, the governor-general conceives that we should be clear gainers by the adoption of the above project, in nearly the whole amount of the proposed annual subsidy.

In the actual state of India, we do not require the services of the raja's army, officered and maintained at so large an expense, in its present position, however valuable and efficient those services have proved whenever called into action. The internal tranquillity of the Nagpur territory has been for years past firmly established, and nothing seems likely now to interrupt it. We maintain there a large subsidiary force, which by the 4th article of the treaty is clearly available for the protection of the raja's dominions and the maintenance of the public peace. Neither British interests, nor those of the alliance, seem to demand the presence in the Nagpur territory of any more disciplined troops, in addition to the subsidiary force, although at the same time we could not consent to disband the raja's army, without an equivalent, as not only should we thereby gratuitously sacrifice advantages reserved to us, by treaty, but being responsible for the safety and defence of the country, we might at some future period have to furnish troops, in lieu of the present auxiliary force.

In this state of things, and having sincerely at heart the object of rendering the state of Nagpur a substantive power in reality as well as in name, and of freeing its ruler from all control and interference which may not be necessary for the due fulfilment of the ends of the alliance, his Lordship attaches great importance to the accomplishment of the project thus generally explained to you, which he is persuaded would be productive of essential advantage and convenience to both parties. But the entire and cordial concurrence of the raja is an indispensable condition of the success of the plan and the governor-general would not think it right that any influence should be exerted to induce his Highness to enter into our views, against his wishes. The particular object of the present reference is to ascertain your opinion how far a proposal to pay a subsidy of 8 lakhs per annum in lieu of his present obligations under the treaty, would be acceptable to his Highness and would be likely to meet with his free and unconstrained assent, and on this point his Lordship requests a candid, unbiassed, and detailed communication of your sentiments with as little delay as may be practicable.

254. *William Astell to Bentinck*

India House, London. 4 October 1830
Recd. Calcutta. 17 March 1831

My dear Lord,

I had the pleasure of writing to your Lordship in June last; since which I have been favoured with several letters from your Lordship containing interesting intelligence of passing events in India. Within these few days your letter relating to the state of affairs in China has come to hand; and it has afforded me real satisfaction to find that the

views taken by the court of the conduct of the select committee, so entirely accords with that of your government, and that the court have this additional justification for the resolutions to which they have felt themselves compelled to come so materially affecting the situation and prospects of the members of the select committee. Your Lordship will probably have heard before this reaches you, that the court have removed Messrs. Baynes, Millett and Bannerman from the committee. Mr. Plowden has returned to England; and Mr. Marjoribanks has been appointed president in his room. Perhaps at no period so unpropitious could the crisis which we have fortunately surmounted in China, have arisen; and (I now say it with the less hesitation) the Company's interests, if not their existence, in that quarter, were perhaps never so unnecessarily placed in jeopardy. I trust however that we may now congratulate ourselves upon the termination of the differences with the Chinese authorities, and that we may look to a change in the constitution of the committee for a favourable change of measures.

Your account of Lord Dalhousie's state of health arrived at a fortunate period. Reports of an alarming nature were generally prevalent; and I was happy to have it in my power to remove the anxiety which was felt not only by the personal friends and acquaintance of his Lordship, but by those who looked at the possible result of his illness, in a public point of view. I sincerely trust that the expectations entertained at the date of your Lordship's last letter will be fully realized; and that no necessity will arise for a change in the chief command of the army in India.

I have been much gratified with your report of the success of the regulation for the prevention of suttees. Although we were confident that your Lordship would not put forth such an enactment without being fully satisfied of the practicability of carrying it into effect, we could not but look with some anxiety to the feeling which its being first called into operation might produce. The experience you have already had would seem to justify the indulgence of an expectation that the practice of suttee may 'ere long be completely abolished throughout the territories under our government. It would probably have facilitated the accomplishment of that object, had Sir John Malcolm at once followed the example which was set him in Bengal and at Madras. Still I agree with your Lordship in thinking that, with the knowledge of Sir John's feelings, it was better to allow him to take his own course in a matter in which his intimate acquaintance with the native character would appear peculiarly to qualify him for forming a correct judgment. Within these few days however I have received a letter from Sir John Malcolm from which I am happy to learn that he has deferred to the judgment of the supreme government and that a regulation has been accordingly passed at Bombay in effect the same as that in force at the other presidencies.

Some zealous, but, in my opinion injudicious individuals have lately

brought under discussion in our general court the idolatrous observances at the temples of Jagannath, Gaya, Allahabad, etc.; and the encouragement which they allege is given to idolatry, by the imposition of the pilgrim tax. The object of the motion submitted by these gentlemen was to recommend the court to bring the subject under the notice of the local government. I felt it to be my duty to oppose the motion. Knowing that your attention had been recently particularly directed to the subject and concurring in the opinion expressed by your Lordship in a letter with which you favoured me last year relating to suttee, that public discussions of this description retard rather than promote the accomplishment of an object which all must be serious of seeing effected, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the means by which that result may be brought about, I communicated to the general court an extract from your Lordship's letter; and I have reason to believe that the communication had considerable weight; for there were very few hands held up in favour of the motion. I am myself deeply impressed with the conviction that to the education of the natives we can alone look for their conversion, and that until they change their religion it will be vain to expect them to abandon those licentious and horrid practices of which we had to hear in connection with their worship. Your Lordship will perceive from the court's despatches how anxious we are to afford every reasonable facility to the education of the natives and to their employment in those offices under our governments for which they may be qualified. It is a subject full of interest and importance, and I anticipate your Lordship's entire concurrence in the views entertained by the court.

My attention has recently been drawn to a statement in some of our periodical publications copied from a Calcutta newspaper, from which it would appear that an attempt has been made by the bishop to put a stop to Hindus working on Sundays, and that your government has lent its sanction to his Lordship's views. I shall much regret to find this statement confirmed, as I cannot but regard the measure as highly injudicious and ill-timed. Now that a decided step has been taken to prevent suttees, I greatly fear that the motives which influenced that step will be misconstrued and misrepresented, and a dangerous feeling be excited, if an attempt such as that above mentioned be even countenanced by the local authorities.

Among the letters which your Lordship addressed to Mr. Loch, as chairman, was one relating to the proposed removal of the government to the upper provinces upon which subject you have likewise favoured me with your sentiments. It is matter of sincere regret to me to find that the point is again pressed upon the court's consideration as I cannot hold out the least hope of your Lordship's wishes being acceded to. As the law now stands the projected removal would be illegal; and with the opinion entertained here of the inexpediency of the measure it is vain to anticipate the introduction of a bill into parliament to meet the case in question. I am sure that no other than a strong sense of public

advantage, has influenced your Lordship or your colleagues in re-submitting the proposition: and this makes me the more regret that your opinion should be at variance with that entertained by the court.

The recommendation of your government that the court would abstain for the present from sending out any writers, will receive due attention. I am afraid that you will have some difficulty in disposing of the supernumeraries both in the civil and military branches, occasioned by the recent reduction.

Lord Clare[1] left England to proceed overland to Bombay, at the commencement of the last month—a steam vessel is to meet him at Suez. From the opportunities I had of conversing with his Lordship, and from general report of his character, I indulge the hope that we have been happy in our selection of him for the government he is about to assume.

The attention of all is now anxiously directed to the state of affairs on the continent of Europe. Revolutions are fast springing up around us, but I trust that the good sense and feeling of the people of this country, and the judgment and firmness of the cabinet, will avert from us any internal commotion or collision with other powers.

14 October 1830

Since the foregoing was written it has appeared to H.M's government and to the court desirable to provide for the possible contingency of our being deprived of the services of Lord Dalhousie in India: and with this view Sir Edward Barnes has been appointed provisionally to succeed his Lordship in the chief command of the king's and Company's forces. Deeply as we shall regret the loss of Lord Dalhousie, it is satisfactory to know that in Sir E. Barnes (who from being now stationed at Ceylon, can upon a short notice join the army in India) we have an officer of approved services, and of sound judgment and discretion. The court's despatch will explain the nature and terms of the appointment; and I trust that the manner in which the arrangement is communicated will satisfy Lord Dalhousie that not the least slight is intended towards his Lordship, but, on the contrary, that it is the earnest wish of the court, individually and collectively, that he should receive every attention and that no step should be taken which could hurt his feelings. Some inconvenience and unpleasantness were occasioned in the instance of Sir E. Paget, arising out of his proceeding to Bengal before the vacancy to which he was to succeed had occurred. In the present case, care will be taken here, and I doubt not in Bengal also, to prevent our being placed in the situation of having *two* chief military authorities in India at the same time, and likewise to prevent Lord Dalhousie being induced by the premature arrival of Sir E. Barnes and out of consideration towards that officer, to resign his command sooner than he might otherwise do.

254. [1] Clare, John Fitzgibbon, 1792–1851, Governor of Bombay, 21 Mar. 1831–17 Mar. 1835.

255. *Dr. Ruddell to Bentinck*

Fort William College, Calcutta. 7 October 1830

My Lord,

Prior to your departure from the presidency for the western provinces, I solicit permission to submit the following short review of the principal proceedings of this institution from the beginning of the year 1828 to the present time, and more especially from the month of June 1829, the date of assuming the immediate management of it, in your Lordship's capacity as visitor.

2. The information collected even after the receipt of the honourable court's despatch, on the subject of discontinuing the college of Fort William, was of such a nature as to induce your Lordship to take advantage of the option left in that document and to give the institution a further trial, under a change of system and superintendence.

3. From the result of the numerous enquiries made at the time above mentioned, it appeared clear that a moderate degree of application to study would enable every writer to pass the established examination in two of the requisite oriental languages in a period of about eight or ten months. The correctness of that opinion, has in the interim been abundantly proved by your Lordship's experience, for since July 1828 more than thirty students have been declared qualified for the public service, in less than that time in each instance from the date of their arrival in Calcutta; and some of the young men alluded to in that number deserve the more credit for the rapidity of their acquirements, as, not having had the advantage of a Hailey bury education, they arrived in India unacquainted with even the elements of oriental languages.

4. It appeared from the same source, that the best remedy for the many and great evils admitted to have been produced by a long residence at the presidency would for the future consist in the removal to distant stations in the provinces of every writer from the earliest period evincing a disposition to idling, by which, it had been often observed that all instances of extravagance and impropriety had invariably been preceded. Previous to your Lordship's arrival in the country, this was thought too severe a punishment to be often inflicted, although less effectual measures were probably far more prejudicial, in both a public and private view, and during the year 1828 especially, it was found advisable to resort frequently to early rustication. In 1829, it became less necessary, and in the present year six instances of the kind under consideration have taken place. The few authors indeed of cases of extravagance and idleness which have occurred during your Lordship's administration were, as soon as known, removed from the presidency to situations in the interior, calculated by their circumstances to check such improprieties, and as far as could reasonably be expected in so short a period of time, the object in view has been accomplished.

5. The number of writers sent out to Bengal for some years past, having been much greater than that of former times, the increased diversity of ability and character thence arising must consequently present proportionable difficulties in the superintendence of their education, and some of the individuals of that period have shown so little talent for the acquirement of languages that their case might fairly be considered of a peculiar nature and exempted from the operation of general rules.

6. On the 4th July 1828 there were thirty-eight writers in Calcutta, eight on leave and seventeen rusticated in different parts of the interior, who had not passed their examinations, and from that date to the 16th September 1830 a space of little more than two years, the names of no fewer than ninety-four individuals have been added to the college lists. At the presidency, and in the provinces, at the present moment, there are only fifty-seven students, and of these seventeen have already been reported qualified in one language, and in the course of two months they may obtain the same distinction in another, so that leaving out of the question the probability of a few passing in two languages, in October, November and December, it appears reasonable to expect that before the 1st of January 1831 the unqualified junior members of the civil service may be included in a number somewhat below that of forty. Of these again, sixteen at least are so well disposed, and desirous of being able to discharge their public duties in a proper manner that their emancipation from the college may be reasonably looked for before the expiration of six months, and thus before the 1st of May 1831 the registers of the establishment may be fairly expected to exhibit by their reduced numbers, a most convincing proof of improved application to study.

7. A few of the remaining twenty-four individuals have been permitted to proceed to Europe, for the recovery of their health. Some as alluded to, in a former paragraph of this report, are slow, and uncertain in learning the oriental idioms, and their case may therefore be reckoned beyond the bounds of regulations and calculations, as to term of qualification, for the performance of their official duties.

8. Without however calculating on the casualties of futurity, it appears that sufficient has been actually performed to justify very favourable conclusions, since the preceding particulars prove that about one hundred writers have been declared qualified for the public service, since the 4th July 1828, and by a list annexed to a report, submitted to the college council, in that month and year, specifying the writers annually attached to the college, from the time of its being founded till the date of the writing, and the portion of them who had passed the requisite examinations, it was shown that at no former period had there been more than 26 students given to the public service in the course of one year, at the commencement of which (1803) there were 120 individuals attached to the institution.

9. There are twenty-four students in Calcutta at present, and of these

four only are of more than a year's standing on the college register, one having been admitted in February 1828, was shortly afterwards permitted to study at Dacca, whence on a medical certificate he was lately allowed to return to the presidency, and three in September 1829. Two of these had not been at Haileybury and the third who enjoyed that advantage will I expect pass his final examination in the course of a few days. Of the remainder, five arrived in November and December 1829, and all the others are of 1830.

10. The lists of writers permitted to study the languages, with the assistance of their friends in the country, and of those who had been rusticated for neglect of duty, show much older dates than those above mentioned, and indeed the whole records of the college can furnish very few instances of individuals under such circumstances being reported qualified for the service after the expiration of a short period from the date of their arrival in Bengal. The gentlemen referred to in the next list, from one to twenty inclusive, do not appear to have passed any examination, but after having remained several years in the provinces, and obtained favourable reports from the civil officers under whose authority they had been placed, they were by orders of government dated 1811, disengaged from that obligation, and confirmed in public situations. The remaining twenty-two persons, numbered in the list, are the only individuals who have succeeded at mufassal examinations from the year 1816 to the present time, and the document shows the date of their arrival in the country and the period they required to complete their studies.

11. The names of the students at present attached to the college and of those removed from it for neglect of duty have been specified in former parts of this report, and at the end of this paragraph[1] will be given a list of those who have proceeded into the provinces, on leave of absence, under the care of relations and friends, being placed generally under the superintendence of the district magistrates.

12. It might naturally be expected that young men placed in those advantageous circumstances in the undisturbed retirement of the country, with few temptations to idleness around them, with friends capable of assisting them in their studies, and with the constant conviction before their eyes, that their public duties cannot be performed without a knowledge of the eastern languages, would pass their examinations in them, more rapidly than their less fortunately situated contemporaries, in some respects, at the presidency. This however is by no means the case, as a momentary reference to the lists will show the different times, commonly required to accomplish the same object, under different circumstances. In Calcutta every student knows his progress will appear exactly in the reports on the periodical examinations, which are now commonly held every two months, and even monthly for those who have a prospect of passing in any language. Proper books and competent native teachers are here easily obtained,

255. [1] Omitted.

oriental scholars can at all times be consulted, and emulation which does something everywhere among young men properly educated, has always had, and still has, its full effect among the students of the college of Fort William. Various other reasons might be adduced to account for the difference in question, but it is not necessary to detail them, in as much as they will be obvious to your Lordship.

13. As it has been objected of late that the examinations have become more difficult than they were formerly it may be proper to state for your Lordship's information a few particulars to show that no alteration has taken place in this respect. The same books, in each language, that were formerly employed, are still in use. The exercises are likewise the same, since for this purpose new papers have not been printed for some years. Even when this is done the examiners select them to correspond as exactly as may be, in point of difficulty, with the old exercises, and before they are sent to the press they are submitted for the perusal and approval of the college council. In addition to all this, the senior of the officers, who conduct these proceedings, has been occasionally engaged in the performance of such duties for more than seventeen years, and both his colleagues have likewise been similarly employed for a considerable period of time.

14. It would indeed be no easy matter to persuade any person acquainted with the time and pains necessary for the acquiring of foreign tongues, that an examination in two of them, which after a few months study has been successfully passed more than a hundred times, can be a difficult one, and from the above particulars, it will appear that no alteration in it can have taken place.

15. It has been asserted likewise that the Hindu language can be of no use to the students of the college, but upon what grounds I cannot possibly imagine. It is the most closely connected with the Sanskrit, of all the dialects at present known to have sprung from that origin, and spoken and written at the present day, by one of the most numerous nations on the face of the earth. It might be sufficient to merely name the Rajputs, of every part of British India; but the use of it with some shades of difference may be extended to all Hindus, out of Bengal, and Orissa, who have not lost their own language, and adopted that of foreigners. It may here be added that in 1824 when Hindi was introduced into the college, instead of Hindustani, which being chiefly derived from Arabic and Persian, it was concluded, could not be understood by Hindus, every enquiry respecting the propriety of the change, was made by the gentlemen who then superintended the affairs of the institution, and who were themselves distinguished, not only for their knowledge of the native languages, but also by long experience in the transaction of the honourable Company's public business.

16. The Arabic words that may be introduced into Persian, and Hindustani, are at least as numerous as those of two of any of the ancient languages of Europe, and Sanskrit words are admitted in the same manner, into Hindi and Bengali. These are the six languages

which were formerly taught in the college, but of the late years Arabic, and Sanskrit, have been neglected, and the students' labours are now confined to Persian and Hindi, or Persian and Bengali. In either case he has to peruse three books and perform two or three such exercises, from English and vice versa, of which that perusal might enable him to give versions, and in such a manner, as they might be intelligible to a Mahomedan or Hindu.

17. To acquire a critical knowledge of the languages of the country, it is indeed necessary to learn something of both Arabic, and Sanskrit, and to obtain an extensive and familiar acquaintance with them following the same path, would be attended with the greatest advantage, owing to the extraordinary assistance which the memory would receive from the system of derivation.

18. Referring to the manner in which the two grand sources of Mahomedan and Hindu vocabularies supply these subordinate streams, and to what has been above stated, it will be obvious to any person acquainted with languages, that the student of the college of Fort William, reported qualified to discharge the duties of an officer in the civil service of Bengal, conducted in Persian and Hindi for instance, has a very limited and elementary kind of acquaintance with those dialects, and that it would be useful or otherwise in proportion to the soundness of the grammatical principles on which it had been obtained. His Persian in short might be compared to the Greek of a boy who had read two or three volumes of Herodotus, or Xenophon, and his Hindi to that of the Latin of another, who had perused a similar quantity of the easiest Roman authors.

19. It has therefore always appeared to me exceedingly desirable that the oriental studies of the home college should have been confined to the Arabic and Sanskrit languages, the grammar of which might be learned equally well in any country and the ability to read a common class book in each would be found of essential benefit to the students of the three presidencies. In most cases, the quantity of Persian brought out from Haileybury appears by the initiatory examinations of this college to have been very small and the time said to have been given to Hindustani and Bengali study completely thrown away.

20. The reductions which have been made in the college of Fort William, within the present year, are very considerable, in an economical point of view, but they have not perhaps very materially lessened the efficiency of the institution. The diligent were at all times independent of assistance, and to the idle and inattentive, no aid could supply defect of application. Those however who value instruction by lectures have it now in their power to avail themselves of the learning of and abilities of a gentleman, distinguished for the highest acquirements in the learned languages of Europe, and at the expiration of no distant period, his present progress promises similar attainments in those of Asia. Having evinced such proficiency in Persian and Bengali at examinations of the college as entitled him to diplomas in those tongues,

his qualification to give instruction in them is by this circumstance alone sufficiently established; and having when at leisure from the discharge of his professional duties diligently pursued some of the Arabic, Sanskrit, Hindi, and Hindustani writings, the Revd. J. Procter may in a short time be capable of conducting a course of lectures, in all those languages, under such advantages as have seldom, if ever, fallen to the lot of any other individual. With your Lordship's permission, he commenced a course of reading, not quite two months since, in Persian, Bengali and Hindi, and the attendance being entirely optional, it will be considered as speaking sufficiently in praise of his method of teaching, when it is known that he has already nearly twenty subscribers to the three classes. The number will soon be increased, and I cannot help considering the establishment of Mr. Procter's lectures an exceedingly fortunate circumstance for many of the writers of the Bengal presidency.

21. Since the date of your Lordship's arrival in Bengal including those alluded to in the beginning of the last paragraph, the reductions in the expense of the establishment have been very considerable. The discontinuance of the sum of 4,000 rupees granted to every writer previous to the month of July 1828, supposing it to have been advanced to the ninety-four students alluded to in the 6th paragraph, amounts to the sum of 376,000 rupees. The saving by the sale of public furniture, which had been destroyed nearly as fast as it was supplied or repaired amounted to 4,409 rupees; and the annual saving by the reduction of the professorships and situations of native teachers and other servants, to 30,220 rupees. These measures have I think been generally attended with very favourable effects in the conduct of the students, and have materially assisted in checking idleness and extravagance and promoting study.

22. I am not aware of any other circumstance relating to the affairs of the college which at present requires to be added to the foregoing particulars, but should anything of the kind hereafter occur, I shall not fail to bring it to your Lordship's notice.

256. *Bentinck's minute on Travancore affairs*

9 October 1830

Courtesy towards the authority and person of the governor of Fort St. George and courtesy alone, induces me to yield my judgment to the representation which he has made upon the occasion of his late account of the state of affairs in Travancore, and I will now consider only the prospective measures to be adopted upon the orders of the honourable court. I must at the same time take the liberty of remarking that it is quite clear to my mind, as I always suspected, that much of these charges and imputations upon the conduct of Colonel Morison has been the offspring of vile intrigue. It now appears that the raja, a youth of 16 years of age, has been a mere puppet in the hands of his

tutor, who has at last accomplished his design of becoming the sole diwan, and all that want of sensibility on the part of the resident, on which so much stress was laid, in restraining the raja from placing his father in a position forbidden by the usages and customs of the country, was, in fact, well advised, because we now find the raja declaring to the governor that he is quite aware of his father's failings, and expresses his determination that he shall have no share in the government. As for the oration delivered upon this occasion by the raja, it has too much of stage effect about it to have any weight with me. It is evidently a speech got up by the tutor, and put into the mouth of his pupil, and any other sentiments of an entirely opposite meaning would have been proposed with the same facility, had they been supposed to have been more pleasing to the ears of the principal authority of the state, whom he was then addressing. But of this enough, and I shall now merely express the opinion I entertain upon the proposition now made to us to withdraw two regiments of the Travancore force, and to retain the agent upon a reduced salary, by which a saving of expense is estimated, but not explained, to the amount of 4½ lakhs of rupees.

I recommend a compliance with Mr. Lushington's recommendation. It is in conformity with the orders of the court, though not carried to their utmost extent, and any evil resulting from it, can be quickly repaired. I am also of opinion that the continuance of the resident as long as the present doubtful state of things lasts, is desirable, both for the well being of Travancore and for the realisation of our own subsidy which I fear, may be attended with difficulty, and it is therefore of importance, if disappointment on this head should occur that we may be accurately informed how far it may arise from a maladministration of the finances, and from extravagance, or from the impossibility of exporting specie in consequence of there being no sale for the production of the province.

Colonel Morison is of opinion that the withdrawal of the force can be productive of little other saving to the British government, than that of the staff and the magazines belonging to the force, while the money expended by the troops in Travancore was a great gain to the country, and facilitated the payment of the subsidy. He also supposed that the Travancore government must raise additional troops at an increase of charge, to replace the corps so withdrawn, but in all probability the regiment retained will make this unnecessary. Upon enquiring of Mr. Hill, if any difficulty had been experienced from the remittance of the surplus revenues from Malabar and Kanara, he said that the payment of the troops, among which there was a corps of Europeans, disposed of a considerable portion of the funds, and that otherwise the remittance of the whole would have been attended with great injury to those provinces.

It is difficult therefore to understand how this great saving of 4½ lakhs is to accrue, unless the troops withdrawn were to be altogether reduced; if this should not be the case, the expense saved must be trifling and if, further, the extraction of the subsidy should fail, the

transaction will be attended with evident loss. Upon this point it will be right to require more explicit information from the government of Fort St. George.

It will be a more appropriate question to consider whether the army of Fort St. George, after the return of these corps from Travancore and two others expected from the Doab, may not undergo a reduction. *But this question will be better discussed, when the military establishments of the three presidencies come under review.*

It appears, however, that the raja himself pressed upon the governor's attention the difficulty that would attend the payment of the subsidy, if we did not, as in former times, consent to take in lieu of money the produce of the country, consisting of pepper, timber and cardanoms. The governor as well as Colonel Morison has foreseen the probable occurrence of this embarrassment, and by way of meeting it, Mr. Lushington has suggested to the raja to freight a ship, happening then to lay at Cochin, with pepper to be sold by the honourable Company in *London on account of the raja, and the proceeds to be paid into the* treasury at the India House at 1s. 11d. the rupee. To this proposition I feel many objections. As a mere commercial transaction it is difficult to imagine that an advantageous remittance by means of pepper (by the governor's own account an unsaleable article) could in these times, have escaped the notice of every intelligent merchant in India. It is hardly fair either for the greatest commercial company in the world to be trying or rather to be *ordering* (for this is the proper term) this commercial experiment to be made at this petty raja's expense, and lastly all pecuniary transactions with dependent states, other than those expressly stipulated by treaty, have always been more or less of a forced character, and tend to shake their confidence in our inviolable adherence to our engagements, and are in my judgment highly objectionable and undignified. But I fear there is no time to place these objections before the Madras government, as the governor's suggestion would probably have been carried into immediate execution.

257. *Resolution of the Bengal government on the administration of civil justice*

12 October 1830

1. On a full consideration of the foregoing papers the governor-general in council cannot doubt that the administration of civil justice will be promoted and improved by enlarging the powers at present exercised by the native judicial officers, and he is of opinion that the measure proposed for that purpose in Mr. Bayley's minute may be adopted with advantage, independently of any further modifications of the existing system which it may be deemed necessary to introduce hereafter either in regard to the abolition of the provincial courts and

the office of registrar or establishing of a separate sadar court in the western provinces.

2. In regard to the registrar's court it will be necessary to dispense with it in the districts in which the regulation enlarging the powers of the native judges may be introduced. In such cases it seems desirable that the zillah judge should have the assistance of a junior civil servant to aid him in preparing cases for his decision, in examining forms and reports, and in performing such other ministerial duties as it might be proper to entrust to an assistant according to his experience and intelligence. Previously to coming to a decision as to what those duties should be the governor-general in council desires that the court of sadar diwani adalat may be requested to report their sentiments on the general question as to the best mode of giving employment to assistants in the judicial branch of the service in the event of the registrar's courts being abolished.

3. The regulations heretofore annexed for augmenting the powers of the native functionaries have been directed to their gradual extension as better adapted to the condition of the people than any violent innovation in the established system which might suddenly elevate the native judges to the possession of the full extent of jurisdiction which before had only been entrusted to the European officers, and the governor-general in council is persuaded of the policy of pursuing this plan so long as it can be rendered effectual in relieving the zillah judges from a sufficient quantity of business to allow of their exercising an effectual control over the inferior courts.

. . . . .

258. *Court of directors on policy towards Hyderabad*

East India House. 21 October 1830

I have received and laid before the court of directors of the East India Company, Mr. Jones's letter of the 7th October returning the Bengal political draft No. 600 and I am commanded by the court to request that you will lay before the commissioners for the affairs of India, the following representation upon the alterations made by the board in paragraphs 4 and 6.

The court cannot admit that the discontinuance of interference on the part of the Bengal government in the internal management of the Nizam's dominions merits the character of a precipitate change of policy from one extreme to another, nor is it, the court conceive, correct in point of fact, that the measure was adopted 'in consequence of the wish for independence expressed by the young Nizam'.

It was adopted because for years past, and after repeated discussions, the authorities both at home and in India, had been fully convinced that they had been acting on a mistaken system of policy with respect

to the Nizam's government. The court of directors in their letter to the Bengal government dated 21st January 1824, pronounced a deliberate and severe condemnation of that policy and from that time to the present, the whole tenor of their correspondence has been of a nature to inspire the Bengal government with the belief that in delivering back the government of the Nizam's dominions to the native authorities, even during the life of the late Nizam, they would only have been acting in conformity to the declared wishes of the home authorities. The Bengal government certainly could not have expected that when the measure was accomplished, those very authorities, having in the meantime altered their opinion, would throw the responsibility of the measure upon the persons who merely gave effect to their declared wish. The Indian governments cannot be expected to foresee, when our orders are issued, that by the time they are executed we shall have changed our minds. If we discover ourselves to have given them improper instructions, we have no right to lay our own errors at their door.

The court consider it unnecessary to enter into any exposition of their reasons for condemning the system of managing the Nizam's affairs by European officers, from which system the Bengal government has now, in their opinion very properly departed. Those reasons are set forth in their political letter to Bengal of 21st January 1824, to the principles of which despatch the court fully adhere. But it seems to be the opinion of the board, that the accession of a new sovereign, with whose character we were as yet unacquainted, was not a fit occasion for making the change.

On this I am directed to observe, that the interference which we exercised in the Nizam's affairs, and which was wholly unsanctioned by treaty, derived its sole warrant from the approbation, or at least permission of the Nizam himself. To justify its continuance under a new reign, this permission must have been renewed by the prince who succeeded to the throne. Without such a renewal, we had no more right to govern the country for him, than to take it for ourselves. The Bengal government undoubtedly thought, and in the court's opinion justly, that it would have been highly unadvisable, even if practicable, to wring from the new sovereign a reluctant assent to the continuance of a system of which we ourselves disapproved, and which we had determined to renounce on the first favourable opportunity.

With respect to our 'utter ignorance of the character of the young sovereign' the court observe that the present Nizam was no longer in early youth, and that government knew as much of his character as they ever can know of the character of the heir apparent of any throne in India. What they did know was wholly in his favour as appears from Mr. Martin's despatch of 25th May 1829. It is true they had no experience of him as a sovereign, but it was impossible that they ever should acquire that kind of experience, so long as they continued to deny to him the exercise of sovereignty.

The intimation, that, whether he maintained his present minister, or

appointed a new one, we would not interfere, appears to the court not to have been 'gratuitous', but necessary, to prevent the Nizam from supposing that we continued to give our support to the existing minister of whose elevation we had been the original authors. The Bengal government had long been convinced that the measure of upholding a minister by our authority was injudicious and they considered the present a favourable opportunity for retracing their steps.

259. *Calcutta finance committee on judicial administration*

25 October 1830

My Lord,

In commencing the revision of the establishments of the three presidencies, with the view to bringing the charges down to the standard of 1823–24, we stated to your Lordship in council that retrenchment of expense, and not general reform, was the primary object we had in view, and that in the suggestions offered by us we should adhere as far as possible to the existing system. We at the same time intimated that when no other mode of effecting reductions to the necessary extent appeared to be practicable, we should consider ourselves at liberty to propose new arrangements founded upon those principles which we concurred in thinking it expedient to adopt in providing for the civil administration of the country.

2. In conformity with the above principles, the only essential changes recommended by us in regard to Madras, were the modifications of the courts of circuit and appeal, the abolition of the office of registrar, and the extension of the powers of native judges. In Bengal, however, it appeared to us that the requisite reduction of expense could only be effected by a somewhat more extensive change of system; and at Bombay the arrangements actually adopted by the government, involving an almost complete alteration of their judiciary establishments, we were compelled to enter fully into in consideration of the general principles to be followed in all local arrangements for the civil administration of the country.

3. In so wide a sphere of enquiry it could scarcely happen that there should exist an entire concurrence of opinion on all points; and the views of our second member in regard to some important questions involved in the system adopted at Bombay differing from those entertained by the majority of the committee, we have the honour of submitting herewith a copy of a minute, wherein, as intimated in the postscript of our report of the 20th September last, he has explained the sentiments entertained by him, together with the observations of our senior member on some of the matters discussed in that paper.

4. The committee propose to take an early opportunity of submitting a separate report upon the question, how far the agency of

individuals could be advantageously substituted for that of collective boards. In the meantime, the third member deems it sufficient to refer, for an explanation of his views regarding the judicial and revenue administration, to his minute of the 16th June 1829, and to the regular reports of the committee already furnished, and to state his concurrence with the second member in thinking that the provincial judges of appeal and circuit might, without any other delay than would necessarily attend the adoption of the arrangement, be safely abolished at Madras, by still farther enlarging, as at Bombay, the criminal and civil powers of the local European and native judges.

5. It is satisfactory to find that there is a general concurrence in our committee in regard to the essential principles of reform proper to be applied to the local administration of India, and that whatever variety of opinion may exist in following out those principles, does not in any degree tend to bring in question the financial results it has been the object of our reports to establish.

D. Hill
Holt Mackenzie
John Bax

260. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

28 October 1830
Recd. 8 November 1830

My dear Lord William,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of the letter from your Lordship under date [? 1st] October and as you are anxious for my opinion upon my proposition as to the Indian navy I send for your own information copy of my minute upon the report of the financial committee. Your Lordship will observe from this that I am very reluctant to part with this branch of local strength and cannot see my way to any efficient substitute for it. I have done my duty and God knows am unbiased by any other motive for as to Charles Malcolm, he would be the most fortunate of men if the plan of this committee (which must render his station unnecessary) took effect. He would certainly get a pension and be not only able to take better care of his health which has not been good but be freed from all the bad feeling that his high and uncompromising integrity have led to his being assailed with at Bombay where he has nobly supported my efforts to root out abuses and to make reforms in his department which, like most others, I have found to require no lenient hand.

Your Lordship shall have the letter I promised upon the army and a minute summing up what I have done closing with my sentiments on the leading points of our internal administration.

I have really lost temper almost with my colleagues on the subject of

Baroda. I enclose copies of the minutes which have passed on this occasion. Mr. Newnham's will, I think surprise you, but he is a good natured easy man, worked up to assert and maintain the *consular dignity* (as a worthy predecessor of his at Bombay termed it) in order to prevent if possible the fall of long cherished systems and interests. Mr. Romer is a desperate regulation man with the principles in full vigour of an ultra Tory and high churchman, hates all changes from the clauses of a regulation at Bombay to the act of parliament for the catholic emancipation. I have, however, treated my counsellors as I have all who have opposed what I thought economical and expedient, with temper but decision.

P.S. I have been disappointed at not receiving a sanction to my proposition for employing Lt. Burnes. The information about the Indus is certainly important and I do not know how it could be obtained so well and at such small cost. I should like to have your Lordship's opinion on this and there may be time if this express reaches soon, before I leave Bombay on the 1st of December. The work will be spoilt by the least mismanagement, but if your Lordship does not write before you leave Calcutta I shall conclude *the plot* which I certainly thought a good plot, is not approved of. . . .

261. *Board of control on policy towards Hyderabad*

India Board. 28 October 1830

Sir,

I am directed by the commissioners for the affairs of India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 21 inst. conveying the representations of the court of directors upon the alterations made by the board in paragraphs 4 and 6 of the Bengal political draft 600.

The board observe that these representations do not apply so much to the alterations themselves as to the reasons given in support of them. The court remark that the Bengal government could not acquire any experience of the Nizam as a ruler as long as they continued to deny him the exercise of sovereignty.

It is impossible for the board to dispute the correctness of this, the only remark in your letter which bears directly upon an alteration made by them, but they cannot but think that between the denial to the Nizam of the exercise of sovereignty and the unqualified declaration of non-interference with his government, while we remain bound to reduce to obedience such of his subjects as may be refractory, there might have been found a medium, and that the sovereign powers of the Nizam might have been gradually enlarged as he evinced aptitude to govern, and the disposition to govern well.

From a passage in the letter to which reference has been made of 21 January 1824 it may be inferred, that the court then entertained

doubts whether a system of non-interference founded on a regard for the rights of an independent sovereign was practicable, under the circumstances of our intimate connection with the Nizam's government.

In that letter the court distinctly state, that we are bound by treaty to protect that government, however tyrannical and oppressive may be its proceedings, and they further state that as long as we have an army stationed within the Nizam's country (which we still have) the objection to non-interference founded upon that obligation (which still exists) can never be entirely obviated.

Under this impression the court abstained from issuing any positive instructions because they were unwilling to fetter the discretion of the Bengal government.

The opinion of the board is that the Bengal government have not exercised a sound discretion in the manner in which they have accomplished abruptly and at once the wishes intimated by the court.

I am therefore to desire that in conformity with the provisions of 13 section of the act 33 Geo 3 cap 52, the draft as altered by the board, may be forwarded to India without delay.

262. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough*

Ghazipur. 7 November 1830

My dear Lord,

The only letters I have received from you in the present year are dated February 17, conveying the *Mirror of Parliament* with a corrected report of your speech respecting your letter to Sir John Malcolm and your letter of the 15th May, per *Susan*, whose arrival has been much retarded by her bringing troops from the Cape. The latter letter was received only three days ago.

With respect to the improvement of cotton and silk, it will have been already before you that these important objects had been entrusted to the Society of Agriculture and Horticulture, who are most active in their endeavours, and have exactly the same views as the government at home. We have complied with their request both for money and land, upon which they are about to establish an experimental farm for the cultivation of cotton and tobacco. Sir Edward Ryan is the president, and no man can be more active in advancing every kind of improvement. Several very wealthy natives are associated in the committee with the principal merchants and officers of government. The extraordinary success that has followed the encouragement given to the culture of fruits and vegetables in particular, promises fair for other produce. India I am satisfied can produce anything in her varied climate, but I must repeat again and again, that it is only to be done by European skill and capital, with a free and open market. In about a fortnight I shall be in Bundelkhand,

our great cotton district, and enquiry shall then be made, how far the process of cleaning may be better performed by our own officers.

Your Lordship will receive by the ships sailing about this time our correspondence with the judges upon the formation of a legislative council, and the introduction of one system of courts for the whole of our possessions. Into the legislative council bill, upon which we are agreed, we have introduced several provisions from the same enactment for Van Diemen's land, which we had not seen when our first draft was prepared. The judges, I mean those appointed by the king, may be made most useful aids to the general administration, instead of disturbing of the public peace, as has been too often the case. The opinion of council, tho' not expressed, is divided as to the rejection for the present of all other persons; except the members of council and the judges of the supreme court. Sir Charles Grey had proposed the admission of the bishop; but as a legislature for a Hindu society, this seemed to us all very objectionable. For my own part I should infinitely prefer the introduction of natives, of whom many are to be found of rank, high character, superior talents, and great wealth, both in money and land. They would supply that information upon the manners, customs and feelings of the natives so essential to good legislation, and which we the rulers are so greatly ignorant of. But perhaps even this change would be better adjourned for a time, until the more simple and obvious composition of a council had been tried.

The suggestion contained in your letter to depute upon great occasions, like those of Delhi and Lucknow, a judge of the supreme court to the spot had already occurred to us and would be a very beneficial measure. Any other mode of bringing a great delinquent to justice is utterly bad. Whether the existing system continues or not, some new means must be devised for trying Europeans, of whom there are several hundreds residing in the interior. As the law now stands such is the difficulty of dragging witnesses from their houses, such the tampering with them when here, with many other obstacles, that murder itself is almost secure against punishment. We are of opinion that there would be no difficulty in most places of assembling a jury of five persons. I think their discussion will exhibit more than any other documents which I have seen, the real difficulties of the present system. It must be admitted to be, as one of the judges described it an imperfect government and Mons. Jacquemont,[1] the French savant, who came here with letters of recommendation from the board of control and the India House, wrote lately from the upper province to a friend of his in Calcutta that 'le pays' was 'usillement inadministré'. There are other papers worth your perusal contained in the opinions of the munsifs of the sadar adalat upon Mr. Bayley's plan for the enlargement of the powers entrusted to the native judicial officers. A regulation has passed to this effect, but the introduction will be gradual and confined in the first

262. [1] A selection of his letters, translated from the French, are in *Letters from India, during the years 1828–31.* (1834.)

instance to such districts as afford capable individuals and when the European authorities are not adverse to the employment of natives.

I shall conclude for the present.

263. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 11 November 1830

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Sir Edward Barnes[1] has been provisionally appointed and his course will be so shaped as to fall in with the views and wishes of Lord Dalhousie. The loss of a nobleman of his Lordship's independent and honourable mind must be a severe deprivation at the moment to your Lordship, and it is a matter of severe regret to all Lord Dalhousie's friends that he should so soon have suffered from his acceptance of a public post which was yielded to more as a sense of public feeling than I believe from any desire to undertake so distant a voyage or so troublesome an office.

. . . . . .

The governor-general and two lieutenant governors would seem better fitted than the present [system] which leaves too much in the hands of the subordinates and rather induces an abstinence from interference however strong the necessity may be felt for it on the part of the supreme government. Hence there is a disunion on matters of general policy, and finance, leading to results which baffle every well intentioned measure on the part of the supreme government for ensuring efficiency, retrenchment and economy.

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Mr. Astell leaves the chair and the court in April. So does Mr. Marjoribanks. It is presumed Mr. Campbell will be chairman. The deputy is doubtful. I may be permitted to suggest to your Lordship in *strict confidence* not to write to the *new chairman* should it be as above other than *very very* cautiously, if at all. I know what has been written as to Persia, but am most anxious to prevent the shadow of a ground for supposing that your Lordship may be influenced by anyone from hence as to the future appointments connected with this charge as successor to the late Sir J. McDonald.

264. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Private

Benares. 14 November 1830

I have to return you my best thanks for your letter of the 3rd June per the *Huntley Castle*. Your approbation of many of our measures is

263. [1] Barnes, Sir Edward, 1776–1838, Governor of Ceylon, 1824–31. Commander-in-Chief, India, 1831–3.

highly gratifying. My foresight and anticipations were never more completely at fault than in the reception given at home to our Nagpur treaty. I have, as Mr. Campbell will inform, in a letter to Lord Ellenborough, not receded an inch upon the right, just and generous policy that guided us. All orders of the court positively enjoin the arrangement, whenever the government may think it safe and expedient so to do. A most satisfactory explanation can be given to all the apprehension of future inconvenience of which this despatch is so prolific. I trust the court will be able to convince the board of the impolicy of departing from the present course of forbearance and non-interference, the success of which has been very strongly demonstrated by the present state of central India.

We are for once acting upon one uniform intelligible principle and I am confident our moderation is appreciated. Upon the licentious nature of many of the publications in the daily press you have expressed a strong opinion of their injurious tendency. It is more easy to see the evil than to deal with it. You have a free press here and I doubt very much whether any government can *now* venture to suppress it, or to bring it here within the censorship that exists at Madras. In all the encounters with editors at Calcutta, the government have always been beat. I doubt much whether the contemplated despatch will bring any positive orders upon the subject. The finance committee have taken a very complete review of all our establishments. I think they have ably and honestly discharged their duties, which are to terminate with the year. Lord Dalhousie is following us on the river. A native report states him to have been ill again but we have no accounts of it. His health is much improved, but he is still in a very weak state. He ought to have gone home. I left Calcutta on the 16 October and proceed on my march on the 19th of the month. I shall begin with Bundelkhand, which has been positively ruined by ill-judged and excessive assessment. I have unluckily not the same able assistance, as I should have had last year, but we have a part of the board of revenue and I hope we may be able to recommend to the consideration of the court some plan for rescuing the question of revenue settlement in the ceded and conquered provinces from the unsatisfactory and discreditable position in which it has so long been placed. I have invited Mr. Graeme, who is very conversant with Sir Tho. Munro's revenue system to meet me on my tour. I expect much assistance from his knowledge and experience in these matters. We have very satisfactory accounts from Major Burney. The court of Ava have been particularly civil to him and they are doing their best to prevent all marauders on our frontier. I rather think that much of this civility proceeds from the hope of getting back the Tenasserim provinces without any equivalent and of some more favourable line on the side of Manipur. At Lucknow where I expect to be soon, I cannot say that things are in a very favourable state. We have the satisfaction of having an honest and able resident at that court but I think he has started with rather too high notions of his prerogative and with the seeming desire

to be the sole ruler in Oudh. This is a mistake common to almost all residents. I have been particularly pleased with my personal communications with Major Stewart. He seems remarkably conciliatory and clearheaded and more likely, as he did most successfully with the late Sindhia, to gain the confidence of a native court more than any man I ever saw.

265. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 26 November 1830

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The affairs in China will have explained the cause of the non-arrival of the China ships before the *David Clarke.* The copy of the court's orders to China consequent upon the absurd manners of the super cargoes who will have to repent of their folly I forwarded to your Lordship—they will have put your Lordship in possession of the court's sentiments. I send with this packet the last numbers of the *Parliamentary Mirror* and a copy of a connected report with the evidence of the lords commission on the China question. What measures may now be had it is not yet possible to say, whether any further enquiry or whether, when the 3rd year notice is given in April some propositions may be made is yet doubtful. I do not expect that anything short of opening the China trade will satisfy the public. It is so far as the Company is concerned a simple question of money. A remittance to meet political charges of nearly £3,000,000 annually must be made somehow from India, and looking at the state of private mercantile speculations the question is whether at any time they are to be trusted entirely as the channel for that remittance. Then again India with all that can be done in the way of reduction will want the aid of £800,000 to a million here after payment of debts. I do not really think the Company have any wish to drive a bargain with the public. The Company have rights and privileges and property, all of which they are willing to make subservient to the public good if they can be fairly and properly secured in what they are fairly entitled to. In that case I would give the utmost latitude to British merchants, not that I think they will do much better in the China than they have done in the India trade. The latter has not yielded them 1/7 a rupee. The bullion remittance might make 1/11d. It is extraordinary that there is no medium by bills—this would shew that there is little substantiality in the commercial character involved in the India trade.

266. *Lord Ellenborough to Bentinck.* Private

Grosvenor Place. 26 November 1830

My dear Lord,

I cannot terminate my correspondence with you as president of the India board without expressing to you my sincere thanks for the candour with which you have at all times communicated your opinions to me, and my satisfaction at having the government of India in your safe hands. I am sure you will persevere in those measures of reduction which are essential to India, not only financially but politically, for I feel confident that if the financial difficulties of the Indian treasury should, when indirect assistance is no longer derived from the China trade, bring the affairs of India under the consideration of a house of commons in ill humour, reductions will then be ordered so inconsiderately and enforced so roughly that the permanence of any dominion will be endangered. It is my persuasion that the work of economical reform being pursued firmly and unremittingly but very cautiously India can pay for her own administration without any assistance from hence, and upon this persuasion I noted the advice I was prepared to give that a negotiation should be opened with the court on the basis of the freedom of trade.

I hope you will receive from my successor the same support you would always have received from me in your measures of reduction. It is justly due to you, who in obedience to your peremptory instructions pursue a line of conduct which exposes you to much unmerited odium.

I feel that the example of obedience you have given is of great benefit politically. It tends to restore a proper tone to the whole service. The reins of government had been too much relaxed both here and in India.

I had been co-operating with you in retrenchment and had just prepared reductions which would ultimately have amounted to £360,000. I have left minutes relating to them in the office. The details are not intelligible without the voluminous memoranda and calculations attached. But I will send copies to you as they will serve to show the general outline of my plans.

The total amount of the reductions entered or proposed here and of those you have effected since the month of January 1828 is not less than £1,850,000.

267. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. December 1830
Recd. Bundelkhand. 21 December 1830

My dear Lord William,

I am decidedly for refusing the aid of our troops in the internal disturbances of the Jaipur state and am rejoiced to learn that your Lordship entertains a similar opinion. To furnish troops for the support of the rani and Jotha Ram would not only be an interference in internal affairs, but would also be an interference on the wrong side, and in a bad cause. Were we forced to interfere it ought to be for the purpose of establishing a popular government and good measures. We have only tolerated the vicious rule of the rani, because the assembly of chiefs declared for her right, and Jotha Ram is her minister because as ruler she has the right of election. If the chiefs oust him, and even set her aside, and establish a government really Jaipurean, under chiefs of the state, it will do good. If such disturbances should arise, as may compel us to interfere, we ought not, I think, to do it in support merely of one of the parties. We ought then to be arbitrators and dictators for the whole. No aid in troops ought ever to be afforded to a government, which declares itself incompetent to quell internal disturbances, unless it places itself and its measures entirely under our guidance. Then commences a new era in our connection with a state so situated: but it is one which it is desirable to avoid rather than hasten. If plunderers from the disturbed territory infest neighbouring states, we must either insist on redress or allow those states to redress themselves. The tribute will be more irregularly paid, but our right to it will not be affected, and when we may chose to insist on realizing it will be a matter of option and expediency. I have hopes that the Jaipur government, finding that troops are refused, will see the necessity of accommodation with the chiefs, if it be not strong enough to keep them under, and that the thing may be settled without extensive confusion. It is a fine field I think for the exercise of good principles, if the local authorities act with sense and judgment. Rajputana requires a firstrate resident to itself, separated from Delhi, but almost everything of good from such an arrangement would depend on the individual selected. Should your Lordship, under present circumstances, think it desirable to retain an agent at Jaipur, I should not see any objection of great consequence: although it is a chance whether he would do harm or good, that depending very much on the person employed. Your Lordship will find almost all our Indian [residents] are advocates for interference. They declaim against non-interference, although, owing to a general propensity for interference, it has never been fairly tried. I thank your Lordship for the European intelligence . . .

268. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck on the internal government of India.* Official

Bombay. 2 December 1830

My Lord,

I have written your Lordship very fully on the subject of the army of India, and my minute under date the 28th of November, copy of which is transmitted, gives a short abstract of the principal measures that have been adopted since I took charge of this government. It also shows their financial results. Though these have exceeded forty lakhs of rupees from reductions of the army, abolition of officers, diminution of establishments, and revisions of departments, I must consider this reduction as comparatively small in proportion to what will result from the reforms introduced into every branch of this government, the economical effects of which have already been very great, and must, if the measures now in progress be decidedly maintained, be progressively greater. The accounts of the three last years as relating to all contingencies both in the civil and military departments shew this, as your Lordship will observe, in a very clear manner, but there must be no laxity in enforcing rigorously the principles upon which such reforms rest. Continual representations will be made against the different parts of a system which affects the interests of too many individuals to be unassailed. It will be more difficult to repel such representations from the multiplied distinct authorities which alike exist over departments at the presidency and in the provinces. Many may be adverse to the principles on which recent reforms have been made. Indolence, weakness, or inexperience in their superiors will all tend to aid subordinate persons in the various establishments, and those connected with them, in their unwearied attempts to revive abuses and increase expenditure. The efforts which have been made to reduce expense have owed their success to cases which in the ordinary state of affairs cannot be expected to continue in operation. I came to this government with general knowledge of all parts of our empire, and long residence in India, as well as personal experience in the details of every department, which gave me advantages not likely to combine again in an individual. The pressure of financial difficulties was so great that reductions to a large amount were indispensable. This presidency was measured by a standard which referred (upon what principles I can never understand) to its ability to pay its own expenses more than to its importance as a part of the general empire of India, and I was called upon by every consideration of duty as well as by the orders of my superiors in England and in India to diminish public expenditure. In this work, in which I have personally and unremittingly laboured for three years, I have been greatly aided by the talent and virtue which I found in the public services. But it has not been accomplished without creating discontentedness and dissatisfaction with measures that affect the present interests and prospects of numbers. This I have not heeded.

My knowledge of the subject, my impressions regarding the future benefits to the governments and to the public service, have enabled me to pursue an undeviating course, but the obstacles I have met make me quite satisfied that without there are many and serious changes and modifications in the whole shape of the general administration of this presidency, the reforms I have introduced will not be permanent, and these reforms I am also convinced, are quite essential for the better rule of our extended provinces. I have had a singular opportunity of forming my opinion upon this subject since I came last to India, and as the changes I mean to suggest are associated in principle with the administration of every part of this empire, and can alone be judged by the supreme government and the authorities in England, I deem it proper to address your Lordship personally, but so far from having any objection to my sentiments being put on record, I should rather desire it, particularly as I shall send a copy of this letter to the chairman of the court of directors. It is the last communication I shall ever make to a governor-general upon the subject of the internal government of India. It is made with the full conviction that it contains no suggestion that is not calculated to promote the ends of economy, to give simplicity and efficiency to every department, to maintain and improve checks upon the abuse of power, to raise into more consideration the higher classes of the natives by rendering them useful in the general administration, and above all, though it will lessen the numbers, to elevate the condition of the civil service and to offer to the competent and distinguished members the highest objects of ambition.

The observations I shall now proceed to offer to your Lordship's consideration may be deemed by some innovations and objectionable as calculated to disturb what may be viewed as a good and established system. But a rapid succession of events have wholly altered our condition in India, and we have, in my opinion, no choice between suiting our rule to the altered state of our power or of incurring hazards of a nature that may endanger its existence, unless that is protracted at a cost that will render India a burden on England, for in proportion as we extend our actual system our civil and military expenses will swell beyond our means of defraying them.

I can anticipate no complete success to any one plan I have suggested, nor indeed any essential improvement in the condition of the provinces of this presidency without still further change than what has been made at my recommendation in the form of their administration. The supreme government have recently sanctioned the nomination of a political commissioner in Gujerat, but there appears to me a necessity for an union of power in both that country and the Deccan which must early overcome every objection to such a charge. I can see none that should prevent the early extension of the power of the commissioner over both the political and judicial branch which would include the whole direction and control of the magisterial department, or in other words the maintenance of the general peace of the country. The col-

lection of the revenue and the supervision of the department might remain for a period as at present but as the principles upon which this branch was regulated become more fixed it might also be placed under the control of a chief commissioner, who aided as he would be by efficient public servants would find no difficulty in performing his important and responsible duties. This is indeed proved by the complete success of the system now in practise in the south-west country where the revenue, judicial and political powers have been hitherto united with every success.

Such a mode of administering the countries on our western frontier would be found alike essential to provide against foreign danger as to maintain internal peace. Instead of the numerous and almost coequal authorities with whom it becomes necessary to communicate, and who are to be combined in action on every occurrence of emergency, prompt proceedings would be certain to repress revolt and repel invasion. The natives of the province would no longer have their attention distracted by a variety of civil and political authorities among whom they often see difference and collision. They would recognize a local head, to whom all owed deference and obedience. There is no part of India which more requires we should preserve that awe and respect for local authority among our native subjects than the provinces under this presidency. This important impression is now in a great degree lost by the sub-division of power and it constitutes a strength which were there no other reasons would of itself be sufficient to recommend this measure to adoption.

Much benefit might be expected to result to the public service from all communications with the military in the province being exclusively with one officer in the civil and political department. This every day's experience shews to be much required.

The advantages government would obtain by this modification of its provincial administration would be very great. Its duties would be simplified and facilitated, communication would be received, orders conveyed, and references made to one individual. It would no longer be embarrassed as it often is at present with a variety of opinions which embrace local or personal considerations upon which distance from the scene and want of information of details may make it difficult to judge. These would still be brought forward by officers employed in the provinces; but government would be better enabled to judge such subjects when they come before it in a concentrated shape and it is aided by the experience and judgment of the commissioner. There can be no doubt of the economy of the system. That would result from many causes, but from none more than the gradual diminution of European agency, and here I must state my decided opinion that this form of provincial administration is essential to enable us to preserve the privileged classes established in the Deccan and southern Maratha country and to introduce this order into Gujerat with any prospect of success. It appears to me desirable that employment and means of

distinguishing themselves in the public service should be early afforded to this class. That we cannot do without they have confidence in support and protection from some high local authority. Their alarm at our regulations which are few and easy to be understood will gradually subside. A complete knowledge of them will be acquired, but men of rank and family can only be encouraged to engage in public duties by a belief grounded on personal feelings that they are safe in their honour and character, which they never can while the construction of our provincial administration exposes them to the daily hazard of being placed under superiors often changing and sometimes of comparative junior standing, and at the head of distinct departments.

The privileged classes in the Deccan were instituted by Mr. Elphinstone. This order was regarded by him with anxious solicitude till the day of his embarkation, and he went to his native country accompanied by the strongest testimonies of their regard and gratitude. I have in my treatment of individuals, and in every arrangement connected with this class endeavoured to follow the steps of my predecessor, and my previous knowledge of many of those who belong to it and other circumstances have given me many advantages in allaying their fears and confirming their confidence in the permanence of an order to which recent events have shewn they attach importance and are prompt to resist every change of that administration of the laws which, modified as they are with reference to their feelings and condition, they recognize as the best that could be established.

There are other advantages which government would derive from the modification of its provincial rule. The best and ablest public servants who have belonged for any period to the department in which they have been serving have a bias which tends them to take opposite views of the interests of government in the countries in which they reside. If those in the judicial branch attach as they may do in many cases more importance than they should to the forms and processes of their courts, these are often undervalued by officers employed in the political or revenue department. Recent events have destroyed that school in which men rose to stations which compelled them to attain a knowledge of every department and to aid government in taking a just view of the comparative good or evil that may locally attend its measures. This knowledge must be possessed by the commissioners, and it would be taught in their progress through the service to numbers who might act under their immediate orders. Instead of the answers to circulars now received differing nearly in proportion to the number sent and referring to local considerations of which the government can imperfectly judge, all the information that could be collected would be sent with the advantage of the opinion and judgment formed on the spot of one of the highest and most competent officers of the establishment. To the civil service these high stations would be of incalculable value. They would present objects of honourable ambition. Their duties would be such as must compel proper selection and place them

beyond the ordinary routine of seniority, for there would always exist a necessity for competence in those who had to perform them. The same causes would put the whole provincial administration of India out of reach of the encroachment of European patronage, and the able discharges of such extensive duties as must devolve upon those that filled such stations would give an opportunity that does not now exist of public servants at this and every presidency where the same system was introduced recommending themselves for further promotion in India as well as to notice and distinction in England.

The only stations to which civil servants can now aspire are seats in council where their duties are optional and undefined and may be productive of good or evil according to the disposition or character of the president and members of the board. But under few circumstances can the labour of the most able men in such situations be generally known or appreciated and though a seat in the council as associated with rank and local consequence is coveted by the senior civil servants on the list as a comparatively easy and honourable close to long service, it includes no high and independent charge. Their counsel may promote the happiness of millions or the prosperity of a country; but they seldom receive any adequate share of that applause and that just fame which form the best reward to past and the most legitimate and honourable of all incentives to future efforts in the public service. Far different would be the condition of the commissioners of extensive provinces, and if in addition to such situations that of a chief judge was instituted who should be nominated from the civil service to reside in the court of sadar adalat and become the head of the provincial judicature—to such officer might be added fiscal general or chief revenue commissioner—these stations would give objects of real ambition to the service, particularly if accompanied, which they should be, when men become eminent, with further promotion in India and honours in England. The whole system would through such a change receive life and animation. Pensions and retiring funds which form now almost the exclusive object of the ablest servants would become secondary in their minds and we should derive from their experience, knowledge and active zeal, an aid without which our empire in India in its present scale cannot be successfully governed. I do not dwell upon minor considerations such as the rules on which selection should be made, the qualifications and length of service which are necessary for candidates to the high constituted stations, or the claims of those who, when not required for the highest offices of government, should cease. These will be easy of arrangement if the principles of this plan are approved.

The governor under whom these authorities acted, emancipated from the cumbrous and expensive machinery of the present form of administration would traverse as he ought the countries under his charge. His labours would be lightened for he would be freed from an overwhelming load of petty details which would be far better conducted by others. His mind would be solely occupied with the more

important duties of a general control and direction of the whole government and he would act under more direct personal responsibility to the supreme authority in India, and to his superiors in England, than at present, and when the power vested in high officers who are at the head of every civil branch and of the commander-in-chief of the army is considered it may be positively asserted that he would perform his duties under more real check than he does at present. His authority would be less extended, but its exercise when required would be less embarrassed, and aided as he would always be by an able secretariat he would be far more able than he can be under the present system to fulfil his duties.

To give success to such a system as I have suggested, I must plainly state my opinion that the government should remove from Bombay. The character of its inhabitants is essentially different from that of the natives of our provinces. Those of the latter after remaining a few years at Bombay adopt many of the usages and all the sentiments of the old residents. Government within the circle of the island has neither the power of employing them nor of granting them any particular notice or protection. Their concerns are generally commercial; their disputes regarding them or their property, which consists of houses and lands, are settled by his Majesty's court of justice, which becomes of course (as far as any authority over them is recognized) the object of their almost exclusive attention and respect. Circumstances considered, it cannot be otherwise and it is no doubt desirable that in the principal sea port of western India, which is the residence and resort of so many British subjects, his Majesty's court should command that respect and consideration necessary to its functions but when the effects produced by the exercise of these are injurious to the good administration of external countries under a totally different form of rule the subject demands our most serious attention.

The acts of government as long as it remains at Bombay will continue liable to be arraigned and attacked. Its principal court of provincial judicature is over-shadowed from its position within the jurisdiction of the supreme court, receiving little, if any, consideration from the natives at the very seat of its authority. All these results it may be contended are of little import as they refer to Bombay where the distinctions of authorities are well understood, but they are of most serious consequence when they weaken, as they have done, and will continue to do, the local administration in the provinces.

The influx of Europeans to India must be expected to increase and the liberty of the press both English and native will become every day difficult to restrain. It appears to me and ever has done, of much importance to mitigate if we cannot wholly guard against dangers arising out of the extraordinary character and construction of our rule in India. I know no measure that will tend more effectually to this result than making a separation, as far as we are able, between those countries in which all branches and departments are under the rule of

the local civil government, and those seaports or capitals, where it is deemed necessary to have high and independent judicial courts administering the British law.

I am not led to offer this suggestion from recent occurrences. It has long been my settled opinion. Circumstances which have occurred at this presidency have no doubt aggravated, but they have not created, the evils I have stated. These are inherent in the present system and cannot be remedied by any alternative measures; changes must be made, and among those I know of none in this quarter of India, that will be so certain of having good effect as removing the seat of government. Bombay and Salsette can be well managed by a civil commissioner with the necessary aids of officers of rank in the marine and other departments. The visit of the governor to it would be as frequent as required.

The removal of the government while it produced the greatest political benefits would be attended with a pecuniary gain instead of loss. From the situation of almost all public property at Bombay, what would remain after providing ample accommodation for the supreme court and other offices and store rooms, by which a rent to a considerable amount would be saved, could be sold to advantage in a port where warehouses near the harbour are always in demand. The products of these buildings would far more than provide for any accommodation that would be required at another seat of government, but if the form of the administration is modified as suggested that will be on a comparative moderate scale. Considerable financial benefit would ultimately result from much money being circulated in the provinces, which is now spent in Bombay. The residence or departure of the government would be attended with little if any effect whatever to the permanent and increasing prosperity of that rich and important commercial city.

Independent of other effects of the plan I have suggested in regard to the future administration of this presidency I can speak with confidence of its being far more economical as well as efficient than the present. It would make many immediate reductions. It would eventually require less expensive European agency. But while the number of civil servants were reduced, those that remained and were competent would be greatly elevated, and motives of emulation and a desire of distinction would stimulate men to efforts that would gradually tend to improve the resources of the country.

Besides the high offices already stated, which would become objects of ambition that must remain exclusive to the civil service, those of this presidency would like all others have the appointment of the secretaries of the governor-general open to them, and when that supreme head of the government was released as he must be from the trammels of the present system and the details with which he is now burdened [he] would require not only a chief secretary of state but a secretariat formed of persons practically acquainted with every division of the vast empire

subject to his direction and control. The governor-general should move throughout the countries subject to his authority, but this would be impossible without great inconvenience and increased expense if any council is continued, or if even the commander-in-chief of India is associated with him in his civil and political duties. He might, as well as the governors of the great divisions of India subject to his authority, be empowered like the governors of his Majesty's colonies to call when required specified persons at the head of the different departments to a council board when he deemed such a proceeding expedient, and this as it increased his responsibility would be beneficial.

The governors of the different divisions must make continual circuits of the provinces under them. This is indispensable on many grounds. The expense of such should be regulated, and reduced as much as possible, but it never can equal the saving that vigilant personal supervision of the chief authority must produce. It is still more necessary that the commander-in-chief should annually visit his army, yet from the extent of the territories even under this presidency such circuits are incompatible with his duties as a member of the council board. But he cannot for many reasons be removed from that while the government is constituted as at present, and while the governor and him are both absent in the provinces, though the former be deemed constructively present, the two civil councillors form a majority on any question in which they concur against the governor, and this may either compel him to return to the presidency and to request the attendance of the commander-in-chief, to the impediment of his military duties, or to give up that weight in the government which its original constitution (formed under circumstances very different) gives him, where he has a casting vote and can carry any measure he deems expedient if concurred in by one member of his full council.

The governor it is true has in cases he deems important a power to act upon his own responsibility but many reasons must render that rare of exercise. It is a measure that will not be resorted to unless in cases where a governor is very confident in his own experience or judgment. Differently situated, he will generally sacrifice other objects rather than adopt a course which sets at nought the opinions of his colleagues and has perhaps the effect of losing temper and good feeling in a degree that may be more injurious to the public service than the benefits (however important), that can be derived from any single measure.

I have gone far beyond my original design when I commenced this letter, but in considering the actual condition of the most fruitful and important provinces of this presidency, and of the local administration best suited to maintain their peace and promote their improvement, I have gradually led to the examination of the whole frame of government. My opinions upon this subject are offered for the consideration of my superiors. They are the unreserved sentiments of one who has passed through almost every grade, military, civil, and political, of the

service, has had much experience of the actual operation of our system in every quarter of our territories, and will be received perhaps with more attention as the last public record I shall ever make connected with a subject in which I have through life felt so deep an interest, from considering them to involve not only the interest and reputation of my country, but the happiness and prosperity of the inhabitants of India.

The growth of our territories has been too rapid to admit of those changes and modifications which their good government required, but a period has arrived when we have leisure to consider and introduce such reforms as are more suited to the actual condition of our territories, and to our means of ruling them. The present frame of government had its origin in jealousy and distrust, nor were such feelings and motives at the period it was formed, unwise. The scene was distant and little known, every check was required on individuals, and the court of directors desired to have in the rank and talent of his colleagues a check against the abuses of power of a governor. There were no regular departments. The details of the administration were little known to the court, who avowedly sought as a source of information, and as a guide to their judgment in deciding upon questions as they arose, the dissenting minutes of council. Circumstances have entirely changed: as complete information exists, and as correct opinions are formed upon every subject connected with the administration of the empire in England, as in India. The time has passed when governors can be suspected even of abusing their power, and the means of checking them are so complete and the quickness of communication with Europe so improved, that no evils can arise from their being invested with the power I have proposed, that will in the slightest degree balance the advantages that must be derived from their being freed from the restraints and impediments to the performance of the most important duties under the present system.

It is true that this change would require much attention to the selection of persons for these high offices, but this would be so far good, as it increased the responsibility of those who were to nominate them. The evils of a bad selection however to such a situation cannot be avoided, though it is here of importance to remark that a governor without local information or experience but of good sense and honourable character would be much more efficiently aided by the heads of distinct departments, the commissioners of provinces, and an able secretariat than he ever can be by a council, either agreeing or disagreeing in his general views of administration. This arises out of the relative condition of the parties associated in the government and is incapable of remedy while that is constituted as at present.

269. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck.* Private

Bombay. 2 December 1830

My dear Lord William,

I add to my letter of the 27th of November on the armies of India, a letter to your Lordship on the future administration of this presidency and with allowance for local circumstances for all our empires. I have not recorded this at Bombay as it is a subject not within the sphere of our deliberations and contains only speculative opinions. These I am sorry to think will be found to differ much on some points from those of your Lordship, but I can contemplate no system of rule for India that will be at once economical and efficient, except it keeps a wall of separation between English and Indian law. We may gratify an English public, a Calcutta public, a Madras public, and a Bombay public by an extension of the former. We should be approved by numbers of what are called intellectual men but I should tremble for the future fate of the millions who inhabit our province and from whose simple forms we have already departed too far. To add the mysteries of English law and the comments of English lawyers to those of the adalat courts would be to abandon all hope of their ever understanding or being reconciled to our system of judicature. . . . I can quite understand the evils you desire to remedy but I fear you will encounter greater. I shall see all that is said upon this subject when I reach England. In the meantime, I write to your Lordship only. I resigned yesterday and sail on the morning of the 5th. The good people here have treated me far better than I expected. Most anxiously do I hope that similar will benefit both you and Lady William.

270. *Sir John Malcolm to Bentinck*

Bombay. 4 December 1830

My dear Lord William,

I sail, or rather go away, tomorrow morning. I have not been able to get all the statements complete for my last minute but they will be soon and the whole will be a complete document. The military reductions will be more than forty lakhs, 29 of which are by orders of this government. The civil reductions are not yet clearly made out but immediate and prospective will be at least five. But the great reduction as your Lordship will discover is in contingencies. It is in that reduction I have personally laboured and the result has even exceeded my expectations, with little more than twenty [lakhs] in war expenses. The average of three years before I came, and three years subsequent, is seventy lakhs in military contingencies alone and in this last they will be twelve lakhs less, I trust, than in 1829, and this by reduction of

useless depots, unnecessary expense of labour, and more than 30 per cent in almost all supplies, buildings, etc. In short, I must look to 1831 for my good name and the result of my measures, provided the ban is not slackened and active supervision is kept awake.

Your Lordship will see by my last minute on our present judicial and revenue system that I entreat no changes shall be made in the distribution or creation of appointments until I have reported the whole as it now stands to the directors. I have taken alarm at a private letter to me from Bax which [instances] a long report of the finance committee.

One word more upon finance. There is, I observe, an active supervision in Bengal of the monthly statements of increases and decreases but the form gives no room for explanation and a small increase is considered, perhaps 600 or 1000 Rs. a year, as swelling current charges that is perhaps granted to reward a man who has saved us in contingent charges three or four lakhs of rupees. . . .

271. *William Astell to Bentinck*

India House, London. 15 December 1830

I had the honour to receive a few days ago your Lordship's private letter dated the 5th July last; and with it copy of a letter, which you had addressed on the 18th June, to Mr. Martin, who was then resident at Hyderabad. I have subsequently perused the official despatches, and as it appears that Mr. Martin was removed from that office (in which so far as respects the trustees of Palmer & Co. the court of directors deemed his conduct to have been marked by judgment and fairness) contrary to the advice of your council, and on the sole responsibility of your Lordship, I have the less hesitation in saying that I deeply lament the step your Lordship has taken. Mr. Martin's conduct in the investigation of the charges against his munshi may have been censurable; but that such is not the sole cause of his removal from Hyderabad is declared by your Lordship, when you tell him, on the 14 June last, that the trustees of Palmer & Co. were warranted in making the remarks alluded to in your letter of that date; and (to borrow your Lordship's own interrogation) what conclusion I would ask can the native community of Hyderabad arrive at but that the removal of Mr. Martin is a triumph to the trustees in consequence of the censure which that step unavoidably implies of the resident's conduct?

Whatever embarrassment now exists or may hereafter arise about the concerns of Palmer & Co. appears to me chiefly attributable to the permission granted by the board of commissioners, notwithstanding the earnest and strong remonstrances of the court of directors, for the return to India of Sir William Rumbold, whom I will not worse characterize than has your Lordship in your letter under acknowledgment. Indeed I must declare it as my decided opinion, that so long as Sir William

Rumbold is permitted to reside in India with the shadow of countenance from your Lordship, intrigue, and arrogance to the government of India, and the authorities at home will continue. Much however has been said about the injury done to the creditors of the house by the promulgation of a low opinion, emanating certainly from no mean authority though subsequently overruled by the opinions of the twelve judges. No complaint, I presume to think, was ever less substantial: for, in the first place, no one, *here* at least, contends that the spirit and intention of the law were not violated; and if its letter was declared not to have been infringed, it was because in the case of a penal enactment, a liberal is properly deemed preferable to a strict interpretation, or at most because 'quod . . . non dixit lex'; and after all the injury was but small if injury there was. It amounted to nothing beyond a little delay in recovering debts afterwards recovered (in part at least) with 24 per cent interest! Besides admitting that the firm of William Palmer & Co. were entitled to conduct their business agreeably to the usages of the country where they were established, they must I apprehend be bound to conform to those usages in every respect; and if I am not much misinformed, it is a rule with the natives, that when the interest of a debt equals the principal, no further demands for interest can be made. Were the claims of the trustees to be adjudicated according to this rule the amount of their recoveries would I believe be inconsiderable.

Whilst too much stress is laid upon the injury alleged to have been sustained by the trustees from an erroneous construction of the law, nothing is heard of the benefit resulting to the house from a positive infraction of the law in their favour. In the settlement of the accounts of the house with the Nizam's government upwards of five lakhs of rupees were admitted in their favour being the balance of an old account between the government and the firm subsisting before the grant of the licence, and which balance was irregularly transferred to the firm established under the licence. More than this: by some arithmetical mistake about fifteen lakhs of rupees were overpaid to the house beyond what they were entitled to receive in the adjustment of their account with the Nizam's government under the conditions of settlements prescribed by the governor-general in council. The two sums which have been thus paid to them *in error* actually exceeding the whole amount of their claims on individual debtors as stated by themselves in February 1824.

I think it due to your Lordship here to state that the delay which has taken place in replying to the despatch from your government of the 26 May 1829, is not attributable to the court. Very near twelve months have elapsed since a reply was framed at this house to the letter in question, and sent to the board, but it has not yet been despatched, and I fear that the recent change in the government at home may yet occasion further delay.

It would appear that Mr. Martin has been removed from Hyderabad

because his conduct has been deemed unduly adverse to the trustees. To the person selected to succeed him I have no personal objections. I am willing to believe that Major Stewart will enter upon the duties of the office of resident with honest intentions; but I cannot divest myself of the apprehension that be his qualifications what they may he will have received a warning beforehand that unless he support the claims of the trustees of Palmer & Co. prosecuted through their agent, Sir William Rumbold, he cannot long remain resident. This my Lord you will excuse me for saying is a hard tenure. I know what the feeling is at Hyderabad; and I know also, from a source upon which I can fully rely, that Sir William Rumbold and Mr. W. Palmer remained at the Nilgiris, waiting only the appointment of a new resident to make their descent for the purpose of reviving their intrigues.

The prospect which your Lordship's letter holds out of an improvement in the administration of Oudh is very gratifying; the more so that it will not have resulted from any interference on our part. We shall anxiously look for the official details of Major Burney's mission to Ava. As far as our information goes, we have reason to be satisfied with the manner in which that officer has discharged the duties entrusted to him.

On the subject of Malwa opium, I wish that I could give an opinion favourable to the change of system which has been introduced by your government; but I cannot withhold the expression of my strong apprehension that the revenue we derive from that source has been placed in a most precarious situation without any sufficient countervailing public advantage. The extent to which smuggling is carried on is truly alarming; and if it be not checked I tremble for our fate. I have good ground for believing that of the funds which have been advanced to the agency houses at Calcutta the greater portion has been employed in the purchase of smuggled opium at Daman whence it will find its way into China and will there interfere with our Benares opium which cannot compete with the smuggled article under circumstances so disadvantageous.

After the opinions which your Lordship has so ably expressed against making advances of the nature of those above alluded to, you will be prepared to hear that the resolution adopted by your government in May last, has occasioned much regret and disappointment—a feeling in which I deeply participate. It appears to me that in looking at the subject you have too much confined your views to the India market; whilst the measure is calculated seriously to affect the market in this country particularly as respects the article of indigo of which the Company are considerable holders, and which must be much depreciated by the immense quantity which is likely to be thrown upon the market under circumstances which will render its sale at almost any price a matter of necessity. Upon this subject however it will be the duty of the court to remark at an early period, and it is therefore needless for me to pursue it further at present.

As respects the Nozeed zamindari which forms the subject of your Lordship's letter of the 1 July last, I am happy in being able to express my entire concurrence in the view which you have taken of the regulation of the Madras government decreeing its partition, and in the decision adopted by the supreme government upon hearing that such a regulation had been agreed to. I have directed the earliest attention to the subject; and a draft is under preparation, and I hope will shortly be despatched for India, in accordance with the opinions you have formed and communicated to me.

Having attentively considered the several minutes and proceedings relating to the publication of the letter containing the sentiments of the late commander-in-chief on the half-batta question, I observe with satisfaction the disposition manifested by your Lordship to give effect to the court's order which, I cannot but regret, the majority of the council determined not to enforce in the case of Col. Fagan. The court are now placed in some difficulty as their opinion of the propriety of those orders remains unchanged: at the same time it cannot be denied that the enforcement of them after such an interval might have the effect of reviving a question which it is to be hoped has been set at rest and will not again disturb the minds of the army.

Since writing the foregoing sundry letters from your Lordship have reached me including that of the 25 August which does not raise my expectation in regard to our opium revenue which your Lordship has described as extremely uncertain. I know that the former system was not free from objections and difficulty; but when I consider how large an item this revenue has formed in our receipts, I cannot but regard as unfortunate and ill-timed any arrangements which could put the amount of it to hazard. Respecting the charter of justice for P[rince of] W[ales] Island I trust that we shall shortly be able to make a communication that will be satisfactory. It having been deemed necessary to have a new charter, the form and substance of which depended upon the resolutions to which your government might come upon the receipt of the court's despatch of April 1829 which vested in you a discretionary power with respect to carrying into effect the suggestions it contained, we have regarded it expedient to await the receipt of intelligence from Bengal of our suggestions having been acted upon. Of that intelligence we are now in possession. I much regret that public inconvenience should have been felt at P. W. Island: but I must attribute it to a want of proper caution on the part of the department with which the appointment of the recorder originated.

Begging your Lordship to accept my best thanks for the communications which you are so good as to favour me with, containing much interesting and valuable information, . . .

272. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe.* Copy. Confidential

Across the Jamuna. 15 December 1830

My dear Sir Charles,

Mr. Maddock has been three or four days in camp, and returned yesterday to Lucknow. He brought with him a letter from the king, informing me that he had appointed Hakim Mehdi as his minister, but had reserved certain parts of the investiture of his intended honours which he wished to be completed to me. The hakim probably wishes for the confirmation of his appointment by the government, first as against the resident, and hereafter probably as against the caprice of his own sovereign. You will receive copy of my answer, in which passing over this request, and not questioning his own right to appoint his minister, I have simply confined myself to expressing a strong opinion, that the misrule in Oudh could not be permitted to continue any longer, and if his new minister were able to restore order and prosperity to the Oudh dominions, his choice must be hailed with satisfaction and joy. I send herewith a long memoir from Mr. M. on the present state of Oudh, and if there is no exaggeration in the picture, which however I somewhat doubt, I should say that extreme case was arrived, which required our active interference. My present plan of proceeding is this; there is quite enough of misgovernment to warrant a very strong and solemn warning and remonstrance. The letter I have written is intended as a preface to the verbal communication, in much stronger terms, which I propose to make. At Lucknow and passing through Oudh, I shall have the means of satisfying my own mind as to the actual state of facts, to the extent of the military force said to be kept up, which is excessive, may be very inconvenient and ought to be reduced, and to the state of anarchy and disorder said to exist. If that immense army is necessary, part of which Mr. M. informs me is very good, and which is independent of burkundarzes and civil troops, there can be no doubt that the state of things requiring such a force needs most urgently some correction. With full information before me, I shall lay the whole case before the council for their opinion. My own disposition is to leave my warning to take its trial, and to refer in the mean time for the court's orders for our future guidance, in the event of disappointment. I am not at all satisfied that the hakim is not capable of completing a reform in the government, and the fear that I hope to be able to impress on the king's mind, of the insecurity of his own tenure, will possibly allow him to give full scope to the hakim's endeavours; and the same language to the hakim, as to his own responsibility towards the king and the British government, may I hope have the effect of preventing him from abusing his powers, as Mr. Maddock apprehends. I shall feel much obliged by your unreserved opinion upon this plan of operations. Within these very few days I have entertained the serious intention of begging you to join me at Lucknow, that I might be assisted by you in

the decisive measure, which then seemed to me essentially necessary. But upon further consideration, a solemn warning seems to be the preliminary proceeding, which friendship and justice equally recommend, and will suit any decision, which the home authorities may come to upon this question. I will beg you to return the memoir to us to reach me at Cawnpore, (6th January), or before, if you can conveniently do so. I have no means of making a copy here, and I should not wish the paper to become public by going into the secretary's office at Calcutta. It may be well also to show it to Mr. Blunt, but I am desirous that this note should be confined to yourself.

P.S. Mr. Maddock seems a highly honourable and sensible man, but his feelings are irritable and sensitive, and trifles have in his mind a consequence and weight which less susceptibility, and more intercourse with the world and its collisions would disregard and despise. He has refused enormous bribes. His account of past transactions in this way are very curious. No evidence against Mr. Ricketts will be obtainable. The agents admit the fact, but plead the dishonour of a disclosure.

273. *Lord Amherst to Bentinck*

Christmas Day 1830

In the first place a merry Christmas to you. Such is the usual salutation, and such I give you with all my heart. Such have I received during the course of the day, but mine alas! are over. A few more happy ones I hope to enjoy, but as for merry ones, this day brings back too strong recollections of former merry Christmases to be anything but a day of mourning and melancholy to me. I am thankful for the blessings that remain to me, but I cannot but be alive to those I have lost; and sensibly alive indeed must I be to them thus to intrude my thoughts upon you when nothing could be farther from my intention than so to do when I took my pen in hand to begin this letter to you. I cannot tell you the satisfaction I derived from your letter of the 1st of May. It was quite a relief to my mind to hear you say that your confidence in Marrige was undiminished and that he will probably continue to manage your concerns for you while you remain in India. As for my own concerns I dare say I shall find all right whenever he sends me, if he ever does send me, a final account. It is perfectly true that he made me a considerable remittance in the month of July last and I have no reason to doubt that his bills will be honoured when they become due in the course of the ensuing month. McMahon sent me an abstract of Marrige's account which gives me an insight into my affairs such as had not before been afforded me and in all probability I shall receive before long the balance of 5000 rupees and upwards which appear to be still due to me; but as for a line from Marrige himself, I suppose *that* is too much to expect.

I am much interested in the account you send me of a sanatorium in the Sikkim raja's territory. Had I stayed another year in India I believe I should have employed the favourable season in exploring the country in that direction with a view of founding an object of such immense importance to the lower provinces. My thoughts would have been turned towards the country near Sylhet, but your discovery seems to be of far greater advantage inasmuch as you have found a much higher elevation with equal facility of access. I am almost inclined to believe from what you say of the Tenasserim provinces that the idea of relinquishing them to the Burmese is for the present suspended. It is at least satisfactory to find that their expenses become less while in our possession and that they are believed to possess great capabilities of improvement. Mr. Ricketts left his card with me in Grosvenor Street, but before I could return his visit (which I almost hesitated to do) he was gone out of town, I know not whither. I see he is elected a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. I am glad I was not asked to certify to his fitness. What a world of events have happened since I wrote to you last summer! Those with which I have been principally concerned are the burnings and riots which I grieve to say originated in this county. My immediate neighbourhood indeed has been less disturbed than other parts of Kent—and with reason—for we have no machinery, and have taken care to provide our labourers with work on full wages. But the evil, I believe to be deep seated, and to have been aggravated by secret agents and contrivances of which we have not yet been able to discover the extent. My belief is that there has been a design to produce revolution by exciting first consternation and then discontent through a general and extensive destruction of property. The plot has succeeded but too well; and it now appears that the persons principally engaged in mischief are all, almost without exception, men in the receipt of ample nay superabundant wages. The pretext has been inadequate pay to agricultural labourers, but persons in that condition have formed but a very small portion of the mobs assembled for the purposes of destruction. The law is now taking its course; and amidst the numbers of comparatively innocent men who have incurred the penalty of transportation, it is at least satisfactory to observe that 4 or 5 of the ringleaders in this county, in Sussex, and in Hampshire, will have been overtaken by the capital punishment which they have so richly deserved. We have not as yet however convicted, not more at least than in one instance, the greatest criminal of all, the vagabond incendiary, hired by others to set fire to farming stock from no motive whatever than the perpetration of reckless mischief. Many such I believe to be going about, and it is piteous to see the terror they inspire. I doubt not that many more might have been detected and punished but for the fear of becoming objects of their vengeance.

Parliament has just adjourned. I suppose that on their re-assembling, reform will be one of the first subjects for discussion. It is impossible, I conceive, to resist it altogether. Had poor Canning lived his opinions

must have undergone some change. I have no idea what government intend to propose; but the difficulty will be to know where to stop, and it is too much, I fear, to expect that any moderate reform will be sufficient to allay the clamours which are daily growing louder on this question. I cannot say that I am any great admirer of our newspapers at any time; and I think that during the whole of the excitement which has been prevailing since the commencement of the disturbances, nothing can be more disgraceful than the language of the public press. Had Cobbett himself directed it, it could not have been more mischievous. The only fortunate circumstance at present is the personal popularity of the king. There is a frankness and kindness about him which engages all who come near him; and which, while it wins the affections of the populace, inspires confidence I doubt not in those who form his council and his government.

Once more to go back to India. I heard with deep regret of the death of poor Stirling. What with him and Malony, and the intended departure of Mackenzie, you will have been deprived of some of your best assistants. I also expect to see Mr. Bayley in England before long. This year, I think, was to complete his service in India. Once again I must thank you, indeed I have scarcely thanked you at present, for having acted so friendly a part by me in respect to my pecuniary concerns. It would have grieved me much on every account if any suspicious want of honesty had rested upon a man of whom I had always entertained so high an opinion and for whom I felt a real regard, and who I trust will continue to deserve your confidence as well as mine. Lady Amherst begs to join with me in every good wish to you and Lady William and I remain ever most sincerely yours.

274. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 27 December 1830
Recd. 5 January 1831

My dear Lord William,

I have the pleasure to return the Lucknow memoir which I have shown to Mr. Blunt. I entirely concur in your Lordship's plan of operations, that is, in giving a solemn warning, leaving it to take its trial and referring in the meantime for the court's orders for the future guidance of the government in the event of disappointment. I also agree with your Lordship in believing it to be very possible that the hakim may be able to bring about a tolerable state of affairs. I think it not impossible that the memoir is exaggerated as well as to the number of troops as in other particulars. The arguments used in it for interference are as applicable to the state of Hyderabad and other protected states badly governed, unless we suppose Oudh to be something *sui generis* requiring different principles of conduct. I shall be glad to

see the day of direct interference postponed as long as possible: but when we must interfere, it must I conceive, be in a more effectual manner than that proposed in the memoir. The resident lording it over a minister, and the minister absolute over the country, strikes me, from what I have seen of its operation, as the very worst plan that could be adopted. In one sentiment of the memoir I fully agree. We are bound not to protect the government in oppression, and before we ever proceed to actual interference, otherwise than by the desire of the government of Oudh, I should like to see the experiment tried of withdrawing our troops from Oudh. Were it not for the possible consequence of future collision with the Gurkhas arising out of dissensions in Oudh, I should, as far as Oudh alone is concerned, think that a very desirable experiment. It would afford the best chance of bringing the government to its senses. I wish that Mr. Maddock could enter the spirit of your Lordship's intentions and act accordingly. He has lost himself it seems to me from the beginning in a personal contest with the minister, and may find it difficult to get out of it. Your Lordship's description of his character corresponds with what I had conceived of it. From a letter which Colonel Jimenes received from Lord Dalhousie some days ago there was reason to expect that before now the officers of the depot would have withdrawn in consequence of your Lordship's reply to his Excellency's appeal: but the order has not yet appeared: and I do not mean to issue any notification regarding the extension of allowances to the 1st of January until the 'king's depot' has submitted to the constitution. Your Lordship's reply ought to have satisfied the commander-in-chief, and unless the present delay is accidental it is [*illeg.*].

A dreadful accident happened to Mr. James Barwell this morning in riding. His horse at full speed fell dead and rolled over the rider. Mr. Barwell was carried senseless to the general hospital but afterwards recovered and it is hoped has sustained no further injury than the breaking of some ribs.

275. *Charles Marjoribanks*[1] *to Bentinck*

Canton. 28 December 1830

My dear Lord,

I have lately arrived in this country of old customs, and as one of the privileges which have belonged to my situation is that of sending some tea to the lady of the governor-general, I avail myself of a ship now sailing for Bengal to do so. You know that it is the mere dust of this country and cannot in any way be considered as a present. I am happy to say that everything proceeds in uninterrupted quiet here and I have been fortunate enough to experience none of that discord and disunion

275. [1] A relative of Campbell Marjoribanks, the director and chairman of the Company.

which usually attend the changes of supercessions. In respect to the Chinese government, you must be well aware that the situation of foreigners in this country is an anomaly altogether. That we or any other power could ever be justified in going to war with a people for the mere establishment of certain restrictive fiscal regulations can I imagine never be maintained. Against such we can only remonstrate and exert the influence which our situation affords us. The oppressions and often indignities to which British subjects are exposed are of a powerful kind, but what I have ever considered most so is our sometimes inability to protect natives from punishment awarded to them for no other reason than faithful services rendered to foreigners. The government at the present moment, if I except occasional violent proclamations, which I am disposed to treat with indifference, seems disposed to allow us to remain in peace and quiet. I shall be the last to wish to interrupt this disposition. In any endeavour to contend with them in threatening language they are greatly our superiors and long may they continue so. By expensive embassies or any of the refinements of diplomacy we shall never gain anything at their hands. A Chinese statesman versed in the science of political intrigue will at any time bring in aid of his views the most unfounded assertion, worth a whole cartload of the venial equivocations which European policy admits of. To a bold and decided remonstrance assisted by a corresponding naval force, should an occasion arise to justify it, I believe much might be yielded, and to suppose that your Lordship could not at any time if it suited English policy and your disposition so to do, beat them into good breeding, would be to believe that the gentlemen we see here in gilded petticoats with bows and arrows were equal to contend with the highly disciplined troops under your orders. What may be called a naval settlement has within the last ten years been established among the islands in the mouth of this river where a very extensive trade is now carried on in defiance of the government and in a great measure under its connivance. Were it ever considered justifiable and desirable I believe a territorial settlement might with equal facility be gained and maintained. I am led however to believe that a knowledge of the power of Great Britain, while it increases the jealousy of the Chinese government and its anxiety to continue its restrictive system, awakens very lively apprehensions of the consequences which might result were they by any act of violence or outrage to compel us to a suspension of amicable relations. Until then I believe a temperate firmness may do much in continuing our transactions with them; until then I sincerely hope we may have no more wretched half measures in this country of which we have had more than enough and which frustrate the very ends which they are intended to accomplish. I sent you officially some time ago a few particulars of a rebellion which has broken out in western Tartary, which if you think in any way interesting, I shall continue to do. The Chinese consider it a very serious matter and the monied natives here have been called upon to contribute to carrying on the war. By a Pekin gazette

which I received last night, a victory is said to have been gained by the imperial troops and 10,000 of the rebels killed, but such victories are frequently more destructive in the gazette than they have previously been in the field.

If I can be at any time of any service to your Lordship in this out of the way corner of the earth, it will afford me much pleasure. I beg to present my best respects to Lady William etc.

[P.S.] We have secret information from the viceroy's office here that in consequence of the Tartar war and in some measure in consequence of the inconveniences experienced by the suspension of trade last season, an order has been received from the Emperor to this effect. 'Treat the English with liberality and arrange with them. Kindly respect this'. This is an unusual display of the Imperial affection to foreigners. We have often in past years been rendered aware of the agitations of the mainspring of government at Pekin by the vibrations in the remote machinery here and this promises well for a continuance of tranquillity.

276. *Bentinck to Sir John P. Grant.*[1] Copy

Jalalpur, Bundelkhand. 29 December 1830

My dear Sir John,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 17th inst. asking my opinion, if, in consequence of the death of Sir James Dewar, your return to Bombay would be conducive to the public interests.

Many of the other questions arising out of the differences between yourself and the Bombay government have been particularly embarrassing, but upon the present reference, no doubt occurs to my judgment, that is, as far as the supreme government is concerned.

With the supreme courts in India we have nothing to do. They are entirely separated from our interference in any way; whether any or all have only one judge, as is probably now the case at Bombay, or no judge at all, as at Penang, the legislature has given us no authority to provide for these or any other contingencies, and therefore the present state of the supreme court at Bombay is no concern of ours.

It is possible that such a state of public inconvenience might exist at Bombay, which would justify a special intervention of the supreme authority, but there is no reason to suppose that any such extreme case at present calls for such interference. But at all events the call must come from the Bombay government.

Without the most urgent necessity I should be most unwilling to

276. [1] Grant, Sir John Peter, 1774–1848. Puisne judge of supreme court, Bombay, 1827. Clashed with government, was replaced, and in September, 1830 went to Calcutta to practise. Appointed puisne judge, 1833–48, Calcutta supreme court.

advise your return to Bombay. Indeed I do not see how we could do so, with our recorded opinions that immediate deference should have been paid to the order of recall, not by going home, but by relinquishing your seat on the bench.

That order still remains unexplained. But besides this objection, there are others equally strong—your own resignation, your actual departure from that presidency, and the great inconvenience, after so much collision with the authorities there, which your return could hardly fail to produce in some shape or other. Although it may be difficult to say how much weight may really belong to any of these reasons taken separately, yet all taken together, with the certainty of an early decision from home, seem to be conclusive upon the question.

277. *Bentinck to William Astell.* Rough draft

Bundelkhand. 30 December 1830

In this country of exaggeration, it may be necessary to present to you the real state of a transaction, which in itself is of very little importance, and having occurred, may be likely to produce more good than harm. On our march we were to meet the 3rd native cavalry, coming from Cawnpore to their new quarters at Sultanpur. I took the occasion of inspecting their men and horses, announcing previously my intention of doing so, and inviting all the officers to dine with me. When I came on parade in the morning, the commanding officer presented to me only a part of the officers: I thought this an accident; and I did not notice it; tho' those who were with me did and thought it must be done intentionally. After breakfast, of eleven officers, five sent excuses, one assigning sickness as the reason, the others giving no reason at all. The style of some of the notes was not very proper. I did not complete the inspection in the morning, and on my return in the evening, I stated to the commanding officer my suspicion of the motives of these officers, and I begged him immediately afterwards to call upon them for an explanation, and if that should not be satisfactory to inform them that I should take instant measures for the vindication of my authority from this act of apparently intended insult. He was further requested to bring the answer to dinner. The call was sufficient, the officers thought better of their intentions, came to dinner and so the matter ended. In consequence of a letter from one of these officers to my military secretary the following day I thought the commanding officer had mistaken the purport of the communication I had directed him to make, and I wrote to him upon it. I send copies of my letter and of his reply which form a complete record of this foolish case. I find this was projected with other young officers at Cawnpore. Of course if this impertinence had not been instantly checked here it might have appeared in a more serious form elsewhere. I learn from Meerut and other places that a good deal of discontent, the

effect of the half-batta order, still continues. It is unfortunate that contemporaneously with this occurrence, any appearance of [a division] should have taken place between the government and the commander-in-chief. The circumstances have been reported by the vice-president, and I therefore need not trouble you with further documents. The truth is that the severe attack of illness so recently happening after his arrival has nearly incapacitated Lord Dalhousie for all public business. He has taken no part in our proceedings and is ignorant of the constitution and much of the government. He could not otherwise have published an order in direct counteraction of those of the government. I have no doubt that this order proceeded from the irritation of the moment without consultation with those about him, who could have well advised him of the irregularity of the proceeding. It is difficult in this country for the body to have received so severe a shock as his has done without a participation in the effects on the part of the mind and feelings. He seems an excellent honourable man, but singularly incurious, if I may use the term, as to public affairs, their causes and consequences, and I should fear not very practicable when affairs do not proceed in exact accordance with his opinions.

I will feel obliged, if you think proper, by your communicating the [first] transaction to the honourable court. The latter remarks are of a more private nature.

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278. *London policy towards Hyderabad*

7 January 1831

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2. We are glad to learn that, on the decease of the Nizam, his son Nasir-ud-Daula, who had already been recognized as his successor, ascended the masnad without opposition.

3. We perceive that the resident, Mr. Martin, has conceived a favourable opinion of this prince's disposition and capacity. We hope that this opinion may be confirmed by further experience.

4. One of the first acts of the new sovereign was to signify to you formally his wish that the civil administration of his territories might be placed in his hands and that all interference on the part of our officers might be discontinued. You are aware of the strong desire we have always entertained, that the management of the Nizam's affairs by British officers should not be unnecessarily prolonged; and we hope you have exercised a sound discretion in acceding at once to his Highness's wish, but we think it might have been more prudent to have waited until you acquired some experience of his Highness's character before you adopted a measure of this importance.

5. We entirely approve of your having stipulated for the maintenance of the revenue engagements to which the faith of both governments was pledged and of your having reserved your right to insist upon the performance of this stipulation.

6. You have announced to the Nizam, that you desired to exercise no control over the choice of his ministers, and that whether he retained the present administration or appointed a new one, you would not interfere. We earnestly hope that no circumstances may arise to induce you to regret the having made this declaration.

7. We approve of your having taken the opportunity of Nasir-ud-Daula's accession to alter the style of your correspondence with the Nizam, from a style of superiority on his side and submission on yours, to one of equality between the two governments.

. . . . . .

10. We have no doubt that your attention will be duly directed to the possibility of effecting reductions in the expenses of the Hyderabad residency, corresponding with the diminution which has now taken place in the duties of the resident and of his establishment.

279. *London policy towards Oudh*

7 January 1831

. . . . . .

2. We are gratified by finding that the place where the base money was fabricated has been discovered by the exertions of the Oudh government, the gang dispersed, their implements destroyed, and a considerable number of the offenders convicted and punished.

3. These exactions, from the extent to which they are carried, have become a very serious evil, and one which we lament to perceive does not appear likely to be soon remedied. From the administration of the late king of Oudh, no strenuous or hearty co-operation was to be expected: and the vigour evinced by the new minister in the annihilation of the gang of coiners mentioned in the last paragraph, appears to have exhausted itself in that single act.

4. The impediments to the navigation of the river have been very frequently under your consideration. But the plans by which you have attempted to remove them, have hitherto been found impracticable and your representations fruitless. The king professes himself willing to coerce the zamindars, but it is uncertain whether he is able, the amils he has it in his power to punish by depriving them of their office but it is uncertain whether he is willing. Latterly he has proposed to send Shaikh Maum Buksh, with a body of troops for the purpose of chastising the present offenders, and to station a line of thanas along the river for the prevention of similar practices hereafter. But offenders such as these, who are zamindars and officers of government are not likely to be restrained by a police, and the only check which can be maintained over such persons, is the certainty of punishment whenever they offend. We anticipate little good from the mission of Shaikh Maum Buksh and his troops, unless a British officer accompanies them, with authority to hear and decide the complaints of the merchants against the amils and zamindars. Otherwise our expectation is that those who have merely deprived British subjects of their property, will be spared, or only nominally punished, while those who in addition to this, have withheld the revenues demanded by the King's officers, will be punished, not for the offence against us, but for the offence against him: unless they are strong enough to resist his troops and escape altogether from the threatened punishment.

5. The measure which the king of Oudh adopted of stationing sowars to accompany the Benares and the Cawnpore mails, appears to have produced the desired effect, at least in some degree, and for some time. We regret, however to perceive from your consultations of 26th June 1829, that the Cawnpore mail has again been robbed, in part of the road to which it appears that the arrangement providing an escort did not extend. You very properly directed the resident to urge the appointment of an escort there also. While the existing defects of the general police of Oudh continue, a special arrangement for guarding the dak is indispensable.

6. This serious and growing evil, as you justly style it, has been for some years past a leading topic in all our correspondence with you on Oudh affairs. There cannot be a more striking proof how little real influence we exercise under our existing relations with Oudh, than the fact that an evil of such magnitude so earnestly complained of and so often discussed with the Oudh government has hitherto continued without a single effort to suppress it. So little moreover is known of the habits of these banditti, that one magistrate of Gorakhpur represented them as forming large gangs and occupying strong-holds against which regular military operations were necessary; while his successor declared that they were scattered in small parties over an extensive tract covered with jungle, and possessed no places capable of defence.

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280. *T. H. Maddock to Bentinck*

Camp (Kanpur). 8 January 1831

My Lord

I mentioned to your Lordship the circumstance of the king having desired me to consider myself as his agent for the settlement of any points to be negotiated with the British government, and having authorised me to act for him and, I suppose, to plead his cause with your Lordship. I told him that your Lordship would laugh at me if I appeared in such a capacity, but that if H.M. demand my aid or advice he might command my good offices when his wishes were committed to paper. I added however that little advantage could accrue from my mediation, unless he had some intelligible plan for the amelioration of the state of his kingdom to lay before your Lordship. I had heard nothing more on this subject for a week till this morning, when the vakil, Zafar Ali, brought me a note from the king in H.M.'s handwriting, of which, though it has little meaning or importance, I have thought it proper to send your Lordship a translation before I set [out] on my return to Lucknow.

'My friend as you are the medium of intercourse between the two states and are appointed for the purpose of augmenting the friendship and cordiality between them and for the settlement of my affairs, and as the present is the time of all others for the exercise of unanimity, I will trouble you to use your endeavours with the governor-general, who is the undoubted guardian and protector of this state, that my kingdom may flourish and prosper, and that my absolute power in all matters may be preserved according to former treaties with my progenitors. You will thereby ensure my gratitude and confidence in you, and his Lordship's reputation will thereby be increased in every country in the world.'

(True translation)

281. *London policy towards Tanjore*

12 January 1831

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2. Conformably to the suggestion in our general despatch on the revision of establishments, which had been communicated to the government of Fort St. George, that government determined that the office of resident at Tanjore was unnecessary, and might be abolished; but on the notification of this determination to the raja of Tanjore and to Tondiman, both these princes made a most earnest appeal against the proposed measure, representing that it would lower their dignity, in the general estimation, in a manner which would be most painful to them, and likewise that if the agent employed by government in its transactions with them were the collector, with whose officers they are constantly liable to come into collision, they could no longer expect to be treated with the same justice and impartiality, as when their interests are protected by a separate officer appointed by government for the purpose.

3. The raja of Tanjore has afforded the strongest proof of the sincerity of his wish that a British resident should continue attached to his court, by offering to take upon himself the whole expense of the office, rather than that it should be abolished. This offer, however, it would be inconsistent with the dignity of the British government to accept, nor can we sanction the revival of the objectionable practice of allowing our servants to become in fact the servants of native princes, and to receive pay from them, instead of receiving it from the government to which they are responsible.

4. The alternative therefore lies between abolishing the residency and suffering it to continue, at least for the present, on the existing footing. The latter is the course recommended by the Madras government; who have in consequence, notwithstanding that our instructions were addressed directly to you, revoked the order which they had passed in conformity to those instructions, without a previous reference to your superior authority; by which they justly incurred your censure.

5. We are not bound by any engagement with the raja to maintain a resident at his durbar; no advantage accrues to our own government, or to our subjects, from the expense thus occasioned; a resident at Tanjore is not required for either of the purposes for which we maintain residents at other places, namely, to watch the conduct of native princes or to afford them our countenance and protection. We therefore regret extremely that his Highness should regard our orders for the abolition of the residency in a light neither justified by their real tendency nor by the motives which prompted them. Regard, however, for the personal feelings of this respectable prince; and for the good offices which the Company have formerly experienced from his family, induces us, so far to comply with his wishes, as to authorize the

maintenance of the residency during the life of the present raja; provided, that you have not, before this despatch reaches you, seen fit to act upon our first instructions. The salary and other expenses of the residency must be fixed on the lowest practicable scale, and effect must be given to our original orders immediately on the raja's demise.

6. As the execution of our order to abolish the Tanjore residency is postponed from considerations of a personal kind, and as the nawab of the Carnatic and his family would consider themselves degraded if no British agent were stationed with them, while a resident continues to be maintained at the court of an inferior and even tributary prince, we are also disposed to authorise for the present the maintenance of the Chepauk agency on the reduced allowances on which the Madras government have placed it unless before the receipt of this despatch you shall have seen fit to act upon our first instructions.

. . . . .

282. *Sir Edward Ryan to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 13 January 1831

My dear Lord William,

I am very much obliged to you for forwarding to Mons. Jacquemont the packet to his address. It is fortunate for him that it came into your Lordship's hands, as it reached him without delay. I have for some time thought of troubling you with a few lines upon the present state and condition of some of the educated Hindus of this place, but I have been afraid of appearing to attach too much importance to a matter that does not seem to attract any attention here. I conclude you have been informed of the natives having withdrawn their children from the Hindu College for a term, that Dr. Derozio[1] was dismissed, and also of the intention of two natives formerly students at the college but now teachers at one of Mr. Hare's schools,[2] to attend a public dinner given to Mr. Ricketts[3] at the Town Hall. The two young men who proposed attending the dinner came to consult me before they took such an important step. Our conversation lasted for two hours, during which I attempted from prudential motives to dissuade them from the course they were about to adopt, and the young men answering, I must admit most successfully, any argument I attempted to advance. I feel that I cannot by letter, nor could I by word of mouth, put your Lordship adequately in possession of the impression this conversation made on my mind. There was an apparent manliness of character, a strict regard to truth and honesty accompanied with a modest but decided

282. [1] Derozio, Henry, 1809–31. Eurasian poet and teacher, who was charged with preaching atheism.

[2] Hare, David, 1775–1842, started the Hindu College, 1817, and the Calcutta School Book Society.

[3] Ricketts, John William, 1791–1835, promoted the education of East Indians and went to England 1829–30 on their behalf.

maintenance of their own views and principles unawed and uninfluenced by names or authority, that I think would have induced those who are most sceptical as to improving the *moral* and intellectual condition of the natives to hesitate before they come to any sweeping conclusion.

The young men consulted others on this subject, Calder, Col. Young, Mr. Gordon, etc. but were unconvinced. The influence however of Mr. Hare at last prevailed upon them, that is upon their feelings but *not* their reason, for Calder, Young and Gordon felt with me that they were invariably defeated in all attempts to convince them by argument of the impropriety of such a measure. Wilson thinks that we were wrong in attempting to stop this public display, but he did not at the time communicate this opinion to the young men. I do not stop now to consider this question for it is beside my purpose. I mention this occurrence as one amongst many, for which an opinion may be formed of the character of the boys. In order that your Lordship may form an opinion of *others* of the same class I have ventured to send you three letters written to me by boys who have left the college and who are employed as teachers in the schools, and I have also enclosed a note from Mr. Hare from whom I made enquiry not for the purpose of satisfying my own mind for I have the fullest conviction of the *moral* character and talents of these boys, but I am always afraid that my views may be thought too sanguine. I therefore attach this reply to a letter addressed by me to Mr. Hare he being of course ignorant of my motives or attention. It was after a long conversation with these boys that I requested them to send me their thoughts in writing. The letters I send correspond with the sentiments they expressed but they are but a very faint representation of the [?obstacles] they have to encounter and the evils they endure—nor do they by any means adequately exhibit the clear views they have formed of their own state and condition. I will mention another fact in corroboration of the precarious condition of these boys who derive their support from being teachers at schools. You are probably aware that the school society from the funds of which many of these native schools are clearly supported, consists of native gentlemen and Europeans and that one of the secretaries is a native, Radhakant Deb,[4] a Hindu of wealth and talents but strict in his religious principles. He called upon me just a few days since to request that I as one of the committee would authorise the dismissal of a boy by name Krishna Mohan Banerjee the editor of an English newspaper called *The Enquirer*, which you may not have seen and of which I send you some copies. I enquired of him the grounds of his complaint. He said the boy had threatened to dine with Mr. Ricketts, but that the offence of which he now complained was his conduct at the police [station] on a recent occasion. The boy went there for the purpose of obtaining a licence to publish the paper; it is a necessary form that he should be sworn to some affidavit—the boy refused to be sworn by the Ganges

[4] Deb, Sir Radha Kanata, Raja Bahadur, 1784–1867, educationist, and promoter of Indian education. Conservative and orthodox in religion.

water stating his disbelief in the Hindu religion and that it was against his principle to pretend to be bound by a form of oath in the sanctity of which he had no belief. Through Mr. Hare [who] had influence with this native gentleman I have been able to allay his feelings for a time, but it is clear that things cannot remain in this state, and the sad truth is the one to which I venture to call your Lordship's attention, that for Hindu boys of very considerable acquirements and as I believe most firmly of strict honour and integrity there is no honourable or appropriate employment. I do not for a moment venture to suggest that this class of Hindu who have deserted the faith of their countrymen should be *especially* selected by the government of this country to fill offices of state for which they may be qualified—far from it. I should perhaps think the government are bound to give the strict Hindu of equal honour and integrity, *if such persons can be found*, a preference in the distribution of appointments, but all I would venture to suggest is whether it be a right state of things, that under British government, moral and intellectual improvement should be taken to be, subject to the government, rather a curse than a blessing, and that the abandoning a debasing and vile superstition should be rewarded by poverty and disgrace; and yet such is the condition of these Hindu boys. I am aware of the great difficulty that attends this subject and of your Lordship's most anxious desire to remedy the evil. If offices of trust and importance were open to this class of person supposing them to be as honest and as competent as I believe these, I am satisfied the natives who now despise and ill treat them would speedily regard them in a very different light and the stronghold of Hinduism would eventually be broken down. I have more than ventured to suggest the possibility of making after due instruction and examination persons of this description [*illeg.*] but I am aware that this matter has been under the consideration of government and I will not now trouble your Lordship with my crude views on the subject—indeed I am afraid I have already exhausted your patience. . . .

Whitmore writes at length of a scheme for forming a code here which I had suggested to him and of the necessity of making all persons subject to the courts of the country and *native* judges. Lord Calthorpe and he had an interview with Grant at the board of control and Whitmore thinks Grant is favourably disposed to the view as necessary upon free colonization. . . .

I trust Grant may take up the legislative council, but [*illeg.*] as the bill went home it will not extend further than the making of laws and regulations. I am quite satisfied, whatever doubts I might formerly have entertained of the inexpediency of introducing English law, English form and their [? kind of] English courts with the courts of this country. I would have a sensible code, single form and quick decisions with as little cost as possible, but I do not think the present mode of proceeding in the courts, more certain, simple or less *expensive* even than English law and its forms, ill adapted as they are to this country. I

have made two or three vain attempts to arrive at the average costs of suits in the mufassal. I believe the expense is on average equal to the costs of suits and actions in the *supreme court*, and certainly more if the *necessary* bribing is taken into the calculation. I am sorry to say that I have as yet no accounts of Lady Ryan. May I beg of you to present my best regards to Lady William. The newspapers here mention it to be your Lordship's intention to return soon to Calcutta. I hope for once they may be right in this conjecture, they are generally very unfortunate in their Indian speculations.

P.S. I ought to have mentioned that the newspaper called *The Enquirer* is conducted entirely by natives and the chief writers are boys in the school at which the editor is a teacher.

You will see by one of the letters that another paper is about to be established in Bengali by another young man. Wilson thinks this paper will be of considerable service and have a wide circulation if conducted with talent. It may be thought this is going too fast, but these measures *are entirely their own.* What will the good people at home think of the free press of India? The European gentlemen interested in the schools have endeavoured to persuade the boys not to publish (I beg to say I am not amongst the number) but *they act for themselves*, and have rejected this advice.

283. *Bentinck to Lord Ellenborough.* Confidential

Lucknow. 16 January 1831

My dear Lord,

I received yesterday your letters of the 7th and 15th August respecting the nomination of successors to Sir J. Macdonald and Major Hart.

I am glad to find that the view contained in my letter of the 25th August of the much more immediate connection of the mission in Persia with the home authorities than with us, and of the possible desire that you might entertain of appointing in England an officer of rank and consideration and possessing your confidence was correct. I regret very much that neither of the distinguished persons to whom you made the offer would accept it. I have now to hope that the construction I may put on your wishes in the present position of things may be equally correct.

I collect from your letters, that the envoy in Persia must be selected from the Company's service: and, as all appointments in India originate with the local governments, it is not thought expedient to deviate from this rule in favour of Lt. Colonel Briggs, though an exception might well have been made in the case of Messrs. Elphinstone and Jenkins. Concurring in this opinion of the court, you had determined to leave the choice of the envoy to the supreme government. The only question now is, whether my letter of the 25th August will have caused any

change in your resolution. Upon mature reflection, I think not. You will conclude, as it appears to me, that your letters now received, do not allow us to have a doubt upon the point; more especially when we see that the intention of making the nomination in England, which we had anticipated, had actually been prosecuted and had been finally abandoned. Another anticipation on my part is, that when you find in my letter that Major Stewart would be the object of my choice you will be perfectly satisfied, that a better solution, with the two exceptions before mentioned, could not be made. I shall therefore by the present post propose the office to him.

In some respects, your letter may be said not to have placed an insuperable bar to the nomination of Sir Henry Willock and I fear that your letters announcing to him a confirmation of his appointment, if made from hence, will be a cause of great mortification. But with so strong a conviction on your part that confidence cannot be placed in him, I could not feel justified in naming him. Entertaining a very high opinion of Sir J. Macdonald, I cannot but participate in the same feeling in some degree. But I believe also, that in no part of the world has party work, and *clan*-work run higher than in Persia, and possibly the assertions to the discredit of the Willocks should be rec'd with some allowance.

Your Lordship has proposed the command of the troops in Persia to Colonel Monteith and if he declines Major Darcy will have the offer.

Captain Murray, Sir George's brother, to whom, as I told you, this command has been offered, has refused; and it has been since proposed to Major Stock of the Madras service, whose answer is not received. I probably may let him go, if he chooses, with the understanding that he is to make way to any home appointment.

Sir John Malcolm strongly urged me to leave Lieut. Shee in the command but I thought it preposterous to place an officer of that rank [in command]. The Duke of Wellington at Madras when describing to me the character and great merits of Malcolm, added, that he was sometimes too partial to his own followers and countrymen. Lieut. Shee is protected by Sir J. Malcolm. I must do Sir John the justice at the same time to say, that some of the best officers in our political department are of his selection.

284. *Bentinck to Major Stewart.* Confidential. Copy

Lucknow. 16 January 1831

Dear Major Stewart,

Please to read the enclosures first, and you will then better comprehend the following statement.

On the 25th August upon receiving the intelligence of Sir John Macdonald's death, I informed Lord Ellenborough, that considering

Persian politics since the war to be much more connected with Europe than Asia, I thought he would like to fill the office of envoy with some officer from home possessing the confidence of the King's government. I also expressed my concurrence in an opinion given by Sir J. Malcolm to the late Mr. Canning, that the appointment in Persia would carry with it much more authority if it emanated directly from the king. I also stated my intention of leaving Capt. Campbell in charge, Sir John Macdonald having manifested a want of confidence in Sir Henry Willock, in which sentiment he, Lord E., had participated. I added at the same time, that if the choice should notwithstanding be left with me, I should, observing the importance attached to the mission by the British government, select the person best qualified in my opinion, and that you would be that person. I have in consequence informed Lord E. by a letter under this date that I had made the offer to you.

It is possible, that Lord E. may still act upon my letter of the 25th August but I decidedly think he will not. Two principles I think clearly established in Lord E.'s letter. 1st that the situation of envoy is to be filled by a servant of the Company, and 2nd that the rule of all appointments originating with the local governments in India will not be departed from. I conceive therefore that you may safely venture upon this appointment if you prefer it. I shall most exceedingly regret your loss, but your own just title to any distinction I have to offer and the good of the public service are duties which it is very pleasing to me to perform.

I will send tomorrow a statement of the salary....

285. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 20 January 1831

My Lord,

I had the honour to address your Lordship on the 21 ultimo and acknowledge your Lordship's favour of the 23 July, since which I have been honoured with your Lordship's letter of the 20 August and the 11 September.

The first was written some days before the receipt of . . . the half-batta despatch. Its announcement I had seen on Monday last in a Calcutta paper of 7 September, and in subsequent papers I was surprised at not finding some remarks of the editor on a question which had occasioned so much excitement. The order of your Lordship prohibiting thro' the secretary any comments explains their silence and has been commended by all here [as] most judicious. We shall be anxious for news by the *Euphrates*. I mentioned to Mr. Astell your Lordship's intention of writing to him by that ship. By private letters from Bombay

to the 10 September, it appears that Sir J. P. Grant had left for Calcutta. The arrangements contemplated in a letter from Lord Ellenborough to your Lordship marked private but which had reached us officially from the board in consequence of a call arising out of an allegation by Sir J. P. Grant that he had leave of Lord Ellenborough and the chairs to remain for the purpose of going to the Calcutta bar has given rise to some discussion and to a dissent from Mr. Marjoribanks, a copy of which I enclose, protesting against the powers assumed by Lord Ellenborough. Whether the matter may ever come out in parliament time will shew, but the bad odour in which his Lordship has been with the public had led more to the manifestation of an opposition to his measures than any real ground for complaint, for I believe his Lordship's intentions have been good and certainly most kind towards Sir J. P. Grant.

Sir John Malcolm must now be near home. I have seen a copy of his letter to your Lordship on the subject of the secretariat arrangements. That Sir John is a distinguished servant we must admit, but at finance he has reputation still to gain—never were calculations and results so opposite. The affair of the [slave] question will I fear turn out unfortunately for the commander and the judgment even of the commodore Sir C. M. The establishment is altogether a useless expense and would be far better abolished. I perused hastily yesterday (when I finally received the official announcements) the minutes of Mr. Hill, Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. B. on the proposed alteration in the present constitution of the Indian governments. There are many suggestions calculated to lead to a better order of things on a new settlement of Indian affairs, but some of the notions appear to have been hastily advanced and not well calculated to effect the object. That the governor-general is too much encumbered with detail, is too apparent to admit of a doubt, and that he ought to have the power of moving throughout the vast empire and effectually to carry on the matter of governing, wherever he may be, is I think equally clear. The substitution of the lieutenant governors for those now existing of governors is well calculated to effect a reduction in charge, or at least to prevent the increase with which the separate governments in their present form have a natural tendency to produce. But the great difficulty will be to find at all times a fit instrument to exercise the vast power and responsibility which would inevitably devolve on the governor-general. No man conversant with what passed in India from 1814 to 1827,[1] could divest himself of the possibility of the trust so enlarged falling into similar hands—and if such should be the case the results in principle and practice would be fatal to the existence of our power. I do not believe that there is any public post held by any public servant to be at all compared with that of governor-general of India, especially if planned as it is proposed. The alteration is however essential to amity

285. [1] This is a reference to the governor-generalships of the Marquis of Hastings and Lord Amherst, of which Auber held a poor opinion.

and promptness in all the measures connected with the administration of the eastern empire whether affecting Bengal, Madras or Bombay. [To be also at the head of the] army would consolidate and strengthen the means of governing; but again the difficulty in expecting that fit instruments will always be found adequate to so great administration presents itself. But that it must be adopted I think there cannot be a doubt, for as it is the governor-general is in name such, but, with one or two exceptions when he feels it absolutely necessary to exercise power, he generally abstains and the subordinates are left to act as they may see fit, which would be avoided in the new plane. Your Lordship will perceive by the public papers that the affairs on the continent are by no means in a tranquil state....

286. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 23 January 1831

My dear Lord William,

I am just favoured with your letter of the 11th September last. If I take the deputy chair next year, as is very likely, you must in future distinguish between confidential, and letters which merely inform me of what is going on, and contain general observations therein. The former I shall keep to myself, but the latter I must as chairman occasionally show to others. I have had a cursory reading of the minutes of the members of your finance committee on the constitution of the supreme governments—its defects etc.

If [Hill] had been writing a private letter on the subject he would have opened more and taken a better view of the subject than he has done in his public minute. Mackenzie's is the best production but there are some suggestions worthy of attention in all of them. I hope you have not sent these home without the comments of yourself and your council but if any such are come I have not seen them. I incline to think the result will be that we shall have to govern India—without anything to do with trade to or from India or China—and that therefore the great object ought to be to make all arrangements on such a plan as will best enable us to make India pay her own expenses, and this I have always thought may be done except in extraordinary cases of war. It seems essentially necessary to effect this object—that the supreme government should exercise the power and be responsible for making all feasible reductions in India, and for all expenses that may be incurred there, and that the subordinate governments should entirely depend upon you—that is to say that all reductions you may order should at once be made by them and no new expense incurred without your sanction. The committee and Mackenzie in particular has adverted to this important point and shown very well the tendency of separate governments to increase expense, when under no control but

the home authorities. The idea of reducing the subordinate governments to lieutenant governorships with reduced powers and establishments I am much inclined to approve. Under such an arrangement—the reduction of the supreme to recorders courts and the separate commanders-in-chief to subordinate staff officers only under one commander-in-chief—great savings might be made and great unity of action as well as efficiency be effected.

Many members of our court however will be horror struck with all this novelty, but it will work unless the government here set their faces against it. It will certainly affect their patronage more than ours, as all higher appointments which would be abolished or reduced in consequence rest in fact with them, and I suspect they care much more about such things than we do. We shall have indeed under any circumstances all the patronage we want for private purposes, and it may be questioned whether we ought to have any more. I should like to see the communication you have had with the supreme court. One of the greatest objections I have always had to your scheme of the indiscriminate admission of Europeans into India has been the difficulty of controlling them when there, and I am clear they never can be properly controlled unless they are made subject in all respects to the local courts in the same way as natives are. For this purpose a new code of laws as applicable to Europeans particularly in criminal cases will be necessary. Such a code might certainly be established but I doubt very much whether you can find fit judges to preside everywhere among the present description of your civil service. Europeans will never rest satisfied with justice administered by such persons as many of them are and what I dread more than anything is the judicial services falling into the hands of English lawyers. Great changes however must or ought to take place both abroad and at home, and it is not the novelty but the demerits of any that may be proposed that will incur any opposition. The above are my first impressions on the subject of your last letter. Further consideration may improve them.

We continue here and in all Europe in a state of great excitement which renders the lack of government more difficult than ever. You have in that aspect a comparative easy task of it. It will be some years I think before things settle into anything like a permanent shape, and great alteration must take place in the meantime. All government however will probably assume a more liberal form than at present. My only fear is that they may go too fast in that way, and by aiming at too much at once get beyond their depths and produce more evil than good. It is curious enough that almost every observation you have made on the batta draft was made here when it was under discussion. The papers are already abusing you for forbidding all remarks, but are you prepared to meet the question of any editor who may violate your orders? I think the despatch is open to many of the objections you state. If it had been mine I would have made it much shorter and determined. I would merely have said whatever I might

have thought of the orders themselves—that after what had passed they must be obeyed, and have added that the king's government coincided with this determination.

I am sorry to hear what you say of the slow progress and improvement of native agency. It is not so at Madras but I have little faith in what many of its opponents say against it. The eyes of the European civil servants are always open to all native defects, but before we can have a just comparison let me see what the natives really think of the faults in European agency. There can be no doubt however but that for some time there will be much to find fault with. However, a vigilant superintendence will gradually correct this evil.

It is certainly ridiculous to say that when a commerce exists between any two countries a remittance of money to any extent wanted may not be ready. It may be a bad remittance as the import and exports of one country with another may vary but I take it that our remittance now from India is obtained on as bad form as it can be under any other system.

China would certainly be an equal source of remittance whether the trade continues in our hands or in that of the mercantile world in general but with all my propensities for free trade I think that the opening of the China trade will be mischievous. The question is not as with two countries equally disposed to trade with one another, but it respects two countries in one only of which the trade is free and in the other every principle of government is at variance with free trade. Still however, it may be said that as we import from China, exports to China must take place to a nearly equal extent, either from Europe or from India.

Your opium arrangements have alarmed old fashioned folk here, but I do not think the old practice in Malwa could have been continued. I am not very sanguine as to the success of your passport plan, but I think it would be greatly facilitated by the acquisition of Daman and any other Portuguese ports, and more by an agreement with the intermediate native states to allow a *free transit* to all opium accompanied by your passports. In a [*illeg.*] point of view, however, much will depend on the demand and consequently the price in China. If you can manage to keep that up you will not only be safe but improve, but will not the Turkey opium interfere with you and will not the excess of produce in India keep down the price beyond what can be compensated by an increase of production?

The result of thirty years does not seem to have produced any one new tenable article in Bengal as was anticipated from the permanent settlement, nor do I see any prospect of it however rich the zamindars may become. The Madras system I admit has not produced any increase of revenue worth speaking of, but still I think we may look to improvement at Madras but not in Bengal, and I have little doubt that the great body of the people are prospering more in the former than in the latter provinces. What a temporary great man you have

made of my son—acting resident at Hyderabad. He laughs too much at his elevation for the time, to make me apprehend that he will be spoilt by it as I should regret it.

Your removal of Martin by the by is looked on with alarm. It tends to elevate Sir William and [demote] the office of resident too much, and I never expect to see matters there going on as they ought until Sir W. is out of the country, nor do I think he will willingly quit the country so long as another rupee can be squeezed out of the Nizam or any of his subjects. . . .

287. *Bentinck's minute on the value of collective authority*

24 January 1831

Having already in my minute on the remodelling of the military board at the presidency, given my opinion on the relative advantage of individual and collective agency, I need not here say much more upon the subject.

Where the duties are principally executive, like those belonging to commissioners of revenue and circuit, much benefit is obviously to be derived from the despatch, vigour, and unity of purpose, which a single hand can best achieve. But on the other hand, when deliberation, the careful revision of a great system, with its details are required; when, moreover, functions are to be delegated, partaking partly of a judicial character; when investigating charges of default against a large body of revenue servants, and partly of a legislative character; when suggesting the regulations by which the rights in the soil are to be determined, it strikes me, that there cannot be a doubt of the superiority of a collective body. In all my experience of public business, both in and out of parliament, I have never seen an occasion where discussion did not produce great improvement in the original measure. In this country, where the revenue system is of such vast importance to the community at large, it seems to me that government can never hope to arrive at a complete knowledge of its management, except by that free interchange and honest collision of opinion, that can only grow out of a joint superintendence. The board of revenue is to the supreme government, what the latter is to the home authorities. I beg to ask, if it were not for the able and honourable individuals who sit in council in independence of the governors of the different presidencies, what security would there be even for a true and fair record of administration, much less that the public affairs were conducted with efficiency and honour, and in the true spirit of the orders and intentions of so very distant an authority.

. . . . .

288. *G. Swinton to Captain Benson*

26 January 1831

My dear Benson,

You have almost fallen out of correspondence, but I know well how busy you are.

I have sent Burney's official despatches to Prinsep, and I now send you copies of his formal letters to me, which I think will be interesting to his Lordship. You can give them to Prinsep. Burney makes too much of the Burmese wishing to go to war with us again. They will always bully; but a steamer with a few redcoats sent to Rangoon would at any time frighten them out of their seven senses. They are a people to whom no concession can be made with safety and we should give them no *half pot of rice* even, until we have given them a bellyful of Sir Archie's meat balls. He is the only cook to dress their dinners for them. [*Illeg.*] has some very sensible remarks on what Burney has written about their disposition to go to war again. I will send you a copy of his letter tomorrow.

Our Burmese friends here were trying to give themselves a few airs and repeatedly fixed a day to visit me and bring the minister's letter to my address which they purposely omitted to do on the first visit. I allowed them to make their own excuses and send any day they pleased. They might come to me but that they must bring the letter, for it was their credentials and that until they did so, I could not introduce them to the vice president. Some intriguing people here had put nonsense into their heads that the letter should be delivered in the *Lootoo*, i.e. the council. They gave in at last and came to me a few days ago. Burney I think attaches too much importance to Burmese of rank coming here that they may report to the king the truth as to our power. None of them dare to speak the truth. The newspapers certainly do much mischief but Golden Toes will find us firm whatever his newspaper friends may make him fancy.

289. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 27 January 1831
Recd. Rohilkhand. 4 February 1831

My dear Lord William,

I return Lord Ellenborough's letter with many thanks. I do not know anyone fitter for the situation than the one whom you have selected, Major Stewart. He will manage well with all the courts concerned, the court of Persia, the court of Ellenborough, the court of directors, and the court of Calcutta. How completely Lord

Ellenborough's mind is set against Sir Henry Willock, and still one knows not why.

Your injunctions regarding the college shall be attended to.

Col. Casement informs me that you have ordered a cavalry guard to be sent down for the vice president. I am very sensible of your kindness in this, and greatly obliged to you. I am so comfortable without anything of that kind, that if it were compulsory to use it at all times, I should rather wish it away. Believe me my dear Lord . . .

290. *Bentinck's minute on military policy*

31 January 1831

In recording my sentiments on the batta question in a minute of the 22nd February 1829, I had occasion to remark that I had no data before me to judge of the relative condition of the three armies and that I must therefore reserve my opinion until the finance committee had furnished us with that information upon local circumstances with which they alone were acquainted, and I recommended that this subject should form one of their earliest reports . . .

The honourable court will therefore have been long in expectation of receiving the result of the enquiry thus ordered and I recommend that the report of the committee accompanied by the whole of the correspondence on this question, together with the proceedings of committees held at out stations and subsequently received may now be sent home. It would be difficult to imagine a more inconclusive report than that of the finance commitee and it is to be regretted that nothing more satisfactory could be obtained. Its arguments are often at variance with the statements which accompany it, while those statements as far as they relate to the expenses of the subalterns of the three armies appear only to prove that the expenses of that class of officers would probably in general exceed their allowances whatever those allowances might be.

. . . . . .

Having on the present tour visited the principal military station, Cawnpore, and several smaller ones, the home authorities might be disappointed were I to be silent upon the actual state of the feeling of the army, a subject which has necessarily engaged much of my attention. As all opinions concur upon this point, I can have no doubt of the accuracy of the information I have received. It appears then that the irritation first created by the half-batta order has subsided, and that any manifestation of intemperate conduct would be universally deprecated. The discontent however remains the same. The general opinion seems to be that the home authorities have unjustly departed from an understanding as to allowances which had existed for 28 years, which had become the measure of the general style of living and which cannot now be curtailed without affecting the comforts of the most frugal and

without inflicting cruel injury upon the married officer and irretrievable ruin upon all those in embarrassed circumstances. This in a few words may be said to be the general result and I must in candour say, that a feeling of equitable claim founded upon such long possession with all its obvious effects is neither unnatural, nor unreasonable, and I am satisfied if the publication of the half-batta order had been followed by a respectful demeanour and by a becoming subordination to the decision of superior authority, that the honourable court would willingly and favourably have received a representation of their alleged grievances with every disposition, if prevented from repealing the order, to grant an alleviation by some corresponding advantage.

But whatever may be the opinion of the justice of reducing the income of officers at present in the service nobody can question the equity of any arrangement having prospective operation upon those who may hereafter enter the army, and then upon the principal heads under which the question of equalization, so very desirable to be introduced into the three armies, should turn. I am inclined to think first—that there is nothing in the peculiar circumstances of the Bengal presidency which render necessary a rate of pay, including in that word every description of allowances, superior to that at Madras and Bombay. Secondly—that the same pay in the field and cantonments is opposed to the usage of every other army in the world, and it would seem an obvious inference, that what may be required to cover the losses and wear and tear of a campaign, must be more than sufficient where no extraordinary cause of expense occurs from supplies or other circumstances in time of peace, and in point of fact that the full batta has done infinite mischief to the Bengal army by encouraging extravagance and debt growing out of the credit, which large allowances could alone have established. The truth of this remark is considered to be completely borne out by the small amount of debt of the civil and military service at the two other presidencies where the allowances are comparatively small as contrasted with the enormous encumbrances of both services in Bengal.

My general impression of the condition of the European part of the native army is that it requires improvement, and that this may be effected with equal advancement of the interests of the native troops and accompanied by a great saving of expense. I have examined a good deal into the duties at present required of the native army, and the fitness of the present constitution of that force to perform them, and the conclusion to which I have come is that the present formation is inefficient and excessively expensive. The grounds of this conclusion will be explained in the paper I propose hereafter to write upon the pay, constitution, and distribution of the Indian army.

291. *Bentinck's minute on Fort William College*

4 February 1831

I feel extreme regret that the honourable court have resolved, without waiting for the issue of the further experiment they had allowed to be made, to abolish the college. The report of the secretary of the college which I lately submitted to council, with the addition of some remarks of my own, has satisfied me that the present plan has put as effectual a check to idleness and extravagance as can be expected from any system of education of which India is to be the scene. The new measure now ordered by the court, has, in some degree, had a trial, by the actual distribution, in the interior, of one half of the whole number of the writers, part being rusticated for dissipation and inattention to their studies, part by their own desire to be placed with friends and relations. With respect to their progress in acquiring the languages, it will be seen that the mofussil portion have made no advance equal to those in Calcutta, and for the very obvious reasons, that they have not the assistance afforded by the college, nor the same vigilant control and superintendence over their studies and conduct. It will be observed that many of the voluntary mofussil students have been subsequently re-admitted to the college, but never without the consent of the friends, with whom they had been originally placed, nor without sufficient cause thereon.

There are now fifty-six writers who have not passed. It is proposed in the despatch that these young men should be placed 'with such of our more experienced servants as may seem to you to possess the qualifications best calculated to draw forth whatever may be good, and to check whatever may be evil in those committed to their charge'.

In theory, this is an excellent plan, and ought to be easy of execution, but with the information that actual experience with the writers already in the mofussil has given me, I am convinced that the measure will altogether fail. In the first place, how few is the number of those experienced servants who are fit, or if fit, would be willing to undertake this control. The kind of parental care here adverted to is not easy to be obtained in private life; and how much less likely is it to be met with in those whose whole time is engaged in public business, in behalf of strangers, at that time of life the least patient of authority, in whom generally they can have no interest whatever. I beg to refer the members of council to the secretary for the generally unsatisfactory answers from magistrates, under whom the young men have been placed, as to their diligence and general conduct. Almost uniformly these reports have been favourable, though positively contradicted by the fact of continued inability to pass an examination. Upon the subject of control, I should say, that one of the great drawbacks to the efficiency of the administration is the want of a due subordination between the higher and lower ranks in the civil service. The superiors, in general, exercise

a very imperfect control over those under their command, and the assistants, in consequence, do little or nothing as their inclinations lead them, and seem to conceive that exertion is only called for when they are placed in an independent charge. There can in my opinion, be no worse symptom of the laxity prevailing upon this important point, than the almost total absence of all complaints on the part of superiors of those under them, and the excessive and, I may add, the universal reluctance, even in the worst cases, to impeach neglect and delinquency. For these reasons, therefore, I have not the smallest confidence in the efficacy of the superintendence described in the despatch.

The only part of this plan really possessing a compelling power, and affording any security for success, is the condition that if the writer is not qualified within a certain period, he will lose his most valuable appointment. This, no doubt, will operate in England as well as here, as parents, by previous instruction will take every precaution to guard against this misfortune. But this guarantee will be good for nothing, unless the required qualifications are subjected to an impartial and rigid trial. I am disposed to place no trust in an examination in the mofussil, however the committee may be composed, and I consider that there can be no security against great abuse in this respect, except by the appointment of permanent paid examiners, as at present, of the highest attainments and character.

I suspect that there will be found a strong practical obstacle to the execution of this plan in the impossibility of finding accommodation for the writers exactly there where the proper superintendence is to be found. With nearly a similar object of placing the young men when they had passed college, with those officers who were likely to make them the best men of business, a report, at my suggestion, was called for of all the buildings at public stations that might be available for their accommodation. As far as my recollection serves me, the number at any station was very limited. I beg to refer the members of council to these returns. Of course this difficulty might be removed by the erection of the required number of bungalows, but this would demand both time and expense, and if made, what certainty would then exist, that in these very stations, the most eligible officers for the charge in question would always be found.

My opinion upon these orders of the court, is, that the execution of them should be suspended, until the report of the proceedings of the college, and of its apparent success during the progress of the further trial which they authorized to be made, is before them. A decision upon this communication may reach us in little more than six months, and any evil from this delay is not to be compared with the baneful effects of long duration which would follow, according to my opinion, from the substitution of one plan of certain failure, for another, which, as far as it has been tried, appears to promise well. The knowledge of the languages of the country, is of too great importance to our efficient administration, to be trifled with. That this knowledge can be better

gained in Calcutta than in the mofussil is certain. That it would be obtained at too dear a price, if it involved the students in a load of debt, as in former times, from which it has been found almost impossible to be extricated, may be at once admitted. But that such is the present case, I positively deny, and with the experience I have of both the present and intended system, I think I should deserve all the charge of inconsistency of purpose and vacillation, which such changes would be open to, if before allowing the honourable court to judge for themselves of the effect of their own former orders, which of course they did not anticipate, I carried this last order into immediate effect. Suspension therefore, for the present, of the court's instructions is my recommendation.

But should neither of my colleagues concur in this opinion, I then request the vice president in council to carry these orders into effect and to make such regulations for the future control of the writers in the mofussil, as he may think proper. I confess at once my own inability to suggest any arrangements by which the wishes of the court can be satisfactorily accomplished.

292. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 7 February 1831

My dear Lord William,

I heard yesterday by chance that a band is maintained at the Hyderabad residency at the expense of the Nizam's government. It was established in Mr. Martin's time and is paid I understand out of the produce of the military bazars. It seems to me a very objectionable proceeding, and of the same character with others in former days, by which, through the eager readiness of a subservient minister, the pomps and vanities of the resident were supported at the expense of the Nizam. I have thought it right to let you know this; lest you should wish to put a stop to it. Major Stewart I should think would see the impropriety of the thing....

293. *Major John Low's*[1] *memorandum on Jaipur*

Camp. 24 February 1831

1. In obedience to his Lordship's orders I have presented the whole of the late correspondence on the affairs of Jaipur.

2. I find that the exact nature of the guarantee granted by Sir Charles Metcalfe to a number of the principal chiefs, is the point on

293. [1] Low, Sir John, 1788–1880. Resident with Baji Rao, 1819–25, at Lucknow 1831–42: later resident at Hyderabad.

which Lord W. Bentinck wishes at this moment, to be more minutely informed than he has been hitherto; the object therefore of this memorandum is solely to add to his Lordship's information on that subject. It is evident from Mr. Cavendish's letter to the resident at Delhi of the 9th December (5th paragraph especially) that he thinks the nature of our guarantee has never been distinctly understood by the chiefs, and since this memorandum was written I have observed that Mr. Cavendish in his letter of the 22nd December distinctly asserts that the nobles do not comprehend the terms of the guarantee, and he also says, or implies distinctly in some of the papers I have just read, that our general system of non-interference was never fully explained to those chiefs.

3. In that supposition Mr. Cavendish is entirely mistaken; our system of non-interference has been repeatedly explained by me both to the chiefs themselves, and to their vakils when the latter attended me, as they frequently did for the adjustment of real, and at other times alleged oppressions which they had suffered from the government, and those explanations were often given in presence of the rani's ministers and vakils.

4. The nature and objects of our guarantee were in like manner repeatedly explained to both parties both by Mr. Clerk and myself and our explanations have often been proved to them by our acts.

5. In regard to the consequences that would follow any actual opposition by force on the part of the guarantee chiefs to the rani's government, it is absolutely impossible that the former could be ignorant because in the month of March or April 1827 (shortly after my return from Delhi) a circular note was written by me to all the chiefs by order of the governor-general, apprising them distinctly that if they chose to endeavour to remove Jotha Ram and Roopabadarum by measures of their own (they had formerly requested the permission of the British government to do so) the governor-general would not interfere to prevent their making this attempt, our guarantee would cease from the commencement of their proceedings, and would never be renewed. This note was also sent to all the other chiefs who voted before Sir Charles Metcalfe and myself, respecting the right of the rani to govern the state after the young raja was brought out of the zenana, and a copy of the note in question, was furnished to the rani herself.

6. The note above alluded to, is in the Hindi records of the Jaipur agency, and I think that a copy and translation of it should be sent for. A perusal of it, in addition to the following observations will enable the governor-general thoroughly to understand the objects and extent of Sir Charles Metcalfe's guarantee now that a copy of his despatch to the late governor-general of December 1826, has arrived in camp.

7. The guarantee was originally only a verbal one; it was granted very reluctantly, but it was considered an indispensable act of justice towards the chiefs who had been invited by us to declare their sentiments upon the usages of the raja and having been granted by one of

the highest officers under government who was better able to judge of the necessity of the measure than any other person, and whose proceedings on the occasion were fully confirmed by the governor-general himself, it is needless to say that it was a positive duty of the political agent at Jaipur, to see that its meaning and extent should be strictly adhered to by both parties concerned.

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294. *Robert Campbell to Bentinck.* Private

East India House. 27 February 1831

My Lord,

I had the honour of addressing a long letter to your Lordship, in duplicate, by two separate ships last month. I had there, among other things, remarked that I had seen nothing in the Bengal correspondence from which I could infer that there was any superabundance of military force under our immediate government. Since then I have perused a minute of your Lordship, in which you broadly state the fact; and another by Sir C. Metcalfe in which he dissents from your opinion . . . I think it most fortunate for the Indian empire, in its present critical state, both as to finance and future administration, that an experienced soldier is at the head of it. For I am convinced that no purely civil governor could introduce those military reforms which every Indian despatch now announces to have been made, or to be in progress. For the same reason I shall despair of any further financial improvements when your Lordship shall once have quitted the helm. Therefore I ardently hope that you will not retire until this great, I might almost call it, revolution has been fully accomplished.

As your Lordship has done me the honour of asking my opinion on some points of Indian military finance, and as I have had my mind almost exclusively directed to that subject for nearly 40 years, I will take the liberty of stating in so few words as I hope will not be tiresome my present view of our Indian military condition.

It appears to me that having at last reduced all India to subjection and [having] several excellent frontiers, it is our interest to reduce, rather than augment, the numbers of armed natives, to bring that number to as near an approximate to the number of European troops retained in India as circumstances will admit, and to keep as much as possible the great moveable arms of cavalry and artillery in the hands of Europeans. With this view I shall wish to see the European cavalry augmented, and the native cavalry and artillery reduced in number, especially at Madras, where they can be best spared, since I believe the cavalry are worst affected. Yet they are a distinguished corps and worthy of every kind and liberal consideration. I think the native infantry might be considered as a great armed police, to be augmented and strengthened with European officers wherever circumstances, such as a Russian

invasion, (if that shall ever happen,) might require it; and that in the mean time 3 captains might be reduced in each regiment. The same in each regiment of native cavalry. Such reductions are ultimately favourable to European officers. The numbers of field officers d[itt]o. Staff appointments remaining the same. All clamourers for large native establishments (which of course involve patronage and promotions) put forth the spectre of Russian invasion, and the consequent necessity of numerous and highly disciplined native regiments to oppose them; but it appears to me that a Russian army, if ever it got to the banks of the Indus, might be best opposed by British troops, aided by a moderate number of natives; and that we have the means of transporting British troops to India faster by sea than the Russians can approach with the necessary material by land; our material being already on the spot.

I am called upon by the private hand, by which this letter will be conveyed to India, to close it without delay. Your Lordship will not probably regret that it is thus cut short. I had indeed but little to add beyond expressing my best wishes for the continuance of your Lordship's health and government, and subscribing myself your most obedient and faithful servant, etc.

295. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 2 March 1831
Recd. Dehra Dun. 13 March 1831

My dear Lord William,

You will be sorry to learn that Mr. Blunt and myself concur as to the necessity of carrying the court's order for the abolition of the college into effect. I never acted in my own opinion with so much reluctance, both because your Lordship's wish was otherwise, and because it is very unsatisfactory that so important a measure should be carried into effect without the sanction or rather the concurren :e of the head of the government. We propose that the abolition shall take effect on the 1st of June, a more convenient season for removing the students than any part of the intermediate hot weather, and we had further in view to give your Lordship time, if you should desire to exercise your privilege and maintain the college notwithstanding our opinion; with the same view we have not yet promulgated the resolution for the abolition: but whether we shall be able to keep it back until we hear from you, I do not know. We propose to prepare rules for the future regulation of the young men, which will be submitted for your approval. If your Lordship should determine, either to revise our decision, or to let it stand, in either case an early communication of your intention will be very acceptable, and will enable us, if I receive it in time, either to proceed with confidence, or to withhold the promulgation of the order as the case may be. Your instruction to us was distinctly to carry

the court's order into effect, unless we concurred with your Lordship in suspending it. Still, if you wish to revoke that instruction, there will be time.

It has been surprisingly cold since the rain left us. Yesterday and today the thermometer at 56 and 57°.

296. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 13 March 1831
Recd. at Saharanpur

My dear Lord William,

I am sorry to see that the officers at Meerut have been so unmannerly and silly as those at Cawnpore but I am very glad that your Lordship determined not to take notice of it. The disrespect, although undoubtedly intentional, was as you observe negative, and as it consisted in the omission of an act which could not be required, it is difficult to say what notice could have been taken of it with any effect. The commander-in-chief would have acted with more becoming decency and propriety, if knowing, as he did know, the motives that were operating, he had declined a compliment, which was paid more for the purpose of shewing ill will towards the government and its head, than from any personal attachment towards the commander-in-chief and his lady. I am satisfied that, by treating the matter as you have done, and continuing to receive all with your usual kindness, more will be done to produce a right feeling in the army than could be accomplished by any measures of severity or any inefficacious notice of their conduct.

I am not surprised at anything in the way of impertinence and self-sufficiency on the part of Mr. Ewer: but on what ground he could presume to imagine himself exempt from the duty of obeying your Lordship's summons to a public meeting for consultation on the most important part of his official functions, I cannot comprehend. That he would have been found ignorant I can easily conceive, for notwithstanding readiness and cleverness, and integrity as to pecuniary matters, there is not a more idle or less zealous character in the Company's service.

I think that your Lordship will like Mr. Fraser better when you know him personally. He is apt at discussion, mild and engaging in his manner, and much more reasonable than would be supposed from his strange style of writing. He has more information I believe on the important subject of landed tenures, than any man in the country and is capable of great good if waywardness did not spoil all.

While alluding to landed tenures, let me request your Lordship's attention to the discussion going on on that subject, in which I have taken a part. I find myself at issue with the revenue authorities at your headquarters in some very important points. I am only contending for

principles, without establishing which we cannot I think act either justly or clearly. I do not like to trouble you with a tedious dissertation in this form, without knowing that it would be agreeable to you; but if you enter with interest into the question discussed, and find my minutes indistinct, I shall be most happy to answer any call that you may like to make, publicly or privately, for further explanation. I think I hear you say 'God forbid'. My principles are briefly these. The government is not proprietor of the land, and cannot make proprietors of the land. The real proprietors of the land are generally individuals of the village communities, who are also for the most part the actual occupiers and cultivators of the land. The great zamindars, the taluqdars etc., whom our regulation men recognize as proprietors, are not so, but representatives of the government. We may confer on them as great a portion as we choose of the government rights, but we have no right to give them the property of the land which belongs to others. I believe these principles to be established and acknowledged from Cape Comorin to Kashmir universally, where we do not destroy them, and these form the grounds of my differences, both with your revenue board, and your Benares committee.

We have strange weather for the season. It is actually more chilly than is pleasant this 14th day of March.

297. *Lt. General Sir S. F. Whittingham to Bentinck*

Camp Mohan Chawki. 18 March 1831

My dear Lord,

I have to return you my most sincere thanks for the honour you have done me in submitting the accompanying papers to my perusal. They are highly interesting in every point of view; but they do not appear to me to meet fully and completely, the spirit of your enquiry, viz. how to effect such reductions in our military establishment, as to remedy in part at least, the distress of our finances.

The total want of returns from the Madras army render it impossible to enter into details; but the great changes which have taken place in British India within the last ten or twelve years, have thrown the presidency of Madras so much in the rear of our future military operations, that there can be no doubt of the safety with which her military establishments may be greatly reduced, and the state of our revenues points out the expediency of such reduction.

The perusal of the accompanying papers has suggested to me the following observations which I submit to your Lordship's consideration:

1. The system of concentrating the largest possible force at divisional head quarters, cannot be too strictly attended to. The discipline of the troops will be thereby ensured; the morale of officers and men, improved; the peace and tranquillity of the country secured by the assembly of a

large force always ready to act, and whenever the army shall be called upon to take the field, its component parts will be in a perfect state of preservation! Troops dispersed about a country in small detachments, or by wings, or by battalions, may be compared to the artillery in former times, when two guns were attached to each battalion. The result is zero!

2. The strength of the battalions of native infantry should not be under 1,000 men, and the king's regiment should be 1,200 strong.

3. We sadly want a new regulation about guards. The number furnished is an abomination! I see no reason why the king's service should not serve very nearly as a model for the native army, in respect to the number and strength of guards to be furnished.

4. The native infantry will never be the military body it ought to be, till a well-organized gendarmerie renders the civil service quite independent of the military, and, vice versa.

5. The leaves of absence to the sepoys, are only given during the hot season and rains, when all drill has ceased.

6. The more the number of king's regiments in the upper provinces of Bengal, is increased, the greater will be the real efficiency of the army. Upon our north-west frontier we may be called upon to take the field at a very short notice. The rapidity and efficiency of our initiative is of infinite importance. Nothing will more tend to maintain the belief of our irresistibility, or more conduce to a speedy and honourable conclusion of our operations.

7. Every brigade of infantry, or cavalry, should be composed of one king's regiment and two native.

8. The horse artillery should be *exclusively* European. The foot artillery in the greatest proportion which circumstances will admit of.

9. The total strength of the Bengal native light cavalry, is at present too much reduced! Any further reduction would be ruinous.

10. Regiments at 4,000; of this number certainly not above 3,500 would be found present under arms, on taking the field. Our north-west frontier is an open campaign country, where the action of cavalry must have full play, and where a great inferiority of numbers would be surely felt.

11. The defect of the Bengal cavalry is a want of confidence in the sabre, and a consequent unfortunate preference of the pistol. This however, might be completely rectified by making them all lancers. It is their national weapon: they understand it and use it with confidence and dexterity. The quilted jacket of the natives is impenetrable to the sabre, to the lance it offers no resistance.

I am sorry to say, my dear Lord, that the perusal of all the important papers which you have been pleased to place in my hands, has only served to strengthen the opinion I have long entertained that there is no army in India! There is an immense military mass, numerous beyond our wants; but without shape, or form, or due proportions. Its coloration is as defective as its composition. It is like the army of

Darius, unwieldy and superlatively expensive! God grant that you may be able to transform it into the army of Alexander, when beautiful proportions and admirable organization, enabled him to overturn mighty empires with a handful of brave men!

298. *Robert Campbell to Bentinck*

East India House, London. 23 March 1831
Recd. Simla. 15 September 1831

My Lord,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 26th August and of November last, and beg leave to offer my very cordial thanks for the kindness you have shewn to my son in Persia who will I trust prove himself worthy of the confidence your Lordship has been pleased to repose in him.

The reference made by the Bengal government to the home authorities to appoint a successor to the late Sir John Macdonald has not yet arrived, but when it does I am inclined to think that the court will find themselves precluded by law from entertaining the proposition, and his Majesty's ministers cannot do so without entirely changing the character of the legation and rendering it, what the late Mr. Canning could never be prevailed on to do, a royal mission. It is therefore probable that the nomination of a successor to the late envoy will be remitted to your Lordship in council, and in that case I would earnestly entreat, should the conduct of my son while in charge of the British interests in Persia have given satisfaction to your Lordship, that you would be pleased to confer the appointment on him.

There is reason to believe that his nomination would be acceptable both to the shah and the prince, whose esteem and regard he has conciliated; but I beg your Lordship to be assured that no consideration should induce me to press my present request did I not entertain a moral conviction that from his intimate acquaintance with the politics of Persia, his thorough knowledge of the language and of the minds and characters of the Persians in authority both at Teheran and Tabriz, Capt. Campbell is capable of adequately discharging the duties of the high trust to which he aspires. That he possessed the entire confidence of the late envoy there is ample proof; that it was his earnest desire my son should succeed him I have documents in my possession to show; that Sir John Malcolm, now here, who knew my son well is of opinion that the British interests in Persia may safely be confided to his care, I have Sir John's promise; and I can myself vouch for the purity of his mind and the integrity of his principles.

299. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 27 March 1831
Recd. 7 April 1831

My dear Lord William,

Your Lordship knows Mr. Maddock much better than I do, for I have never seen him, and the least personal intercourse goes a much greater way towards a knowledge of character than any degree of observation at a distance. From all that I have ever heard or seen of his character, I should suppose parts of it, his integrity and ability, well suited to the residency at Hyderabad, and parts, such as his vanity and pomposity, the reverse, as rendering him liable to be worked upon and influenced through these weaknesses. Chandu Lal's bland subserviency will supply incense, much more gratifying to Mr. Maddock's senses than the refractoriness of Hakim Mehdi. It seems clear that Mr. M. cannot do well at Lucknow without a complete change of policy, and therefore that he will probably do better at Hyderabad, though it is a pity that the recommendation for the one should be his unfitness for the other.

Lieut. Col. Briggs[1] is not equal to Major Stewart for Persia, nor has he, that I know of, any pretensions to Hyderabad or any other residency. I met him at Aurengabad in 1821 and he did not strike me as a first rate man. He is clever however and has published a new translation of *Ferishta* and an original work on the land tax of India, which I mean to read when I have time. He sent me a copy by Mr. Ricketts, the envoy of the east Indians, who returned here a short time ago, and no doubt Col. Briggs has either sent or will send a copy to your Lordship. The subject is highly interesting and important especially with a view to revenue settlements.

Col. Lockett I think would answer better than most men either at Ajmer, on the footing described by your Lordship, or in any other political situation, as he possesses some of the most desirable qualifications. His judgment is not always perfect—but whose is?—and I am not sure that he is so sound and staunch in the principles of non-interference as to be sure of resisting temptation at all times: but he will study to obey orders, and will not have many superiors anywhere.

In justice to Col. Caulfield I must mention that he will return to India in August. He is one of the ablest political agents. I received a letter from him a few days ago from Bourbon in which he desired me to mention his intention of returning. He is, I believe, honest and zealous and able.

299. [1] Briggs, John, 1785–1875. Resident at Satara, 1831–2, senior member of the board of administration, Mysore. Resident, Nagpur 1832–5.

300. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 27 March 1831
Recd. 7 April 1831

My dear Lord William,

I have read repeatedly Mr. Prinsep's note on the financial measures proposed by the accountant general which Mr. Prinsep by your Lordship's desire sent to Mr. Bushby. Mr. Blunt has also seen it. He is of opinion, as well as myself, that the best way of disposing of the funds in the treasury is to apply them to the discharge of 5 per cent debt as proposed by the accountant general.

Mr. Prinsep's paper seems to me to mystify a very plain question by the variety of unnecessary considerations that he introduces: and his plans appear to me to be objectionable in two important particulars. First they would continue for an indefinite period the payment of interest which we might get rid of: and second they would introduce into our Indian finance the worst part of English finance, i.e. giving credit for more than we receive and consequently having to pay more than we borrow, to which we owe the present enormous amount of our national debt, which by a different system of borrowing would in amount have been much less, with greater facility, of course, for the extinction of the principal, and also for the reduction of the interest. Mr. Prinsep's scheme therefore for selling 3 per cent stock, by which he calculates on getting 80 Rs. for every 100 that we shall ultimately have to pay, seems to me decidedly objectionable. When we must borrow, the plainest mode appears to me to be the best, that of getting 100 cash for 100 debt at the lowest rate of interest at which money is procurable. If interest be high when we have to borrow, it can be reduced when we are in a condition to think of such a measure. In like manner when we have money to pay, the sooner we get rid of paying interest the better. In our state in India any plans of finance, that are only to be carried into effect remotely, are almost sure to be deranged, because nothing with us is sure or stable. One year we may be able to pay debt, the next from unforseen circumstances we may be forced to borrow. Our proper plan of finance is accordingly, I think, a very simple one, which is to pay and reduce debt when we can, and to borrow only when we must. It ought I conceive to be our object to get rid of debt entirely, although I fear that there is little hope of its accomplishment.

301. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

London. 28 March 1831

. . . . . .

Sir John Malcolm arrived from Bombay via Alexandria and Malta on the 26 February. Lord Clare had been detained a fortnight in the desert awaiting the appearance of a steamer at C. and was in no very pleasant temper when Sir John met his Lordship there on the 23rd instead of the 1st as was expected. Sir John looked very well considering the long period which he has passed in India. He will be brought into parliament by the duke of Northumberland, it is said, forthwith. Mr. Compton, late advocate general at Madras, is appointed or rather is *to be* appointed successor to the late Sir Jas. Dewar as chief justice at Bombay.

. . . . . .

The subject of the aid rendered to the commercial community at Calcutta has been under discussion. Paragraphs were brought forward on [*illeg.*] framed for the purpose of putting a stop to the practice in future or at least of fortifying the government in a refusal to make advances and likewise to put the Europeans and native community on their guard against relying upon and being afforded [*sic*] to the houses of agency. Whilst the late measure of the government is sanctioned the evils attending the system were pointed out and it was submitted that a proclamation by government to be issued at the least objectionable period should be promulgated publicly, announcing that no further relief would be given. The principle of their interference was generally approved, but it was considered that a proclamation of such an intention would inevitably involve the whole of the commercial houses in severe if not inextricable distress. The paragraphs were consequently rejected and the matter will again come under discussion. I mention this to your Lordship confidentially and shall send the copy of a dissent which I think will be recorded with the resolution rejecting the paragraphs on Wednesday next, which will touch the leading points, . . .

302. *J. A. Casamaijor to Pakenham.*[1] Confidential

Mysore Residency. 4 April 1831
Recd. 6 April 1831

My dear Pakenham,

As we grow older we refer to the friends of our youth with warm memory and although we have not corresponded or met for many

302. [1] Pakenham, C. Private secretary to Bentinck. On 17 May 1830 Bentinck wrote to the Duke of Wellington saying that 'no officer in the service is more generally esteemed and when I selected him for my private secretary I was solely influenced to do so by his good character, and by his experience in revenue and judicial affairs which as commissioner in Cuttack he had superintended for several years to the entire satisfaction of government. He has not brilliant talents but he has an excellent understanding and judgment and a high sense of honour.'

years, I feel a confidence that I may ever have your friendship by my own, that for you is unchanged. We have both had our share of heart-rendings and afflictions since we last parted in Calcutta but to these chastisements we must submit with reverence and only pray that we may live to our amendment. Rather than harass my good friend Lord William Bentinck with unnecessary writing I will negotiate a bit of parish business with you and that you may communicate to him with my respects. Lord William Bentinck is quite aware that the raja of Mysore has been dissipating his resources and neglecting his government for the last twelve years. When I took charge of him from Cole, five years ago, his treasury was in debt to about *fifteen* lakhs of pagodas. By incessant toil and good fortune I succeeded in liberating his finances from this burden of debt until it was reduced to *three* lakhs. But he has again retrograded and in one year increased his debt to about eight lakhs. My industry has never slackened to avert this and advice has been reiterated until heard and practised with disgust both by the raja and myself. You will see with this my last report to government and the letter in consequence written by Mr. Lushington to the raja. This admonition has had good effect on the raja's mind for the present and he is taking advice with better humour and although there is a bad spirit among his inhabitants, if I am supported by the Madras government, I do not despair of keeping the things right but then I *must* have confidence and support; without it, my exertions must fail. Now I am satisfied that a letter from Lord William to the raja informing him that he is grieved to find that he is relapsing into his former errors of misgovernment and giving him a friendly caution would have the best effect and as this would cost but little trouble I will venture to solicit through you that I may have the benefit of this aid to my labours. You will find the Mysore treaty in the *Asiatic Annual Register 1799* and our right to give him advice and his obligations to attend to it are too clearly defined to be doubted. I will also mention to you that although I am on the best possible terms with Mr. Lushington I have no confidence or faith in his character and [fear] that he may turn round upon me as I have known him do towards others. He has a bad habit of receiving and adopting petitions and relying on native intelligence and often writes to others his opinions founded on such shallow information. He may perhaps misguide Lord William Bentinck about Mysore affairs and I wish to provide against this. He talks of altering our relations with this government as if the power of doing so rested with *him*. I therefore wish his Lordship to see my public despatches, copies of which are sent by me to Lord William, before he listens to Mr. Lushington's opinion and I will therefore, if free from objection, continue to send you copies of public correspondence as events take place here, for the only security I feel in this situation is the general superintendence of the Bengal presidency over this durbar. They have more experience in the political department and this residency should never have been removed from their more immediate control for the raja is

enabled to bribe every rascally *dubash* at Madras either by money or employing their relations under his government. If I trespass too much in sending you these papers let me know candidly. I feel my own acts and motives of conduct will bear any blaze of light but unless the resident is supported matters must [worsen]. I have Travancore before my eyes and the shameful treatment of Morison. If similar insult was attempted towards myself I would pitch the appointment to the devil in five minutes.

. . . Mr. Lushington has been very patronizing . . . but this does not blind me and I have had friendly hints to be vigilant and not over credulous of his continued good will and this appointment is wanted for others, but as my fortunes do not top above 60,000 Rs. at this moment, I must make a fight for five or six years longer before I can take care of the children. . . . I hope my dear Pakenham you have made better progress.

I saw George [*illeg.*] on board the *Wellington*. I love and respect George. He left India with a shattered constitution and £500 in his pocket. I fear the General will not be just or generous to poor George. Charles I hear from constantly and they are both my most intimate friends. Now keep the subject of this private letter to yourself, of course not concealing *anything from Lord William Bentinck*, who I look up to with reverence, affection and respect and whose countenance I ever hope to merit. Arthur is again returned for [*illeg.*]. He does not complain but his great want, is money. He has his annuity and a lakh and twenty thousand rupees, *this is all*. He brought out £10,000 his patrimony to India so his pecuniary advancement in India has been nothing. He gave me a good account of your boy.

P.S. I before mentioned that I send copies of my public letters to Fort William but as you are in advance I therefore send you duplicates as it is possible they may not be sent to Lord William Bentinck from Calcutta, and I wish him to know how matters are going on here.

303. *William Astell to Bentinck.* Private

India House, London. 13 April 1831
Recd. 21 October 1831

My dear Lord,

I have to acknowledge with my best thanks your Lordship's letter of the 14 November last, forwarded by the way of Bombay and which reached me on the 27th February. If the approval by the court of many (I may say by far the greater portion) of the measures of your government has been gratifying to your Lordship, I can assure you that it has been no less so to me, it having been my duty especially as their chairman to originate and submit for the court's sanction the judgment passed upon the acts of your administration etc. Whenever a difference

of opinion has arisen between the authorities here and in India, due credit has always been given for the best intentions on the part of those whose measures or views may have called forth animadversion. As I quit the chair, and the direction also by rotation, this day, I could not, without injustice to my own feelings, avoid expressing to your Lordship the satisfaction which I have derived from a general review of your Lordship's government; and at the same time requesting you to accept my best thanks for the private and demi-official communications with which you have been so good as to favour me and from which I have derived much useful information.

I wrote you, fully, my sentiments on the Hyderabad question in the letters which I addressed to your Lordship in December last; and in the same letter I adverted to the subject of the advances to the Calcutta houses of agency: and stated the intentions of the court shortly to take up that subject, and also the judicial questions arising out of the altered condition of the settlements of Prince of Wales Island, Singapore and Malacca. I hoped (and have used my best endeavours) to bring both these matters to a conclusion; but from circumstances with which it is needless to trouble your Lordship, I have not been successful. They cannot however be allowed to be over; and I trust that my successor in the chair will be able at an early period to enter upon them. . . .

In your Lordship's letter of November, you touch upon the Nagpur treaty, and the view taken of it by the home authorities. Your Lordship knows well the stages through which a draft of a despatch from the court is required to pass; and in justification of that body of which I am a member, I may therefore (I trust without any great breach of confidence) state that the reply to the letter from Bengal dated the 19 December 1829 was taken out of the hands of the court by a secret despatch framed at the board, by which, contrary to the opinion of the court, and in opposition to the strong remonstrance of the secret committee, the treaty was censured and the course of policy repeatedly recommended by the home authorities, condemned. My opinions upon the subject were quite in unison with those expressed by your Lordship: but the power was with the board, and the exercise of it, which I regret as much as any man, could not be averted.

When I was placed in the chair in April last, I expected that some progress would be made in parliament towards the settlement of the questions arising out of the approaching termination of the present charter of the Company: but various obstacles have occurred: and the existing administration has had its hands too full of other pressing matters to allow of their yet entering upon so important a matter. It has been my endeavour and the endeavour of the other directors who are also members of the parliamentary committee to let it be distinctly understood that the Company are not parties to the present investigation and that in fact the Company are not before parliament. A mass of evidence has been taken: but it consists of much irrelevant matter; and I do not think that, fairly and impartially considered, the parts

which really bear upon the questions for decision, at all injure the claims of the Company. On the contrary I should say that (unintentionally no doubt) the Company's case has been favourably established.

With best wishes for the continuance of health and strength to your Lordship, and for your return at the close of a successful administration in the enjoyment of those blessings, . . .

My son arrived from China four days ago in good health to the great joy of his family, on whose behalf I repeat my sense of obligation for you and Lady W. Bentinck's kindness to him.

304. *T. H. Maddock to Bentinck*

Lucknow. 14 April 1831
Recd. Simla. 22 April 1831

My Lord,

Your Lordship will have heard of the request made to me by the king on his Majesty's visit to the residency on Sunday last. He was accompanied by the minister, and as soon as we had taken our seats, H.M. said that he had brought his answer to your Lordship's memorandum and that he had a very particular request to make of me. He then put into my hand a paper, a copy of which I sent to Mr. Prinsep, who will have shown it to your Lordship, and begged me to read it. It was in the king's own handwriting which is very illegible, and I therefore made it over to the minister and desired him to read it to me. When he had done so I told him that I had already heard of something of this kind being in agitation, but that happy as I should be to have an opportunity of returning to England and having the honour of conveying H.M.'s letter to the king of England, neither I nor any other servant of the Company could undertake a commission with a pecuniary provision attached to it without first resigning the service. The minister said that he understood that perfectly well, and that if I consented I should be fully secured against any loss by my compliance and should have my present income rendered permanent to me. He then informed me that it was desired that I should not only be the bearer of the king's letter, but that I should continue when in England as a friendly advocate of this state and exert my best endeavours to save the country from resumption and that he anticipated the greatest advantage from my undertaking the commission. I told him that I was aware of no objection to the king's sending an agent with his letter and to transact any other business for him in England, but that the governor-general might perhaps not approve of my consenting to accept such an office. I asked him whether he could not select from among his numerous acquaintances some other gentleman better qualified than myself for such a mission, when he said it was impossible, that I should carry

more weight than anyone else, that from my acquaintance with the state of Oudh and all the circumstances of its present situation I was the only fit person he could select, and that I should be conferring an everlasting favour on the king by agreeing to his proposal. That if, as I professed, I was the king's friend the best proof of friendship would be my compliance with his request to go to England where I might render him most essential service. He then alluded to the king's letter to your Lordship and to the memorandum of the conference on the 20th of January last and said 'They will be forwarded to England and the question will be decided there. We ought to have our own advocate on the spot and I fully understand the immense advantage of having a competent friend there as the bearer of the letter to the king.' He alluded in illustration of his ideas on the subject to some former instances of the same thing being done, and particularly to a commission undertaken by Sir John Macpherson on the part of the nawab of Arcot, whereby he said that country had been saved from assumption by the Company. The king joined the minister in earnestly entreating me to comply with his wishes, and promised if I did so to attend to all my advice and to do whatever I might dictate to reform and amend his administration. I did not conceal that my personal wishes would prompt me to an immediate acceptance of the offer, but I wished to have time for consideration till the next day, when, in order to prevent all misconception or appearance of concealment I proposed to have obtained from the king or minister in writing the full scope of their views and wishes in this extraordinary proposal. This was prevented by the minister being suddenly taken ill, and I have not seen him since till last night, when I paid a visit to the king about sunset, and found the minister sitting with him, emaciated by his sickness, but not so much altered in appearance as I had expected to find him. In our conversation on this occasion a promise was made that the king's wishes would be committed to paper in a day or two or as soon as the minister could attend to business, and I agreed to go home with the king's letter if I obtained your Lordship's sanction to my doing so. The minister however requested me to defer making a reference on the subject for ten or twenty days. I explained to him the impossibility of this and my determination to have no secrecy or concealment from your Lordship in any part of the transaction, as well as the absolute necessity for me to bring a question of so peculiar and delicate a nature as it affects myself and my present situation at this court to issue without delay.

Your Lordship will not require me to inform you how desirous I am to avail myself of this offer if it can be accepted with honour and propriety. After the best consideration which I can give to the subject I see no objection to my doing so, provided I have your Lordship's sanction to my first resigning the Company's service, but I may view a proposal so advantageous to myself with too partial an eye and should therefore have felt anxious for the approbation of my friends and the sanction of your Lordship to a proceeding of so much importance before

I had decided upon it. I have been compelled however to rely upon my own judgment in the assent which I have given to the proposal, and I trust that I am justified in doing so. The minister appears to attach so much importance to the projected mission that if I had declined to undertake it openly he would in all probability have endeavoured to accomplish his object clandestinely through some other channel, though he professes to have determined to entrust the business to no-one but me. Whether any latent desire to get rid of me may have influenced him or not I feel satisfied that after all that had previously passed and the impossibility of any cordiality existing between us for a long time to come my removal will be a real advantage to him, and will probably conduce to the success of his administration and of your Lordship's plans for the government of Oudh. For myself I have long been prepared to leave without regret my present situation and considering the wide difference that exists between my ideas of the proper line of policy to be pursued towards Oudh and your Lordship's views on the same subject I feel that I am not the fittest person to be your Lordship's representative here at this crisis, for, conscientiously as I have endeavoured to conduct myself on all occasions conformably to your Lordship's wishes and instructions, it is impossible that my proceedings should not often have been swayed by the contrary bias of my own mind. It has necessarily been a difficult task for me to pursue a system which my own judgment disapproved, and my public duties have consequently been so irksome and unsatisfactory to me that, even without the inducement now held out to me, I should have solicited permission to resign my office if my private circumstances would have justified me in gratuitously making so great a sacrifice. The fear of offending your Lordship, to whom I am so greatly indebted, by avowing my opposition to your Lordship's policy is the only consideration which gives me any real pain. But your Lordship encouraged me to express my sentiments on a former occasion, and will now I trust pardon me for addressing this difference of opinion as one principal motive with me for accepting the offer now made to me. While I flattered myself that my services might be beneficially directed to the amelioration of this state a sense of public duty would have prompted me to reject the offer. As a public man I have now every inducement to avail myself of it, and your Lordship will do me the justice to allow the weight due to such considerations notwithstanding the advantageous nature of the offer itself and the less liberal construction that might be put on my motives by those who are ignorant of my character.

The request of the king as formally made to me is, your Lordship will observe, confined to the conveyance of a letter to the king of England. This commission I might with your Lordship's permission have executed without resigning the service. But the king's object is that I shall remain in England and look after his interests when your Lordship's report on the state of Oudh comes under consideration. He will require me, or at all events I should consent, to advocate the cause of

this state on no other grounds than I have already done. But I cannot resign the service without an adequate provision for myself and I cannot accept that provision which he offers without a previous resignation. Under these circumstances I have resolved to tender my resignation, and if your Lordship sanctions my undertaking this mission, I trust that I may be permitted to return to Europe without delay and to make over charge of the residency to any person whom your Lordship may order to relieve me.

305. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 14 April 1831
Recd. Simla. 28 April 1831

My dear Lord William,

I am quite of your opinion that the accountant general ought to have known better than to lead us on in borrowing up to the day when we were ready to pay. The reason for it I suppose would be that he was collecting surplus funds for a remittance. And now, having the surplus it is advisable to reduce the debt. We have been borrowing largely since the peace, and I shall be truly glad to see any progress made in reducing debt. I wonder how anyone can like to keep the state in debt, seeing what certain ruin, in a financial view, hangs over our country, from the monstrous debt at home, with regard to which no ministry has yet done its duty, and none is likely to dare to do it. The consequence seems inevitable. I was very sorry when we opened a loan in January 1830. I thought then that we might have gone on without it, but all the financial departments were for it.

We have closed the 4 per cent loan, understanding that your Lordship intended to sanction that measure, although it is not positively authorized in Mr. Prinsep's letter.

306. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 16 April 1831
Recd. Simla. 27 April 1831

My dear Lord William,

I attach more importance to terms in our revenue matters, than they seem to your Lordship to deserve, because in my opinion all our errors, those I mean which have destroyed the rights of the majority of the agricultural community, have proceeded from the use of terms conveying wrong ideas. We could not have made the zamindars of Bengal proprietors, if we had considered that every field had its proprietor, nor could we have allowed whole villages to be sold in the upper provinces

as the property of one man, when every village so sold was most probably in that state of property, in which every field had its distinct owner, as all the lands were the joint property of the landowners. Your Lordship asks what the theory is good for if in practice there is no limit to the demand of the government. But everywhere there is a limit. There is not a spot, I believe, where the government demand is not limited by law, the common law of the land. The acknowledged demand is everywhere too great, but is still fixed and limited; and the advantage of maintaining the rights of the real proprietors is that when we can relax our demand, the benefit will go to the real proprietors, but if we call them under-tenants and so forth, all the benefit will go to the sham proprietors, those who are made proprietors solely by the terms of our regulations. It seems to me that the revenue board in attendance on your Lordship are disposed to recognize as proprietors too easily and without sufficient question an intermediate class, who have no right to that character. The worst part of our regulations is that which ejects proprietors from their lands for arrears of revenue. Any severity of distraint is preferable, but moderation is much better. I think that practically the result would be beneficial to the landowners, if they were acknowledged as such. I do not pretend to make a distinction between landlord and landowner, and do not recollect on what occasion I have done so: but at present perhaps, considering that the government takes what in amount is more the whole rent than a mere tax, one might call the government the land *lord*, without destroying the proprietory right of the land owners. Land *lord* gives one an idea of something higher than land *owner*. A landlord is supposed to have tenants under him: but many a landowner in India cultivates his own fields with his own hands. I do not however mean to argue in favour of any distinction in these terms.

With respect to the raja of Benares, unless he has been restrained by any of our regulations, I should think him entitled, where the village communities are the landowners, to whatever the government would have a right to under the same circumstances, that is to the government share, not to any amount at his pleasure, but to the prescriptive amounts, which must I conclude, be as well known in the Benares districts, as they are universally in other parts of India. He may in my opinion make short settlements, or annual settlements, or claim his right according to the produce without any settlement and I should not conceive him to be bound to follow the course pursued by government, unless it has heretofore been declared, or may hereafter be declared, by law that he must do so.

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307. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 17 April 1831
Recd. Simla. 28 April 1831

My dear Lord William,

I did not understand your first minute, regarding the abolition of the college, as precluding our sending our proposed rules for your sanction, and they had gone before I received your letter forbidding it. Earnest as your Lordship is in condemning them, I am not less so in thinking that they are a great improvement on the college, and that the studies and examinations of that institution were as ill-suited to qualify young men in an useful knowledge of the languages for public service, as if they had been purposely contrived to impede it. That is as ill-suited for their object as any teaching of the languages could be made to be. What is wanted is such a knowledge of the language as will be most useful in public business. Scholarship is not to be given in a few months in any mode of education, and the smattering given by the college was all in a wrong direction. I am quite serious in my opinion that the rules proposed are more to the purpose than the college and that all that is requisite is to insist on qualifications and efficiency: and that the college examination was a very fallacious test: but you are our master, and we shall obey your orders on our last official reference.

308. *Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Bentinck*

Recd. 23 April 1831

After endeavouring inadequately to express my anxiety for an interview—an anxiety which in magnitude equals that of the excellence of your Lordship's character and disposition and the illimitable extent of your acquirements:

I take occasion to communicate to your enlightened understanding, which is the ornament of friendship. Unbounded praise be to the Holy Sree Akalpoorkh Jee, who, through his infinite benevolence, has caused the amber laden zephyrs of friendship to be ever breathing the freshness of happiness upon the roses of the esteem which subsists between these two exalted states: who has caused the perfume of the attar-mingled fragrance of your regard to reach the organs of mutual friendship. The rose garden of amity to be ever in blossom—the odoriferous parterres both of that friendship which is mutually manifested by external ceremonies, and that which is felt in the depths of the heart, to be covered all over with flowers as with a garment—who has caused the lawn of the firm connection, which by mutual stipulations, exist between us to be ever verdant—the rose bud of sympathy to blossom—

and the nosegay of unanimity to be bound up for ever. By whose intercession the clouds of the beneficence of the Deity rain luxuriance upon the fruit trees of concord, and verdure upon the forest of good will—who has caused the field of the relations, which have been for ages established, to be daily extended and improved, and the ladder of alliance yearly to become lengthened so as to approximate to the heaven of perfect union.

From the day that I learnt of your Lordship's intention to visit Hindustan, the Deity, who possesses the secrets of all hearts, knows what happiness the news afforded to my mind, and how anxiously I desired your approach. At this auspicious moment from the rumour of your Lordship's arrival in the vicinity of my dominions, who are the surety for the continuance of the stability of the fabric of alliance so long established between the two states, the cedar of my heart has put forth the spring leaves of happiness in such abundance and beauty as to excite the envy of paradise.

Accordingly, in fulfilment of the obligations of friendship, I have deputed the illustrious officers, Sirdar Hari Singh, my minister Diwan Moti Ram, the centre of the circle of state affairs, and the venerable and philosophic faquir Aziz-ud-din, of noble descent, to be the bearers of some curiosities, and for the purpose of enquiring after the particulars of your Lordship's health, in company with Captain Wade, political assistant at Ludhiana, who is ever exerting himself to cement the hands of reciprocal harmony and mutual good understanding between the two states.

I trust, by the favour of Sree Akalpoorkh Jee, that the above officers will arrive at your Lordship's residence at a propitious moment—such a one as presents itself, where Mooshtersee (Jupiter) and Zohna (Venus) are in conjunction, and that they will communicate to your friendly mind the sentiments of regard and esteem I entertain for your Lordship, and the sincere desire which I cherish for the perpetuity of the relations which exist between the two states.

There can be no doubt that your Lordship's visit to these parts will tend to increase the friendship and good understanding between us to a degree beyond that to which it has ever yet reached, and that the freshness and growth which it shall acquire will present a picture of permanent tranquillity and happiness.

True Translation

E. C. Ravenshaw, Deputy Secretary.

Enclosure

Parwana from Ranjit Singh to his officers visiting the governor-general. (Translation)

17th Bysakh 1888

Some superior wines fit for my own drinking of the kinds noted below may be asked of the governor-general in a quiet way as a testimony of

the friendship and unanimity which subsists between the two Durbars—Five [bottles] of superior mellow savoury, particularly Madeira pleasant of digestion. Three bottles—of other kinds, pleasant and very superior. Two bottles—[*illeg.*].

Also enquire particularly of the governor-general's doctor, and ascertain that there shall on no account be any flesh or decoction of any kind in the wines sent, but that they are of the pure grape. If his Lordship proposes to send more bottles than the number mentioned, you may say that by the blessing of God if his Highness finds the wines agree with him, he will ask for more. But mind the wines must be digestible, and of the pure grape, and of the finest kind and strengthening to the stomach.

309. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 28 April 1831
Recd. at Simla

My dear Lord William,

The accountant general has tempted us with a proposal for the reduction of the interest of our debt next year. His plan at first included an announcement of the payment of a fixed sum. I objected to that as we could not be sure of our ability at the time to fulfil the engagement. His present modified proposal is free from that objection, and is I think worth trying, although I am not so sanguine of success as he seems to be. The scheme will be submitted through the proper official channel. The accountant general has seen Mr. Prinsep's paper, and is quite against an attempt to create a 3 per cent stock, on which subject I entirely agree with the accountant general.

310. *Lord Clare*[1] *to Bentinck*

Malabar Point. 29 April 1831
Recd. Simla. 15 May 1831

I rejoice to hear so good an account of you and Lady William and by the blessing of God I will next December meet you somewhere in Ajmer. I will make a tour in Gujarat in a chaise and pair (our masters in Leadenhall Street early impressed on my mind the propriety of a cheap mode of travelling) where there is still much to be done and I will from thence go on and join you and possibly I shall induce you to

310. [1] Clare, John Fitzgibbon, second earl of, (1792–1851), governor of Bombay, 21 Mar. 1831–17 Mar. 1835. Victor Jacquemont, *Letters from India*, pp. xxviii and 333, describes him vividly: 'An English peer of Irish nationality, the companion and butt of Lord Byron at the University, Italian in appearance and a bit of a dandy . . . who has remained a total stranger to the language of the Indians since his arrival; unaccustomed to affairs and with no natural talent (so it seems to me) for dealing with them; five feet two in height and as thin as I am . . . far more like an Italian butler in a great house than an English lord . . . nobody could seem more of a fribble'.

take Bombay in your way back. I am sorry to tell you we shall lose upwards of two lakhs at Baroda. Everything turns still there and I must say I think a great deal of the past and present causes of complaint may be fairly laid to the charge of the resident. Heaven forbid that I should plunge into the abyss of the Malcolm papers respecting the Gaikwar state that has been somehow or other settled, and I trust Sir John's arrangements will turn out well, but what will the sovereign of the Indies, what will you say when you hear of this enormous deficit and of the causes of it? It seems the paymaster of the Gaikwar forces has been long in the habit of drawing on the Baroda money on account to pay the troops. For the sums so received he passed his receipts and at the close of the year gave a receipt in full receiving the balance due to him. Mr. Williams who is the most indolent and inefficient of public officers instead of cancelling the receipts on account of the paymaster makes a double entry against him and charges him for the monies so paid as well as the entire sums due to him for the troops. The natives employed in the treasury finding this out, and knowing that he had only been paid once help themselves to the remainder and this has been going on since 1824 and never found out by the resident nor what is more extraordinary by the accountant general here so that the public will lose two lakhs 15,000 R. I do not believe we shall recover a shilling of it. I have ordered all the native officers implicated in the frauds to be suspended from their functions. Mr. Williams ought to have done so at once and he is called upon, if he can, and I see no reason why the affairs of the public are to be put in jeopardy in consequence either of his indolence or incapacity. I really do not know what to do. I have no confidence in Mr. Williams and who can say what further losses may not be found out? He is placed in the most important situation under this government and I believe him to be unfit to discharge the duties of it either with credit to himself or with satisfaction to the public. I am sure you are right generally speaking in what you say of our European staff but in truth Henry [Vynon] is an irreparable loss to me. He was devoted to me had excellent abilities and great powers of making himself useful, but God's will be done. All is for the best. This climate would never have suited him. My private secretary George Upton is the comfort of my life, he likes me, likes his business and the country and gives general satisfaction. For military secretary I have Major Powell who was long with poor Sir Sidney Beckwith and is well acquainted with all his views respecting the Indian and king's armies or military and indeed on all subjects he is of great use to me. People here were frightened when I appointed him because he ruled Sir Sidney and they thought he would rule me but they now see they are mistaken. Powell is too sensible a man to wish to do so. I have got Hamilton a brother of Lord Melville's private secretary and nearr elation of Birnings for A.D.C. and when George [Hyam] has served a year with his regiment he shall be his colleague. I may say he was dear Lady Bath's legacy to me on her deathbed and both you and Lady William will be glad to hear that he is going on very well. There is a vacancy

now in the Queen's and I do hope Lord Dalhousie will appoint him to fill the vacancy. I have already told you how much I want one or two who can speak the language and from my frequent intercourse with the natives I find it may be more and more necessary, all formal business is carried on between them and me thro' the Persian secretary. I find Mr. Bax of great use for he knows all that was going on at Calcutta and both Mr. Norris and Mr. Williamson are able and intelligent men particularly our chief secretary about four days in the week enter the secretariat in turn with their boxes and I have occasionally the amusement of the secretaries. I get on very well, how I shall get on when left to myself I know not. I want to get rid of one or two expensive committees which like all committees here and in England make long reports about [? nothing] and receive large salaries for doing nothing. But I see I shall have a fight about one of them for the head of it likes Bombay better than Broach where he has a judicial appointment of R. 2500 a month the duties of which are now performed for him for R. 300, and to which he shall go or I will send some one else. The appointment of this committee was I think a job to give Mr. Crawford a large salary who had nothing but as Mr. Roman has permanently provided for him he must go to attend his business. There would not for a moment be a hesitation in the cabinet in England on such a subject and I cannot conceive why there shall be in council here. I have sent a letter with our reasons for appointing a 5th superintending surgeon temporarily. I fancy this is unusual but I was anxious that you should be aware of the necessity of the measure. Of course if you annul it a prompt and ready obedience will be paid to your orders. But I do not think you will. The want of a 5th surgeon has been long felt and poor Sir Sidney had intended carrying the measure. It is really required for the army in general and in particular for the judicial part of it but I had referred the justice to the court. I have also sent you my case. And if you think I have dealt out a hard measure to my predecessor remember that feeling bitterly I have expressed myself strongly and that I owe to him a residence in the deserts of Egypt and Arabia of 12 weeks and what is worse than all, he has deprived me of the services of poor dear Henry [Vynon]. I do not ask you to read my statement for it is a long one, but if you do, bear in mind what I say. When I have time to do any thing I will go over with Bax the different subjects in the report from Calcutta of which no notice has been taken by my predecessor and I will see if all or most of your recommendations cannot be attended to. I verily believe Sir John's reductions were considerable and not [*illeg.*] as they are by many supposed to be. His geese you know are always swans and the amount of them will not be as great as he anticipated. Still the annual saving consequent upon his arrangements will be no trifling sum. He has left many supernumeraries in the revenue department to be provided for and since I have been here we have got rid of two and in a short time I hope to get them all absorbed. But we shall be ruined if they go on sending us out more writers every year from

England. I find the business very heavy and I have not time to open a book. The miserable details which come before me drive me mad. Surely government might be relieved from the minutes of the administration which occupies all my time and prevents us from paying attention to subjects of real interest and importance. Major Stock is here but no vessel will sail for the Gulf before the 20th of May. Surely if he regards his health, I was going to say his life, he had better wait until November and go with Major Stewart. The heat in the Gulf in the month of July August and September is intolerable. I did not hear a word of Ashby's appointment to Madras nor do I now think it likely. But is Lushington going home? I do not believe Wilmot Horton would dislike coming to India. I knew before I left England he told me this place would have suited him and in a year or so if his friends remain in office and he continues of the same mind, it would not surprise me to hear of his appointment to Madras. I believe I mentioned in my first letter to you that Ellenborough wrote to me on the 4th of October saying he had forwarded to me to Egypt a despatch containing Sir Edward Barnes' appointment as provisional successor to Lord Dalhousie in the event of his illness, being obliged to leave India from bad health, and that I did not receive the despatch. I hear tho' a despatch has reached India. The weather is getting hot here. I manage to keep the thermometer at 88 and 89. It is now eight o'clock in the morning, 85. This situation may be a little cooler than Parel but a very little. All the enormous sums expended by Sir John on the government houses are I think thrown away. I saw the timbers of Parel roof; they are quite rotten and the necessary repairs this year to that House will cost R. 12,000.

Goodbye dear Lord William: this is a sad lengthy prose but a long letter is the vice of India.

311. *Bentinck to Charles Grant*[1]

Simla. 3 May 1831

I cannot describe the joy which your appointment to the board of control has given me. This intelligence has reached us via Egypt, and I hope to have its early confirmation by the China ships. From my earliest arrival sinister reports respecting my own position have been constantly coming from quarters where I had every reason to rely upon the good will and the correct information. I was told that I was the only one of Canning's friends still remaining in office, and that a good

311. [1] Grant, Charles, Baron Glenelg, 1778–1866. President of the board of control, 22 Nov. 1830–15 Dec. 1834. *D.N.B.* Charles Grant was the eldest son of the famous former director of the same name. He had a reputation for brilliance and as a minister for indolence. He certainly found it difficult to take decisions. As a 'Canningite' he was broadly in sympathy with Bentinck in matters of social and economic policy, although he was much more sensitive than Bentinck to the pressures of the Christian missionaries.

Bentinck saw the change of Grant for Ellenborough as a change for the better generally and for himself personally. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 274–98.

occasion for my removal would be hailed with delight. Every successive arrival has brought me the same friendly caution to observe the utmost care and circumspection. That there has been a strong appearance at least of a readiness to censure and corresponding tardiness to support is certain; but this may have been deserved. Without however being able to adduce any positive or tangible proof of hostility, I have always *felt* that a friendly spirit did not exist towards me. Be assured that I never for a moment gave heed to these dark [*illeg.*]. I have kept steadily on my way, well knowing that were I so disposed, no management of mine could avert the blow from the all-powerful arm, by which it was to be struck: and having moreover learnt this lesson from the experience of a similar misfortune, that there is no consolation but the consciousness of having acted rightly. Yet sailing as I am upon a sea, recently deeply troubled, and now though smooth and calm, containing under its surface much bad and angry feeling and a great deal that is opposed to good government, it is very satisfactory to me to feel, that I have under my toe a friendly post of refuge, where I am sure of a kind and generous reception. I shall say no more at present. Our wishes to promote to the utmost the happiness of this great Indian population are I know the same as I hope also are our opinions that in proportion as the resources of India are fostered, encouraged and brought forward, so will Great Britain profit by the connection, and that it is a policy as miserable as it is false, to fancy, that the interests of the latter can be promoted by a sacrifice of those of the former as has been too often the case.

You have a dreadful mass of papers to wade through, but you are lucky in having at your command the best possible guide in Holt Mackenzie, who probably has more knowledge of Indian affairs with all their most minute details than any other man in the east. I regret his loss exceedingly. Besides being one of the best, he is also one of the pleasantest men of business I have ever had to do with.

Lady William is very well and sends her best regards. I need not say, that she partakes in all my happiness and comfort in your appointment. Her health is very good. I have had some rude attacks of fever in Calcutta, but on the march I have much recovered. and I hope this fine climate will enable us to go on. I propose leaving the hills as soon as the hot winds subside. I mean to go to central India, Ajmer being the extent of my journey, passing through Jaipur, which has been disturbed but is likely to settle into a better government.

312. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private. Copy

Simla. 4 May 1831

My dear Sir,

It is very long since I have either heard from you or written to you. Our last direct ship left England on the 20th October and the only

infrequent intelligence has been brought us via Egypt by Lord Clare, down to the 11th December. The events both in England and in Europe are indeed surprising. I shall be much mistaken if the appointment of C. Grant to the board of control does not prove a most happy one. The question of trade as connected with the E.I. Company must be decided by the general feeling of the country; and is in my judgment far beyond the control or dictation of any minister. But in every other respect C. Grant will be I should think the staunch advocate for the agency of the Company in the government of India. All his old prepossessions, his reverence for his father's name and appearances, his earliest political feelings and interests must incline him to this view of the question. He is an able and enlightened man: and in his hands the delicate process of control will never have the character of a constant irritating interference in matters of trifling importance, much less of haughty dictation. I trust the court and the board will return to their original places, as intended by the legislature, and which I am satisfied was the most wholesome state of things. In the India House and its innumerable connections with the east, can *alone* be found a perfect acquaintance with passing Indian affairs, and in the president of the board of control, often a stranger to India, there must necessarily be less of undue bias whether from party or connections.

My intention was not to descant on these matters, but to inform you that no new appointment to Persia will take place till September, when if no nomination shall be made in the meantime at home, Major Stewart will proceed to Persia. This will leave your son for a very considerable period in charge, and from what I see of his proceedings, I should think the government will not be dissatisfied with the delegation to him of this important charge. The desire of conferring this appointment upon two such distinguished men as Messrs. Elphinstone and Jenkins will I hope justify me in your opinion that the choice, if made in India, should fall upon one of the most able of our political officers. I flatter myself that the arrangement was under all circumstances the best that could have been made for your son's interests.

I had hoped to have announced to you the appointment of your son, the brigade major at Meerut, to the command of a regiment of local horse which he had accepted. The commanding officer had taken sick leave to the presidency with the intention of going on furlough to Europe. He has now announced his change of intention. Whether this arises from his having heard that the officer appointed by the commander-in-chief as his temporary successor, with whom there was probably some pecuniary understanding, would not succeed him permanently, or whether he thinks to induce your son to some such arrangement, I do not know: I have however taken means for defeating these plans if possible. Your son is an able officer and generally considered a *good fellow* but I hear he is a little idle. If however he takes this appointment or any other from me, as I hope may be the case, I shall take the liberty of giving him a lecture upon this point.

313. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 6 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 12 September 1831

. . . Ram Mohan Roy has not been well. I have left my card and been favoured with your Lordship's letter. I meet him tomorrow at the chairman's for dinner and he has intimated his intention of calling on me soon. He is quite a lion at the west end of the town. I believe his views entirely correspond with what your Lordship has written about him, and altho' he has fallen in some measure into Mr. Crawford's hands I do not think he will imbibe much of his principle. . . .

314. *Lt. General Sir S. F. Whittingham to Bentinck*

Mussooree. 6 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 11 May 1831

My dear Lord,

I received your letter of the 28th April when I was on the point of quitting Meerut which prevented my answering it immediately. I left Meerut on the evening of the 2nd and arrived here on the evening of the 4th. Many thanks for your interesting account of the state and organization of Ranjit Singh's forces. You must indeed excuse my saying, what I feel to be most true, that you do certainly possess the most close and well directed spirit of investigation I ever met with. A few days have made you acquainted with the whole of Ranjit's system, and a few days' experiments will make you well acquainted with *the real state* of the Bengal artillery, as your Lordship will see by the enclosed extracts of their first days' proceedings at Meerut.

I am not surprised that Ranjit Singh should have abandoned the lance for the sabre, because we are the model of perfection to which the natives look, and our having only one regiment of lancers, and the others armed with sabres, would have been quite sufficient to induce him to adopt the same system; Jaipure is another reason which is quite decisive; from the moment Runjeet determined to form a certain portion of his cavalry to man in line, at close order, he must have felt all the inconvenience using lance the natives always use, and which is quite unfit for close action. The lance in the hands of light troops is a weapon of little importance, and even in skirmishing, the sabre, the carbine, and the pistol, will be found to have the advantage; but when the Polish lance, such as our lancers use, is employed in line, by able-bodied men mounted on powerful horses, the shock is irresistible.

The intensity of force of which this arm is susceptible, can only be

conceived by those who have witnessed the effects of a charge of the best Polish lancers; but in the east the advantage of the lance, *in line*, is still greater, inasmuch as it is the only weapon capable of penetrating the quilted jacket with which the natives are clothed, and thereby inducing our native cavalry of the line to give up the abuse of the pistol.

I do still however hope that your Lordship will permit the experiment to be tried with a brigade of two native regiments and the 16th Lancers, and when the day of trial comes, I would most willingly stake my slender reputation upon the brilliancy of the result.

I am quite happy to see that Colonel Morison's ideas correspond with mine as to the quantum of the horse artillery on the Bengal establishment! Napoleon considered 20,000 cavalry, with 120 pieces of horse artillery, as capable of deciding the fate of any battle; and altho' this theory was not justified at Waterloo, it only failed from the unheard of gallantry of the British troops. Your Lordship, even on our present peace establishment, could bring 10,000 sabres into the field; a trifling augmentation per regiment, would make the numbers of our cavalry and horse artillery, exactly in the relative proportions established by Napoleon, viz: 12,000 sabres, supported by 72 pieces of horse artillery....

315. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private

Simla. 7 May 1831

My dear Sir,

The court will have before them two separate propositions, though forming two parts of the same minute, for the better and more efficient organization of the military board at this presidency, and for the making and maintaining the roads and communications between Calcutta and the provinces, as well as between the provinces themselves; as also for promoting other internal improvements. I will merely observe that the almost entire neglect in which the sources of wealth, convenience and civilization have been so long left, is a positive scandal and disgrace to our government. But to do any good with such funds as the court may be pleased to devote to those purposes, it is necessary that their application should be systematically conducted under an efficient superintendence. It is with this view that I have so strongly recommended, as indeed for the satisfactory execution of all the other very important duties assigned to it, that the board shall be composed of able and scientific individuals whose whole time and attention shall be exclusively given to this particular business. A great deal may be made of the resources of India, but at present the consideration and direction of means calculated to draw them forth, is nobody's especial business and care. To effect this, to put things in regular train, and to get rid of the desultory and imperfect manner, in which all works hitherto have been in great measure conducted, is the great object I have in view, and I

beg to recommend my propositions to your favourable consideration. As country improvements have been in England a favourite pursuit of mine, it would gratify me, if, before I left India, I could have the opportunity of putting these measures in train. Experience as well as inclination, and the possession of more local knowledge, than can generally belong to the individual filling my situation, give me some advantage. Such improvements and measures have not the éclat of victories as great political arrangements, but still they have no inconsiderable influence upon the happiness and prospects of mankind; and such I honestly confess it to be my ambition to promote. I enclose a letter from Lt. Col. Craigie one of the members of the military board, giving some account of the past and present condition of the roads, which I should feel obliged by being put into the hands of the secretary, who may be required to report on these propositions.

An early decision would greatly oblige me.

316. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 7 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 19 May 1831

My dear Lord William,

There must be something in the air of Lucknow most dangerous to the constitution of honesty. The splendid bait must have dazzled Mr. Maddock's senses and turned his brain. He wrote to me on the subject, the first communication that I ever received from him. I was astonished but confined myself, in replying, to the anticipation of your Lordship's refusal of your sanction, and the expression of my own opinion that such a scheme could not be countenanced, giving him credit at the same time for the integrity of his motives, and treating his plan as if it were merely, as concerning himself, one for quitting the Company's service and entering that of the king of Oudh. By what process of reasoning he can have persuaded himself, that he can honourably and fairly have secured to him by the king of Oudh an income for life equal to his salary as resident, it is impossible to conceive and it is only left to suppose that he has been dazzled out of his senses. I am sorry that Col. Gardner figures in this business. He has always had the reputation of an intriguer; but I have wished to think well of him, on account of services which he once rendered, and which I have thought undervalued. What a consummate spider the hakim must be. The whole contrivance on his part has probably been with a view to effect Maddock's ruin. We have despatches in all departments from England, which will of course be forwarded. There is a mischievous one from the secret committee, proposing to get territory from the Rajput states in lieu of tribute.

317. *Bentinck to Charles Grant.* Private

Simla. 8 May 1831

You will have learnt all that has passed respecting the appointment of an envoy to Persia as well as of an officer to discipline the troops of the king of Persia after the European fashion.

Lord Ellenborough having communicated to me the decision come to by the court and the board of control (Messrs. Elphinstone and Jenkins having declined the appointment of envoy) to leave the nomination to the supreme government, I have, as I intimated I should if the nomination was left with me, offered it to Major Stewart one of the best of our political officers, by whom it has been accepted.

My letter to Lord Ellenborough signifying my intentions of not filling the office of envoy, until I might learn the pleasure of the king's government, had not been received. But as the question anticipated by me had actually occurred, and been decided upon the principle of leaving this, like all other appointments filled by officers in the Company's service in India to the local government, I have come to the conclusion, that my letter will make no change in this decision. Major Stewart however will not leave Hyderabad till September when the hot season in India will have abated, and a change of the monsoon in the Gulf will enable him to reach his destination, and in the meantime, an answer to my letter, if any changes should have been made, will probably arrive.

It seems more probably, that the officer to command the Persian troops will have been appointed at home. Major Stock, the son of a former bishop of Killaloe has been ordered to proceed to Persia to take the command. He will of course return, as he has been directed to do, upon being relieved from England. He is an old officer and a very gentlemanlike man and will I think do credit to the appointment. It was merely a guess of mine, founded on the importance attached by the preceding government to the Persian mission, that they might have a wish to reserve to themselves the appointment of the envoy. But, should such reservation be hereafter intended, it would be well, that it were previously made known to us, both to save to the individuals concerned the extreme inconvenience of such long journeys, and to the state, the unnecessary expense of a double appointment. I certainly wish and think that the Persian mission should be exclusively under the orders of the king's government. The communication between Persia and England occupies about half the time of that with India, and there is always the risk of our views and orders being at variance with those of the home authorities.

I will take another opportunity of writing on Persian politics.

318. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 9 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 21 May 1831

My dear Lord William,

I have received your packet of the 27th inst. containing your Lordship's admirable reply to Mr. Maddock. It makes me ashamed of the tame view that I took of the subject in stating any objections to his scheme. It will astound him, and I should think drive away the delusion which must have influenced him.

The physician who was one of the deputation from Ranjit Singh, if his name was Aziz-ud-din, was the person most employed in negotiation with me during my mission to Lahore in 1808/9, and is certainly a very clever man. He was then and has been ever since much consulted and employed by his master, and was then and is probably still the most acute fellow at the court. He had two brothers one of whom, Imam-ud-din, was always stationed in my camp during the mission. A shrewd knowing man also: Ranjit Singh has shewn great ability in his use of the talents of others of all religions. Several of his ministers have been Mahomedans. His family of physicians are so.

P.S. A note just received from Mr. [?Mintons] 'Have you heard the strange story about Maddock? My people tell me he is to be removed'. They seem to have quick intelligence.

319. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private

Simla. 11 May 1831

My dear Sir,

My distance for some months past from the presidency has put it out of my power, to give you as chairman, that early report of current events which it had been my custom to do. My tour has furnished nothing particularly satisfactory. The proceedings of government will in due course exhibit various occasions on which I have had cause of displeasure with different functionaries: and the same record in the upper provinces has greatly disappointed those expectations of efficiency and advancement, which had been so long entertained. Twenty-eight years have passed since we obtained possession of the greater part of the ceded and conquered provinces. Ten years were then assigned as the term when all the information required for a permanent settlement was considered practicable to be obtained: and here we are, having made but miserable progress in this work, and retarding by our unlucky arrangements the general prosperity of the country. All that I have seen has convinced me more and more of the justness of an opinion

I ventured before to give, without much credit, I believe, being given to it, but now confirmed by the unanimous opinions both of the civil finance committee and of the members of government, that a fixed government at Calcutta is utterly inadequate alone to control and superintend the administration of these upper provinces.

In my letter of the 30 December to Mr. Astell I communicated to him some remarks of disrespect evinced towards me by some young officers of the 4th Cavalry, and of the satisfactory termination of that affair.

In my subsequent visits to the principal stations of Cawnpore and Meerut, tho' nothing unpleasant took place publicly, or rather came officially under my notice yet the Company's officers availed themselves of an occasion which happened to offer, to show as much dissatisfaction with me, as they dared. The occasion was this. At Cawnpore Maj. Gen. Sleigh commands. Lord Dalhousie was to arrive at that station about ten days after my departure. It was the wish of the [? Company's] and the king's officers that a station ball should be given both to Lady Dalhousie and Lady William Bentinck. The Company's officers with whom the proposal to show this mark of attention to Lady D. has arisen, objected to the joint measure as proposed by the king's officers. I knew nothing of these proceedings till I had left Cawnpore. Nor was Lord Dalhousie aware of the facts, till after the ball given to Lady D. He was told there by Maj. Gen. Sleigh who also informed him, that this was the reason why he had declined to attend the ball. Neither he nor any of the officers of the 11th Dragoons subscribed to the entertainment. Lord Dalhousie approved of Gen. Sleigh's conduct.

At Meerut I arrived two days after Lord Dalhousie's departure. The same question and the same discussion had arisen there with this difference that all the superior officers, Sir S. F. Whittingham commanding the [*illeg.*], Brigadiers Brown [*illeg.*] and [*illeg.*] of the Kings', together with Col. Arnold commanding 16th Lancers and Major Hay commanding a Company's regt., were for both balls, upon the ground, that the exception could only be considered as an intended slight upon the governor-general.

I was very sorry that the question had been entertained at all. It is not customary for a governor-general to receive invitations. There was nothing to find fault with in a military cantonment giving a dinner or a ball to a commander-in-chief only. The puzzling part of the question was the notoriety of the discussion, and the construction put by the superior officers upon the intention of the inferior officers, who had decided the question. Before I came to Meerut, I had heard all that had passed. Lord D. accepted the invitation. Sir S. F. W. for the same reason as Gen. Sleigh declined attending. Lord D. did not know what had passed, till he had accepted the invitation. Otherwise I believe he would not have attended. It is odd enough, that having been previously aware of the transactions at Cawnpore, he had not had the curiosity to ask, if any thing of the same sort was not passing at Meerut. He ought to have done so, and being informed of the fact, he ought, even at the late

hour, when he was apprised of it, to have declined being in any way a party to a mark of disrespect being intended to the chief authority on any ground whatever, but more especially on that of the old half-batta order. However there is this excuse in the inferior state of his health and in the want of energy and debility of mind and body, which this has occasioned. I did not like to be blind and deaf to what every body else had seen and heard, neither did I like to bend to this spirit of insubordination. But after much reflection I came to the conclusion that the best plan was to treat the whole transaction as unworthy of notice. My principal reason was, that it was impossible for me to do otherwise without [? involving] myself, with the commander-in-chief, and producing an evil and infinitely worse effect to the public service. I therefore acted as if nothing had happened, and entertained the whole station as is customary upon such occasions. I however thought it proper for the sake of good order, to make known to Brigadier Brown, commanding the horse artillery, an excellent right-headed man, my opinion of the excessive silliness as well as impropriety of such conduct: that such proceedings could not be kept secret: that men [alarmed] enough to act in this manner would be the loudest to proclaim their absurdity; and should these acts reach the ears of the home authorities and particularly of the D. of Wellington, was their cause so much injured by the indiscreet [movements] likely to be improved by it? That I stated this merely from good will to the army, and from no feeling of displeasure, for, as far as I was personally concerned I should treat the occurrence with perfect disregard. I certainly have never wished to have the command of the army. The civil business of the government is ample occupation for any governor-general's time, but devolving as has in great part on my shoulders, not only the military business of the army, but the support of good order and discipline, I have often regretted the want of power, which the authority of commander-in-chief could alone give me.

Mr. Walter Ewer was during these proceedings at Meerut. He was the commissioner and principal court officer in that division. At all the stations and in every new district I have always assembled the board of revenue, and have myself presided at such meetings, to enquire into the state of the revenue settlements and by mutual interchange of opinions to ascertain and if possible to remove the obstacles, which have hitherto retarded their progress. I was greatly provoked at the refusal of the commissioner to attend, alleging the most flimsy possible pretexts, notwithstanding both by my private secretary and by myself personally, I strongly remonstrated against this act of contumacy. I believe he was afraid, that this meeting would expose his ignorance. This gentleman is like many others in the upper provinces beyond all control, following no will but their own, full at the same time of their own prodigious importance. There is too little subordination in the civil service. I am sure I shall be supported by the court in my endeavours to improve this defect in our administration.

Since I have been here, a deputation of compliment has waited upon me from Ranjit Singh. Nothing was omitted in the value of the presents, or the high character of the chiefs civil and military, and in the splendour of the array, to give consequence and distinction to the mission. I received them with corresponding feelings and sent them away much pleased with their treatment. It is impossible for us to have a better intermediate power. Ranjit Singh is a most able man; thoroughly understanding the superiority of our power; has perfect confidence in our pacific and honourable intention towards him and neglects no opportunity of obtaining our good will. The secretary to government, Mr. Prinsep, will after the hot winds be deputed with the return mission. I shall take the opportunity of considering the disposition of Ranjit Singh to discuss with us, in opening a free navigation up the Indus, according to the spirit of the instructions recently rec'd from the secret committee. The amirs of Hyderabad are the only intervening power: and their unfriendly and disrespectful conduct with regard to the present of horses sent by the king to Ranjit Singh gives us a fair opportunity to demand that the interruption shall not again take place. They can make no resistance to the united demands of our own government and to that of the Lahore chief. The countries west of the Indus are now principally supplied with Russian manufactures. We have lately obtained very correct information upon these points, which will shortly be laid before the secret committee.

I am glad to be able to make a favourable report of the present tranquil state of the whole of upper India.

P.S. It is a curious fact that all the gold coins presented to me by the different chiefs and officers composing Ranjit's mission were Dutch tequins said to be coined in Russia.

Enclosure in the above

Copy of letter to Mr. Grant transmitting copy of the preceding letter to him. Confidential

Simla. 11 May 1831

Since the time of the general discontent which prevailed throughout the Company's army respecting the half-batta order, I have been careful in repeating any instances of insubordination or disrespect to my authority to the chairman, principally to enable him to counter the exaggerated reports of such occurrences. You will read in the enclosed copy of my last letter to him, signs of the continuance of an improper spirit. I shall have occasion some time hence to enter into the whole question of the Company's army, which requires much to restore it to a right and proper feeling. We have been unlucky in our commanders-in-chief—Lord Combermere did nothing. He was a lazy minded, good natured man, extremely averse to the trouble of thinking, and left all his business to the conduct of others. His intentions were good and his judgment correct, when a question was plainly brought before him.

Lord Dalhousie has been inefficient from ill health ever since he has been here. Both commanders-in-chief have been in the hands of the adjutant general Col. Fagan, a clever man, and good man of business. But having had the wish, from pecuniary embarrassment, to become the delegate of the army to England, to represent their grievances to the home authorities, and to the public eventually if disappointed in the appeal to the former, he, who from his official situation ought to have discouraged all the clamour, was the first to encourage it. His regard was to have been the payment of all his debts and a guarantee against the loss which he suffered from being deprived of his commission, if so rewarded by the displeasure of the authorities in England. I prevented this mission and I regret that I did not remove him from his office. But here again I must have come into painful and very objectionable collision with the principal military authority. Lord Dalhousie will I think and hope go home in the next cold season. He is very inferior, is in bad spirits, discontented with the climate and very irritable. His son, who is a very fine young man, has been severely indisposed for the last ten months. He has lost an eye and his constitution has very much suffered. He is better at present, but will certainly return to England next cold season. I should think his father will not stay behind. Perhaps Sir E. Barnes was the best provisional appointment close at hand. To me he is a stranger but I hear from the best authority that he is much addicted to gambling, a vice requiring in this army the strong hand of power to put down, rather than the encouragement of high example. The army requires in its chief a strong firm hand and who above all will co-operate cordially with the government.

320. *R. Shortreed to Bentinck*

Ahmadnagar. 18 May 1831
Recd. 13 June 1831

My Lord,

Availing myself of the privilege conferred by your Lordship, I have now the honour to address your Lordship on a subject which has long appeared to me to involve in a considerable degree the welfare of the country under your Lordship's government. I mean those sums given to the numerous establishments of brahmins in various parts of the country for the support of Hinduism.

In the course of my duties as a surveyor, I have had frequent opportunities of coming in close contact with natives of all classes, and have often had occasion to remark the contrast between the disaffection of these brahmins to the British rule, and the contentment of the generality of the other classes: and the result of my own observation, as well as that of others with whom I have spoken on the subject, is that there is little or no prospect of any improvement in this respect, so long as these

establishments continue to receive as at present support from government. At first sight, these sums might be expected to have the effect of attaching those who receive them to our government, but a closer enquiry will I think convince us that no such attachment can be produced by this means; for as these establishments originated with the native governments, the brahmins do not consider themselves indebted to the British for maintaining them, but generally consider the money thus given them as pay for work done—so that whatever thanks may be due certainly none are rendered for it. Instead of gratitude, they look on the British rule as having deprived them of the chief part of the influence which they possessed under the native governments; and as they in general value this influence even more than money, not only for its own sake, but as a means of obtaining their wealth, they bear in their hearts a deep-rooted enmity to our rule. The skill with which they conceal their real feelings from those whose situations give them anything to expect of fear is well known: they are however less careful before those whose situations they consider as of less importance and such has been my case.

The continuance of these establishments seems thus to have a tendency to perpetuate a race of lazy, disaffected brahmins who use every means in their power to enrich themselves at the expense of their neighbours and they never omit to mention the money they receive from government as in some measure authorizing their demands. The effect of this is, I believe, the general impoverishment of the adjacent villages not only by their direct exactions, but also by withdrawing many persons of any wealth from the neighbourhood to reside at these places of pilgrimage: besides those multitudes who come thither from every part of India—to the injury of their health, morals and property.

It seems therefore desirable both in a political and moral point of view to abolish these establishments as far as possible. The only mode, perhaps, under all circumstances in which government could interfere seems to be by withdrawing those sums contributed to their support. This would deprive them of the opportunity they have at present of representing our government as not merely tolerating but directly encouraging, and paying the expenses of, idolatry. To this measure however there is an obstacle in the promise to continue such establishments on the same footing as under their former rulers. Having been established at the pleasure of the former rulers they might surely have been revoked when they pleased. It is however generally understood by Europeans that our promise includes something more than this, but the subject has seldom I believe been fully considered by them. A change in the religion of the former government or in that of the majority of the people, would have been attended by a great change in the constitution, or probably by the total abolition, of these establishments. But this concerns the abstract merits of the question, which I have no intention to discuss in a communication of this nature to your Lordship.

If your Lordship should consider these establishments to be a

political evil, I would respectfully beg leave to suggest the following plan for their gradual abolition, which I conceive may be adopted without infringing the rights of anyone concerned. If all the present incumbents were registered, and the amount now received by each continued to him for life, then by admitting no one to fill the vacancies as they occurred, the system would come to a natural end with the lives of the present generation and thus a very large sum would in a few years be saved to government.

I have no means of estimating the probable amount to be saved by this measure. Those which I have seen in the Deccan, and in the Konkan, cost government upwards of 50,000 rupees a year—besides many others in different parts of the country, which I have not had an opportunity of seeing. In a general way, the saving would amount to the revenue of several parganas which are now entirely lost to government.

This is a measure which would no doubt be very much disliked by the brahmins. But as those personally concerned would not be affected by it, they could have no just cause of complaint: and I have no hesitation in avowing my belief that their concealed hatred or outward influence, would not in that case be more prejudicial to the interests of the British government than they are at present.

321. *Major Stewart to Bentinck.* Private

Hyderabad. 19 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 7 June 1831

My Lord,

I was just about to report officially my proceedings in regard to the adjustment of the affairs of the late firm of W. Palmer & Co. when I received your Lordship's letter of the 27th ultimo. Referring your Lordship for details to the report which will be despatched tomorrow or next day, I may here merely state that I consider the proposed plan of a panchayat to have failed. I am moreover of opinion that Chandu Lal will come to no settlement with the late firm unless he is positively directed to do so by a power competent to enforce that order. With respect to the other debtors of the firm Chandu Lal has with respect to most of them the power to oblige them to come to a settlement but as Mr. Dighton has observed 'the malik has been so frequently brought forward both by the other debtors and by the minister as a plea for not liquidating the demands of the late firm that Messrs. W. Palmer & Co. have now almost ceased to make their claims finding it useless to do so until some final arrangement be concluded with Munir-ul-Malik'. So far therefore are the affairs of the firm from being in such a state of adjustment as to be little affected by the feelings and views of the

resident here, that I must candidly admit that they are almost precisely in the same state as when I first arrived here. If therefore at that time your Lordship considered that the prepossession of the resident could be construed to operate unfavourably on any questions that might arise, I conceive that they might still be so construed. I believe Mr. Martin to be an honourable and an upright man, and that he would carry strictly into effect the orders of government in regard to all matters here, but that he would be *supposed* to have prejudices in regard to the question of Palmer's house there cannot be a doubt, and his reappointment here under these circumstances would I think be considered both by Europeans and natives as unfavourable to the house. However conscientiously he might discharge his duties here there would still be the *supposition* that he was [antagonistic] to the firm.

Here perhaps I ought to close this letter, but presuming on your Lordship's indulgence I will go a little further, and venture to suggest that on my departure the charge of this residency, for a time at least, should be left in the hands of my assistant, Capt. Ross. I have already taken the liberty to mention his name to your Lordship. He appears to me to possess a sound judgment with temper and discretion, and I feel very confident that he would give satisfaction to your Lordship. In regard to the vexatious business of the firm of W. Palmer & Co. he appears to take the same impartial and unbiassed view of that question which I trust I have done, and it may be hoped that if more specific orders arrive soon from home, this protracted dispute may be terminated under his auspices, when your Lordship would be relieved from the embarrassment that now attends the selection of a resident for this place. There would then indeed be no objections whatever to Mr. Martin's return.

As I formerly stated my hope that your Lordship would not fill up the appointment of resident until it was known whether or not any one would be appointed to Persia from home, I trust this circumstance will not be supposed to have influenced me in recommending this plan, which I conscientiously think is for the good of the public service. I own at the same time that I shall be very glad if this residency is kept open for a short time for me to fall back upon, in the event of any circumstances occurring that may render that necessary.

Should your Lordship think fit to nominate Capt. Ross acting resident on my departure I would beg leave respectfully to suggest that he should receive while so acting a consolidated allowance of 2500 Rs. per mensem. This is more than is usually drawn by an assistant in charge, but it is not more than what I conceive an officer of Capt. Ross's standing and services merits, and it is certainly not more than is requisite to enable him to keep up the respectable appearance which he must maintain here.

I have taken a great liberty with your Lordship in making this suggestion, but your kindness to me has emboldened me to give my sentiments in this unreserved manner.

322. *British policy towards Persia.* Secret committee to Bentinck

East India House, London. 20 May 1831
Recd. 21 October 1831

Para 1. We have received from Captain Campbell copies of his letters to your chief secretary dated the 15th and 29th of August, 30th September, 27th November, and 28th December 1830.

2. These letters give a lamentable view of the state of Persia. In addition to its other calamities, that country appears on the eve of a civil war. Captain Campbell has been placed in circumstances of difficulty and delicacy and he has encountered them with a judgment and self possession which do him honour.

3. It is important, especially in the present crisis, to bear in mind the nature of the relations that subsist between this country and Persia. It is with the Persian sovereign as the supreme authority of the Persian state that our treaties have been made, and an alliance contracted. It is therefore with reference to that authority that our conduct must be directed. The shah may communicate with the British envoy at his court thro' the medium of any individual whom he shall please to select for that purpose. But such individual, whatever be his intention, can be regarded by us only as the delegate or representative of the king, not as possessing any substantive or independent political character.

4. In this position Abbas Mirza is now placed. He has long been designated by his father as a successor to the throne. He has been invested with the government of several provinces and entrusted with the management of wars and negotiations of an important nature. He has, finally, on occasion of the recent commotions been summoned by the sovereign to march an army against the insurgent prince for the preservation of the kingdom, with the promise of being put at once in possession of still larger authority in the general government of the kingdom than he now enjoys, if he should succeed in suppressing the revolt. Thus situated and accredited it is however to be remembered that our relations are formed and maintained with him, not as prince royal, nor as the ruler of powerful provinces, but as the person appointed by the king to act in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty.

5. It is further to be borne in mind that our connection with Persia is that of ordinary alliance neither calling on us to interfere in the internal concerns of that empire nor conferring on us any right so to interfere.

6. The British envoy at the court bears the usual character of a representative of the British government stationed at the court of an independent prince. He is charged with certain international concerns and interests of the two states, but it is no part of his duty to intermeddle with the domestic concerns of the people among whom he is to exercise his diplomatic functions.

7. From this state of things we may naturally deduce the line of

conduct which such envoy is to pursue in reference to the actual position of Persian affairs.

8. In the contest which has in all probability already commenced, he is to look only to the shah, and if his Majesty should appoint any individual, whether his son or any other chief to act as his lieutenant or viceregent, with that individual in that character the envoy is to communicate on any requisition that may be made for the advice or assistance of the British government.

9. In the present case, it appears that Abbas Mirza has been so selected by his father and it is only in virtue of that selection, and of the representative character which he derives from it, that our relations with him exist. That this is the principle on which we proceed, should be rendered apparent both to the shah and to Abbas Mirza himself; in order to avert any misconstruction of the motives of our conduct or of the real nature of our relations with the parties concerned.

10. We have deemed it of consequence to preface with these remarks our more particular instructions in respect of Persian affairs, because, in the present state of our connection with Persia the progress of events may place those who are charged with the maintenance of that connection, in situations in which it is most material that they should have a distinct impression of the general views and aims which ought in our opinion to govern our Persian policy. We are at the same time sensible that in the application of the principles which have been laid down, our agents must be guided by circumstances; and that contingencies are even, of possible, though (we trust) of very unlikely occurrence, in which some deviation from those principles will be found unavoidable. We do not attempt to specify those contingencies, because, as the specification must be hypothetical and therefore imperfect, it might serve only to embarrass those whom it was intended to direct. The safer course will be to leave such cases to the discretion of the functionaries concerned; merely cautioning them to uphold the principles referred to, whenever this is practicable, to admit of exceptions to them only under the compulsion of necessity or of an exigency approximating to it—and to limit the exception strictly to the occasion.

11. We are happy to add that we place every reliance on the capacity of Captain Campbell to meet the possible emergencies to which we have adverted.

12. In entire consonance with the views that we have expressed we approve Captain Campbell's compliance with the request of Abbas Mirza, that the British detachment should accompany his royal Highness to the field. This was indeed, as it appears to us, the only course consistent with the spirit of the friendly habits which have long subsisted between the sovereigns of Great Britain and Persia.

13. Under the same impression, we comply with the request of Abbas Mirza enclosed in Captain Campbell's despatch of the 28th July 1830, for four subaltern officers in addition to the commandant and adjutant already granted to discipline the Persian army.

14. You will accordingly (if you have not already taken this step) send without delay by the route and in the manner suggested by Captain Campbell, men well qualified for the peculiar duties of this service.

15. We are willing to incur the additional expense (stated by Captain Campbell in his despatch of 28th July 1830, at something less than £1000 per annum) for the officers whom the prince requires, but we certainly expect that the shah will, by a judicious arrangement of his resources, soon relieve us from this charge, and defray from his own supplies the expenses of the officers while they remain in his service. To this point on the supposition that Abbas Mirza is charged with the care of the army, it will be necessary to call his particular attention.

16. It should not be forgotten that in the year 1829, the revenues of Azerbijan and its dependencies, exceeded 600,000 tomanns, and that in the opinion of our late envoy Sir J. MacDonald, as stated by him to his royal Highness 250,000 tomanns a year would suffice for the maintenance of 8 or 10,000 men, including military stores, tents and barracks. The important provinces of Hamadan, Kermanseh, have lately been added to the government of his royal Highness, and from this extent of territory his royal Highness should be able to draw without oppression a considerable increase of revenue.

17. We have not yet been informed of the transmission to Persia of the supply of small arms, which (to the extent of 12000 stand) we directed in our letter of the 27th of December 1829 might be furnished to the prince without payment.

18. We cannot close our remarks on this subject, without adverting to the menace which is insinuated in the letter from Abbas Mirza, of seeking aid from Russia, if refused by this country. In reference to this matter, the envoy will take occasion to observe, with all the requisite caution and management, that if his Majesty the shah should be disposed to weaken or dissolve his connection with this country, the effect might be to place us under the necessity of turning our attention to other means of guarding ourselves from the consequences of conduct so unjust and unreasonable.

19. He will at the same time repeat to his Majesty the assurances of our sincere desire to cherish the friendship which now unites the countries of Great Britain and Persia, a disposition of which the British government has already afforded substantial proofs and which, as that government is happy to believe, meets with a reciprocal sentiment on the part of the Persian monarch.

P.S. We shall transmit a copy of this despatch to the envoy in Persia for his information and guidance.

323. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 23 May 1831
Recd. Simla. 3 June 1831

My dear Lord William,

I have this instant received your letter of the 10th with a copy of Mr. Maddock's reply, the nature of which he has apprised me of. I should think, considering his past character and the entire misconception under which he has been acting in this instance, making it a case more of aberration of mind than anything else, that your Lordship may be indulgent to any extent that would not in your judgment be injurious to the public interests. He has evidently been under a delusion. The prospect was dazzling and pains must have been taken to deceive and entrap him. He is in some measure the victim of others, and although his not being sensible of the impropriety of his proposal is unaccountable, it is still evident from his making it that he was not. I wish that I had taken a copy of my letter to him when he announced his plan. Written with a view to express my objections to it without hurting his feelings and without any certainty but with a confident anticipation of your sentiments on it, that letter would have shewn what I considered the best view that could be taken of his predicament.

324. *Bentinck to S. R. Lushington.* Private

Simla. 31 May 1831

In the course of last week I rec'd from Sir George Walker a letter apparently official, containing an appeal against the nomination of Mr. Harris as vice president; a protest and a minute recorded in council were also transmitted. As a request is made in this minute, that the proceedings should be laid before the court of directors and the supreme government, I was desirous of seeing the reasons of this measure, before writing to you upon the subject. These papers not having arrived, it is possible, that Sir George Walker may have determined to send the appeal direct from himself: but he ought at the same time to have informed the council of this intention.

I conceive that we are not at liberty to refuse this appeal, and I have therefore called upon the Madras government for such explanation as they may choose to make.

In a minute I recorded about two years ago, upon the general powers belonging to the governors of Madras and Bombay, as well as to the governor-general, I took occasion of adverting to the anomalous and extraordinary position in which a governor of one of the other presidencies was placed, when he was away from the seat of government,

but within the limits of it. I adverted also to the proclamation (not that of 1822) which is an exception to the general form followed both at Madras and Bombay and expressed a doubt, whether when absent from the presidency a governor had any power at all. And I concluded by recommending, that in any new act to be hereafter made the same powers should be given to them as to the governor-general.

It is clear that the act never contemplated the absence of the governor at a distance from his council: and I have great doubts, as I expressed in that minute, whether the act gave even to the governor-general, when within his own presidency but absent from Fort William, the same powers that he may exercise when present at the other presidencies. The question had been mooted at Calcutta, I believe by Mr. Edmonstone, but it was never referred home, and the practice of several governor-generals has been to appoint a vice president. The court had not rec'd this minute, when, in reference to a previous proposition to remove the government to the upper provinces, they gave orders that neither then nor hereafter should the seat of government be removed from Calcutta, and that if it had been moved, it should immediately return, but further, that if I chose to go to the upper provinces, I was required to appoint a vice president. According to analogy and common sense, the same arrangement under the same circumstances should take place at the other presidencies. It is however not within our competency to provide for the omissions, if such they be, of the legislature, and we must be guided by the act imperfect as it may be.

The act makes no mention of a vice president for Madras or Bombay. I had heard of Sir Thos. Munro having in 1822, appointed a vice president and I asked Mr. Hill upon what authority he had done so. Mr. Hill's answer is as follows: 'On the first occasion when Sir Thos. Munro was about to leave the presidency, after I became chief secretary, I brought to his notice what I considered to be the defects of the proclamation of 1822. These defects were:

1. That it was illegal because the government individually had no power to make such a declaration and also because even after it was made he had no power to exercise singly all the powers which might legally be exercised by him in council. 2. That is was absurd, because it declared that *all* the powers of the government were to be exercised by the governor alone in the provinces, yet that *certain* powers were to be exercised by the members of government remaining at the presidency.

I pointed out to him the distinction in this respect between the authority of the governor-general and of the other governors. Sir Thomas readily adopted my view of this matter and desired me to draw up a proclamation conformable to it. This I did, and the same form has been in use in every subsequent occasion.'

I take this to be the correct view of the question. The act has not been altogether silent upon the absence of a governor from council, and Sir George quotes the passage as supporting his claim: 'If a governor-general or governor shall happen to be absent from council, owing to

indisposition *or any other cause whatsoever*, then the senior member shall preside at said council etc.'

I really do not know how the words *or any other cause whatsoever* can be construed not to embrace the present case, unless the orders of the court adverted to in your proclamation have differently interpreted them. If you had *vacated* the government, your arrangement then would have been in conformity with the act. This was as well as I recollect the case, when I went to Calcutta in 1805. The leaving the limits of my presidency necessarily made a temporary vacancy, and I learn from Lieut. Col. Morison, who has a copy with him of the government orders of that date, that during my absence all orders were issued by the *honourable* the governor in council.

The course I propose to follow is this: when I receive all the papers from Madras, I shall submit them for the opinion of the chief justice, as to the legality of the appointment of a vice president, the only question with which I have to do.

As the arrival of Sir R. O'Callaghan whom I believe you will find a very good natured and agreeable colleague and not disposed in any way to thwart your measures, will probably remove all the difficulties that induced you to nominate Mr. Harris, would it not be better, unless you are quite clear that the orders of the court will bear you out, to consult your law authorities upon the legality of this measure; and should their opinion not confirm your act, to revoke it yourself, rather than to have it reversed by the interference of the supreme government? This would be infinitely the most pleasing course to me.

With respect to the fort, although the question is not without its difficulty and uncertainty, I should be prepared, if a reference were made to me on that point, to decide that the command, there being no vice president, should remain with the governor. The vice president in Bengal is ex officio deputy governor of Fort William; and if your nomination of Mr. Harris were good in law, he necessarily would become deputy governor of Fort St. George.

325. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 1 June 1831
Recd. Simla. 13 June 1831

My dear Lord William,

I have sent your Lordship's memorandum to Mr. Morley, and requested him to give an explanation, on the points of difference in a private form. I was originally against the losing of the 4 per cent down; and have never been thoroughly convinced that it was perfectly right. I was however converted to it by the consideration that, as we could only pay a [*illeg.*] half this year, by keeping open a 4 per cent loan we

should be unnecessarily paying interest for money which we did not want, and instead of saving 5 per cent interest on the amount discharged, we should only save 1 per cent. The same reasoning is as good against reopening a 4 per cent loan until the 1st May 1832, after which whatever money we can draw into a 4 per cent loan will redeem an equal amount of 5 per cent stock, which before that period it would not. I do not for my own part anticipate much effect from the payment of interest in advance.

326. *Bentinck to J. Harris.* Private

Simla. 1 June 1831

Dear Sir,

I think it right to apprise you of the purport of a letter I have written by this date to Mr. Lushington on the subject of Sir George Walker's appeal to the supreme government on your appointment as vice president in the governor's absence.

Sir George's letter to me is accompanied by a protest and minute, which he recorded in council. In the latter is stated a desire on his part, that the proceedings might be forwarded to the court of directors and to the supreme government. I read his letter about a week ago, and I thought it possible, that the whole of the proceedings, as requested by Sir George, might immediately follow; a knowledge of which would have better enabled me to have given an opinion to Mr. Lushington.

I have told Mr. L. that I could not refuse to receive this appeal, and you will therefore receive a call from me officially for all the proceedings.

The proclamation of the 26th April announces your nomination under the orders of the court of directors. With these orders I am unacquainted, and cannot even imagine what they can be. If the government was vacated, there could be no doubt of your succession so laid down in the act. But no provision has been made, as in Bengal, for the appointment of a vice president, when the governor is temporarily absent. On the contrary the act says when the governor is absent from indisposition or any *other cause whatsoever*, the next member of council shall preside. It seems impossible to get rid of the clear meaning of these latter words, which comprehend every contingency of absence, except that of an actual departure and vacating of the government. I had occasion about two years ago to record a minute upon the powers of the governor-general and governors which upon some points are very imperfectly and obscurely described. I then adverted to the very question now under discussion, and expressed my opinion, that the governors of Madras and Bombay had in reality no power when absent from their seat of government although by their proclamations the same powers had been exercised by the governors of Madras and Bombay when absent, as

when present in council: and of course this practice as it has the sanction of superior authority ought to continue. I then recommended, that in any new enactment to be made at the renewal of the charter, the same powers, as are now vested in the governor-general, should also be conferred on the governors of the subordinate presidencies. You will see from this statement, that my opinion on this question has long since been made up. In 1822 Sir Thos. Munro appointed a vice president. When Mr. Hill was at Calcutta, I asked him by what authority Sir Thomas acted. He informed me, that when Sir Thos. was about to leave the presidency after he had become chief secretary, he brought to Sir Thomas's notice the defects of that proclamation and its illegality: that Sir Thos. adopted his opinion and desired him to draw up a proclamation in conformity to it, which he did, and was adopted on every subsequent occasion. I mention this circumstance, in order that no false inference may be drawn from the precedent of 1822.

I have told Mr. Lushington the course I propose to follow, which is to submit all the papers when read to the chief justice, whose opinion I should request upon the legality of the measure, which is all that concerns me. I have ventured to suggest to Mr. Lushington, that, unless he is quite certain that the orders of the court will bear him out, he should consult the law authorities at Madras, and if he finds his act not confirmed by their opinion, at once to remake what he has done and thus prevent the interference of the supreme government. I have sent my letter to Mr. Lushington under cover to Major Stewart with a request that he will address it to Mr. L. who I suppose to be in the Nilgiris. It would I think save time, and this is the principal reason of my troubling you with this letter, if you would take privately the opinion of your advocate general and forward it to Mr. Lushington. In matters of difficulty and importance of a legal character, which cannot come before the judges in their judicial capacity, I prefer consulting the chief justice, who is most ready to give us every advice and assistance either privately or officially. This is at once the highest authority and therefore the safest guide. This may not have been your practice at Madras; and you have at all events, as far as I can judge, an excellent advocate general.

327. *C. M. Wade*[1] *to Bentinck.* Confidential

Camp Adinanagar. 1 June 1831

My Lord,

I am favoured with your Lordship's letter announcing the despatch of the wine for the maharaja. The wine arrived the day after and was immediately sent to his Highness, who desired me to thank your

327. [1] Wade, Sir Claude Martin, 1794–1861. Diplomatic agent at Ludhiana, from 1823 and intermediary with Ranjit Singh from 1827.

Lordship for your attention, particularly in sending the certificate from Dr. Turner. I should have answered your Lordship's letter before, but as an interview between the maharaja and yourself, became, just at that time, a subject of conversation, I determined to defer writing until I knew the result.

On the evening of the 27th ultimo, while I was with his Highness, he expressed a desire for an interview, and asked me if your Lordship were disposed for one. As neither the time or place seemed to be suited for the discussion of so sober a question (the party being of a similar description to that of the 22nd) I replied indefinitely, and the subject was dropped—(the maharaja observing to his favourite Raja Dhian Singh, that the wine did not appear to affect the captain). The following morning I received a visit from fakir Aziz-ud-din, who brought the subject of an interview, at once, on the tapis, stating that his Highness was anxious that it should take place. I still kept a reserve. The fakir said that he thought your Lordship was desirous of an interview, as you had asked Sirdar Hamid Singh, at Simla if he had a picture of the maharaja which implied a wish to see the original; and also from the circumstance of Captain Murray having observed to Lalah Kishen Chand, the vakil, and the commandant Chait Singh, when they visited him at Sabathu, on their return, that your Lordship wished to have an interview with his Highness. I now felt that any further reservation on my part was needless, especially as the maharaja and his people had evidently been waiting for an overture from me on the subject. Negotiations have been going on ever since, and today I have been authorized by his Highness, thro' fakir Aziz-ud-din, to convey to your Lordship his wish for an interview. He however annexes to it the following conditions:

1st. That the interview is to be strictly one of friendship between the two states, and not to involve the agitation of any political object.

2nd. That it should take place in the vicinity of Anandpur Makhowal, each party encamping on his own side of the river.

3rd. That your Lordship should pay him the first visit.

4th. That as it is his intention to depute his son Kaur Kharak Singh to receive and conduct your Lordship, on the day of the first interview, from the bank of the river to his tent, he hopes that his Excellency the commander-in-chief will accompany your Lordship in the journey, and pay him the same compliment, when he (the maharaja) returns your visit.

5th. That an interview with your Lordship shall not be considered as a precedent by other governors-general to expect the observance of the same ceremony towards them, as the state of his affairs at the time, may not possibly admit of an interview without detriment to his interests.

It is for your Lordship to decide whether you will accede or not these propositions. His Highness's object in making them is clearly to have assurance that there is no secret motive in your Lordship's desire for

the interview, and on a fair consideration of the subject, in all its bearings, I do not think they are extravagant.

In the event of an interview taking place, the maharaja would wish that the presents prepared for him, should be sent to Amritsar in charge of any person whom your Lordship may appoint. Immediately after their delivery he would proceed with that person towards the place appointed for the interview; and as your Lordship will no doubt give his Highness a sight of European troops when he visits you, he does not appear desirous of a large escort accompanying the presents.

I think your Lordship will concur with me in the propriety of keeping the subject of the interview strictly private until it is fully matured, for if publicity were given to it in its present stage, other native chiefs would in all probability exert their influence to deter the maharaja from the meditated step.

328. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 4 June 1831
Recd. Rupar. 27 October 1831

. . . . . .

Ram Mohan Roy, who I have had some long conversations with, is a staunch reformer—he is made much of by the [utilitarian] party. I really think he is a mild, well meaning man of extraordinarily fine presence for a Hindu but not of much strength of mind. I have only this morning received a letter from him in which he announces, at present privately, his having arrived as *envoy* from the king of Delhi and sends me a private copy of the treaty of 1805, with remarks, also the opinions of Mr. Ross on his Majesty's case. It will serve to add to the various matters which will be brought forward to amuse and confuse the public. The king of Delhi's case is fully discussed in the Bengal government's minute of the 3 July 1828. I think it is utterly absurd to expect for a moment that Ram Mohan Roy can be at all accredited in this country.

. . . . . .

329. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Simla. 5 June 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

On my return yesterday from my excursion I received yours of the 23rd respecting the employment of Mr. Maddock. It came very à propos, because I had fixed on that very day, to give him a decision upon his own case, which has perplexed me exceedingly; less from not being convinced of what was right to be done, than from an extreme

unwillingness to inflict an irreparable injury upon the character of an honourable though misguided man. I gave him my decision yesterday. Your letter, therefore, interpreting more favourably the opinion of the preceding day, came too late. The sentiments I expressed to him were these: that it was no longer a question to be settled between himself and me, with which nobody else had any concern: that the fact of his compulsory resignation would be universally known, and that he himself had published the circumstances: that now the question was what would be thought of his conduct by the service at large and the authorities at home; and after every consideration, I did not see how in any view whatever any other than an unfavourable construction could be put upon it. I recapitulated all that I had said in my first letter, as [to the] necessary inferences that must be drawn, and with respect to myself, what would be thought of my weakness in again employing as an agent a man, who set up his own views against my own, made public his dissent from my opinions and was even prepared to expose them before the British public? I was therefore still of my former opinion that he ought to be transferred to some other department. But considering that his honour was safe and his immediate abandonment of his project and his candid avowal thereof, I felt excessively unwilling to inflict upon him an extent of condemnation, from which he never could recover. I therefore [decided to] continue him in the line, and I offered him Katmandu. He immediately rejected it. He considered it inferior in point of rank and he conceived he should be degraded if he accepted any charge inferior to that he had left. I combated this feeling. I represented to him that he had done a great act of folly, that, whether I wished it or not, he could not escape from the penalty. He must suffer a loss of consequence. This appointment would manifest dissatisfaction, a feeling that would be universal, and must follow the general publicity he had given to the transaction. But it would also as publicly show, that his integrity was unimpaired. I endeavoured to impress upon him the necessity of humbling himself. To this advice or indeed to a right understanding of his own position, his vanity has not yet allowed him to yield. He made a curious remark, that now he should leave Lucknow with greater credit as a resident than any other within the last twenty years. He might, he said, be the richer by £500,000. I could not help observing, that this was a very negative kind of credit, he only not being a rogue. The resident is poorer by 50,000 Rs. which I think likely, from the scale and expense of his establishment. He wished to consult his friends. He will at any rate remain hereabouts till after the rains. I think he is satisfied with my disposition towards him, tho' unfavourable to his views. Indeed I sincerely feel for him.

330. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 5 June 1831
Recd. Simla. 17 June 1831

My dear Lord William,

A demand from the court for £1,000,000 next shipping season furnishes cogent reason for opening a four per cent loan, and as your Lordship proposed that measure before, I shall venture to anticipate your sanction now, as it is desirable to open it before we pay off the 5 per cent advertised for payment on the 13th inst. The accountant general calculates on receiving one crore into the 4 per cent loan in the course of the year. We propose to keep the court's demand secret, *if we can*, as long as we can.

331. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 8 June 1831
Recd. Simla. 20 June 1831

My dear Lord William,

I return the dissent of the secret committee with many thanks. I am glad to see that they have taken so just a view of the question.

Mr. Lushington's proceeding, in nominating Mr. Harris to be acting president (for that I think was the designation, not vice president) above the higher member of council appears to me to have been illegal. I do not know on what it is founded. I however understood that the governors of the subordinate presidencies have authority to nominate vice presidents and if they have not, the second member of the council, i.e. the commander-in-chief, one would suppose, would in the absence of the governor preside in the council ex officio. The power of nominating a vice president is given exclusively I believe to the governor-general and that I imagine was originally given to provide for his leaving his own presidency. The other governors having no power to quit their own presidencies have no such authority granted to them and where Mr. Lushington found his authority I cannot conjecture. I have heard that he rests the act on some old order of the court of directors.

I shall be happy to find that Mr. Ravenshaw is the deputy chair, for I feel obliged to him for the good will that I know him at one time to have expressed towards me.

I do not know to what your Lordship alludes in mentioning the 'Sayyid's death'. If *Sayyid Ahmad*[1] be dead it is a good riddance, for in my belief there was greatly more danger to our empire in India from that fellow than from the Russians.

331. [1] A religious leader and reformer who proclaimed a *jihad* against the Sikhs in 1826, and was later killed in battle.

332. *Bentinck to S. R. Lushington.* Private

Simla. 9 June 1831

Since I wrote to you a few days ago, upon the subject of Sir Geo. Walker's appeal, I have received officially all the papers from the council at Madras. I now send you the copy of a letter I have addressed officially to Sir Charles Grey, by whose construction of the law, be it what it may, I shall abide. The question at issue, the appointment of a vice president, seems to me to be a battle about a very straw, if indeed, the successful establishment of this right or office, might not materially be construed to interfere with the real prerogatives of the governor, of which, be he where he may within his own presidency, he cannot, I imagine, be diverted. As vice president, he can exercise no powers, that did not belong to him as Mr. Harris. Fortunately for you, he has not those which the act gives to a vice president of Fort William; he cannot act upon his own responsibility in case of an equality of votes, he has no casting voice, and I should doubt, whether he could adjourn the council for a limited time under certain circumstances, or, if right, claim priority for the consideration of his own propositions, a privilege having very important consequences, more especially as regarding patronage. My idea is, that you are governor here there and everywhere, that the patronage is yours—that your measures and propositions must be considered in council as if you were present—your vote having effect in the same way, and no great measure passing without your previous consent. The proclamation from the governor's authority, when leaving the presidency, that he took with him all the powers he had when at the presidency was, I think, founded in error. No such proclamation was necessary, but if necessary, it should have been issued in the name of the governor in council, whether by the consent of the council or upon the governor's sole authority. The best way of settling the arrangement of all doubtful questions of this sort would have been that which we have adopted here, by deciding previously to your departure, by a resolution of council for its own guidance, what business should be done at the presidency, and what should be referred to you, and what powers should be exercised by the governor and council respectively.

This is my view of the case, but it is obviously fitting that all these doubts should be cleared up by a new enactment.

333. *Bentinck to J. Ravenshaw.* Confidential

Simla. 9 June 1831

A transaction concerning Mr. Maddock the resident at Lucknow, a conspicuous personage in a sadly conspicuous place, will obtain

notoriety here and may probably reach the ears of the home authorities. As it will not be found upon the records, I am anxious, to prevent misconception, that the true circumstances, should, if necessary, be known. But unwilling for the sake of the individual to give to it greater publicity, than the occasion may require, I think it best to send the papers to you privately with a request that you will consult the chairman upon the propriety of this letter assuming the character of my demi-official communications to the chairman, for such notice of their contents as he may think proper to give to the court. The correspondence between me and Mr. Maddock, of which copies are enclosed, will best explain the whole affair. His first letter, not marked private, was accompanied by an official resignation of the service addressed to the secretary of government, Mr. Prinsep. In the whole course of my life, I never witnessed a case of such extraordinary delusion on the part of any man, but more especially of one of high honour, as I believe him to be, and of talents of a superior order. In this instance he has been the victim, not of a love of money, but of a vanity great to a degree, upon which the artifice of Col. Gardner his friend, the agent in this business of the old hakim, and no less accomplished an intriguer, has, for his own private ends and interests, successfully worked. Mr. Maddock's open and candid avowal of his intention, and immediate abandonment of it, upon the receipt of my letter, entitled him, in my opinion to much consideration. I made him give over immediate charge of his office to his assistant. He has since come here, where he at present remains. My opinion at first was, that such extreme want of judgment displayed upon this occasion, and the total confusion of ideas as to duties and obligations which the mere entertaining of such a proposition indicated, must disqualify him for further employment in the political line of the service. An intimation of this opinion was given to him. Indeed how could I employ an agent, who had been so wanting to myself? But when I came to reflect upon the irreparable ruin to his character that must ensue from this sentence, coupled as it would be, in public opinion, with all the suspicion of corruption belonging to every Lucknow transaction, I hesitated in my resolution, and finally determined to offer him Katmandu, a residency of inferior rank. At first he at once refused the offer, saying that he should be degraded by taking an office inferior to that which he had held. I begged him however to consider well his position. He had committed a great act of folly, for which he must suffer the penalty. His conduct would be universally known. He himself had published it. It would be as universally condemned, and from this effect I could not relieve him. He must submit to a loss of consequence. It was necessary he should humble himself. The appointment to Katmandu would indicate the dissatisfaction which my duty to the service required me publicly to make, but still would shew satisfactorily that no doubts were entertained of his integrity. So stands the matter at present. I hear his inclination is to appeal to the court against my measure, and to go home. I doubt however his obtaining the

concurrence of any one of those, whom I have advised him to consult, with this intention. This subject has really grieved me.

You will find in my letter to Mr. M. described in a very few words the line of policy, which I think we ought to pursue towards the native princes; and the reasons why I have made no progress in Oudh. The system of double governments, cannot and has not succeeded any where. It is a system totally opposed to every feeling, that nature has implanted in the human heart. But all our agents like to be kings, and the feeling of the service naturally enough chimes in with this policy.

334. *Bentinck to Captain Wade.* Confidential

Simla. 9 June 1831

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st June.

I will first notice the conditions on which the maharaja has proposed an interview.

To the first there can be no objection.

To the 2nd that Anandpur Makhowal shall be the place of meeting—each party encamping on his own side of the river—I cannot find Anandpur on the map. Makhowal appears to be near Balaspur. As I should wish to be accompanied by some European infantry and cavalry and artillery, Ludhiana would be more convenient.

3rd. It is impossible for me to pay him the first visit. The maharaja must have been quite aware that this could not be consented to.

4th. The commander-in-chief is too ill to be able to make the visit; but if he were, the part assigned to him would bespeak a degree of subordination to the governor-general individually, which does not belong to the character of the commander-in-chief. It has been always the custom for the secretary to government in the Persian department, accompanied by other officers of the governor-general's staff to perform this office. I should expect, if the maharaja's son were present, to be conducted by him, if not, by the principal officers, and it might be added that none would be more agreeable to me, than the members of the deputation who came to Simla.

5th. This interview shall not be considered as a precedent.

The presents, consisting principally of artillery, must necessarily march with the other troops, and could not be separated without diminishing the effect of the interview.

I have now given answers to all the conditions, and I beg you will state them with frankness to the maharaja. The communication should be kept secret. You will however say to the maharaja that it would be infinitely more convenient for me to postpone this interview till the cold season of 1833, when it is my intention to return to the upper provinces. The state of Rajputana and the troubles lately existing at

Jaipur, have made me resolve, to go via Delhi to Ajmer, where I shall meet the governor of Bombay.

I shall return from Ajmer to Agra, and from thence proceed to Allahabad, at which place or at Benares I intend embarking in a steamer for Calcutta. Upon the shortest calculation of the time required for this long march and the necessary detention at the principal stations, I cannot expect to reach Allahabad before the commencement of the hot season in Bengal, which I am anxious to avoid. Any detour therefore would very much interfere with my other arrangements. I beg you will explain minutely and circumstantially all my intended movements. I wish to avoid all appearance of mystery as well as of any desire either to avoid or to court an interview.

It may be convenient to discuss now the terms of any future interview, that the proposition may not be hereafter renewed, if it cannot be arranged to the satisfaction of both parties.

You will assure the raja of my high consideration.

335. *C. M. Wade to Bentinck*

Ludhiana. 13 June 1831

My Lord,

My return to Ludhiana prevents me from acting immediately with regard to the contents of your Lordship's letter of the 9th instant. It will not be long before I am enabled to do so. The maharaja is desirous that I should attend him, when Lieutenant Burnes[1] arrives at Lahore, which may be about the beginning of August. I intend with your Lordship's concurrence to visit Simla for a few days, and to leave Ludhiana with that view on the 1st proximo. A favourable opportunity will then be afforded of communicating personally with your Lordship, on the subject of the interview. His Highness is prepared, no doubt, for a counter-project, and modification of his propositions. If he be anxious for an interview, which he appears to be, he will, I am inclined to think, yield the only point which is likely to engage his serious deliberation—that is, who should pay the first visit. In expecting your Lordship to do him that honour it occurs to me that he refers to the terms of the interview which took place between the king of Delhi and Earl Amherst. To aspire to equal dignity with the high and ancient, tho' fallen majesty of Delhi, is more than he can be considered entitled to expect. It seems sufficient that in the mode of meeting him and the other chiefs of India your Lordship make such a degree of distinction as may consort with the difference between his and their relation to the British government. I am charged with a reply to the letter of which I was the bearer from your Lordship to the maharaja, and many friendly messages. I reserve the letter to accompany my final report.

Sirdar Hari Singh, the diwan and fakir particularly requested

335. [1] Burnes, Sir Alexander, 1805–41. Sent on mission to Ranjit Singh at Lahore, and travelled extensively in the north-west. In 1832 went to central Asia. *D.N.B.*

me also to convey their expressions of respect and esteem for your Lordship, and to say that they retain a lively sense of the attentions which they received at Simla.

336. *Robert Campbell to Bentinck*

East India House, London. 18 June 1831
Recd. Simla. 1832

My Lord,

I was willing to hope that the explanation afforded by the letter from the vice president in council of the 16th November to Lord Dalhousie would have satisfied his Lordship not only that there was no want of courtesy or attention on the part of government towards his Lordship relative to the abolition of the depot at Chinsurah, but that the measure was one of obvious expediency involving a considerable pecuniary saving without in any degree hazarding either the health or comfort of the troops. Lord Dalhousie's reply (very recently received) to that letter, together with his order of the 15th December have revived a notion in my mind which had been engendered by his general order of the 6th November, and by that of the 20th November, professing to cancel it, that the impaired state of his Lordship's health might have affected his judgment, and that notwithstanding the resignation of his command he might change his mind and remain in India. With this impression I was desirous of seeing the terms on which Lord Dalhousie's resignation had been accepted and I accordingly obtained a copy of Lord Hill's letter to his Lordship on that occasion.

I have now the honour to send to your Lordship a transcript of that letter the concluding paragraph of which has not tended to quiet my apprehensions as it seems to leave it optional with Lord Dalhousie to retire or remain as he may think fit; after what has occurred this appeared to me a most undesirable state of things and I therefore did not lose a moment in urging upon our present president, Mr. Grant, the necessity of adopting some such measure as would obviate the possibility of Lord Dalhousie remaining in the event of any change of his original intention. Mr. Grant has just informed me that he has seen Lord Hill on this matter who seems to think it is quite impossible that Lord Dalhousie should entertain the idea of remaining. I confess however that I continue sceptical, and I shall not cease to urge the expediency of making Sir Edward Barnes's succession, which is now contingent, upon the death, resignation or coming away of Lord Dalhousie, immediate and absolute. It appears to me that this would be only an act of justice to Sir Edward Barnes, for as Mr. Wilmot Horton proceeds next month to take upon him the government of Ceylon, Sir Edward might by possibility find himself without any office. I sincerely hope that my speculations may prove groundless, but I thought it right to

communicate to your Lordship my apprehensions and the steps that I have taken.

Your Lordship will be pleased to learn that your judicious and successful endeavours to reduce our expenses and to place our finances in a more satisfactory state than they were when your Lordship assumed the government, are duly appreciated here, as are also the temper and firmness evinced by your Lordship in the discharge of the odious tho' necessary duty of retrenchment. I anticipate the most beneficial results from your Lordship's visit to the western provinces, where I should think much may be done by granting leases for such reasonable periods as would stimulate industry by inspiring confidence.

337. *Lord Clare to Bentinck*

Dapooree. 23 June 1831
Recd. Simla. 14 July 1831

I shall be delighted to meet you at Ajmer in December and if I could manage I cannot say how much it would gratify me to be able to push on to Delhi. I rather think I cannot by law leave the presidency unless you summon me to your presence but there are so many good reasons for our interview, that you may enlighten me, a regular griffin, on many points, particularly respecting our relations towards the Indus, the opium question and above all to give me the pleasure of seeing you and Lady William. I feel sure there can be no objection to your doing so. In truth it will I fancy be a mere form. I shall combine my attendance on you with a visit to Gujarat but I hear I cannot venture there before the middle of November. . . .

My plans are to go as far as Cambay or near it, for the approach to it is dangerous, by sea, and then I shall only be 450 miles from Ajmer. But I hear as one moves slowly in India, great bodies you know always do, that it will take me five weeks to perform the journey not reckoning on stopping at any of the stations which I shall certainly be obliged to do. The road eastward from Cambay thro' Idar is difficult and I fancy I must go by Ahmedabad and as high as Deesa where we have an important station. Now tell me your plans, how long you mean to remain at Ajmer, about what time in December you expect to arrive there and whether you think of coming on towards Udaipur. I have been making enquiries and I find I shall be able to travel for one tenth of the cost charged by my predecessor for his tours. I was much interested by your letter respecting the Indus and very glad to be made acquainted with your views, they are sound and practical and I hope Ranjit Singh will co-operate with you. The amirs are a troublesome set and have long been so. I confess I shall not be sorry to hear that you have decided to get rid of them at once. We are not likely to have any further communication with them respecting Lt. Burnes. For having

cried out *peccavi*, they really exerted themselves and long since he must have left their territories. In the early stage of the business the strongest remonstrances were made to them.

There has been a bad affair in Cutch. The Parkar plunderers as usual crossed the Rann, in number about 300. They carried off cattle and other booty but were at last overtaken by Capt. Roberts and a small party of the auxiliary horse with a large force of the rao's troops, double the number of the freebooters. They refused to fight and witnessed the ineffectual attempts of Capt. Roberts' party of horse to take the plunderers without moving a step. The consequence was they escaped and we lost eleven or twelve men killed and many wounded. The worst of it is the defence of the country mainly rests on the durbar troops against the inroad of freebooters and if they return before a detachment of native cavalry which the resident has asked for from Gujarat arrives in Cutch there will be no force to resist them. Sir John only left 250 horse to defend that important frontier. The infantry cannot act and I believe we must re-inforce the horse or be annually subjected to these attacks. I am afraid as we determined to remain in Cutch we have reduced too low the force there for the sake of economy. I think Sir John had better means of sparing the public purse. The resident is going to re-model the rao's troops, but after this base conduct I must think it would be better to take part of the sum now paid by the rao for maintaining them and with it add a certain number of irregular horse to our present force. The defence of the country as long as we remain in it rests with us and our force is quite inadequate to the purpose. I have however been here too short a time and know so little of the country I am naturally averse from changing any system introduced by my predecessor. His arrangements for Cutch however have failed. The duke of Wellington wished us to give up the country if possible but that would be difficult and at present looking towards the Indus, may I venture to say so in opposition to such high authority, impossible?

We receive by every ship the most violent, I may add the most abusive, letters from the court personally directed against Sir John Malcolm and I must say tho' the language used is very coarse he has deserved all the blame thrown upon him for his extraordinary acts here. It is to me very painful to have to carry into execution orders which press hard upon individuals because Sir John in the wanton exercise of his power thought proper to disregard the orders of the court.

I am happy to say our masters have taken up my cause warmly against him. In truth it is their cause and not mine. Sir John performed his journey to England in exactly the time while he kept me in Egypt and Arabia. Of my delay at Jeddah the court had not heard on the 16th of March. The news from Europe I think quite alarming and I cannot but say I think Lord Grey steers too near the sands to shew his wit. What do you say to the Russell purge and the new constitution? I groan over it and very sincerely hope the bill will not pass. Baring

Wall's and his uncle Baring's seem excellent speeches against it. Palmerston appears not to like his measures much and it is to me very strange that Mr. Canning's friends should have concurred in it. I who have the [odour] of an old Tory about me cannot help considering it as the most unconstitutional measure ever proposed to parliament. You see it has exceeded the expectations of Hunt, Hume and O'Connell. Is not this enough to make a man view it with suspicion? I have heard one piece of news which I do not like at all: that whenever you leave India Lord Durham is to be your successor. Pray stay as long as you can and I will follow you as quick as I can. I really cannot conceive a more injudicious appointment and hope it is not done. Wilmot Horton will I take for granted succeed Lushington at Madras.

I am sure you and Lady William were sorry to hear of the poor Granthams's misfortune. I am told they are both in despair particularly Lord Grantham. Frederick Robinson died of the same complaint which carried off his pretty little sister three years ago.

I like this place and country and our botanical garden considering it has been only three years established and that the allowance for it is very small has succeeded very well. I am going to ask Sir Charles Metcalfe for a supply of plants and seeds from Calcutta and I hope you will give me your assistance. You would approve of Dapooree and if there was such an animal in the east as a country gentleman this would be his residence. The house is small but comfortable. I however and the public are sadly annoyed by the want of a bridge to cross the river between this and Poona. In these times without the sanction of the court it must not be thought of. I have with the full concurrence of my colleagues been obliged to sanction an outlay of Rs.30,000 on Parel to make it habitable and to give me one spare apartment. I must have either done this or taken back the house in the fort. I cannot tell you how pretty the view of Poona is as you approach it from this place surrounded with mango trees planted by the [*illeg.*] and backed by the ghats. The cantonment is so very European I can hardly fancy it in the east. The land here is bare and unproductive and the ryots are calling out for rain. The climate is delightful like cloudy July weather in England and I can gallop over the country in comfort in a cloth coat. This change after Bombay is very agreeable.

You will vote me a bore for writing such long proses.

338. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

London. 26 June 1831
Recd. Delhi 1831

My dear Lord William,

I am anxiously looking for letters from you or my son. We have accounts from Calcutta to the 7 February.

I think Sir C. Halkett will be your new commander-in-chief in Bombay.

I should like to keep Metcalfe in council in Bengal for I shall not feel confidence (put in who we may) when he is out and you are come away more especially if your successor should be an unfit man. We have set Captain Johnstone of steam memory to work and I hope it will not be long before he has got all the information that England or the continent can afford him but I am not sure whether he ought not to go to the *Ohio*.

I am very glad Lord Dalhousie is coming home but am not without apprehension that if he gets well again he may be induced to remain, for though he has resigned and his resignation has been accepted it is still left to his option to come away when he likes, and Sir E. Barnes's appointment is conditional only. The depot affair was a very awkward one for him and would perhaps have been serious if he had not resigned. I am willing to attribute his conduct to a pettishness brought on by ill health, but it put me very much in mind of General Macdonall's conduct at Madras. I do not at all like my friend Lushington's proceedings at Mysore and fear the intrigue which has succeeded there will throw the country into confusion, ruin the young raja, and probably compel us to send the whole subsidiary force back again.

Ram Mohan Roy is a great lion here. He has at last come forward as agent to the king of Delhi. He is a curiosity certainly but seems to me very much bewildered and, blacky-like, generally to agree with the last speaker. He will be examined before the India committee very soon, if he is well enough, but he has not been well since his arrival.

I have seen B. Bayley and Holt Mackenzie, but not enough of either to say what I think of them.

339. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

London. 7 July 1831
Recd. 18 November 1831

My Lord,

I have the honour to have remitted to your Lordship by the *Mint* the *Times* paper of today which contains the opinion on the second reading of the reform bill, which was carried this morning by 387 to 231. It will pass the third reading with little or no opposition and I conclude that the discussion in the house of lords will be concluded next week.

A committee has been re-appointed on India affairs. The course which they will follow has not yet been decided. The Company do not petition at present for a renewal altho' the parliamentary notice has been given. I do not think from the lateness of the session and the

pressure of other important matters that anything will be done till next year, unless ministers put the court in possession of their views, upon which it would not be difficult to frame a plan which should provide for all the leading interests and yield at the same time to the public what is not essential to the maintenance of the system for governing India. Ram Mohan Roy is one of the lions if not *the* lion of the day. It is astonishing what attracts John Bull, whose admiration is divided between the *prince* as Ram Mohan Roy is called and *Paganini* the celebrated violin player. Ram Mohan Roy dined with the court of directors at a formal dinner. Lord Caledon, Sir M. McDonald and some of the other members of the board together with Sir J. Malcolm were present. Ram Mohan Roy begged to propose the board of commissioners and then the East India Company when he really expressed himself very well, and alluded in pointed terms of gratitude to your Lordship's administration, thanking the Company for having appointed your Lordship to *reign* over them. He is full, indeed overflowing, in favour of *reform* and enters into the question with the zeal of the most zealous supporter of the bill. I have had a good deal of intercourse with him and upon one point which he has now brought before the court, the claim of the king of Delhi, I have read all the papers on the records and really there does appear to be some foundation for dissatisfaction on the part of the king. In a matter of this kind I think the Company are bound to act kindly and fairly although it may touch a little on their purses. I cannot I confess agree with the view which has been taken that there was no treaty or no specific lands assigned which can now in any way be traced with facility—for in the printed regulations of 1805, 6 and 7, the exemption of certain lands from fiscal impositions is always referred to as the territories assigned to his Majesty on the right bank of the Jumna. It appears that the authorities here were prepared originally to have gone as far as 15 lakhs per annum, 12 is now what is drawn and if the addition of 3 lakhs was made I think it would suffice and put the matter on a fair and equitable footing; retrospect I would not accede to.

Yesterday the question of the Persian residency came under discussion. I send your Lordship privately the paragraphs which passed the court, having been altered to their present form after a long debate in which the claims of Sir Harry Willock were brought forward. Some members contended that the Bengal government should appoint whilst others felt that your Lordship had referred it to the authorities in Europe from a conviction that the interests involved in it could be better attended to by a nomination direct from here. The recommendation of Captain Campbell may be considered as putting the question at rest, but it is entirely with your Lordship.

. . . . .

340. *Court of directors on policy towards the agency houses*

20 July 1831

1. We have perused with serious concern your despatch acquainting us that the principal houses of agency in Calcutta were again in circumstances which compelled them to solicit and induced you to grant to them temporary pecuniary aid notwithstanding the positive orders contained in our despatch dated the 2nd of April 1828.

2. We do not deny that the alarming crisis caused by the failure of the house of Messrs. Palmer and Co. may have been such as to justify you in the exercise of your discretionary power, but we are more than ever anxious for the strict observance of our instructions in future, convinced as we are that the system of the government's interfering to relieve commercial embarrassment has the most pernicious effects upon trade generally and upon the real interests of the parties whose property is embarked in commercial pursuits.

3. Of late years the applications for relief have become more frequent and loans have been granted at shorter intervals. The amount too has increased while the security instead of being in government paper as was the practice at first has been of a less convertible and more doubtful character and on the last occasion you consented to accept as a security the growing crop of an article the value of which is liable to excessive fluctuation, yet notwithstanding these efforts to uphold the commercial houses the period of your more extensive interference has been marked by failures among them and by loss of commercial confidence beyond any former precedent. The inference fairly deducible from these facts is that by systematically aiding the merchants you have created in their minds a habit of dependence on the government and which there is every reason to believe has operated most prejudicially in causing improvidence in the conduct of commercial transactions with all its injurious consequences.

4. We must also direct your attention to the instructive fact that your advances have been made available principally to the support of the house whose failure caused the late crisis; so that by interposing measures of relief you have probably only aggravated the ruin which although you may have stayed you could not prevent.

5. Of the whole sums advanced in 1822/23, 1826/27 and 1827/28, Messrs. Palmer and Co. received nearly ⅓rd. in the first of those years, more than ¾rs. in the second and ⅘ths. in the remaining year. Of the total sums advanced from 1812/13 to 1827/28 the proportion drawn by Messrs. Palmer and Co. was more than ⅝ths.

6. Hence it is evident that you have been instrumental in propping up an insolvent house whose demands upon you for aid increased in proportion to the facility with which you afforded it, and whose ultimate failure was made the ground for a fresh measure of relief in aid of other merchants upon terms more objectionable than any which had preceded it.

7. Seeing then that past interference has been not only useless, but pernicious; you cannot be surprised if we now in the strongest terms re-iterate our determination to put an end to the practice.

8. With this view some measure more effectual than that which you took upon the receipt of our former orders must be adopted for the purpose of impressing upon the agents and also upon their constituents that they must abandon all expectation of relief from the government in future, and we accordingly desire that you will formally communicate to the agency houses and take decided and effectual steps for making generally known our fixed determination not to allow any further interference on your part for the relief of commercial embarrassment.

9. We do not agree in the opinion of our governor-general that the present state of the trade of Calcutta has arisen from the restrictions upon the resort of Europeans to the interior of India and upon their holding lands there. We scarcely know how his Lordship can reconcile such an opinion with the fact that the cultivation of indigo has already been carried even to an excess principally through the employment of European capital. The difficulty is not the want of capital but the want of possessing sufficient control over it and we are persuaded that this difficulty is created by the system of combining in the same persons the operations of agency and trading.

10. We observe with deep regret that a prominent feature in the whole of the proceedings connected with the late commercial embarrassment in Calcutta is a distrust of Europeans on the part of the native community, caused it is said by a prevailing opinion that the failure of the house of Palmer and Co. should have been averted by exertions on the part of the other houses. It is the tendency of the system hitherto pursued by you to encourage the impression that merchants may depend upon the government in the event of a failure of their own resources. The natives have witnessed from time to time the interference of government on behalf of the merchants and it is not unreasonable that they should manifest disappointment and irritation if a failure such as that in question has not been prevented by extraneous assistance.

11. We desire that you furnish us with a statement of the several sums advanced under your resolution, of the securities lodged with you on that account, and of the periods when they are repaid.

341. *Col. W. Morison to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 22 July 1831

My Lord,

I feel greatly obliged to your Lordship by being allowed the perusal of these papers of Mr. Graeme, which I have now the honour to return.

There seems to be a doubt on this side of India, of the practicability

of a ryotwar settlement, in these upper provinces—a point however easily put to the test of actual experiment by calling for one or two experienced civil servants for the purpose, from another presidency. I have heard Mr. Graeme say, that he would himself gladly superintend the trial in any small district near Nagpur—and I own that my sympathy for the ryots inclines me to any confinement calculated to preserve their just rights, so anxiously desired by government. Captain Read, the father of the system, as it relates to our government, never could have introduced it into Coimbatore, but from the countenance and support, which he received direct from the Marquis Cornwallis. All the revenue authorities at Madras thought at that time, as unfavourably of the system, as it is still thought of in Bengal and tho' I can form but a very imperfect opinion myself of the subject, I rely with implicit confidence on the opinions and experience of Sir Thomas Munro, and Mr. Graeme.

I am sorry to hear of the illness of Sir George Walker. I had not heard of it before.

342. *H. T. Prinsep*[1] *to Bentinck*

Simla. 28 July 1831

My Lord,

The history of the discussions which took place last year with the Bombay government about the management of the Malwa opium concern will be found in the two volumes which I send at the places marked.

It will be seen that Sir John Malcolm advocated the transfer of the concern to Bombay and its management by a commercial officer of that establishment separately from the political function which he proposed to leave under an officer of the supreme government. This however was a mere scheme submitted for the approval of the supreme government: the occasion of his actual interference with its arrangements was briefly the following:

A resolution was passed in the political department for discontinuing all the existing restrictions by which the opium monopoly was supported in Malwa. This was done suddenly in the middle of the year and followed closely a resolution to increase the purchases for sale. In the secret department it was to be determined what measures should be adopted consequently upon this sudden resolution. Enquiries were addressed to Major Stewart then officially as opium agent and he reported at length on the subject giving his opinion in favour of a continuation of the plan of purchasing for resale. He reckoned upon

342. [1] Prinsep, Henry Thoby, 1792–1878. I.C.S., secretary in the territorial department, 1826, chief secretary, 1834.

making a supply of opium equal to that of the previous years sales—at an increase of price certainly—but if the sales at Bombay did not show a fall of more than one fifth in the outlay per chest his calculations promised a revenue of seventeen lakhs from purchases for resale each year.

The supreme government influenced mainly by this recommendation determined to continue its purchases for the passing year but declared the inclination of its opinion to be in favour of a relinquishment of this scheme and the adoption hereafter of the plan of selling passes to private merchants. The supreme government however opposed a suggestion for mixing the two schemes claiming them incompatible. Major Stewart had been directed to consult the Bombay government. He accordingly sent them a copy of the report he had transmitted to Calcutta. Sir John Malcolm availing himself of this reference to him which was never intended for more than *consultation* took upon himself to issue immediate instructions to Major Stewart founded upon his report addressed to the supreme government, and the determination he came to was different from that of your Lordship and the council at Calcutta. Sir John *instructed* Major Stewart not only to purchase as largely as he could but immediately to commence granting passes at Rs. 25 per chest for private opium to Bombay. Sir John further gave official notice in Bombay that these passes would be granted. Within five days after complying with this instruction of Sir John's Major Stewart received the instructions of the supreme government which directed a continuance of purchases and specifically forbad any attempt to combine with that scheme the issue of passes. Major Stewart very properly recalled immediately his proclamations and wrote by express to Bombay that measures might be adopted there also to undo the mischief. Sir John was of course not very well pleased and thereupon commenced a discussion in which he charged the supreme government with having been the cause of the confusion and with having lost the revenue which he said would have been gained by continuing the issue of passes with the purchases made for resale. He further charged the supreme government with neglect in not taking measures for purchasing all the opium in Malwa at any price at which it might have been procurable and sent home a long minute and letter on the subject to the court of directors taking care to get the *first* word by delaying for more than two months the copies required to be sent to Calcutta. This rendered it necessary to write the second letter to the court on the 21st September last after the matter had been fully reported on the 3rd August preceding.

If your Lordship desires to put Lord Clare in full possession of the views entertained at this presidency on the subject of the Malwa opium concern and its past and future management it would be best perhaps to have a copy of these two general letters made for transmission to Bombay. They are long and rather controversial but they contain a statement of the facts and arguments on both sides.

343. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 30 July 1831
Recd. Simla. 12 August 1831

My dear Lord William,

I return Mr. Maddock's papers. I am glad that the business has ended so well for him. I do not anticipate any difficulty with respect to the court of directors. They will not object to what your Lordship has done. Under any other circumstances I should regret his appointment to Katmandu, for I doubt his being fit for that situation. If he gives himself pompous airs there, he will cause disgust on the part of the high minded people of that court. I trust however that late events may have humbled him, or subdued him.

Your Lordship will receive a reference from us, for your decision, as to the effect or non-effect to be given to the orders of the court of directors prohibiting changes. Unless we can get rid of them altogether, as not applicable to what is at present in contemplation, they seem to me to preclude every measure proposed; until it be submitted to them and sanctioned.

I flatter myself that I am sure of not seeing Lord Durham in my time: and I hope that you will remain in India long after. The frequent change of governors is one of the greatest evils that India is subject to: and I shall be exceedingly sorry if you hurry away for several years, at least, to come. For my own part, I begin to think that two and thirty years of uninterrupted residence in India will be enough, and the nearer my day of discharge approaches, the less inclination I feel to remain. I should not resist any offer for my continuance, but I have scarcely any wish for it, and frequently take pleasure in the conviction that it is extremely improbable.

The reform bill seems to me excellent and perfect, and I expect that it will be carried. One cannot foresee the effect, because it will give us a representation such as we never had before, but the bill accords so much with the constitution that if the latter should be endangered by it, we never can have had the constitution that has been our boast.

Col. Briggs, the inevitable, remains on hand, and seems quite at home. He has never received any invitation, since the original one, which was meant as an act of ordinary civility and help to a traveller and stranger, who talked of being here a day or two en passant. He has got six months leave of absence from his own presidency. How much of this time he intends to bestow on me I do not know. Just as much, I have no doubt, as will suit his own convenience. He would be a 'rara avis' indeed, if he could make himself very agreeable under these circumstances. I am not at present an unbiassed judge, and shall therefore say no more about him.

It is cool now as I would ever wish it to be. Since the rains set it, with the exception of a few hot days, and close nights, the weather

generally has been exceedingly pleasant. I am glad that you enjoy so delightful a climate at Simla.

344. *Lord Clare to Bentinck.* Private

Dapooree. 31 July 1831

I begin meaning to write a very long letter to you 'à la Malcolm' but you know well what an exertion a letter is in India and that one is often obliged to abridge what one has to say even to our best friends. I have no news from England so late as what I sent to you which came from Suez. I have letters from London to the 2nd of April. My mother then knew of my delay at Jeddah and was as you may suppose outrageous. By the way either the plague or the cholera has broken out in Arabia. The accounts are contradictory but we incline to believe it is the former horror. The governors of Mecca and Medina and 12,000 men have fallen victims to it. All ships now arriving from the Red Sea are subjected to quarantine.

You are quite right. No human being, even admitting that his reasoning is correct, can understand how Sir John Malcolm's plan of nazarana is to be carried into effect, so if you please we will dismiss the subject very shortly, but I heartily wish all he has written on the subject at the bottom of the Indian Ocean and out of the heads of my Maratha stewards and Parsis for I am tormented at every durbar by applications from a sirdar with land to a sirdar without any to be allowed to adopt some dirty scrub, and assured that my predecessor promised them that his favourite plan of nazarana would be the law of the land and that he would settle the question for them in England. What business had he to give them hopes when he knew that the supreme government did not approve of the measure and when he was uncertain of its fate at home? In this and other matters his love of talking and of inducing every one to believe that he was the law and the prophets embarrasses me very much. Nothing can be more just than what you say of Sir John's having sacrificed every miserable peon and the lowest employees of government to gratify the grandees whether in the southern Maratha country or at the presidency and simply because he wished to be thought a great man by the native sirdars and the high covenanted servants of the Company. He would have sacrificed the public purse to gratify the former, as he undoubtedly injured the prospects of the greater number of the civil servants for the sake of swelling the incomes of a few heads of departments. With him in fixing the amount of pay for any situation the claims of the individual who filled it was of much more importance than the duties attached to it, and this is a fault which I find very common in India. The return which you required from this government respecting the salaries of the subordinate staff officers has been sent to you. You will confer the greatest boon on the service both civil and

military if you will equalize as much as possible the salaries of every situation throughout India. When reduction proceeds on this principle I do not find any discontent but the heartburning is excessive when a man finds himself worse paid than his neighbour at Madras or Bengal who performs the same duties. I send you a table shewing you the effect of the late order of the court reducing the allowances of our staff officers. I have of course obeyed it but requested our masters to reconsider this order. It bears hard on our high staff officers prospectively and tho' we cannot and do not expect to be as well paid as your great men in Bengal I think there is not a fair proportion observed between the two. I think a full return of the pay and allowances of all our officers would give you quite as much information as you could obtain from our military auditor general in person. Col. Hough was certainly a great loss but tho' I should be sorry to be deprived of him even for a time I believe Colonel Burn his successor would answer your purpose equally well. Col. Frederick is a strange man but there is information to be had in his book. He complains I hear loudly of his Bengal colleague who would not produce any information or give any answer respecting the allowances in Bengal. Your military secretary to government Colonel Casement is said to be very hostile to us and to write the most disagreeable letters imaginable to Bombay. Since my arrival I have seen nothing of the kind. If I had you should have heard of it. He is also accused of never giving us a direct answer and contrasted with the open and fair answers of the Madras government. Col. Casement is accused, I know not how justly, of always keeping something back. It is strange there should be any feeling of jealousy between the two presidencies but there certainly is a very strong one and I find our service well inclined to hold up their heads and turn out their toes. The want of subordination in your civil service of which you complain is quite as much felt and complained of here, and I am sorry to say my predecessor by his loose mode of proceeding rather increased than diminished the evil. He positively did whatever the heads of the service required and as for the junior they were altogether without discipline. The collectors have a host of supernumeraries doing nothing at head quarters and the assistants do not at all like being sent into the interior to learn their business. The esprit de corps is so strong no complaints are ever made, and I have lately sent a circular to all the collectors to desire them to send into me every six months a report of the disposition of their assistants throughout their collectorates and of their conduct and attention, for as far as I can I wish to make promotion depend on a man's deserts in the service.

Until I get a commander-in-chief in council I shall not be able to do any good. I am sadly crippled now not wishing to have recourse to the ratio ultima but I brought such a case before my colleagues of the state of this adalat. I induced them (two being old judges) unanimously to agree to my proposal to inform the judge and assistant judge they should be both removed from their situations if they did not clear

the jail of prisoners and their file of arrears in four months. What do you think of prisoners kept in jail 22, 18 and 16 months untried? I have had a very good humoured letter from Sir Edward Owen. I believe he has forgiven me the slap I was obliged to give him at parting. You may depend upon it I will not give up one bit of my prerogative either to a naval or military commander-in-chief. I have no private objects of any kind to carry and I will always fight my way as well as I can in support of my public measures. I have one and but one relation in India, under the Madras government, for whom I am anxious to get something done and I am sure you will not think me unreasonable in wishing to provide for him.

I am provoked with Charles Grant for never writing to me except to recommend some stupid youth. He should really tell us what are the views of government respecting India; that is, if they know these themselves. I fear from what I hear he is very indolent at the India board. Sandon I am happy to say is doing all he can to promote the steam communication between the two countries notwithstanding a faction in the court against it. You know that the *Hugh Lindsay* will leave this on new year's day. The despatches she takes over will reach England by the Malta steamer the end of March, and if the court or board write to us by the Malta steamer in May I will have one of our cruisers at Suez the end of June and thus before August next year we shall receive answers to our letters sent from India at Xmas. As the question of the charter will certainly be discussed next session I think it of importance to facilitate the communication as much as possible. Our cruisers have little else to do and I hope you will approve of the arrangements.

I have sent home a minute stating that our last unlucky voyage was caused solely by a want of fuel for I was afraid that the court would take hold of it as an argument against steam vessels returning from the Red Sea in the winter months.

I do not at all like Ranjit Singh's army under Ventura coming so near Sind. I distrust the Sikh chief and he has such good cause of complaint against the amirs he may I fancy over-run their country before we little folks at Bombay can say Jack Robinson. My hope is that you and he understand each other, but Ventura's army of 10,000 men with an undisciplined host besides but ill accords with what Ranjit's vakil told you that he meant to move a few battalions towards Sind. It will be of the greatest use to me to talk to you about all these matters at Ajmer. Pray summon me without delay. I may get your answer the end of September. I cannot venture into Gujarat before the middle of November and if I go by Ahmadabad, Deesa and Abu I suppose the march will take me six weeks and I shall reach Ajmer about Xmas when you talk of arriving there. Tell me your plans and where I shall direct to you after you leave Simla until we meet, but remember without your orders I cannot leave my own presidency. I am sure Wilmot Horton will succeed Lushington and he will be a great acquisition in India. We were threatened with a scarcity from want of rain but have had

plenty lately. I believe Sir Edward Barnes will come here before he goes to Calcutta. He and Wilmot do not speak so he can hardly remain in Ceylon after the new governor's arrival and Lord Dalhousie I hear stays at Calcutta until March. Give my best regards to Lady William. I hope you will both return with me to Bombay.

This climate excellent. Thermometer 75° near higher.

345. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe.* Confidential

Simla. 2 August 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

I feel very doubtful whether, as we originally intended, we can reach Calcutta before the hot weather is so far advanced as to make exposure to it not without some risk to ourselves and those belonging to us. So says Turner. The earliest date we can be at Allahabad, no calculations made for extraordinary contingencies, as sickness and more than usual rain, is the 11th March, and I am therefore almost resolved not to attempt a return to Calcutta till the commencement of the rains: but if I put it off so long, I think I should be inclined to stop till the end of the cold weather 1832/3. I had hoped next season to have included Saugor and see Maddock on my way from Ajmer, but this is utterly impossible, and it can only be done in the following season, with a visit to Bundelkhand, about the state of which my opinion is quite broad and very much *un*satisfied. In this latter case, I should summer either at [*illeg.*] or at [Hardwar], where there is accommodation and a better climate than in the plains, or return here. I should infinitely prefer the former, tho' both these places are a great deal out of the way and beyond our own frontier. But this does not much matter.

This place would be much more satisfactory, if I could leave the government in your hands. But I know not whether you would wish to stay, or if you did, how it could be effected. There are only two modes of bringing it about which occur to me. One by your period of service in council being renewed, which I should have no difficulty in strongly recommending to the president of the board of control. The other, by the adoption of the plans of the civil finance committee, and forming Bengal into two governments, to one of which you should be appointed. This latter seems out of the question, because no constitutional change will be made before the whole question comes into the parliament, which cannot be done before the sessions of 1832, or more probably of the following year. There is another scheme, but I do not know whether it is within our own competency, and that is, in like manner as we have deputed a portion of the sadar board and court, so we may also appoint a representative of the supreme government to be stationary in the upper provinces to control the whole administration. Without some

such local controlling and executive authority, the two deputations will lose much of the usefulness of their control. Pray let me hear your opinion upon these difficult projects. All I can say is, that I should see your departure before me with the greatest regret, and should feel that I was losing an excellent friend and councillor.

346. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 8 August 1831
Recd. Simla. 22 August 1831

My dear Lord William,

Another row in China. The Chinese seem to be entirely the aggressors this time and the factory innocent. They write to us for support, but we shall do nothing without your instructions. I should be for giving them the co-operation of the admiral and the navy and the letters that they want, which of course would come best from your Lordship, but as to the efficacy of those measures, or any others that we could adopt, I doubt it.

The despatch will be forwarded to your Lordship today.

347. *Bentinck's minute on the atlas and survey of India*

Simla. 8 August 1831

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Having understood, soon after my arrival that during fourteen years from the date of the court's letter in 1814, the advance towards the production of a general atlas of India had been very tardy, I directed my attention to the most practicable means of accelerating this great geographical work. Nothing however to that effect has been done. I shall preface a few suggestions I have now to offer for expediting it, by a succinct account of the matter as it stands.

From the papers before me, and from such information as I have been able to collect, it appears that three independent surveys are carrying on at Madras, the Hyderabad, the Vizagapatam and the Malabar survey. They are founded upon Colonel Lambton's trigonometrical operations, which have furnished the bases for the main triangulations. From these a sufficient number of points have been determined for taking up the details (for the most part with plain tables) on a scale of one inch to a mile. A complete register of triangles and a geographical and statistical memoir, accompany each survey with a map on a reduced scale. These surveys have, I believe been prosecuted with steadiness and perseverance for many years, and the whole of the territory subject to the Madras presidency, may be expected to be

finally surveyed in a few years. Only two or three districts remain to be thus surveyed.

At Bombay there appear to be carrying on a Deccan, a southern Konkan and a trigonometrical survey. The three are founded upon trigonometrical operations, proceeding from measured bases, and ultimately verified by a connection with the sides of Colonel Lambton's triangles. Theodolites and small angular instruments are employed for filling in the details from points determined by a minor triangulation. Of the general progress of these surveys, or of the probable time of their completion, I am not informed.

The grand trigonometrical survey has penetrated into Bengal, but has not yet reached Hindustan. It is about to revert to the hands of Captain Everest whose tried zeal and ability may be relied upon for pushing it to early completion. Excepting the province of Bundelkhand, and the small tract of our mountain possessions between the Sutlej and Gogra rivers, we have not any trigonometrical results, in Bengal, where exclusive of the revenue surveys (of which the system obtaining is tedious, laborious and expensive) those immediately in progress are the great trigonometrical survey, the Agra trigonometrical survey conducted by Lieutenant Boileau, and a survey in Assam. This survey is founded upon perambulator measurements and bearings by the compass needle and small theodolite, occasionally corrected by astronomical observations. This method of survey indeed has been generally practised under the Bengal government, and according to it there seems to be a great mass of independent detail survey, extending over most parts of this presidency. If carefully compared and digested, and if good points of check were obtained these surveys might perhaps afford available materials for a map of many portions of Bengal.

In the memorandum appended to my minute of the 29th September 1829, I recommended, with a view to obtaining the most valuable geographical materials for general purposes, the introduction into Bengal of the system of detail or topographical survey pursued at Madras. This system I hope to see adopted. But, as in the construction of the atlas, time and cost are most important considerations, instant operations upon this method need be undertaken to the extent only which may be found absolutely necessary as connected with that object.

In order to put to the best account the quantity of collected materials it is advisable that their value and character should be determined. Without this, wanting a key to the knowledge of what remains to be executed we shall be unable in many cases to avoid the expense and delay, as concerns the atlas, of going twice over the same ground. The deputy surveyors general should be required each to report, in regard to his own presidency, what the accumulated materials are, and their value, and to shew from them what remains incomplete. How much of detail, how much of check and how much of both. A knowledge of these points would put us in a posture capable of deciding something certain as to future operations. But as the examination of the materials and

their arrangement, however desirable, will probably require much time and labour, it will be sufficient for immediate purposes, if the surveyor general will point out the most obvious blanks which still exist, whether as not surveyed at all or so imperfectly as to need being gone over again to fit the results for insertion in the atlas.

. . . . .

I may seem to have noticed in too cursory a manner the Bengal revenue surveys, which it may be thought to afford valuable contributions for a detail map. But this is not the case. They are conducted upon principles which render them unsusceptible of useful application to geography. At present too they comprise a few limited spots, the proportion of which to the whole surface to be delineated renders them altogether insignificant in a geographical point of view. Though they have been in operation about seven years, there has not been yet surveyed more than four square degrees, a rate of progress which bids fair to place the advantages of the work, in whatever they may be supposed to consist, at a period so remote as to render its prosecution a matter of indifference to the present if not to the next generation.

From the time I obtained some insight into the great cost, slow progress and apparently unsatisfactory results of those surveys, I entertained scruples about their continuance, and I should probably long ago have proposed to suspend or abolish them, had I not deferred to the opinion of Mr. Holt Mackenzie, who had given his mind so much to the subject. But notwithstanding he had gone much into it, and held the survey in high estimation, I could not perceive that he had found a very distinct notion of the intent of its original institution. He certainly did not dread the expense so much as I do, the average rate of which for all the country, at least upon the present system of conducting them, there is no prospect of ever being brought so low as even 20 per cent upon the revenue.

Looking indeed into revenue operations, and tracing their influence on the happiness of the people from the poorest individual upwards, I should not repine at any reasonable charge for procuring information which would enable revenue officers to regulate the assessments with fairness between the government and people and with equality as regards villages and the details of the same village. But the revenue surveys have no tendency to effect this. Their objects seem to be to ascertain village boundaries and to serve as a check up on the measurements, in the aggregate, of the native surveying parties attached to collectors. They pretend not to detail the subdivisions of property nor the separate farms of which a village consists. A consultor of the maps, which are executed with a nicety not to be exceeded in a survey of Regents Park, cannot learn from them and their accompanying tables the quantity of land cultivated and paying revenue, its real and rated valuation as to quality, its susceptibility of yielding more rent, nor the quantity culturable but not cultivated nor assessed. They are consequently made no use of by collectors, and as checks upon the musahut

establishments they act but very indifferently, in particulars not at all, nor do I learn, that with reference to proceedings in the courts they are of any authenticity for settling boundary disputes.

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348. *Major John Low to Bentinck*

Gwalior. 10 August 1831
Recd. Simla. 17 August 1831

My Lord,

As you will already have seen my letter of the 27th ultimo to Mr. Packenham, I shall not intrude upon your Lordship's time by repeating any expression of my gratitude for all your great kindness to me. My chief object in now addressing your Lordship is to say, that if you would before my departure from this, direct any memorandum of instructions to be sent to me, either officially or privately, regarding the principal points to which your Lordship wishes my attention to be directed at Lucknow; or any particular mode of proceeding that you may desire on the part of the resident, for the attainment of your objects at that court, I shall feel greatly indebted to your Lordship, and would strive to carry your wishes into full effect.

It may be proper to state for your Lordship's consideration, some of my own notions on Lucknow affairs, requesting you however to bear in mind that I have a very imperfect knowledge of what has been done there for several years past, and that I speak therefore solely of what I understood to have been the practice during some years previous to 1829.

I should suppose the grand object to be this—to endeavour to procure for the inhabitants of the Oudh country, a fair degree of good government in comparison with other native states, and at the same time to leave to the native sovereign as much of the reality, and (what he will value almost as much) the appearance also of independence as is possible, consistently with the just objects pursued by us. All interference with regard to trifling cases, ought I imagine to be carefully avoided, and more especially so with respect to individuals, whether Europeans or natives, tho' there may be now and then some exceptions I fear to this rule in regard to those natives who are under our formal guarantee: several persons in that situation some years ago, seemed to me to consider their connections with the British government as emancipating them from all duties towards their own sovereign: this was I feel convinced, never intended by the supreme government.

It would be very desirable I conceive to get all the native gentlemen who have a positive claim to our protection, to reside within our own provinces, if it can be done by advice; and to those of them who prefer remaining at Lucknow, due respect towards their own prince, ought I think to be an indispensable condition of favour at the British residence.

In regard to matters of real importance, such as great commotion in

districts adjoining to our territories, which it is the duty of the British government to prevent if possible, it appears to me, that much of our embarrassments may have arisen from the *mode* of our interference.

When disturbances existed in the country the tone and language of the resident (and if common report be true, that of the supreme government itself) were often that of unmeasured censure towards the durbar, without sufficient advertence being always given to all the causes of the disorder, or to the difficulties to be overcome; and delays in remedying such evils, have at different times (as I have understood) been at once pronounced by us, as evidence of gross misgovernment.

Such conclusions must, sometimes at least, have been too hasty and uncandid on our part, and the mode of communicating them was peculiarly offensive. It was done in the form of written protests publicly recorded, so that the native ruler, even when he did effect a reform, could not but perceive that the merit of it belonged chiefly, in the eyes of his own subjects, to a foreign government, and much irritation was the natural result.

In lieu of this mode of proceeding (if it be still practised) I would propose to substitute a full and patient trial of friendly and private verbal advice, confined exclusively to the knowledge of the king and his minister, thus leaving all the public appearance of merit arising from any improvements entirely to the native government.

Another material objection to those recorded remonstrances, when they extended to the length of urging the adoption of new plans of civil administration, was this—that the residents themselves were not always sufficiently masters of the detail of the systems recommended (and I am sure I should be one who would feel so situated), so that he was constantly liable to be puzzled by local difficulties, and his remonstrances must have lost almost all their force, from his inability to indicate clearly the proper mode of overcoming real difficulties, and this must have tended to lessen his influence in other matters, where it was of great importance that it should continue undiminished. Embarrassments of that description at least would be avoided, by the plan I have now ventured to suggest. I would steer clear of recommending particular systems of local management, the details of which I do not myself understand, and I would endeavour to cause reforms, when evidently wanted, by convincing the native sovereign and his minister, how much it would tend to their own fame, and promote their own interests, to maintain peace in the country, and improve the condition of its inhabitants.

Another point to which I shall rigidly adhere, will be to show by my conduct, that I have never any personal objects to serve in regard to patronage. I would not recommend the employment of a single individual, from the highest public officer, down to the meanest chaprassi; while we profess in the treaty to have the king absolute in his own dominions, his right to select his own instruments of office, appears to me to be indisputable, and that it ought never to be infringed.

In regard to the European servants of the king, whose employments, claims to remuneration for services, etc., were formerly adjusted by the resident, and sometimes caused considerable irritation between him and the court, I have heard that the practice has very properly been discontinued by orders of government, and it therefore does not require any further notice in this letter.

There are other points on which I should like to know your Lordship's views, and especially those connected with the possible, tho' I trust improbable case, of a vicious determination being envinced by the king to plunder his subjects, and drive them into rebellion contrary to common sense, and in disregard of all advice in whatever shape it be given; but I should not feel justified in troubling your Lordship further on this occasion, and especially so, by discussing a state of things which can only be considered in the light of a remote contingency.

In conclusion I have to entreat your Lordship's forgiveness for intruding on your valuable time by this long private letter; to repeat, that in alluding to former proceedings at Lucknow, I have been speaking in ignorance of almost everything that has been going forward there since January 1829 (when I was at that place on a short visit to Brigadier Patton), so that much that I have said in this letter, may not be at all applicable to the present state of our relations with the durbar. I beg leave also to repeat that if your Lordship will honour me with any communication of your sentiments in reference to my own crude notions (through any of your secretaries, public or private), I shall esteem it a particular favour, and my humble endeavours shall never be withheld towards carrying your Lordship's wishes into effect, as far as my abilities, and opportunities may enable me to do so. As my time will necessarily be much occupied on my first arrival at Lucknow in the performance of current petty duties, and in reading voluminous records, some knowledge beforehand of your Lordship's views in regard to those matters adverted to in this letter, would be of infinite advantage to me, and I trust that you will kindly excuse my having to use this mode of endeavouring to acquire it.

349. *Bentinck to Lt. Colonel Briggs.* Secret

Simla. 4 September 1831

In July last, upon a reference made to me upon the state of affairs in Mysore by the governor of Fort St. George, I communicated my opinion, that the best remedy for the existing evils would be the assumption of the entire administration, as provided in Lord Wellesley's treaty. But, as the governor had stated his intention of making a formal investigation into the actual circumstances of the country, I intimated my intention of waiting for his report, before I issued any final instructions.

I have since received the result of that enquiry, which has entirely confirmed my former resolution.

Tomorrow I shall despatch to the governor in council the necessary orders for carrying this measure into effect. The arrangement upon which I have determined is shortly this: to take the whole administration into the hands of the Company; to vest the government in the hands of two commissioners of whom I have named you the senior and have left the nomination of the other to the governor in council, as well as the settlement of all details of the commissioner's establishment; the agency to be exclusively native; the native institutions to be maintained; but if any change be necessary, either to follow the system pursued by Purnia[1] which probably is better adapted than any other to that country, or, to consider the applicability of the regulations established by Mr. Elphinstone for the management of the territories of the raja of Satara; the commissioners to be under the orders of the governor in council at Madras, but copies of all their reports, and of the instructions sent to them to be transmitted to the governor-general in council; the commissioners to have all the powers of the boards of revenue and the sadar adalat.

If this appointment should suit you as I hope it may, I beg you will lose no time in repairing to your post. The despatch, I find will not be ready for a day or two, and I should feel therefore obliged by your keeping secret this communication for the present.

350. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 4 September 1831
Recd. Simla. 19 September 1831

My dear Lord William,

I conclude that you will have determined on establishing the sadar court in the western provinces, and those whom you propose will of course be nominated to it. The notice to Mr. Sealy of his destination will probably bring him to a decision to go home.

The inevitable Colonel Briggs commenced his approaches against your Lordship's position yesterday, and will I presume take it by storm before the end of next month. With or without your leave he goes as far as Delhi, where his further movements will be directed by circumstances. He carries with him a paper with a scheme of a permanent settlement with village communities. A settlement with village communities accords entirely with my notions: and if a permanent settlement be the best, I should prefer it on that plan to any other. I do not mean however to subscribe to everything in the colonel's paper. He satisfies himself on very important points too hastily.

I rejoice at the dissolution of parliament, and hope that the reformers

349. [1] Purnia, the brahman finance minister to Tipu Sahib, ruler of Mysore; retained in his post by the British until 1811. He died 29 Mar. 1812.

will triumph decidedly. I did not expect that the parliament would have acted so foolishly. I thought that a majority would have yielded to the manifest sense of the nation.

Your Lordship will have seen a letter from the court of directors, regarding my being an assignee and so forth: but you may not have discovered that it had any connection with the dissolution of parliament. Nevertheless it had, and would not have come out, if the parliament had not been dissolved. Thus it was, the court sent the letter to the board of control for approval. It was disapproved, but in the absence of Mr. Grant, who had to attend the election at Cambridge to support Lord Palmerston and Mr. Cavendish, and afterwards his own in Inverness-shire, the letter somehow got back to the court, without the formal prohibition as to its coming out, and it came. Mr. Grant afterwards authorized a communication to be made to any of my friends in London, to be forwarded to me, intimating that the letter not only had not the concurrence of the board, but was entirely disapproved, and that he regretted very much that it had been sent. This was very handsome on his part towards me, who am quite a stranger, and never had any communication with him. I was not acquainted with these circumstances, when I recorded the minute, which I wrote on receipt of the court's letter. As to the letter itself, although I would rather not have had my name mixed up with such remarks, there is nothing personally offensive to me in it, and it enables me to get out of the assigneeship, which I shall be glad of. Mr. Campbell then deputy chair, with whom I have never had any prior communication, sent me privately an extract from the letter, without any remarks, for what purpose I do not know, and I observed that his name was not to the court's letter, whether from accident or design. I do not clearly see what I am to infer from this. I have hitherto supposed him unfavourably inclined with respect to me. I have acknowledged what I had no right to regard otherwise than as a civility. Before his letter reached me, I had seen the court's despatch, and acted on it.

P.S. How silly the clergy are to excite the bad feeling of the nation against them by their virulent opposition to reform.

The probability of your not returning to the presidency this coming season is already talked of in Calcutta on the ground of letters from some of your party.

I see that Ranjit Singh wishes to have some presents sent to him instead of waiting to receive them at a meeting. I think that he is in the right. Sending presents and giving them at a meeting are distinct things. He has sent presents. If the compliment be not returned, it will make him appear in an inferior rank. It will look as if he were made to come as an inferior to receive presents. The compliment to him will not be complete unless presents are sent by a return mission. What he proposes as to the envoys, one of your Lordship's staff assisted by

Capt. Wade, would be quite sufficient. Afterwards at the interviews, whatever is done on one side might be done on the other, and all would be equal and comme il faut.

351. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Simla. 5 September 1831

I expect you will receive by today's post copy of a letter I have addressed to the governor in council at Fort St. George, deciding on the assumption of the entire administration of Mysore, and placing it in the hands of two commissioners, of which I have nominated *one*, viz. *one* Lt. Col. Briggs as first and senior. Be this arrangement right or wrong, it will at least rid us of the said lieutenant-colonel, and he probably is as good or better as Mr. Lushington's choice would be. This measure is in harmony with my own view of the right course to be taken in such cases, as laid down in my Oudh minute and it is founded upon the best Indian authority in my opinion, that of Lord Wellesley. I expect another advantage from it, as an example that may not altogether be lost on the rulers at Hyderabad and Lucknow. I cannot help remarking the discrepancy almost between the 4 and 5 articles of the Mysore treaty, and Lord W's. construction of them. It is curious that Mr. Lushington has never made any answer to my first letter. He might at least have told me upon receiving it that his former communication was considered by him sufficient. I always suspect him of some underhand and tricky proceeding; otherwise in an honest and well disposed person, the private letter which accompanied his minute would be construed as proceeding from a desire not to embarrass—to give me a choice of proceedings—and from kind consideration alone.

I enclose a letter to Lt. Col. Briggs announcing this arrangement, and begging him to repair to his post as soon as he can. It will perhaps be better not to deliver to him the letter till the despatch to Mr. Lushington has been forwarded.

352. *Bentinck to S. R. Lushington*

Simla. 7 September 1831

I find we have been playing at cross purposes. Your letter of the 4th of July with the minute accompanying it, must have been sent off shortly before the receipt of the letter of Mr. Prinsep addressed to Mr. Clive upon the measures to be adopted in Mysore. As this is a very grave proceeding, I was naturally anxious to have it conducted with all due attention to order and regularity, and to have officially before me, not only the fullest and latest information, but your own sentiments on the state of affairs. It is true that your minute affords ample confirmation of all the circumstances previously brought to my notice, upon which my

first conclusions were formed. Your subsequent silence I ascribed to a further reference to the resident. Indeed it was impossible for me not to expect a further communication, as your private letter contemplated the total suppression of that communication by allowing me to make use or not of it, to record it, or not, as I might think proper, a mark of consideration for which I thank you.

It was impossible for *me* to come to any other decision upon the remedy to be applied to the long existing misrule in Mysore. The same question has already been prejudged by me in reference to Oudh. In that country the same kind of disorder and mismanagement has long prevailed as in Mysore, and their king as well as his predecessors, have paid no attention whatever to the repeated remonstrances made by my predecessors and to their urgent recommendation of reform. When at Lucknow, I told the king, that I should recommend to the home authorities, if his Majesty did not seriously set to work to remedy the mismanagement prevailing in every department of the state to a degree unknown even in the time of any of his predecessors, that they should sanction the entire assumption of the territories. I will send you a copy of my minute upon this subject. I have therein adverted to the great inconvenience of a double government—to the failure generally of an administration carried on by a resident and a diwan there being a reigning chief, and to the false policy hitherto most ineffectually pursued in regulating non-interference in the internal concerns of our tributary and dependent states. The Mysore treaty has exactly prescribed the course which I think right to be pursued in all cases where this oppression solely exists under the protection of our power, and where attention to our advice is pertinaciously refused.

Casamaijor's reports, of the extent of the insurrection, of the cruelties and excesses committed by the raja's officers and troops, and of the prospect of tranquillity, differ extremely from those of all the military officers, without exception, from the commanding officer downwards, which I have seen. The writers are all upon the spot. Their accounts uniformly agree, and it is quite impossible to doubt their correctness. Having taken this heavy responsibility upon myself, I have considered it not inconsistent with your authority, to make the selection of one of the commissioners, leaving to you the appointment of the other: my choice has fallen upon Lt. Col. Briggs, a perfect stranger to me: the home authorities were anxious that he should have been appointed envoy in Persia; but as the nomination was left to me, I did not think it right to prefer any other to Major Stewart, who holds the first rank among our political officers. His experience in Khandesh and particularly at Satara where the administration was exclusively native, strongly recommended him. If no difference had existed between you and Lt. Col. Morison, a preference would most probably have been given to him. I am in hopes that this example in Mysore, will have an *encouraging* effect where similar mismanagement, in spite of our advice and remonstrance is suffered to continue.

353. *Bentinck's minute on the constitution of the Indian government*

Simla. 14 September 1831

I shall now offer my opinion upon the report of the civil finance committee regarding the constitution of the Indian government.

The members of the committee, as well as my two colleagues, Mr. Bayley and Sir C. Metcalfe, concur in opinion that the local details pressing upon the time of the supreme government utterly preclude the performance of the higher and more important functions of its office.

The same concurrence of opinion exists as to the necessity of the supreme government being divested of all local charge, and that its duties should be confined to a general control of the subordinate presidencies, and that a distinct and fourth government should be formed for the upper provinces.

Of the total inadequacy of a government stationed at Calcutta, to control and superintend the administration in the western provinces, I have frequently had occasion to remark, and actual investigation has amply confirmed the justness of the opinion.

Upon the degree of control which it would be most salutary for the supreme government to exercise over the other presidencies, there appears to be no great difference of opinion. Hitherto this control has been rather nominal than real. It has been confined to general measures of government, to political negotiations, to the making of treaties, to the declaration of war, to great financial arrangements, and latterly, to the confirmation of all regulations.

In the details of the administration of the subordinate presidencies the supreme government have no interference. The only knowledge they have of their proceedings is from the copies of their despatches to the court, and by the published orders of the government and of the commander-in-chief. The supreme government have, indeed, the power of issuing orders, if they observe in these communications anything deserving of strong disapprobation. But it would be highly inexpedient to use the power except in extreme cases, because the act being done, a public revocation of it places the subordinate government in some degree of embarrassment and humiliation; and the measure being under reference to the court, the supreme government may be found in the same objectionable position with respect to its own superiors; and from the public proclamation of conflicting orders and sentiments much inconvenience must unavoidably arise.

The subordinate governments naturally enough stickle for their own independence. They objected strongly to their regulations being made subject to the sanction of the supreme government, though it would seem difficult to understand how legislation, except upon occasions of public danger, or some great pressing emergency, can be otherwise than benefited by additional discussion and deliberation, by

more enlarged experience, and by a comparison with the success of remedies applied to the same evils; and so the honourable court in their wisdom have ruled. But in all other proceedings of the administration, what disadvantage could arise from a prompt and immediate check upon any departure from uniformity of system, upon a non-compliance with the orders of the home authorities, an evasion of which is so encouraged and facilitated by the endless delays of repeated references to so distant an authority, and above all, upon lavish expenditure? In the military department instances daily occur of indulgence granted in one army, to which the officers and soldiers of the others, whether European or native, may have an equal right.

At this very moment, the copy of the despatch to the honourable court, from the government of Bombay, announces the grant of a particular gratuity to a regiment in consequence of its being ordered from a particular cantonment before the ordinary relief. But much stronger claims for compensation have lately occurred in Bengal, in the total abandonment of a cantonment, and consequently of the total loss of property to the officers happening to occupy it; but the court's orders positively prohibit the grant of any satisfaction, and have been rigidly enforced. Had this, as a new case, and as an outlay of money, been referred to the supreme government before being executed, we should have answered, 'all must have it or none; let it be submitted as a general regulation for the court's orders.' As it is, we can now only point out the irregularity, and request that it may not be repeated. It is not only the immediate suspension of irregularities, or of unnecessary expenses, that would be thus effected, but to the supreme authority at home, that has ultimately to pass its decision, the advantage of this local discussion in eliciting truth, and in placing every question upon its real merits, would be most useful. Let me take as examples the expenses of the two presidencies of Bombay and the incorporated settlements to the eastward. Could the excessive extravagance of the former have been passed upon the court, if it had been open to the scrutiny and objections of a local authority? Could the useless establishments of the latter, and the plurality of almost sinecure offices, accumulated upon individuals, have successfully withstood the proof that a more active local control would have required of their necessity? I will mention another case of recent occurrence, that was productive of great scandal to the British administration, and of most serious inconveniences to the interests of the individuals and of the public; I allude to the long and indecorous differences between the government and supreme court at Bombay. If the advice of the supreme government, with that of the judges of the supreme court at Calcutta, could have been interposed in the first instance, I feel a perfect confidence that the evil would have been stayed at any rate, if not totally prevented. It is humbly suggested, whether, if it be resolved still to preserve the present inconvenient scheme of king's courts administering English law, in which the intentions of the legislature are so vague and ill

defined, where so much is left to and embraced in the large term of construction, and where the exercise of specified power is declared to be, in many instances, discretional, it might not be expedient, in the event of collision, to allow an appeal from the subordinate presidency, through the governor-general in council, to the supreme court at Calcutta.

It might be assumed from the preceding remarks that I am in favour of a supreme government, as recommended by the committee and my colleagues, whose duties should be exclusively those of general control and superintendence. But my concurrence only goes to the expediency of a more effective control in the supreme government over the other presidencies, and I consider this to be practicable, without the great change proposed of forming Bengal into two presidencies, to which there are great local and practical objections, and without incurring the great expense that this larger scheme would entail; although I entirely adopt the sentiments of Mr. Bayley, that for so great an object as a much improved government of this immense empire, the additional charge, even at the highest scale, is not worth a moment's consideration.

My first objection is to the separation of the presidency of Bengal into two separate governments. It is true that there is a broad line distinguishing the upper from the lower provinces; they are different in climate, in character, and in their political circumstances. They each ought to have within their reach those authorities, revenue and judicial, upon whom their rights and interests so materially depend. But in other respects there is a great mutual connexion between their general interests; one river pervades the whole territory from west to east; one port receives all its produce; Calcutta is the great exchange upon which the commercial and pecuniary transactions of the whole are carried on. For these, and for many other reasons, it would be very inconvenient to divide the control.

A separation into two presidencies supposes also a complete system of separate establishments. Such an arrangement would be inconvenient, quite unnecessary, and very expensive. Some of the departments ought to have their head-quarters in Calcutta; so must the boards of trade, marine and salt and opium. The upper provinces ought to be the principal station of the revenue and military boards, and of all the military departments, where are placed the greater part of the army, our principal magazines, the studs, our chief public works, bounded by the frontier, with all the offensive arrangements connected with it. But a branch of all these departments, whether above or below, must be stationed where the principal office is not in direct correspondence and dependence upon it. The establishment of civil covenanted servants also could not be divided into two distinct bodies for the service of the upper and lower provinces without great injury to the public interest, and without much individual inconvenience. The appointments in the upper provinces, in consequence of the unfinished state of the revenue

settlements, and of the difficulty of the process, require to be filled by very competent officers, which a selection from the whole service cannot easily supply. In Bengal, where the demand of government is fixed in perpetuity, the office of the collector is comparatively easy. Again, with respect to the individuals themselves, there are many to whom the climate of western India is fatal, while in the milder, but damper climate of Bengal, health is preserved, and good service can be done to the state. An interchange seems indispensable; and this could with difficulty be arranged if the service was divided and allotted between two separate presidencies. The same observations apply still more strongly to the military force.

With respect then to the Bengal presidency, all the territories at present constituting it should, in my opinion, be subject, as now, to a governor-general in council; but the seat of government should be placed in the upper provinces, the scene of all its most important transactions, revenue, military, and political. No spot presents so many advantages for direct control, and for ready intercourse with the most distant provinces, and for the despatch of all business, as Allahabad. I annex to this minute a map showing its contiguity to our most important affairs. It is immediately adjacent to Oudh, to the Saugor and Narbada territories, to Bundelkhand; it has under its eye the revenue settlements of the upper provinces, of such vast importance to the government and to the people, and which could no longer so shamefully stagnate. Gwalior, Malwa, and Rajputana are all brought within easy reach of immediate superintendence, and of personal communication if necessary. A steamer from Allahabad would reach Agra or Delhi on the Jumna, and any place equally distant on the Ganges, in four or five days. At Allahabad, also, the government may have the advantage of the advice of the commander-in-chief in council, as contemplated by the legislature, whose head-quarters for the future always ought to be, and I may venture to predict always will be, in the upper provinces. I shall beg Lord Dalhousie's opinion upon the proper position for the commander-in-chief, with reference to the well being of the department confided to his charge, as also upon all the other points embraced by the finance committee's report.

But to relieve the supreme government of the load of details which has hitherto so unworthily occupied its time, it is necessary that a subordinate authority, similar to that of vice-president in council, should under the orders of the governor-general in council, reside at the presidency, superintending the revenue and judicial administration of the lower provinces, and of all our territories to the eastward, and conducting all the business at Calcutta. Having now been absent from Calcutta since October, and having reserved to myself a complete cognizance and control over the whole affairs of the presidency, very much similar to what should be executed by the governor-general in council if placed at Allahabad, I am, from this actual experiment, inclined to think that the supreme government would be enabled to

devote sufficient attention to the general affairs of the empire without renouncing the direct management of the Bengal presidency.

The continuance of the present system would obviate one of the greatest difficulties that I suspect would be found in divesting the supreme government of all local management, namely, the allotment of the whole patronage of the four proposed presidencies, so as to give to the governor-general his proper importance and consideration, without taking away from the subordinate governors that proportion which is necessary to the efficiency of the administration for which they are responsible. Where the responsibility is, there must be the selection of officers.

Nor would it seem desirable that a minute interference with the administration of the subordinate governments should take place; the interference should be rather of check, of a preventive and restraining, than of an active and meddling character. The supreme government should come in aid, and not in supersession of the home authority. It should supply that defect and weakness in the home direction arising from distance, from the delay in the issue of its orders, and from the imperfect knowledge it must possess of the circumstances and true bearings of very many questions. Its business would be, to preserve the system as already approved from innovation, to prevent all new expenditure, to prohibit all changes in the various details connected with the military establishment, which are for ever occurring in spite of the court's orders, and especially so to superintend the general distribution of the troops of all the presidencies, as to make the whole act in unison for the general defence. But it is impossible for the supreme government to perform even the least part of these duties without knowing beforehand the intentions of the other governments; and for its accomplishments, it would be necessary to require that all reports of their proceedings, as is the case with all subordinate authorities, should be made direct, and in the first instance, to the supreme government, copies being sent for the information of the honourable court.

With respect to the constitution of the supreme government, it might be either left as it is, or, with reference to the whole of India being now subject to British rule, and to the expediency therefore of its being regulated by one uniform system of policy, it might be thought preferable to compose it of a governor-general and one councillor from each of the three presidencies. The knowledge and experience of the whole would thus be combined for the general improvement. How much would the revenue settlements of Bengal have been promoted, if by such means the spirit of Sir Thomas Munro's superior management could have been infused, and practically brought to bear upon this branch of administration!

In the first case, of leaving the supreme council as it is, there would be only the increased charge of two new councillors at Calcutta. In the second, there would, in addition to the two councillors at Calcutta, be

required a third civil member for the supreme council. But this charge in both cases might be met in great part by reducing one of the civil councillors at Madras and Bombay, and transferring them to the supreme council. The constitution here proposed for the governments of India accords precisely with the model of that established by the honourable court in the incorporated settlements to the eastward; when the governor who was supposed to move from one settlement to the other, was absent, one resident councillor conducted the local details. Here would be two, besides the military officer in command of the troops. Care would be taken that in no case, not even of a temporary nature, the councils should be reduced to one member.

It is recommended that the supreme government should be moveable. This would be necessary if Calcutta be retained as the seat of the empire; but it is confidently anticipated that this deference to ancient recollections, and may I be excused for saying prejudices, will give way to the manifest and numerous objections to a position, the excessive distance of which from its most important concerns and interests, precludes the efficient performance of any one of the functions of a supreme controlling authority.

I have already dwelt so much upon this subject in my minutes of the 10th February 1829 and 22nd February 1830, that I need not again repeat arguments, which have in a great measure been supported by the unanimous opinion of the committee and of the members of government. If the supreme government is to be moveable, the distance travelled, and the delay, to say nothing of the expense, of such journeys, would render the residence of the seat of government at Calcutta more nominal than real. But under all circumstances, as there apparently must be a separate administration for the upper provinces, it might be more convenient and more conducive to prompt decision and energy of action, that the governor-general should alone visit the different parts of the empire, possessing the powers now belonging to him.

With respect to the distribution of our political relations between the subordinate governments, according to their contiguity, as recommended by the committee, I am now, as I ever have been, entirely opposed to it. Those chiefs and rulers who are only so in name, and have no political power, may unobjectionably be so placed. But all those, on the other hand, who possess extensive territories yielding a considerable revenue, and maintaining a military force, and who come within that most anomalous state of relationship to our power of recognized independence, but of real and virtual dependence, even to protection against their own oppressed subjects, all these should be subject alone to the supreme government. Experience has shown the excessive delicacy, difficulty, and impossibility almost of managing these relations with success, and it is only by the steady adoption of one and the same principle towards all in the regulation of our interference, which will be the more effectual, the less involved in intrigue, the less offensive to their dignity, and the more conducive to confidence,

if proceeding direct from the paramount power, that we can hope to establish such an improved order of things that shall eventually make better rulers, happier subjects and more useful allies.

354. *Bentinck on judicial and revenue administration*

Simla. 15 September 1831

I avail myself of the opportunity of an overland despatch to show the principal objects to which my attention has been directed since my departure from the presidency, in connexion with the existing judicial and revenue administration.

2. Your honourable court is already aware that my visit to the western provinces was in a great measure prompted by an anxiety to satisfy myself by personal observation of the progress which was making in the work of settlements under the operation of the provisions of Regulation VII, 1822 and to ascertain whether it might not be practicable to expedite that progress, or to adopt other measures equally adapted to secure the objects contemplated by your honourable court and to promote the prosperity of the country.

3. With a view to forming a just estimate of the result of past operations as well as to aid my judgment in determining the most eligible course of future proceedings, I summoned the several revenue authorities of the districts through which my course lay, to attend me at their respective stations and learnt, by personal conference with those functionaries, their real sentiments as to the past operation and probable future effect of the provisions of the enactment above adverted to.

4. Among the officers whom I consulted I found no deficiency of zeal and no want of intelligence, but it is nevertheless my duty to assure your honourable court that to whatever cause the failure may be attributable, little or nothing has been effected towards a settlement of these provinces.

5. By some authorities this lamentable result has been ascribed to the want of precise instructions which should regulate the proceedings of the local officers in the conduct of the native surveys, and in collecting materials for the formation of settlements. By others to the requisition of statements embracing the most minute particulars which, while they were not essential to an accurate development of the resources of the country, involved vexation to the people and impeded the progress of the measures designed for their welfare.

6. These reasons cannot, however, I conceive be admitted as affording a solution entirely satisfactory, and it was under the impression that the improvement of the country must be indefinitely retarded and its resources materially deteriorated, if some intermediate measures were not adopted to obviate such a calamity, that I caused to be

addressed to the sadar board on deputation, the accompanying letter dated the 7th of April and entered as No. 1 in the list A, in which, I desired to be furnished with the deliberate opinion of the several revenue authorities, as to the propriety and expediency of anticipating the progress of the detailed settlements, by the grant of long leases founded on an investigation of a nature more summary than that which is prescribed by the existing law.

7. I have not yet received the information which is requisite to the decision of so important a question. My preconceived notions are so fully stated in the document above referred to that I will not detain your honourable court by a recapitulation of them in this place; but you will observe, from the whole tenor of that communication, that I shall be prepared to abandon the project I contemplated on proof of its inexpediency, and you may rest assured that, however much I deprecate the mischievous consequences which must flow from the unsettled state of property in this portion of your territory, I shall sanction no measure involving a sacrifice of the just demands of government or a compromise of those reasonable claims to protection which it is the first duty of the state to extend to all classes of the agricultural community.

8. It was with sincere gratification that I perused the remarks contained in the 58th paragraph of your honourable court's despatch dated the 9th of February last, which evince your sense of the necessity of long leases, and which detail your views (so nearly corresponding with my own) as to the mode by which the process of settlement may be expedited and the rights of the subordinate tenantry protected.

9. As intimately connected with the subject of the foregoing observations a copy of a letter No. 11 of the list A, which I caused to be addressed to the sadar board on deputation on the 31st ultimo and of its enclosures are herewith transmitted. These documents will serve to show your honourable court how enormous has been the expenditure lavished on the maintenance of the native surveys and how trifling has been the benefit derived from them. The observations contained in my minute will also convince you of the inutility of the professional surveys conducted on their present footing. They neither admit of practical application to settlement purposes nor do they furnish materials for the construction of a geographical map. Yet the cost of their prosecution has been very serious.

10. The only other discussion relative to revenue affairs in which I have been recently engaged and which I deem of sufficient importance to bring to your notice on this occasion, originated out of your honourable court's instructions to the government of Bombay under date the 16th of July 1830. I directed a communication of those instructions to be made to the sadar board on deputation for their guidance and for the guidance of the authorities subject to their control. This communication, a copy of which was forwarded to the presidency in ordinary course, called forth certain observations from the honourable the vice

president in council, and the correspondence followed, a copy of which is herewith transmitted and marked as No. 13 to 26 inclusive of the accompanying list A.

11. I trust I may not be found to have mistaken your honourable court's intentions in this matter. My confidence in the accuracy of the interpretation I advocated has been considerably increased by a perusal of the remark contained in the 26th paragraph of your honourable court's letter dated the 22d of December last to the following effect, 'the policy observed by the nawab of Rampur deserves to be carefully considered as holding out a very instructive lesson. The collector states that the nawab's assessments are fixed on the land and not on the crop, as would appear to be the case in the British provinces'.

12. The documents enumerated in the list marked B which accompany the communication, will shew that I have sanctioned several important arrangements in the judicial department. The correspondence which preceded my final determination will sufficiently prove that those arrangements have not been hastily or inconsiderately adopted. The considerations by which I was influenced, have been so fully detailed in the accompanying documents, as to supersede the necessity of more than a brief allusion to them in this place.

13. A more extended recourse to native agency for the disposal of judicial business has been so earnestly, so repeatedly, and so recently urged by your honourable court that I should almost have deemed it my duty to give effect to your injunctions in spite of any local obstacles which might have opposed themselves. But concurring as I do most cordially in the wisdom, the justice, and the sound policy of those injunctions, and being fully satisfied that native probity and talent may immediately be found (if due caution be observed in the selection of instruments) in sufficient abundance to justify the present introduction of the system, I should have deemed myself criminal had I any longer delayed to concede to the people of this country a measure so eminently calculated to facilitate their access to justice, to conciliate their attachment and to raise the standard of their moral character.

14. Though the arrangements about to be introduced with a view to these objects will unquestionably be attended with considerable expense, yet I trust it may not be thought to exceed in magnitude the benefits which it will confer. The appointment of native judges on the new footing, must necessarily be gradual and the expense to be incurred will be equally so. I have suggested various means by which a saving has been or may be effected to meet this increased expenditure. The most important is that of the abolition of the provincial courts of appeal from which measure alone, should it be sanctioned by your honourable court, a saving would be effected more than adequate to the purpose. The more extended recourse to native agency in judicial matters I consider as being by far the most important and most beneficial of all the recent arrangements.

15. The establishment of a court of sadar diwani and nizamat

adalat for the western provinces, was in my opinion imperatively required. In the course of my progress through those districts my interposition was in several instances rendered necessary and I could not avoid being continually oppressed by the conviction that to the inhabitants of the western provinces justice was virtually denied. There existed no competent authority to check and control the local functionaries. The distance of the presidency rendered the exercise of judicial superintendence from that quarter almost nominal, while the privilege of appeal was rendered nearly nugatory by the difficulties the delay and even the danger, occasioned by the distance and difference of climate. Your honourable court has been pleased to sanction the appointment of one separate judge for the conduct of the duties of the sadar diwani and nizamat adalat in the western provinces. I have ventured so far to deviate from your instructions as to suggest to the board that one judge from the Calcutta sadar adalat, and one member of the commission appointed under Regulation 3 of 1828 may be deputed to officiate in the new court as co-adjutors to the judge who may be permanently appointed. From the arrangement I anticipate much advantage. It might be apprehended that with only one judge the court in the infancy of its establishment would not be adequate to its functions, while there is no reason to suppose that the absence from the presidency of the officers above indicated will be attended with any material inconvenience. If on the other hand there were to be only two judges present with the new court, their proceedings would be greatly impeded by the constantly recurring necessity of referring for decision to a distant tribunal, all points on which a difference of opinion might arise.

16. It cannot fail to have attracted your attention that the greatest inconvenience has been repeatedly experienced from the inability of the several commissioners of revenue and circuit to perform the functions of their united offices. From this cause it has been found necessary to have recourse to various temporary expedients by which much embarrassment has been occasioned, and it is to be feared that the full extent of the mischief arising from it has not been made apparent. When the pressure of business on the commissioners has become so great as to compel them to call for help, it may fairly be presumed that the interests of government and the welfare of the people cannot have met with the deliberate attention to which they are entitled from an officer so situated.

17. This was a state of things that required a remedy; and that which most obviously presented itself was the transfer to the zillah and city judges, where those functionaries were competent to the trust, of the duty of holding the jail deliveries. I am happy to say that the instances of incompetency are rare. By being relieved from the greatest portion of their civil duty by the transfer to native judges of original suits not exceeding 5,000 rupees in amount, they will, it may be confidently expected, have abundant leisure for the business of the sessions, while from the

more certain punishment of the guilty and the more speedy enlargement of the innocent, which will be the necessary consequences of the arrangement, its beneficial tendency can hardly be sufficiently appreciated. But in order to give effect to the measure it became necessary to divest the judges of their magisterial powers, and there was no other alternative consistent with the dictates of financial necessity than to transfer those powers to the collectors. I do not consider the latter measure to require any apology. On the contrary I hold it to be admirably calculated to confer efficiency on the police of this country, and I have the satisfaction of finding that its propriety was urged and that it was recommended for adoption by your honourable court in the 165th to the 168th paragraph of your letter to this government dated the 9th of November 1814, and that in the same despatch you advocated the transfer to the zillah and city judges of the powers of trying commitments. The union of the office of collector and magistrate has been long indeed carried into effect in several districts under this presidency.

18. The proposed regulation for amending the existing provisions relative to the trial of summary suits does not involve any new principles. It is merely an extension of that which has long prevailed and been considered salutary by your honourable court, of empowering the collectors in the first instance to adjudicate in cases of claims for arrears or exactions of rent. The enactment appeared advisable as well on general grounds, as to afford relief to the judges, and enable them to devote their entire attention to their important duties as judges of session and appeal.

19. The regulation for the more speedy and efficient administration of justice in the courts of sadar diwani and nizamat adalat has been drawn up in conformity with the suggestions of two of the judges of those courts, and I trust your honourable court will consider its provisions unobjectionable.

20. The deputation of the sadar board to form a controlling authority for the revenue affairs of the western provinces is, as you will perceive, professedly a temporary measure, and may be cancelled without inconvenience should it not meet the approbation of your honourable court; but I confidently anticipate your concurrence in the propriety of this arrangement. Where such vast interests are at stake and such important operations in progress, the advantages of proximate control must be obvious and undeniable.

21. I have thus briefly recapitulated the several enactments which I have sanctioned and the motives which have induced me to approve their provision. That they are intrinsically good, and that they will produce infinite benefit I cannot entertain a doubt. The only hesitation I felt as to the propriety of the immediate enactment was occasioned by the prohibition contained in your honourable court's despatch under date the 26th of January, against all great changes without previous reference and sanction, unless under circumstances which would not

admit of such reference without manifest injury to the ends of good government.

22. But it will at once appear evident to you, that the adoption of all the measures to which I have given my sanction was inseparably connected with one which did not admit of postponement. I allude to the relief to be afforded to the commissioners of circuit which could only be effected by transferring their session duties to the zillah and city judges, and the latter officers could only perform those additional duties, by the transfer of their original civil jurisdiction to native judges, and of their magisterial functions to the collectors. The suspension of the jurisdiction of the provincial courts was a natural consequence of vesting the appellate jurisdiction in the zillah and city judges, and the retention of the judicial power confided to registers was incompatible with the enlarged powers to be conferred on native judges; nor can there be any valid objection to vesting the tahsildars with powers of police in cases wherein it may be deemed advisable to unite the office of collector and magistrate in the person of their immediate superior.

23. Having once determined on the propriety of their enactment, I considered the early promulgation of the rules referred to as an object greatly to be desired, and I therefore caused them to be embodied in the forms of regulations under my own superintendence. In that form they are herewith submitted to your consideration, and it will remain with the vice president in council to promulgate them as they now stand, or with any modifications or additions that may be deemed advisable.

355. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private

Simla. 15 September 1831

You will with this letter receive public despatches addressed to the court and the secret committee of considerable importance. Exclusively of the China question in which we can only play a subordinate part, and our proceedings in which are reported, I have also transmitted my instructions to the government of Fort St. George, to assume according to the provisions of the Mysore treaty, the direct management of those territories. There can be no doubt of such a case being made out as to warrant the measure and as little, that this is the best mode of repairing the existing disorders, of redressing the excessive wrongs suffered by the population, and of obtaining for the improvement about to be introduced some security for its future continuance. I am sure the lesson and the example will be of great use, and I know that some measure of the sort is absolutely required. At present we interfere in all ways, but our interference, always obnoxious, leads to no good purposes —now there will be a moral to the fable. It is desirable that all these

tributary and dependent rulers, who exercise all this misrule under the sanction of our protection should be impressed with this sentiment that we have every desire to respect their dignity and independence, that we have no desire to swallow up the kingly authority in the person of our resident, or to establish an imperium in imperio; but that we require that they shall govern well, and failing of that, they must suffer the consequence as exhibited in the present transaction. There was another mode offered to my choice less likely to attract attention, but subject to all the objections against which that most able statesman, Lord Wellesley, professedly intended by his treaty to guard.

Having during my late tour used my best efforts, in conjunction with the best officers, either immediately attached to me or employed in the local administration of these provinces, to provide remedies for the defects in the existing revenue and judicial systems, I have forwarded by this occasion, several very important changes from the present practice. I have upon this as upon all other occasions, when practicable, taken the opinion and advice of the vice president in council, according to the spirit of our constitution. I am happy to think that these proposed alterations concur for the most part in suggestions of the honourable court already at different times expressed; but as they are now submitted in the form of distinct regulations, it seemed necessary that they should have prior to their being carried into effect, the sanction of the home authorities. I venture to urge that your decision may be given with as little delay as possible.

I also forward my sentiments upon the recommendation of the finance committee for a more efficient constitution of the governments of India. It is rather a large subject, but I am satisfied that no impartial person can scrutinize the practical operation of our mufassal management, without being convinced that it is excessively expensive, imperfect and inadequate to its object.

I hope to be able in the ensuing cold season to bring to pass the free navigation of the Indus. I am not quite prepared to detail my views upon this subject but I think the scheme will be accomplished without difficulty. Much advantage would not at first arise from this new or rather from the removal of restrictions upon an old channel of commercial intercourse; but eventually, all the anticipations of the secret committee would I confidently believe be completely realized. There is no river perhaps offering greater facilities, and free of those obstructions which so terribly impede the navigation of all the other Indian rivers, than the Indus.

I am glad to say of India, that it is undisturbed, and as far as I can see not threatened by any calamity; our finances are in a satisfactory state. I perhaps think that the accountant general's estimate is rather too sanguine.

We have lost an excellent officer in Mr. Scott, the commissioner in Assam.

Lord Dalhousie is here, and in better health, than at any time since

his attack. He will sail in the middle of January. Sir E. Barnes was to leave Ceylon for Calcutta about the 1st of October in order not to have a contrary monsoon.

May I beg of you to communicate to the court such parts of this letter as you may judge proper.

356. *Bentinck to Charles Grant.* Private

Simla. 16 September 1831

Your letter of the 8th April received on the 13th of this month assured me of what I have never doubted, your very kind feelings towards me. Your confidence and protection is indispensable to the comfort and usefulness of the person holding the situation I do, beset as it is with so many conflicting private interests and often accompanied by great anxiety and no little annoyance and always deeply responsible. I however have never shrunk from the expression of truths however unpleasant or from following the straight path of my duty however great the unpopularity in consequence, and great it has been. But I will not enter into these matters.

I have been earnestly engaged for many months past in investigating our internal administration and in suggesting remedies for the very great defects belonging to it. Many of these propositions are transmitted by the present occasion and I shall be much obliged to you to urge a decision upon them. You have a ready interpreter of Indian hieroglyphics, for such they must be to you, in Holt Mackenzie. No man is so thoroughly informed of all Indian details as he is and his views are in my judgment most humane and liberal. I do not think I shall return to the presidency next year. Sir C. Metcalfe will be a great loss to me. His service in council expires in August. He quite ranks with Sir T. Munro, Sir J. Malcolm and Mr. Elphinstone and quite deserves the same distinction. If it be intended, and the necessity cannot admit of a doubt, of forming a second local government in Bengal, he undoubtedly ought to be at the head. I strongly recommend him. While he has always maintained the most perfect independence of character and conduct, he has been to me a most zealous supporter and friendly colleague.

The opening of the Indus to our commerce and navigation was a great object of the late government and I think very deservedly so. I am very sanguine as to its accomplishment and without our being involved in any unpleasant consequences. I have invited Lord Clare to meet me at Ajmer, that we may have a complete mutual understanding of the plan to be pursued, the execution of which must mainly rest with the Bombay government. I am to have a meeting with Ranjit Singh on the 25th of next month on the Sutlej. He is very desirous of seeing some European troops. Their superiority will I expect confirm the impression of our power, of which he is already fully acquainted.

Lady M. sends her best regards.

Everything is quiet in India. Our finances are flourishing and I see no reason to apprehend evil or mischief of any kind.

357. *Lord Clare to Bentinck*

Alligaum. 24 September 1831

I had the pleasure yesterday to receive your two letters of the 29th of August. The post even by express travels provokingly slow between Simla and Poona. I have made enquiries on the subject and our Mercury assures me the fault, if fault can lie in such a quarter, rests with the Bengal authorities. I will let you know what he said and possibly a little stirring up on both sides may expedite their motions. I have also to thank you very much for your letters of the 25th which I redirected three days ago. You have a nice question to decide with Ranjit Singh when he starts the subject of the Indus. Undoubtedly the navigation of the river may be opened with great facility and commerce more securely protected under a powerful chief who knows how to keep order than under such a set as the amirs but I confess I had rather have them for our neighbours than the Sikh chief, for in this country it is very difficult to avoid disputes with a native and a trifling difference about village rights might bring on a war between us and Ranjit Singh, and I cannot but think it will be more for our interest to force the amirs, in conjunction with Ranjit, to open the navigation of the Indus and to keep down the lawless race inhabiting its banks, and by taking the Bahawalpur raja under our protection prevent the advance of Ranjit in that quarter. The great difficulty to be overcome is to decide *how* the amirs are bonâ fide to perform their part, for giving them even credit for good intentions I doubt much their power to suppress disorder in an effectual manner. I cannot think this projected alliance between Persia and the amirs is an event which need give us any uneasiness. It is argued that as Persia is under Russian influence danger must necessarily be apprehended from it; but I really believe from what I can hear the alliance with Sind thro' Persia would give but little real power to the northern autocrat supposing he meditates an attack hereafter on India, for as there are a few miles of desert to cross before he could reach us, I do not think we should have any difficulty in disposing of the amirs, if we found them tripping, long before the arrival of their powerful supporter. I shall imagine hereafter the real danger (if any?) of a Russian invasion would be from the autocrat having a good understanding with Ranjit his heirs or assigns and as it is impossible to foresee what turn events will take when I shall be a crusty old gentleman with half a liver, £20,000 and the house in Upper Harley Street, the fruits of my Indian warfare, I had rather keep our excellent friend and ally Ranjit at a distance from Cutch and our north-western frontier,

because I am afraid he will at all times have the powers if he once overruns Sind certainly to annoy us and as certainly to close the navigation of the Indus. You will have to decide the question, supposing the amir obstinate, which from his character is very likely to be the case, and that he will not hear the thunders of any conclave at Ajmer and like a good servant attend to the order of his lord and do what he is ordered to do. He must then be brought to reason and that can only be done by Ranjit and us, or by either power singly. If the troublesome triumvirate are to be of necessity tumbled into the river, why, we and Ranjit had better go snacks [*sic*], leaving us the mouths of the river and as high up as you please and giving his Highness the remainder, but we must protect the raja of Bahawalpur and other friendly chieftains under any circumstances from his grasp. I know nothing of the characters or dispositions of the various powers from the sea to Ranjit's dominions and after all my speculations are very crude ones, but you write to me in so kind and friendly a manner you encourage me to indulge in these [speculations]. The China affair is unlucky because the enemies of the Company will use it as an argument against them in England. The celestial emperor is, I imagine, too wise a politician to sacrifice so lucrative a trade and as it is the mutual interest of both parties to settle these disputes, presuming them to be reasonable creatures, I take for granted they have before this done so. The admiral in personâ on board the *Southampton* will have due weight at Canton and I hope our sloop of war will be of service to the select committee. She sailed for Canton in two days after I received the despatch requiring her services. The chief secretary writes me word he has sent your despatches overland. I presume they have reference to this China affair. The papers say you are to come shortly to Mysore and settle the affairs of that country yourself. May I as a particular favour ask you to stop on your way at Baroda and settle the Gaikwar question. Whatever you do in the south do not sequestrate territory. I am sure the example of what Sir John did in Gujarat ought to deter anyone from following his example. There is nothing I apprehend to prevent from taking possession of Mysore altogether but if the cost of management shall approach the cost of our management of the Gaikwar districts you will have to keep possession of it for a long time. Had Sir John taken the whole of the Baroda state, given the Gaikwar a pension until the debt was paid off (which it would have been in 3 or 4 years utmost) he would have done far better than he did by adopting a sort of half measure which, as you know, disgusted the Gaikwar and will never answer the object he had in view.

When I was at Aurangabad I heard from all quarters that Lushington was recalled and that I was appointed in his place. It seems letters by the *Minerva* have spread this foolish report throughout India. There is not a syllable of truth in it, nor with the numerous claims upon them is it at all likely that the present government will make me any such offer. But I really want your advice supposing Mr. Lushington goes home next

year, and for want of a better person they offered me Madras. Would you advise me to accept the offer? I do not think it is as interesting a country as this. Our external relations with Egypt, the Gulf and the Indus amuse me here, but on the other hand Madras is a settled presidency; and heaven knows whether I shall be able to do any good where I am. I am nearly indifferent on the subject. I care not for a wider command or more extensive patronage and the climate of the Deccan is here a great resource tho' it is not I believe better than Bangalore and the Nilgiris. It is very unlikely that without consulting me I shall be ordered to Madras. If I am I must go. But as you have been there and know the country would you recommend me either to apply for the reversion at home or if offered to me to accept it? I am against making any application now for it would bind me to remain in this country longer than I shall perhaps like. My present intention is, if my life is spared so long, to return home in three years from next December. I cannot think of a longer separation from my mother. Indeed I almost promised as much at starting. I quite agree in all that you say about Col. Casement. I have always found his answers fair and open but certainly there is a strong impression against him here. I am sorry you do not think our high staff officers ill paid by the late reductions. I am rather inclined to ask the question are they sufficiently paid for the duties they perform? Thus to contrast their pay with the pay of the Bengal staff, you must always remember the enormous expense of living in Bombay. It is I understand by far the dearest place in India. Certainly the price of provisions, servants and house rent is enormous.

Your official summons is come and Mr. Romer with Sir Charles Grey's opinion before him has started a question whether I can exercise the power of governor out of the limits of this presidency. Mr. Duncan, Mr. Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm did so and I will certainly follow their example. I will if possible push on to Delhi and come back with you by Agra to Jaipur to Ajmer or at all events meet you at Agra. But I have got a letter three yards long from the Gaikwar. I do not know what it is about yet but it may oblige me to stop at Baroda. A palanquin bears me so I cannot travel long dak. Not all the palanquin-bearers in Bengal would carry my little person if I am to make the attempt for 800 miles. From my place of landing in Gujarat to Ajmer is 31 marches not counting halts. I calculate on six weeks and if I can manage to reach Ajmer at Xmas I may still join you at Agra if I make haste. I have sent you one memorial from our European regiment and you will receive another. The discontent about promotion amongst the officers is very great. Here we obeyed your orders to the letter and spirit and consolidated the two regiments into one. But the two wings are together at Deesa under one lieutenant colonel. At Madras the obedience was merely nominal for the two wings are separate with I understand a separate staff and under separate commanders. I shall be anxious to know what you say respecting the command of the southern division of our army. If old Company's officers will not come out to take the good things provided

for them by order of the court we shall have constant questions of this kind unless we confine all our European troops to Bombay and Poona. We ought to have a king's regiment in the south but if we have and the officer commanding it is senior to any Company's officer available what is to be done supposing the Mysore troubles to extend to our dominions (and Mr. Lushington wrote me word the rebels had certainly support and encouragement from our subjects) and we were obliged to move troops? The very first regiment to be moved would be the King's 20th from Belgaum (for I cannot suppose that the colonel of it is to remain shut up in his cantonment with the drums and fifes) and then how can the divisional commander junior to Col. Thomas issue his orders to him? I send you the duke of Wellington's opinion when a king's officer being the senior applied for one of the commands of my army *out* of the division in which he was stationed. The Duke very properly rejected his claim but you will see he expressly says that no junior company's officer can take the divisional command over the head of a king's officer in the same division. It is a very nice question affecting the interests of the Company's officers throughout India. The favourite plan here with those who consider only the claims of the Company's officers, is to shut up the 20th regiment in Belgaum under Lt. Col. Thomas and to appoint Col. Gilbert a junior Company's officer to the command of the division, removing the head quarters to Dharwar. This plan I think very objectionable, and so, I hope will you. Why disturb the military arrangements of the presidency and deprive government in the hour of need of the services of the 20th regiment merely to meet a case of difficulty which after all must be finally decided by the court? The supercession of so many officers by Col. McCleod's promotion in Bengal is the subject of conversation here. I do not exactly understand the merits of the case. Some of these days Ahmadnagar will be the head quarters of the artillery for all this part of India. It is a noble station for a larger force and how much more convenient for the [*illeg*] cantonment to be supplied with all it wants from Nagar than from Madras. Forgive this very long prose . . . .

358. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 24 September 1831
Recd. Simla. 7 October 1831

My dear Lord William,

I return Mr. Lushington's letter. I do not think that I have seen the memorandum to which it refers. I suppose that he means to throw the responsibility and odium of any measures that may be adopted on you alone. Your Lordship's letter to the Madras government has not yet reached me. I am afraid that you will have some trouble on this subject. Mr. Lushington has hitherto shown so much disposition to have his

own way in everything, that I cannot trust his seeming resignation to your will. Your Lordship, I conclude, has more information than has come before us, which has induced you to adopt the decided measure of assuming the government of Mysore. I do not think that we have sufficient for it, if the measure had depended on us.

359. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Simla. 26 September 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

I send our route and the probable period of our arrival and of our halts. Illness and accidents excepted, our calculation will not I trust be disappointed.

I have resolved to depute Col. Pottinger[1] to propose to the [Pirpur] amir of Sind, Murad Ali, to consent to the navigation of the Indus and to come to some arrangement for fixing the amount of duties. Lt. Burnes is of opinion, from the description he gave to him and from the character of the man as well as of his policy, that he will not yield to this representation. There are circumstances, however, which are favourable to the accomplishment of this object. Ranjit Singh has been threatening his possessions on the west of the Indus, and the other amirs of Sind of whom [Pirpur] is the most powerful and independent, is beyond measure anxious for an alliance with us, for the sake of being protected against the Hyderabad chief and Ranjit Singh. What the latter may say to all this I do not know, but he complains very much that he cannot get rid of his Kashmir shawls, of which he has the monopoly, and has thought of establishing an agent in Bombay for the sake of them. This may possibly open his eyes to the advantage of a free commercial intercourse with other countries by the Indus: but on the other hand, the introduction of British vessels, merchants, and [troops] to closer contact with his dominions may possibly alarm him and may also be seen as an obstacle to the extension of his conquests to the south-west, which he openly acknowledges. He told Lt. Burnes that the Sindians paid tribute to the Afghans: that he being in possession of Peshawar, the right has devolved upon him to that which they now do not pay to anyone.

We are going into the interior for a week with Lord Dalhousie. I fear there is little to repay the trouble. Lord Dalhousie was unwell a few days ago, but is quite recovered.

359. [1] Pottinger, Sir Henry, 1789–1856. Served in the north-west of India. Sent on mission to Sind, 1831, and made political agent there 1836–40.

360. *Lord Dalhousie to Bentinck*

Simla. 27 September 1831

My Lord:

After having attentively perused the various documents by the members of the committee of finance at Calcutta, and by the members of council, I can feel no difficulty in complying with the desire expressed in your Lordship's minute, that I should give my opinion 'as to the proper position of the commander-in-chief, with reference to the well-being of the departments confided to his charge'.

There can be no doubt of the necessity, that the commander-in-chief in India should at all times be placed in the most confidential communication with the governor and government; but a residence of three months in Calcutta, in which I attended regularly the meetings of the council, satisfied me that the constant attendance of the commander-in-chief in council could not be useful to the public service, and therefore could not be desirable.

The attention of the commander-in-chief must be chiefly called to the discipline, equipment, and ready state for service, in which the army is expected to be kept. His personal presence and inspection are absolutely necessary, not for his own satisfaction only, but for that also of the government, to which he is responsible for any irregularities or deficiencies. It is not an option with the commander-in-chief to remain near the seat of government; it is his duty to place himself in the midst of his troops, that he may know their state, the country in which he is to act, and every matter connected with their well-being. It is certain, that the first wish and desire of every succeeding commander-in-chief in India will be, to proceed with the least possible delay to the point where he may best see and know his command. A glance on the map of Bengal will show that Calcutta is an extreme point, withdrawn from convenient intercourse with the great body of the army; that all correspondence, all orders, all inspection, are rendered difficult by the distance in this presidency, but infinitely more so when the commander-in-chief reflects, that his commission has placed him in chief command of the armies in all the presidencies, and at the same time lays upon him the responsibility attached to such commission.

Under that view of the 'departments confided to my charge,' I need no further argument to show that my post and head-quarters ought to be central, having ready and quick communication, not only throughout Bengal, but also with Madras and Bombay.

I beg, however, to draw your Lordship's attention to the manner in which I have been attended by the chief head-quarter staff of the army, for the purposes of this my first inspection. I left Calcutta in October last, having directed in orders, that the chief officers of departments should leave behind everything not absolutely necessary for public service, and most especially to bring only such proportion of inferior officers as were indispensable for the affairs in each. I have every reason

to believe that these orders have been obeyed; nevertheless I find myself marching at the head of a little army of every rank and gradation. The chief depot of this great staff is still at Calcutta, but so far distant, that my inspection, which I could not accomplish in a less time than two or three seasons, required all this population which now accompanies me.

Were the permanent head-quarters of the commander-in-chief placed in a centre point of the country, I might have accomplished my inspection with little more attendance than my aides-de-camp, and a very few assistants of the adjutant and quartermaster-general's departments; and, as the season required, the commander-in-chief might retire upon that head-quarter, where all his principal departments and officers were occupied in his absence; but to Calcutta he could not possibly retire in each season.

The enormous expenses attending this movable camp afford matter of serious consideration to the government, in addition to that of the facility and convenience of command to that officer, in whom the confidence of the chief governor must be placed.

Your Lordship's minute has so fully expressed your conviction on this point (predicting even that in future the commander-in-chief will always place himself in upper Bengal), that I need not say more upon it. The next question is, which is the best and most centrical point for the purpose?

I think that Agra and Allahabad are nearly equal in the advantages they possess.

If the movements and correspondence of the commander-in-chief were alone considered, I would give the preference to Agra; but if the artillery branch of the service, and that of the engineers, could be brought to Allahabad, and placed under the more immediate cognizance and control of the commander-in-chief, which I do most strenuously and urgently advise, then indeed Allahabad has immense advantages over Agra. Should it be hereafter decided that Allahabad should be the head-quarters of the governor-general, as supreme government, then there can be no doubt that there also should be placed the commander-in-chief.

Your Lordship's minute expresses a desire that I should also give my opinion upon all the other points touched upon in the minutes of the members of the finance committee and of council; but in maturely considering these papers, I see only one great and important proposition to be considered. All other points appear to me as matters of detail belonging to that one.

It seems also, that there is perfect unanimity on that great question, with the exception of forming a fourth presidency in the upper provinces, called usually 'the central India.'

I entirely concur in the general opinion, that one supreme government, in 'the governor-general in council', is required and most essentially necessary to govern with energy this great empire.

I concur with your Lordship, that in such change there is no necessity whatever, nor advantage even, to be gained in altering the existing presidencies, or the limits of them; that lieutenant governors should be appointed in charge of the local administration in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, having as now a council for each; and that the governor-general, as supreme government, residing at Allahabad, should have the full power of proceeding, when to him it shall seem fit, to any part or residence of the subordinate presidencies, there to assume his place as chief governor in council.

I think with your Lordship, that the ablest council that could be found to assist the supreme government should be a member of council from each of the presidencies, and chosen by the governor-general.

That during the required absence of these councillors from their presidencies, the vacant place might be filled, according to the present system, by a temporary appointment.

With regard to the consideration of the economy of this new system, I think that such details can only be well arranged by the supreme government when formed; and from what I have seen in this country, I should think that such a subject, proceeding from the governor-general and his three councillors, would be viewed with equal liberality and justice to the parties concerned, both public and private.

I concur in the general opinion, that there should be but one commander-in-chief, having power to visit every part of the three armies; and I have no hesitation in saying, that having himself seen the three armies, the commander-in-chief cannot find any difficulty in removing all the obstacles, and all the objections now imagined, why one uniform system should not constitute one active and united army.

My opinion is very decided, that the existing disjointed system renders a much more numerous force necessary, than would be the case were those forces distributed by one head where most wanted, mutually connected and mutually co-operating.

The commander-in-chief in Bengal; one major-general, inspector of cavalry; two major-generals, inspectors of infantry.

One lieutenant-general in Madras; one major-general, inspector of cavalry; one major-general, inspector of infantry.

One lieutenant-general in Bombay, and two major-generals, as in Madras.

The further distribution of divisions and brigades cannot now be stated; but I do not hesitate to recommend, that when such distribution shall be made, considerations of seniority of rank shall not prevail so much as is the practice now, over considerations of talent and military conduct.

I agree with your Lordship, that a great proportion of the numerous presidency staff, and certainly that double staff of the king's and Company's army, might be dispensed with.

My opinion is also very decided in regard to the medical and military boards. I consider them both not only as not useful, but as

heavy and most expensive incumbrances upon the effective command of the army.

I regret to find one point upon which I must differ from all the able individuals who have stated their sentiments in these papers, and that is, as to a legislative council in India.

A facility to enact laws appears to me to be one of the most dangerous powers that can be given to a subordinate government, for such I must consider even the supreme government of India, as compared with the crown and parliament of Great Britain.

I think it might be quite sufficient to vest in the supreme government the power to recommend laws to be hereafter enacted for the general good of India, that recommendation to be founded on opinions given by the judges in the several presidencies, in manner similar to the opinion of the twelve judges in England, occasionally called for by the crown or by parliament.

The supreme government having ample powers to provide for all emergencies, I could fear no inconvenience, no injury, to the great interests of India, in waiting for a mature consideration of the subject before the actual enactment of law, and that such law should pass in the parliament only.

361. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 9 October 1831

My dear Lord William,

I am much obliged to you for your route. A most interesting journey it will be.

I am exceedingly sorry to learn that your Lordship is about to embark in negotiations about the Indus. I see that no one is proof against the temptation of extension. It seems to be contrary to our nature to remain quiet and contented with what we have got. To my mind this move on the Indus is the forerunner of perilous wars and ruinous expenditure. It is wonderful how we invariably confirm and justify by our conduct the jealousies and suspicions with which we are viewed. The amirs of Sind have been resisting our encroachments for the last twenty or five and twenty years, apparently without warrant or reason. But the day is coming. They will see in your Lordship's proposals the confirmation of their fears. They will not agree to them willingly. The next step according to our usual policy is to compel them. We are too overbearing to be thwarted, and thus we advance, crushing the independence of every state that we come near. We profess moderation, and nevertheless shew by our continual restlessness that there is no safety in our neighbourhood. I had hopes that your Lordship's administration would have been distinguished for moderation and regard for the rights of other states. But this project as to the Indus, and other symptoms of a disposition to assert supreme authority

over other states, make me now fear that it will be otherwise. Every step by which we approximate ourselves to the Russians appears to me to be playing their game for them. The only manner perhaps in which they could be formidable to our power in India is by shortening the distance between us, by which they will be nearer to their resources, and we more removed from ours, with the additional disadvantage of rendering all the countries that we meddle with disaffected and hostile. You will perceive that your project has roused my alarms. I quite grieve at it.

362. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Simla. 18 October 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

Lord Dalhousie is particularly anxious to go in the *Minerva* which comes on the 28th December. Lord D. expects to be at Calcutta on the 4th January and his intention is to sail in two days afterwards. If you could arrange this for him I should be much obliged to you. He is on his way, and I hear has not been incommoded by the heat. His health has made him irritable and reserved, and his natural good judgment has not had fair play: he wrote me a most angry letter about the Meerut barracks that is about your decision about them. But upon explanation, he instantly withdrew it, and sent me word the next day, he had destroyed the draft. He will I fear still go away with the impression that he has been ill-used by me and all the rest, and especially by Casement: but this does not signify. He is a kind, warm-hearted man, and as clean-handed, clean-minded a man cannot be excelled. He also would be glad if the ship could be saved from touching at Madras. I think you may be sure of his punctuality, so great is his anxiety to leave the country. He is I think entitled to every consideration, even at some sacrifice to the Company. Will you have the goodness to inform him whether the *Minerva* can be kept for the few days longer than the 28th December.

We start tomorrow for Rupar. I leave the hills with great satisfaction and hope to escape in the plains from the water regime to which I have been some time condemned, with much advantage I almost regret to say.

363. *Peter Auber to Bentinck.* Private

London. 21 October 1831
Recd. Simla. 25 May 1832

. . . . . .

The mercantile community here is suffering under much depression, owing in some measure to the stagnation arising from the reform measure which from the uncertainty of its operation induces the

manufacturers to abstain from working at the present moment. I trust some measure will be devised that may put the question at rest for it keeps all classes in a state of continued agitation

. . . . . .

I have already mentioned to your Lordship that Ram Mohan Roy has come forward as the avowed agent of the king of Delhi. The subject has been under consideration and the result at present will be the refusal on the part of the court to recognize him, to express to the supreme government a desire that the state of his Majesty's wants should be looked into and, if it appears necessary, that an extension of 3 lakhs per annum to the present stipend of 12 lakhs granted under Lord Minto's government should be made in such manner as you shall deem most advisable. In this Mr. Grant fully acquiesces. Ram Mohan has behaved very well. He does not yet know the refusal, and will doubtless be mystified; but there would be no end to such appeals by personal agents over the principle once admitted. . . .

364. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Rupar. 27 October 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

Yesterday Ranjit visited me and today I returned the visit. He talked much of you and repeated, as he does before, the complete verification of your prediction and assurance, 25 years ago, that the friendship established by you between the two states would flourish without interruption for their mutual benefit. He is a shrewd fellow, a great questioner, of unpolished manner, attending and not over-looking with his single eye any minutia however small and having evidently his whole concerns completely in hand. His reception this morning was very handsome, without the least disorder of any kind. His troops looked well. . . . He is to give Lady William an entertainment on the Sutlej on Saturday which she is to return on Monday and on Tuesday I shall be off. I saw all his diamonds today, which he wore, and magnificent indeed they are. His son Kharak Singh is here. A poor creature, but apparently well disposed. Ranjit is in excellent health. His French officers dine with him today. He seems to keep them at a distance and did not allow them to be present, at the audience, where 16 of his sirdars had seats. Everything has passed off very well. The position of our camps on each side is very picturesque. . . .

365. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

London. 3 November 1831
Recd. Simla. 6 May 1832

. . . . . .

The evidence is not yet printed as taken before the committee last session. Some answers to written queries by Ram Mohan Roy are contained in the last part. Upon the whole, his evidence is well given and it is fair and unbiased. He strongly points out the miserable state of the ryots or cultivators, supports the permanent settlement, urges some fixed assessment on the land so that the ryots may know what they are about. Suggests the introduction of natives in the room of the greater part of European collectors and suggests that Indian servants should be older before they enter upon official duty in India.

. . . . . .

366. *Bentinck to Lt. Col. Pottinger*

Camp at Naogour. 3 November 1831

In order to place you completely in possession of the views of the home authorities in respect to the negotiation with which you have been entrusted, I enclose a copy of the despatch from the secret committee in which they are contained and I will, in the present letter, communicate to you without reserve, my own sentiments upon the whole of this question.

It is necessary to advert to that part of the despatch only, which relates to the navigation of the Indus, the importance of which, commercially and politically, the secret committee have not in my judgment, too highly appreciated.

The establishment of a conveyance for the manufactures of England and India by means of that fine river, which shall at once be secure from plunder, and shall be relieved from excessive and uncertain duties, cannot fail to promote very materially, the objects contemplated by the secret committee. From the reports of Lieut. Conolly[1] and others, it is clear, that in the countries to the westwards, a decided preference is given to British manufactures, but that they cannot compete in price with those of Russia, in consequence of the insecurity and difficulty of the present route, and the imposition of numerous and exorbitant transit duties.

Nor are the political advantages of inferior consequence. A more frequent intercourse with the amirs of Sind and the other chiefs residing near the Indus, purely commercial, unaccompanied by any project of ambition and aggrandizement, would have the effect of removing all distrust of our power, and of clearly establishing that identity of

366. [1] Conolly, Arthur, 1807–42(6). Made a reputation by returning from England to India in 1827 through central Asia. *D.N.B.*

interest, mutually existing, of making common cause against all foreign invasion. In the event of any such attack, a hope is expressed in paragraph 7 that our military means would enable us to destroy any such hostile army before it could reach our own provinces. It is either to the westward of the Indus, upon the debouche of the invaders from the mountains or upon the bank of that river to prevent the passage of it, that the first struggle would have to be made. In either case, the banks of the Indus would be the place of rendezvous of the troops from all parts of India, and to the transport of those coming from Bombay and the south of India, the Indus would afford a great and almost indispensible facility. The superiority of numbers that could thus be readily collected, would in all probability, be at once decisive of the contest. But these arrangements cannot be postponed till the enemy is at our door. We must know beforehand our friends and our foes. It is not at the moment when all our force ought to be collected and applied to the general defence, that these negotiations could be prudently deferred, which, if these are unsuccessful, would probably prevent the choice of our own field of battle, and would deprive us of the advantages of a united and concerted plan of operations. It is only by good understanding, long previously subsisting—by actual experience of the benefits of our protection and alliance, for which our policy towards the protected states has paved the way, that we can hope in the hour of need for a cordial and well understood concert and cooperation. And with reference to all these considerations, it is in my opinion, most justly remarked in the 38th paragraph of the despatch of the secret committee: we are far from being desirous of having any collision with the people of Sind, but we cannot permit any jealous feeling in their part to close the navigation of the Indus, should it appear to offer results not only commercially but politically important, which but for them would be attained.

In the public despatch have been stated the circumstances, which at the present moment, peculiarly favour this negotiation. Ranjit Singh is, I believe aware that something is on the carpet. He however asked no questions, but upon two occasions, put forward the subject of the Sind vakils, as if to give an opening for any remarks. It was however, done with apparent indifference and was met precisely in the same manner. He has not disguised his views upon Shikarpur. These must be known to the amirs, and the fact of the vakils of the family of the ancient dynasty being in his camp and whose claims, it would be according to the ordinary march of his policy to take up, will of course be also known to them, and will probably make them anxious to court our protection. A most friendly letter received the day before our leaving Rupar, by Lieut. Burnes from Murad Ali, not in answer to any communication from that officer, and which never would have been written under ordinary circumstances, is to my mind a clear indication of some present apprehension. It struck me also that Ranjit was desirous of displaying before the Sind vakils, the good understanding

existing between the two governments I learnt in corroboration of Ranjit's plans on Sind, that Colonel Court's brigade is under orders to join Mons. Ventura. I am at the same time of opinion that such is the extreme caution which has marked all Ranjit's conduct, and such his thorough conviction of our superiority, that a single word from us will put an end to all serious designs of conquest upon the Sind territory, though it might not prevent, if there was no adequate force upon the spot to resist him, a temporary attack upon Shikarpur for the purpose of levying tribute.

I fear that no eloquence will be sufficiently powerful to convince the amir of Hyderabad of the certain financial benefits that he would derive from a free and secure commercial intercourse subject to moderate duties. With him it will be a choice of evils and his only calculation will probably be, whether the immediate and present danger from Ranjit Singh is not greater than the more distant one of admitting Europeans into the Indus, with the risk also of our hostility in the event of a non-compliance with the present overtures. It cannot be expected that he will sell his consent to the latter at a less price than protection from the former. A defensive guarantee of this nature would be very objectionable, and I should be very glad to receive any suggestion from you by which it could be avoided—and if unavoidable, how it could be reduced within the smallest and safest limits. Murad Ali might possibly be satisfied with an annual payment for a free passage to all vessels carrying the English flag. Any guarantee about the succession to the masnad after his death, would involve us in very great embarrassment.

I cannot imagine that the possibility of a Russian invasion has ever been suggested to his contemplation, or if it has, that he may have speculated upon its consequences. Ranjit Singh adverted to it. He was anxious to secure from me a paper confirming former assurances of the sincerity and permanency of the alliance. A paper expressive of his wishes as to the purport of such a paper was given to me, and concluded with this expression—'that the friends and enemies of the one should be considered as the friends and enemies of the other'. Mr. Prinsep explained both to his confidential agent and to the maharaja himself, the consequences of such a stipulation, and that each party would be bound to consult and to assist the other in all cases of military operations against other states. They were asked to whom this precaution had reference. The answer of both was—to the Russians. A general defensive alliance amidst our numerous connections, that listens to the voice of reason. If this measure is to be carried at any time, it must be through the influence of fear, and it happens by a concurrence of circumstances that the present moment is peculiarly favourable to the success of such a negotiation.

367. *Bentinck's minute on the training of the civil service*

10 November 1831

1. The Bombay government in their despatch to the honourable court, under date the 1st of December 1830, submitted, with their recommendation of it, a proposition of Sir John Malcolm, founded upon an original plan of Mr. Holt Mackenzie, for assimilating the salaries of the civil service to those of military officers employed on the staff, that is, one part of the pay to be considered as personal pay, and regulated according to length of service, the other part, as the pay of the office, or staff appointment, which the incumbent may happen to fill. Mr. Mackenzie's plan, which was written during Lord Amherst's government, never having been recorded, I now take the opportunity of doing so. It will be found, like all others coming from the same pen, an able paper, and to contain a strong and forcible exposition of the difficulties, drawbacks and imperfections unavoidable belonging to an administration, conducted by Europeans and foreigners, in a country situated like India, with the customs, habits and language of whose inhabitants there is so limited an acquaintance.

2. The scale proposed by Mr. Mackenzie is inserted in the margin.* The only remark I feel inclined to make upon it is that the personal salary is too high for the juniors, and too low for the seniors. It is among the latter, that inefficiency is so detrimental to the public service, while an inadequate provision operates upon them with extreme hardship. A high salary to the former is attended only with disadvantage, in facilitating the contracting of debt, by giving the means of paying a larger amount of interest and insurance. To the juniors, the allowance should be measured by the wants of a strict economy, rather than upon a scale of affluence, and there can be no better criterion in fixing the limits of a sufficient and proper maintenance, than the military pay of the army.

* Class	Period of service	Allowance of rank per annum as per note	Ditto as per list
1st	Exceeding 30 years . . .	20,400	24,000
2nd	,, 25 and less than 30 .	16,500	18,000
3rd	,, 20 do. 25 . . .	12,000	14,400
4th	,, 15 do. 20 . . .	9,600	12,000
5th	Less than 15 years . . .	8,400	Same as
6th	From 8 to 11 years . . .	7,200	preceding
7th	Exceeding 3 years . . .	6,000	column
8th	Less than 3 years . . .	4,800 and 3,600 respectively	

N.B. It would appear that after writing the note, and while preparing the recast of the civil list upon its principles, Mr. Holt Mackenzie saw reason to increase the higher grades—the comparison holds so as to exhibit an equality of the totals with the higher allowance for senior servants.

By the annexed table,† it will be seen that a captain receives, when on full batta, 89 rupees per mensem less, and on half, 129 rupees less than the proposed personal allowance of 500 rupees per mensem, exclusive of office pay, proposed to be given to the writer between 3 and 8 years standing, whose average years do not probably exceed the whole average service of the other.

3. It seemed desirable, upon a project affecting the interests of the service at large, to submit it to the discussion of some of the very respectable and experienced officers, who happened to be, at the time, in my camp. A committee was, in consequence, formed, whose report will be now recorded. Their opinion will be found to be favourable to the principle of the plan; subsequent changes, and the great proposed reduction in the whole establishment would make a new recast, or arrangement of salaries, necessary, and it would not be, of course, the intention of the home authorities that these accidental circumstances should operate to the disadvantage of the establishment that is to be permanently kept up. It is not, however, upon the detail, but upon the principle of the plan, as tending to improve the comfort of individuals, and to promote the efficiency of the administration, that I propose to offer any remarks.

4. I will take this occasion of adverting to a remark contained in the 57th paragraph of the report of the civil finance committee, dated 12th of July 1830, in which they take a review of the civil establishment of the Bengal presidency. They observe that in the lower provinces, for the mere collection of the revenues, a native tahsildar might take the place of an European officer, and in the following paragraph they advert to the objection that might probably be made to it, in reference to the usual practice of government of appointing to the easy office of a collector to a district permanently settled, the least competent of the public officers.

Para. 58: 'Against this arrangement, we have, as yet, only heard one material objection, not founded upon a misconception of the position in which the government and its revenue officers stand towards the people, viz., that it will no longer be possible for government to find employment for indolent or ignorant men, without greater inconvenience than is now experienced from the appointment of an incompetent collector. But this is an argument which, at the present moment especially, it must be unnecessary for us seriously to notice.'

5. To maintain the converse of this proposition may appear ludicrous and absurd, but it is to facts, and not to theory, that we are to look, and if it be true that incompetent men always have been, and must continue

	Full Batta	*Half Batta*
† Colonel	1,280	1,280
Lt. Colonel	1,020	820
Major	780	635
Captain	411	371
Lieutenant	254	224
Ensign	200	180

to be employed, it then becomes a position not quite so clear, whether the lesser evil to the community might not be to retain such offices, tho' at some increase of cost, in which a moderate degree of efficiency may be harmless at least, instead of reducing the number of appointments to the lowest possible amount, and assigning to each such an extent of duty as can be executed by superior industry and ability. It appears to be an error in all our administrative arrangements, that we have calculated upon a degree of imaginary perfection, in the agency by which this country is exclusively governed, which it would be utterly inconsistent with the laws of human nature that it can possess. The government of the Bengal presidency, containing about fifty millions of people, is entrusted to about 400 individuals, not selected by any reference to qualifications, subjected hitherto to no subsequent weeding, exposed to a climate unfavourable to the European constitution and particularly adverse to mental and bodily activity, not roused to exertion by the ordinary stimulus of competition, neither checked nor encouraged, except partially in the lower provinces, where the press and the residence of Europeans have some small influence, by public opinion, and from the vast extent of our territories, placed, for the most part, at so remote a distance from the seat of government, as to render the control and superintendence of official authority utterly inefficient and inadequate. I mention these circumstances with no desire to disparage the civil service, because it may be, I believe, boldly and confidently asserted, that no part of his Majesty's colonial possessions is as well administered as that of the East India Company. I state them as facts and truths, always to be borne in mind, and strongly enforcing the necessity of devising every possible contrivance by which the internal defects of this foreign agency, in an uncongenial climate, can be corrected and improved.

6. I shall take the liberty of recapitulating some of the measures, which have been adopted for this purpose, and shall notice others that I think might be successfully introduced.

7. Beginning with the first and indispensable qualification for public employment, the utmost possible competency in the native languages, I have urged the continuance of the college, as affording the most efficient system of education; and I have as strongly recommended that the test of competency shall be subjected to the only true and impartial trial, viz. that which shall be conducted by permanent examiners, selected for honour and education.

8. To obviate the great disadvantage to the government and to the public, of an ever changing agency by the continual transfer of officers from one situation to another, the proposal of a more general equalization of allowances had my entire consent, and has had the best effects.

9. To render official control and superintendence more efficacious, and to bring it nearer to the door of the executive officers in the provinces, I cordially adopted the plan of substituting for the courts of circuit, ordinarily the resting place of those officers not considered the

best fitted for the higher employments in the service, individual commissioners, whose personal responsibility would be directly involved, and whose charge would be so circumscribed as to admit of a real supervision.

10. I now advocate for the same reason, the transfer of a deputation both of the sadar board of revenue and of the sadar adalat to the upper provinces, so that the community, whose best rights and interests are entrusted to their care, may have the power of a direct and personal appeal.

11. In pursuing still further the same principles, I concur in the necessity so strongly urged by the civil finance committee, though differing with them in the plan itself, that our western territories should be placed under a distinct government.

. . . . .

16. Cases of gross delinquency ought to be held up to public execration, in every possible manner; but it may be questioned whether these greater crimes inflict one-thousandth part of the injury that arises from idleness and habitual neglect of duty. The first class are comparatively of rare occurrence, their enormity confines them within narrow limits, they cannot be of long duration, and such crimes will find no indulgence in the sympathy of the service at large. But that description of idleness and neglect in a principal, whose kachheri, as in the case in question, is shut for weeks together to the suitors for justice, and whose duties in fact, devolve upon an ill-paid and irresponsible amlah, afflict a whole community, introduce universal corruption, and place every man's rights and interests in jeopardy. No moral turpitude is attached to such misconduct, in public opinion; it entails no dishonour in the estimation of his associates; but the consequences upon the happiness and rights of the native population are excessive, and therefore for the sake of example, call upon the government to express its reprehension in the most public manner.

. . . . .

20. While I am of opinion that it would be difficult to form any agency more efficient than that of the civil service, and while I deem it necessary that its integrity as a body, and the secure prospect of honour and reward, should be preserved to it, it is impossible to be insensible, at the same time, to some of the disadvantages belonging to this in common with all '*Exclusive Orders*'. In all will be found the same disposition to view with satisfaction things as they are; the same indulgence towards the errors of members of the same community, and the want of that exertion generally which rivalry and competition can alone excite. But besides these, there is in the mode of recruiting the civil service by very young men, which seems however to be unavoidable, a cause operating very much to diminish what might otherwise be the greater usefulness of an European agency. These young men come out at too early an age, to have acquired any practical experience in any branch of business, science or knowledge; and therefore instead

of bringing out, as new-comers, the latest improvements of the European civilised world, to be ingrafted upon the existing stock, they themselves retrograde and fall into the opinions and feelings of an age gone by. These effects must, I think, be very obvious to any stranger's eye, who has been familiar with English practice, with the wants of every community, and with the obligations of those by whom its concerns are managed. The honourable court have done something to supply this defect by the indulgence of a three years' furlough after an expiration of ten years' service, when the individual will be able fully to appreciate, and to profit by his observations upon the superiority of Europe in every particular comprised in the science of civil economy and government. I venture to think, that it would be even good policy to make this furlough a compulsory measure, deducting this period from the term of service required, before the pension can be received. But this alone would not be sufficient. To correct this exclusiveness, to introduce a feeling and counsel independent altogether of the service, and to add to it the benefit of European experience combined with matured judgment and acknowledged talents and learning, it would be most useful in my judgment to associate with the judges of the sadar courts in the upper and lower provinces, one or more judges appointed by his Majesty for the purpose of better superintending and of improving the administration of justice, and of the police. It is essential that this infusion of a different agency should not be so extensive as to interfere with the integrity of the service, and with its just and fair prospects. The recommendation is made upon the same principle on which we have already proposed the union of the judges of the supreme court with the local government, for all purposes of legislation.

21. In addition to the subjects contained in the despatch of the government of Bombay, two other questions were submitted to the committee.

1st. The means of accelerating promotion by inducing the retirement of senior servants.

2nd. The best mode of employing the junior servants.

22. It is difficult to provide a remedy for the evil contained in the first question, which is only felt in Bengal, where there are more than 20 pensions in arrear, for which there are no applicants, while in Bombay and Madras, the annual appropriation will not satisfy the demand. The cause is in the great debt of the older servants, produced by habits of extravagance, which never existed to the same extent in the other presidencies, and the effect of which is to saddle the public service with a perpetual burden of old and worn out officers, and to blast the hopes of the rising generation of that promotion to which they are justly entitled. In the last year, two propositions were made to the honourable court by the subscribers to the civil annuity fund, in order to induce incumbents to retire. 1st. by increasing out of a part of the accumulated annuities, the amount of pension to those entitled to retire, a proposition, of the equity or success of which, I should be very

doubtful; secondly, by allotting the remainder in smaller annuities, to those officers who had not completed their period of service, but from continued bad health would be glad to return to England. For this latter description of misfortune, both humanity and the benefit of the service would urge a provision, not only for the present occasion, but as a general regulation. For the sake of the pension, the individuals are induced to hang on, continually absent from their stations, and doing little real duty, while life is put to great hazard, and excellent service often meets with a cruel return.

23. But if some measure is necessary to protect the fair claims to promotion of our own servants, it is more loudly called for by the interests of this vast population. If we exclude the natives from every place of emolument and honour in the country, if these great advantages are conferred upon a privileged few, we are doubly bound to alleviate as much as possible the evils of this monopoly, and not to allow, for the mere personal advantage of the individual, the administration to be encumbered by a mass of incapacity, whether proceeding from ignorance and idleness, or infirmity of mind or body. The proposition of Mr. Holt Mackenzie will give great aid to the government in providing with less injury to the public service, for the inefficient seniors. Whatever a strict and severe morality may dictate, it is impossible, in practice, to deprive an old servant of his office, if he has been guilty of no act of delinquency, only because he is useless, and to consign him at once from comfort and wealth, to the comparative beggary of an officer out of employ. Mr. Mackenzie's plan makes a fair compromise between the rights of the individual and of the public, and enables the government, with less hesitation, to perform this invidious part of their duty. But Mr. Mackenzie's plan is imperfect as a remedy, because it supposes the continued employment of an inefficient individual, and only mitigates the evil by placing him in office of less responsibility. But there are men in the civil service and in high situations, who are totally unfit to be employed. In the army, these cases are disposed of on the pension and invalid lists, according as they may have arisen from bad and vicious habits, or from causes reflecting no discredit upon the character of the individual. It would be easy to extend Mr. Mackenzie's plan so as to remove both these occasions of great obvious public injury.

24. Upon the second question, the best mode of employing the junior civil servants, the committee are divided in opinion, the majority advocating the employment of assistants in the independent management of some branch of public business, on their own responsibility, and considering the registrar's court as the best school of instruction; the minority asserting the total unfitness of young men of immature judgment without experience and with little knowledge of the customs, manners or language of the country, for the administration of civil justice.

25. It is difficult to conceive how a young man can become a good judge, collector, or magistrate, only by the repetition of his own bad

decrees, by making bad settlements, or by unjustly flogging and fining unfortunate pensioners. It is not in this way that the knowledge of law and judicial practice, or of any other science, is acquired in any other part of the world. The mode of elementary instruction at the expense of the rights and sufferings of others here recommended, was, I believe, compared by Mr. Courtney Smith, not very inaptly, to the study of anatomy by the dissection of living subjects. But this proposition of the majority, strange, as it will to many appear, is nevertheless in perfect accordance with actual practice, and would probably meet the convenience and wishes of the greater part of the service; the seniors finding much more useful and manageable their native amlah and English writers, and the juniors very naturally preferring the freedom and consequence of independent and uncontrolled command.

26. This feeling and practice is strongly illustrated by the reasoning contained in the 45th paragraph of the report, signed, let it be recollected by some of the most experienced and intelligent officers in the service. 'If assistants, they be not entrusted with some independent branch of business on their own responsibility, *if they are subject to the caprice of a superior*, perhaps of inferior ability to themselves, and the question whether business shall be transferred or not, *be left dependent upon the influence of a serishtadar*, we should despair of seeing the assistants, as a body, made useful to the state, proportionately to the charge of maintaining them, and although individual collectors and individual magistrates and commissioners may have found means of *extracting useful service from them through the terms of confidence* on which they live together, *the example will not warrant a reliance on such a system*, for the general conduct of affairs, nor is the employment so given by superiors for their own relief, and in the spirit of confidence, any substitute for the independent management of a civil court, under rules and responsibilities declared by law.'

27. To this remark the minority answer, 'if indeed, as would seem to be here hinted, the junior members of our body are to be coaxed into obedience, it is high time that a stricter system of discipline should be substituted, for that which has been hitherto in force'.

28. The result of all my investigation, now pretty extensive, and very earnestly made, into the system of our administration, has been a conviction, that its main defect consists in the absence of all official subordination, in the equality existing between all ranks, and in the individuality, if I may say so, of every public functionary. The recommendation, that I would in conclusion the most strongly urge upon the honourable court, is that they would confirm and persevere in the system long since recommended by them to the Madras government, upon the authority of Sir Thomas Munro, of uniting the appointments of collector and magistrate, of destroying the independence of each other, of every officer employed in the same district, of making the collectors a great office, consisting of deputy collectors and joint magistrates and assistants, subordinate to one head and acting upon

the same system. The public will then be saved from the evils of a continually occurring interregnum, from the succession of perfect strangers to all the concerns of the district, and from the undue advantages which all such occasions of the virtual suspension of authority give to a corrupt amlah. This arrangement gives also to the government an opportunity of providing a counterbalance to the inefficiency of a chief, by aiding him with subordinates of superior qualifications, and by placing under the correction of a strong superior, the idle and the weak. It is in a school of this kind, that young men will be best trained. A profound knowledge of jurisprudence, or the high attainments that distinguish English lawyers and judges are not to be looked for, nor however desirable, are they indispensable, but what is necessary is that those, both young and old, who have the decision of suits, whether for ten or a thousand rupees, and who are vested with the powers of fine, imprisonment and corporal punishment, should have served their apprenticeship, should be conversant with the manners and business of the country, and that their opinions should be formed upon the practice and greater experience of their superiors in office.

29. This plan is in the course of introduction, and I will not deny that I think it will work ill at first, the seniors will not assert their authority, nor will the juniors willingly submit to control. But there can be no good government until the principle can be firmly established, and as is observed by the minority, 'to this end it is only requisite, that those who have control over the young men should be given to understand, that the government will expect at their hands the maintenance of a stricter discipline, and that they will not be excused, if from any mistaken notions of lenity, they tolerate idleness or screen misconduct'.

368. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 13 November 1831
Recd. 23 November 1831

. . . If the account in the newspapers of your Lordship's meeting with Ranjit Singh is correct, I am afraid that a trick has been played, in order to give him the appearance of superiority in one particular. It is said that he put a necklace round your neck, a pair of bazarbunds on your arms, and a sarpech in your hat. No mention is made of your investing him in a similar manner. If done equally on both sides, it is an act of reciprocal friendship, indicative of cordiality and equality. If done exclusively on one side, it is a symptom of superiority on the part of the bestower. It is what a superior does to an inferior but not what an inferior does to a superior. It is what in some degree will probably be done by the king at Delhi, and was done to Lord Amherst, and there it is not amiss, because the superiority of the king is acknowledged and the motive of the acknowledgement cannot be mistaken. I hope

that it was done on both sides with Ranjit Singh, if it was done on his. It is a trick not unlikely to have been attempted and sufficient at the moment to resist, and would probably be accompanied by great signs of cordiality. With great respect.

369. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 19 November 1831
Recd. 27 November 1831

. . . What think you of an insurrection within forty miles of Calcutta? The country in the possession of the insurgents. The civil power beaten out and disgracefully put to flight. On the part of the civil officers there has been great negligence or want of information in the first instance, respecting which we must make enquiry; and some foolish conduct since, which has given great encouragement to the insurgents. A military force marched against them two days ago, and strange to say we have heard nothing of it since. Either they have been too busy to write, or the communication must be obstructed. The force sent by order of the government was a regiment of infantry with two guns, my twelve troopers, being the whole of the cavalry in our territories between Benares and Arrah, and sixty mounted artillerymen from Dum Dum. A second regiment has been sent by Gen. Watson from Barrackpore, on a separate requisition from the magistrate of Krishnagar respecting the same insurgents. I am sorry for this, for if there were any need of it, it would be of more use I conceive cooperating with the other detachment.

370. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 20 November 1831
Recd. in camp. 30 November 1831

My dear Lord William,

Our insurgents were attacked yesterday morning. They made no attempt to escape, lost 50 or 60 killed and of the rest of that party 250 are prisoners. They are described as perfectly fearless, under the influence of doctrines preached to them for the last year or two by some fakirs and maulvis. They are said to have been armed for the most part with great sticks, a few only comparatively having muskets or swords. Nevertheless they set a regiment of infantry with two guns, 40 mounted Europeans and 12 native cavalry at defiance. Would neither run nor yield, and some say that not one in the whole party asked for mercy. They had possession of a village, which they had stockaded; but they commenced the action outside. They had affairs with both parties of

cavalry before the infantry came up. That was on Friday. The infantry and guns came up in the evening, but did not attack until yesterday. The infatuated people might have gone off in the night and about half of the original party it is supposed did. But the rest as before enumerated stood in the morning to receive the attack. Two more villages are in their possession and remain to be taken. People of the same sects abound in the neighbourhood. The future management of them I suspect will require a more efficient officer than Mr. Alexander. They had a quantity of plundered property in the village. Their audacity is wonderful and if it is produced by the new doctrines I hope that the rest of the Mahomedans may not become converts to these reformers. It would not do to have such a spirit general. The men of the civil establishment did not dare to go near them, and all our police [thanas] in their neighbourhood were abandoned. Two magistrates had to run for their lives for miles like hares from hounds. It is strange that their gathering should have got to such a height without attracting the notice of our local authorities, but it is one of the natural effects of the Bengal permanent settlement, that the local officers know nothing of the real state of their districts. There are reports of oppression towards these Mahomedans on the part of the Hindu zamindar, such as fining them according to their beards, etc. This must be enquired into. Latterly the insurrection has been a daring fanatic attempt to set the government at defiance, and plunder all Christians, Hindus and Mahomedans not of their own sects, accompanied by unbridled atrocity. But if it originated in any oppression, the oppressor ought to suffer punishment, and to prevent his repeating it his estate ought to be confiscated.

371. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 21 November 1831
Recd. Camp. 30 November 1831

My dear Lord William,

My aides, Sutherland and [?Smith] who accompanied the detachment sent to quell the insurrection returned today, all opposition having ceased when they quitted camp. The leader was one of Sayyid Ahmad's companions on the pilgrimage to Mecca, from which they returned to reform the Mahomedans in India. Sayyid Ahmad left this man as his powerful representative in this quarter, and in the late business the infatuated man assumed the title of king and adopted the insignia of royalty. On what he could have founded such an expectation one cannot conceive, but he does seem to have imagined that he could establish himself, and never thought of abandoning the village where he had fixed his capital. The total expulsion and disappearance of our authority during his short reign are highly disgraceful to our subordinate civil establishments, and stamp their complete inefficiency

where they meet with resistance. Hundreds of them collected but did not dare to face the king of clubs, for most of his followers had no other weapons. These however, they were expert in using as well as stones and brickbats, and with one of these things Sutherland was knocked off his horse in the midst of them, in the morning, before the mounted Europeans or the infantry had come up, while engaged with them along with [Smith] and over twelve troopers. He fortunately recovered his seat, else he must have been despatched.

372. *Lord Clare to Bentinck*

Camp. 23 November 1831
Recd. December 1831

I send you a letter which I received for you this evening late, exactly in the state in which you see it, from Capt. Campbell; also a summary of English news not worth much and a letter from a Capt. Chesney who has been writing about a steam communication with England via the *Euphrates* worth as little.

I am afraid our English officers in Persia are giving bad advice to the king and what is worse, if Capt. Chesney tells truth, his Majesty is likely to follow it. Capt. Campbell is, I hear, an inexperienced young man, and to judge by his letters this Capt. Chesney is a very foolish man. It was the object, and a very wise one, of Sir John MacDonald to prevent the court of Persia from going to war with Russia at the time of the last war between the Porte and the autocrat of the north. You know he succeeded with some difficulty in inducing the king of Persia to remain quiet, and whether the present is a favourable moment or not for attacking Russia surely considering her colossal power it ought to be our policy to prevent Persia under any circumstances from going to war. If you desire me the prince of Shiraj shall be supplied with arms but I think they are far better in the grand arsenal Bombay. I hope you will send Dr. Melville back to [*illeg.*] soon if indeed he has been so unwell as to have even left his post, or some one who will know how to guide that very unwise durbar.

The reform bill has passed the commons on the 2nd reading as one expected and the lords will not do much against it. Leopold will make in troublesome times but a poor king of Belgium, and had I been him I shall have preferred Marlborough House and Claremont to the palais à Bruxelles.

I enter Baroda tomorrow. The Gaikwar will no doubt be ravished to see me; he intends meeting me, I hear in great state, and will I am afraid keep me a long time in the sun and away from my breakfast.

373. *Peter Auber to Bentinck*

London. 24 November 1831
Recd. Simla. 20 April 1832

. . . . .

The new president of the board tho' highly educated and having something of a natural feeling in favour of India is sadly inert. There is no possibility of moving him and whilst he is well intentioned, matters are left undecided and in abeyance because he is not disposed to decide or to bring himself to that point which is really so essential to the progress of public business. He is too apt to be led away by the opinion of the last person who is with him, hence the difficulty of getting any question decided. I may instance that of Ram Mohan Roy—for these 9 months the subject has been before him with an expression of the opinion of the chairs that it is most inexpedient to acknowledge him as the representative of the king of Delhi and to decide on his appeal here, but that the whole matter should be referred for the consideration and determination of the supreme government.

Another point I may mention to your Lordship confidentially—the half-batta question. He is almost disposed to concede it to the army whilst at the same time he hesitates in adopting the plan for a military retiring fund, which has been with him for months. He is an honourable man, and entirely free from intrigue and chicanery, which is more I'm sure than could be said for some of his predecessors who have not long quitted affairs.

Whilst alluding to the half-batta question I may be permitted to state that I have read your letter to the chairman alluding to certain ill-judged and unaccountable manifestations of feeling on the part of some of the army when your Lordship was there and likewise to the conduct of Mr. Ewer. It is a subject which has been long felt by some of the most intelligent men at home that the services, civil and military, are too much above themselves. An impatience of control, insubordination to authority, alacrity in public conduct and no mean opinion of themselves all combining to render the bodies of which each branch is composed by no means which they were in an available point of view as formerly. The very best policy exists towards your Lordship in the court and I'm quite sure that the most unreserved support will be given to your Lordship. Everyone must have known who knew anything at all of India that your Lordship took the government under circumstances of great difficulty and with all the onerous work of filling the responsible part after a most amiable but imbecile governor and with a service that will still require some time to get out or to grow out of the effects engendered by Lord Amherst's predecessor. Your Lordship appears to have acted (I may I hope be permitted to say) with great temper and judgment on the occasion of the military ball and the course adopted by Lord D. can only be attributed to his

impaired state of health. His Lordship writes me that he is destined for England. If ever there could be a necessity for combining in one person the two offices of governor-general and commander-in-chief it exists at the present moment.

. . . . . .

374. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Camp. 26 November 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

With respect to Ranjit Singh's trick about the necklace, which he might easily play upon us, I had the explanation of our master of the ceremonies, no great conjurer in these matters either I suspect. I did not see myself any disposition either to impertinence or assumption of *superiority in his demeanor, with one exception, the want of punctuality* in his own visits and in being ready to receive mine. Indeed at his review, Kharak Singh never came to meet me at all, and I arrived at the maharaja's tent, and took him quite unawares. I waited for some time and at last he came out galloping up almost alone. He might have been purposely alone, but I rather doubt it. I account it rather to their ignorance of time, than lazy and loitering habits. I took no notice of it. I would not, as I might have done, wait for my ambassador, who I knew would be late from the example of the two preceding days, because I wished to get the review over and not be exposed to the rain. . . . I am quite well again, am only weak and a sore mouth which continue to annoy me. I shall not be at Delhi before the 5th or 6th. Mr. Martin is negotiating about presents and asking an explanation of the king's designation of Lord Amherst's arrangement as a degradation. Vide his letter to the king of England.

375. *Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe*

Camp Allahabad. 1 December 1831

My dear Sir Charles,

I am sorry to say that a slight symptom of insubordination and disrespect has occurred, but it has passed by, and may be attended with advantage in preventing something more serious. I had settled to inspect the horses of the cavalry yesterday and the day before I sent an invitation to dinner to the whole corps, after coming into camp yesterday. Of eleven officers four sent excuses without assigning any reason, and the style of one was particularly objectionable. In the evening I saw the men and horses and asked the commanding officer, Captain Angelo, to call upon the officers for the motive of their declining to dine with me and to bring me their answers when he came

to dinner. I told him if the answer was not satisfactory, I should request an apology, and if refused I should suspend them from rank and pay. This threat succeeded and they all came to dinner. They are all young officers and had in the first instance sent their excuses to Capt. Angelo, who did not forward them. I find there is a good deal of ill-humour at Cawnpore and that the whole of the displeasure from late retrenchments falls upon me. A letter from an officer at Cawnpore was seen by one of my family stating this discontent and observed, if many followed *Mr. Charles Bayley's example* (adverting to his declaration that he would neither visit me at Calcutta which he did not, nor receive me into his house at Ghazipur where I had been expected) our reception was not likely to be very satisfactory. I have only heard of this letter since I resolved not to recommend him, but the knowledge of his loud and improper language has had much influence in this decision. I was not then however aware, that this behaviour had been so extensively known. I sent you a copy of a letter which a colleague of Capt. Angelo has given me an opportunity of writing and of explaining my sentiments and which I hope will check any impertinence if any more be intended. I will beg you to show it to Mr. Blunt and Colonel Casement.

376. *Sir Edward Barnes to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 5 December 1831

Dear Lord William,

I little thought that I should have been a month (for we arrived at the Sandheads on the 6th of November) in your territories without communicating with you. I have, therefore, many apologies to make for my seeming remissness. The fact is, I knew that my arrival had been intimated to you, I consequently deferred writing till I could, with certainty, say what my movements were to be.

To-morrow we are to start in the *Soonamooke*, to be towed by the *Hoogly*. These, together with a small boat form our convoy, as I was given to understand the *Hoogly* could not tow any more boats. I was, therefore, obliged to send off a convoy of carts with stores for our march from Benares, which appears to be the highest point which we can reach with convenience at this season of the year by water.

A portion of the headquarter mess will be directed to move from Cawnpore to meet us at Benares, which we expect to reach by the end of this month. Thence we shall move, necessarily slowly, on to Simla, where we calculate upon arriving about the end of March.

I am extremely concerned to hear that both your Lordship and Lady William have been suffering severely, but I trust ere this reaches you, all disease will have left you, and a return to the hills will soon restore strength.

The rumour here is that Lord Munster is named as your successor,

and has actually commenced to form his suite. If this be the case, his Lordship is more communicative to his friends at home than abroad, for in a letter which I have just received from him, he does not say a word upon the subject.

Before I left Ceylon I saw a letter from Bombay, which said *positively* that the projected meeting with Lord Clare at Ajmer was to concert means with him, preparatory to your delivering over the general government to him. These rumours will afford your Lordship some amusement.

I have to express my obligations for the preparatory steps which I found had been adopted for the payment of my passage from Ceylon. The remaining amount due to the ship was £520 which, under the orders of the vice president, has been paid.

I am given to understand that the 10th of January is the latest day that the *Minerva* can wait for Lord Dalhousie. I, therefore, propose so timing it as to arrive at Cawnpore at the same time that the official notification of his Lordship's departure can reach it by post, that in joining the great bulk of the headquarter camp, I may be in authority.

377. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 7 December 1831

My dear Lord William,

As the ceremony of the necklace appears from the enclosed to have been reciprocal, it was not only unobjectionable, but was a mark of mutual friendship. The statement in the newspaper was that Ranjit Singh, when your Lordship visited him, put on you a necklace, a sarpech (head jewel) and a pair of armlets, and it was not stated that any such ceremony had taken place on your part when he visited you. With respect to time they seem to attach some dignity to being unpunctual. I hardly ever knew them otherwise. And it is generally I believe by design.

We have reports, but nothing authentic from our own officers, of a fresh insurrection of Mahomedan fanatics in the Jessore district, and have thought it right to put troops in motion from Barrackpore for its suppression, as the silence of our own officers we now know to be no proof of the falsehood of the reports. We have reason, however, to believe that some of them are without foundation. The total inefficiency of the civil power either to quell or prevent such disturbances, and the want of intelligence by the local authorities have been exposed in the most glaring manner.

Sir Edward Barnes was to have started yesterday but has postponed his departure as his way lay through the quarter said to be the scene of the new insurrection. He waits for a strong guard and will then proceed. He proposes to put the Company to the expense of hiring a

steamer for the guard, which I think unreasonable, but have not resolution enough to forbid under all the circumstances.

I trust that this will find both Lady William and your Lordship enjoying perfect health.

Enclosure in the above

Camp. 25 November 1831

H. T. Prinsep to Bentinck

My Lord,

I was well aware of the light in which such a putting on of articles would be liable to be regarded. That it might be considered as an investiture by a superior. With respect, however, to Ranjit Singh it was reciprocal, your Lordship having first at Capt. Wade's suggestion put the necklace laid out in the tray for the maharaja round his neck when he made his visit to the durbar tent. I remarked to Capt. W. at the time that it would look like investiture as from a superior to an inferior but he said the maharaja expected and would be pleased with it. When your Lordship went over to return the visit the maharaja did the same. Your Lordship may recollect the circumstance of the maharaja having the necklace put on from the point of his having immediately after put the beads and emeralds up to his eye to examine their size and purity. His Highness's curiosity made me smile, but fortunately I was on his blind side.

P.S. On referring to the Persian note of the ceremonies taken at the time, I do not find that anything was *put on* except the necklace. No armlets nor anything else but as the maharaja removed the ring of pearls from your Lordship so did your Lordship receive it from him. I have detained this to make the reference.

378. *C. M. Wade to Captain Benson*

Ludhiana. 7 December 1831

My dear Benson,

I have not been well for some days past, which has thrown me rather back in my correspondence, or I should have replied promptly to the enquiries contained in your letters of the 21st ultimo.

Accept my best thanks for a sight of the accompanying papers regarding the expense and construction of iron suspension bridges. I have explained their contents to the maharaja, thro' his vakil but have not yet received the expression of his Highness' sentiments in reply. From the positive manner in which he declared his wish of having one of these bridges, when at Rupar, I anticipate an application to get one for him, in which event I suppose I may apply to Captain Baker, the maharaja bearing the expense, of course.

I have naturally been anxious to ascertain the real state of his Highness's feelings as to the interview at Rupar, and from every information which I can collect my impression is that he is generally satisfied with the result. He expressed himself to that effect on more than one occasion to me. The document which he received from the governor-general gave him, the maharaja observed to me, strong assurance of his Lordship's friendly disposition towards him; but from a remark made by fakir Aziz-ud-din, I am inclined to think that the non-insertion in that document of a pledge of offensive and defensive alliance makes him infer that our government is actuated by motives of policy at variance with his interests; and that his Highness's chief object in asking that pledge was to sift the real feelings of our government in relation to him. The sirdars disapproved of the interview from the first, and although pleased with the attention shewn, went away dissatisfied with the maharaja for taking that step.

Of the private interview between the governor-general and his Highness, I made no notes, and I therefore feel some diffidence in relying on my memory for a faithful record of what passed on that occasion. If you will send me your memorandum on the subject, I shall be happy to give every assistance in my power to render it as perfect as possible.

I have collected the data which his Lordship requires regarding the payment of the maharaja's troops, and you may depend on having the information by tomorrow's date.

I am very glad to learn that Lord and Lady William have recovered from their late indisposition.

The chieftain of whom I have been writing has applied to me to assist him in getting a band. I have suggested the propriety of issuing an advertisement in the gazette for one.

379. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 9 December 1831
Recd. Gurgaon. 19 December 1831

My dear Lord William,

The reports of a second insurrection appear to be devoid of foundation. We have accordingly countermanded the troops which had been put in motion.

Major White has brought out a story of a conversation that he had with the chairman of the court of directors, in which the latter assured him, and authorized him to tell his brother officers, that you had received carte blanche to make up what had been taken away from the army by the half-batta order in any way that you might think proper. This story has done mischief, by leading people to imagine that you have the power and will not use it. The assurance that no

such authority has been received here from the court is ineffectual to counteract it, for the answer then is that you have been empowered in private letters.

Sir Edward Barnes went off yesterday. A steamer was not [possible] so he took his guard instead in a pinnace. Both he and Lady Barnes made themselves very pleasant here.

380. *J. G. Ravenshaw to Bentinck*

India House, London. 10 December 1831.
Recd. Simla. 21 May 1832

My dear Lord William,

I wrote to you so fully on the [?9th] and 24th ultimo that I have little now to say but perhaps I shall do as I did then—write a long letter before I have done.

I have received your letter enclosing the correspondence with Mr. Maddock. I showed it to the chairman as well as Mr. Grant—but we agree that unless it becomes necessary in your defence, we shall not communicate the contents any further.

We have just received accounts of the select committee at China having thought better of and recalled their threat, foolishly made at first to stop the trade, but their anger with the Chinese is not a bit abated. It is for governments however not merchants to make war, but merchants should take care how they unnecessarily involve their country in war. Sir C. Metcalfe will be proposed for two years more in council on Wednesday next and I have no fear of the result. Who the provisional will be I cannot tell you. I should be puzzled to choose as I am to recommend and wish you had indicated your ideas as to persons fit for the situation, as you know most of the military characters here. I wish you would give me the names of some who would do as commanders-in-chief. Parliament has met again but no mention of [*illeg.*] or the bank charter. We have only surmises at present as to the reform bills or the extent of the opposition likely to be made to them. Ministers however seem in high glee.

We hear that Lord Dalhousie was to be at Calcutta in this month—and to come away in next.

Whatever your friend Mr. Grant may be in other respects, he is a most dilatory and undecided man. For the last 3 months or more he has been making up his mind to a proposition we have put before him—for a retiring fund for the army—and he will not say yea or nay.

He has an indiscreet fancy I think to restore the full batta but we are decidedly opposed to giving your army such a victory, after the deliberate cabinet decision which was made on that point. It is not money to spend in luxurious habits that your officers want but the

means of retiring with more comfort than at present, and thereby the aid to promotion, which is more needed than anything else.

Your financial prospects seem improving and if peace lasts you will do wonders in spite of all the abuse that is heaped upon you.

We shall be obliged to call upon you for more specie as our treasury will be very low in 1833.

Do you see any objection to young civilians sent home from illness etc. being allowed to return if they repent of their follies and undergo a strict examination in orientals before they are allowed to return, supposing always that in other respects to their oriental knowledge they are qualified?

Ranjit Singh's army by Lieut. Burnes's account is very splendid and numerous but where does he get the revenue to keep up such a force? He seems to have a hankering after or at least a tribute from that country, but the Persians are looking the same way are they not?

Talking of Persia, I suspect you have not appointed Major Stewart and will not till you hear from the court. You may then be guided by the state of things in that country, with reference to the importance of the duties to be performed.

Malcolm as you say has turned everything topsy turvy in Bombay and Lord Clare will have enough to do to put things straight again. I am not at all surprised. Mysore is a melancholy instance of the incapacity of natives to govern for themselves. I doubt if you will be able to keep the raja on his legs. I expect a similar scene in Travancore ere long. If the Mysore resident had kept a good look out much of the evil might have been checked, but my friend the governor is blind to his faults, as he is to the good qualities of better men.

I cannot tell you who is to be my deputy next year, but between ourselves think it will be Marjoribanks or Loch.

I have had several confabs with [*illeg.*] who has more in him I think than most of your Bengalis, though from the little I have seen I think I shall like Holt Mackenzie. Baillie has too many prejudices. What sort of a governor-general would the Duke of Richmond make or who would make a good one?

I stand my work very well, and am not at all afraid of it. I never thought there was any mystery in government. A good knowledge of right and wrong and resolution to act upon it are the chief essentials.

I have just read the papers connected with the question of college or no college. There is much weight in your minute—quite enough I think to justify the suspension of the court's orders, or rather as you probably know tho' the vice president-elect did not, the orders of the board, which after the directions given should never have been sent, until we heard the result of your endeavours to reform the college. It was a pity however that you left so much discretion in such a point to your vice, but you concluded I suppose that your minute would have had more weight.

There was an awkwardness in the result, but no great damage is

done. The most efficient rule if acted upon will be that which limits a time for qualification. If that rule had existed all along with the college, half the evils of that establishment would never have existed. I think somewhat more time should be given to those students who passed at the London board when an oriental test was not called for than to those who have passed that test in England whether at college or the board.

I am not surprised at the jealousy of the amirs of Sind. They had more ground for it than they were aware of, but you managed them, though their conduct may involve them with Ranjit *and that may give you a difficult card to play.*

15th Dec.

Sir C. Metcalfe was appointed yesterday to continue a year longer in council. I congratulate you on this event—at least I hope I may—as it was done from a belief that it would be most agreeable to you, as well as beneficial to the public service.

I have seen your letters and enclosures. I send the printed petition of the Company to the king, which his Majesty I hope will not receive. They are a pretty set but I pity them, and trust they will yet come to their senses.

We have now received accounts of the trade with China being opened again. The conduct of the committee has not been very consistent but they are right now and will I hope continue so. As an American was starting from Liverpool the chairman and I took upon ourselves to write a letter to the committee, expressing our satisfaction at the trade being opened and deprecating the idea of their committing any act of violence or aggression such as might involve this country in hostilities without positive orders from home.

What think you of what Lieut. Burnes says of the Russians having an eye upon you? It appears to me thay are putting out this feeling in every direction from their [having] not so much the real design of ever invading India, as with the view, in the event of a European War, of keeping us on the alert in India, of threatening rather than acting in that quarter, or of urging other parties on our frontier to act, such as the Sindians and Ranjit. But I see Colonel Pottinger differs from Lt. Burnes tho' he has not told us in what respect. If Ranjit has the army he is said to have I question if he will not be obliged to employ them for I cannot suppose his revenue equal to such an expense, but I do not fancy the idea of his exacting tribute from Persia. Much will depend however on the real feelings of the Sindians and Ranjit towards us or towards Russia.

22 December

We are it seems to have more India committees this session, but they are to be the last—so at least it is so avowed—and if so it looks like a final decision on the question in the following session. The commerce committee is to be divided into branches—5 members I fancy in each,

revenue and accounts, judicial, China and India commerce, military and political, and general, each of which is to make a report to show that parliament has not been idle, but I doubt if they will show that much good has been done, and unless the reports are drawn up either here or at the board, I doubt if they will be good for anything.

27 December

I have this day received a letter from my son from Simla dated late in July in which he says so much of himself and his report on the landed tenures in the Deccan that he forgot to say anything about you, but I conclude both you and Lady William are well as I am sure he would otherwise have mentioned it. I have [omitted] all along to say anything to you about my son because I know you will do what is right and I would rather anything you may do should come entirely from yourself, but the performances he has lately sent me—his memorandum on Palmer and Co. affairs and his landed tenures—have shown him so fit for any situation, that you will I am sure excuse my exulting a little, and as we have denounced your rule of service rules—so far at least as to confine the limitation of allowances to the restrictions imposed by act of parliament—you will not be so hampered as you had transpired yourself, in bringing forward the most useful instruments you have.

The steam boats are going on well. The experiment at any rate is worth making. I am not so sanguine about roads, but should be more so if we were sure of having a Lord William B. always as governor-general. The expenses already incurred to little purpose has been enormous and who but you can prevent the superintendence become a job, admitting however that all [? loss] could be avoided and the roads well made would then have traffic enough to wear them down into good order, for if not they would soon get into disorder, and all our labours and money be lost.

28 December

We have the concern of Palmer & Co under consideration and feel disposed to try the arbitration scheme of settlement which was in fact first suggested to me by my son as long ago as June 1830, though it has since been publicly noticed both by Major Stewart and Sir C. Metcalfe.

It is as feared it might be. I meant to say little but find I have said a great deal.

Great doubts as to the fate of the reform bill.

381. *C. M. Wade to Captain Benson*

Ludhiana. 11 December 1831

My dear Benson,

I have now the pleasure to send you the papers promised by me, regarding the strength, formation, and pay of maharaja Ranjit Singh's troops of every arm, exclusive of garrisons, the amount of which I cannot state with perfect exactness, but it certainly does not exceed 25,000 men, who are merely the undisciplined soldiers of the country. I hope you will find all the information required in these papers. I shall be happy to supply anything that I may have omitted. I found it impossible to despatch the papers by the day I mentioned, in consequence of the necessity of some corrections which rendered it necessary to have the papers re-written.

Enclosure in the above

Abstract of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army, exclusive of garrisons

Infantry regular	18,950	
Ditto irregular maintained by different jaghirdars	4,350	23,300
Cavalry regular	7,000	
Ditto irregular maintained by different jaghirdars	19,329	26,329
Horse artillery 6 pounders	62	
Ditto maintained by different jaghirdars	28	90
Troopers or Golandaz	496	
Ditto maintained by different jaghirdars	224	720
Foot artillery of different calibre	116	
Ditto maintained by different jaghirdars	20	136
Foot Golandaz or gunners	1,104	
Ditto maintained by different jaghirdars	172	1,276
Mortars		13
Gunners		104
Zemboorahs or Swevelson camels	263	
Ditto maintained by different jaghirdars	110	373
Pioneers		800
Ghore Cherahs		1,450

382. *Bentinck to Robert Campbell.* Private. Duplicate

Delhi. 14 December 1831

I have the pleasure of informing you that your son has been nominated envoy in Persia.

You may recollect that I stated to you my intention, as I did also to Lord Ellenborough, that if the nomination was left to me, I should select the best of our political officers, who, in my opinion is Major Stewart.

I upon receiving intimation from Lord E. that Messrs. Elphinstone and Jenkins had refused the appointment and that he had agreed with the court in thinking that Lt. Col. Briggs was not of sufficient distinction to warrant an exception in his favour being made to the general rule of all nominations originating with the supreme government, I had then to decide whether I would choose Lt. Col. Briggs who had been proposed by Lord E., or Major Stewart the previously declared object of my own preference upon public grounds alone.

The responsibility being left with me, I chose the latter, and offered Major S. the appointment which he accepted. But as no official answer had been received to my original proposition of consulting the home authorities, and as Major Stewart could not from the state of the season make the journey to Persia, I postponed making the appointment. It did not follow also that the new president of the board of control should take the same view of Persian politics as his predecessor so things have remained, and nothing had been officially published.

The despatch of the secret committee has been at last received, expressing entire satisfaction with Capt. Campbell's conduct, and intimating the opinion that the charge may be safely left in his hands; and to this opinion I have thought it my duty to defer. I will however state to you frankly what passed between me and Major Stewart. Upon learning the intention of the court to reduce the scale of the mission, and their inclination apparently to take a different view from that of Lord E. and of Sir John Malcolm in particular, of giving to this mission every possible consequence and of placing at its head an officer of the highest rank and reputation, I thought it right to state these circumstances to Major Stewart and I left it to him to decide, whether under these altered circumstances, he would still prefer Persia to Hyderabad. In his answer he declined Persia, and I thus am left at liberty to gratify your wishes.

383. *Bentinck to R. Campbell.* Private

Delhi. 15 December 1831

Anxious that nothing should be withheld from the knowledge of the secret committee of my own views or proceedings relative to the negotiations with the states on the Sutlej respecting the opening of the navigation of the Indus, I take the liberty of enclosing the copy of a private and confidential letter addressed by me to Col. Pottinger. The last instructions of the secret committee are dated the 29th of July, and were received here yesterday. The end and object in these last orders are the same as in the former, but the means are essentially different. In the last the measure is to be represented as an advantage to the amirs of Sind, but persuasion alone is to be employed in obtaining their assent. Be assured that free trade and the truisms of political economy are not more in vogue here than they were in Europe not many years ago. In the former the navigation was to be demanded as a right, to a refusal of which we would not submit. You will however perceive that the instructions have been drawn with the utmost caution, and in no degree militate against the amicable spirit of the latter instructions of the secret committee. I will not now anticipate the course of the negotiation, as in a very few days we are likely to know the result of the overture. In my letter I have stated that some return either in money or protection will be demanded. The question then will be, shall we or shall we not take these states under our protection, and thus arrest the aggression of Ranjit Singh? I shall immediately enter into a discussion of this question with the vice president in council, in order that I may have the benefit of his opinion in the event of any such proposition being made. I confess that I entertain a very great difference of opinion from Sir Charles Metcalfe upon this question. I do not apprehend a Russian invasion any more than he does, and I am confident, if the authorities here and at home make a proper use of the resources which both countries afford, that British power is invulnerable against every attack. But of the means of promoting the commercial prosperity and political security of India, I consider the establishment of our power, as protectors and mediators, upon the Indus, to be one of paramount importance. My belief is that this object can be now attained by the manifestation of the least possible decision without the smallest hazard. Your last instructions forbid such language, and I certainly will not discredit the British character by making a threat which I dare not execute. . . .[1] 'Where is the danger' would no doubt be most desirable, but in the present instance, the expression seemed to have been introduced not with any real intention of giving it effect but probably as a feeler of our own opinions and feelings, and I thought it better that it should be met with a simple remark, that the danger did not at present threaten and that there

383. [1] Part of the letter is missing here.

would be abundant time hereafter to provide for the emergency, should it occur. In my interview with Ranjit Singh, my great object has been to remove the distrust that is still latent in his mind, of our superior power, and while this endeavour has I hope not been wholly nugatory, the general appearance of the European troops, with which he has been much struck, has I have reason to think, diminished in no respect, his former opinion of our superiority.

I beg to invite your private and most unreserved sentiments upon every point connected with the question.

384. *Bentinck to Charles Grant*[1]

Kutub, near Delhi. 17 December 1831

I have, I am happy to say, nothing unpleasant to communicate. In proportion as the European world seems disturbed and almost in convulsion, India at least enjoys general tranquillity of which I see at present no prospect of any interruption, and which as being the result of British power, will lead ultimately to a great amelioration of the condition of this immense population.

You will perceive by a letter I have written to the chairman for the information of the secret committee, that I have received with regret the somewhat different view of the *means* taken in these from the former instructions relative to the opening of the navigation of the Indus. I consider the measure to be very practicable and to be attained without any risk but not without some return, which possibly may involve us in some future difficulty. But these contingencies are the unavoidable consequences of extensive dominion. From this position we cannot recede, and I think in these quiet times of peace, our object should be by all prudent measures to prepare and strengthen our defences against any attack that sooner or later, as heretofore, must be made against India. The power of resistance is in us alone. The only remaining substantive states are the amirs of Sind and Ranjit Singh. To make them good allies in time of need and to concert the great resources which commerce and civilisation might derive from the free use of the river of the Punjab, of which they have the command, must be the work of time and of a vigilant attention to avail ourselves with prudence and decision of such favourable opportunities as fortune may throw in our way. The present is I think one of those favourable consequences and I should regret extremely to see it escape from our grasp.

I will write to you soon about our finances. It strikes me that they are susceptible of great improvement. I do not know the probable future demand of the home treasury, but unless this exceed very much what

384. [1] Grant disagreed with Ellenborough's policy of active interference in the affairs of the Indian states and was inclined to return to the line of policy followed by the directors and Bentinck. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 278–85.

we suppose it to be, I see no reason why the income and expenditure should not be made to agree without any detriment to our military and civil governments I am happy to say, that in the course of 6 months the 4 per cent loan has already given us half a crore.

385. *C. M. Wade to Captain Benson*

Ludhiana. 17 December 1831

My dear Benson,

I find that I neglected to enclose the accompanying papers with the letter in which I mentioned their despatch.

The maharaja has ordered four pieces of ordnance to be cast immediately, exactly similar to those which were presented to him by Lord William, and is daily superintending the exercise of his battalions, enjoining their commandants to imitate the specimen which they saw of our troops at Rupar. His martial spirit is unabated, and he only wants the physical activity of youth to emulate his early career of conquest and ambition.

386. *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Bentinck*

Calcutta. 18 December 1831
Recd. Gurgaon. 29 December 1831

My dear Lord William,

I do not clearly collect from your Lordship's occasional references to the subject what has been the cause of your not meeting the king on the footing established at the time of Lord Amherst's visit to Delhi. Considering the relative situation of the king and the governor-general, there was nothing in the ceremonial on that occasion derogatory to his Majesty; and I do not recollect that there was any difficulty or appearance of reluctance. The negotiation however on the subject was I think principally or wholly between Lord Amherst and the king, through poor Sterling as secretary, and not through me as resident. When the question of Lord Hastings's visit to the king was under discussion there was no difficulty expressed on the part of the king to such a ceremonial as took place at Lord Amherst's visit. The only difficulty was as to the perfect equality which Lord Hastings insisted on as the sine qua non of his accepting the king's pressing invitation. The communications on that occasion passed exclusively through me. I am sorry to see that the king is assuming more now than he did on the two former occasions: and I regret that the meeting has not taken place as before for the omission will be so interpreted by the native community as to be made

a subject of triumph to our disparagement. We have on the whole behaved generously towards the king from the first; and I never found him unreasonable or assuming; but if he pretends to what is implied in his professing to regard his interview with Lord Amherst as derogatory, I should think it our best policy in future to let him sink into insignificance, instead of upholding his dignity as we have done. The authorities at home ought to decline negotiation with Ram Mohan Roy, and refer the king to the authorities in India. They may otherwise do mischief.

387. *Major-General Sir S. F. Whittingham to Bentinck*

Kutab. 18 December 1831

My dear Lord,

It is now twenty-two years since I had first the honour of being introduced to you at Aranjeer when Count Florida Blanca's abhorrence of the French induced him to decline speaking their language and made me the interpreter between you and him!

I have always been most proud of the friendship with which, since that time, you have been pleased to honour me.

On the point of again taking leave of your Lordship, will you forgive the liberty I venture to take in expressing my admiration of the whole of your Indian administration, and my conviction that this country will ultimately be indebted to you for the consolidation and security of its best interests. You took the reins of government at a moment when the finances exhibited a deplorable deficit, and you will leave it with its resources fully equal to its expenditure. You found a petty system of interfering tyranny pervading our relations with the native princes, and you have established in its place a liberal system of generous policy. A blind and mistaken zeal led to the toleration of suicide by the burning of unfortunate widows. Narrow minded men had abstained from acting according to the dictates of their judgment for fear of consequences; you smote the prejudice without hesitation, and the abomination has disappeared without a murmur. On our north-west frontier, a powerful and most intelligent chief had formed to himself an empire by the sword. You saw this man and his troops, and thus enabled yourself to form a most correct judgment of his views and his army. Already in possession of the upper Indus, you saw that he had fixed his attention upon the importance of possessing the whole of that noble river, and getting possession at the same time of the [?treasures] of the Sind chiefs; and your present march to the south, I venture to imagine, is made to prevent, by prudent combinations, an event so hostile to British Indian interests. The two strongest impulses of his nature, avarice and ambition, will lead Ranjit to extend his conquests

down the Indus, and nothing short of such a mind as yours could have arrested his hitherto uninterrupted career of success!

Forgive, my dear Lord, the freedom with which I express the dictates of my head and heart, and let the honesty of my feelings plead in their excuse! Whether we ever meet again depends upon chance and the will of others; a soldier has no tomorrow; but be that as it may, I shall ever most fervently pray for your happiness and prosperity, and that complete success may attend all your measures to the end of your glorious career.

388. *Bentinck's minute on canal construction*

22 December 1831

I have had an opportunity of perusing the report addressed to the commissioner of the Murshidabad division on the 29th of last month by the gentlemen composing the committee (Col. D. W. McLeod of Engineers, Capt. Forbes ditto, Mr. May, Superintendent of Nadia rivers) which was called upon 'to report whether there be any and what prospect of keeping the Bhagirathi river open, or of essentially improving the navigation of it, by any means at the disposal of government', and being of opinion that the proposition contained in it for forming a canal extending from Rajmahal on the Ganges, to Mirzapur on the Bhagiratha, merits the fullest consideration, I beg to propose that Col. McLeod and Capt. Forbes should as proposed in the 121st paragraph of the report in question, be permitted in the present cold season, to commence a general examination of the country extending from Rajmahal to the Hooghly, for the purpose of determining in communication with the superintendent of the Nadia rivers, the line on which it would be advisable to have careful surveys and accurate levelling sections prepared.

Connected with the immediate object of these gentlemen being directed to form themselves into a committee, the opinion expressed by them is 'that neither by the old heads of the Bhagirathi nor the newly opened entrance to the Farukhabad nullah, nor by the cut alluded to, could such a supply of water be brought into the Bhagirathi as would ensure its continuing at all seasons navigable for boats of ordinary (say 3 feet) draught'.

They then give the grounds upon which this opinion has been come to by them and after suggesting that the whole course of the Farukhabad nullah should be surveyed in February next with a view to determine as to the expediency of making a cut from Lalgolah to Bustumparah, for temporary purposes (a measure to which no objection whatever appears to me to exist) they proceed to particularize the plans of the great work which has been proposed by them.

It is quite unnecessary in the present stage of the business, to discuss

the relative merits of the different lines, plans or estimates which are fully detailed by the committee. The benefits of the canal will unquestionably be very great, but ample time must be taken for deliberation and scientific gentlemen qualified by education to estimate the correctness or otherwise of the premises drawn from the data on which the plans are grounded, must be consulted. Still what has been proposed is an essential preliminary, and as an additional reason for wishing it to be undertaken in the present season, I may mention the benefit to be expected from Capt. Forbes being employed in the duty, an aid which we cannot I fear, from the state of that officer's health, calculate on being available to us for many seasons to come without the intervention of a trip to Europe.

It will be observed that it is by no means the desire of the committee that this great undertaking should be commenced upon with rash or precipitate haste. They themselves recommend that the opinions of some of the most eminent English engineers should be obtained, and concurring for the most part in the sentiments contained in the paragraph in which such a reference is suggested, I beg to conclude this hastily written paper with a transcript of it: '121. At variance as this is with the affirmation that India is not yet sufficiently advanced in civilization to warrant such an undertaking, we but beg to suggest the expediency of such enquiry as will prove either the error of our deductions, or the accuracy of the opposite and more degrading conclusion. Bearing in mind that the first step of the investigation proposed, that of preparing the surveys and sections requisite to the detailed development of the plan, would require two seasons, and remembering that from the time of the first breaking ground to the completion of the work, would occupy eight years, it becomes apparent that as concerns the general question it is not what the country is now ripe for, but what in the way of improved communication it will be ready for 10 years hence that must be regarded. Influenced by this consideration, and impressed with the conviction that opening a direct line of navigation betwixt the upper and lower provinces (none during two-thirds of the year now existing) cannot but tend to the speedy ripening of both for the reception of still greater improvements, we would earnestly recommend that in the present cold season we should be permitted to make a general examination of the country extending from Rajmahal to the Hooghly, for the purpose of determining in communication with the superintendent of the Nadia rivers the line on which it would be advisable to have careful surveys and accurate levelling sections prepared* when surveys and levelling sections have been made, and when with reference to them we have been allowed time for preparing plans and specifications

* Note: Having in the course of those and previous enquiries had frequent opportunities of examining and of ascertaining the accuracy of surveys and sections prepared by Mr. May the superintendent of the Nadia rivers, we have pleasure in being able to state that informed as a member of this committee of all the points on which information is desired and possessing considerable local knowledge, we know of no person better qualified to make these surveys and sections or to conduct such preliminary investigation.

of the works calculated for constituting and preserving the line of navigation, we would beg to propose, that on the result of our labours, opinions should be requested of some of the most eminent English engineers, more especially of Messrs. Telford, Rennie, Walker, Stevenson and Jardine. By such reviewers we know that if the data presented do not appear amply to warrant the inferences drawn from them, our conclusions will be corrected by the test of long practice, and with that forbearance to error which its acquirement never fails to instil.'

389. *R. Campbell to Bentinck*

East India House, London. 26 December 1831

Since writing to your Lordship on the 15th of last month I have had the honour to receive your letters of the 4th and 7th May and of the 12th June, and beg to offer my very grateful acknowledgments for your Lordship's kind intentions respecting my son at Meerut and for the opportunity afforded to his brother in Persia of making himself known by allowing him to remain so long in charge of that mission. I have not the pleasure of Major Stewart's acquaintance, but I have often heard him mentioned as a man of great private worth and of very considerable ability as a public functionary. The satisfaction expressed by my son at Major Stewart's appointment is only inferior to what he would have felt had the choice fallen on himself. Your Lordship will know before this that the situation was not offered either to Mr. Elphinstone or to Mr. Jenkins by the only authority here competent to make the appointment, the court of directors. Your Lordship has drawn a very faithful portrait of our present president. He is indeed an amiable and able man, always anxious to do what is right, seeking information from those sources whence it can be best derived; patient in discussion, ready to yield to reason, and never assuming what does not belong to him. The ministry have hitherto been so much engrossed by the question of parliamentary reform that they have had but little time to think of our concerns, this however they must do soon, and they will find the subject beset with difficulties which those among them who have not turned their attention to India matters little contemplate.[1] Public opinion seems in favour of the continuance to the Company, of the political administration of the affairs of India, but averse to their

389. [1] In preparation for the expiry of the Company's charter in 1833, two great questions had to be determined by parliament: the continuance or cessation of firstly, the Company's exclusive privilege of trade with China, and, secondly, its rule in India. The first question was not really in doubt, the main difficulty being that the Company's profits on its China trade had provided such surpluses as it enjoyed. However, the privilege was removed. On the second subject, it was clear that the British government was not equipped to take over the government of India, and the select committee reports had in fact shown in William Cobbett's words that 'the country is governed well by the Company'. The Company's rule over India was therefore confirmed for a further twenty years, and the patronage, which was considerable, was left in the directors' hands. Philips, *East India Company*, pp. 287–95.

enjoying the exclusive trade to China, but without this, or some equivalent it is quite evident that the Company could not go on. There ought not to be any difficulty on our part in conceding to our own countrymen such intercourse with China—perhaps we should have done this long since—as is now enjoyed by foreigners, and I am sure we might without any sacrifice entirely relinquish the trade to India. Of the minute alluded to in your Lordship's letter of the 7th May the first part only, which relates to the military board has reached this house, and your Lordship will find by the court's despatch of the 6th July last that your proceedings in that respect have been confirmed. When the second part embracing the subject of the roads arrives, your Lordship may be assured of my best attention to it, tho' if I should not then be in the chair, my ability to promote the plan will be less than at present; [?with you] its advocate I shall always be satisfied as I am that nothing can more contribute to the prosperity of a country than facilitating the intercourse of its inhabitants. With reference to this subject your Lordship will be pleased to learn that we have contracted with Messrs. Maudslay & Co. for four pair of wrought iron steam tug and accommodation boats for the navigation of the rivers of India, which will we expect be ready in four or five months. I was very glad to observe by your Lordship's letter of the 12th June that Lord Clare entertained such sanguine hopes of the success of the pass system for concentrating the opium trade in Bombay. Your Lordship will observe by the court's despatch of the 19th October that it was thought advisable that a regulation relative to the sale of passes should be transmitted for the sanction of the home authorities. Adverting to the state of the Bengal council, and to the circumstance that in the ordinary course Sir Charles Metcalfe would vacate his seat in August next, considering too the great experience, acknowledged ability and high integrity of that gentleman and the inconvenience that might result from the introduction into council of a new member at a moment when for the accomplishment of the objects your Lordship has in view, the aid of the most efficient colleagues will be required, I thought that I could not do any thing more likely to provide [for]the public interest, and consequently nothing more acceptable to your Lordship, than propose to the court the continuance of Sir Charles Metcalfe in council for two years from the expiration of his present term and I have great pleasure in acquainting your Lordship that the court have concurred in that arrangement. There is still a provisional councillor to be appointed, and I am now looking over the list of servants with an earnest desire to bring forward the man who may appear best qualified to discharge the important duties which will devolve upon him. For Madras it is my intention to propose George Russell: my inclination and the solicitation of friends would lead me to name another person, but I feel that I cannot do so, and do rightly. Russell therefore will be the man.

390. *W. H. Macnaghten*[1] *to Bentinck*

26 December 1831

My Lord,

I return the book and papers which you did me the honour to lend me for perusal. Little is left to me but to express my humble concurrence in the sound and comprehensive views of policy entertained by your Lordship, particularly as they are expressed in your private and confidential communication to Col. Pottinger. Revolving the matter in my own mind after the oral statement of it I received from your Lordship, many of the arguments occurred to me which I subsequently found to reinforce your recorded instructions.

It can I think with perfect safety be predicted on this occasion that the amirs of Sind, though they may be impelled by fear, will not be enticed by treason. They will dread but not trust us 'et dona ferentes'. The experience of their neighbours has proved to them that where we come we subjugate and a reasonable desire to preserve their own independence may have as much share as the selfishness belonging to barbarians in dictating a denial of our demands.

But we have also an independence to maintain, and if it be true (which must be admitted) that the navigation of the Indus is necessary to secure us from western invasion we have at least as good a right to demand as they have to refuse the use of the river—to say nothing of the equity of our claim to participate in the commercial advantages which its navigation would afford.

The Sind authorities will either reject our overtures absolutely, or they will accede to them conditionally.

In the former case under the recent instructions from the secret committee the course to be pursued by this government is not to be mistaken. Passive submission must be the present line of conduct and must be persevered in I suppose unless a forcible remonstrance to the home authorities should convince them of the necessity of adopting more vigorous measures for the improvement of our commercial interests and the security of our political existence. In the mean time no great danger of Russian invasion need be apprehended and Ranjit Singh will probably be teaching the amirs of Sind a 'moral lesson' by means of discipline which they will richly merit and the force of which they will admit much more readily than the best inculcated truisms of political economy, nor do I conceive that the extension of the Sikh empire ought to be viewed by us with jealousy. From the nature of the materials its solidity must be decreased by expansion.

It is however I think much more probable that our overtures will be acceded to conditionally and that the amirs of Sind will stipulate

390. [1] Macnaghten, Sir William Hay, Bart., 1793–1841. I.C.S. Registrar of the sadar diwani adalat, 1822–30. On tour with Bentinck in north-west, and secretary in the secret and political department 1833–7. *D.N.B.*

for protection against the designs of Ranjit Singh. I should doubt very much whether it would not be better to relinquish for the present all the commercial and political advantages which the navigation would secure to us than to become a party to such an engagement. We have a clear right to demand unqualified concession and on no other terms should it be received. We might indeed mediate and it might possibly (the required concession having been made) be safe to offer our mediation, but with a clear understanding at the same time that our interference should not go beyond amicable negotiation.

From the cautious policy of Ranjit Singh we might confidently hope that he would listen to reason and that he would not pursue a system of aggression which we could fairly pronounce to be unjustifiable; and as he would be a party to the commercial treaty the introduction of that subject would present a fair opportunity for bringing to a clear understanding the nature and extent of his claims upon the possessions of Sind.

Nothing I conceive could be more to be deprecated than a rupture with the present ruler of the Sikhs. Sooner or later after his death I look upon it as certain that his supremacy will devolve upon us by the national consent if we do not inspire the people with hatred towards us by hostility to him whom they now universally acknowledge as their legitimate sovereign.

The circumspect and cautious tenor of your Lordship's instructions to Col. Pottinger has prevented the unpleasant consequences which might have resulted from the vacillating policy of the home authorities and whatever may be the result of the present negotiation you will be left free to act without any compromise of national honour or any sacrifice of political consistency.

The crudity of these remarks requires your indulgence, in soliciting which I have the honour to subscribe myself your Lordship's much obliged and faithful servant.

391. *Lord Amherst to Bentinck*

30 December 1831

I did not receive until a few days ago your letter of the 5th February enclosed in an envelope dated the 29th March acquainting me that the letter for me had gone by mistake to Mr. Romer, the acting governor of Bombay. As you surmise, your letter intended for Mr. Romer found its way to me in August last, and I returned it to you in the same month without knowing for whom it was destined. When you last wrote to me you were within a fortnight's march of Simla, and I dare say were as much gratified on your arrival there, as we were 4 years before, at finding a climate and productions which reminded us of our native land. Indeed it was so cold on our arrival there in the early days of

April as to induce us to get off our horses for the purpose of warming ourselves, and I well remember the pleasure we all experienced at finding we had not lost the use of our legs by a four years' residence in Bengal. As a summer abode I have heard very different opinions of Simla, and I expect to learn from you that altho' the temperature of the air may have been agreeable, you had to encounter damp fogs so dense as to obscure for many successive days the face even of an Indian sun.

I had great pleasure last spring in renewing my acquaintance with Mr. Bayley. What has become of him during the summer I do not know, but I expect to find him in London on our return thither, and as he looks forward to a seat in the direction I suppose he will make London his chief abode. Mackenzie I had also the pleasure of seeing in town on his way to Edinburgh. What he will determine upon I do not know, but I should think it not improbable that the court will tempt him to return to India by the promise of an early seat in council after he shall have gratified the very hungry appetite which he appeared to me to have for all the objects of curiosity which Europe offers and from which he had been so long absent. The question of the renewal of the charter I see is adjourned 'til next year, by which time I trust we shall have disposed of the reform bill, and have wiped off the arrears of business of various kinds which that all-absorbing question has suffered to accumulate. Ireland, and agricultural and other distress in England seem to me to be subjects of much more urgent importance in themselves than a reform in the commons house of parliament, but it is quite clear that until the latter question is disposed of, no other matter, of whatever urgency, will be entertained, and I am therefore most anxious that the bill should soon find its way into the house of lords, and that some of those who opposed the second reading in October last may be induced at least to absent themselves when the new measure makes its appearance. But I will not begin another sheet upon this or any other matter. You told me in your letter of May 1st 1830 that Marrige would *immediately* remit the balance due to me of about 5000 rupees. He has not done so, nor have I heard a word from him upon the subject. You will therefore do me a kindness if you will refresh his memory. Adieu my dear Lord William. With the kindest regards from this house to you and Lady William and many good wishes that the next year may be a happy one to you.