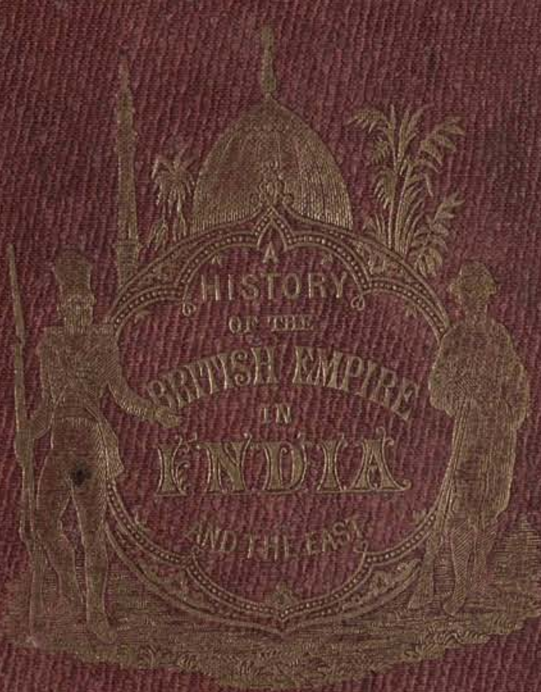
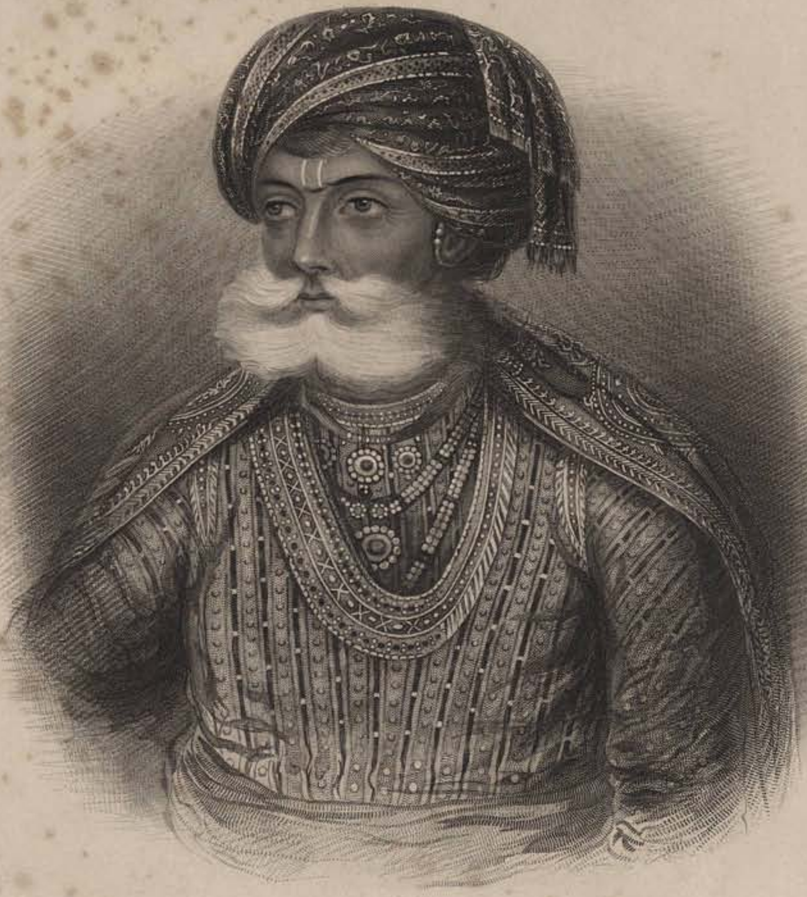


A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA AND THE EAST

Ex Libris

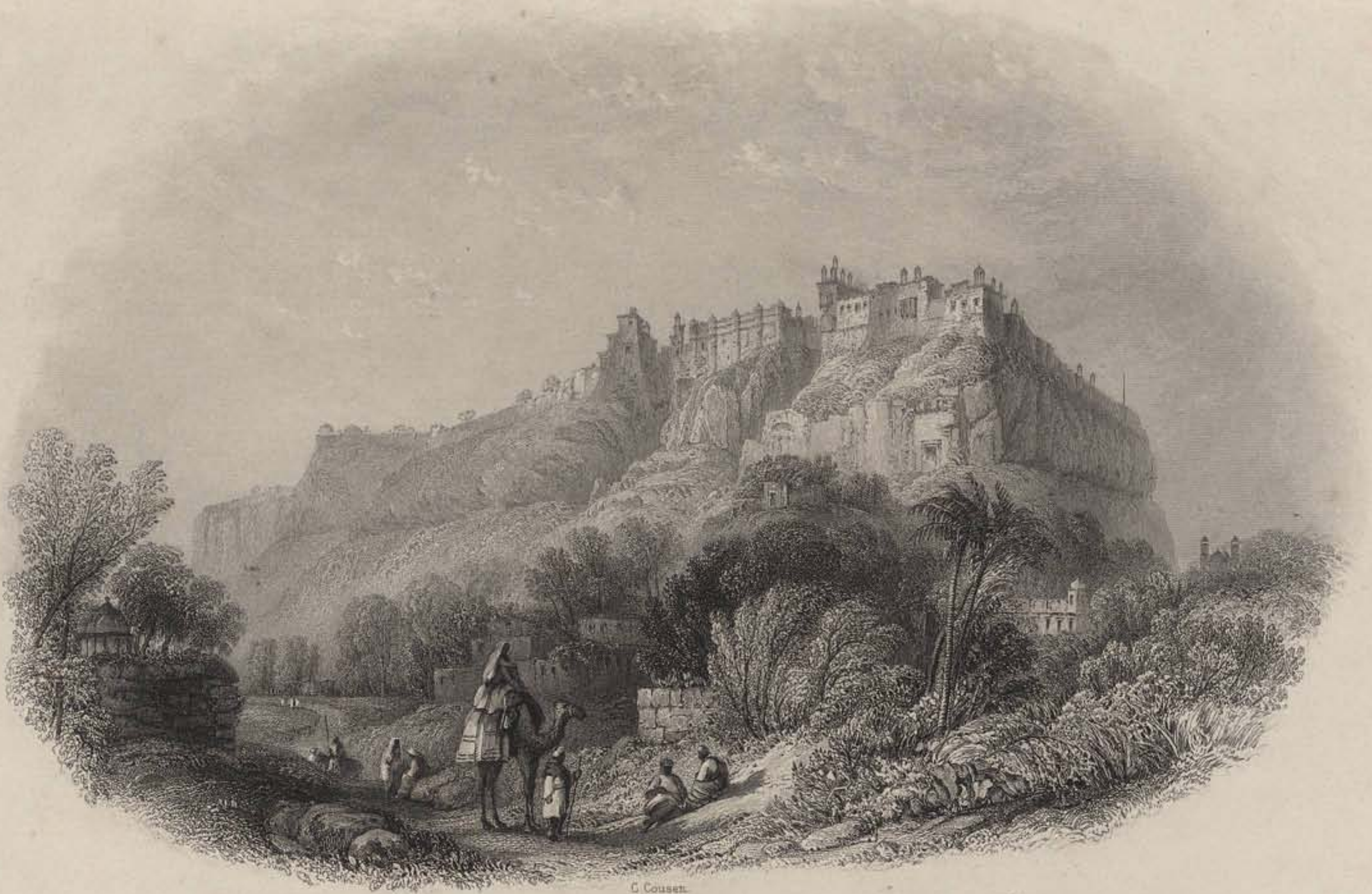
K.K.Venugopal



GHOLAB SINGH.

From a Drawing by an Indian Artist.

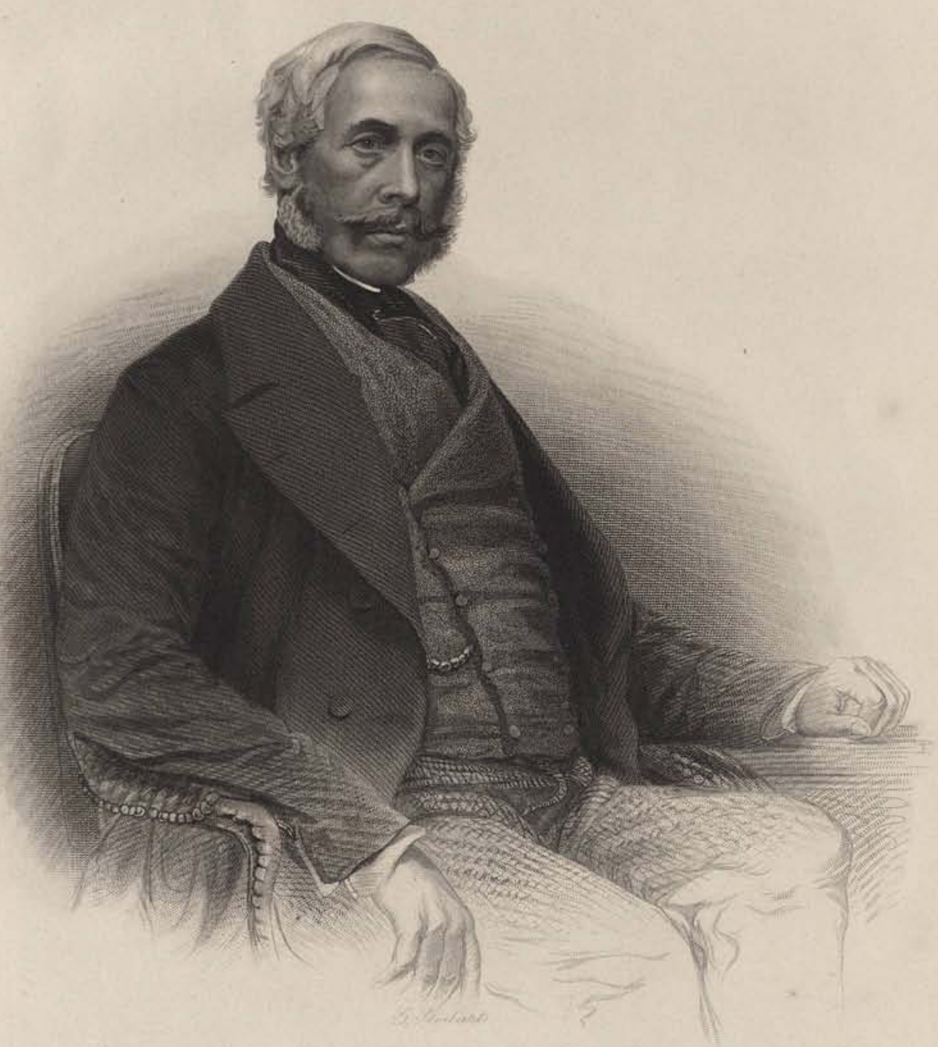
LONDON: JAMES S. VIRTUE.



THE FORT OF GWALIOR.

FROM THE NORTH-WEST

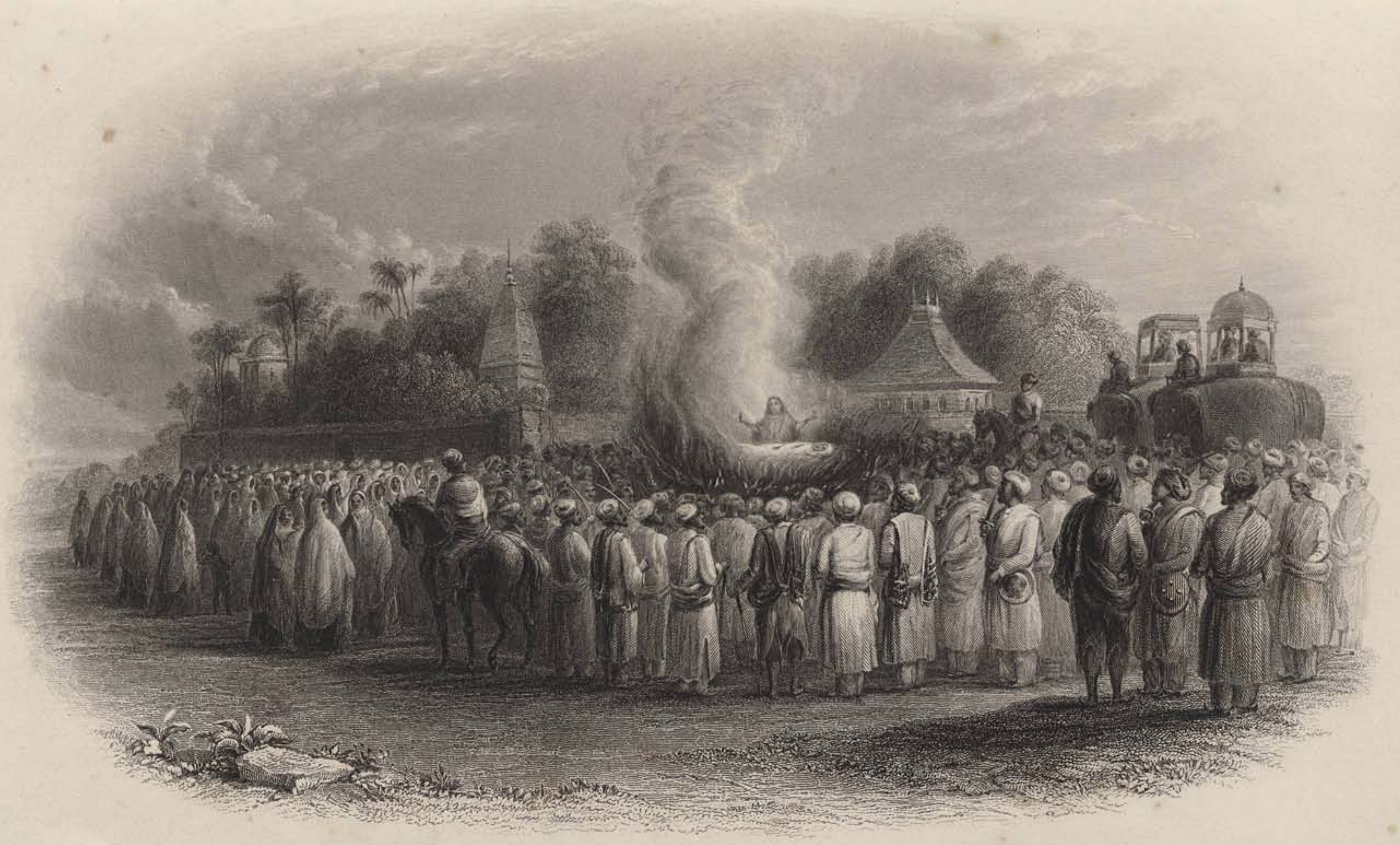
LONDON. JAMES S. VIRTUE



GENERAL NEILL.

From a Photograph by Kilburn.

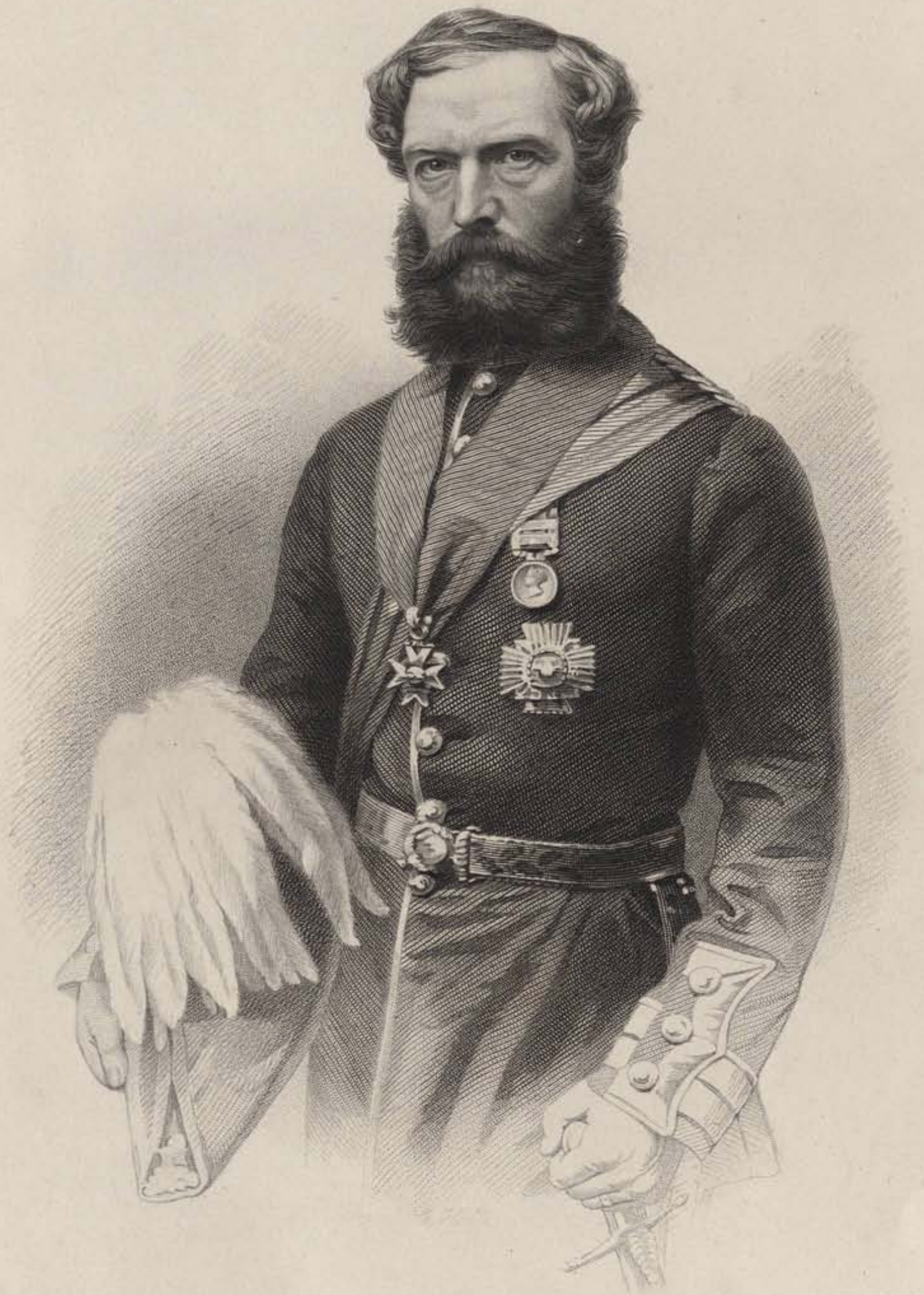
LONDON, JAMES S. VIRTUE.



A. SUTTEE.

FROM A DRAWING IN THE POSSESSION OF THE HON: E. I. CY

LONDON. JAMES S. VIRTUE.

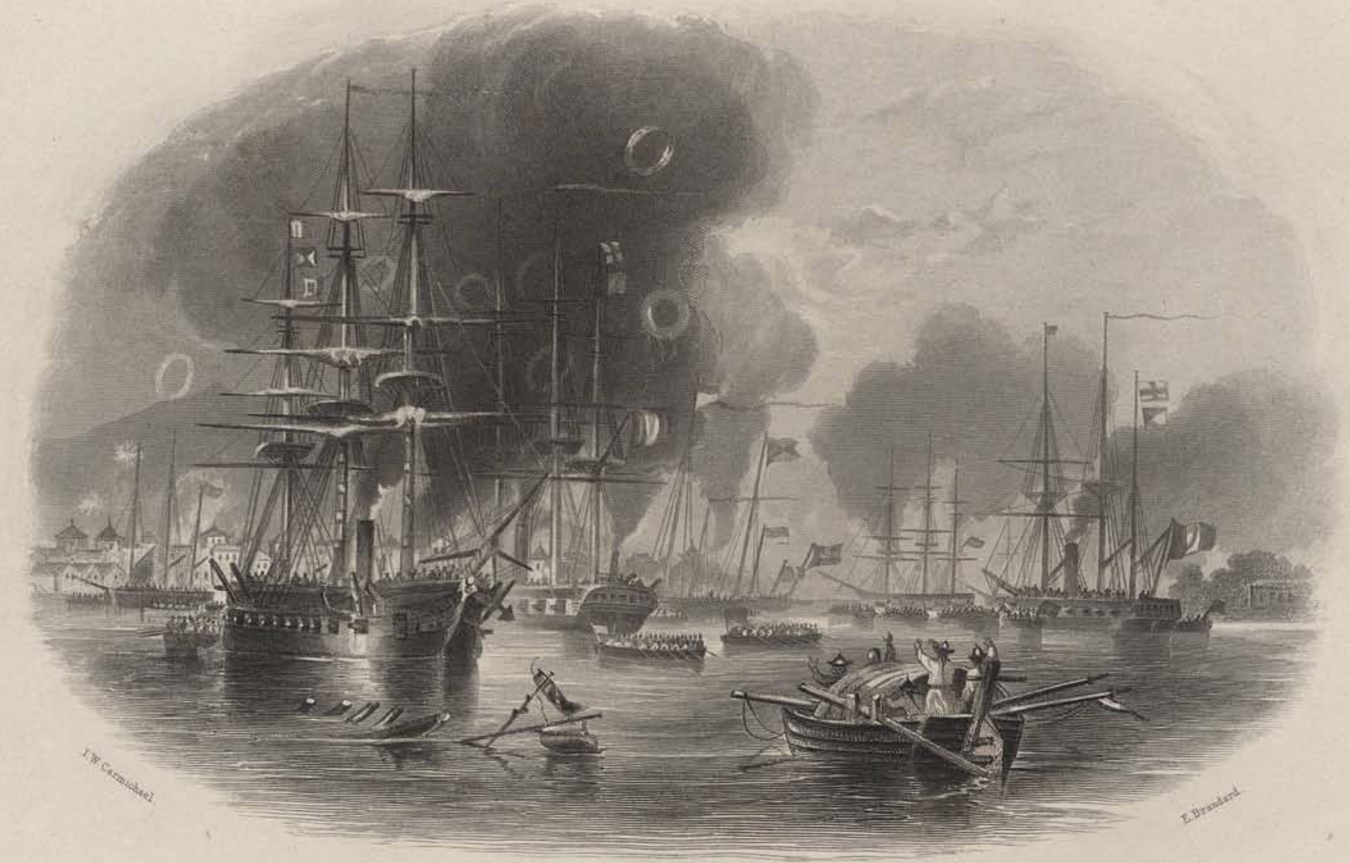


MAJOR GENERAL SIR J. E. W. INGLIS, K.C.B.

DEFENDER OF THE GARRISON AT LUCKNOW.

From a Photograph by Mayall

LONDON, JAMES S. VIRTUE

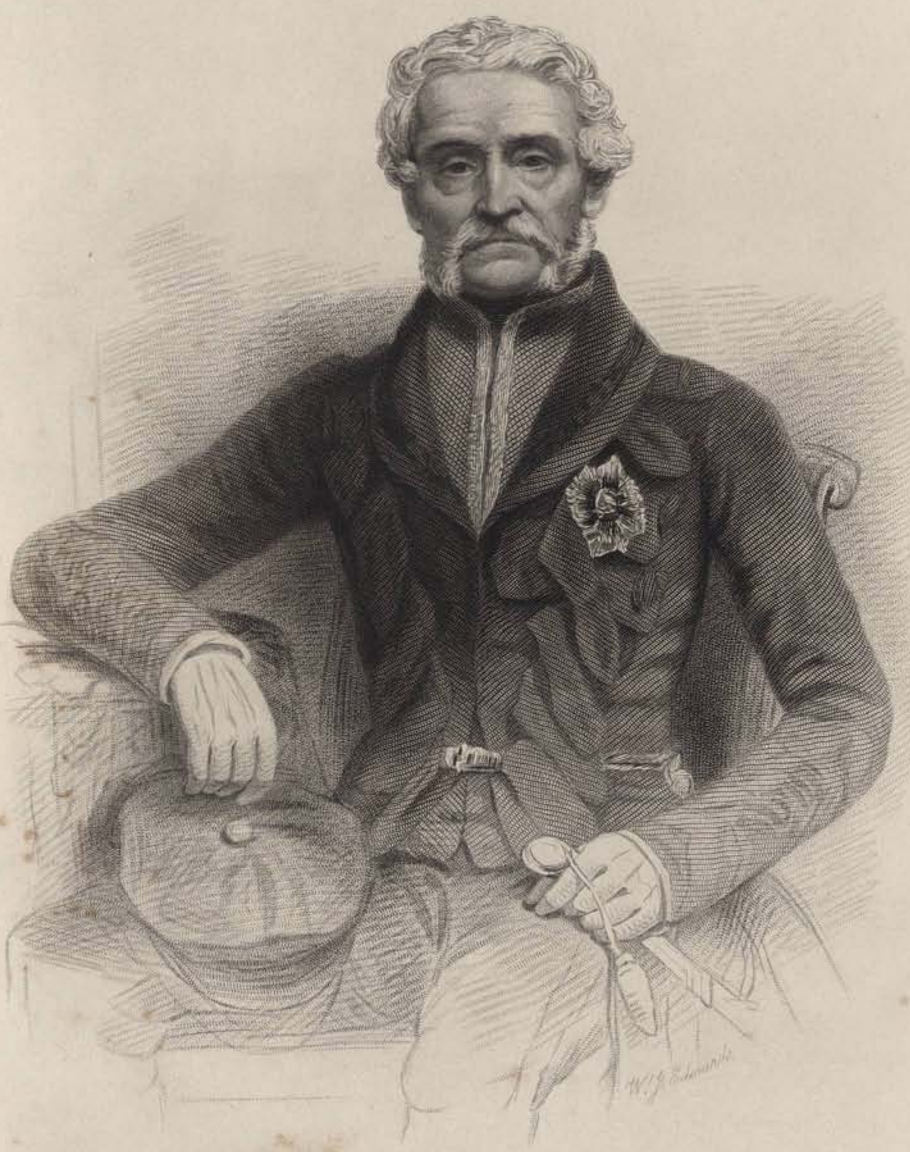


J.W. Carmichael

E. Brandard

THE BOMBARDMENT OF CANTON.

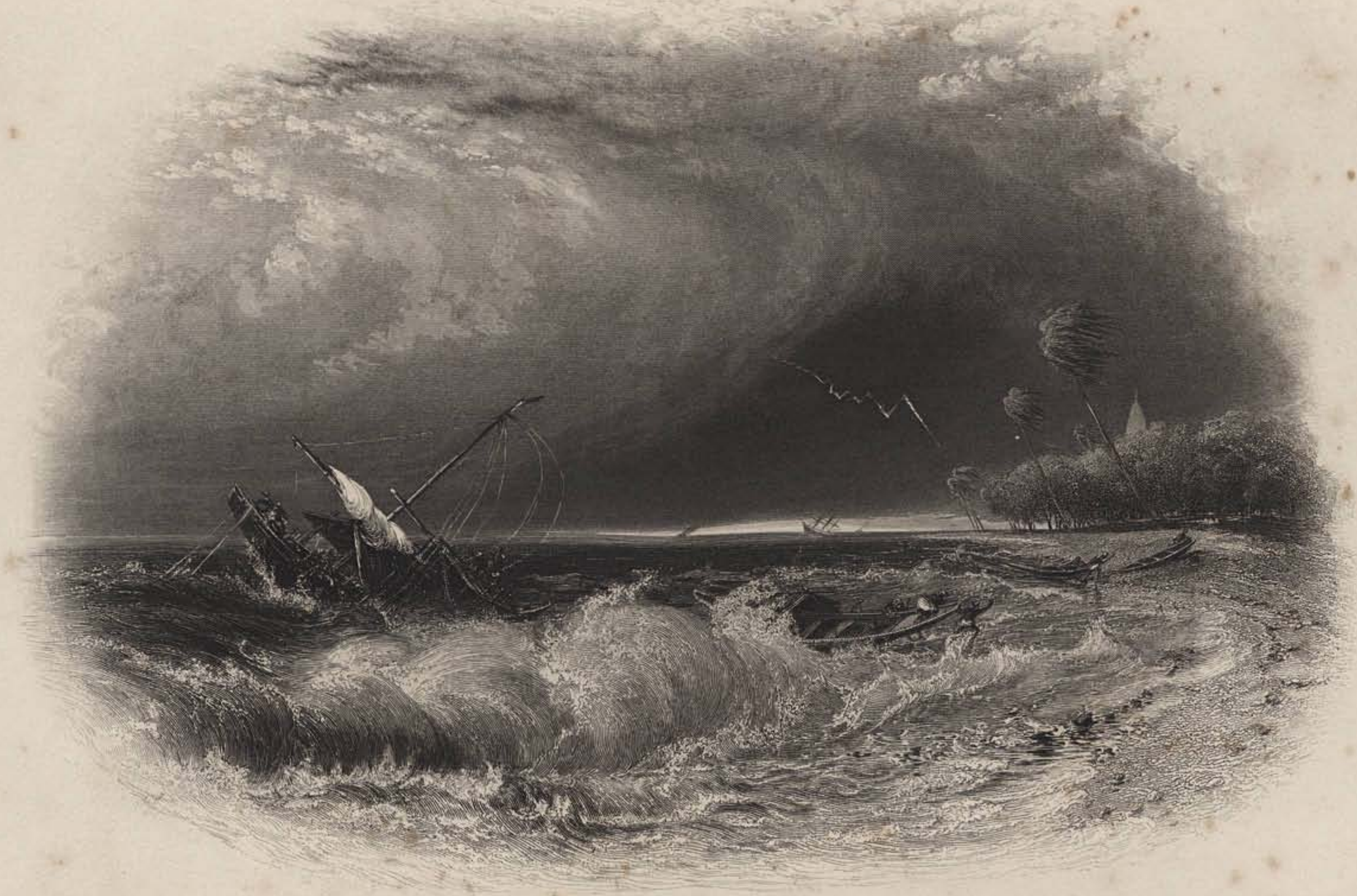
LONDON, JAMES S. VIRTUE.



LIEUT. GENL. SIR HARRY G. W. SMITH, BART. G.C.B.

From a Photograph lent expreſsly for this Work

LONDON, JAMES S. VIRTUE



CALCUTTA — THE MONSOON.

teen islands, interspersed in every direction at its mouth, which preserve it, undisturbed by winds or waves. It is resorted to by the various nations of the East, and consists of a very mixed population, of which the Chinese form the most numerous, enterprising, and successful section, amounting to about sixty thousand.

The Javanese, as well as the English, received with jealousy the creation of this stronghold, and both united, and laid siege to the new fort. A treaty was agreed to, by which the Dutch engaged to pay six thousand rix dollars to the King of Jacatra, and abstain from further fortification. This arrangement did effectively terminate the apprehensions entertained in the temporary absence of Coen. Van der Broek, who was left in command of the garrison, was invited by the king to a feast, and was treacherously seized, along with his attendants, and placed in irons. Of this proceeding the English have the credit, and with every appearance of being entitled to it, for they availed themselves of the occasion to coerce the Dutch into a treaty, and to surrender their fortress to the King of Jacatra. The success of the king was but short-lived. The day immediately following the ratification of the treaty the king of the adjoining state, Bantam, either at the instigation of the Dutch, or tempted by the hope of possessing the fortress and wealth of Batavia, invaded Jacatra, and defeated and forced to fly its sovereign. The Dutch captives were treated with as much harshness by their new master as by the former. But the hour of their liberation was at hand. Coen returned at the head of eighteen ships; he swept the English, by his superior numbers, from the Straits of Sunda, attacked the town, and carried it by assault in a few hours. His countrymen were restored, and the town evacuated by the enemy. The fortress now for the first time was called Batavia, the classic name of the mother country, and soon became one of the richest and most magnificent commercial cities in the world. Those who had the direction of the Indian commerce in Holland were greatly pleased when informed of this establishment, as their policy now was to build forts, create magazines, organize a military force, and constitute a regular civil government. Without such arrangements, they knew it would be impossible to enter into successful competition with their European rivals.

To strengthen more firmly the ties between them and the orientals, the Dutch induced the King of Siam to send an ambassador to the Prince of Orange, who received him with great pomp and ceremony. He brought over five Indian princes to be educated in Europe.

In 1622 the East India Company sought a renewal of their charter, which they with very great difficulty obtained. They were opposed by the public, on the substantial grounds that the monopoly which they enjoyed was detrimental to the subjects of the republic generally; and the proprietors complained that the profits were not justly appropriated; several alleged that by throwing open the trade, far more money would find its way to the exchequer. Very opportunely for the claimants of the charter, in the spring of this year, there returned home two ships richly laden, which conveyed the news that the war was still raging in Java, and also against the Spaniards in the Moluccas, and in the Manillas; that Banda was again recovered, and that the last outward-bound Dutch fleet had arrived at its Indian destination in four months and three days.* A new charter, dated December 22, 1622, was conceded to them for the further term of twenty-one years.

In the year previously, the twelve years' truce with Spain had come to a close, and the archduke thought that the civil dissensions which distracted and weakened the states, had reduced them to such a condition that they would gladly compromise their difference with Austria and Spain; he consequently suggested to the Dutch the advantages likely to result to them from a reconciliation with their natural sovereign, and a pacification which would include the King of Spain as well as themselves. This proposal was indignantly rejected, and vigorous preparations made for the prosecution of the war. A great change had been effected in the political relations of the powers who had taken an active part in the former war. The haughty and cruel conduct of the states, in rejecting the humane remonstrances of the King of France, who had unavailingly interceded to save from an unmerited and ignominous death that able statesman Barneveldt, and his illustrious compatriot Grotius, who would have shared his fate, had he not been rescued by his dauntless and virtuous wife, who was completely devoted to him. The Lutherans of Germany were averse to make any sacrifices in behalf of the Calvinistic provinces. In addition to these grounds of alienation, the reformed princes were terrified by the humiliation of the Count Palatine, and the absorption of his territories in the empire. England, which had hitherto aided the Protestant revolters, from religious as well as political sympathies and a desire to humble the Catholic powers, was now in close alliance with Spain. The disputes between the Dutch and English East India Companies* irritated the public mind; and James complained that the Dutch had represented him to the Indian princes as the chief of a petty state, and as the plunderer, butcher, and tyrant of his subjects. The rejection, by the court of Madrid, of the suit of Prince Charles for the hand of the Infanta put an end to these influences, and drove the English king into a defensive treaty with the Dutch for two years, by which the latter were permitted to raise six thousand men in the British Isles at the king's cost, the expenses to be paid at the conclusion of the war.

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* Meteren, *Histoire de Pays Bas*, lib. xxxiii.

This treaty had been scarcely concluded, when intelligence was conveyed from the Indies, the earlier communication of which was calculated to interrupt friendly negotiations, and which exasperated the English against their allies. This was the celebrated affair at Amboyna; where, on the pretence of a conspiracy, Gabriel Towerson and other Englishmen were seized, tortured, and put to death.

This act created a great sensation at the time, and destroyed those strong feelings of attachment which bound together the two great Protestant maritime powers—a union which was not severed by the vacillating policy of the wavering Stuart.

Amboyna is the chief of the Molucca Islands. It is between fifty and sixty miles in length, and favoured with two splendid bays, and celebrated for its production of cloves. It was first discovered by the Portuguese, who took possession of it in 1564. They were expelled by the Dutch in 1605; and in 1615 the English made an ineffectual attempt to share the possession of it.† They, however, contrived to preserve a factory there till 1622, when the occurrence just mentioned happened.

The facts of the case, stript of the inferences which give it a forensic complexion, are simply these. The Dutch authorities had their attention called to one of the Javanese soldiers—a body of whom were in their service—who had been observed making some minute inquiries respecting the citadel. He was arrested, and, on being subjected to an examination, revealed that his countrymen had held a correspondence with Towerson, the chief of the English factory, and some of his countrymen, to gain possession of the citadel, and to put to death the governor. The Javanese were disarmed, and they fully confirmed the statement of the prisoner, as also did a surgeon, Price, who had been arrested for arson. Towerson and twelve other Englishmen were then arrested and put to the torture, and in their anguish admitted their guilt. They were after this put to death. The Dutch, apprehensive of the consequences, endeavoured to conceal the particulars, and merely announced, when the intelligence reached Europe, that there had been some commotions in Amboyna, which, by the vigilance and prudence of the governor, had been totally extinguished.* When the full particulars reached England, the proceedings were stigmatized in the severest terms, and the exercise of any jurisdiction over the subjects of Great Britain was strenuously condemned, and this summary punishment was pronounced violation of the rules of equity and of the law of nations. The charge of conspiracy was denied, and asserted to be a pure invention of the Dutch, framed with the object of depriving the English of the share of the trade which they possessed. The admissions of guilt were treated as declarations wrung from the victims' agonies to procure a cessation of their intolerable punishment; and this view of the case was corroborated by the testimony of Towerson, who, in an acknowledgment which he gave privately, through his keeper, to a creditor of the company, added:—"Firmed by the form of Gabriel Towerson, now appointed to die, guiltless of anything that can be laid to my charge; God forgive them their guilt, and receive me to his mercy."† And also by others of his fellow suffers, who in their last moments protested their innocence. Three of the prisoners received pardon, and all the details which were published depend on their questionable testimony. A late historian‡ records as his conviction, "that the whole story of the plot was a fabrication, is highly improbable; and there seems no doubt that the Javanese soldiers did, in fact, entertain a design of the nature imputed to them, either in concurrence with, or relying on, the co-operation of the English; but if the latter cannot be exonerated from the accusation of treachery, the conduct of the Dutch was no less disgraced by an excess of vindictiveness and cruelty." However justly indignant the English public felt at the fate of their unfortunate countrymen, the Prince of Orange, the Dutch East India Company, and the states-general, were enabled to silence the patriots, and to have this outrage condoned.

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* The differences between the Dutch and English were settled by the payment of eight hundred thousand livres by the former.—HARRIS's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 930.

† The Dutch, having thus acquired exclusive possession, retained it till the year 1796, when it was wrested from them by the British, under Admiral Ranier, and restored at the peace of Amiens. It was re-occupied by them in 1810, and restored by the peace of Paris, in 1814.

* *Universal Modern History*, vol. x. p. 309.

† Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 880.

‡ Davies' *History of Holland*, vol. ii. p. 554.

A well-equipped fleet was fitted out by the joint naval authorities of Amsterdam, Friesland, Zealand, and Holland, consisting of eleven large vessels, having on board upwards of one thousand mariners and six hundred regular troops, and three hundred pieces of cannon. In honour of Prince Maurice it was called the *Nassau fleet.* It was proposed that it should touch on Chili or Peru, for the purpose of making a settlement there, or to strike such a blow as would materially affect the Spanish interests in that quarter; it was then to prosecute its voyage to the East Indies. On the 10th of May it made the port of Lima; the Dutch attacked the town, did it much damage, and took several prisoners; they inflicted similar mischief in other places, and to climax their vengeance they hung up their guiltless captives at the yardarm. At the close of this year the fleet reached its destination, and though the great and splendid results augured for it were not realized, the aid which it brought enabled the Dutch company to overpower the Portuguese, to intercept the communication between their various settlements, and to detach from them several of the native princes.*

A powerful stimulus was given to their Indian commerce, and the directors of the company, aware that the prosperous condition of their affairs in the East was mainly attributable to the abilities and discretion of their admirals and commanders-in-chief, sent out in rapid succession three squadrons, respectively commanded by John Peterson Coen, who sailed in April, 1627; John William Verschoer, and Andrew Block Martsen, who sailed in October of that year.

The attacks frequently made on their homeward-bound vessels, by the privateers of Dunkirk and the English, compelled the Dutch to fit out a strong squadron annually to convoy their merchantmen. The first equipped was commanded by John Dierskisz Lam, and as soon as his flag was seen on the seas, the privateers retired. In October a squadron of eleven ships sailed for India, under the command of James Specks, and with it went Valbeck, an accomplished mathematician. About this time some Dutch adventurers sailed from Batavia, with the intention of passing through the Straits of Baly, but, by encountering some adverse winds, they were driven out of their course, and ran ashore upon the south side of Australia, in the latitude of twenty-one degrees. In order to get afloat, they were obliged to throw a great portion of their valuable cargo overboard. In their passage they fell in with Block's fleet, which, like themselves, had encountered very boisterous weather. It was at this period that the Dutch so enriched, by their discoveries, the geography of the Pacific islands. Carpentaria—called after General Carpenter—was discovered in 1628; it was subsequently called New Holland, and since it became a possession of the British crown, it is universally known as Australia. The western parts of that island were discovered in the following year, and after its discoverer, named De Witt's Land.

The stability of the Dutch empire was subjected now to a very rude shock, and had it not been for the great exertions made by the company, and the succession of squadrons which with such rapidity followed each other, she would have been compelled to evacuate the seat of power. The rise of Batavia, and the imperious dictation of the Dutch, as soon as they found themselves sufficiently strong to throw off the mask of suppliants, and exercise the authority of masters, had first excited the suspicions and jealousy of the Javanese, and at length induced them to take measures for the destruction or ejection of the strangers. In 1629 the King of Java raised an army of two hundred thousand men, with which he invested Batavia. The siege, or rather blockade, was vigorously maintained for some months, but the town had been so strongly fortified and spiritedly defended, that the enemy, having lost sixteen thousand men, were obliged to desist. The Prince of Madura, a small island adjacent to Java, represented to the King of Java that the failure was attributable to the incapacity of the commander, and that a skilful officer with one-third the force, would be able to capture the town. Influenced by these representations, an army of one hundred and fifty thousand was placed under the command of this prince, and the king in person accompanied him to the siege. From the 22nd of August to the 2nd of October repeated assaults were made to no purpose. Every effort ended in the severe loss of the besiegers, and the army was reduced to almost the skeleton of what it had been. In a fit of fury, excited by disappointments and severe losses, an attack was made by the Javanese on the unsuccessful prince and his contingent, in which both he and eight hundred of his men were slain. The success of the glorious defence was due to John Peterson Coen, the governor-general, who ended his life towards the close of the siege.

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* It is worthy of remark that at this early period all accidents regarding discoveries were carefully recorded. In after times such was not the case. Probably the number of European peoples who were contending for the trade with Asia deterred the discoverers from communicating the results of their experiences to their rivals.

With this drawback, nevertheless, the year was a propitious one to the company. Six vessels reached home, under the command of three several commodores, richly laden; and Peter van der Broek, the first introducer of trade upon the Red Sea and the adjacent countries, returned home the next year from the East Indies, where he had been for several years, with seven vessels, the cargoes of which were valued at eight millions; and in 1631, Antony Van Dieman returned with seven others, which brought the company an incredible amount of treasure.*

On the death of Coen, James Specks was appointed provisional governor—a good selection. He caused the canals to be cleansed, and expeditiously restored every thing to its proper condition, essentially promoted the interests of the company, and added considerably to his reputation.

The enormous wealth which thus flowed in upon them served but to incite the ambition and cupidity of the Dutch shareholders. They resolved to enlarge their means of aggression, and to aim at the expulsion of their European rivals and a monopoly of the Indian trade. It was with these objects that, in 1641, they resolved to seize on Malacca, the strongest hold which the Portuguese held at that time in India, and which was so advantageously situated as to secure to an energetic people, in possession, the commerce of the kingdoms of Johor, Siam, and Pegu, and the control of their trade with China and Japan. By the mastery of the Straits of Malacca, they calculated that they would be in a position to dictate the law to all the nations that traffic in that part of the world.

It was in this year the Dutch also succeeded in excluding the Portuguese from the entire possession of the commerce of Japan. This they effected by sedulously ingratiating themselves into the favour of the sovereign of that country. They persuaded his ministers that they were a humble, peaceable, and well-disposed people, whose only objects were to open a market for their commodities, and who felt it to be their interest as well as duty to promote the prosperity of any country where they were kindly received. By these amiable pretensions they succeeded in imposing on the Japanese authorities, and were placed in possession of the fort of Firando, and treated with every mark of confidence. By the adoption of similar means, they insinuated themselves into the favour of other Indian princes, and thus obtained permission to establish factories, and to build forts for their protection. Having so far succeeded, they no longer supplicated; they dictated laws, and those kings whom they had approached with such apparent humility, and sycophantly courted, found to their cost that their old friends were become their new masters.*

The successes which had recently attended them, the great wealth they had acquired, the revenues which their trade yielded, and the terror which their many and well-appointed armaments inspired, removed the difficulties which otherwise would have stood in the way of the renewal of the charter which now, for the third time, they obtained for the period of twenty-one years, commencing from the 1st of January, 1644. Such, indeed, was the importance acquired by the company that, on the conclusion of the general peace, their interests were as much consulted as those of the government, and the court of Spain was compelled to relinquish any right previously claimed of questioning their conquests in India. As a mark of their gratitude the company entered into a project of erecting, at their own expense, a monument to the commercial fame of the city of Amsterdam. This was the Stadthouse, a structure commenced in 1648 and finished in 1655, and for a long time after considered the finest in the world. There was no period at which they were better able to undertake such a work; their commerce was at its height, there was not a potentate from the Cape of Good Hope to the most distant part of the empire of China which had not learnt to respect their power, and which had not experienced the effects of their good will or their enmity.

At first view it appears singular that in this unexampled prosperity, with a trade enlarged by each successive year, the dividends per cent. to the shareholders under the second charter fell considerably short of those derived under the first. The solution of this anomaly is probably to be found in the vast augmentation of their expenditure occasioned by the necessity of building fortresses, raising forces, and the splendour of their establishments in Batavia and elsewhere.

Shortly previous to this period two contemporaneous revolutions had been successfully attempted in Europe, and the contest in each was being vigorously maintained. The discontented Portuguese, spurning the foreign rule of Spain, had bestowed their allegiance on the Duke of Braganza, whom they had placed on the throne with the title of Joam IV., and in several campaigns they nobly maintained their independence. The Portuguese settlers in India did not hesitate to follow the spirited precedent set to them at home, and proclaimed their native prince. By this procedure they lost the aid which they sometimes derived from the Spaniards; and from the authorities in the father-land, involved in the struggle against their late masters, they could calculate on no assistance. Of this state of affairs the Dutch, though the allies of Joam, availed themselves, and made use of the exigency to extend their power; taking care at the same time to give the best colour they could to those actions, suggested by their worst passions, avarice and sordid ambition.[*]

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* Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 933; *Universal Modern History*, vol. x. p. 317.

* Tavernier, *Voyages des Indes*, p. 2. l. 3. c. 20.

The second revolution referred to, will be recognised as that in which the outraged Commons of England rose against a would-be dominant, and at the same time servile, church,[†] and faith-breaking sovereign. The civil war absorbed all the attention of the nation, and the interests of the English East India Company were lost sight of in the more important considerations at home. The Dutch improved this opportunity also; and on the most frivolous pretences plundered the English factories, and seized on the English vessels. A brief reference to this subject here is demanded, in order to show by what lucky accidents the Dutch were enabled to grasp the power which they wielded in Asia. In dealing with the English portion of this history the subject shall be treated with the consideration due—enough for the present purpose to say that, on the treaty with the Protector, the English claimed as compensation for their losses the sum of £2,700,000, and a further sum of £3615 to the representatives of the persons that were murdered at Amboyna thirty-two years previously.

One of the most important acquisitions of the Dutch in the East was undoubtedly Ceylon. A description of that interesting island has been already given.[‡] A brief summary of its history, from its being possessed by the Portuguese till it fell into the hands of the English, appropriately forms a part of this chapter.

The first settlement of the Portuguese was made as early as 1517, when Albergaria obtained from the King of Cotta—whose territories close adjoined Colombo—permission to erect a small factory for the purposes of trade. As in every other quarter, they soon contrived to strengthen their position, and extend their intercourse with the natives. Stone walls quickly replaced the unpretending palisades, and a goodly supply of cannon frowned their defiance on those who dared assault it by land or sea. Too late the Cingalese were sensible of the dangerous proximity of their late suppliants. With the aid of the Moors, and other foreign traders who were eager for the destruction of their enterprising and successful rivals, an attack was made on the new settlers. This proved unavailing; and after a long protracted struggle, the Europeans were left in possession of the western coast. The arbitrary, faithless, and cruel conduct of the Portuguese, which had rendered them detested by the Indians, generally characterized them in Ceylon; and when the Dutch, in 1601, under the command of Admiral Spilbergen, arrived on the coast, and sought an alliance with the King of Candy, in the interior of the island, the proposal was heartily embraced, in the hope that, with the co-operation of the new comers, the Portuguese could be expelled or destroyed. It does not appear that any hopeful attempt was made to realize these expectations until the year 1639. In that year a Dutch squadron attacked the forts on the east coast, and razed them to the ground. In the year following they repeated their visit, and landed at Negombo, but did not as yet attempt to make a settlement there. In 1643 they attacked and took possession of this town, and fortified it in 1658. The Dutch, who properly estimated the value of the prize, sent General Heest from Batavia with a good fleet and army to cooperate with the King of Candia, to effect the final expulsion of the Portuguese. Having defeated the latter in the field, they sought the protection of the fortifications of Colombo. Partly by force and partly by famine this fortress was reduced in a few months. The King of Candy led an army of forty thousand men to this siege, and, although according to the terms of the treaty existing between them, every fort wrested from the enemy was to be delivered into his hands, the Dutch peremptorily refused to put him in possession of this. They alleged there was a large debt due to them, and that they had resolved to retain it as a security for its discharge. This breach of the treaty led to a rupture and declaration of war; but so broken and disheartened were the Portuguese that they did not avail themselves of the opportunity offered to repair their losses.

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[*] *Universal Modern History*, vol. x. p. 336.

[†] Dominant over the people, and servile to the throne. She was, perhaps, the most subservient to the throne and the most hostile to popular rights of any national church then existing. The repudiation of the Papal supremacy, the confiscation of church property, the entire dependance of the dignitaries on the sovereign, made it, to a great extent, a mere political engine in the hands of the prince. The Church of England was the first to teach these impious doctrines—the divine right of kings, and passive obedience; dogmas which soon roused the noble indignation of the British, called into action the pious and chivalrous Independents—a God-fearing host, who vindicated the immutable rights of the people—and taught kings that they had heads to forfeit for their flagrant violations of honour, duty, and rights.

[‡] P. 158.

The recent conquerors pursued a wiser policy than their European predecessors. They set assiduously to work to develop the resources of the country, and to cultivate a trade with the interior. They acted with their usual discretion, and duly appreciating the advantages to be derived from an extension of trade they, contrary to the example of the Portuguese, treated the natives with kindness, and made no efforts to reap barren military renown. They succeeded in rendering their commerce between this island and Holland very lucrative. Beside the trade in cinnamon, several other branches of industry were developed; public works undertaken on a large scale; and education, if not placed within the reach of all the inhabitants of the maritime provinces,—over all which their sovereignty extended,—was established on a broad and liberal scale, and subjected to government superintendence. For a century and a half they retained unquestioned possession. The enervating effects of the torrid zone must have told upon their descendants, as, indeed, it has hitherto done upon those of all European settlers; for the territory which they had, by their military prowess, secured in 1658, they as rapidly lost, by their imbecility and cowardice, to the British in 1796.

Not content with the successes they had achieved, the general council in Batavia made an enterprising effort to overcome the difficulties which had hitherto impeded their trade with China. In July, 1655, they sent an embassy with very rich presents to the emperor. After a delay of eight or nine months at Pekin, they were honoured with an audience, and from the courtesy with which they were received, they augured favourably of the results; but very shortly after discovered that they had enemies at court, who had sufficient influence to frustrate all their hopes. The Jesuits had, a long time previous to this, been settled in the Celestial Empire, and under the then reigning sovereign were in great credit, and had considerable influence. The chief of these was Father Adam Schaal, a native of Cologne. He had been thirty-five years a resident, and was in special favour with the emperor, who had raised him to the rank of a mandarin of the first class, and placed him at the head of all the philosophers and mathematicians of the empire. He gave a truthful sketch, though highly coloured, of the new comers; who, with assumed "humble mien and bated breath," hoped to accomplish their ends. He represented them as a people belonging to an insignificant corner of Europe, whose support depended on pedling and piracy, who had, by treachery and cruelty, raised themselves an extensive empire in the Indies, at the expense of the natives, and more especially of those princes who suffered themselves to be imposed upon by their specious pretences, and allowed them settlements in their dominions, and by those means afforded them an opportunity of tyrannizing over them and their subjects.* On being questioned respecting these particulars by order of the emperor, their admissions fully convinced the Chinese authorities of their real character, and the embassy was obliged to return towards the close of the year 1657, frustrated in their objects.

A similar attempt made at the court of Japan was more fortunate. The Dutch, on this occasion, made a felicitous selection of their ambassador. Zachary Waghanaer was a man of polished manners, affable deportment, and very great experience. On his arrival at that court in March, 1659, he succeeded in ingratiating himself into the favour of the emperor, and also what was equally to his advantage, into the good graces of his ministers. By giving an assurance that the Dutch would apprise the authorities of Japan of any designs which might be formed in the Philippines to their prejudice, and that they would forbear from molesting Chinese vessels trading to their coasts, he obtained for his countrymen all that he could reasonably request in their favour.

While these negotiations were pending in the distant empires of China and Japan, some serious complications arose in Java, in which the safety of Batavia was involved. The Island of Java was under the rule of a sovereign, who by the Dutch was sometimes styled the emperor, and at other times the King of Japara. His governor of Bantam† threw off the yoke, and proclaimed his independence. In this revolt he was sustained by the Dutch, who hoped, in the exhausting conflict, to bear away the lion's share. Their policy—that by which they had hitherto sustained their position—was to foster these divisions; and, accordingly, whenever the emperor made any aggressions on the Dutch settlement, the King of Bantam was always ready to take up arms in their favour; and whenever the latter and they had any variance, the interference of the emperor was sought. In consequence of some intestine troubles in Java, in the year 1659, the emperor's entire resources were engaged in their suppression. The King of Bantam considered the crisis favourable to his personal designs, and he accordingly enrolled a very numerous army to attack the Dutch, who, he reasoned, deprived of the aid of the emperor, would become an easy prey. He laid siege to Batavia; but the hopes which he nurtured of success were fated to end in disappointment; the greatness recently attained by their extraordinary successes, and the several squadrons which had arrived from Europe in the Indian waters, enabled the Batavians to baffle every effort made by their enemy, and after various repulses and the great losses which he suffered, the King of Bantam retreated precipitately to his own territories.

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* Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 933.

† Bantam is on the west of Java. The English and Danes had factories there till 1682, when the Dutch fomented a war between the king and his son, because the father would not come into their measures. With the aid of other rebels they took the old king prisoner, and sent him to Batavia, and placed the son upon the throne. In 1683 they pretended that they were empowered by the new king to expel the Danes and the English, which they did, insolently, according to their custom.—HAMILTON'S *New Account of the East Indies*, vol. ii. p. 127.

Their own immediate necessities and defensive war did not incapacitate the Dutch from extending support to their ally the King of Bengal, whose rule was endangered by the pretensions of his brother to the throne. They supplied him with provisions, military stores, and a body of troops, which enabled him to establish his power on a firm basis. As an acknowledgment of the services so opportunely rendered, he conceded to them permission to erect a factory and build a fort at Hoogly. This position they strongly fortified. The effects produced by this location on the trade of the English in that quarter will be hereafter detailed.

The repulse which attended their efforts to conciliate the Chinese still rankled in the bosoms of the governor and council of Batavia, and they eagerly wished for an opportunity to requite the Jesuit fathers for their interference. To be revenged they fitted out a fleet of thirty sail, which they dispatched to the Island of Macassar, to attack the capital of that name, in the port of which there was a Portuguese fleet richly laden, in which the Jesuits were largely concerned. In June, 1660, Macassar was attacked by sea and land, and though the king of the island defended his allies with all his forces, the Batavians achieved a complete victory, burnt three of the enemy's ships, sank two, and captured one; the cargo of which was so valuable, that it defrayed the expenses of the Chinese embassy, which cost the Dutch a sum of money (the loss of which affected them seriously), and also of this expedition. The King of Macassar, much to the honour and gratification of the victors, sent an embassy to Batavia, and submitted to such terms as the governor thought proper to impose, though these were stringent and arbitrary. He was bound to expel from his dominions all the Portuguese settlers, and never to admit them, or any other Europeans than the Dutch, to locate themselves there. The fortress and port of Jampandam, with a district of about four leagues in diameter about it, were assigned to the Dutch East India Company; the Jesuits were expelled, their colleges razed, their churches beaten down, and their effects confiscated to the use of the company;* and the king was compelled to send an ambassador with suitable presents to the governor-general, to obtain the ratification of the treaty, even upon these disgraceful terms. This was the most important and advantageous of all their achievements in the East. But, nevertheless, it was undoubtedly an unjustifiable act of robbery and spoliation, a long time conceived, carefully matured, and treacherously executed. Ten years previously, while they were carrying on a trade with this island, and on terms of amity with the king, they privately encouraged several of their countrymen to settle in different parts of his dominions, who, when they found themselves sufficiently strong, raised a formidable force, and unexpectedly attacked him in his palace, having an assurance from the authorities in Batavia, that a sufficient force was prepared to support them. The latter, through mismanagement, did not arrive at the time appointed, and in the interval the king, though taken by surprise, mustered his forces, and acted with such vigour that the Dutch insurgents and their allies were in danger of being totally destroyed. Both armies were encamped within sight of each other, and separated by a river. The Dutch, observing that the native soldiers at a certain hour came to drink, poisoned the water, and thus destroyed multitudes of them, and secured themselves till the succours arrived.

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* In a work entitled, *An Historical Description of the Kingdom of Macassar in the East Indies,* in which the above statement is more fully given and quoted from Tavernier, the author observes:—"This is the specious pretence wherewith M. Tavernier excused the Indian Batavians; but this is the truth, which ought to be believed, concerning that affair, upon the testimony that was given to me by persons disinterested, and of known probity, who told me what I am going to say concerning those that had the greatest share in that expedition. 'Tis very true that the Dutch ambassador from Batavia was ill-received at the Chinese court, and that the emperor refused him permission to traffic in his country. But there was no necessity for the Jesuits to advise him to deal so by him; for by several precedents he well knew how dangerous a thing it was for the Indian sovereigns to let the Dutch get footing in their realms, and the experience of their neighbours convinced them too well of the infidelity and ingratitude of those people. But though the Jesuits of China should have had any share in the emperor's refusal, and though they who live at Macassar, because they were of the same society had deserved the blame, yet how many merchants were there at the same port, to whom alone the ships belonged, that were innocent? Nevertheless, they were as little spared as the rest, but were all involved in the same misfortune. 'Tis true, the Jesuits were sensibly concerned at the defeat of the Portuguese; not only for the loss of any merchandize of their own, but because they saw themselves disappointed in all their hopes of settling the Roman Catholic religion in Macassar."—P. 33.

The self-congratulations of the Dutch, on the success of this expedition, were shortly after painfully interrupted by the severest reverse they had met with during their Indian experiences. They had at this time one of their most flourishing and fairest settlements in Formosa. This island lies about ninety miles off the coast of China, from which it is separated by the channel of Fo-kien, north lat. 22° and 25° 30″, and east long. 120° 30′ and 122°. It is one of the fairest and most fruitful countries in the East. Almost all grains and fruits may be produced on it. Among its articles of trade are—maize, sugar, tobacco, fruits, timber, salt, sulphur, camphor, cotton, hemp, silk, &c. It at present belongs to China, and is familiarly called the granary of the maritime provinces of that empire. It was unknown to the celestials till about the year 1403. About 1643 the Dutch built a fort there, called Fort Zealand, on a small island, commanding the harbour of the capital Taewan. The Chinese, in the year 1653, laid a deep and well-devised scheme for the destruction of the settlement, which was frustrated by the accidental discovery of it. Their good fortune produced a relaxation of that circumspection characteristic of the Dutch; and, entirely bent on the prosecution of their private speculation, they neglected their public duties and general welfare. The fortifications were neglected, and the magazines exhausted. At the same time the greatest severities were inflicted on the Chinese, who in the island amounted to between twenty and thirty thousand men. These were in communication with their countrymen, who were at that time engaged in resisting the Tartar invasion of the empire. The Dutch governor, Werburgh, in order as he supposed to render himself and the garrison secure, proceeded against such as were either in arms or were suspected of a forbidden correspondence. Many of the former were cut to pieces, and many of the latter exposed to cruel deaths and merciless tortures. These severities made the Chinese to a man determined enemies to the Dutch.

At the time the Tartars made their last conquest of China, there dwelt in Fort Zealand a tailor, whose name was Chinchilung, but by the Europeans he was called Iquon. He was a man of large mind, great resolution, and undaunted courage, devoted to his country, and enraged against its Tartar invaders. So constituted, he could not continue a passive spectator of the dangers that threatened his father-land. He collected some kindred spirits, manned two or three small barks, and with this force proceeded to take an active part. His daring adventures were crowned with success; in a short space of time his power had increased to that degree that he became a terror to the Tartar emperor. To get rid of so formidable an adversary, the emperor entered into negotiations with him, and offered to make him king of the two extensive provinces of Canton and Fo-kien, and invited him to Fo-kien to complete the arrangements, and to give him the investiture of his new dignity; but, instead of keeping his faith, he seized on his guest, and had him poisoned. This aspirant to a throne had a son, whose name was Coxinga, who, upon his father's imprisonment, took the command of his fleet. He at first solicited the aid of the Dutch, promising them in return great advantages in case of success; this was refused. Enraged at the repulse, and well acquainted with the neglected state of the defences and the disaffection of the Chinese, he resolved to turn all his force against Formosa. For this enterprise he assembled a fleet of six hundred sail, most of them small frigates, but nearly one hundred of them stout men-of-war of forty guns and upwards, and before any preparations could be made to receive him, he appeared before the Dutch town, in March, 1661. The Chinese landed forty thousand men; all the outposts in a very short time fell into the hands of Coxinga, and the Dutch forces on the island were crowded into Fort Zealand. Although a strong squadron of nine ships, commanded by Commodore James Cawen, was sent to re-inforce the garrison, four hundred of his troops were lost in a land attack upon six thousand Chinese. No better success attended an effort by sea; the Dutch lost two of their best men-of-war, one of which came ashore, and the crew, numbering three hundred and eighty, were killed by the Chinese; the other was blown up, a shot having lodged in her powder magazine. Thus baffled, the five remaining vessels sailed for Java, having on board two hundred women and children taken from the fort. The Governor Cojet performed his part like a soldier and man of honour; and when he was urged by promises and threats to surrender, his answer was worthy of a Spartan,—there was nothing, he said, could induce him to betray his trust, or to give up the place he commanded into the hands of the enemy. Though deprived of the co-operation of the fleet, he made so obstinate a defence, that Souja, the uncle of Coxinga, who was in command of the Chinese fleet, resolved to raise the siege without the knowledge of his nephew, with at least the force under his command. Coxinga, informed of this resolve, had him arrested, and then prosecuted his operations with such skill and vigour, that the Dutch garrison was compelled to surrender, although the succours which they had been expecting were in sight.*

The position of the Dutch was seriously altered by the loss of this settlement. Instead of having the Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese commerce at their mercy, they were no longer able to send their own annual ships to Japan,† but with great difficulty and danger; they, however, reaped one advantage by this disaster—they established a correspondence with the Emperor of China, who consented to aid them in restraining the power of Coxinga, to prevent him from piracy in those seas, and from disturbing the commerce of the empire and Japan.

It was at this period, and by the mediation of Charles II., who had married the Infanta Catharina of Portugal, that a treaty of peace was entered into by the United Provinces and that kingdom, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties; for although the Dutch had the advantage over their adversaries in the East, their gains there were balanced by their losses in other quarters. In the West Indies the Portuguese were the victors, and they had also succeeded in wresting the Brazils from the Dutch; they were in a fair way of making still greater conquests; and their privateers were so numerous, that Holland found her trade in the Mediterranean, and on the coast of Africa, in a critical situation.

The Dutch East India Company did not regard the obligations which this treaty imposed. They acted as if they were sovereigns within the bounds of their charter. In the year, 1663, they made an attack on Coulan, on the coast of Malabar, and, having reduced it, they next attacked the important post of Cannanore, and, after a severe struggle, took possession of it. They repaired the fortifications, and made a settlement there. Their next enterprise was the siege of Cochin, a city of greater importance, being a bishop's see, and the centre of a large trade. After a fierce and protracted defence, in which the loss on each side was very severe, it fell into the hands of the Dutch. The rajah of Porca, a tributary to the Portuguese, next submitted; Cranganore was also taken; and thus in the course of a year, Commodore Goens expelled the Portuguese from all their possessions on the coast of Malabar, and thus acquired a territory one hundred and fifty leagues in length, with all the trade belonging to it, which they had enjoyed without interruption from the time of their first settlement in India. Alliances were now formed with the Zamorin of Calicut, the King of Cochin, and several other Indian princes.

On the ascent of Aurungzebe to the throne, the Dutch sent an embassy, which was graciously received. They paid the same mark of respect to the sovereigns whose dominions bordered the Bay of Bengal, by all of whom they were equally well received.

Some misunderstanding arose between the Dutch, and the King of Siam. They, in consequence, withdrew their factories from his coasts. Alarmed by the injury such proceedings would necessarily inflict, he addressed the council at Batavia in a very respectful letter to know the cause, and then forwarded an ambassador to invite them back, and to assure them of his kind offices and his willingness to redress any grievances of which they had cause to complain, and of any which might arise in the process of time; accordingly the factories were re-established at Siam and Ligor. This satisfactory termination of those differences was followed by an outrage on the part of the Dutch, which to the great credit of the authorities was adequately punished. The crew of a Dutch vessel murdered thirty-five Siamese in cold blood, having first subjected to their libidinous passions their wives and daughters; but before time was allowed for a public complaint, the council caused the offenders to be apprehended. Four of them were broken on the wheel, and five hanged. It may here be also noticed to the credit of the Dutch that they attempted, and by the most feasible means, to introduce amongst their Asiatic allies European literature and civilization, by prevailing on many of the Indian princes and nobles to send their children to Batavia for education, where they were in many instances maintained at the expense of the company; but with this education was mingled their selfish objects—they took all imaginable pains to instil into their minds a high idea of the power and alleged superiority of their nation, and of their capacity to maintain the precedence which they had recently acquired.*

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* Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 935; Basnage's *Annales des Provinces Unies*, tom. i. p. 667.

† Dapper's *Tweede Gezantschap naar Sina*, fol. 91.

* Neuville's *Hist. Van Holland*, 2 deel lxii. cap. iv.

rather as insurrections and rebellions, than wars with independent states.

The period for which their third charter had been granted to the company had expired, and they consequently found themselves under the necessity of obtaining a new one. The republic was now directed by a statesman who was no friend to monopolies, and who had no inclination to sacrifice what he thought was right, to subserve the interest of this body,—this was the celebrated De Witt, who, by his prudence and talents, won the flattering cognomen, "Wisdom of Holland;" who, in 1653, though only twenty-eight years of age, was made pensionary, and as head of the peace party, was in constant opposition to the Prince of Orange and his adherents, who are known in history as the "Louvestein faction." This statesman was of opinion that though companies might be necessary in the infancy of trade, and when new establishments were to be formed, yet when it was matured, it would be prejudicial to the interests of the nation at large, that power and wealth should be suffered to accumulate to an inordinate extent in the hands of the favoured few. His observation had convinced him, and he did not hesitate to promulgate his convictions, that the Dutch employed in the East India settlements were, as he said, the scum of the earth—debauched, necessitous, unprincipled, rapacious, and profligate; all which he attributed to the strict and slavish terms imposed by the company, to which none would submit who could live at home, or could afford to emigrate at his own expense. Notwithstanding his powerful opposition, on the payment of a large sum of money the fourth charter was granted for twenty-one years, dating from the commencement of the year 1666.

The extent and returns of the commerce of the company were enormous of late years, the directors divided *four hundred and fifty per cent.* upon their capital, which was about forty per cent. more than they had divided from 1622 to 1644.

At this period the Dutch, having carried on a very lucrative trade for above forty years with Tonquin, were at variance with the authorities in that country. A brief notice of their settlement there may be interesting and instructive. Shortly after their introduction to Japan, they learnt that annually a small squadron from that country sailed to Tonquin; and that also a considerable trade was carried on there with China. One Charles Hartsink proposed to send a vessel thither from Japan, freighted with the usual commodities, and some European in addition, and various curiosities, considered a suitable present for the king. Hartsink with his cargo was well received. He sold at very high prices, and shortly sailed to Batavia with a valuable freight. Van Dieman, who then presided in India, highly commended his conduct and diligence, and resolved on settling a factory there; he wisely placed Hartsink as superintendent, who in a very short time so ingratiated himself into the favour of the king, that he took him into his councils, elevated him to the highest honours, and finally adopted him as his son. Under his management, and that of some succeeding chiefs, the affairs of the company prospered. At length, about 1664, jealousies arose, the trade gradually declined, the factories were withdrawn, but were settled there again, and continued for about forty years, when they were finally withdrawn. The Dutch probably owed to their own cupidity the deterioration of this branch of trade.

Particular attention was bestowed on the enlargement, embellishment, and fortification of Batavia, and augmenting the commercial conveniences of that port, and the names of the successive governors are honourably identified with the improvements.

Henceforth, the history of the Dutch is involved in that of the French and English, who successively became the leading powers amongst the European nations in the East; and in the records of their progress will be found the decline of a power once all powerful, and even still felt, in the East.

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THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA

AND THE EAST.

CHAPTER L.

PROGRESS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FACTORIES IN CONTINENTAL INDIA TO THE FIRST SETTLEMENT ON THE HOOGLY.

From the date of the settlement of a factory at Surat, to the period of the establishment at Hoogly, and the breaking out of the civil war in England, was a time of considerable events to the company, at home and abroad. Gradually, throughout that period, the foreign agents of the company were laying the foundation of future fortune, where, and how, they suspected not. The reverses of the company subserved its ultimate greatness. The ravages and successes of the Dutch led to their ultimate humiliation, and the triumph of England and her East India Company. The states-general would have probably carried on a commerce, in the long run, successfully, rivalling that of England, had not their grasping and venal temper led them to set justice and treaty at defiance, in endeavouring to deprive the English of all share in the trade of the Eastern Archipelago; but their cupidity roused the latent energy and resources of England, which soon asserted a naval ascendancy in Europe, and ultimately all over the world. The English, at the period of which we now write, were very solicitous to injure the commerce both of the Portuguese and Dutch. That they were just as ready to circumvent and damage the Dutch, as the latter were to disparage or interrupt them, is evident from the correspondence of Sir Thomas Roe. Still, the English were incapable of the cruelties of the Dutch: much more were those of the Portuguese impossible to them. In one of Sir Thomas Roe's letters he writes:—"The Dutch are arrived at Surat, from the Red Sea, with some money and southern commodities, *I have done my best to disgrace them;* but could not turn them out without further danger. Your comfort is, here are goods enough for both."

In another letter he says, "The 10th, 11th, and 12th, I spent in giving the prince advice that a Dutch ship lay before Surat, and would not declare upon what design it came until a fleet arrived, which was expected at the first fit season. This I improved, to fill their heads with jealousies of the designs of the Dutch, and the dangers that might arise from them, which was well taken; and, being demanded, I gave my advice, to prevent coming to a rupture with them, and yet exclude them the trade of India." Here the English ambassador, so scrupulous and just in many affairs, and especially where he was personally concerned, acted towards the Dutch, as he so bitterly complained that the Portuguese acted towards his own countrymen; but it is more than probable the representative of England was obliged by his instructions to act thus, and *necessitas non habet leges.* Besides, the provocations received by the British, from both Portuguese and Dutch, were so frequent and severe, that they could not but oppose those nations, if there were any British trade to be established.

The grand occasion of quarrel with the Dutch was spice. The English enjoyed a good trade in pepper, from their connection with Sumatra and Java, but the trade in the finer spices, such as cloves, nutmegs, cinnamon, &c.,

had been exclusively in the hands of the Portuguese, and was at this period becoming a monopoly in the hands of the Hollanders. The English became intensely eager to break up this monopoly by fair trade; the Dutch to keep it by force of arms. The English sent out agents from Bantam to Amboyna, Banda, and several other islands, reputed for their production of superior spices; and finally, after much mortification and disappointment, they established a factory at Macassar, then deemed an eligible depot for spice brought from other places, and which itself produced superior rice, that might be made available as an article of exchange, and which could be procured by bartering it for the fine cloths of Central India.

The general state of affairs, and prospects of traffic, may be gathered from the reports made by the agents, soon after the company was fairly settled in factories on the coast of India. Mr. Mill thus sums up the tenour and substance of these reports:—"That Surat was the place at which the cloths of India could best be obtained, though nothing could there be disposed of in return, except China goods, spices, and money: that large quantities of Indian wove goods might be sold, and gold, camphor, and benjamin obtained, at the two factories of Acheen and Tekoo, on the Island of Sumatra: that Bantam afforded a still larger demand for the wove goods of India, and supplied pepper for the European market: that Jacatra, Jambee, and Polania, agreed with the two former places in the articles both of demand and supply, though both on a smaller scale: that Siam might afford a large vent for similar commodities, and would yield gold, silver, and deer-skins for the Japan market: that English cloth, lead, deer-skins, silks, and other goods, might be disposed of at Japan, for silver, copper and iron, though, hitherto, want of skill had rendered the adventures to that kingdom unprofitable: that, on the Island of Borneo, diamonds, bezoar stones, and gold, might be obtained at Succadania, notwithstanding the mischief occasioned by the ignorance of the first factors; but from Banjarmassin, where the same articles were found, it would be expedient, on account of the treacherous character of the natives, to withdraw the factory: that the best rice in India could be bought, and the wove goods of India sold, at Macassar: and, that at Banda, the same goods could be sold, and nutmegs and mace procured, even to a large amount, if the obstruction of European rivals were removed. Surat and Bantam were the seats of the company's principal establishments."

An attempt was made for the establishment of a Scottish East India Company, and a royal patent granted in 1618 to Sir James Cunningham, but withdrawn, in consequence of the interference of the London company, who made compensation for the expenses incurred. The king, in return for this concession, and with a view of sustaining the Russian company, which had long been in a precarious state, prevailed on the East India Company to unite with them in carrying on a joint-stock trade, each party advancing £30,000 per annum during the continuance of their respective charters; but the experiment failing after a trial of two seasons, the connection was dissolved at the termination of the year 1619; the loss of the East India Company being estimated at £40,000.*

The company was much disturbed about this time by the prospect of competition with the French and Danes. The associations for Eastern commerce, formed in these countries, were not on a scale to appear formidable to the powerful resources of the Portuguese, Dutch, and English; but nevertheless these nations were all nearly as angry at the bare prospect of any other people wishing to buy spices, where they were produced, as they were by their rivalry with one another. The English appear to have taken more alarm at the formation of the French and Danish companies than the Dutch or Portuguese did, and this alarm appears to have been more excited by the Danes than by the French, although the Gauls were earlier upon the great stage of furious and bitter rivalry. In separate chapters, the formation, progress, and foreign enterprises of the various East India Companies upon the continent,—other than the Portuguese and Dutch, which have been already related,—will be stated and described, so far as relates to the object of these volumes. In a former chapter it was mentioned, that negotiations were opened with Persia, and a treaty of trade secured, under the superintendence of Sir Thomas Roe. That acute man, however, dissuaded the enterprise, on the ground that the Portuguese already possessed the commerce between Persia and Surat, and that the expense of protecting the trade by armaments would be too great. The general policy of Sir Thomas was to avoid, as much as possible, all armed competition, and to seek avenues of trade the least exposed to the expense of numerous crews, heavy armaments, and forts. The experience of the English verified the sagacity of these councils. The trade opened in the Persian Gulf never became very profitable, in consequence of the expenses incurred.

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* Milburn's *Oriental Commerce.*

In the year 1617-18, a new subscription was opened by the company in London, which reached the enormous sum of £1,600,000. This was designated "the company's second joint-stock."

In 1619 negotiations began between the courts of England and Holland, to adjust the quarrels of the respective East Indian interests of the two nations. It was agreed on all hands that it was disgraceful for allies to carry on a commercial competition which almost amounted to war. Accordingly, on the 17th of July, the terms of this treaty were in brief, according to Bruce, as follows:—"It was stipulated that there should be a mutual amnesty, and a mutual restitution of ships and property; that the pepper trade at Java should be equally divided; that the English should have a free trade at Pullicate, on the Coromandel coast, on paying half the expenses of the garrison; and that of the trade of the Moluccas and Bandas they should enjoy one-third, the Dutch two, paying the charges of the garrisons in the same proportion. Beside these conditions, which regarded their opposite pretensions, the treaty included arrangements for mutual profit and defence. Each company was to furnish ten ships of war, which were not to be sent in the European voyages, but employed in India for mutual protection; and the two nations were to unite their efforts to reduce the duties and exactions of the native governments at the different ports. To superintend the execution of this treaty a council was appointed, to be composed of four members of each company, called the *Council of Defence*."

The same author says—"In consequence of this treaty, by which the English were bound to send a fleet of ten ships to India, a larger fund was this year raised than had been provided for any preceding voyage: £62,490 in the precious metals, and £28,508 in goods, were exported with the fleet. The return was brought back in a single ship, and sold at £108,887."

The result, however, was unfortunate, as the English commissioners of the council of defence reported, that unless measures were taken in Europe to check the grasping and aggressive proceedings of Holland, the trade must be abandoned. This impression was taken up in England, but it was impossible just then to do anything for such a purpose.

The commercial proceedings, meanwhile, are described by Mr. Mill, with great brevity, in the following paragraph:—"In 1621-22, they were able to fit out only four ships, supplied with £12,900 in gold and silver, and £6253 in goods; the following year, they sent five ships, £61,600 in money, and £6430 in goods; in 1623-24, they equipped seven vessels, and furnished them with £68,720 in money, and £17,340 in goods. This last was a prosperous year to the domestic exchequer. Five ships arrived from India with cargoes, not of pepper only, but of all the finer spices, of which, notwithstanding the increasing complaints against the Dutch, the company's agents had not been prevented from procuring an assortment. The sale of this part alone of the cargoes amounted to £485,593; that of the Persian raw silk to £97,000; while £80,000, in pursuance of the treaty of 1619, was received as compensation money from the Dutch." This compensation money was, however, given with the greatest reluctance, and its concession deepened the hostility which the Dutch felt, and had so malignantly displayed. Not long after followed the massacre of Amboyna, described in the last chapter.

It may here, however, be observed, that the Dutch certainly believed the English guilty of a conspiracy at Amboyna to seize the fort, and some English writers have conceded it. Captain Hamilton* affirms it, and even palliates, and almost justifies, the severity of the Dutch, by references to alleged tortures, perjuries, and persecutions, inflicted by agents of the English company upon other Englishmen, who, not being the servants of the company, were called "interlopers," and proscribed, having been deemed fair game for the company's people to hunt down by any means they could.

Upon the allegations of Captain Hamilton, Professor Wilson, of Oxford, thus animadverts, while he concedes the probability of some English plot:—"It is not impossible that there was amongst the English on Amboyna some wild scheme for the seizure of the island. The Japanese were soldiers of the garrison, and their position rendered their co-operation of an importance more than equivalent to the smallness of their numbers. At the same time, the conspirators were punished with a severity wholly unjustifiable. It is no extenuation of the cruelty of the Dutch, to argue that the English in India, in those days, were guilty of similar atrocities; the fact is not proved, and the probability may be questioned: no instance of such savage barbarity can be quoted against any of the English factories or governments, and particular acts of severity towards deserters and pirates, are not to be confounded with the deliberate cruelties of a public body. Even with regard to individual instances, however, the evidence is defective: Hamilton wrote from recollection, according to his own admission, and his accusations are, for the most part, general and vague. It is elsewhere noticed by our author, also, that he was an interloper, and that his testimony, when unfavourable to the company, must be received with caution. His assertions cannot be admitted as conclusive or unsuspicious. The conduct of the council of Amboyna admits of no doubt, and no plea of precedent or necessity can be justly heard in its palliation. The Dutch writers themselves acknowledge, that it would have been much better to have sent the accused to Europe for trial, even by the English courts."*

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* *New Account of the East Indies,* vol. i. p. 362.

The proceedings of the company at home assumed but few features of importance up to 1629, when a new charter was obtained. The circumstances which led to it are thus recorded by Mr. Mill, on the authority of Bruce:—"As the sums in gold and silver which the company had for several years found it necessary to export, exceeded the limits to which they were confined by the terms of their charter, they had proceeded annually upon a petition to the king, and a special permission. It was now, however, deemed advisable to apply for a general license, so large as would comprehend the greatest amount which, on any occasion, it would be necessary to send. The sum for which they solicited this permission was £80,000 in silver, and £40,000 in gold; and they recommended, as the best mode of authenticating the privilege, that it should be incorporated in a fresh renewal of their charter; which was accordingly obtained."

During this period, also, the company first petitioned the English House of Commons. Upon the death of King James I., and the ascent to the throne of Charles I., the House of Commons, as is well known to the student of English history, gradually asserted more power and influence, which the company perceiving, brought its claims before it, and urged the straits to which it was reduced by the aggressions of the Dutch.

Among the incidents in the last years of the reign of James were the succession to the company of the right to punish their servants abroad, both by martial and municipal law. This right was granted by the crown without the consent of the commons, or even consulting them. Mr. Mill found among the East India papers, in the State Paper Office, the material for the following paragraph:—"In the year 1624-25 the company's fleet to India consisted of five ships; in 1625-26, it consisted of six ships; and in 1626-27, of seven. In the last of these years we gain the knowledge collaterally of one of those most important facts in the company's history, which it has been their sedulous care to preserve concealed, except when some interest, as now, was to be served by the disclosure. Sir Robert Shirley, who had been ambassador at the court of Persia, made application to the king and council to order the East India Company to pay him £2000 as a compensation for his exertions and services in procuring them a trade with Persia. The company, beside denying the pretended services, urged their inability to pay; stating that they had been obliged to contract so large a debt as £200,000; and that their stock had fallen to 20 per cent. discount, shares of £100 selling for no more than £80."

Judging from their own representations, their affairs, commercially, wore at this juncture an unfavourable aspect. They probably, however, presented their case in this dark aspect to elude the payment demanded by Shirley, and to create a public impression that they needed yet more the patronage and favour of government, while they were rendering great services to the nation. Probably no event of the times annoyed the company so much as the demands of King James, and his admiral, the Earl of Buckingham, for share of the prize money, won by its successful conflicts with the Portuguese. The king demanded £1000 as droits to the crown; the lord high admiral demanded the like sum as droits to the Admiralty. As the power of the king was often exercised in an unconstitutional manner in those days, the company deemed it discreet simply to raise objections to the demand, and make no farther resistance. To the admiral's claim they presented legal obstacles, and indignant remonstrance and protest. They declared that as their ships which captured prizes did not carry letters of marque from the Admiralty, it had no right to interfere, especially as the armaments by which such captures were made, were a heavy cost to the company, which had to protect its own trade, the state rendering very little assistance. These arguments were good, for if the government in any form made itself a partner in the naval and military successes of the company, it should also take its share in losses that were inflicted by the armed Portuguese and Dutch. The whole matter was brought before the Court of Admiralty, when it appeared that the prizes of the company were to the amount of £100,000 sterling, and 240,000 reals of eight. The unprincipled king, greedy to obtain money, insisted on his prerogative; the claims of the high admiral were postponed and eluded, and probably eventually baffled, for there is no evidence of their having ever been satisfied.

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* *Vies des Gouverneurs Hollandois*, in the *Histoire Générale des Voyages*, xvii. 33.

The first home event of any importance after the royal concession of 1629, was the opening of a subscription for a third joint-stock. This began in 1631, and was completed in the following year. It amounted to £420,000. With the new subscription seven ships were fitted out the same year. In 1633-34 five ships were sent out. In 1634-35 mention is made of only three, but some historians doubt whether that year was not more prolific of enterprise.

The company now complained loudly of the "interlopers:" private adventurers trading to any part of the East on their own account were so considered, and such they were so long as the company held the royal charter. There was, however, a disposition to murmur at the slightest infringement of their privilege unworthy of a body which had already acquired so great an influence, and which carried on such extensive enterprises. But, in truth, the profits of the trade were far less than the public supposed. Most of the directors were ignorant of political economy, and few of their agents had any correct opinions as to the principles of trade. The censure of Mr. Mill applies too truly to the conduct and intelligence of the company at this period as a trading association:—"The company, like other unskilful, and for that reason unprosperous, traders, had always competitors, of one description or another, to whom they ascribed their own want of success. For several years they had spoken with loud condemnation of the clandestine trade carried on by their own servants, whose profit they said exceeded their own. Their alarms for their exclusive privileges had for some time been sounded; and would have been sounded much louder, but for the ascendancy gained by the sentiments of liberty." Their hope that their monopoly would escape the general wreck with which institutions at variance with the spirit of liberty were threatened, could only be entertained if its pretensions were prudently kept in the shade. The controversy whether monopolies, and among others that of the company, were injurious to the wealth and prosperity of the nation, had already employed the press.

The outcry as to the interlopers and private traders was one which troubled the public as well as the company from the beginning of the century, and during the embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, he advised the directors to allow no servant to trade, but to give them adequate salaries, and engage their entire interests. The parsimony of the company to the agents compelled them to trade for a sufficient subsistence. The advice of Sir Thomas had only been in part followed, and hence the complaints to which Mr. Mill, with a tone of some asperity, refers.

In 1634-35 a new and remarkable episode in the history of the company is presented. A treaty was formed with Portugal for freedom of trade between the Eastern possessions of the two countries, and also between the parent states and the respective factories and possessions of each. This event was hailed in England with as much satisfaction as the arrangement with the Dutch previously had been received, and with but little more ground for the hope and confidence inspired. To the company it turned out to be a great danger, for it incited a number of enterprising persons in India to denounce the monopoly of the company, and to attempt the formation of an independent association. At the head of this party was Sir William Courten, who succeeded in engaging a gentleman of the royal bed-chamber, named Endymion Porter, to use his influence with the king on its behalf. The courtier had little difficulty in persuading a monarch so tenacious of his own rights, and so thoughtless of the rights of others, as Charles I. The king was prevailed upon to *take a share*, and then there was no difficulty in obtaining from him, on behalf of the association, licence to trade. The object of the king was personal profit, and yet he had the unfaithfulness and effrontery to set forth in the preamble of the licence, "that it was founded upon the misconduct of the East India Company, who had accomplished nothing for the good of the nation in proportion to the great privileges they had obtained, or even to the funds of which they had disposed." Charles no doubt felt emboldened in the perpetration of this treachery by the opinion of the nation, then hotly engaged in discussing monopolies, and the rights of kings. The provision of notice to the company three years before any abrogation of its charter, emboldened many to become adventurers under its guarantee; the violation of this compact was worthy of a prince who could keep no faith with his subjects, whether the matters which demanded it were religious, political, or commercial.

Courten's Association, as the newly licensed company was called, persevered, and sent out ships. In 1637-38 several ships of the new company returned home laden with Eastern produce, suitable to the English market, which brought a ready sale and great profit. In consequence of the alarm and petitions of the old company, the privy council came to the conclusion that the two companies should avoid all collision by Courten's Association seeking new ports, and the East India Company not touching at any place where Courten's people erected a factory. The East India Company prosecuted its protests against all rivalry; the king was so overwhelmed with complaints from all classes of his subjects, except the highest in birth and privilege, that he became extremely solicitous to quell this new tumult, which, like so many others in his reign, he had himself done so much to raise. The privy council were directed to form a committee to investigate and settle matters, and, if possible, conciliate conflicting parties and interests. The council, however, did none of these things—here also perpetrating the neglect, and displaying the folly, which ere long convulsed the nation, and for a time left the throne blood-stained and vacant. Charles was obliged to do something about the company, "to satisfy the noblemen and gentlemen who were adventurers in it," and, according to Bruce, the licence to Courten was withdrawn. His party complained bitterly that the king had betrayed them, entangling them in undertakings beneath the ægis of his protection, and then in the moment of hope and trial abandoning them.

The affairs of the company now assumed an aspect of confusion which it would be impossible to describe, but their affairs had been conducted with so much disorder, their accounts kept in a manner so complicated and impracticable, the agents abroad had looked so little after the company's property, being taken up with their own barter and exchanges, that it is extraordinary bankruptcy did not immediately ensue. The proprietors of "the third joint-stock" demanded that that particular adventure should be brought to a close, and that its property in India should be brought home. The difficulty of complying with this demand was greater than the aggregate capacity of the directors could accomplish. Mill, quoting Bruce, depicts the conditions of things thus:—"It might have been disputed to whom the immovable property of the company, in houses and lands, in both India and England, acquired by parts indiscriminately, of all the joint-stocks, belonged. Amid the confusion which pervaded all parts of the company's affairs, this question had not begun to be agitated: but to encourage subscription to the new joint-stock, it was laid down as a condition, 'That to prevent inconvenience and confusion, the old company or adventurers in the third joint-stock should have sufficient time allowed for bringing home their property, and should send no more stock to India, after the month of May.' It would thus appear, that the proprietors of the third joint-stock, and by the same rule the proprietors of all preceding stocks, were, without any scruple, to be deprived of their share in what is technically called the *dead stock* of the company, though it had been wholly purchased with their money. There was another condition, to which inferences of some importance may be attached; the subscribers to the new stock were themselves, in a general court, to elect the directors to whom the management of the fund should be committed, and to renew that election annually. As this was a new court of directors, entirely belonging to the fourth joint-stock, it seems to follow that the directors in whose hands the third joint-stock had been placed, must still have remained in office, for the winding up of that concern. And, in that case, there existed, to all intents and purposes, two East India Companies, two separate bodies of proprietors, and two separate courts of directors, under one charter. So low, however, was the credit of East India adventure, under joint-stock management, now reduced, that the project of a new subscription almost totally failed. Only the small sum of £22,500 was raised. Upon this a memorial was presented to the king, but in the name of whom—whether of the new subscribers, or the old—whether of the court of directors belonging to the old joint-stock, or of a court of directors chosen for the new, does not appear. It set forth a number of unhappy circumstances, to which was ascribed the distrust which now attended joint-stock adventures in India; and it intimated, but in very general terms, the necessity of encouragement to save that branch of commerce from total destruction." The failing credit of the company, the alarming ascendancy of the Dutch in the Eastern Archipelago, and the political conflicts at home, all combined to render it impossible to raise a new joint-stock.

In this state of affairs the company incurred a new blow from the king. Having resolved to make war upon his subjects, and not possessing pecuniary resources for the task which he imposed upon himself, the king seized all the pepper of the company, offering to purchase it on credit, which he did, and then immediately sold it for ready money. The parliament was subsequently unwilling to acknowledge any responsibility for this and other acts of the king, and his majesty appears to have given himself no concern as to the repayment. Bruce represents the company as receiving back a portion by remission of customs, but Professor Wilson believes that they never received any compensation. Thus, in every form, Charles I. was perfidious and oppressive to the company. His caprice, selfishness, and injustice nearly extinguished the existence of a body, destined however, to live for great achievements. Probably the company would not have survived the plunder of the stores of pepper by the king, had not some of the agents abroad sustained by loans its sinking credit.

The conduct of the king became more and more infatuated, until the fury of the civil war shook every institution in England to its foundation, and the East India Company suffered its full proportion of the disasters which the royal obstinacy and unconstitutional violence entailed upon all. Among the acts of this sovereign which most disturbed public confidence was the seizure of the money lodged in the Tower by the merchants. "Previous to the year 1640, the merchants of London lodged their money in the Mint at the Tower as a place of security. The king's inability to meet the Scottish army, which was then approaching the borders of England, constrained him to call the parliament together, which had not been summoned for twelve years, for the purpose of obtaining supplies. These being refused until their grievances were redressed, parliament was hastily dissolved by the king, who, upon some alleged ground that the City of London had occupied more lands in Ireland than was granted by their charter, forcibly borrowed of the merchants £200,000 of their money then lodged in the Tower. This led the merchants to withdraw their deposits, and to place them in the hands of goldsmiths, whose business till then was to buy and sell plate and foreign coins, and to melt and cause them to coin some at the Mint, and with the rest to supply the refiners, plate-makers, and merchants, as they found the price vary. They became lenders to the king, whose wants led him to anticipate the revenue, and who gave orders or letters on the exchequer for the interest."

Such was the condition of the company's affairs at home that, *à priori*, the reader may conclude affairs abroad, so far as depended upon the management and resources of the company, did not prosper. In the earlier years of the period of which we treat, there were some successes, but these were almost entirely confined to the continent of India, and the neighbouring seas.

The foundation, at Jacatra, of a colony, upon which the Dutch people concentrated their power in that direction, had considerable influence upon the progress of affairs in the eastern Asiatic isles. The Dutch were nearly always at war with the King of Bantam, who was the ally of the English. Several times English interests there appeared upon the point of destruction, and the King of Bantam in peril of the loss of his dominions. The English settlement was repeatedly attacked, and once burnt down, and the palace of the king partly demolished.

A few months previous to the arrangement of 1619 between the two companies, Sir Thomas Dale combined his forces, of some ships which he commanded, with the forces of the King of Bantam, for the expulsion of the Dutch from Jacatra. This expedition was successful, and the natives of the place undertook its defence. The Javanese soldiers who occupied the place were neither brave nor vigilant, and surrendered upon the next demonstration of the Dutch. This locality was chosen by the latter* for the foundation of a fortified city, which, after the ancient name of Holland, was called Batavia. That became the great seat and centre of Dutch oriental power and commerce, and continues so to this day. It was at Jacatra, or Batavia, that the council of defence already referred to fixed its quarters, but the victory of the Dutch admiral, Coen, left unfavourable influences, which caused animosity to rankle in the hearts of men of both nations. "The president and council," as the four English representatives constituting the council of defence at Batavia were called, were much dissatisfied that the ships destined for Java and the Spice Islands were detained in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, to the great detriment of the pepper export, but events proved that these ships were more profitably employed than they could have been loading pepper at Batavia or Bantam. In like manner the factories at Sumatra detained ships which were also to have brought away lading from Java, but so uncertain was the conduct of the Dutch, that the factors at Sumatra appear to have had good reason for their conduct. These discontents, however, between the company's agents abroad led to conflicting "advices" in the communications received at home, and embarrassed the directors.

The expiration of the truce between Spain and Holland, in 1621, left the Dutch cruisers once more at liberty to attack Portuguese interests, which they did with an energy that inspired still further desire for a scope to their activity, and the English, contrary to treaty, were also assailed. Dutch writers allege that the English settlers in the Bandas, Poleroon, Rosengin, and Santore, conspired with the natives against the legitimate influence of Holland, which claimed a right to the sovereignty of these isles. The admirals and merchants of the states-general were, however, always fancying conspiracies, or inventing them as pretexts for their aggressions. According to the testimony of their apologists, just as the English conspiracies were ripe, the opportune arrival of the Dutch admiral, Coen, saved the settlers, and restored the interests of his nation. He inflicted severe punishment both upon the native and English conspirators, effectually protected Batavia, and established it in superior strength, and covered the designs of the English with humiliation.

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* See chapter on the Dutch in India and the East.

The English factory at Bantam had been removed to Batavia, on the faith of the treaty of conciliation and partnership between the two companies, concluded in Europe. The English agents now desired to return to their former position, but the Dutch opposed that, on the ground, openly confessed, that it might injure their newly consolidated oriental metropolis, Batavia. Thus it became evident that the Dutch had resolved by force to put an end to the trade of all rivals, and to hold under the cannon's mouth the monopoly of trade in the Eastern Archipelago.

The English trade with Java had now been extinguished, unless carried on to a small extent under restrictions haughtily and insolently imposed. The commerce with Japan became similarly circumstanced. In a former chapter the English were described as obtaining from the emperor charters the most favourable at Firando and Jeddo. The Dutch attacked these places while peace existed between England and the states-general, and the two East India companies were in ostensible partnership. No provocation had been given, no plea of sovereignty was set up, but upon the old pretext of prior occupation, the assault was made with sanguinary violence by an overwhelming force. The English could make no effectual resistance; they had to flee into the interior, where, protected by the natives, they escaped; otherwise they would have shared the fate of their compatriots at Amboyna.

Soon after these misfortunes the company's agents retired from Java to the Island of Lagundy, in the Straits of Sunda. The persons who selected this position were as little skilled in sanitary science as English agents and commanders have generally been since; and the result was a severe mortality, which in twelve months carried off nearly two hundred men. The distress of the settlers was so great, that they could not muster men sufficient in number to work a vessel to bear themselves away to any of the English factories. The Dutch showed some mercy by bringing them away to Batavia. The "Pangram," or King of Bantam, their steady friend, again offered them the means of re-establishing the factory at his capital; this was accomplished in 1629, the Dutch being at that juncture unable to oppose, as the Emperor of Java besieged Batavia with eighty thousand men. Notwithstanding the difficulties to which the company at home, and its agents abroad, were exposed during this period, attempts were made to open up a trade with China, where, it was believed, if a commerce could be secured, it would render especial profit. From Firando and Tywan the English made repeated attempts to create a Chinese trade, which, considering the infancy of those settlements, reflected credit upon the agents and the commanders of ships.

According to the twenty-sixth article of the treaty of defence, "the two companies were jointly to open a free trade to China." But the policy and proceedings of the rivals were precisely the same on the Chinese coasts as among the Spice Islands. They did not, however, make any pretence of justice in their conduct in the Chinese waters. They had no exclusive privileges or pre-occupation to plead, yet, "neither the treaty, nor the fear of reprisals, nor a sense of the friendship which subsisted between England and the states-general, could restrain the avidity of the Dutch company, or render them equitable to their allies."* The company established their factories at Tywan and Formosa, with every prospect of working a remunerative trade, and of securing an opening at Amoy. Formosa was an object of their ambition, because of the alleged variety of its produce; and it was reported that English goods brought thither from the Chinese province of Fo-kien, in Chinese junks, sold well. The Chinese were then busy colonizing Formosa, chiefly because of its productiveness in rice; and as Formosa gathered an industrious Chinese population, who worked as its own wild people would not do, a demand for English goods increased.

Efforts were made to procure intercourse with Canton by means of the Portuguese at Macao; but the governor would not allow any English settlers without sanction from Europe. When the English succeeded in gaining access to Canton, it was under provisions which restricted their operations exceedingly; all ships, guns, and ammunition must be sent on shore, and heavy dues and exactions submitted to, which were tantamount to plunder. The Chinese nation was also much disturbed, the minds of men were unsettled, and a predatory and contentious spirit seemed to prevail among the whole people.

As soon as the Dutch found the English seeking a trade, they not only attacked and plundered their ships, but they committed extensive piracy on Chinese junks, sinking and burning the vessels, and slaying their crews, proclaiming themselves to be English, and committing these enormities under the flag of England. The result was as they expected—a prejudice against the British was spread all along the coasts of China. It became the habit of the Dutch at that time in every sea, when they wanted to perpetrate a dishonest or violent deed, to hoist English colours, and declare themselves English to their victims.

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* Auber.

The court of directors in London had their attention called more especially to the condition and prospects of a Chinese commerce by their agents at Bantam. The following is a curious and interesting *exposé* of the opinions and hopes of the first British essayists in Chinese commerce. It is a document sent by the "presidency" at Bantam in 1622:—

"Concerning the trade of China, two things are especially made known unto the world. The one is, the abundant trade it affordeth; the second is, that they admit no stranger into their country.

"1*st. Question.* Whether the Emperor of China resides near the sea or within the land?

"*Answer.* He resideth within the land, seventy days' journey from these seas, in a city called Pequin, situate in 48 degrees towards the Tartarian borders, &c.

"2*nd. Quest.* Whether our king might not send to visit him, and whether our king's people and shipping might not be permitted to have trade, and to pass and repass with safety?

"*Ans.* No people may be admitted to travel within the land; neither will the Emperor admit converse or commerce with any prince or people. In some places that border on the coast or confines of other princes, there is trade tolerated by some inferior governors, yet unknown to the emperor, and those with limitation; for their vessels, if on sea voyages, are proportioned for bigness not to exceed one hundred and fifty tons, their number of men allowed, and their time of absence prescribed. The like strictness is observed in the neighbourly land; commerce being carried on by marts only, held on certain days."

In the year 1627, the presidency of Bantam referred the court of directors to certain conferences which were opened with intelligent Chinese as to trade between their country and Japan.

In 1635 the president of the English factory of Surat, having been engaged in negotiating with the governor of the Portuguese settlement at Goa, for a treaty of peace between the two nations in India, the court of directors expressed the extreme pleasure which such a prospect afforded to them, and their desire, should such a treaty be brought to pass, that advantage should be taken of it for the purpose of facilitating the trade between India and China. When the treaty was effected, the company renewed the expression of these wishes, and upon the arrival in India of the ratification of the treaty by the King of Spain, the viceroy at Goa proposed to the council at Surat, that a ship should be freighted, partly by each company, and sent to Canton. The British ship, *London*, was selected for this purpose. This was the first British ship that sailed from India to Macao: directions were therefore given to be exceedingly scrupulous to create no prejudice in the minds of the Chinese. The ship reached Macao in July, 1635. The governor's conduct justified the complaints made from Firando and Bantam, that he paid no attention to his superior at Goa, and that the Portuguese in China were in revolt against the Portuguese in India. The functionary at Macao would not allow the supercargoes, either British or Portuguese, to reside on shore, and in all ways, short of direct expulsion, hindered the new trade.

At this juncture the ships of Courten's Association arrived, and hostilities between them and the servants of the company at once began. The effect upon the Chinese was to lead them to believe that some underhand proceeding, hostile to themselves, was on foot, the spectacle of the ships of the same nation being in hostility appearing to them incomprehensible.

The Dutch, perceiving how matters stood, attacked both Portuguese and British, and for a time there appeared but little chance of the allies resisting the superior force of the ships of the states-general. The Portuguese fought badly, and their want of prowess caused the English to despise them so much that they lost all confidence in any good result from the alliance. The Dutch were, however, defeated in their attempt to conquer Macao, and retired to the Pescadores, where they built a fort, from which to annoy and plunder Chinese, Portuguese, and British indiscriminately.

Having presented to the reader a succinct account of the condition of the company's interests, and the events which befell them in the earliest sphere of its operations in the Eastern Seas—as the Archipelago and the Chinese waters were called, in contra-distinction to the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea—a new series of events remain to be related in connection with these.

The English, as has been shown in former chapters, obtained, after much difficulty in negotiations, settlements in continental India; and, as has also been shown, there was at the outset great danger to the factories, from the hostile rivalry of the Portuguese.

When the English obtained permission to establish a factory at Surat, they found that place a very considerable emporium. It was one of the most ancient in India, for it is mentioned in the *Ramagasee*, a poem of very great antiquity. After the Portuguese discovered the passage by the Cape, it became a place of large export, especially of pearls, diamonds, ambergris, civet musk, gold, silks, cottons, spices, indigo, saltpetre, and fragrant woods. It had, from the time of Mohammedan ascendancy, been a port of embarkation for pilgrims on their way to Mecca, and of debarkation for them on their return from Arabia.

In 1612, when Captain Best obtained permission to establish a factory, he left ten persons, and a stock of £4000 to purchase goods.* The Dutch, hearing of the English settlement, made arrangements to enter into the competition going on there between the British and Portuguese, but did not arrive until 1617, and then were driven thither by a storm, some of their ships having been wrecked. The English succoured them, and even assisted them in disposing of their cargoes to advantage. This kindness was not generously requited.

The English continued to trade as peaceably at Surat as the jealousies of rival nations allowed, and great hopes were entertained by the residents, that the Persian treaty (already referred to) would open up a mine of wealth. In virtue of that treaty the English were permitted to build a factory and a fort at Jask. Accordingly, two ships were sent there in 1621, and found the port blockaded by a Portuguese fleet, consisting of five large ships and fifteen small craft. The English returned to Surat, and informed the president of what he had seen. Two other ships reinforced them, and returned to Jask, where, notwithstanding the great disparity of vessels, the British forced their way in. The Portuguese retired to Ormuz, where they refitted and refreshed, that island having then been in their possession for 120 years. Sailing thence for Jask, they drew up in line of battle, and opened a cannonade upon the English with their large vessels, while the small craft, as in an earlier conflict at Surat, attempted to board; the general result was a decisive victory on the part of the English. The Persians were as pleased as the Indians were at the first English victory at Surat, and proposed to the English an allied expedition to Ormuz, to expel the Portuguese from their long-established depot. The naval portion of the expedition was furnished by the English, the military part by the Persians, but the whole was under English direction. The naval force of the British was very disproportionate, but the military contingent of the shah was, in English hands, a formidable element of the assailing force. The English had received instructions from their own government not to molest the subjects of the King of Spain, the Stuarts always having a friendly feeling to Roman Catholic princes. The British, however, disobeyed those orders in this case, and carried the Persian forces to Ormuz. The place was assaulted and captured in 1622. The victory was complete; the Portuguese proved themselves inferior even to the Persians in arms, when the latter were well led. The shah took possession of the island, but the English received a fair proportion of the prize, and, moreover, a moiety of the customs of Gombroon was conceded to them. This was of some importance, as the English had already a factory there since 1613. Gombroon was on the mainland, nearly opposite to Ormuz, in longitude 54·45 east, and latitude 27·10 north. The Dutch had established a factory there two years before this event, and their mortification and rage were boundless that the English should be placed "over their heads."

A condition was appended to the grant of the customs at Gombroon; namely, that the English should keep the gulf free of pirates. This they did until 1680, when they failed to perform it, and the privilege was resumed by the shah.

The Dutch, so kindly fostered at Surat as guests, soon returned as competitors. They were better traders than the English, and had larger capital; their habits also were more economical, and the English accused them of carrying on their business and regulating their personal expenditure penuriously. They were, however, hospitable, and lived well; they also paid their servants much better than the London company did, which enabled their agents to give themselves more completely up to advance the interests of their employers. Nevertheless, they conducted their business at less cost; all waste was avoided, no money was "fixed" that could be "kept in hand;" their payments were prompt, and their credit therefore good, and in most of these respects they were very unlike their rivals. The English trade at Surat soon began to suffer, and the company memorialised the government at home against the Dutch, as giving a larger price for Indian commodities, and selling European goods lower than they did. The idea of the company was not that the English trader should outbid the Dutch, and undersell them in a fair commercial competition, but that the government at home should use force or diplomacy to rid them of the competitors.

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* The reader will find the fullest and best account of the history of this settlement in a work entitled, *The English in Western India*, being the early history of the factory at Surat, by Philip Anderson.

While the British were thus troubled by the Dutch at Surat, the Portuguese made another effort to snatch from the victorious English the renown of their recent achievements. In 1630 the viceroy of Goa received a reinforcement of nine ships and two thousand soldiers; and, backed by this demonstration, opened negotiations with the Mogul for the recovery of the exclusive trade of Surat. Five English ships arrived for trade at that place, and as they entered the port of Swally, the Portuguese attacked them, but were beaten off. The disparity of force was too great for the English to inflict any severe punishment upon their foes, who continued to harass the British squadron, and keep up incessant skirmishes. Finally, by a bold attempt to set fire to the English squadron, the Portuguese hoped to accomplish their purpose. This failed: the English again inflicted chastisement upon the opposing fleet, and landed their goods in safety.

Surat and its immediate vicinity were not the only spots in continental India upon which the English laid a tenacious hold at this juncture. In 1628 they purchased from the *naig*, or chief, of the district, a piece of ground on the Coromandel coast, and the year following built a factory, and fortified it by mounting twelve pieces of cannon, guarded by about a fourth of a military company of "factors and soldiers." This is the first we hear of "soldiers" in the service of the company; their employment is, by most writers, assigned to a later period. It does not, however, appear, from any information extant, whether these soldiers were natives or Europeans.

Fortified factories or forts were now considered necessary to the security of the company's trading stations. Miss Martineau says, "It was the king, Charles I., who had brought the company round to the conviction that they must have forts;" and she assigns the reasons given by the king, in 1635, for granting a licence to a rival company, as the occasion of working this change in their opinion. It may be, that the directors at home were influenced to offer their encouragement to the building of forts, in consequence of Charles making their not having done so a pretext for creating another association to trade in the East; but it is remarkable that that society from the outset protested, in the language of Sir Thomas Roe, against forts as a waste of money and incompatible with trade. The agents of the company were, however, convinced of the importance and essential requirement of fortified positions years before Charles issued the document in question, as their proceedings at Armegan and elsewhere show. Indeed, this authoress places the matter much in this light, when she thus describes the proceedings of the company's agents at this period:—"Piece goods, then in great demand—the delicate muslins and soft cottons of the Deccan—were to be had more easily on the Coromandel coast than on the western, and the company attempted to set up several factories or depots there. We read of four, besides the Madras establishment; but European rivals were hardy, and native governments were harsh, and one after another was given up, or transferred to some safer place—to be again removed. Under these difficulties, men began to talk again of forts. It might be true that garrisons would absorb all the profits of trade; but it was clear that trade could not go on without garrisons. No help was to be had from home. During the civil war there, nobody had any attention to spare for India; and the company's agents must take care of themselves. The forts were an humble enough affair; and the native soldiers who were hired to hold them were armed with anything which came to hand, from bows and arrows to damaged muskets; but the company had now a military front to show, and was pretty sure to be soon called on for evidences of its military quality."

Miss Martineau considers that by these forts "a new institution was fairly established, which annulled the purely pacific character of British settlements in India." Although these remarks of this gifted lady were called forth by the establishment of Fort St. George, in Madras, in 1640, they are not justified by that circumstance. Fort St. George, as well as previous and minor erections of a military nature, were simply defensive. They were no more a symptom of departure from pacific principles and purposes, than would be the fact of a quiet citizen procuring a policeman to watch his house when he knew it was an object of assault by thieves. The desires of the English merchants and their agents at this time were "purely pacific."

The reinforcements of the viceroy of Goa placed Ormuz in danger, as that functionary openly boasted of his intention to reconquer it, and to destroy the English factory on the mainland. These boastings proved vain, as the purposes were never executed, the courage of the English, and the numbers of the Persians, rendering their execution impossible.

The British had established a factory at Masulipatam, but removed it. Subsequently, as they became more anxious for a trade on the eastern shores of Bengal, negotiations were opened with the King of Golconda, who promised that former grievances should be redressed, and concessions were made of such a nature as induced the company to make Masulipatam again a port of trade. The agents of the company at Agra and Surat prevailed upon the Mogul government to grant permission to open trade at Piplee.* It was for the better government of these stations, that the station at Bantam was again raised to the rank of a presidency.

A trade in pepper with the Malabar coast was actively prosecuted when the treaty with Portugal was made. This step the company was constrained to take by the difficulty of the island trade, in consequence of the vigilance and armed power of the Dutch.

One of the most, perhaps the most, important of the proceedings of the company's foreign agents, was the occupation of Fort St. George, at Madras. This arose from the inconvenience of Armegan† for the chief articles of exportation from the coast of Coromandel—muslin and other wove goods. The Rajah of Chandragiri granted, March 1st, 1639,‡ permission to have a factory at Madras, to the company's agent, Mr. Day, who, as the English were then trading with arms in their hands, immediately began to erect a fort, which was called St. George. The directors in London heard of these proceedings with alarm, but the directors of the factory at Surat prevented them from abandoning it; and thus was founded a place which became the capital of a great presidency, larger than the dominions of all the powers which at that time traded and quarrelled around the peninsula, upon so prominent a position of which it stood. The station was at once placed under the supervision of the president at Bantam. The force in Fort St. George was merely nominal; had an attack been made by either Portuguese or Dutch, it must have fallen. Its chief defence was the goodwill of the rajah.§ The territory granted extended five miles along the shore, and one inland.

The expenditure upon the fort was considerable for the times; in 1644 it amounted to £2294, and it was calculated that as much more would be requisite. In that year it was deemed politic to render it impregnable, and for that purpose one hundred soldiers were assigned to it, but these were from time to time reduced.

The apprehensions of the company that Madras was not suitable as a station for trade, were not altogether ill-founded. As a port it is deficient in convenience, for the reasons assigned in the geographical portion of this history when describing it. At a period long after its establishment, a writer competent to pronounce an opinion observed:—"Owing to the want of a secure port and navigable rivers, the commerce of Madras is inferior to that of the other presidencies, but all sorts of European and Asiatic commodities are procurable. Besides, the disadvantages above mentioned, the Carnatic province considered generally is sterile compared with that of Bengal, and raises none of the staple articles of that province in such quantities, and at so low a price, as to admit of competition in foreign markets. Provisions are neither of so good a quality, nor so cheap as in Bengal. The water is of a very good quality, and supplied to ships in native boats at established prices."* The same writer, describing the vicinity, thus writes:—"In the neighbourhood of Madras, the soil, when well cultivated, produces a good crop of rice, provided in the wet season the usual quantity of rain falls, and in some places the industry of the natives by irrigation creates a pleasing verdure. The fields yield two crops of rice annually. In appearance the country is almost as level as Bengal, and in general exhibits a naked, brown, dirty plain, with few villages, or any relief for the eye, except a range of abrupt detached hills towards the south."

An event of still more consequence than the concessions of "Sree Runga, Rayapatam," to Mr. Francis Day, enabling the latter to build Fort George, occurred about this time—the establishment of the settlement of Hoogly. The circumstances which led to this event are better known than the precise date of it. These circumstances were as follow. Shah Jehan, the great Mogul, had a favourite daughter, named Jehanara: on one occasion, after spending the evening with her sire, when retiring to her own apartments, she passed too closely to one of the lamps that lit a corridor of the palace, and set her dress on fire. Fearful of calling the attention of the guards—

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* Montgomery Martin alleges it to be Piplee, in Orissa, twenty-seven miles from Cuttack, and in lat. 20·5 north, long. 85·58. Mr. Walter Hamilton, Professor Wilson, and others, affirm that it was Piplee, in Midnapore, twenty-eight miles E.N.E. from Balasore, lat. 21·42 north, long. 87·20 E. At this latter place the Dutch traded, exporting, according to Mr. Hamilton, two thousand tons of salt annually. This writer represents the removal of the merchants to Balasore subsequently, as in consequence of floods deluging the town, and forming a bar in the river.

† Madras was nearly seventy miles south of Armagan.

‡ Miss Martineau, Mr. Martin, and others, allege that it was in 1640.

§ In the geographical part of the work, the reader will find minute and correct descriptions of the present condition of the city and presidency of Madras.

* *Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of Hindostan, and the Adjacent Countries.* By Walter Hamilton. London, 1820.

oriental ladies of her rank regarding any exposure to the gaze of strangers as a calamity to be avoided at whatever cost—she rushed to the harem, her light apparel in flames, which the rapidity of her flight of course fanned. She fell insensible into the arms of her attendants, who extinguished the fire, but the princess was severely and even perilously injured. The emperor summoned the chief physicians from every part of his wide dominions, but they did not succeed in affording such succour as gave hope of her final recovery. The surgeons of the English East Indiamen were then thought of by the emperor himself, who, sending to Surat, one Gabriel Boughton hastened to obey his commands. The result of his skill and counsel was, the restoration of the royal lady, and the boundless gratitude, not only of herself, but of her sire, and of the court. The emperor offered to his benefactor any reward he might choose to name within the limits of the imperial power to bestow. The noble Englishman thought only of his country, and demanded for it freedom of trade in every part of the empire, then confined to a few places, and chiefly to Surat. The princess, charmed with the disinterestedness of the *medicus*, joined her entreaties to his request, and the emperor equally surprised, and admiring the patriotism and generosity of the man, conceded the boon. It appears that Boughton about the same time rendered valuable services to Prince Shuga, the governor of Bengal, and in this case thought also of his country rather than of himself. The practical consequences of these providential incidents were that Shuga, with the consent and pleasure of the emperor, issued a *neshan*, or order with warrants from the local governors, for the English to trade free in all ports of his imperial majesty, and to be exempt from all duties, except at Surat, with general permission to erect factories.

The English took immediate advantage of this, and settled a factory at Hoogly, which laid the foundation of their subsequent commerce and empire in Bengal. The precise dates of these events, as well as the modes of their occurrence, have been more discussed than most others in English East India history.

The Portuguese had previously had a factory at Hoogly, and were expelled thence. The date of their expulsion has been generally fixed at 1636; by some writers, however, in 1640; and by others, fewer in number, at a later period. As the English did not enter into possession of Hoogly until some time after the Portuguese had been driven out, the date of the one event is dependant upon the other. Stewart, in his *History of Bengal*, says that Boughton was sent to the imperial camp in 1636, and that factories were founded in Balasore and Hoogly four years after. Bruce, in his *Annals of the East India Company, from* 1600 *to the Union of the London and English Companies in* 1707-8, affirms that the factory was not established in Hoogly for eleven or twelve years after the period assigned by Stewart, and that the visit of Surgeon Boughton to Surat was in 1645. Mr. Mill assigns to it so late a date as 1651-52. Professor Wilson leans to the opinion of Bruce, and thinks that Stewart confounded the permission given to Mr. Day to trade at Piplee, in Orissa, with the neshan given to Boughton for a general free trade in Bengal. The same learned historical critic observes—"An attempt was made to establish a factory at Patna in 1620. In 1624, a firman was obtained from Shah Jehan, permitting the English to trade with Bengal, but restricting them to the port of Piplee in Midnapore, but the regular connection of the company with Bengal did not commence until 1642, when a factory was established by Mr. Day, at Balasore."

According to Mr. Mill the concession of privilege to the English for a general free trade was not as gratefully imparted by the emperor and the governor of Bengal, as their professions of obligation to Mr. Boughton might have led him to suppose would be the case; for a sum of three thousand rupees was required as a bonus. This was the ostensible sum then paid, but before a firman was issued by the emperor, which was not until the reign of Aurungzebe, much more had to be expended upon the corrupt imperial officers, to remove their opposition or purchase their support.

The erection of the English factory at Hoogly was of great importance, not only to the destinies of India, but to the immediate interests of the East India Company. It appears, however, that much embarrassment was experienced from the local authorities, notwithstanding the nominal freedom conceded to the settlers. Mr. Walter Hamilton says, "The Dutch in 1625, and the English in 1640, were permitted to build factories at this place, but their trade was greatly restricted, and subjected to continual exactions."

The way in which Dr. Cook Taylor sets forth the conduct of Mr. Boughton is not so honourable to the British surgeon as all other writers depict it. Dr. Taylor seems to have been misled by the payment of the three thousand rupees, which were not paid to Mr. Boughton for his use, but which went to the governor of Bengal, and the creatures around him, or as some writers opine to the emperor himself.

The learned doctor thus puts the transaction:—"In 1636, an English physician, Dr. Boughton, accompanied the British envoy from the factory at Surat to Agra, where the emperor, Shah Jehan, was stationed. The favourite daughter of the shah was cured of a dangerous illness by the skill of Dr. Boughton; the shah, from gratitude, granted to him the right of free trade over the empire. This right the doctor sold to the company, who made use of it by establishing a new factory on the banks of the Hoogly, on a spot convenient for their shipping. This was the foundation of Calcutta."

Dr. Taylor affirms too much when he represents the settlement at Hoogly as "the foundation" of Calcutta, which he describes as not settled for long after, Fort William having been built in 1697-98. It is true that the town of Hoogly, being on the Hoogly river, the establishment of a factory in that city led to the consolidation of a commerce upon that stream, and in that part of Bengal, otherwise Calcutta would never have been selected; but other events, and many sequences flowing from them, contributed to the causes and the occasion of a factory at Calcutta, and the erection of a great monument of English energy, power, and perseverance there—Fort William.

CHAPTER LI.

HOME HISTORY OF THE COMPANY, FROM THE CIVIL WAR IN ENGLAND TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In another chapter* a brief outline is given of the history of the East India Company as a government, describing the dates of its different charters, and the terms in which they were granted. This circumstance will enable the author to convey with more brevity the home history of the company.

When Charles I., after governing the country as long as he dared without a parliament, summoned one to Westminster, the result, as every reader of English history is aware, was violent discussion between the house and the senate, which issued in an appeal to arms, the impeachment and execution of the monarch, the protectorship of Cromwell, the incapacity of a successor, a reaction against freedom, the restoration, and the gay, flippant, and corrupt despotism of Charles II. In all these events which so rapidly and violently passed over England, there was a strange action and reaction of influence, from the ruler upon the people, and the people upon the ruler. "The leading journal," with its usual knowledge of human nature, and of English human nature more especially, sagaciously observed in an article written in 1858:—"A king must always be a great man; the personage whom millions regard with admiration, respect, or curiosity, must end by instilling something of his own temper into his subjects and his age. Servants catch the tricks of their masters, wives get the look and voice and turns of expression which belong to their husbands, young ensigns become duplicates of the major in command, and barristers of one year's standing have already unconsciously assumed the tone and diction of the silk gown. Although the Englishman is of a stubborn and impassive nature, and may live twenty years in a foreign country without losing much of what he brought with him or acquiring much from the people he is among, yet hardly a monarch has reigned in England who has not moulded society into something like his own image. Those who come into contact with royalty have been gallant cavaliers, tasteful in dress and decoration, but bigoted and insolent withal, under Charles I., reckless and profligate under his son, wavering in their faith under James, with a return to Protestant and patriotic sentiments when William and Mary were installed. The four Georges in succession might have seen their very various characters reflected in the mirror of contemporary English life. Happy it is for this country that the power has gone no further, and that royal personages have been limited to an influence on the prevailing manners of the day."

The East India Company, in the whole course of its history, exemplified the philosophical soundness of these remarks. What writers regard as a policy unaccountably changeful and contradictory, may be explained by the influence, upon the minds of the directors and agents, of the changeful moral and political fashions of the times, created by the predominance of prominent public men. The peculiar characters of these men were, to a great extent, fashioned out of the opinions, habits and temper of the sects, and parties into which a bold and free discussion necessarily divided the nation; while all schools of philosophy, political parties, and churches were passing through the ordeal to which free examination and free speech exposed them. Nevertheless, the English nation manifested its idiosyncrasies strongly amidst all the rapid vicissitudes of religion and politics, and the changeful currents of fashion, whether set by kings or enforced by sects. The geographical position of England, as well as the ethnological elements in the nation, account for this. The journal before quoted, when showing how much more the character of a German state depended upon the character of its prince, than did that of the western nations of Europe, especially Great Britain, thus clearly and cleverly put this truth:—"The British Isles, or France, or Spain may claim to be nations independently of any government or dynasty. They are marked out by the hand of nature as separate portions of the globe, and their geographical formation has tended more and more to give them unity in themselves and dissimilarity from their neighbours. No individual, or family, or class can say that he or they keep England together, and that without such help there would be no longer a country or a position in Europe for the inhabitants of these islands. The nation remains one by its own coherence and vitality; its institutions may have done much to bring about this result; the personal character of the sovereigns may have done much; but now the work is complete, and the nation is independent of any such extraneous aid."

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* Chapter xiii.

Before the English nation reached this high state of civilization (if even yet it has altogether attained it), there was a bold independence and hardihood of thought perpetually struggling with the dominancy of fashion, and sometimes triumphing over court and aristocracy; asserting itself powerfully, and forming the spirit of the age. This explains much of the pertinacity of the company, conquering all assailants and holding its position against commercial losses, foreign rivalry, the superior naval or military resources of foreign enemies, the perfidy of kings and cabinets at home, and even unpopularity with the merchants and citizens, who were constitutionally jealous of monopolies, and of the growing power of a sort of *imperium in imperio* so far as colonies and commerce were concerned.

During the civil wars comparatively little could be undertaken either in the way of new enterprise or in the consolidation of old plans and performances. The company was itself tossed about on the great agitated sea of revolution, as roundhead and cavalier swept over the land, and

> "With fetlock deep in blood,
> The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,
> Dash'd the hot war-horse on."

The affairs of the company were disturbed and endangered. Commerce fled appalled as the rude blast of the trumpet summoned citizens to arms, or proclaimed that Englishmen had conquered Englishmen on some ensanguined field, or in some city's breach choked with the slaughter of a cruel fratricide. It is not surprising, therefore, if for a long season the affairs of the company at home presented little interest, and the dealings of the company abroad little profit.

Before proceeding to the narration of particular events, it is desirable to present the general aspect of the company's oriental relations. The distractions caused by the great civil war in England, left its remote foreign commerce comparatively unprotected; and the Dutch were enabled to maintain a career of triumph in which the flag of England was insulted, and the property of her merchants, to a vast amount, destroyed. Whenever the Dutch made treaties or conventions with any native prince, it was a *sine quâ non* that such prince should stipulate never to admit any other foreigners to trade in his dominions. Even when, in 1660, the Dutch sea and land forces conquered Macassar from the native prince and allied Portuguese, the conqueror was not content with securing a treaty for the perpetual exclusion of the Portuguese and of the Jesuits, against whom the expedition was chiefly intended, but also of all other nations, European and oriental, but more especially the English. This illiberal policy was prejudicial to British interests, and made it necessary to regard the Dutch as enemies alike in peace and war, so far as the great theatre of Eastern rivalry was concerned.

During the reign of the Protector, however—for such it virtually was—the Dutch were made bitterly to feel the superior power of the British, especially when they had a man of genius, like Oliver Cromwell, at their head. The reparation demanded and compelled, to the relatives of those who perished at Amboyna, and for the losses which British merchants had undergone, was nearly two and three quarter millions sterling.* Scarcely had the Protector passed away from life, when the Dutch, encouraged by the state of England, renewed their attacks upon English merchants in the East. These, although appearing to be desultory, fitful, and capricious, were systematic; opportunities and pretences being patiently and vigilantly waited for, and promptly and cunningly used. Sometimes the Portuguese and British were sufferers together. This was especially the case during the restoration of Charles II. and the reign of James II. The Danes were also sufferers from Dutch cupidity during this period, and they were repeatedly fellow sufferers with the British. The ejection of both by the Dutch from Bantam, in the year 1683, when they pretended the authority of the king for the treachery and violence which they practised, exemplifies this.* And although both the Danes and British continued to retain factories in Bantam for about nine years longer, yet they were subjected to so many oppressions and so much insolence, that both powers were obliged to abandon their footing on the west coasts of Java.

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* See chapter on the Dutch in India.

This general outline of the company's difficulties abroad, through a long course of years, will, without introducing detail in this place, enable the reader to perceive the motives, and comprehend the spirit, of the company in many of its domestic movements, which have obtained from many historians an undeserved censure, or at all events, censure in an undeserved degree.

While yet the trade languished, the necessities of the state and the caution of the citizens checking commercial adventure, the company made desperate exertions to raise funds. Mr. Mill, who takes his statements altogether from Bruce in these descriptions, thus represents the struggle:—"An effort was made in 1642–43 to aid the weakness of the the fourth joint-stock by a new subscription. The sum produced was £105,000; but whether including or not including the previous subscription does not appear. This was deemed no more than what was requisite for a single voyage: of which the company thought the real circumstances might be concealed under a new name. They called it the 'first general voyage.' Of the amount, however, of the ships, or the distribution of the funds, there is no information on record. For several years from this date, no account whatever is preserved of the annual equipments of the company. It would appear, from instructions to the agents abroad, that, each year, funds had been supplied; but from what source is altogether unknown. The instructions sufficiently indicate that they were small; and for this the unsettled state of the country, and the distrust of Indian adventure, will sufficiently account."

A new danger now arose to the company. The ever wary Dutch, perceiving that the English profited by their peaceable relations with Portugal, and by the convention with the viceroy of Goa for mutual amity and protection, exerted themselves to induce the Portuguese to come to similar terms with them. The latter had experienced so many reverses from the Hollanders, that while distrusting their intentions, they deemed it unwise to reject their overtures, and provoke so great a power. The Dutch probably never meant to keep the agreement; nor did the Portuguese, except so far as fear of the ships of the states-general might ensure their steadiness; at all events, both repeatedly violated the stipulations; and in this respect the Dutch, in very wantonness of power, often did so when by observing the agreement, their especial ends might have been honourably attained, or their general interests in the East as effectually promoted.

The Portuguese did not concede any advantages to the states-general, which had not been already conceded to the English, but the latter felt it to be very detrimental to them to be obliged to meet the Dutch on equal terms where the Portuguese had settlements. Mr. Mill condemns, or rather sneers, at this querulous disposition, and apprehension of competition on the part of the British East India Company. But it is to be remembered that the Dutch company had a large capital, was supported by the general voice of the states, and well backed and abetted by their government, which had no interests distinct from the nation; while the English company was hampered for want of capital; embarrassed by its various separate joint-stock ventures; regarded with distrust as to its constitution by political economists and roundheads; despised by the cavaliers, and regarded as a suitable object of plunder by the despicable Stuarts. Under such circumstances, the company could not afford to encounter any further competition; and hence, regarded the Dutch and Portuguese convention at Goa with intense alarm, memorialising their government, and appealing to the patriotism of the English people. Neither memorials nor appeals availed them much at that time; while the Dutch with dogged and pertinacious assiduity worked on, and still chased and plundered every English ship when the inferior force of the latter encouraged the attempt.

The success of the parliamentarians against the absolute monarchists, gave an impetus to the national ardour and self-reliance, of which the company resolved to take advantage. Bruce gives the history of their effort to do so, and describes the complicated financial affairs of the company at this juncture with fidelity and accuracy:—"In 1647–48, when the power of the parliament was supreme, and the king a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, a new subscription was undertaken, and a pretty obvious policy was pursued. Endeavours were used to get as many as possible of the members of parliament to subscribe. If the members of the ruling body had a personal interest in the gains of the company, its privileges would not fail to be both protected and enlarged. An advertisement, which fixed the time beyond which ordinary subscribers would not be received, added, that, in deference to members of parliament, a further period would be allowed to them, to consider the subject, and make their subscriptions. It appears not that any success attended this effort; and in 1649-50, the project of completing the fourth joint-stock was renewed, partly as a foundation for an application to the council of state, partly in hopes that the favours expected from the council would induce the public to subscribe. In the memorial, presented on this occasion to the ruling powers, Courten's Association was the principal subject of complaint. The consent of the king, in 1639, to withdraw the licence granted to those rivals, had not been carried into effect; nor had the condition on which it had been accorded, that of raising a respectable joint-stock, been fulfilled. The destruction, however, to which the association of Courten saw themselves at that time condemned, deprived them of the spirit of enterprise: with the spirit of enterprise, the spirit of vigilance naturally disappeared; their proceedings, from the time of this condemnation, had been feeble and unprosperous: but their existence was a grievance in the eyes of the company; and an application which they had recently made for permission to form a settlement on the Island of Assada, near Madagascar, kindled anew the company's jealousies and fears. What the council proposed to both parties was, an agreement. But the Assada Merchants, so Courten's Association were now denominated, regarded joint-stock management with so much aversion, that, low as the condition was to which they had fallen, they preferred a separate trade on their own funds to incorporation with the company. To prove, however, their desire of accommodation, they proposed certain terms, on which they would submit to forego the separate management of their own affairs. Objections were offered on the part of the company; but, after some discussion, a union was effected, nearly on the terms which the Assada Merchants proposed. Application was then made for an act to confirm and regulate the trade. The parliament passed a resolution, directing it to be carried on by a joint-stock, but suspending for the present all further decision on the company's affairs. A stock was formed, which, from the union recently accomplished, was denominated *the united joint-stock;* but in what manner raised, or how great the sum, is not disclosed. All we know for certain is, that two ships were fitted out in this season, and that they carried bullion with them to the amount of £60,000. The extreme inconvenience and embarrassment which arose from the management, by the same agents, in the same trade, of a number of separate capitals, belonging to separate associations, began now to make themselves seriously and formidably felt. From each of the presidencies complaints arrived of the difficulties, or rather the impossibilities, which they were required to surmount; and it was urgently recommended to obtain, if it were practicable, an act of parliament to combine the whole of these separate stocks. Under this confusion, we have hardly any information respecting the internal transactions of the company at home. We know not so much as how the courts of directors were formed; whether there was a body of directors for each separate fund, or only one body for the whole; and if only one court of directors, whether they were chosen by the voices of the contributors to all the separate stocks, or the contributors to one only; whether, when a court of proprietors was held, the owners of all the separate funds met in one body, or the owners of each separate fund met by themselves, for the regulation of their own particular concern."

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* See chapter on the Dutch in India.

The conduct of the Dutch in the East becoming intolerable, Cromwell took them in hand, and soon reduced them to the condition of suppliants. Great in his naval conceptions —as he was great in every thing—his plans, after the declaration of war against the states-general, were comprehensive, as their execution was vigorous and prompt; and the power of Holland, so recently rampant, bowed before the lion-hearted man, who made his country's name a terror to her foes all over Europe. Not only were the Dutch forced to compensate such Englishmen as suffered through their rapacity and violence, but they were compelled, on meeting any British men-of-war in the channel, to "lower their flag and yards." It must be admitted, however, that the Dutch managed the diplomatic part of the negotiations with skill, so as to evade, under one pretence or another, and by dextrously setting off one clause of the treaty against another, the payment of much that the British believed themselves entitled to demand. These arts of the Dutch were promoted by the stern integrity with which Cromwell's commissioners examined the claims of the British East India Company. They showed no favour, but dealt with a rigid equity between the demands for compensation made by both companies. Cromwell's commissioners were prejudiced against the company; they were, like their chief, opposed to all monopolies, commercial or ecclesiastical; and they did not insist upon compliance with demands made by the company, with the correctness or principle of which they were far from being satisfied.

In 1654 the body of merchants to whom the joint-stock belonged, including the Assada Merchants, presented two petitions to the council of state, in which they prayed that the East India Company should no longer proceed upon the principle of a joint-stock trade, but that the owners of the separate funds should be empowered to employ them as they pleased. Bruce, and Mill, who follows him, commend the arguments of these proprietors of stock, and infer that the men who then opposed the proceedings and policy of the company, entertained sound views of political economy. The petitioners obtained the name of Merchant Adventurers, and their memorials and statements had great weight with the public. The petitions were remitted by the committee of the council of state to the Protector and his council, who showed their opinion in a very practical way, by issuing a decree to the Merchant Adventurers, giving them permission to fit out four ships for the India trade, under the management of a committee.

The consternation of the company at this concession to free trade was great, but it was far less than that of the Dutch East India Company, who feared the abolition of all monopolies, if once the Protector declared himself in favour of the Merchant Adventurers.

"Meanwhile the company, as well as the Merchant Adventurers, were employed in the equipment of a fleet. The petition of the company to the Protector for leave to export bullion, specified the sum of £15,000, and the fleet consisted of three ships. They continued to press the government for a decision in favour of their exclusive privileges; and in a petition which they presented in October, 1656, affirmed, that the great number of ships sent by individuals under licences, had raised the price of India goods from forty to fifty per cent., and reduced that of English commodities in the same proportion. The council resolved at last to come to a decision. After some inquiry, they gave it as their advice to the Protector to continue the exclusive trade and the joint-stock; and a committee of the council was, in consequence, appointed to consider the terms of a charter." *

The decision of the council was generally understood to be contrary to the opinion of Cromwell himself, of Milton, and several other of the most eminent politicians of the day; but the Lord Protector deemed it constitutional to act upon the advice of his council in such a case, and the charter was granted in 1657. Much doubt has been thrown, from time to time, upon the concession of a charter by Cromwell. No record exists of it in any state papers, or in the archives of the East India Company. Mr. Mill doubts if it ever had an existence. In a work published in 1855,† edited by a competent authority, purporting to be a statement of the laws relating to India, no mention is made of this charter. Bruce, however, the careful annalist of the company, affirmed its existence in these terms:—"That the charter was granted in this season will appear from the reference made to it in the petition of the East India Company, though no copy of it can be discovered among the records of the state or of the company."‡ Professor Wilson confirms the opinion of Bruce by the following statement:—"In a letter from Fort St. George to the factory at Surat, dated 12th July, 1658, it is stated that the *Blackmoore*, which had arrived from England on the 12th of June, had 'posted away with all haste, after his highness the Lord Protector had signed the company's charter.'"§

The decision of the Protector's council left no hope of separate action to the Merchant Adventurers. Had no fresh charter been granted, it is evident from the talent and energy of these men that they would have persevered in their projects. As matters were, they deemed it discreet to coalesce with the company. A new subscription was opened, which realized £786,000. After much trouble and difficulty matters were adjusted, but not to the perfect satisfaction of all parties, and various arrangements for the factories and stations where trade was conducted were agreed upon—these will be referred to when relating the foreign transactions of the period.

Considerable spirit was now evinced in

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* Anderson's *History of Commerce;* M'Pherson's *Annals.*

† *The Law relating to India and the East India Company.* London: Allen and Co., Leadenhall Street.

‡ Bruce, vol. i. pp. 329, 330.

§ Wilson's Notes on Mill's *History of British India,* lib. i. cap. iv.

fitting out expeditions. The first fleet consisted of five ships; one for Madras, carrying £15,000 in bullion, one for Bengal, one for Bantam, and the other two for Surat and Persia.

The new joint-stock did not flourish any more than its predecessors. A careful writer thus describes the company's affairs:—"The embarrassed state of the company's funds at this particular period may be inferred from the resolutions they had taken to relinquish many of their out-stations, and to limit their trade in the peninsula of India to the presidencies of Fort St. George, Surat, and their subordinate factories." * For the history of the company at home, from 1661 to 1668, almost the only authorities are Bruce, Anderson's *History of Commerce*, and M'Pherson's *Annals*. Mr. Mill quotes them, and sums up in his own way the information diffused by them over a much wider space:—"Meanwhile Cromwell had died, and Charles II. ascended the throne. Amid the arrangements which took place between England and the continental powers, the company were careful to press on the attention of government a list of grievances, which they represented themselves as still enduring at the hands of the Dutch; and an order was obtained, empowering them to take possession of the Island of Polaroon. They afterwards complained that it was delivered to them in such a state of prepared desolation as to be of no value. The truth is, it was of little value at best. On every change in the government of the country, it had been an important object with the company to obtain a confirmation of their exclusive privileges. The usual policy was not neglected on the accession of Charles II.; and a petition was presented to him for a renewal of the East India charter. As there appears not to have been, at that time, any body of opponents to make interest or importunity for a contrary measure, it was far easier to grant without inquiry, than to inquire and refuse; and Charles and his ministers had a predilection for easy rules of government. A charter, bearing date the 3rd of April, 1661, was accordingly granted, confirming the ancient privileges of the company, and vesting in them authority to make peace and war with any prince or people, not being Christians; and to seize unlicensed persons within their limits, and send them to England. The two last were important privileges; and, with the right of administering justice, consigned almost all the powers of government to the discretion of the directors and their servants. It appears not that, on this occasion, the expedient of a new subscription for obtaining a capital was attempted. A new adjustment with regard to the privileges and dead stock in India would have been required. The joint-stock was not as yet a definite and invariable sum, placed beyond the power of resumption, at the disposal of the company, the shares only transferable by purchase and sale in the market. The capital was variable and fluctuating; formed by the sums which, on the occasion of each voyage, the individuals, who were free of the company, chose to pay into the hands of the directors, receiving credit for the amount in the company's books, and proportional dividends on the profits of the voyage. Of this stock £500 entitled a proprietor to a vote in the general courts; and the shares were transferable, even to such as were not free of the company, upon paying £5 for admission. Of the amount either of the shipping or stock of the first voyage upon the renewed charter we have no account; but the instructions sent to India prescribed a reduction of the circle of trade. In the following year, 1662–63, two ships sailed for Surat, with a cargo in goods and bullion, amounting to £65,000, of which it would appear that £28,300 was consigned to Fort St. George. Next season there is no account of equipments. In 1664–65, two ships were sent out with the very limited value of £16,000. The following season, the same number only of ships was equipped; and the value in money and goods consigned to Surat was £20,600; whether any thing in addition was afforded to Fort St. George does not appear; there was no consignment to Bantam. In 1666–67, the equipment seems to have consisted but of one vessel, consigned to Surat with a value of £16,000."

In 1666 an altercation between the two houses of parliament arose out of the zeal of the company to put down all interlopers. Frederick Skinner, an agent of the Merchant Adventurers previous to their junction with the company, formed a settlement at Jambi, a district on the east coast of Sumatra. It appears he bought the Island of Barella from the Sultan of Jambi, and in those places conducted some trade. He was succeeded by his brother, Thomas Skinner, who, either supposed he had a personal right in the property, or thought he would take advantage of the troubles of the times, both in Europe and Asia, and keep unlawful possession, it does not appear which. When the Merchant Adventurers united with the company, Skinner was ordered to hand over the stock and the accounts to the company's agents, which he refused, claiming them as his own. The agents of the company in India seized his ship, merchandize, house, and the Island of Barella; and, refusing him a passage to Europe, he was compelled to travel overland at a great cost. He presented his complaint to the government of Charles II. With the unhappy knack which that monarch's advisers possessed of turning every incident, however remote from politics, into a political embroglio unfortunate to their king, they, after much palpable neglect, handed the matter over to a committee of the council; who, indisposed to take trouble about it, it was referred to the House of Peers. The peers ordered the company to answer the charges; which denied the jurisdiction of their lordships, affirming that their lordships' house was a court of appeal, and not of trial in the first instance. The lords overruled the objection, and the company threw themselves upon the protection of the commons. The lords, angry at this slight to their authority, proceeded to adjudge by default, and awarded £5000 to Mr. Skinner. The commons imprisoned Skinner. The lords, in reprisal, incarcerated Sir S. Barnardson, and three other directors of the company. The two houses were committed to "the great Skinner controversy." The king adjourned the parliament seven times, in the hope that the contest would cool during the recess, but that result was not obtained. The "merrie monarch" found it not at all amusing to quell a parliamentary conflict. At last the king sent for both houses to Whitehall, and by personal persuasion, in which he showed more ability and address than men generally gave him credit for, he succeeded in inducing both houses to erase their resolutions and abandon the subject. The contest was thus ended, and Skinner was ruined. "The sacrifice and ruin of an individual," says Mr. Mill, "appeared, as usual, of little importance: Skinner had no redress."

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* Bruce.

A war with Holland in 1664, and a temporary quarrel with France the year following, greatly disturbed the company's affairs.

In the year 1664 the French formed an East India Company, which alarmed the English company much more than a war with France would have done. The English court, however, seemed more interested in the welfare of France than of England, and the company did not dare to appeal to the king to use his endeavours against the French, as they importuned him to be hostile to the Dutch. They, however, sent out agents to the East with instructions to oppose the French, and to show them no favour, notwithstanding the partiality of the court in their behalf.

The Danish company, which was formed about 1650, was also active at this juncture, adding fresh fuel to the fire of anxieties and fears which tormented the British company.

Considerable discussion existed in England, both among the friends and opponents of the company, as to the necessity of the great expenses incurred by factories. These expenses pressed heavily upon the company's resources, and led many to believe that the plan of building forts and factories was bad, and that the advice of Sir Thomas Roe ought to have been followed from the first. Many historians and political economists at the present day are also of this opinion; but Dr. Wilson * answers them well in the following terms:—"It is very unlikely that any such results would have taken place, or that a trade with India would have been formed, or if formed, would have been perpetuated by any other means than those actually adopted. The Portuguese and Dutch had territorial possessions and fortified factories; and without similar support, it would have been impossible for the English to have participated in the profits of the commerce of the East. Even with these resources, the Dutch succeeded in expelling the English from the Archipelago; and it is very little probable, that they would have suffered a single English adventurer to carry on a trade with any part of India from whence they could so easily exclude him. Principles of individual adventure and free competition, would have availed but little against the power and jealousy of our rivals; and it was necessary to meet them on equal terms, or to abandon the attempt. But it was not only against European violence that it was necessary to be armed; the political state of India rendered the same precautions indispensable. What would become of 'individual adventure' at Surat, when it was pillaged by the Mahrattas? And what would have been the fate of the English commerce with Madras and Bengal, on the repeated occasions on which it was menaced with extinction, by the rapacity and vindictiveness of the native princes? Had, therefore, the anti-monopoly doctrines been more popular in those days than they were, it is very certain that the attempt to carry them into effect would have deprived England of all share in the trade with India, and cut off for ever one main source of her commercial prosperity. It is equally certain, that without the existence of such factories as were 'the natural offspring of a joint-stock;' without the ample resources of a numerous and wealthy association; and without the continuous and vigorous efforts of a corporate body animated by the

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* *History of British India.* By Mill and Wilson. lib. i. cap. iv.

enjoyment of valuable privileges, and the hope of perpetuating their possession by services rendered to the state, we should never have acquired political power in India, or reared a mighty empire upon the foundations of trade."

The growing commerce of England in other directions influenced her relations to the East. Capital became more plentiful in England, and the company found it easier to raise funds. In 1667–68 Bruce informs us that the first order of the company was issued to their agents to open a trade in tea; he quotes the words of this order as follows:—"To send home by these ships 100lb. waight of the best tey that you can gett."

In 1668 Charles signed another charter. Two months after that event he married the Infanta Catherine of Portugal, and received as part of the dowry given her by the crown the Island of Bombay. The king, finding it more trouble and expense than advantage, made a virtue of necessity, and bestowed it upon the company, to whom it proved a valuable acquisition ever after. According to Bruce * the investments of the company greatly increased in 1668, and continued to do so for a number of years in an unprecedented degree. In the course of the years 1667–68, six ships sailed to Surat, with goods and bullion to the value of £130,000; five ships to Fort St. George, with a value of £75,000; and five to Bantam, with a stock of £40,000. In the next season we are informed that the consignments to Surat consisted of 1200 tons of shipping, with a stock of the value of £75,000; to Fort St. George, of five ships and a stock of £103,000; and to Bantam, of three ships and £35,000. In the year 1669–70, 1500 tons of shipping were sent to Surat, six ships to Fort St. George, and four to Bantam, and the whole amount of the stock was £281,000. The vessels sent out in 1670–71 amounted to sixteen, and their cargoes and bullion to £303,500. In the following year four ships were sent to Surat, and nearly 2000 tons of shipping to Fort St. George; the cargo and bullion to the former being £85,000, to the latter £160,000: shipping to the amount of 2800 tons was consigned to Bantam, but of the value of the bullion and goods no account seems to be preserved. In 1672–73, stock and bullion, to the amount of £157,700 were sent to Surat and Fort St. George. On account of the war, and the more exposed situation of Bantam, the consignment to that settlement was postponed. In the following year it appears that cargoes and bullion were consigned, of the value of £100,000, to Surat; £87,000 to Fort St. George; and £41,000 to Bantam. The equipments, in 1674–75, were, five ships to Surat with £189,000 in goods and bullion; five to Fort St. George, with £202,000; and 2500 tons of shipping to Bantam, with £65,000. In 1675–76, to Surat, five ships and £96,500; to Fort St. George, five ships and £235,000; to Bantam, 2450 tons of shipping and £58,000. In 1676–77, three ships to Surat, and three to Fort St. George, with £97,000 to the one, and £176,600 to the other; and eight ships to Bantam with no account of the stock. The whole adventure to India in 1677–78 seems to have been seven ships and £352,000; of which a part, to the value of £10,000 or £12,000 was to be forwarded from Fort St. George to Bantam. In 1678–79, eight ships and £393,950. In 1679–80, ten ships and £461,700. In 1680-81, eleven ships and £596,000; and, in 1681-82, seventeen ships and £740,000.

Amidst these vast undertakings, for that age, the company was embarrassed by political events at home and abroad. At many of their stations trade could not have been conducted but by force of arms; violence, by European and native, endangered the factories and forts, as well as ships and cargoes, and the lives of the agents and mariners who served the company. The acquisition of Bombay by grant of Charles brought dangers and difficulties as well as advantages; and the company, in the midst of its increasing influence and power, must have sunk, had not an all-superintending Providence reserved it for the great events of which it was destined to be the author.

Among its difficulties the contentions of its agents abroad, with one another, was one of the most troublesome and dangerous. Nearly all appeared to be implicated in transactions as much at variance with the will of the company as with its interests, where its desires could not have been certainly known. Contentions for pre-eminence and authority ripened into a sort of civil war at the factories, and the company was compelled at last to seek some solution of this difficulty. It was resolved that authority should exist among its factors according to seniority, except where specific appointments were made from home, where the office of president was held, or where any special mission designated an agent to an especial and temporary service.

The interlopers increased rapidly in proportion as the ventures of the company became larger, and the profits of their returns were reputed to be of higher rate. The attempts of individuals, and of small parties or associations combined for the purpose, to force

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* Vol. ii. pp. 200, 469.

the trade of the East, was as alarming to the company as war with Holland, or the enterprises of Danes and French. The company, however, obtained more and more authority from the crown, and dealt summary punishment upon all Englishmen who presumed, without their permission, to trade with the East. There existed an unrelenting antipathy to the settlement in India of any British subject whatever, other than the company's servants; and unless they found protection from some powerful native prince, they were seized by the company's officers and deported. The powers of the Admiralty jurisdiction were conceded by the king, so that interloping ships were seized and condemned. The powers of the company, by the year 1685, had assumed a magnitude which roused political jealousies at home. The authority which it swayed over the persons and property of British citizens in India, and in the ports where it traded, was unlimited. Against this the spirit of English liberty revolted; and many private adventurers who violated the company's charter, and made infamously false representations to native princes, of having authority from the King of England, were, when punished by the company, made objects of sympathy in England. From the year 1682 the company became more circumspect in the publication of its affairs, whether financial or commercial. This arose from the general desire which prevailed to deprive the company of its exclusive privileges—a desire which found vent in an openly-expressed purpose of forming a new East India Company. This project was urged upon the court and the country in 1682-83, and the king and council took it into consideration, but withheld their sanction; at the same time expressing themselves in a manner which kept up the hope of the promoters of the scheme, and subscriptions were actually entered into for a joint-stock.

A relation of the naval undertakings of the company throughout this period will find a more appropriate place in the pages set apart for a review of its foreign transactions. The revolution of 1688 necessarily interrupted the proceedings of the company and of its competitors, home and foreign. The war which raged in Ireland during that period, as in 1641, embarrassed the finances of the country, and drew off its resources in men and material. The Irish Roman Catholics having espoused the cause of James II., while the Protestants embraced that of William and Mary, the revolution led to a protracted civil war in that country, which was only terminated after a series of bloody battles and sieges for ever memorable to the Protestants of that country for the heroism which their ancestors displayed. Although the proceedings of the company went on through all these troubles, it was a considerable time before the pacification of Ireland was ensured, and the care and anxiety of government ceased to be turned chiefly in that direction.

The alliance with the Dutch at the period of the Revolution was expected to check their aggressions upon English trade in the East; but the Dutch East India Company had its own peculiar interests to consult irrespective of the states-general, and therefore the alliance of the two nations did not heal the differences or stop the envenomed rivalry of the two companies.

It is remarkable that during the time which elapsed from the beginning of the civil war to the accession of William and Mary, the company experienced more favourable treatment, on the whole, from the imbecile and unpatriotic Stuarts, than from the triumphant parliament or the Lord Protector. The Stuarts were as ready to rob the company as they were to plunder any other portion of their subjects, but they were not unwilling to afford it any advantages of monopoly, if paid for by money or political service; nor reluctant to endow it with arbitrary power within the limits of its jurisdiction. The favours granted by the Stuarts were noticed on a former page,* but may here more generally be named. The Island of Bombay, given by Charles II. in 1668, and formally made over "to the governor and company" on the 27th of March, 1669. In 1674 he made a grant of the Island of St. Helena, which had previously been the property of the company, Captain Lancaster having taken possession of it on his return from his memorable voyage; but the Dutch wrested it from the company, and it was afterwards retaken, in the name of the British crown, by a naval force under Captain Mundane. The same sovereign, October 5, 1677, confirmed to the company the powers before granted in every case. On the 9th of August, 1683, Charles conferred the power of establishing courts of judicature for the repression of offences. James II., April 12th, 1688, confirmed all that his royal predecessors had conferred.

Among the various privileges imparted by the Stuarts, one has been strangely overlooked by historians, which, nevertheless, had an important bearing upon the authority and influence of the company. In 1676 Charles II. granted letters patent for the coinage of rupees and pice (a small copper coin) at Bombay. This invested the company with sovereign privilege, and laid a new foundation of their power.

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* Vol. i. p. 286.

During the Commonwealth, however, an event occurred which probably had as much influence as all the favour of the Stuarts upon the commerce of the country. In order to thwart the power of the Dutch, then in possession of the carrying trade of Europe, the act known as the "Navigation Act" was passed, which forbid the importation of foreign commodities, except in English ships, or those of the countries in which such commodities were produced. Ambassadors were sent by the Dutch to Cromwell, demanding the repeal of this act. His refusal was the chief cause of the national sentiment in Holland, which produced the war so signally humiliating to the Dutch and glorious to the Protector. As the commercial wealth and enterprise of England were at that period fast rising, and an extraordinary desire for foreign commodities sprung forth in the general taste, the Dutch were much injured as carriers; and the English merchant, although at the cost of the English consumer, was relieved from the only competition which he really feared. It was not, however, to favour any class or interest, much less the East India Company, that Cromwell favoured the Navigation Laws; but to form and consolidate an English navy, by fostering and nursing up, as it were, an English commercial marine. While this policy answered the end which the autocrat contemplated, it also removed from the British ports the trade carried on in Dutch bottoms, or transferred it to English ships, and in this way the Dutch could find no market for their spices in England; force on their part was met by force, indirectly but effectually. The Dutch ships might still plunder the English vessels or factories in the Archipelago, but they were themselves debarred from carrying their spices to a market, already more valued for such articles than any other. Thus, however the Commonwealth may be considered as unfavourable to the genius of monopoly, and to that of the company in particular, and however truly the reigns of the Stuarts may be regarded as partial to it,—although that partiality was capricious and dishonest,—still, political events, over which Oliver Cromwell had no control, forced him also into paths which made him, unintentionally, perhaps reluctantly, an abettor of the company's progress to greatness and power. A writer, possessing peculiar facilities for comprehending this subject in all its bearings, has thus reviewed the company's history during the periods thus compared. After giving an opinion in reference to the successes of Cromwell against Holland, similar to that expressed above, he observes:—"The spirit of the Navigation Laws was further extended by Charles II., and their operation produced so great a change in the state of the shipping and commerce of the country, that in a few years a large portion of the Dutch trade was drawn from them, and we became in a great measure the carriers of Europe. Amidst the events, comprising the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration, and the Revolution, the East India Company surmounted the powerful efforts made by their opponents, both abroad and at home, to annihilate their establishment and subvert their influence, and successfully attained the objects for which they had been incorporated. In the progress of the trade, the foundation was laid of our present empire in India: in its extension and consolidation, the genius and talents of some of our most illustrious statesmen and warriors were first developed."*

The reign of James II. was, in many respects, favourable to the company, had they taken advantage of it. Some well-devised measures to induce that monarch to bestow better naval protection upon British Eastern commerce were proposed towards the end of that monarch's power; but the Revolution put an end to these, and introduced a new era in the domestic and foreign affairs of England. Mr. Capper has correctly referred to the company's disappointment in this respect when he observes—"During the reign of James II. the company might have strengthened their position with the utmost ease; for that prince, whatever were his other faults, did not possess that of inattention to the commercial interests of his subjects. He readily conceded them all the privileges they sought, and was prepared to forward their views in any manner that might have been desirable; but with all these advantages, the company suffered much from the incapacity or dishonesty of their own servants."

The establishment of the Revolution enabled the company to give more attention to their affairs, which were at that juncture in a disastrous condition in a pecuniary point of view. The want of economical management and of sound commercial principles created this state. The affairs of the company at home were also acted upon injuriously by the tyrannical conduct of their superior officers, who proved themselves in several instances unfit persons to be entrusted with such great power as the various charters of the company allowed. The languishing state of trade would probably have sunk the company at this juncture, had it not been for the aid received from the revenues of their foreign possessions. In a future chapter an account will be given of the progress of their affairs abroad during this period, when it will be seen that events over which the company had little control put them in possession of a revenue-yielding territory. It would seem that at this time the company began to despair of their trade, and to contemplate the settlement of various places as valuable chiefly or only for the tribute they rendered. In fact, the idea of conquest, afterwards repudiated and indeed revoked, occurred to the company and was admitted in their policy. The instructions given to their agents in 1689 were in these terms:—"The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care as much as our trade: 'tis that must maintain our force, when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that must make us a nation in India; without that we are but as a great number of interlopers, united by his majesty's royal charter, fit only to trade where nobody of power thinks it their interest to prevent us; and upon this account it is that the wise Dutch, in all their general advices which we have seen, write ten paragraphs concerning their government, their civil and military policy, warfare, and the increase of their revenue, for one paragraph they write concerning trade."

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* Peter Auber.

The Dutch are hardly correctly represented in this circular. It is true, that the general advices of the Dutch company referred more frequently to civil and military government than to trade, but it was for sake of trade. Neither the East India Company nor the people of Holland contemplated an Indian empire, but they regarded naval and military forces as elements of trade, upon the principles in which in those days it was supposed an Eastern trade ought to be maintained which involved monopoly, and armed competition to sustain that monopoly. The Hollanders were willing enough to make war upon natives or Europeans, if the free course of their trade were interfered with, and their exclusive hold of such commerce as they could open up endangered; but it was by trade, not by revenue extorted from oriental princes or peoples, that the company, fostered by the states-general, hoped to grow rich.

Mr. Mill, commenting upon the new principle avowed by the British East India Company to its own agents, observes:—"It thus appears at how early a period, when trade and sovereignty were blended, the trade, as was abundantly natural, became an object of contempt, and by necessary consequence, a subject of neglect. A trade, the subject of neglect, is of course a trade without profit."

Upon this stricture of Mr. Mill, Professor Wilson thus animadverts:—"The anxiety of the directors to maintain a trade 'without profit,' would be somewhat inexplicable, if it was true, but the injuries to which that trade had been exposed from European competition and native exactions, had sufficiently proved that it could not be carried on without the means of maintaining an independent position in India."

The tone and substance of this critique is as unfair to Mr. Mill as the animadversions of Dr. Wilson too often are, especially when he charges the historian with partiality and injustice. The object of the company, at that period, was not simply to fix independent positions upon the spots where their commerce lay, so that the native rajahs could not exact from them, drive them out, or interfere with the ordinary current of their trade. The aim of the directors in sending out the "advices" that incited the severe remarks which Mr. Mill, as a political economist, made in the above passage, was to obtain revenue from the soil of India: territory taken from its occupants by military force, if not quietly surrendered, and to which the directors were disposed, at that time, to trust as the support of a failing trade. This is the view which is taken by most writers who have paid adequate attention to the subject. Mr. Murray says:—"The voyages of the English (at first) were personal adventures, undertaken with a mingled view to discovery, commerce, and piracy, rather than to any fixed scheme of conquest or dominion. Their forts accordingly were erected as depositories for goods, or to supply commercial facilities, but not with any aim at territorial possession. It was not till 1689 that their views seem to have extended to the latter object. In the instructions issued to their agents during that year, they intimate that the increase of their revenue was henceforth to occupy as much attention as their merchandize; that they wished to be 'a nation in India;' and they quote with unmerited applause the conduct of the Dutch, who, they assert, in the advice sent to their governors, wrote ten paragraphs concerning tribute for one relative to trade. The means of gratifying this disposition were as yet very limited, as certain small portions of territory around Bombay and Madras comprised the whole extent of their Indian sovereignty. They held themselves ready, however, to purchase every city or district which the native princes could, by any motive, be prevailed upon to alienate."

Mr. Murray has very properly added the words, "which the native princes could by any motive be induced to alienate," for the negotiations carried on were not strictly commercial bargains; and previous to 1689, the feeling then avowed to their agents by the directors was predominant, as the conduct of the Brothers Child, elsewhere to be noticed, evinced.

While the company thus resolved upon the acquisition of territory by force or purchase, or *quasi* purchase, as might be, all its great powers were put in force against interlopers with inexorable severity, leading to such indignation in England as compelled the attention of William III. and his parliament. Mr. Mill presents the aspect of affairs very briefly and completely in the following passage:—"The prosperity which the nation had enjoyed, since the death of Charles I., having rendered capital more abundant, the eagerness of the mercantile population to enter into the channel of Indian enterprise and gain had proportionably increased; and the principles of liberty being now better understood, and actuating more strongly the breasts of Englishmen, not only had private adventure, in more numerous instances, surmounted the barriers of the company's monopoly, but the public in general at last disputed the power of a royal charter, unsupported by parliamentary sanction, to limit the rights of one part of the people in favour of another, and to debar all but the East India Company from the commerce of India. Applications were made to parliament for a new system of management in this branch of national affairs; and certain instances of severity, which were made to carry the appearance of atrocity, in the exercise of the powers of martial law assumed by the company, in St. Helena and other places, served to augment the unfavourable opinion which was now rising against them."

The House of Commons was undoubtedly hostile to the company. They appointed a committee in 1689 to consider the best mode of procedure in legislating for the trade with India, and the relation of the company to it. On the 16th of January, 1690, this committee made its report, which was to the effect that a new company should be established by act of parliament, but that the existing company should hold the monopoly until such act was passed.

The company, instead of taking warning from the report of this committee and discerning the temper of the nation, proceeded to extremity against all independent merchants who sought, in contravention of their charter, to open any trade with the East. Mr. Bruce gives an extraordinary proof of this in certain instructions of the directors in 1691, given to their agents and captains:—"The court continued to act towards their opponents (the interlopers) in the same manner as they had done in the latter years of the two preceding reigns, and granted commissions to all their captains, proceeding this season to India, to seize the interlopers of every desciption, and bring them to trial before the admiralty court of Bombay, explaining that as they attributed all the differences between the company and the Indian powers to the interlopers, if they continued their depredations on the subjects of the Mogul or King of Persia, they were to be tried for their lives as pirates, and sentence of death passed, but execution stayed till the king's pleasure should be known." *

The result of these proceedings was that a spirit of hostility, which amounted to resentment, rapidly spread through parliament and the public, and addresses from both were presented to the king, praying him to dissolve the company; the parliament, however, added to the prayer, that a new one should be incorporated. The king made answer that he had referred the matter to a committee of his privy council. The pertinacity of the company, however, in persecuting the interlopers, compelled King William to take some decided step, although his own policy was to temporize. The assumptions of the company became unbounded, and the discontent of the people kept pace with these pretensions. Captain Hamilton thus relates the company's proceedings at this juncture:—"Sir Josiah Child, as chairman of the court of directors, wrote to the governor of Bombay, to spare no severity to crush their countrymen who invaded the ground of the company's pretensions in India. The governor replied, by professing his readiness to omit nothing which lay within the sphere of his power, to satisfy the wishes of the company; but the laws of England, unhappily, would not let him proceed so far as might otherwise be desirable. Sir Josiah wrote back with anger, 'that he expected his orders were to be his rules, and not the laws of England, which were a heap of nonsense, compiled by a few ignorant country gentlemen, who hardly knew how to make laws for the good of their own private families, much less for the regulating of companies, and foreign commerce." †

The king and parliament were at issue as to what was best to be done. His majesty was for granting a charter in his own royal right; the parliament and committee had resolved that parliament was the proper court to determine what new regulations should be made for the trade of India. The latter, however, gave way, just as in modern times the house has often shown itself indisposed to support recommendations of its committees, of which it nevertheless approved; so it was in the reign of William III. The crown found means of appeasing the house, and issued a charter by letters patent. The commons, however, acted upon by the exasperation which now pervaded the public mind, broke forth again into resolutions and protests, to which many assented, and loudly advocated—because they believed the matter was already settled by the charter, and they might in this manner cheaply purchase popularity by a display of patriotism, independence, and regard for justice. Towards the close of the session, the house accordingly resolved—"That it is the right of all Englishmen to trade to the East Indies, or any part of the world, unless prohibited by act of parliament."*

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* *Annals of the East India Company*, vol. iii. p. 103.

† Hamilton's *New Account of India*, i. 232.

The public ferment now rose high; it was discovered that the ministers of William had been bribed before the issue of the charter; and the democratic party did not hesitate to say that £10,000 of the bribery money found its way into the king's own hands. In 1695 the excitement was at its highest. The commons ordered the books of the company to be delivered up for the inspection of their honourable house. It was by that means clearly proved that the company had been enabled to obtain so many favours during past reigns by systematic bribery, both of the sovereigns and their ministers. The evidence against the Stuarts was damning; and the suspicions against William, although not confirmed, increased: several of the great men about his court were convicted of having advocated and advised the new charter from corrupt motives. No less than £90,000 had been in the course of the year expended to obtain a renewal of the charter. Amongst the criminals, the commons selected the Duke of Leeds for impeachment, there being clear proof of his having received £5000. The House of Lords took the matter up, some of its members having heard that the principal witness had been sent out of the way, and the house demanded that the government should take measures to arrest his flight; nothing, however, was done for that object during nine days, until it was believed that the witness was beyond arrest. The king and his government acted alike scandalously. He and his ministers did their utmost to quash all inquiry; and the people and their representatives becoming, as usual, tired of agitation and discordant among themselves, the court succeeded in covering the delinquents. Whatever services William of Orange rendered to the English nation, and whatever claims his memory may have to be toasted as "glorious, pious, and immortal," he neither acted justly, wisely, nor gratefully to the British public, which bestowed upon him a throne, in these transactions. It was generally believed that he favoured the company, chiefly to prevent the expansion of a national trade with the East, which he knew would soon bear down all the opposition of the Dutch, of whose interests it was suspected he was more careful than of those of his adopted country. The only act of authority the commons seems to have exercised in opposition to the king, was to consign Sir Thomas Cook to the Tower, for refusing to disclose the names of the corrupt ministers who had trafficked in the liberties of the people. He was eventually released, and when the agitation subsided, "the court of committees" bestowed upon him £12,000, as compensation for his incarceration and any losses attending upon it.

In spite of every obstacle which was presented then or in the following years, a new charter came into force, granted by William and Mary, 7th October, 1693, confirming the rights and privileges of the company, subject to its acceptance of such orders, directions, additions, alterations, restrictions, qualifications, as the king in council should think fit to make or appoint at any time before the 29th September, 1694; under which proviso supplementary charters or letters patent were issued at two different dates, viz., the 11th November, 1693, and the 28th September, 1694. By a like instrument from William III., dated the 13th April, 1698, regulations for the distribution of votes and for other purposes were made.* This "instrument" must not be confounded with the charter granted that year, it being a "charter supplementary,"or "letter patent," dependant upon that of October, 1693.

The losses of the company by interlopers and pirates between 1693 and 1698 were very heavy, but have been too variously stated to enable any careful historian to approach an accurate estimate. For several years the company paid no dividend, and was bound down by debt from enterprises which held out reasonable prospects of success.

At this juncture a proposition for a new Scottish company was brought forward, and a charter was granted to it to trade to the East and West Indies, Africa, and America. This undertaking was brought to an end by the misfortunes of the Darien settlement. Another society, however, was more fortunate. At the termination of the French war the country was placed in great difficulties for money to pay the heavy expenses then incurred. The East India Company offered a loan of £700,000 at four per cent. interest if their charter should be confirmed, and by an act of parliament, the exclusive right to trade to the East Indies should be secured. The rival association determined to outbid them, by offering a loan of two millions on similar conditions. To this stock foreigners as well as Englishmen, bodies corporate as well as individuals, were invited to contribute. The contributions were to bear an interest of eight per cent. per annum, and the company was to be allowed liberty to trade on the principle of joint-stock, or separate ventures, as the company itself might determine. A bill was introduced to parliament, and an act passed in the interest of the new association, and a charter granted after tedious yet acrimonious discussions.*

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* M'Pherson's *Annals*, ii. 142.

* *The Laws relating to India and the East India Company.*

On the 5th September, 1698, William III. incorporated a second East India Company, under the name of the "English Company trading to the East Indies." To this company the commerce with India was exclusively committed, with the exception "that the Governor and the Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies" (the old company) were to be permitted to carry on their trade until the 29th September, 1701.† Mill gives the following account of the issuing of this charter:—"In conformity with this act a charter passed the great seal, bearing date the 3rd of September, constituting the subscribers to the stock of £2,000,000 a body corporate, under the name of the 'General Society.' This charter empowered the subscribers to trade, on the terms of a regulated company, each subscriber for his own account. The greater part, however, of the subscribers desired to trade upon a joint-stock: and another charter, dated the 5th of the same month, formed this portion of the subscribers, exclusive of the small remainder, into a joint-stock company, by 'the name of the English Company trading to the East Indies.'" ‡

Bruce, Anderson, and M'Pherson, all represent the two companies as fettered by certain regulations as to dividends, which the first of these writers sums up in the following terms:—"It was provided in reference to the old company that their estates should be chargeable with their debts; and that if any further dividends were made before the payments of their debts, the members who received them should be responsible for the debts with their private estates to the amount of the sums thus unduly received. This measure, of prohibiting dividends while debt is unpaid, or of rendering the proprietors responsible with their fortunes to the amount of the dividends received, befitted the legislative justice of the nation. A clause, on the same principle, was enacted with regard to the new company, that they should not allow their debts at any time to exceed the amount of their capital stock; or, if they did, that every proprietor should be responsible for the debts with his private fortune, to the whole amount of whatever he should have received in any way of dividend or share after the debts exceeded the capital."

The formation of this new company reveals much folly and equal corruption as prevailing in parliament, and among the public. Under the pretence of zeal for national interest, the projectors of the new company succeeded in obtaining another monopoly, instead of the old one; simply transferring the real or supposed advantages of a protected and exclusive trade from the hands of one set of men to another. This must have been as obvious to the parliament which passed the act, and the king who granted the charter, and his cabinet by whose advice he acted, as it was to the merchants whose rival monopolies bid for their favour; but king, cabinet, and parliament, in the face of all this, and pretending to do as they did for the welfare of the nation, transferred the monopoly from one set of men to another, because the favoured party were willing to advance the larger loan. The only party honest in the midst of so much corruption was the old company, which had the plea of having rendered great services, acquired property under charters, and become possessed of territories yielding revenue.

The old company showed itself equal to the emergency; then, as in all future periods of its history, a critical conjuncture served to bring out its energies, and disclose talents which were often but poorly employed, until the occurrence of danger quickened them. For a number of years previously, the amount of its trade was very small, and far from profitable:—"The equipments for 1689-90 were on a reduced scale; consisting of three ships only, two for Bombay, and one for Fort St. George. They were equally small the succeeding year. We are not informed to what the number of ships or value of cargo amounted in 1691-92. In the following year, however, the number of ships was eleven; and was increased in 1693-94, to thirteen. In the following year there was a diminution, but to what extent does not appear. In each of the years 1695-96 and 1696-67, the number of ships was eight. And in 1697-98 it was only four."

The spirit evinced and the measures taken to meet the emergency of 1698, the writer above quoted thus states upon the authority of Adam Smith:—"The old, or London company, lost not their hopes. They were allowed to trade for three years on their own charter; and availing themselves of the clause in the act, which permitted corporations to hold stock of the new company, they resolved to subscribe into this fund as largely as possible; and under the privilege of private adventure, allowed by the charter of the English company, to trade, separately, and in their own name, after the three years of their charter should have expired. The sum which they were enabled to appropriate to this purpose was £315,000." That the company "lost not their hopes," as the writer just quoted expresses it, is very obvious from the terms in which the directors wrote to their agents at the presidencies and factories. They urged those agents to second their exertions, and they would send out increasingly large equipments, with which the new company could not compete. They represented the parliamentary triumph of "the English Company" —as the new one was styled—as temporary, arising from a party move, which time, wisdom, and management, would enable the directors to defeat. They assured their agents that no ground for alarm existed, either at home or at the settlements; that "two East India Companies in England, could no more subsist without destroying one the other, than two kings at the same time regnant in the same kingdom; that now a civil battle was to be fought between the old company and the new company; and that two or three years must end this war, as the old or the new must give way; that, being veterans, if their servants abroad would do their duty, they did not doubt of the victory; that if the world laughed at the pains the two companies took to ruin each other, they could not help it, as they were on good ground and had 'a charter.'"* Orders were also given to the agents to behave themselves circumspectly to native princes, and more especially to the Great Mogul, whom they were to take every means to conciliate. It appears as if the directors relied much upon a "voluntary humility" to the Great Mogul, as a means of ingratiating themselves, to the disparagement of their rivals. In this alone they failed, happily so for their future fortunes.

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* See chap. xiii. p. 286.

† *Charters from the Crown, and Laws relating to the East India Company.*

‡ *Wilson's continuation of Mill,* lib. i. cap. v.

The new company proved itself no match for the old one. The loan of two millions to government was an undertaking beyond the resources and influence of the men who composed it. It was obliged to borrow money at a disadvantage, to replace that given to the government, and thus became embarrassed from the beginning. When the period came for taking up the stock of the new company, many of the subscribers were unable to fulfil what they had undertaken, and others who calculated upon the speedy destruction of the old company were appalled by its bold front and resolute prosecution of its plans, with a capital superior to the new company, having made no loan to government. Bruce declares that a panic ensued among the shareholders, who sold out their stock at great loss, and brought down the price in the market to a ruinous discount.

The first expedition which the new company fitted out—after having been anticipated by the old company on a much larger scale, as already quoted—consisted of three ships, with a stock of £178,000. The old company immediately followed that minor effort by one of great efficiency and vigour, amounting to thirteen sail of five hundred tons burden each, and goods considerably exceeding half a million sterling in value. At this juncture, too, they obtained various grants of territory in India, the town of Calcutta, afterwards the very seat of their glory, being among them.

While the new company was in trepidation, without capital to trade with, and its stock at a discount in the market, the old company was silently and quietly laying the foundations of Fort William at Calcutta, and making arrangements not only to possess there a fortification which they hoped to be impregnable, but also for erecting a station into a presidency. Bruce states, that besides the general moral effort of these spirited proceedings, parliament became sensible of their energy, and passed an act, entitling "the London Company"—as the old association was called—to trade, after their own charter should expire, under the charter of "the English Company," to the amount of the stock they had subscribed to its funds. This was a legal right which the London Company possessed in common with all other persons who subscribed to the stock of the new company, but to avert any injustice on the part of either that body or the government, an act especially empowering them to do so was sought and obtained. It is not improbable that "the English Company's stock" would have become utterly unsaleable in the market, had it not been for the large amount held by the London Company.

The new company availed itself of the discarded agents and officers of the old, which proved injurious in the long run of events, for these men were dismissed either for bad conduct, or, having too strong a will, for resisting the authorities above them. These persons committed their new employers to measures so imprudent and violent as to defeat their intentions, and impair their interests. Several of these persons were sent out to India, whither they went in the character of royal ambassadors, injuring both companies by the representations which they made to the native princes, and assailing the old company in the very manner which it had been brought as a complaint against it so often that it had treated interlopers. Whatever had been the sins of the old company, those of the new surpassed them; so that before the short term allowed to the former had run out, men grew weary of hearing of the violence, arrogance, false accusations, piracies, and villanies which the agents of the new, and ostensibly reformed, company perpetrated. The English name was lowered and disgraced, not only in the opinion of other European nations trading to India, but in that of native princes, and more especially of the Mogul himself.

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* Documents of the company, collected by Bruce.

At home there was a strong disposition among politicians to keep up this bitterness. "The whole of this contest," says Grant,* "was only one division of the great battle that agitated the state between the Tories and the Whigs, of whom the former favoured the old company, and the latter the new." Both parties suffered intensely; the market was inundated with oriental wares. The new company made overtures for a junction with the old, but the latter held sternly off. The silk weavers of Spitalfields, Norwich, Canterbury, and Coventry, petitioned against the admission of Indian silks, which the rival importers were selling at a loss, and so underselling the home production, that the English manufacturers, employers and operatives, were in ruined circumstances. The result of this agitation was one of those acts for the protection of the silk trade which fetter commerce and repress enterprise and industry. For this act William was more desirous than his parliament, or any portion of his people, except the manufacturers of silk. The printers of muslin and calico were, however, participators in the protection.

When the king received the directors of the old company on the subject of permitting them to continue a body corporate, he strongly recommended them to coalesce with the new company. This occurred in March, 1700. The proprietors called a general court of the proprietary together, to make known the king's recommendation; but they delayed to do so for some time, and then were actuated by policy to keep up an appearance of respect to the king's counsel, with which at the time they intended no compliance.

Some months later the king sent a message to know what proceedings they had taken in virtue of his advice to them. The directors again summoned a general court. The proprietors passed the following resolution:—"That their company as they have always been, so they are still, ready to embrace every opportunity by which they may manifest their duty to his majesty, and zeal for the public good; and that they are desirous to contribute their utmost endeavours for the preservation of the Indian trade to this kingdom, and are willing to agree with the new company upon reasonable terms." Mr. Mill calls this resolution evasive. He is sometimes, perhaps frequently, too eager to fix censure upon the old company, arising from the adverse politico-economical views entertained by him, which prevent him from making due allowance for the spirit of the age, the degree of civilization then prevalent, and the little influence it had upon seafaring matters and commercial pursuits in general. The resolution of the court of proprietors was not a hearty acquiescence with the will of his majesty, but they considered that it was not for them to take any initiatory step towards a coalition. As the stronger party, they only required time to bear down the competition of the other; they believed that they had little to fear for themselves. It was for the weaker party to offer terms, and so to press them, as to make it the interest of their opponents to accept those terms. The king and his ministers did not take this into sufficient account, and they were chiefly anxious that the two companies should coalesce, because a better prospect might be thus held out to borrow more money, or obtain the retention of what had been borrowed on easier terms. All the parties made much pretension of having the welfare of their country chiefly at heart, but none of them gave any practical proofs of being actuated by a sentiment so exalted. That "the London Company" were not evasive in the resolution condemned by Mr. Mill was soon proved, for when "the English Company" proposed formal terms, the former at once offered to have them submitted to discussion by seven delegates from each body.

As the year and the century were nearly at the close, the old company entered earnestly into negotiations with the legislature for a permanent adjustment of the questions then open. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed "to receive proposals for paying off the national debts, and advancing the credit of the nation." "The London Company" took advantage of this circumstance, and offered to pay off a million sterling which the government owed the English Company, and for which eight per cent. was paid; the London Company offering to hold it at five per cent. It was the old expedient of outbidding their rivals by pecuniary favours to the government. It was partly met in the old way. The commons' committee fell in with the proposal, and every thing appeared to be on the point of adjustment, once more giving the old company the victory over all enemies, when the house ignored the proceedings of their committee, and the difficulties remained still obstructing commerce, and the enigma of the future continued still without solution, when the seventeenth century closed upon the struggles of the old East India Company. Those struggles were intense, abroad as well as at home; and were alike successful, although often repressed by opposition and defeat. To the trials and triumphs of the company abroad, the reader's attention will be directed in the next chapter.

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* *Sketch of the History of the East India Company.*

CHAPTER LII.

THE ENGLISH IN INDIA AND THE EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO, FROM THE SETTLEMENT AT HOOGLY TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

DIRECTING attention to that quarter in which the British, when simply in pursuit of spice, opened up their first trading operations—the Archipelago, the Islands of Java and Japan, and the Moluccas—the state of things will appear as unfavourable as could be well conceived, when, just at the time, upon the Indian continent, the English settled down at Hoogly, and were looking forward with excited prospect to a flourishing trade with the rich province of Bengal. The business of that coast, from the city of Madras to Hoogly, was superintended from the distant settlement of Bantam, in the far east. The elevation of Fort St. George into a presidency relieved the chief of the presidency of Bantam of much care, but at the same time diminished the importance of his post, which seems to have declined in relative influence from that time. It was at this place that the power of the Dutch was most severely felt, as they roamed the Eastern Sea with triumphant insolence and unchecked aggression. The company was at this time most anxious to pursue a trade with the Chinese, and notwithstanding previous failures to accomplish the like in that way, hoped still to accomplish it from Macao, through the aid of the Portuguese, upon principles that might strengthen both against the overwhelming power of the Dutch. The delicate task of achieving this much desired object was committed to the agency at Bantam. Full power was given to them, but unfortunately they received nothing else. The following communication from them to the directors in 1648 discloses a state of things extremely humiliating to the company, and makes one wonder at, as well as admire, the courage and pertinacity with which the English held on against all odds, and conquered all at last:—

"The experiment which you desire we should make with one of our small vessels for trade into China, we are certainly informed, by those that know the present state and condition of that country very well, cannot be undertaken without the inevitable loss both of ship, men, and goods; for as the Tartars overrun and waste all the inland country, without settling any government in the places which they overcome, so some of their great men in China, with a mighty fleet at sea of upwards of a thousand sail of great ships (as is confidently reported), rob and spoil all the sea-coasts, and whatsoever vessels they can meet with; and how one of our feeble vessels would be able to defend themselves against such forces is easy to be supposed. As for the Portugals in Macao, they are little better than mere rebels against their viceroy in Goa, having lately murdered their captain-general, sent thither to them, and Macao itself so distracted amongst themselves, that they are daily spilling one another's blood. But put the case, all these things were otherwise, we must need say, we are in a very poor condition to seek out new discoveries, while you will not allow us either factors, shipping, or sailors, scarce half sufficient to maintain the trade already you have on foot: and therefore the Dutch but laugh at us, to see us meddle with new undertakings, being hardly able to support the old."

The Dutch at this time rendered any trade with China by any other European nation difficult, as well as by themselves; they penetrated to Canton, and were expelled, but not only continued to infest the Canton River and the coasts as pirates, they assisted the Tartars against the Chinese all along the eastern shores of the empire.

Until 1664 no further efforts were made, either directly from home, or through the agency at Bantam, to make a favourable impression upon the Chinese. In that year some vessels were sent to Canton. At first the prospects seemed favourable; the supercargoes landed at Macao, and secured a house as a temporary factory. The Chinese demanded that the ships should be measured, and in the result insisted upon "two thousand tales." The supercargoes offered an amount equal to a thousand dollars, but the reply was, "we will abate nothing." At the same time eight musketeers were placed to guard the house of the supercargoes, and prevent their leaving. After much negotiation, and the most insolent and oppressive behaviour on the part of the "celestial authorities," the supercargoes were permitted to return to Bantam, having been unable to effect a single sale.

They had scarcely left Macao, when the Tartar government took measures to repress all foreign trade within the empire, nor were the Dutch exempt from the application of this prohibitory system, notwithstanding the venal assistance which they had rendered to the Tartar oppressors.

After the severe defeat of the Dutch navy in Europe, through the genius and courage of Oliver Cromwell's commanders, and the consequent treaty, by which the Dutch engaged themselves to restore such possessions in the Archipelago as had belonged to the English, negotiations were opened by the English agents at Bantam for the execution of the stipulated terms. The restoration, or, as the Dutch called it, the cession, of the Island of Polaroon, was one of the terms of stipulation. The governor of that island pretended that he could not deliver it up without orders from the governor of Banda. On application to him, he pleaded that he must have orders from his superior, the governor of Batavia; he pleaded the want of definite instructions from the directors of the Dutch company. The fear of Oliver Cromwell alone caused the Dutch to surrender anything; and they continued to defer the surrender until 1665, and then the spice-trees had been cut down, and the inhabitants banished. Hostilities having recommenced, the English were expelled both from Polaroon and Damru, and subsequently, by the treaty of Breda, they were both ceded to the Dutch.

From 1663 to 1668 the company appears, from the correspondence carried on with its factory at Bantam, to have been anxious for an active prosecution of trade in Japan. Mr. Quarles Brown, the chief agent, replied that to accomplish such a purpose, the plans and modes of the Dutch must be imitated, who sought in Siam, Cambodia, and Tonquin, the foreign articles most in request in Japan. The Dutch advanced money to native merchants, who procured the commodities in the interior, and brought them to the coasts.

In 1667–68 attempts were made to reopen the trade with Sumatra, which had been lost during the previous troubles with the Dutch.

It was in consequence of the recommendations of Mr. Brown, as to the foreign articles most used in Japan, and as to the way in which the Dutch procured such articles, that, in 1672, an attempt was made to found a factory in Tonquin. The kingdom thus designated is bounded on the north by the province of Yunnan, in China; on the east, by the province of Canton and Bay of Tonquin; on the south, by Cochin; and the west, by the kingdom of Laos. It is twelve hundred miles in length, and five hundred miles in breadth. Its independence was established in 1553, but it is now subject to Cochin China. The president at Bantam was led to believe that there were many commodities which the people of Tonquin and Japan would like to interchange, and the president hoped to establish a commerce between the two places, and find means to introduce British goods, and articles from continental India.

On the 25th of June a vessel from Bantam reached the river of Tonquin. After passing the bar, and ascending up the river fourteen miles, they were stopped until permission for their progress should be obtained from the mandarin. Ung-ja-Thay came on board, attended by a guard of soldiers, and gave permission for the vessel to proceed to Hien. The passage was one of curiosity to the English rather than of commerce. The supercargo having advised the agent at Bantam of the reception he met with, the communication was forwarded to the directors at home, and has remained as one of the most curious documents connected with the early commerce of the company.

"In sailing up the river the ship several times touched, and the mandarin, being this day aboard, pinioned the captain, and threatened to cut off the chief mate's head, because they would not tow the ship against a violent stream, which at last they were forced to try; but as soon as the anchor was up, the tide or current carried down the ship, in spite of all help, so he was something appeased. We cannot tell how this action of the mandarin's can consist with a good correspondence hereafter. Were it not that we have respect to the company's affairs, and that we would not be thought to impede their designs by any rashness of ours, we should have resisted any such affront, though we saw but little hopes of escaping, being so far up the river, and our ship so full of soldiers. He told Mr. Gyfford that we must know we were come to a great country of great justice and government, and that if we would do all things that he would have us, it should be well for us; and these words he wrote down upon a paper in China characters, and bade him keep and remember it. Mr. Gyfford said we were very willing, being strangers, to be observant to their customs and laws, but such unreasonable impositions as these, of forcing a ship to go against wind and tide, and putting such dishonour upon us as to pinion the captain, seemed very strange to us, and therefore we desired no other favour from him than leave to go back again, for we believed our honourable employers would not trade here upon such terms. The mandarin answered, that while we were out, we might have kept out. The king was King of Tonquin before we came there, and would be after we departed, and that this country had no need of any foreign thing; but now we are within his power, we must be obedient thereto, comparing it to the condition of a married woman, who can blame no one but herself for being brought into bondage. So that we can perceive as yet but a very little affection they have for trade.

"Discoursing with Ung-ja-Thay of our intentions to settle a factory, he said little to it, only showed us the king's chop, authorising him to receive us. He says, likewise, he has power over ship and goods; so it seems he is absolute, and will, as he says, take out what he pleases: to which we must submit, for it is impossible to get a ship back over the bar, by reason of the shoalness of the water and the contrary winds; we are therefore compelled to give him his way in all things. His soldiers and secretaries, always keeping on board, are a great charge to us, for he calls for wine at his pleasure, and gives it amongst them, forcing them and our seamen to drink full cups.

"Much ado we had to put off Ung-ja-Thay from making the seamen work on the Sabbath-day, for we told him beforehand that it was not our custom to work on that day, for God commanded us to the contrary, who was greater than all the kings and princes of the earth.

"The ship ran ashore again at high water, and the captain could not bring her off, so the mandarin, thinking himself wiser than him or his mate, in this extremity made the seamen work night and day till they were nearly exhausted, and would have the ship hauled off by force, which, to please him, we tried, but to no purpose, for she presently swayed, so we fear we must of necessity stay here this spring. We now looked very solitary one upon another, and began to think that his extraordinary earnestness to get the ship further up the river was to give him a better opportunity to ransack us, which makes us esteem our condition no better than that of a prize."

They had but a sorry prospect of commercial dealings, and as little reason to congratulate themselves on the liberality of the presents from his majesty. "About noon Ung-ja-Thay went away, and sent us word we should come up to the city, that we might know what prices the king would give us for our goods, and that we might take a starved bull of a small size, which he brought as part of the present from the king, but would not deliver it before now, nor hath not the remainder yet, which, he told us, was fifty thousand great cashies, nor the king's chop. About two o'clock we embarked on board the galley that waited to carry us up, and went on our journey to the city, with longing expectation, to know what prices he would make upon our goods, for we were not admitted to make a price ourselves; but, about two miles off, the other mandarin, who commanded the galleys, Ung-ja-Thay, that villainous fellow, stayed for us, and invited us ashore, for he had got before us to prevent our complaint to his superior, and while we were there present he colleagued with us most abominably, now he had done us the most prejudice he could, in carrying away all the goods that would have yielded us any profit, and then would have us to be cheerful, like a conqueror, who would have his prisoner to be merry when he lost all he hath."

The British witnessed many proofs of the stern and sanguinary despotism which reigned at Tonquin. Here also, as almost everywhere else, the English agents found the Dutch before them. The king dealt with them, receiving saltpetre and money for the products of the country. In spite of all difficulties, the agents at Bantam persevered in maintaining some traffic at Tonquin until 1697, when it was found necessary to abandon it.

In 1681 the court of directors at home especially directed attention to secure a trade with Canton. They directed questions to the chief of the factory at Bantam on this subject to the following effect:—

"1. Whether there was reason to hope that the sanction of the emperor for a free access to that port could be obtained?

"2. Whether the people at Amoy, with

whom a profitable trade was transacted, but who were at war with the Tartars, would be offended, and decline further intercourse, on learning that the company had admission to Canton?"

Before the agents could answer these questions, they received a solution not contemplated: the Tartars conquered Amoy, and excluded the English, whose ships had to go to Macao instead.

At this period the directors resolved, if possible, to carry on a trade with China direct, and not through Bantam. This resolution appears to have been taken from the inconvenience experienced by the expensive and incommodious country vessels used between Bantam and China. The company at the same time adopted the view, that in all their oriental traffic indirect trade should be abandoned as fast as circumstances allowed.

In 1682 the differences between the English and Dutch threatened to deprive the former of all safe commerce with Java; the company therefore resolved to transfer the superintendence of the China ships from Bantam to the council at Surat. It is remarkable that the letter of the court expressing this determination bears date only twenty-one days after the actual capture of Bantam, which the Dutch succeeded in effecting on the 30th of August, 1682. Dutch writers deny that the expulsion of the English was by Dutch agency, and the proofs they assign are worthy of consideration. A war raged at that juncture between the King of Bantam and his son. The English, Mr. Mill alleges, took part with the son. In this allegation he follows Dutch authorities. The son triumphed, and expelled the English; but the victories of the son were obtained mainly through the instrumentality of the Dutch, who hated the king because he favoured the English. The Dutch affected to befriend the expelled English. They allowed them to take refuge at Batavia, and even offered to remove their property thither in their ships. The Dutch allege, that as the English were banished, not by them, but by the conquering native prince, and as they offered hospitality to British sufferers, they were innocent of all evil in the case. The English maintained that the revolt of the prince was instigated and made successful by the Dutch, and that he would not have expelled the English but at the instigation of their rivals, a word from whom would have prevented such an injustice. The English declined receiving the proffered assistance, and demanded reparation for the injuries inflicted. Had Cromwell lived, it is certain that all such wrongs would have been redressed, but James was imbecile; and notwithstanding the general fairness which the English attributed to Dutch William, it was generally believed that he regarded with great leniency the misdoings of his countrymen. The company, therefore, looked for redress in Europe from both James and William in vain. Professor Wilson says that "there is no evidence the English took any part in the dispute, nor is it likely." He also says, "They were not sufficiently strong to provoke the enmity of the Dutch." This is a strange remark, coming from a source of so much intelligence and ability; for whatever the inferiority of numbers of the English at Bantam, and however depressed their affairs at that juncture, that factory was one of the earliest, was a presidency, the centre of their trade in the Archipelago, and of such commerce as they were able to open with China, and their occupation of the position had always been a source of jealousy, and even "enmity," with the Dutch.

The English made various attempts afterwards to re-establish themselves. They sent embassies and presents of gunpowder to the King of Bantam, and received from his majesty presents of tea, but the intervention of the Dutch always prevented the English again having a factory there. If they had been too weak to provoke Dutch enmity, as Dr. Wilson affirms, how is it that Dutch influence was so strenuously used to prevent their return?

Upon the loss of Bantam, the English transactions of "the eastern coast" were transferred to Fort St. George. The charge of the ships for China was, however, as already stated, given over to the council at Surat. Soon after this event the court of directors wrote to the council of Surat concerning the trade with China, and the general business of the company in the following terms (the court wrote on the 2nd of April, 1683):—

"The loss of Bantam to the Dutch, and the *Johanna*, outward bound to your place, with her stock of £70,000, most bullion, but more especially an extraordinary and unparalleled failure of credit in all the public funds of this city, which hath caused the failure of divers of the goldsmiths in Lombard Street, whose names possibly you may have an account of in private letters: this unusual occurrence did so affright all people, that many demanded at once their money at interest from the company, to satisfy whom we were necessitated to publish these three following resolutions:—

"1. That all money arising from March sale should entirely be disposed of towards the satisfying of the company's debts.

"2. That no bullion should be sent out

upon our ships till all the company's debts due by or before the 31st of March were fully satisfied.

"3. That the company would make no dividend of any money on goods to the adventurers till all the debts now owing by them were fully paid."

Under these circumstances, undertakings in the Eastern seas, or even in connection with India, where the company had obtained so firm a hold, became impracticable, except such as, in the most ordinary course, were essential.

In 1686 the company interdicted their servants from dealing in any teas or spices.

In 1687 orders were given to send home teas well packed, which would turn to good account now that it was "a company's commodity, and not of private trade."

In 1689, notwithstanding the disconsolate letters which the directors had written to their agents at Surat, Bombay, and Fort St. George, concerning the trade with China, and other parts of Eastern Asia, continental and insular, some vigorous efforts were made to induce the reluctant and extortionate Chinese to exchange their commodities for the goods of Europe. Captain Heath arrived in the ship *Defence* at Canton, where he experienced difficulties and obstructions the most disheartening. He continued to outwit the Chinese officials through means of their own cunning, and he sometimes succeeded in conciliating them by bribes. The captain was, however, in the end unfortunate, for several of his men and his ship's doctor were killed, and he was obliged to leave Canton; British interests, on the whole, having been impaired by his visit, after success had seemed to crown his efforts.

The heavy duty upon tea in England embarrassed the transactions of the company. The directors ordered their agents to select none but the very best quality, otherwise, in consequence of this duty, "it would not defray either freight or charges."

The exportation of silver from England to India was at this early period of the company's history, as well as of late years, a subject of uneasiness, especially to those of the directors less conversant with the laws of commerce and of political economy. In 1700, in order to lessen that exportation, the court instructed their supercargoes to forward to Madras from China £20,000 in gold.

Thus, a review of the commerce of the company with China and the Eastern Archipelago, from the commencement of the Civil War in England to the close of the seventeenth century, discloses by no means a prosperous state of things. Chinese obstinacy, and that of various Indo-Chinese nations, Dutch wars and Dutch treachery, the listlessness, laziness, and disingenuousness of the Portuguese at Macao, the wars of Tartars and Chinese, the persistent attempts of interlopers, the turmoil and discontent at home, the loss of credit sustained by the company in London,—all these causes operated to render the trade with the islands and peninsulas of Eastern Asia, and with Canton, burdensome, difficult, and dangerous. The main obstructions were, however, the piracy, perfidy, and waging of open war, by the Dutch. Notwithstanding the triumph of England over Holland in Europe, and the accession of the Prince of Orange to the English throne, the Dutch throughout Eastern Asia were never conciliatory, unless to cover a hostile purpose, and were as much enemies in peace as in war. They succeeded in depriving the English of their chief insular settlements, expelling them from Japan and the Moluccas, and in frustrating their attempts to open up trading intercourse with all the nations having a coastline east of the Malacca Straits.

Soon after the settlement at Hoogly, Madras was elevated to the dignity of a presidency, it having been found inconvenient to have the chief authority for reference in the business of the Coromandel coast so distant as Bantam. When this honour was conferred on Fort St. George, its garrison consisted of twenty-six English soldiers; in less than two years after the future metropolis of the great and extensive presidency of Madras was guarded by ten English musketeers, and the civil establishment was, for economy, reduced to two factors.

When the war with Holland was waged by Cromwell, among the many naval enterprises of the Dutch, adverse to the British, in the East, was one against the company's commerce at Surat. "A fleet of twelve Dutchmen," or, as others relate, "eight large ships," blockaded the harbour. The coasting-trade between the different English factories was suspended, in consequence of the vigilance and activity of the Batavian cruisers. The Gulf of Persia was "scoured" by the Hollanders. Three of the company's ships were captured, and one sunk. At the same time the ships of the "states-general" literally hunted down the Portuguese. They drove them entirely out of the Island of Ceylon, and held there garrisons, in dangerous proximity to the British factory of Fort St. George. A Dutch fleet blockaded Goa and the small Island of Diu. The Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf, were filled with their "rovers."

The English were reduced to great distress. At Surat the "out-factories" were abolished, and the agents withdrawn. There was not a post occupied by the English on continental India that was not in peril from the superior naval power of the states-general. The English at Surat described themselves in their letters home as fallen into as much contempt "as the Portugals in India, or the Jews in Spain."

In the early part of the year 1664 Sevajee,* the rebel chief of the Mahrattas,† already formidable to the Mogul, having captured many places, attacked the city of Surat.‡ It is probable that the main cause of Sevajee's attack upon Surat was, as stated on page 676, the conviction that the Emperor Aurungzebe had been supplied with ammunition by the Europeans settled there. This motive, attributed to him by some writers, is denied by others. There should be no doubt of the fact that the emperor had been thus enabled to make war upon the Mahratta with advantage, and that the latter must have known it, and would, if possible, avenge so great an injury, and take measures to prevent its recurrence. The following passage from Bruce§ is sufficient proof of the provocation given in this way to the Mahratta chief:—"Shortly before his death Cromwell licensed a Mr. Rolt to export three mortars and twenty thousand shells, to be disposed of to Aurungzebe, then engaged in rebellion against his father. The company directed the Surat presidency to seize on these articles as illicit; and the more effectually to frustrate the speculation, sent large quantities of ordnance, mortars, shells, &c., desiring the different presidencies to dispose of them at the best price to either of the four rival princes who should first apply for them, preserving meanwhile a strict neutrality." It is impossible that Sevajee did not hear of an event that created such a hubbub, not only at Surat, but at all the company's stations in India. It is likely, too, that no small portion of the ammunition found its way into his own hands, partly by purchase, and partly by plunder.

The defence made by the British is only glanced at in the chapter devoted to Mahratta history. Mr. Mill very briefly narrates the transaction, summing up in two sentences the facts that the English fought bravely, repelled the enemy, pleased the Mogul, and obtained in reward "new privileges of trade to the company. Professor Wilson, as usual, at variance with Mill, complains that "scant justice is done to the company's servants in the brief notice of a conduct highly remarkable for cool and resolute courage." Mr. Mill was not concerned to notice the conduct of the English as that of "the company's servants," nor did he do scant justice to them, for he pronounces a glowing panegyric upon them. His treatment however, of an incident, admitted by himself to have had such important results, is too brief, and justifies the learned Oxford professor's complaint on that score. The account given by the latter is very full and complete; it is as follows:—"Sevajee's approach to within fifteen miles of Surat was announced on the morning of the 5th of January, upon which the governor retired into the castle, and the inhabitants fled from every part of the city except that adjacent to the factory. In the evening the Mahrattas entered, and part blockaded the castle, whilst the rest plundered and set fire to the houses. During that night and the following day repeated demands and menaces were sent to the factory, but they were all met with terms of defiance. 'We replied to Sevajee,' says the despatch to the court, dated the 26th of January, 1664, 'we were here on purpose to maintain the house to the death of the last man, and therefore not to delay his coming upon us.' It does not appear that any organized attack was made upon the factory, but the Mahrattas assembled in considerable numbers before it, and broke into an adjoining house. To prevent their establishing themselves in a situation from which they might offer serious annoyance, a sally was made from the factory, which had the effect of dislodging the assailants, and putting them to flight, with some loss and three men wounded on the part of the English. This success was followed up with spirit: the plundered house was occupied; several sorties were made, and pushed even to the gates of the castle, and the neighbourhood for near a quarter of a mile round was cleared of the enemy. No further attempts were made to molest the factory or its vicinity during the three days that Sevajee continued in possession of the town, and the inhabitants of the quarter in which the factory was situated 'were very thankful in their acknowledgments, blessing and praising the English nation,' to whose valour they ascribed their exemption from the calamities which had desolated the rest of the city. The governor presented Sir G. Oxenden with a dress of honour, and recommended the interests of the company to Aurungzebe. The emperor in the first instance remitted the customs at Surat for one year in favour of all merchants, and subsequently granted a perpetual remission of a portion of the duties to the English in particular. The despatch from Surat states the proportion to be one-half, but the translation of the Husb-ul-hookum, in the Records, says a half per cent.; and in the firman granted on the 26th of June, 1667, the amount is stated at one per cent. out of three, the ordinary impost. A more important provision of the firman is exemption from all transit charges on any pretext whatever."

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* For his history see p. 670, vol. i.

† For the origin of the Mahrattas see p. 669, vol. i.

‡ For an account of the sack of Surat by Sevajee see vol. i. p. 676, and the note on that page. For a description of the place at the present day, see vol. i. p. 145.

§ Bruce vol. i. p. 39.

The English factory at Rajahpore was at this time abandoned, the exactions of the Mahratta chief rendering it impossible for the English to trade there with profit. It was plain that Sevajee both feared and respected the English, but formed exaggerated ideas of their riches, and was therefore desirous to have them in his cities, in order that, under the pretext of dues and duties, he might extort money from them.

In 1670 he again attacked Surat. His aim this time was to take possession of it—partly because of its great wealth, thereby to diminish the resources of the Mogul, and partly to turn to his own advantage the sources of commercial riches that were there. Failing to capture it, his intention was to plunder it, or compel payment of a ransom. Mr. Mill is even more brief in his account of this second attack than of the first,* simply stating that "the principal part of the goods was transported to Sivally,† and placed on board the ships, the English remaining in the factory, defending themselves successfully. Some lives were lost, and some property damaged."

The testimony of Orme is directly against that of Bruce, for he asserts that neither the English nor Dutch factories were attacked, nor was any demand made upon them. Mr. Hamilton and Dr. Wilson contradict Orme. The first named representsthe town as partially pillaged; the doctor expresses his surprise that Orme should have studied so negligently the documents at the India House, and sums up their contents on the matter thus:—"On this occasion, as on the former, the English factory was defended with spirit, 'the enemy,' says the letter from Surat, 'found such hot service from our house, that they left us.' Subsequently a parley was held with 'the captain of the brigade,' who agreed to refrain from further molestation, and 'the house was quiet for two days.' On the third day they again appeared before the factory, 'threatening that they would take or burn it to the ground; but Mr. Master stood in so resolute a posture, that the captain, not willing to hazard his men, with much ado kept them back, and sent a man into the house to advise Mr. Master what was fit to be done.' In consequence of this communication, a complimentary present was sent to Sevajee by two of the company's servants; he received them kindly, 'telling them that the English and he were very good friends, and, putting his hand into their hands, told them that he could do the English no wrong, and that this giving his hand was better than any *coul* to oblige him thereto.' Sevajee was, in fact, desirous to conciliate the English, in order to induce them to return to Rajahpore, where they had formerly had a factory, which they had abandoned in consequence of his exactions. The loss of their trade had injured the town of Rajahpore, and diminished the Mahratta's revenue from it. Sevajee immediately afterwards left Surat. The French had saved their factory by paying a contribution. The Dutch factory was without the town, and was not attacked; and these circumstances, with the interview between Sevajee and the English, inspired the Mogul government with considerable distrust of the Europeans at Surat."

The aim of Sevajee after the spirited repulse he met with in 1670 was to conciliate the English at Surat, who maintained a cold and distant bearing to his advances, as they were afraid to compromise themselves with the Mogul, who had hitherto been so friendly to them. In order to prevent any further attempts at negotiation on the part of the Mahratta chief, they demanded compensation for injuries inflicted at Surat and various other places by him or his hordes of wild followers. To the astonishment of the English, this was conceded, and they then entered into serious negotiations with a chief whom the Mogul not only regarded as an enemy, but as a rebel. In 1674 a treaty was actually formed between the head of the Mahrattas and the president of the English factory at Surat of mutual peace and amity. Sevajee agreed to pay ten thousand pagodas as compensation for past injuries, and relinquished his right to the wrecks of vessels cast away upon his coasts, so far as those of English, or rather of the company, were concerned. The consequence of this was an intense jealousy towards the English by the Great Mogul, and an equal difficulty on the part of the former to maintain neutrality between the Moguls and the Mahrattas. It was in consequence of a state of feeling in India thus arising rather than from events at home (as generally represented), although the latter had some influence also in the matter, that the court of committees in 1677–78 recommended a trimming policy to their servants in treating with all the conflicting native powers in India. Bruce thus describes the directions sent out:—"The court recommended temporising expedients to their servants with the Mogul, with Sevajee, and with the petty rajahs; but at the same they gave to President Augier and his council discretionary powers to employ armed vessels to enforce the observation of treaties and grants:—in this way the court shifted from themselves the responsibility of commencing hostilities, that they might be able, in any questions which might arise between the king and the company, to refer such hostilities to the errors of their servants."*

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* Mill's brief notice is taken, just as it stands, from Bruce.

† Sivally (*Siva laya*, the abode of Siva). This is the harbour of the Surat shipping, and is situated at the mouth of the river Tapty, twenty miles west of that city.

Upon this quotation of Bruce, Professor Wilson thus very properly comments:—"There is a clause in these instructions omitted, which it is but justice to the directors to re-insert. They enjoined their servants 'to endeavour by their conduct to impress the natives with an opinion of the probity of the English in all commercial dealings.' With regard to the object of the court in giving discretionary powers to the president and council of Surat, to enforce the observation of treaties and grants, it is not very candid to limit it to leaving an opening by which they might escape responsibility. Their own distance from the scene of action rendered some such discretionary authority in their servants indispensable, as is admitted a few lines further on." Bruce, however, was rather careless than uncandid in any omissions made by him, as even Dr. Wilson, with all his zeal to vindicate the ancient proceedings of the company on all occasions, is equalled in partiality by that writer.

Partly in the result of the treaty with Sevajee, partly from adopting the policy recommended by the court of committees at home, Surat escaped all attacks from native powers during the remainder of the seventeenth century, although early in the eighteenth century it was repeatedly assailed by Mahratta freebooters. This was important, for Surat was for a considerable time the commercial capital of commercial India; and although its native Hindoo population was always faithless and horribly immoral, the Parsee inhabitants clung to the English and other Europeans, so as to afford facilities of commerce not to be obtained elsewhere. The Parsees at that time were very numerous at Surat,* and they were very important as agents between the other natives, whom they well understood, and the Europeans.

In 1686–87 several of the company's agents were imprisoned at Surat by the Mogul, in consequence of piratical attacks by some English upon his ships, and generally in that quarter he was less friendly than formerly.

Towards the close of the century the piracies off Surat became more common and daring. In 1695 the emperor's chief ship, consecrated to a purpose by him esteemed holy,—that of carrying pilgrims to Mocha and Jedda, the seaports of Mecca,—was attacked by an English rover, and captured. An account of the transaction is given by a Mohammedan writer, one Khafi Khan, according to whose reluctant admissions, the conduct of the English pirates was most gallant and dashing. It was in 1693 that the vessel was made a prize, while carrying eighty guns and four hundred muskets, by which is probably meant not that muskets were a part of the cargo, but of the armament. "An English vessel of small size" bore down upon the Mogul leviathan, and a battle took place. A gun having burst on board the emperor's ship was the occasion, Khafi Khan declares, of the English being able to board, which they did, in spite of all the odds of numbers and of armament; "and although," adds Khafi, "the Christians have no courage with the sword, in consequence of mismanagement the vessel was taken."

Upon this event Mohammedan India literally raged against "the sacrilegious Giaours." At Surat and Swally the emperor, unable in any other way to prevent the multitude from murdering the English, placed them, to the number of sixty-three, in irons.

The emperor, discreetly, sought redress by sending to the English president at Bombay an envoy. This person was the historian, Khafi Khan. He represents his reception to have been with great honour, but rather sneeringly refers to the display of military power which the president thought proper to make. He praises the business ability and good sense of the English council, but expresses his surprise at the spirit in which persons so grave, and on an occasion so important, laughed at the way in which the crew of the little English ship took possession of the emperor's chief man-of-war. Having received explanation that the aggressors were pirates, who would be hanged if caught, and pacific assurances having been profusely made, the envoy returned to the Mogul viceroy at Surat. The English authorities immediately offered a reward of one thousand pounds for Captain Avery, by whom it was supposed the daring exploit was performed, although some attributed it to Captain Kidd, who had been at that time off Swally. Kidd continued to cruise about, but the pursuit of Avery was so hot in consequence of the reward, that he made for the Bahamas, where his ship was sold, and the crew dispersed. Several of them were, however, arrested, and hanged. Matters were arranged with the emperor, but Kidd made so many captures of native and European vessels off the mouth of the Tapty, that peaceful relations between the chief factor at Surat and the viceroy were soon interrupted, and the English traders were exposed to the reprisals of the native government.

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* Bruce, vol. ii. p. 406.

* See chapter on the Relation of the Parsees to Indian History.

When these events were passing at Surat another portion of the strip of territory, afterwards known as the Bombay presidency, was the scene of transactions of great importance. That theatre of event was the Island of Bombay, its dependant islets, and the vicinity of the bay.

While the Dutch in the Archipelago were successfully evading the stipulations imposed by Cromwell when they solicited peace from that conqueror, the Portuguese were acting a similar part, but still more treacherous and dishonest, at Bombay. After the death of Cromwell the Dutch lost all hesitation about breaking the treaty; and while they were treating the authority of Charles II. with contempt, or bribing his connivance at their frauds, even the Portuguese did not think themselves too feeble to resist the prerogatives of the English king, and through him the nation he so weakly ruled. The Island of Bombay having (as related on previous pages) become the property of Charles, as the dowry of the Infanta Catherine of Portugal, whom he married, he sent the Earl of Marlborough to take possession. Five hundred soldiers were also sent to occupy the island as a garrison, with its dependencies, Salsette and Tanna. The Portuguese governor refused to deliver over these islands, as they were not named in the treaty. It was urged upon the governor that the islands in question were so situated, that the occupation of them by the troops of any other nation would render the Island of Bombay insecure to its possessors. He replied that his government could never have framed a treaty which would open Bassein to another nation. He finally refused to give up Bombay until further instructed by his own government, inasmuch as the letters or patent produced by Lord Marlborough did not comport with the usages of Portugal.

The troops brought out by the English ships were so cooped up, that disease broke out among them, and made mortal havoc. Their commander, Sir Abraham Shipman, requested the chief of the English factory at Surat to allow them to land there. He dared not undertake such a responsibility, as it might excite the jealousy of the natives to see so large a force landing in their country. The Earl of Marlborough returned home to report to his government. Sir Abraham Shipman landed his troops on the small island of Anjediva, twelve miles distant from Goa. This situation they found unhealthy, and fresh provisions could with difficulty be obtained. Sir Abraham offered the rights of the crown to the company through their agents at Surat. They refused to accept them, because they could not occupy the island *pro tempore* in proper force, and as a permanent possession they were not authorized to receive it, nor did they consider him authorized to bestow it. Sir Abraham and three hundred and eighty-one of his troops fell victims to "the distemper." The residue were permitted, in December, 1664, to take possession of the Island of Bombay, under the command of an officer named Cook. The eventual cession of the island to the company seems to have arisen from the fact that the king found it an expense too heavy to be borne, and "making a virtue of necessity," he bestowed it upon those by whom he desired to serve himself in other ways.* Mr. Cook, the commander of the little body of infantry, assumed the office of first governor. He found the island nearly a desert, the Portuguese having done nothing to improve so admirable a position. On the 5th of November, 1666, Sir Gervaise Lucas arrived as governor. Sir Gervaise died on the 21st of March, and was succeeded by the deputy-governor, Captain Henry Geary. Mr. Cook, the first governor, had been incensed at being superseded by a governor from England; and as soon as Sir Gervaise died, assisted by the Jesuits, Cook collected a force at Salsette, in order to re-establish himself by force. The attempt failed, through the firmness of Captain Geary, and the fidelity of a portion of the little garrison. On the 23rd of September, 1668, the island was taken possession of in the name of the East India Company by Sir George Oxenden, the company's governor at Surat. The troops were transferred from the king's to the company's service, along with the arms, ordnance, and stores. Soon after it came into possession of the company the revenue rose to £2823 per annum, and in a year after that it more than doubled. Sir George Oxenden died on the 14th of July, 1669, and was succeeded in his office by Mr. Gerald Augier, as chief of the factory at Surat, and governor of Bombay. Under his auspices the revenue rose to £6490 per annum. In 1672 a powerful Dutch fleet appeared off Bombay, and reconnoitred; at that time the garrison did not consist of more than a hundred English soldiers, about as many friendly Portuguese, an equal number of natives, and a small party of French refugees and deserters. The Dutch did not effect any hostile purpose. Possibly they were deterred by the spirited efforts of the governor and the inhabitants, who enrolled themselves as a militia. Several of them were Germans, and received especial praise from the officials for their soldierlike bearing and good conduct. Five hundred Rajpoots were hired, and presented a gallant appearance to the reconnoitering Dutch. In 1674 the fortifications were repaired and strengthened. To the twenty-one cannons which the company found there a hundred were added. The regular troops were four hundred, "of whom the greater part were topasses,"* and there was an enrolled and disciplined militia of three hundred. The mint was established at Bombay in 1676, letters patent having arrived from the king empowering the company to coin 'rupees, pice, and budgerooks."

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* For a description of the Island of Bombay and its vicinity, see chap. vii. pp. 138—145.

During the government of Mr. Augier, the Mahratta pirates infested the bay. The governor died, 1676, and was succeeded by Henry Oxenden.

Among the difficulties with which the settlement had to contend, were the menacing power of the Emperor Aurungzebe, and that of the Mahrattas then rapidly rising to importance. Nevertheless, the place prospered, so that according to Mr. Grant the revenue at this time reached more than £12,000 per annum. The Portuguese and Dutch were bitterly opposed to this settlement. The Danes and French soon became rivals also.

The rising authority of the Mahrattas gave much uneasiness at Bombay in 1679, and the jealousy of that power, and of any relations maintained by the English with it, which animated the Mogul, constituted another peril to the still comparatively new settlement. In that year Sevajee seized the Island of Henery, and the Siddee seized the Island of Kenery as a counterpoise. The English were endangered by both proceedings, but knew not well how to oppose either, because they were alike to be apprehended, and a junction with either party for any purpose must involve a war. The Siddee was considered the stronger, yet the less formidable neighbour. "Siddee, or Seedee, is a corruption of an Arabic term, signifying a lord; but in the common language of the Deccan, it came to be applied indiscriminately to all natives of Africa. The Siddees of Jinjeera took their name from a small fortified island in the Concan, where a colony had been formed on a jaghire, granted, it appears, in the first instance, to an Abyssinian officer, by the King of Ahmednuggur, on condition of the maintenance of a marine for the protection of trade, and the conveyance of pilgrims to the Red Sea. The hostility of Sevajee induced the Siddee, or chief, to seek favour with Aurungzebe, by whom he was made admiral of the Mogul fleet, with an annual salary of four lacs of rupees (£40,000) for convoying pilgrims to Jedda and Mocha. The emperor himself sent an annual donation to Mecca of three lacs."*

Sevajee died in 1680, which, for a time relieved the British very much from their uneasiness in connection with the Mahrattas. In 1681, Mr. John Child, brother of Sir Josiah Child, an influential member of the court of committees, was appointed president of Surat, with a council of eight members; one of the junior councillors, Mr. Ward, was designated deputy-governor of Bombay.

In 1683 Bombay was created an independent English settlement, and in 1684 the chief seat of the power and trade of the English in the East Indies. Before it arrived at so great a distinction, however, it was the scene of a memorable mutiny, which prevented the arrangement from being carried out for several years. Up to the time of this revolt, the East India Company had expended on Bombay, its harbour, improvements, and fortifications, £300,000.† Captain Keigwin, who commanded the garrison, assisted by Ensign Thompson, and supported by the troops, consisting of one hundred and fifty regulars, and two hundred topasses, and headed by the inhabitants, seized on the island in the name of the British crown. Captain Keigwin, not only deposed, but imprisoned the deputy-governor, and was himself chosen to the office of governor with acclamation by the troops, militia, and inhabitants. The captain issued a proclamation, in which he set forth the misdeeds of the company. Mr. Ward applied by secret agents to Mr. Child, the governor of Surat, who was unable to afford him assistance. Meanwhile, Captain Keigwin applied the revenues of the island scrupulously to the support of the troops and civil government in the name of the King of England. The new governor and the inhabitants sent home complaints to the king against Mr. Child, whose oppressions and tyranny were the alleged occasion of a revolt which took so loyal a form. Dr. Cook Taylor sums up the character of John Child and his brother Sir Josiah, as exemplified by their conduct from 1684 to 1688, and the consequences of their misdeeds, in the following terms:—"Unfortunately, their prosperity (that of the company) was greatly injured by one of their own servants, Sir John Child, governor of Bombay, whose fraud, ambition, and tyranny brought the settlement to the very verge of ruin. His folly led him to provoke a war with the Emperor of Delhi, who sent a considerable force to attack Bombay. Child's cowardice was as conspicuous as any of his other qualities, and the fort must have fallen, had not his seasonable death relieved the garrison from the greatest of dangers, an imbecile and treacherous commander. On Child's death, the Emperor Aurungzebe consented to make peace, and granted more favourable terms than the English had a right to expect. Child's successors were little better than himself; so great were their profligacy and rapacity, that from being a populous place, Bombay was almost rendered a desert; it would most probably have been abandoned altogether, if the company's servants could have found means of escaping from the insolence and oppression of their governors by returning to England; but this favour was refused them, and they were detained by their tyrants, without a glimmering of hope. In consequence of this misgovernment abroad, and the peculation introduced by Sir Josiah Child into the management at home, the company's affairs fell into sad confusion, and the merchants of London proposed either to throw open the trade with India and China, or to form a new commercial association on a wider basis."

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* Half-caste Portuguese and Indians.

* Duff's *Mahrattas*.

† Hamilton's *Hindostan*. Murray, Albemarle Street. 1820.

Miss Martineau, commenting upon the spirit and temper of the directors and agents at this period, says—"The wisest men among them, during the reigns of the Stuarts, seem to have entertained a true royal contempt for constitutional law, and a great relish for freedom of will and hand in executive matters. In the early history of the company there are no greater names than those of the brothers Sir Josiah and John Child. These gentlemen were full of sense, information, vigour, and commercial prudence; yet Sir Josiah has left us an account of his notions which reads strangely at this day." The fair authoress then quotes, on the authority, no doubt, of Captain Hamilton,* a reply of Sir Josiah Child to Mr. Vaux, governor of Bombay, in 1692, when the latter declared he would act towards interlopers according to the laws of England. Sir Josiah wrote roundly to Mr. Vaux, what amounted to an assertion of the supreme authority of the company even over the prerogatives of the crown and the laws of England. The injunctions of Sir Josiah were too faithfully carried out by his brother, whose notions of the company's privileges were still more arbitrary.

Whether the conduct of Mr. John, afterwards Sir John, Child, merited the hatred borne to him at Bombay, the feeling was general among all the company's servants and the inhabitants in 1684, so that Captain Keigwin rode triumphantly upon the storm. The king and the Duke of York looked rather favourably upon the statements of Keigwin, and the company espoused thoroughly all the doings and misdoings of Sir John Child. Dr. St. John was sent out by the king to investigate matters, and the company sent privately an agent of its own. Child also proceeded in person from Surat, but the new governor and his confederates would enter into no negotiations with him. Sir Thomas Grantham was dispatched with a naval squadron to take possession of the island, but Captain Keigwin refused to surrender it, except upon condition of free pardon and liberty to return home for himself and his followers, alleging, that what he had done was done honestly, for the king's honour, and the cause of law and justice. The admiral accepted the terms offered by the gallant and loyal insurgent, and on the 20th of November, 1684, the fort was surrendered. It was evident that the royal authorities and those of the company viewed Keigwin's conduct in a different light, but that the latter deemed it their interest to condemn his offences against them. During his government he displayed some activity, having opened negotiations with Rajah Sambajee, and finally concluded a treaty with him by which he recovered twelve thousand pagodas due to the company. This must have pleased them well, for in the year 1685 they confirmed the treaty.

In 1686 the chief government of the company in India removed from Surat, as had been previously determined, to Bombay. Sir John Child was appointed President, Captain-General, and Admiral of the East India Company's forces by land and sea, from Cape Comorin to the Gulf of Persia. Sir John began exercise of his new authority by putting down interlopers, with whom he dealt in the precise spirit of the letter of his brother, Sir Josiah, to Mr. Vaux, already mentioned. Mr. Mill vindicates the interlopers, as does Smith in his able work, but Dr. Wilson pertinently says in reply to the former—" It would appear, from the way in which these interlopers are spoken of, that they were unconnected merchants, seeking only to carry on trade with India on the principles of individual adventure and free competition. It seems, however, that they attempted more than this, representing themselves as a new company, chartered by the king, whose purpose it was to deprive the old of their privileges. They endeavoured also to establish themselves permanently at various places in the Deccan, and offered to the King of Golconda fifteen thousand pagodas for permission to erect a fort at Armagan. It was not without cause, therefore, that the company regarded them with fear, and endeavoured to suppress their commerce." Both the Brothers Child are accused, with some appearance of probability, of having desired to inflict capital punishment upon Englishmen who "interloped;" and of a desire to create in the name of the company a pure despotism over Englishmen within the bounds of sea and land, where their charter gave them any authority. Sir Josiah laid it down, in his communications with his brother, as an essential feature of their future policy, that all injuries inflicted by native princes upon the company's property or servants should be retaliated, and that force of arms should be more relied upon in all future differences with the rajahs of territories contiguous to those of the company. These directions of Sir Josiah's influenced Sir John largely in the career, which Dr. Cooke Taylor denounces with such unqualified severity.

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* Hamilton adds to the passage quoted by Miss Martineau, "I am the more particular on this account, because I saw and copied both those letters in anno, 1696, while Mr. Vaux and I were prisoners at Surat, on account of Captain Evory's [Avery] robbing the Mogul's great ship, the *Gunsway*."

In 1687, Sir John Child being dead, Mr. Harriss was appointed in his place, but the new governor was then a prisoner to the Mogul at Surat, and was not liberated until the ensuing year.

The Dutch having erected Batavia and Colombo into regencies, the English conferred the same title upon the settlement of Bombay in 1687.

War broke out between the company and the Mogul, arising from the efforts of the former, in Bengal, to retaliate for injuries alleged to have been inflicted by the emperor's officers and subjects. The circumstances which led to it will be detailed elsewhere; here, for the reader's convenience, limiting the narrative of its events to Bombay, it may be observed, that Sir John Child deliberately provoked this war, with the intention, if it succeeded, of avowing himself to have done so as the agent of the court of committees, which was in effect his brother Josiah, but if he failed, his plan was to declare that he had acted on his own responsibility, so that the company might disown him, and again solicit, on the ground of their repudiation of all his proceedings, to be restored to the Mogul's favour, and to their former position in matters of trade. This policy has been condemned by most historians as immoral, but several historical advocates of the company have defended it, as expedient and prudent, under the peculiar and exceptionable circumstances in which Sir John Child was placed; others deny, or throw doubt upon the accuracy of the representations made of Sir John's motives and policy. In consequence of that policy, "the Siddee's fleet" (the fleet of the Mogul admiral) attacked Bombay, taking possession of Mahim Mazagong and Sion, and shutting up the governor and garrison in the castle. The Siddee was on this occasion provided with a choice body of Mogul troops. In 1689 an order came from Aurungzebe to his admiral to withdraw his soldiers, but this was not done until the 22nd of June, 1690. The Siddee was very anxious to prosecute the siege, because he regarded the English as at heart the allies of his old enemies, the Mahrattas. He also tarried so long, in hopes of a certain conquest, having been inspired by the Portuguese Jesuits, who at first covertly and then openly abetted the invaders. On the withdrawal of the enemy, the lands which the Jesuits had been permitted to hold were confiscated, in punishment for their treason.

From 1691 to 1693, the plague raged at Bombay, so that at the beginning of the last-named year, only three of the company's civil servants remained alive.

In 1694 Sir John Gayer arrived as governor. The condition in which he found "the regency" led him to make a report concerning it in his despatches home, which represented it as in a deplorable condition. It had not recovered the effect of the desperate policy of Sir John Child, and since his death it had incurred new disasters. The proceedings of the English pirates were most daring, especially against the ships of the Mogul. Aurungzebe demanded that the regency should make good all the losses which those pirates inflicted upon his own navy, and upon the coasting ships of his subjects. To meet these demands the treasury was exhausted, and the council exposed to perpetual apprehension of a new declaration of war by the Mogul. Sir John Gayer was unable to provide any remedy against the evils which prevailed. In 1698 Sir Nicholas Waite was appointed resident at Surat by the new or English Company, already referred to in the narrative of the home history of the East India Company, and he immediately directed his energies against Sir John and his council. His endeavours were incessant to persuade the officers of the Mogul that the agents of the old company were rebels against their own sovereign, and entertained hostile designs against the emperor. In 1700 he succeeded, by his intrigues, in procuring the imprisonment of Sir John Gayer and Mr. Colt. While these intrigues were in progress, and before they had arrived at that result, the English pirates took advantage of the collision between the two companies, and literally made war on their own account. In 1698 they appeared off Cape Comorin with two frigates and a number of swift sailing ships of smaller dimensions, manned by most daring and reckless men, under the command of Captain Kidd, who was afterwards taken and hanged. Also three other piratical frigates cruised, one of fifty guns, one of forty, and one of thirty, all English built, with English crews, and commanded by English captains. These robber ships intercepted all vessels, and made havoc of the native coasters for a considerable time with impunity. These were not the only enemies of the suffering settlement. Its old enemies, the Mahrattas, kept it in a state of constant alarm. The Portuguese, who always regarded the cession of Bombay to the English as an event injurious to their nation and their religion, were not too weak to menace and insult the feeble settlement; the Jesuits, whose property had been confiscated, the Portuguese resident on the island, and even the half-castes, were ready to rise in revolt upon the appearance of a Portuguese force, and correspondence with the Portuguese stations, stimulating an attack, was constantly carried on.

The Arabs fitted out several fast sailing ships, which entered the bay repeatedly, inflicting variety of mischief; and these also had complicity with certain Arabs residing on the island. The English had at first encouraged settlers of all creeds and nations, but the harsh government of Sir John Child had turned them all into rebels.

Even these miseries did not complete the frightful catalogue. The plague, already referred to, had scarcely passed away, when pestilence of another kind spread over the island. The uncultivated land was in a marshy state, and had for some time spread malaria to a certain extent; that extent widened, until the whole island became the sphere of its morbid influence.

The disturbance of the Deccan, during the long reign of Aurungzebe, kept large armies of the emperor's, and numerous bodies of the active and desperate Mahrattas, continually marching to and fro; and this circumstance left the English, both at Bombay and Surat, in a state of uncertainty, from which they were favoured with few intervals of relief, as to how far the policy of the contending hosts might not involve their factories and the Island of Bombay within the whirlwind of war.

In the last decade of the seventeenth century, while the British were put to a severe trial in Bombay, the new and fearfully fatal malady, already referred to, visited the place, and the Europeans, civil and military, were all but annihilated. At this conjuncture the Parsees behaved with prudence and courage. The Seedees of Jinjeera were invading Bombay, and the island, and Fort St. George, then called Dungerry Fort, fell speedily into their hands. An eminent Parsee, a shipwright, named Rustom Dorab, contributed much to save the island to the British. He placed himself at the head of the fishermen, then a numerous caste, organized them, attacked and defeated the invaders, followed up his successes, and drove the enemy back. He, at the same time, sent despatches to the head of the British factory at Surat, who, hastening to Bombay, took upon himself the government. The loyal and intrepid Parsee was rewarded by appointments of honour and profit. Some account having been given of this transaction in the chapter on the Parsees, it is unnecessary to notice it further here, than to say that during the various trials from pestilence and war during the last ten years of the century at Bombay, the Parsees and the Armenian Christians displayed both loyalty and courage.

Having noted the history of events at Surat and Bombay, the chief stations of the company during the period now treated, the reader's attention is directed to the progress of affairs at another of the stations which had assumed importance, and was destined to occupy a powerful position in the future dominions of the company. The settlement of Fort George, at Madras, was noticed in a previous chapter. In 1653 it was raised to the rank of a presidency. In 1661 Sir Edward Winter was appointed chief agent; but in 1665 a Mr. George Fowcroft was nominated in his place, when Sir Edward Winter exemplified the spirit of discord which then prevailed among the company's agents, and the rude lawlessness so frequently evinced by them, for he seized and imprisoned the gentleman nominated to succeed him, and retained by force Fort George until the 22nd of August, 1668, when he delivered it up to commissioners from England, on condition of receiving a full pardon for all offences. Mr. Fowcroft then assumed the government, which he retained until

1671, when he was succeeded by Sir William Langhorn, in which year the sovereign of the Carnatic made over to the company his share in the customs of Madras, for a fixed rent of twelve hundred pagodas per annum. In 1680 Mr. William Gifford was appointed governor of Fort St. George; and in 1683 he was appointed president of both Madras and the company's stations in Bengal. In 1686 Mr. Yule was nominated to the presidency of Madras, the Bengal stations being no longer under its direction. On the 12th December, 1687, the population of Fort George, the city of Madras, and the villages within the territory of the company "were reported in the public letter to be three hundred thousand."*

In 1686 Madras was formed into a corporation, to consist of a mayor and ten aldermen, of whom three were to be servants of the company, and seven natives; the list of burgesses was to comprise a hundred and twenty names. According to Bruce† the aldermen were to be justices of the peace, and to wear their scarlet gowns, and the burgesses black silk gowns; much ceremony was to be observed in conducting the affairs of the corporation, and great pomp in their processions. It was found impossible, however, to constitute the corporation on the wide and liberal base intended. The Mussulman population hated the English too fiercely to be entrusted; the Portuguese were deterred by their priests, whose hostility was as great as that of "the Moors." The Jews left the place rather than have anything to do with the corporation; and the Armenians, whom the English wished chiefly to employ, declined acting. The causes of this appear to have been, a hope retained by the Mohammedans of expelling the English; and an indisposition on the part of the minor sects and parties to commit themselves, as in such case the conquerors would probably hold them accountable. Some lingering hope also pervaded the Portuguese that their nation would one day regain its ascendancy, and that in the meantime their proper task was to sow dissatisfaction in the minds of all other parties against that which was dominant. The tyranny of the English, and the self-will of the presidents, no doubt also deterred many from joining in anything English in its character. The Hindoo population, ever anxious in those days to play off any other power against the Mohammedans, were willing to co-operate.

The governor offered an alliance to the King of Golconda against the Dutch, with whom his majesty was at war. This was done with the object of ultimately obtaining from him a firman to coin rupees, and the cession of St. Thomas.

During all this time the Dutch scoured the Coromandel coast, sometimes seizing ships as buccaneers, at other times at war with the natives. The native chiefs along that coast were then also constantly at war with one another. The Carnatic, in which Madras is situated, was especially disturbed. All these circumstances circumscribed the English trade at Madras, and caused uneasiness in Fort St. George. The Mogul made war upon the King of Golconda, and the neighbouring princes. The company's agents at Madras were desirous to resist the pretensions of the Mogul, but in the end tamely submitted, and petitioned for the same privileges as they had enjoyed under the previous ruler, which were granted. Sir John Child was so opposed to a policy of peace as to censure the agents of the Madras presidency, in bitter terms, for hesitating to believe that the English must ultimately conquer. The events brought about by Sir John himself, the utter inadequacy of his means to assert his pretensions, proved that the agents at Fort St. George knew better than he did the requisites of their peculiar situation: this will, however, appear more fully, when noticing the contest in Bengal and along the western shores of its bay, brought about by the violence and ambition of Sir John. In 1691 Governor Yule was dismissed, and Mr. Higginson succeeded him, who was replaced in 1696 by Mr. Thomas Pitt, under whose presidency Madras witnessed the end of the seventeenth century. During his government the revenue of the territory amounted to forty thousand pagodas per annum. During the whole period, from the erection of Fort St. George, gunpowder was an important item in the cargoes of the vessels "outward bound" from England to the presidency.

During the progress of the events recorded, the Madras agents were engaged in making various settlements: among these were Tengayapatam, or Tegnapatam, a small town in Travancore on the sea-coast, thirty-two miles west-north-west from Cape Comorin, latitude 8° 17′ north, longitude 77° 22′ east; and Vizagapatam, or Vizigapatam, latitude 17° 42′ north, longitude 83° 24′ east. The latter place was first founded, and suffered severely during the war which Sir John Child, on his own authority, carried on with the Emperor Aurungzebe. So confused are the chronicles of this period, that it is difficult to say in what year the place was settled. At Semachellum, near to it, was a Hindoo temple of great reputed sanctity. The town was the capital of a district of the same name. There is some fine elevated ground about it, a range of hills lying near it. A bay is formed by a promontory, fifteen hundred feet high; the vicinity is picturesque. It was the capital of a district of the same name, situated in the Northern Circars. The travelling distance from Madras was four hundred and eighty-three miles. Here, and in Tegnapatam, the English encouraged the settlement of Armenians, who acted as agents between them and the natives, journeying far inland and finding customers for goods, and obtaining commissions for goods and produce. Soon after the peace with Aurungzebe, Tegnapatam was settled, and a fort built there, called Fort St. David. A little to the north of it the French had formed a settlement, called Pondicherry, which gave the English some uneasiness, as the French were fiercely hostile.* The ground at Fort St. David's was purchased from the Mahratta sovereign, Rajah Ram. Aurungzebe, to testify his forgiveness of the late war made upon him, permitted the Mogul authorities of the Carnatic to favour the purchase and the erection of the fort. "The wall and bulwarks were good and strong."

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* Hamilton's *Hindostan*, vol. ii. p. 414.

† Vol. ii. 593 659; and iii. 111, 156.

The proceedings of the company's agents in Bengal involved the Madras stations in the vortex of war and suffering; the remaining items of the history of those stations are comprised in the events which succeeded each other so rapidly on the Bengal coasts and the Hoogly River.

In 1674 the trade of Bengal had grown to such importance, that a separate agency was established to conduct it; but for ten years after that event the trade suffered much from the peculation and oppression of the native authorities. In 1685 the determination was formed by the supreme English authority in India to put an end to these oppressions. The greatest force which had ever appeared in the service of the company was employed for this purpose. Ten vessels, armed with from twelve to seventy guns, sailed under the command of Captain Nicholson, who had also six companies of infantry. The first object of this officer was directed to be, the seizure and fortification of Chittagong, as a place to serve for security in case of reverse, and as a *point d'appui* in any aggressive operations against the Mogul, or petty chiefs of Bengal. In addition to this force the directors of committees made application to the king for "an entire company of regular infantry, with their officers." So badly was the expedition timed, that the ships arrived at their destination in a desultory way; and before a sufficient force was collected, an untoward circumstance brought on a conflict, which, so far as the English were concerned, was premature and unfortunate. A quarrel occurred about some trifling matter between three English soldiers and the peons of Shaista Khan, the Mogul's *soubadar*, or governor, of Bengal. This occurred in October, 1680. The fleet, under Captain Nicholson, attacked the town of Hoogly, five hundred houses were burned, and much of the property of the citizens destroyed. This led the governor to sue for peace, to which the English assented, but on terms so preposterously exacting as to amount to a rejection of the overtures. The whole transaction and its results are thus briefly narrated by Bruce:—"Three English soldiers had quarrelled with the peons of the nawab, and had been wounded; a company of soldiers was called out in their defence, and finally the whole of the troops. The native forces collected to oppose them were routed, the town was cannonaded by the ships, and the foujdar was compelled to solicit a cessation of arms, which was granted on condition of his furnishing means of conveying the company's goods on board their vessels. Before the action took place orders had come from Shaista Khan to compromise the differences with the English, but their claims had now become so considerable, amounting to above sixty-six lacs of rupees, or nearly £700,000, that it was not likely they expected the nawab's acquiescence. They remained at Hoogly till the 20th of December, and then, 'considering that Hoogly was an open town, retired to Chutanuttee, or Calcutta, from its being a safer situation during any negotiation with the nabob or Mogul.' Negotiations were accordingly opened and terms agreed upon, when, in February, the nawab threw off the mask, and a large body of horse appeared before Hoogly."

On this occasion the factory was defended with undaunted spirit. Repeated assaults were made, but the English, headed by the agent, Job Charnock, repulsed the nawab's* forces, stormed the fort of Tanna, seized the Island of Injellee, where they strongly fortified themselves, and destroyed Balasore with fire, together with forty ships of the emperor's fleet.

On the other hand, the factories of Patna and Cossimbazar were plundered by the Mogul soldiery, and the residents carried into the interior. In September, 1687, peace was made, and the English were allowed to go back to Hoogly on their former privileges. The company was, however, dissatisfied with the want of success, and accused Charnock of fighting for his own interests rather than those of the company. The loss of Cossimbazar particularly irritated the court of committees, and they ordered Sir John Child to proceed to Bengal and negotiate for its recovery. This command was so well executed that everything appeared to be on the point of adjustment, when Captain Heath arrived from England in a large ship named the *Defence*, and accompanied by a frigate. Heath arrived in October, 1688, and went up to Calcutta, where he took the company's servants on board. On the 29th of November he arrived at Balasore, and instantly attacked the place, contrary to the advice of the English authorities; he alleging that he had orders from home to make war upon the Mogul. Having plundered Balasore, he proceeded to Chittagong, but the strenuous persuasives of "the council" induced him to allow communications to be made to the nabob before commencing hostilities. He appears to have been of an impatient and hasty temperament, for he did not wait for the result of those negotiations, but sailed away to Arracan, where he made fruitless efforts to establish a settlement. He then carried the agents and property of the company to Madras, where he arrived in March, 1689.* These events exasperated the emperor, and led to the painful incidents at Surat and Bombay, already recorded in this chapter. Aurungzebe, in fact, sent orders to his deputies and commanders to drive the English out of his dominions. Muchtar Khan, the viceroy of Gujerat, ordered the goods of the company at Surat to be sold, demanded five lacs of rupees as indemnity for the burnings, destruction, and plunder in Bengal, and offered a very great sum for the capture of Sir John Child, or the production of his dead body. The English were finally obliged to sue for peace at the close of 1688. The Mogul at first seemed indisposed to accept any terms, but a due regard to his treasury, exhausted by his numerous wars, induced him to listen to the overtures of the English. The death of Sir John Child removed any animosity which the emperor retained, and he became willing to treat the English as traders, resorting to his dominions for commerce with his permission; but as territorial lords he had a repugnance to their presence. Indeed, he had no objection to any of the European peoples as traders, but he was resolved to make them all feel that he alone was lord of India. In February, 1689, a new firman was granted, after incessant and humble importunity on the part of the English, restoring to them the imperial favour, and permission to trade, on condition that they made good the losses inflicted upon his subjects. The preamble of this document sets forth, that it is given because the English entreated pardon for the crimes they had committed, and promised amendment. The concluding paragraph stipulates for the execution of the firman "that Mr. Child, who did the disgrace, be turned out and expelled." The emperor did not then know of the illness or death of the chief offender, thus specifically condemned. Yet, whatever the faults of Sir John, and of the agents who seconded his policy, the provocations and injuries received by the English were very great. Shaista was an inexorable extortioner; and wherever the English held a station in Bengal, this man, under the pretence of service to the Mogul, robbed them by dues, duties, and imports, which had a form of legality, and were substantially unjust. Stewart depicts this man as a villain of the blackest character. Professor Wilson leans to the Mohammedan testimonies, which exalt him as "the lily of perfection." Mr. Mill admits, notwithstanding the severity of his censures upon Sir John Child and the company, that the English were in no part of India so wronged and oppressed as in Bengal.

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* Chapters will be devoted to the rise of the French and other East India Companies formed on the continent. Separate chapters have been already given to the Portuguese and Dutch.

* From the Persian, *nawab*, a deputy (of the Mogul).

The English now for a season became exceedingly deferential to the Mogul. No western people are more respectful to power than the English, while none so doggedly maintain the power they acquire. The directors of committees were not turned from their purpose of gaining territory. Sir Josiah Child was still the chief man among them, and he was not daunted by the defeat and death of his brother. To gain a footing upon the soil of India he believed to be essential to a profitable commerce with India, and the best means of retrieving the company's pecuniary disasters, and he resolved, *per fas et nefas*, to accomplish this resolve.

A very important acquisition was made in Bengal during the contest waged with the nabob. During the conflicts at Hoogly in 1687, the gallant and skilful Job Charnock took possession of Chutanutty, a village about twenty-four miles down the river. This position he considered less exposed than Hoogly. According to Bruce, when peace with the nabob was obtained, that functionary ordered Mr. Charnock to go back to Hoogly, and remove the agents and property of the company thither. According to this author, they were allowed to have some footing there, but were forbidden to build with brick or stone. Mill represents the first occupancy of Chutanutty to have been after the peace with the nabob's great master, the Emperor Aurungzebe, and obtained by grant from him in the result of the company's "respectful behaviour and offers of service." Professor Wilson represents the matter as related above, Captain Heath having gone to Chutanutty, where the English were already settled, and taken them thence. The villages of Govindpore and Calcutta were adjacent to Chutanutty, and formed together one straggling series of connected villages. Stewart* thus relates their occupation:—"The chief agent of the company, Job Charnock, had taken possession of Chutanutty in the contests with the nawab in 1687, and, upon the restoration of tranquillity, returned to it in 1690. The Foujdar of Hoogly sought to induce the English to return there; but they obtained leave to build a factory at Calcutta, which they preferred, as more secure and accessible to shipping. Subsequently permission was procured from Azeem-us-shan, the grandson of Aurungzebe, and governor of Bengal, to purchase the rents of the three villages named above from the zemindars who were then in charge of the collections, amounting to eleven hundred and ninety-five rupees six annas annually. The ground was, no doubt, very thinly occupied, and in great part overrun with jungle, giving to the company, therefore, lands sufficient for the erection of their factory and fort." The English prudently and by degrees erected their fort, and called it Fort William. The Emperor Aurungzebe was probably not informed of these proceedings, for while he respected the possession of forts by Europeans in any territory which he conquered, those forts having been the result of treaty, or sale, or permission to build, on the part of the monarch previously in possession of the supreme authority, yet he never himself gave permission to any Europeans to erect a fortress or fortify a position on any land of which he was sovereign. When the English first settled there, and for many years after, the place was dangerously unhealthy, from the stagnant waters and decaying vegetable matter in its vicinity, the whole district of Nuddea, of which it formed part, being both marshy and covered with jungle.

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* Bruce, vol. ii. p. 648.

A combination of petty chiefs to overthrow the government of the nabob in 1695 gave the occasion sought by the British of insisting upon the necessity of an armed occupation of their property. The nabob on this occasion directed them to defend themselves if attacked, and they accepted the general permission as authority to fortify their position.

During the process of the insurrection the Dutch and English factories at Rajmahal were plundered by Rehim Khan, an Affghan, one of the coalesced chiefs in arms. He also took possession of Hoogly and Moorshedabad, then also a very important place of commerce. He next attacked Chutanutty, and Tanna, a place ten miles west of Calcutta. He was repulsed at the former in a severe conflict. Tanna was covered by the guns of an English frigate, at the request of the Foujdar of Hoogly, and there also the assailants met with repulse. When, in 1698, peace was established by the enforcement of the authority of Aurungzebe, the defences erected by the Europeans were allowed to remain, as they had all been used in the emperor's interest. The English in that year obtained considerable property by purchase, and became lords paramount of a district, to the whole of which they gave the name of the village of Calcutta, which, according to Stewart, is properly *Cali-cotta*, a temple dedicated to Cally, the Hindoo goddess of Time.

In 1689 the English and Dutch (in Europe) united in hostilities against the French. The naval conflicts which followed are memorable in history, and continued until the peace of Ryswick, in 1697. The French were then far behind the English, as the latter were far behind the Dutch as political economists. In the philosophy of commerce the French were especially deficient, although several eminent Frenchmen had thrown light by their opinions upon commercial science. The French in India proceeded in a manner so unwise, that their undertakings were generally misfortunes. In Europe their privateers and men-of-war so frequently captured English and Dutch East Indiamen, that the prices of French importations from India were reduced in the markets of France. During the war more than four thousand English merchantmen, many of them East Indiamen, were captured by the royal navy of Louis XIV. and the French privateers. In India and the Indian Ocean French privateers and royal cruisers inflicted serious injuries upon both Dutch and English, but more especially upon the latter. The war with France was one of the great obstructions to the company during the whole of the time it lasted. In another chapter the proceedings of the French during this century in their Eastern enterprises will be noticed, especially where English interests were affected.

Thus closed the seventeenth century upon the struggles for European dominion, and the competitions for a European commerce with the East. The characters of the various companies and nationalities engaged afford but little scope for comparison. The English, on the whole, do not appear more grasping or more self-willed than their competitors. Perhaps the Danes, in the comparatively small amount of business transacted by them, conducted themselves the best. They were remarkable for their concern for the religious instruction of their servants and mariners, and of the natives over whom they acquired an influence, although at first they seemed to be only intent upon gain. The Dutch were ardent Protestants as well as traders, and were almost as much opposed to the Portuguese, as upholders of the Church of Rome, as they were politically anxious to humble the Spanish and Portuguese nations, and wrest from them their trade and territory. Towards the English they were animated by a foreboding that the British nation was destined to naval pre-eminence, and they were unwilling to bow to the rising greatness of a navy, the ships of which they were so often enabled to encounter with success. The Dutch, whatever the grasping cupidity and stern hardness of their merchants and mariners as such, as a nation possessed many eminently pious and learned men, and there were great numbers of the people of Holland sincerely anxious to spread "peace on earth, and good-will to men," and more especially to promote the proclamation of the gospel among the heathen. When the possessions of the Dutch East India Company assumed a permanent character, schools were established, churches erected, the Bible translated into the languages of the natives, and missionaries sent forth. The Portuguese were anxious to subdue by the burning fagot and the rusty pike. All peoples were, they believed, bound to render allegiance to the Roman pontiff, and they were his instruments in effecting the conquest of the East. The English paid little attention to religion. The provisions made in the charters as to chaplains and religious instruction were grossly neglected, nor could the company be induced to lay out money for such purposes. This may be accounted for partly by the objection which great numbers in England felt to the propagation of religion by state authority, public secular companies, or by any party or denomination bearing the sword. Among the company's own agents there were useful and able servants who held such views.

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* App. xi. p. 544.

The relation of the English East India Company to India at the end of the century was relatively more powerful than that of any of its competitors. The Dutch were triumphant in the Archipelago, but the footing they had gained in India was comparatively feeble. Their stations were small, and, although well managed, not points likely to serve for purposes of aggression upon either the native princes or the Europeans. It was chiefly at sea that they were strong so far as India was concerned.

The ports of chief importance occupied by the European nations in India at the end of the seventeenth century should be attentively marked by the reader, as their relative consequence formed an essential element in the changes which occurred in the century which succeeded.

The Portuguese still retained Goa, often as it had been endangered from sieges by native armies, and blockades by the Dutch. They also retained on the coasts of Western India Damaun, Choul, Bassein, and Diu, in Gujerat. Their power, however, was gone for ever. No one was so weak at the close of the seventeenth century as to fear the Portuguese. On the coasts of China they still held the Islands of Macao, Timor, and Solor.

The Dutch held many places which they had wrested from the Portuguese. On the coast of Coromandel they had Negapatam; in Bengal they had factories at Hoogly, Cossimbazar, and Patna; on the coast of Gujerat they had stations at Surat, the agents at which place superintended other agents at Agra and Ahmedabad. On the Malabar coast they occupied posts at Cochin, Quilon, Cranganore, and Cannanore. On this coast the Dutch held territory wrested from the Portuguese, and maintained military forces. Off the Madras coast the Island of Ceylon belonged to the Dutch, although the French succeeded in taking from them Trincomalee. The Hollanders were strongest in the Eastern Archipelago. Java was the location of Batavia, the most beautiful city of the Eastern world. At Malacca, Bantam, Amboyna, Banda, Ternate, Siam, Tonquin, and Macassar, they held flourishing positions, and even in Japan they alone succeeded. The Portuguese first, and afterwards the English, had been forced out of all the regions east of the Malacca Straits by the ships and troops of Holland.

The Danes held Tranquebar, the Dutch would have deprived them of it but for the assistance rendered by the English. The French held Pondicherry as their only important position. The English held many positions, the chief being Bombay, Madras, Surat, and Calcutta, then rising to importance. On the shores of Western India the British stations of importance were Bombay, Surat, the neighbouring harbour of Swally, and Baroch. The forts of Carwar, Tellicherry, and Ajengo (established within a few years of the end of the century), were situated on the Malabar coast, as was also the factory of Calicut. On the Coromandel coast there were Madras, Fort St. David, Cuddalore, Porto Novo, Pettipolee, Masulipatam, Madapallam, Vizagapatam, and Orissa. Beyond these, eastward and northward, were Calcutta, Hoogly, Dacca, and Patna. There were various smaller positions dependant upon the larger ones which afterwards became of some importance, but it is remarkable that the positions which the English found most valuable during their history in India to the present day were in their possession at the close of the seventeenth century. West of India there was the factory at Gombroon, in the dominions of the Shah of Persia; there were trading ports at Ispahan and Shiraz. In the neighbourhood of the Malacca Straits, and in the Eastern Archipelago, the English still held a few places of some importance. The Island of Sumatra received their chief settlements. Some others there were, such as Tonquin, not yet given up, but they were sources of weakness rather than of strength; and all would have been at the mercy of the Dutch, had not European events, either by war or alliance, checked their encroachments.

Miss Martineau has graphically sketched the general aspect of affairs as bearing upon the future relations of the English to continental India in the following terms:—"Thus were the British in India transformed, in the course of one century, from a handful of 'adventurers,' landing a cargo of goods, in a tentative way, at the mouth of the Tapty, and glad to sell their commodities and buy others on the residents' own terms, to a body of colonists, much considered for their extensive transactions, and the powers, legislative, executive, and military, which they wielded. Whence these powers were derived, who these English were, and why they came, might be more than Aurungzebe himself could distinctly explain; and to this day the relation of our Indian empire to the British seems to be a puzzle to the inhabitants, being really anomalous in English eyes as well. But there we were, acting from three centres of authority and power, and exercising whatever influence commerce put into our hands. It was not for want of enterprise that the British had as yet no territorial power. Sir Josiah Child believed the possession of more or less territory to be necessary to the security of our commerce; and in 1686 an attempt was made to obtain a footing in Bengal by force of arms. It not only failed, but would have resulted in the expulsion of every Englishman from the Mogul's dominions, but for the importance of our commerce to Aurungzebe's treasury. Our reputation suffered by this unsuccessful prank of ambition and cupidity; but not the less did the last of the great Moguls go to his grave, knowing that he left the English established in his dominions beyond the possibility of dislodgment. They were neither subjects nor rulers in India; but such a man as Aurungzebe must have been well aware that if they were really irremoveable they must sooner or later become the one or the other."

CHAPTER LIII.

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In reviewing the events over which this history has passed, there are many things which strike the mind with great force. It will especially occur to the reader that the rise and progress of English power in India so far, bore no resemblance to the development of any other power known to history. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the English, notwithstanding recent defeat and humiliation by the Great Mogul, held various important territorial acquisitions upon the continent of India; and although the government at home had oppressed and robbed the company, alternately persecuting and petting it, now giving it exclusive privileges and anon fostering competitors, it not only survived every vicissitude, but early in the eighteenth century assumed an attitude of strength, influence, and importance at home, which set at defiance all rivalry, and had begun to regard the revenues of its Eastern territories as more important than the prospects of its Eastern commerce. Future empire was already shadowed forth. "The narrative of an empire's rise and progress usually tells how the brook became a river, and the river became a sea; but the history of British India is peculiar and incongruous. It began without a strip of territory. A warehouse was expanded into a province; a province into an empire."* That great result had not arrived at the period to which our history is now brought, the empire had not been formed, but the warehouse had in more than one direction expanded into a province.

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* *The English in Western India, being the early History of the Factory at Surat.* By Philip Anderson.

It is difficult to gather material for an original and accurate record of the events of English enterprise in Asia, from its first efforts to the settled and regular character it assumed in the eighteenth century. The records of government furnish often but a meagre account, and what is furnished is in a form so dry, desultory, irregular, and to a great extent so irrelevant to the actual facts with which they had some official connection, that it is a tedious and difficult progress to analyze, separate, generalize, and reduce their substance to historical form. Bruce's work, already quoted, is the chief light of this period. With indefatigable industry he arranged the information which he thought proper to select from this source. Others, such as Orme, M'Pherson, Milburn, Mill, Walter Hamilton, Grant Duff, Kaye, Taylor, and Wilson, have followed in the footsteps of Bruce, but the labours of all have in this department been more or less partial. The personal narratives of Roe, Fryer, Fitch, Terry, Ovington, Alexander Hamilton, &c., furnish observations and inferences of much value; and the relations of their personal adventures throw an animation over the story, which the crude detail of government papers cannot supply. With all the aids thus furnished, there are many gaps which have not hitherto been filled up. The more the search is prosecuted, the more richly such labour is repaid, by enabling the historian to give a consecutive and clear relation of events which are obscure in themselves, or their origin, or consequences. However scant the sources of indisputable evidence, the meanness and commercial ignorance of the first English settlers are obvious to the student; and yet that they possessed a force of character adapted to ensure success is equally apparent. The Rev. Philip Anderson, the latest and most painstaking chronicler of the period of which this chapter treats, describes its records as "annals of mediocrity and weakness, sometimes of drivelling baseness. The instruments which Providence employed to create a British power in India were often of the basest metal. But such answer the same purposes as the finest in the hands of Infinite Wisdom. And though we may feel disappointed, we ought not to be surprised, when we see little to admire in the pioneers of our Eastern empire, and find that some were amongst the meanest of mankind. Yet, bad as were such agents, it will, I think, appear in this work that British power has been established by the moral force of British character. A writer of Anglo-Indian History must indeed soil his paper with narratives, from which virtue and honesty turn with disgust. But here is a distinction. Truth and sincerity have been, in the main, characteristics of the British, and the opposite vices exceptions. With the oriental races amongst whom they have been located, fraud, chicanery and intrigue have been the usual engines of state policy; truth and sincerity have been rare as flowers in a sandy soil. When British merchants or statesmen have formed compacts, given pledges, or made promises, they have usually—though not in all instances—observed their compacts, redeemed their pledges, and fulfilled their promises, and the natives have generally acknowledged this: so that, although their confidence has been sometimes misplaced, and has received a few severe shocks, they have continued to rely upon the good faith of Englishmen. On the other hand, they have rarely placed dependance on one another, and although some have been distinguished for their virtues in private life, their rule has ever been to regard each other with suspicion and distrust."

Is it not in the characters, moral or intellectual, of the leading men in the promotion of English success, that we best discern the elements of its accomplishment, but in the general character of the English serving in India, or directing at home. The names of Drake, Hawkins, Roe, and of others which have occurred in previous chapters, stand out with peculiar prominence; but it was the general character of the English factors, servants, and soldiers, which contributed to the resources and triumphs of which the story of these chapters has been made up. The author of this history would adopt the language of the writer last quoted, when he says—"My aim is to furnish sketches of men and manners without devoting an exclusive attention to the great and illustrious. In most historical pictures, kings, statesmen and warriors stand conspicuous, whilst the multitude are grouped together, and their separate features are scarcely perceptible. But in modern ages a spirit of research has led students to inquire into the habits and characters of the many, and their minute discoveries have supplied defects in history, throwing as they do, light not only upon heroes, but on man. This work is not indeed antiquarian, but yet its design is to exhume from the graves in which they have been buried, the motives and acts of individuals. As students of antiquity, by finding a bone here, a piece of tesselated pavement there, in another place some pottery or rust-eaten weapons, have caught glimpses of the Roman's domestic life and social condition; so now it is hoped, that by collecting heterogeneous facts from new and old books, and from mouldy records, we shall be able to form a museum, in which will be exhibited the social and moral condition, not only of the architects by whom the foundations were laid, and the building superintended; but also of those who were workpeople in the construction of our Anglo-Indian Empire. And when expatiating 'free o'er all this scene of man,' it will be an object to show, that although 'a mighty maze,' it is 'not without a plan.'"

Whatever the faults of the English in India up to the date of their interests there to which we have now arrived they bear comparison with their competitors in courage, constancy, morality, and benevolence. No people ever pursued trade with more eagerness for the acquisition of wealth, *per fas et nefas*, than the Portuguese. Their bloodthirstiness was fierce and insatiable, not only against the natives, but against Europeans. They probably were guilty of no act more sanguinary than the massacre at Amboyna by the Dutch; but their whole career was merciless, and stained with gore. The English suffered much from this unpitying and vindictive spirit of the Portuguese, but never visited that nation with the heavy retribution which it deserved, although the opportunity was frequently afforded. No one can read the pages of Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*, Orme's *Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire*, the *Voyage de François Pyrard de Laval*, &c., without perceiving the reluctance of the English to shed blood, except in battle, or in acts of piracy, then regarded too generally as fair and open war. The ferocity of the Portuguese, even against unarmed Englishmen and captives, is equally plain on the page of history. Philip Anderson gives a melancholy account of the incarceration, and consequent mortality, at Goa, of English sailors kidnapped by the Portuguese off Surat. He thus sums up the results of his study of the travels of Pyrard and others, early in the seventeenth century, as to the treatment received by Englishmen who happened to fall into the power of the Portuguese :—"Six months before he left Goa, Pyrard met another English prisoner, who seemed a person of some distinction, and had been surprised in the same way as the others, when he was taking soundings. He accused the Portuguese of savage ferocity, declaring that they had slaughtered his cousin in cold blood, and placed his head upon a pike as a trophy. His own life had been in great danger, for his captors, knowing that he had been surveying the coast, regarded him with peculiar suspicion. After a long imprisonment he was suffered to depart. Four months after this gentlemen had been seized, the unlucky ship to which he belonged was wrecked on the coast. The crew, twenty-four in number, having contrived to reach the shore near Surat with their money and other property, were well treated by the native authorities. They then divided themselves into two parties; the more adventurous spirits making an attempt to return home by way of Tartary, the others remaining at Surat. The former were enabled by passports, which they procured at the Mogul's court, to pass through his dominions, but were not permitted to enter the country of the Tartars, and after a fruitless journey they returned to Surat. All the survivors repaired to Goa, and sailed from thence to England. Every Englishman on whom the Portuguese could lay their hands was treated by them as a prisoner, and when Laval was about to leave India, several Englishmen were actually brought on board in irons. Yet even when in this sad plight they appeared to him a proud set, who took every opportunity of showing their contempt for Frenchmen. Such was Portuguese hospitality! Shipwrecked mariners, instead of receiving from them generous fare and clothing, or at least protection and sympathy, were condemned to eat the bread and water of affliction in a dungeon, and if they survived such treatment, were sent to their own country with ignominy. Exclusiveness and illiberality are the sure forerunners of degeneracy, and the English are avenged. Being now the dominant party, they can return good for evil by blessing the descendants of these persecutors with religious toleration and political freedom."

When the Portuguese were unable openly to destroy the English, they did not scruple to resort to assassination. Thus, when Captain Best sent one Starkey, a factor of Surat, with intelligence to England of his success in founding the factory there, he was poisoned on the journey by two friars. Another of the factors, Canning, when sent with a king's letter to Agra, was attacked and wounded by robbers, and some of his escort killed; and this outrage was, upon such evidence as satisfied those most concerned, believed to have been instigated by the Portuguese. Canning, who was in constant dread of being poisoned by the Jesuits, met his death by the means he had foreseen. So intense was the cruelty of the Portuguese, that they in some instances plotted the destruction of the English, when the latter had actually rendered services demanding gratitude, and when peace existed in Europe between the Spanish and English nations. Mr. Anderson, relying upon the accounts of Orme and M'Pherson, and more especially upon Colquhoun, describes, in the following manner, the ungrateful and perfidious character of the Portuguese at Surat, when, in 1615, Captain Downton arrived there with a small English squadron:—"This season Captain Nicholas Downton sustained the reputation of which Captain Best had laid the foundation. He was the chief commander, or, as such officers were then styled, 'the General' of four English ships. At Surat he found three English factors, Aldworth, Biddulph, and Richard Steele, the last of whom had lately come from Aleppo. His first step was, to demand redress for extortion in the customs; his second was to require, like a true Englishman, that a market for beef should be established at Swally. The first application was met by evasion; the second by a declaration that beef could not be had, as the Banyas, by whom the preservation of animal life was regarded in the light of a religious duty, had paid a large sum to prevent bullocks from being slaughtered. The emperor and petty princes of the Deccan were united in an attempt to drive the Portuguese out of India, and no sooner had Downton arrived, than the governor of Surat invited his co-operation. But as Portugal and her possessions were then subject to the Spanish crown, and there was peace between Spain and England, the English captain declined this invitation, which so annoyed the governor, that he in turn refused him all assistance, and on a frivolous pretext threw the English factors into prison. Downton's forbearance was but ill-requited by the Portuguese; for they falsely represented to the governor that he had consented to join them in an attack upon Surat. Their own acts, however, soon refuted this calumny. With six galleons of from four to eight hundred tons burden, three other vessels of considerable size, and sixty smaller ones, mounting in all a hundred and thirty-four pieces of ordnance, the viceroy of Goa attacked the four English ships, which could only mount eighty guns of inferior calibre. To the astonishment of the natives, the assailants were defeated as signally as in the previous year, so that their glory and renown were for ever transferred to their conquerors."

That the Portuguese were capable of such atrocity towards the English, may be judged by the testimony to their cowardice, avarice, and absence of all principle among themselves, borne by one who could have had no motive to scandalize them. Abbé Raynal lived long in India, and was well acquainted with the character of the natives, and of the European settlers. He held intimate relations with the English, forming among them friendships which he cherished with tenacity. His profession as a Roman Catholic priest gave him opportunity of knowing at least equally well the Portuguese. But the Abbé was not such a bigot as to sacrifice truth in his estimate of either English or Portuguese, and thus he depicts the latter:—"No Portuguese pursued any other object than the advancement of his own interest; there was no zeal, no union for the common good. Their possessions in India were divided into three governments, which gave no assistance to each other, and even clashed in their projects and interests. Neither discipline, subordination, nor the love of glory, animated either the soldiers or the officers. Men-of-war no longer ventured out of the ports; or whenever they appeared, were badly equipped. Manners became more and more depraved. Not one of their commanders had power enough to restrain the torrent of vice; and the majority of these commanders were themselves corrupted. The Portuguese at length lost all their former greatness, when a free and enlightened nation, actuated with a proper spirit of toleration, appeared in India, and contended with them for the empire of that country."

That a people thus debased among themselves were capable of any injustice, ingratitude or cruelty to the men of other nations may be easily believed. That the Portuguese failed utterly to establish a moral influence in the East, that could compare with that which the English were enabled to set up, is admitted by modern Roman Catholic writers of eminence in review of the entire oriental history of Portugal, and the entire colonial history of Spain, with which Portugal was so intimately connected in so important a portion of her oriental career. M. Montalembert, the distinguished French nobleman and senator, whose zeal for Roman Catholicism is so ardent, thus notices the oriental and colonial career of the two nations of the Iberian Peninsula, seen from a religious, moral, and utilitarian point of view:—"It is not the general, but the colonial policy of England which is now in question, and it is precisely in this latter that the genius of the British people shines with all its lustre; not, certainly, that it has been at all times and in all places irreproachable, but it has ever and everywhere equalled, if it have not surpassed, in wisdom, justice, and humanity all the other European races which have undertaken similar enterprises. It must be confessed that the history of the relations of Christian Europe with the rest of the world since the Crusades is not attractive. Unfortunately, neither the virtues nor the truths of Christianity have ruled the successive conquests won in Asia and America by the powerful nations of the West. After that first impetuous advance, so noble and so pious, of the fifteenth century, which fathered the great, the saintly Columbus, and all the champions of the maritime and colonial history of Portugal, worthy of as high a place in the too ungrateful memory of men as the heroes of ancient Greece, we see all the vices of modern civilization usurp the place of the spirit of faith and of self-denial, here exterminating the savage races, and elsewhere succumbing to the enervating influence of the corrupting civilization of the East, instead of regenerating it or taking its place. It is impossible not to recognise that England, more particularly since the period when she gloriously ransomed her participation in the kidnapping of the negroes and colonial slavery, may pride herself on having escaped from the greater part of those lamentable deviations from the path of rectitude. To the historian who requires an account from her of the result of her maritime and colonial enterprises for the last two centuries, she has a right to reply, '*Si quæris monumentum, circumspice.*' Can history exhibit many spectacles of a grander or more extraordinary nature, or more calculated to honour modern civilization, than that afforded us by a company of English merchants which has endured through two centuries and a half, and which governed but yesterday, at a distance of two thousand leagues from the mother country, nearly two hundred million of men by means of eight hundred civil servants, and of an army numbering from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand men? But England has done better still; she has not only founded colonies, but called nations into being. She has created the United States; she has erected them into one of the greatest powers of the present and of the future, by endowing them with those provincial and individual liberties which enabled them to victoriously emancipate themselves from the light yoke of the mother country.' 'Our free institutions' (such is the tenour of the message for the year 1852 of the President of that great Republic) 'are not the fruit of the revolution; they had been previously in existence; they had their roots in the free charters under the provisions of which the English colonies had grown up.' But what are we to think if those orthodox nations, with the advantages of such apostles and of such teaching, have depopulated half the globe? And what society did Spanish conquest substitute for the races which had been exterminated instead of having been civilized? Must we not turn away our eyes in sadness at seeing how far the first elements of order, energy, discipline, and legality are wanting everywhere, except, perhaps, in Chili, to Spanish enterprise, so destitute is it of the strong virtues of the ancient Castilian society, without having been able to acquire any of the qualities which characterize modern progress? In Hindostan itself what remains of Portuguese conquest? What is there to show for the numberless conversions achieved by St. Francis Xavier? What remains of the vast organization of that Church which was placed under the protection of the Crown of Portugal? Go, ask that question at Goa? fathom there the depths of the moral and material decrepitude into which has fallen a rule immortalized by Albuquerque, by John de Castro, and by so many others worthy to be reckoned among the most valiant Christians who have ever existed. You will there see to what the mortal influence of absolute power can bring Catholic colonies as well as their mother countries."

It is true, that under the maladministration of some of the governors of Surat and Bombay, and especially under that of Sir John Child, corruption of manners, oppression, tyranny and fraud, were rampant among the officials, but notwithstanding that such evils reached to a great head, the general sense of the English community rebelled against misgovernment, and rose superior to it, whereas the corruption and despicable baseness of the Portuguese received no check, and was all but universal among them until their power and influence sunk to what it is now.

It is painful, however, to find that the most laborious student of this period, a devoted clergyman of Bombay, bears this unfavourable testimony of his countrymen in Western India in the earlier part of the seventeenth century:—"As the number of adventurers increased, the reputation of the English was not improved. Too many committed deeds of violence and dishonesty. We can show that even the commanders of vessels belonging to the company did not hesitate to perpetrate robberies on the high seas or on shore when they stood in no fear of retaliation. During a visit which some English ships paid to Dabhol the officers suddenly started up from a conference with the native chiefs, and attacked the town, having first secured some large guns in such a manner that they could not be turned against them. Their attempt failed, but after retreating to their ships they succeeded in making prizes of two native boats. Della Valle declares that it was customary for the English to commit such outrages. And although this last account may be suspected as dictated by the prejudices of an Italian, we can see no reason to question

Sir Thomas Herbert's veracity. Sailing along the coast with several vessels under the command of an English admiral, he descried, when off Mangalore, a heavily laden craft after which a Malabar pirate was skulking. The native merchant in his fright sought refuge with the admiral, but, writes our author with confessed grief, his condition was little better than it would have been, if he had fallen into the pirate's hands. After a short consultation, his ship was adjudged a prize by the English officers. 'For my part,' proceeds Herbert, 'I could not reach the offence: but this I could, that she had a cargo of cotton, opium, onions, and probably somewhat under the cotton of most value, which was her crime it seems. But how the prize was distributed concerns not me to inquire; I was a passenger, but no merchant, nor informer.' The whole account would be incredible if not given on such good authority; but as it is, we must regard it as a blot upon the English character, and some justification of the Mogul officers when they afterwards brought charges of piracy against the company's servants. Sixty of the native seamen, concluding from the churlish conduct of the English that mischief was intended, and that they would be sold as slaves to the people of Java, trusted rather to the mercy of the waves than of such Englishmen, and threw themselves into the sea, 'which seemed sport to some there,' writes Herbert, 'but not so to me, who had compassion!' Some were picked up by canoes from the shore, and some by English boats; but the latter were so enraged with the treatment they had received, that they again endeavoured to drown themselves. A terrible storm which followed was regarded by the narrator as a token of God's severe displeasure."

After all, these were exceptional cases, such acts were perpetrated by pirates. The company, in every possible way, discountenanced the like; and at that juncture certainly commended justice and benevolence on the part of their officials, naval and mercantile.*

The following anecdote shows strikingly that while the English were "heady" and hot, they were not unrelenting, even when labouring under the impression that a great wrong was inflicted upon them, and when its perpetrator was in their power. "When one of Van den Broeck's seamen had killed an English gunner, the enraged countrymen of the latter insisted upon having the Dutchman executed at once. In vain did Broeck beg that the forms of justice might be employed. Nothing would do but immediate execution, until the crafty Dutchman devised a plan which showed that he relied upon English generosity. He declared that the sailor had been condemned to be drowned. No sooner had the factors heard this, than their thirst for blood was allayed. Believing that there was really an intention of putting the man to death, they relented, interceded for his life, and he was pardoned."†

The English were much inferior to the Dutch in economy, management, and knowledge of commercial philosophy; they had also less religious zeal; their morality was not better, and scarcely so good; but in one respect they were much superior to the Hollanders—they abhorred unnecessary bloodshed. It is difficult to reconcile the many good qualities of the Dutch with their avarice, their passion for making personal slaves of the natives, and readiness to shed blood. In all these respects the English favourably contrasted with them, but more especially in the last two, and most especially in the last of these particulars. The passion for gain evinced by some Englishmen was as censurable as that which marked the Hollanders, but, notwithstanding, the less sanguinary character of the latter as compared with the Portuguese, the English presented a strong contrast to their Batavian antagonists, where the sanctity of human life was concerned.

The Dutch, like other members of the Germanic family of nations, were much less refined in manners and feelings than those ethnological divisions of the human family comprising the Celts and Latins. The Hollanders and English were both deficient in gentler manners and sympathy, but the Dutch were much the ruder, justifying the satire of the poet Dryden—

> "With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do:
> They've both ill nature, and ill manners too.
> Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation,
> For they were bread ere manners were in fashion.
> And their new Commonwealth hath set them free,
> Only from honour and civility."

It must be admitted that Dryden bore an impassioned prejudice against the Dutch, and unscrupulously expressed himself generally where he had a prejudice; still, the stinging satire of those lines has a keen justice, which no one acquainted with the character of the Dutch in the seventeenth century can fail to see.

Taking the evidences collected in Kay's *Administration of the East India Company*, the first administrators of the company's factories on continental India were men of intelligence, integrity, and virtue. Indeed, whatever may have been the general superiority of the Dutch as men of business, the early settlers at Surat were their equals, and, as men of truth and honour, were superior to the Indian representatives of the states-general. Thomas Kerridge, the first president of the factory at Surat, was probably one of the most upright and intelligent men ever sent out by the company, and some who followed him immediately were but little his inferiors. The bravery of the English seems to have had more to do with their success than any other quality.* The Rev. Mr. Anderson, writing of the increasing number of the English expeditions† as the seventeenth century advanced, observes :—"The object of all was purely commercial, but it was an ominous fact that Englishmen only obtained respect and influence among the natives by hard fighting."‡

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* Letters from the directors to the presidency.

† Van den Broeck's *Voyages*.

While the English were merciful compared with the Portuguese, and even with the Dutch, it is to be regretted that several of the national vices were very prominent in Anglo-Indian society, and none more so than drunkenness. Almost all the early records, where such references would be at all in place, bear witness to this, as does almost every writer who notices the moral and social condition of the English at "the factories." Sir Thomas Roe,§ Della Valle,|| the Rev. Mr. Terry, already referred to in this work, bore frequent and sorrowful testimony to the same unhappy characteristic of his countrymen.¶ He declares that the natives at Surat were accustomed to say "Christian religion—devil religion." "Christian much drunk." "Christian much do wrong." "Christian much beat." "Christian very much abuse." These and similar expressions revealed the want of confidence of the natives towards Europeans. It is certain that the conduct of the Portuguese, and of the Dutch although in a lesser degree than the Portuguese, elicited this estimate of the professors of Christianity on the part of the natives; but the rude, coarse, and violent behaviour of the English, also drew forth these censures. The disposition to cheat the natives in trade, which was so flagrant in the Portuguese and Dutch, was possessed by the English also, to a sufficient degree to prevent reliance upon them by the native dealers, to impair their moral influence, and to leave a stain upon their name.

The English were undoubtedly quarrelsome; their drunken brawls at Surat, and afterwards at Bombay, were a scandal to the European name and to Christianity. "Drunkenness, and other exorbitances which proceeded from it, were so great in that place (Surat), that it was wonderful they (the English residents) were suffered to live."* "The manners of the young men in the factory (of Surat) were extremely dissolute, and on that account they were continually involved in trouble with the natives."†

There is, however, much to be said on behalf of the English as to their rough and contemptuous conduct towards the Indians. The latter seldom neglected an opportunity of robbing and assassinating their European visitors, when no provocation could have been pleaded in extenuation. It was impossible for any European to travel into the interior without being attacked, unless guarded by a powerful escort; and it was difficult even then to calculate upon safety, as the escort was frequently either in league with robbers and Thugs, or was composed of men ready to perpetrate the crimes against which, on the part of others, they were employed as a guard. These circumstances excited in a bold and ready-handed people like the English a warm and vigorous resentment, which the least provocation fanned. This was the true cause of many acts on the part of the English which call for modern censure. The following description of the conduct of the natives generally towards Europeans was given, after a diligent search through the pages of many early travellers, and of the letters of various officers of the English factories, by the author of *The English in Western India* :—"Canning, when on his journey to Agra, was assaulted and wounded by robbers. Starkey was poisoned. The caravan which Withington accompanied was attacked in the night at the third halting-place, and the next day they met a Mogul officer returning with the heads of two hundred and fifty coolies who had been plunderers. In Rajpootana the caravan was attacked twice in one day. Between that and Tatta the son of a Rajpoot chief professed to escort them with fifty troopers, but designedly led them out of their way into a thick wood. He there seized all the men, camels, and goods, and strangled the two Hindoo merchants to whom the caravan belonged, with their five servants. Withington and his servants having been kept for twenty days in close confinement, were dismissed, to find their way home as they best could. After this, when Edwards was travelling to Agra, the escort which he

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* Scrafton's *Reflections on the Government of Hindostan.* London, 1673.

† Thornton's *History of the British Empire in India.*

‡ *Treaties and Alliance.* London, 1717.

§ Roe's *Journal.*

|| *The Travels of Signor Pietro Della Valle.*

¶ Terry's *Voyage.*

* *Journal* of Sir Thomas Roe.

† Rev. Mr. Anderson.

took from Baroch was found to be in league with fifty mounted freebooters, who hovered about them at night, and were only deterred from attacking them by seeing their bold attitude. When Aldworth and his party were returning from Ahmedabad, their escort was increased by the orders of government, because robberies and murders had been committed two nights before close to the city. Between Baroda and Baroch they were attacked in a narrow lane, thick set on either side with hedges, by three hundred Rajpoots, who, with their lances and arrows, wounded many of them, and succeeded in rifling two of their heavily laden carts.* Gautier Schouten, a servant of the Dutch Company, who was at Surat in 1660, confirms all these accounts, and declares that when the English and Dutch went to Agra, they always joined themselves to native caravans. Even then they had frequently to defend themselves from Rajpoots, who descended from their mountains to plunder travellers. One anecdote affords us some idea of the local government at Ahmedabad. When Mandelslo was there, he was invited, together with the English and Dutch factors, by the governor, to a native entertainment. As is usual on such occasions, dancing-girls exhibited their performances. One troop having become fatigued, another was sent for. The latter, however, having been ill-requited on a former occasion, refused to attend? What measures then did the governor adopt? A very summary one indeed. He had them dragged into his presence, and then, after taunting them for their scruples, ordered them to be beheaded. These reluctant ministers of a despot's pleasure pleaded for mercy with heart-rending cries and shrieks. Their appeal was vain, and eight wretched women were actually executed before the company. The English factors were horrorstruck; but the governor merely laughed, and asked why they were troubled. This account, given by an eye-witness, whose veracity has been ordinarily admitted, is in itself a commentary upon the records of native rule."† Salbank, the pious factor of Surat, says in one of his letters home:—"The roads swarm with robbers, who would cut any man's throat for a third part of the value of a penny sterling. Howbeit, I, for my part, passed through all those hellish weapons, which those cannibal villains used to kill men withal, surely enough, through the tender mercies of my gracious God." It is not to be a matter of surprise that such men as the English should be easily excited to deeds of force and violence among a people so cruel, treacherous, and rapacious.

It is admitted that the forms of religion were less attended to by the English in the early part of the century than by any of their rivals in India. The Portuguese, while lost in the excess of every vice, still not only observed their religious rites, but fanatically struggled to force them upon others. The Dutch, with a profound worldliness, were regular observers of the primitive forms of their worship, and zealously endeavoured to convert and educate the natives. Even when pursuing gain with greedy avidity, and in the midst of rude and stern conflict, they listened with respect to the rebukes of their ministers, and never withheld from them the means of erecting churches, establishing schools, preaching the gospel, and acquiring the native tongues. The English were alike parsimonious and extravagant. In general matters they became more and more spendthrift in the affairs of the factories, while the factors were paid stinted stipends, and while at home the English nation supported costly ecclesiastical establishments, and the company handsomely remunerated clergymen to preach to the crews of their outward-bound ships, in India they had no missionary spirit, and even infringed the terms of their charter, by neglecting to support adequately and in sufficient number chaplains for their ships and stations. Several devoted Christian ministers were in the service of the company during the seventeenth century, but rarely did they receive any encouragement from the directors of committees at home or from the principals of the factories in India.

Early in the history of the company's settlements, one Henry Lord showed much zeal for the welfare of the natives, in which he was countenanced and assisted by Kerridge, the president of Surat, already referred to. Indeed, the studious and pious undertakings of Lord seem to have been chiefly directed by Kerridge. Both these worthies felt a profound interest in the literature and religious state of the Parsees; and Lord instituted earnest inquiries into the Zend language, and into the sacred books of that strange people. The Banyans were the objects also of their benevolent and spiritual purposes. Lord has left us his first impressions of this peculiar class in the following quaint way, which is the more interesting, from being pervaded so entirely by the style of thought and language then prevailing:—"According to the busie observance of travailers, inquiring what noveltie the place might produce, a people presented themselves to mine eyes, cloathed in linnen garments, somewhat low descending, of a gesture and garbe, as I may say, maydenly and well-nigh effeminate; of a countenance shy and somewhat estranged, yet smiling out a glosed and bashful familiarity, whose use in the companies affaires occasioned their presence there. Truth to say, mine eyes, unacquainted with such objects, took up their wonder and gazed, and this admiration, the badge of a fresh travailer, bred in mee the importunity of a questioner. I asked what manner of people those were, so strangely notable, and notably strange. Reply was made, They were Banians."*

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* Orme's *Fragments*.

† *Les Voyages du Sieur Albert de Mandelslo.*

The Rev. Mr. Terry, chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe, and afterwards rector of Great Greenford, left several works behind him—such as *A Memoir of Tom Coryate*, *Sermons preached before the East India Company*, and *Original Poems*. These all prove him to have been a very learned and pious man, and very desirous for the moral and spiritual welfare of the company's servants and the heathen. Copeland and a few other clergymen about the same time were zealous and devoted, and their names* appear in the records of the company, and in various fragmentary works, with tokens of reverence.

It is remarkable that in several instances clergymen who became useful took their tone of piety and earnestness of labour from eminently pious laymen. Some of these laymen exercised by their letters and statements considerable influence upon the company at home, so as to induce them to more particularity in selecting clergymen for their ships who were adapted to usefulness among seamen, and at the same time learned men, who would be likely to study with success the languages of the East, the mental character of its populations, and the genius of its religions, and who would be likely to meet successfully in argument learned Brahmins. Amongst the benevolent laymen thus exercising a beneficial influence was one Joseph Salbank, who, in 1617, wrote an earnest letter to the directors of committees, intreating that clergymen of the character just described might be sent to the East.

It would appear that for a long time the presidents seldom paid visits of state and ceremony, whether to natives or Europeans, unattended by their chaplains. Pedro della Valle, the Roman, commonly called *Il Pellegrino*, was at Surat in 1623. He stated that on his arrival at that place he was visited immediately by the president, accompanied by two ministers, "as the English call their priests." Della Valle gave of these and other English gentlemen whom he met there a most flattering—or at all events most favourable—account. Of the president he wrote, that "M. Rastel spake Italian fluently, and was very polite, showing himself in all things a person sufficiently accomplished, and of generous deportment, according as his gentle and graceful aspect bespoke him." Rastel, although a courteous, hospitable, benevolent man, and a favourer of chaplains and religious persons, was not himself pious, as appears from the odd accounts given by Della Valle of his entertainments at the presidency. The oldest despatch from the company's officers at present extant is from the pen of this President Rastel. It is dated the 26th of July, 1630, on board the ship *James*, in St. Augustin's Bay, Madagascar.*

Mr. Streynshan Master, who succeeded the pious and painstaking Aungier at the western presidency, was a man of great excellence. Of him Bruce says:—"Streynshan Master was afterwards chief at Madras, and in 1680 laid there the first stone of the first English church in India, carried on the work at his own charge, and never halted till he had brought it to a conclusion. He was dismissed the service by the court's order in 1681; but his offence is not stated. He was then knighted, and elected a director of the new company, which derived great benefit from his experience." †

The habits, manners, and customs of the English in India during the period of which we now treat, throw much light upon their national character, and reveal at once the influence of India upon them, and the sort of influence they exercised upon native communities and governments. Mr. Anderson, relying for his account chiefly on Roe, Fryer, and Della Valle, gives an amusing description of the manner of life of the British, not only in relation to the natives, but in their intercourse with other European nations. "Books and records give us but few glances of early English manners at this period (the first half of the seventeenth century). We may represent the factory as a mercantile house of agency, in which the president or chief was head partner. He and his junior partners, who were called factors, lived under the same roof, each having his own private apartments; but all assembling for meals at a public table, maintained by the company. They were also expected to meet for an hour every day for prayers. Such carriages and capital as they possessed were part of the common stock. Horses were expensive luxuries, used only by the chief and some of his friends. Bullock carts were in ordinary use. For space and furniture, the English and Dutch houses excelled all others in the city. The president affected some style. When he went into the streets he was followed by a long train of persons, including some natives armed with bows, arrows, swords, and shields. A banner or streamer was borne, and a saddle horse led before him. His retainers were numerous, and as each only received three rupees per *mensem* for wages, the whole was but little. There were also many slaves whose clothing was white calico, their food rice with a little fish." The author of a *History of the Factories of Surat and Bombay, and the subordinate Factories on the Western Coast,* quotes an obscure book, written by the Rev. Mr. Ovington at the close of the seventeenth century, who thus describes the combination of extravagance and meanness, at that time undoubtedly characteristic of the English nation, and which during the century was evinced at Surat by the factors:—"All Europeans dined at the public table, where they took their places according to seniority. The dinner service was sumptuous—all the dishes, plates, and drinking cups, being of massive and pure silver—and the provisions were of the best quality. Arak and wine from Shiraz were ordinarily drunk at table. There were an English, a Portuguese, and an Indian cook, so that every palate might be suited. Before and after meals a peon attended with a silver basin and ewer, which he offered to each person at table that he might pour water over his hands. On Sundays and a few other days high festival was kept. The choicest of European and Persian wines were then introduced. On these festivals the factors often accompanied the president, at his invitation, to a garden which was kept for recreation and amusement. At such times they formed a procession. The president and his lady were borne in palanquins. Before him were carried two large banners, and gaily caparisoned horses of Arabian or Persian breed were led, their saddles being of richly embroidered velvet; their head-stalls, reins, and cruppers mounted with solid and wrought silver. The council followed in coaches drawn by oxen, and the other factors in country carts or on horses kept at the company's expense. There was a singular combination of pride and meanness displayed in the factors' mode of life. None of them—not even the chaplain—moved out the walls of the city without being attended by four or five peons. At the Hindoo feast of the Divali, Banyas always offered presents to the president, members of council, chaplain, surgeon, and others. To the young factors these gifts were of great importance, as by selling them again, they were enabled to procure their annual supply of new clothes. This was beggarly enough, but not so low as another practice which was in favour with these young gentlemen, as they were now styled in courtesy. They had a clever way of enjoying practical jokes, and at the same time indulging their mercenary propensities. One of them would enter the premises of a Banya, and pretend that he was shooting doves or sparrows. The horrified believer in metempsychosis would then come out, earnestly implore him to desist, and even offer him 'ready money.' He 'drops in his hand a rupee or two to be gone,' says the narrator. There, reader, is a picture of the representatives of a high-minded nation drawn by one of themselves. Poor civilians! At least in your case necessity was the mother of invention."

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* Lord's *Discovery of Two Foreign Sects.*

* *Outward Letter-Book of the Surat Factory.*

† Bruce's *Annals.*

The following passages from Mr. Anderson's description of the love of pomp shown by the chief factors at Surat, and the motives for the display, are characteristic:—"That an impression might be made upon the natives, the president indulged to a considerable extent in pomp and state—even more than the Dutch president. He had a standard-bearer and bodyguard composed of a sergeant and double file of English soldiers. Forty natives also attended him. At dinner each course was ushered in by the sound of trumpets, and his ears were regaled by a band of music. Whenever he left his private rooms he was preceded by attendants with silver wands. On great occasions, when he issued from the factory, he appeared on horseback, or in a palanquin, or a coach drawn by milk-white oxen—doubtless of that large and beautiful breed for which Gujerat is celebrated. Led horses with silver bridles, and an umbrella of state was carried before him. The equipages of the other merchants came behind in the procession, and corresponded in appearance with the president's." The writer of the above adds, "the pomp and splendour of the presidents were in advance of the times, and the directors strove to check them." A writer and traveller, often quoted by those who notice the early annals of the English in India, thus describes the equipages of the presidents, and of other persons of high position:—"Two large milk-white oxen are put in to draw it, with circling horns as black as a coal, each point dipped with brass, from whence come brass chains across to the headstall, which is all of scarlet, and a scarlet collar to each, of brass bells, about their necks, their flapping ears snipped with art, and from their nostrils bridles covered with scarlet. The chariot itself is not swinging like ours, but fastened to the main axles by neat arches, which support a four-square seat, which is inlaid with ivory, or enriched as they please; at every corner are turned pillars, which make (by twisted silk or cotton cords) the sides, and support the roof, covered with English scarlet cloth, and lined with silk, with party-coloured borders; in these they spread carpets, and lay bolsters to ride cross-legged, sometimes three or four in one. It is borne on two wheels only, such little ones as our four wheels are, and pinned on with a wooden arch, which serves to mount them. The charioteer rides before, a-straddle on the beam that makes the yoke for the oxen, which is covered with scarlet, and finely carved underneath. He carries a goad instead of a whip. In winter (when they rarely stir) they have a *mumjuma*, or wax-cloth to throw over it. Those for journeying are something stronger than those for the merchants to ride about the city, or to take the air on; which with their nimble oxen they will, when they meet in the fields, run races on, and contend for the garland as much as for an Olympick prize; which is a diversion, *to see a cow gallop*, as we say in scorn; but these not only pluck up their heels apace, but are taught to amble, they often riding on them."*

"The English had not yet properly adapted their mode of dress to the climate. The costume of the seventeenth century must have been found peculiarly cumbersome and oppressive in a tropical climate. Old prints represent Europeans in India with large hose, long waisted, 'peasecod-bellied' doublets, and short cloaks or mantles with standing collars. Then there were ruffs, which Stubbs says were 'of twelve, yea sixteen lengths a piece, set three or four times double;' and he adds that the ladies had a 'liquid matter, which they call starch, wherein the devil hath learned them to wash and dive their ruffs, which being dry will then stand stiff and inflexible about their necks.' Breeches, too, were worn by gentlemen preposterously large, and their conical-crowned hats were of velvet, taffata, or sarcanet, ornamented with great bunches of feathers. Probably, however, this dress approved itself to native taste better than ours. At least Fryer, when at Junar, flattered himself that Nizam Beg, the governor of the fort, admired both the splendour and novelty of his costume. Sir Thomas Roe and his suite, as we are informed, were all clothed in English dresses, only made as light and cool as possible. His attendants wore liveries of 'red taffata cloaks, guarded with green taffata,' and the chaplain always appeared in a long black cassock. Society was of the free and jovial kind. There were no English ladies, and if the factors wished to enjoy the conversation of the gentler sex, they must resort to the Dutch factory. We have an account of a wedding party there. The bride was an Armenian; the bridegroom a Dutchman. All the Europeans of the place were invited, and every lady came; so there were present one Portuguese and one Dutch matron, a young Maronite girl, and a native woman who was engaged to marry a Dutchman. The circumstances under which the Portuguese lady was brought there are so characteristic of the times, that they should be narrated. The King of Portugal was in the habit of giving a dowry every year to a few poor but well-born orphan girls, whom he sent to assist in colonizing the settlements of India. A ship which was conveying three of these maidens had been intercepted and seized by the Dutch, who immediately carried their prizes to Surat. A supply of ladies was naturally received with avidity in that time of dearth, and the most eminent of the merchants became candidates for their hands. Two were taken, we know not where; but Donna Lucia, the third, married a rich Dutchman, and was a guest at the wedding banquet. She seems to have been contented with her lot. The affection of her Protestant husband led him to tolerate her religion in private, although she was compelled to observe in public the forms of the reformed church." *

The tombs of a people show their manner of life to after ages as faithfully as other indications more frequently referred to by the antiquary and the historian. In Western India there are many monumental tombs, which are very expressive of the habits of the English in the seventeenth century. The most recent modern historian of Bombay and Surat thus writes of the tombs of the latter place:—"Fancy may see in these sepulchral ruins the continuance of an undying rivalry between the agents of England and Holland. Van Reede, the old Dutch chief, has a brave charnel-house. His mouldering bones lie beneath a double cupola of great dimensions, formerly adorned with frescoes, escutcheons, and elegant wood-work. Its original cost may be supposed to have been enormous, when we read that to repair it cost the Dutch company six thousand rupees. It is not, indeed, to be compared with the Mohammedan tombs of Delhi, Agra, and Bejapore, but no European structures of the kind, except the tomb of Hadrian at Rome, and a few others, equal it. Doubtless the intention of its builders was to eclipse the noble mausoleum which covers the remains of Sir George and Christopher Oxenden, who died a few years earlier than Van Reede. Christopher is commemorated by a cupola within the loftier and more expansive cupola raised in honour of his more distinguished brother, the president. The height of this monument is forty feet, the diameter twenty-five. Massive pillars support the cupolas, and round their interiors are galleries, reached by a flight of many steps. The body of an Indian viceroy might have found here a worthy resting-place; it is far too superb for the chief of a factory, and his brother, who was only a subordinate." The two Oxendens here referred to were men of eminent religious worth, maintaining unsullied purity amidst prevailing corruption, and a lifeful piety when a heartless formalism characterized the religious professions of the majority.

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* Fryer.

* Anderson.

The tombs of the English in Western India do not generally convey impressions favourable to the taste, piety, and affection of those who erected them. A writer in a recent number of the *Bombay Quarterly* observes:—"A large number of inscriptions on our tombs are mere recitals of name, age, and date of death. Where regular epitaphs are composed by Anglo-Indians, their chief character is insipidity." So little care has been taken, however, of the sepulchres of those who laid the foundations of English power in India, that the monumental inscriptions are generally effaced. The writer first quoted remarks:—"No burial-grounds in India are comparable for the interest with which they are regarded by Europeans as those of Surat and Ahmedabad—particularly of Surat. They are histories. Had they been carefully preserved, instead of being barbarously neglected, during the last century, they would have thrown light upon an obscure period. As it is, their dilapidated monuments are as a few pages of a palimpsest, from which, after much painstaking and divining, a fragmentary narrative may be gleaned. Their magnificence, their escutcheons and other heraldic insignia, their religious symbols and passages of scripture, traces only of which can now be observed, prove that the inmates of European factories affected a pomp and splendour even beyond those of their successors, and made more pretensions, at least, to religious sentiments than are generally attributed to them." "As at Surat, there are also at Ahmedabad both Dutch and English cemeteries. The tombs in the former, all of dates between the years 1641 and 1679, are built, not of stone, but brick and chunam, the inscriptions being admirably executed in the latter; and on some the Maltese Cross, or what is called the Cross of Calvary, is traced. One epitaph is in Latin, the rest are Dutch, and none are of especial interest. All the epitaphs are remarkable for what they *do not*, rather than for what they do relate. The Dutch merchants did not often find time to express any religious sentiment, or to bewail the departed. The English ground is chiefly occupied with what may be called mess-room monuments—chilling memorials, without Christian symbols or religious allusions, unadorned by any manifestations of reverence, hope, or reflection upon the future." Such is the evidence indirectly given from the places of the dead of the habits and character of the English and their chief competitors during the eventful century the general character of which, as it regards the British in India, this chapter reviews.

The reason why there were ladies in the Dutch and not in the English factory was, that the government of Holland encouraged the matrimonial desires of the company's servants. There was a blot upon the morals of Bombay in connection with the introduction of females to the community. One of the company's own chaplains, a man of probity and piety, following the testimony of Dr. Fryer and others, describes the condition of several "cargoes" of Englishwomen sent out by the company, and barbarously deceived by them. Having described the immorality of the factors and their servants, he says:—"Nor, we are sorry to add, were these vicious propensities indulged only by men. A great many females on the island were far from exhibiting the gentler virtues which usually adorn their sex, but in this instance the company themselves were chiefly to be blamed. As Rome in her young days sat desolate until cheered by the ravished Sabines; as the poor slaves of St. Helena would not take kindly to their toil until the company brought a cargo of sable maidens to brighten their dreary hours; so also it was thought that the exiled soldiers of England must have a similar solace in Bombay. Gerald Aungier first suggested that they ought to be encouraged and assisted in contracting marriages with their countrywomen. Consistently with his character, he took a religious view of the question, and pointed out that the men, being Protestants, were in the habit of marrying native Portuguese women, the consequence of which was that their offspring were, 'through their father's neglect, brought up in the Roman Catholic principles, to the great dishonour and weakening of the Protestant religion and interest.' He therefore recommended that a supply of women should be sent out from England. This proposal was acceded to by the court of directors, and apparently improved upon, for they not only induced such persons as were adapted to be wives of private soldiers to come, but 'gentlewomen and other women.' Unhappily, 'the gentlewomen,' as they still continued to be styled, had not learned, before they left England, to behave themselves; therefore their countrymen at Bombay were not very forward in offering them their hearts and hands. Some, however, married; but a judicious observer, who visited the island soon after, was shocked to see how sickly their children were, in consequence of the free-and-easy way in which the mothers lived, and their inveterate habit of taking strong liquors. But what was to become of those who remained single and unnoticed? Of course they supposed that the company were their honourable guardians, and that if they could not find husbands, they would at least have the protection of government. Not so the company. To the first party, indeed, a guarantee was given that they should be supported for the first year, and if, at the expiration of that time, they were still unmarried, they should be allowed their diet for another year. This engagement was faithfully kept. But then came out a a second party, fondly expecting that they would be treated liked their predecessors; indeed, they affirmed 'that so much was declared to them at the East India-house, by Mr. Lewis.' Nevertheless, their claims were not recognised. After considerable agitation on their part, and reluctance on the president's part, six or eight pagodas a month were allowed to *such as were actually in distress;* the more obvious objects of charity. The poor creatures had clearly been deluded, and almost left to starve. What was the result? They must have been tempted, if not actually driven, to sell their charms to the first bidder. The small stock of virtue which they had brought with them was of course soon expended. Then,—and not until then,—when they had been led into temptation, the voice of authority and erring-mocking piety assumed a threatening tone." The author of the foregoing remarks, with much grounds for the accusation, declares that Governor Aungier, whose general excellence he commends, had "much Protestant zeal, but little Christian love." It is easy to imagine that the company encouraged these unfortunate emigrants to believe that they should receive support, when it was not intended to perform what they were led to suppose would be done for them, when we remember how frequently of late years persons embarking in undertakings, believing that they did so assured of government support, have found themselves deceived. The treatment of medical civilians during the Russian war, and of other classes, is too well known not to be readily called up to remembrance by the reader in exemplification of this. Government and public bodies in England are too much in the habit of putting forth vaguely expressed offers and inducements to persons or bodies of persons whose services it is desirable to engage, and then taking shelter behind the vagueness and indefiniteness of the phraseology employed, although obviously tending to mislead, if it meant anything short of what the deceived and injured parties supposed it to mean.

It appears that the use of tea, at first a luxury among the English in India as well as at home, had become familiar among them at Surat before its value became known to the company in London. It is probable that the factors at the capital of the English settlements in Western India were accustomed to sip the fragrant and exhilarating beverage for a longer time than is generally supposed before the directors or the royal family in England knew anything of "the cup which cheers but not inebriates." Tea was certainly a commodity of trade between China and Surat for a considerable time before it was an article of import in Britain. The Dutch, who generally anticipated the English in the discovery of useful articles of commerce, perceived the value of this article both in India and in Holland a number of years before the English court quaffed the strange but even then esteemed, delicious, and enlivening beverage. Although the Dutch medical practitioners generally, as afterwards the English, offered opposition, champions were found in Holland among the members of the faculty from the first, who advocated it as advantageous. Tulpius, a celebrated physician of Amsterdam, acquired still higher reputation by a treatise on the virtues of "*Thee*," in the year 1641. The following extracts are taken from the records of the East India-house. At that time (1664) "some good *thea*," as it was then spelt, was deemed an acceptable present for his majesty, King Charles II.

> 1664, *July* 1*st*.—Ordered, that the master attendant do go on board the ships now arrived, and enquire what rarities of birds, beasts, or other curiosities, there are on board, fit to present to his majesty, and to desire that they may not be disposed of till the company are supplied with such as they may wish, on paying for the same.
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> *August* 22*nd*.—The governor acquainting the court that the factors have in every instance failed the company of such things as they writ for, to have presented his majesty with, and that his majesty may not find himself wholly neglected by the company, he was of opinion, if the court think fit, that a silver case of oil of cinnamon, which is to be had of Mr. Thomas Winter for seventy-five pounds, and some good *thea*, be provided for that end, which he hopes may be acceptable. The court approved very well thereof.

After the first half of the seventeenth century had passed away, the social rank of the English in India became much elevated. Persons of superior station in England were sent out to India, and the company at home comprised noblemen and members of parliament. The traders were no longer so anxious as formerly "to sort their trade with men only of their own qualitie;" they became eager for the connection of "gentlemen," a class of whose association with them they had been so much afraid, lest the traders of England should in consequence withdraw their confidence. The increased salaries of the chief persons in the factories induced "gentlemen" to use their influence to obtain these offices; and the style of *social* humility which had characterized the factors, became much modified by the infusion of a new class among them. It does not appear that the sagacity, morality, or religious zeal of the factors and agents was improved by these accessions of gentility, but the social bearing of the English was in some respects elevated. One of the influences which acted most unfavourably upon the social, and even religious condition of the English in India, during the latter portion of the first half of the seventeenth century, and throughout the second half, was the presence and conduct of "interlopers." This class committed no inconsiderable portion of the crimes committed by the English, and by which the native governments were so often enraged, overlooking the provocation which their subjects offered to all foreigners. The factories were kept in a state of incessant apprehension by these intruders, and a spirit on the part of one class of Englishmen towards another, of a resentful and vindictive kind was fostered, which sunk the moral character of the nation in the esteem of other nations, native and European, disturbed social intercourse among the English themselves, and impeded their religious efforts. It also rendered the customs and manners of the English less intelligible to the native governments, as well as peoples; for they could not comprehend how men of the same nation professing loyalty to the same throne, could be so opposed in policy. Mr. Mill, logically right as to the superior facilities which free-trade would have given for the exchange of the products of India and England, overlooks, as Professor Wilson reminds his readers, the impossibility of private adventurers providing force to encounter the armed competition of the other European companies, and the oppressions of the natives. The learned professor, however, replies to Mr. Mill in a tone more peremptory than argumentative. The following remarks on the subject, by the Rev. Philip Anderson, places the matter ethically and logically, as well as circumstantially, in its true light:—"Yet it must be admitted, that when once a monopoly was legally established, an invasion of its privileges became an insult upon the majesty of law. The agents of the company in India, therefore, were fully justified in resenting the intrusions of 'interlopers.' Their masters had entrusted to them the defence of a monopoly, which, however objectionable to those who had no share in its advantages, was a species of property which had been obtained with all the forms of law and justice. Moreover, their establishment was maintained at a great expense, and they often disbursed large sums of money to procure and retain the favour of a corrupt court in England, and a still corrupter court in India. The factors were, as it were, keepers of a manor, for which the tenants, their masters, paid a high rent, and which they farmed at a heavy cost. Interlopers, then, were to them as poachers, who must be warned off, and if they persisted in their depredations, strenuously attacked with fire and sword, or prosecuted in courts of law as enemies not only of the East India Company, but also of the British nation."

Another of the circumstances which militated against the moral and religious life of the company's officers, was the permission given to them to trade on their own account, as well as in the interest of the company. Notice has been taken in previous chapters of the detriment to the trade of the company which thus arose, and of the resolution taken by the directors of the company to put it down. It appears that an oath was exacted from the servants and chiefs in the factories, not to trade on their own account. This was supposed by the majority of the directors to be the only security against the practice. Some of the factory agents were, however, men who objected to take an oath on any ground or for any reason. They offered to make a declaration under liability to any penalty which might be incurred by perjury. This was thought reasonable by a large party among the proprietors at home, but not by the majority, and the oath was insisted upon. This gave rise to "great heats," among the proprietors and directors in London, the opposition of the non-jurors as they may be called, having led to considerable commotion in the mercantile world. The Rev. Philip Anderson says, referring to the dishonesty which led to so much turmoil—"These scandalous proceedings led the court to require from them all an oath, that they would not engage in private trade, and this, in spite of their Anabaptist members, who pressed hard for the substitution of a mere declaration." This is scarcely a candid way of putting the facts of the case, nor is the tone of the reverend writer liberal and just. He makes the statement upon the authority of Bruce's *Annals*, Anderson's *Colonial Church*, and Evelyn's *Diary*. Bruce merely refers to the dry and naked fact of an opposition having been made; Anderson's *Colonial Church*, is hardly an apposite authority in the case; the entry in Evelyn's *Diary* is as follows:—"1657, *Nov.* 26. I went to London to a court of ye East India Company on its new union, in Merchant-taylors' Hall, where was much disorder by reason of the Anabaptists, who would have the adventurers oblig'd onely by an engagement, without swearing, that they might still pursue their private trade; but it was carried against them." The word Anabaptist was at that time a term of reproach used against any sect of religionists, whose views were not well understood, and appeared eccentric, or peculiar, especially if they resisted episcopal authority, supervision, and state in ecclesiastical affairs; but the name was more especially applied to Baptists, who, of course, were not Anabaptists in their views of the ordinances of baptism: nor did their general opinions, religious or political, bear any resemblance to those of the Anabaptists of Munster, whose wild and violent proceedings brought so much odium upon the name. Evelyn did not understand these distinctions, nor care to understand them; but Mr. Anderson, as a learned modern divine, must have been aware of them, and is censurable for copying an error which he knew to be one, so far as the class who opposed the oath-test, and their motives, were concerned. They were, no doubt conscientious persons, who took views of an oath similar to those which Quakers and Moravians now hold, and which, however others may believe to be erroneous, as does the writer of this history, yet society tolerantly respects the scruples of those who make a conscience of the matter.

Although the jurors and non-jurors in the factories were of one mind as to the undesirableness of taking any pledge against private trading, the form of the test and the acquiescence of those who had no religious scruples about it, led to social differences which left fresh impressions of the unaccountable manners of the English among the Portuguese, Banyans, Parsees, and other natives, who, although brought into less intimate contact with the British, were observant of their ways.

CHAPTER LIV.

REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA TO THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (*Continued*).

Notwithstanding the many drawbacks to the social and religious life of the English, there grew up gradually much outward respect to religion in the usages of the factors. Every morning at six, and every evening at eight o'clock, prayers were read or offered every Sunday; in addition to these services was one other, after which a sermon was delivered. The author of *The Early History of the Factories at Surat and Bombay*, thus writes on this subject:—"Few as are the records still extant of this period, all who read them at the present time must be struck by their religious tone; they prove that it was an age of religious profession, if not of moral practice. Puritanism was dominant, or at least had not given way to that open profligacy, that ridicule of sacred things, and contempt of religion, which disgraced the reign of Charles II. In India religious men did not blush to own their fear of God, and it suited the purposes of irreligious men to imitate them. Official correspondence even was devout. Thus when Rastell had arrived in St. Augustine's Bay on his passage to Surat, he commenced his homeward despatch with these words:—'It hath pleased Almighty God in his great goodness to protect us hither in safety, and in blessed union and concord together, the 14th day of this present month; our people generally then in reasonable good plight, and without the loss of any more than five men in our whole fleet, for the which His mercies may His Blessed Name be magnified for ever.' And he concludes by declaring, that he humbly commends his masters in his prayers, entreating God to bless them, and direct their counsels and affairs. When announcing the death of a subordinate in 1630 the chief of the factory writes thus:—'The death of Mr. Duke was very unwelcome unto us, as being sensible of the want you will find by the missing of so able an assistant in that place where he hath been long acquainted. God of His mercy so direct our hearts, who must follow him, that we may be always ready for the like sudden summons.' The same style is observable in all official letters, and the usual formula with which they conclude is, 'Commending you to the Almighty's protection,' or 'Commending you to God's merciful guidance.' Yet these pious adventurers had notions of their own about the observance of the Lord's Day. Although they were scrupulous in attending divine service, in the disposal of the rest of their time they preferred the *Book of Sports* to the *Lesser Catechism*. After sermon on Sundays they used to repair to the suburbs, where they amused themselves in a garden by shooting at the butt; and—which was still less to be defended—they indulged to some extent in gambling. Their visitor, who has told us these little facts, was so skilful in shooting that he contrived to win a hundred mamoudis or five pistoles almost every week. Each inmate of the factory had his allotted hours for work and recreation. On Fridays, after prayers, the president and a few friends met for the purpose of friendly intercourse, and of drinking the health of their wives left in England."

The respect paid at that time to clergymen, and to the externals of religion, both in England and in the colonies, is fairly depicted in this passage relating to the manners of the English at Surat and Bombay. The writer very justly takes Lord Macaulay, the brilliant historian of England, to task, for the light in which he placed the habits of Englishmen in this respect. The years during which the above description of the factors at Bombay and Surat applies, include the period to which Lord Macaulay refers, when he describes with such exaggerations the degradation of the clergy. He writes:—" 'The clergy were regarded as, on the whole, a plebeian class. And, indeed, for one who made the figure of a gentleman, ten were mere menial servants.' And again: —'A young Levite might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year,' for which he was expected to live as a servant. These statements are taken from a satire of Oldham's, and given as grave history. Yet, at the same time, a German traveller noticed the great respect shown at Surat to the clergy, and it is a fact, that when Oxenden, Aungier, Streynsham Master—all men of good families—were there, the chaplain received higher pay than all the senior factors, and took precedence after the members of council. Is there any reason to suppose that the East India Company delighted more than others to honour the clergy?"

During the reign of the second Charles, and the first James, there were many of the higher gentry in England who made small account of clergymen, and in various instances there is proof of their depression being as great as Lord Macaulay describes; but this contempt for men "in orders" did not descend to the middle and mercantile classes, from whom they received high and venerating respect. His lordship omits to make this distinction broadly, and hence life among the English in India, seems so opposed to life in England, as the records of the one, and Lord Macaulay's statements of the other, would make appear.

Among the proofs given by some writers of the low condition, morally and religiously, of the English in India during the seventeenth century, are their neglect of treaty and other engagements with the natives and rival European nations. The terms on which the Portuguese commander of Bombay surrendered the island to the officers of Charles, have, it is alleged, never been kept by the British, and this is very frequently put forward as a strong point against their honour. The truth is the treaty or agreement thus made, was never ratified by either of the courts concerned. The island was, as has been shown in a previous chapter, the property of the English monarch, in virtue of a marriage contract with the royal house of Portugal; and it was the duty of the Portuguese king, not only to see that it was absolutely ceded, but that compensation should be made for any delay in the cession created by the Portuguese officers on the spot. Indeed, the English did demand reparation from the Portuguese government for the damages sustained. The native princes frequently made agreements, suffered their subjects to violate them, and yet insisted upon the English performing their part in a covenant rendered no longer mutual, by the previous violation on the one part. At a later period (during the eighteenth century) the English in India were exposed to similar imputations from their own countrymen at home, frequently with as little justice.

The conduct of the company in violating contracts with their own countrymen was often very bad, and especially so towards their soldiers. The rise of the English military power in the seventeenth century, presents a strange example of how the day of small things may precede the day of great ones. In 1677 there was a militia corps, equal in number to a weak modern infantry battalion, at Bombay. Neither the Brahmins nor Banyans would serve, but commuted service by a money payment; the other natives offered no objection, as far as can be gathered from the documents now in existence: they were chiefly half-caste Portuguese. The regular troops were seldom of any great account as to numbers. The company's force, on taking possession of Bombay Island, consisted of ninety-three English, and a hundred and eighty-seven French and Portuguese deserters and half-castes. This has been called the company's first European regiment, but there was a proportion of natives among them. This corps was gradually strengthened, especially by German mercenaries. These were in great favour with the English, between whom and them a better agreement existed than between any other sections of this motley battalion. A desire to hire Rajpoots existed among the directors, which was but slowly responded to by their agents; for although that class of Indians were very warlike, they were proud and vindictive, and were generally esteemed treacherous if once their fidelity was shaken. In 1676, there were forty troopers miserably mounted. The English have always been noted for mounting their cavalry inefficiently, and even at this early period of their Indian empire they showed this peculiarity. It arose from a misguided parsimony, which was coexistent with extravagance in other particulars. It was difficult to keep up regular troops at Bombay; the island was so unhealthy at that time from its marshy surface that malaria swept away Europeans, especially European soldiers, very fast. The company's factors were instructed to study military tactics in case the defence of the settlement should oblige them to hold military commissions. The ideas which the directors at home entertained of military drill is curiously shown in some of their despatches. The following order is a specimen:—"We would have the inhabitants modelled into trained bands under English or other officers as there shall be cause, and make of them one or two regiments, or more, as your number will hold out, exercising them in arms one day in every two months, or as often as you shall think may be convenient, but you need not always waste powder at such exercise, but teach them to handle their arms, their facings, wheeling, marching, and counter marching, the first ranks to present, draw their triggers together at the beat of the drum, and fall into the rear for the second ranks to advance, as is often used with learners in our artillery ground, but sometimes they must be used to firing, lest in time of action they should start at the noise or the recoil of their arms."

There was much drilling in pursuance of this order, and the more the troops were exercised, the greater the proportion of them who perished with pestilence, especially by a particular form, which, as described by the physicians of that day, exactly corresponded with the disease called *cholera morbus* in this age. Four-fifths of the troops sent from Europe to Bombay perished within a few years, many within a few months of their arrival, until about 1685, when the drainage of the low-lying lands near the sea was, to some extent, effected.

Notwithstanding the intrepidity shown by the British in their naval contests with the Portuguese, and the individual daring of most of them when danger beset, there was no promise of future military eminence in the composition or character of the first troops raised in Bombay, or in the management of those recruits sent out from England. The officers frequently committed outrages upon the civilians of their own countrymen, and their insolence and abuse of respectable natives was disgraceful to their profession. Some of them were even convicted of acts of petty piracy and robbery in the harbour. The non-commissioned officers unfortunately followed the example so infamously set them. The opinion which the immortal Clive gave of the state of the troops in India, previous to his time and as for the most part he found them when he arrived in India, is borne out by documentary evidence at the India-house, and by the testimony of impartial travellers. "Formerly the company's troops consisted of the refuse of our jails, commanded by an officer seldom above the rank of lieutenant, and in one or two instances with that of major; without order, discipline, or military ardour."*

The conduct of the company to its soldiers during the seventeenth century was unjust. In this respect the company only copied the royal governments of their country. To the great officers England has been generally munificent; but to the inferior officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers, she has never been generous. No nation was ever so heroically served by her troops; no nation ever repaid military devotion more shabbily. Until the year 1858 the poor soldier was literally plundered by certain classes of his superiors, military and civilian. "The system" of the British army was so administered, that whether in camp or barrack, at home, or on foreign service, in tent or sleeping room, in mess or in clothing, the soldier was cheated and inhumanly neglected. Even the arms and working tools supplied to him were fraudulently manufactured, and he was compelled to make good the damage from fractures, &c., out of his miserable pay. The English soldier was subjected to a discipline which forbade him to complain to the public, and was then remorselessly robbed, and cruelly left to die in filthy or ill-ventilated barrack-rooms,* or on foreign march, and on far-off encampments, from inadequate supplies. The reader acquainted with these facts can feel no astonishment if the troops in Bombay Island were robbed, oppressed, and neglected in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Such was the case. According to a letter from the deputy-governor and council of Bombay, written the 24th of January, 1676, or, as Orme alleges, 1677, to the court of directors, captains were compelled to serve for the pay of lieutenants, and each inferior rank to serve for the pay of the rank immediately beneath it. Certain surplus sums actually given to the troops at former times were exacted from them in the form of repayments by instalments; various other oppressions at last drove the troops into revolt. There was no failing in their loyalty, but they had been goaded to madness by wrongs, and by the insolent contempt which the mercantile servants of the company showed to them. On these circumstances, an eminent clergyman of Bombay, who had studied the records of the period, and who partook of no partialities for the military, thus wrote; and the annals of Bruce, and the narratives of Fryer and others, justify fully the judgment expressed:—"Could any government expect that their troops would return such ungenerous treatment with steadfast attachment and unshaken fidelity? In 1674 the court of directors received a most solemn warning that such would not be the case. The soldiers affirmed that the court had promised them a month's pay, with a free discharge, after they should have served three years; and when this was not accorded to them, they broke out into a mutiny, which was only subdued after concessions had been made. Three of the ringleaders were condemned to be shot, and on one—a Corporal Fake—the sentence was executed. The other two were pardoned by the president. Shaxton, the officer in command, was suspected of abetting the revolt, and was accused of remissness in checking his men's insubordination. Fryer, who was on the spot at the time, thought that a foolish rivalry divided the civil or mercantile and military branches of the service, and that Shaxton's real offence was similar to one which excited Romulus to commit fratricide, for that he had only mortified the factor's vanity by treating their engineering efforts with contempt, and ridiculing some palisades with which they had fortified Bombay. Whatever the nature of his crime, he was obliged to give up his sword, and was placed in confinement. A court of judicature was then formed for his trial, in which a pompous attorney impeached him, and compared him to Cataline. But the soldier defended himself with ability, and the court decided that they could do nothing, but refer his case to the court of directors. He was therefore sent to England, where he died at the termination of his voyage."

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* MS. quoted by Bruce in his *Plans for the Government of British India.* Part ii. chap. i. sec. 4.

The company was not warned by these events; but at a later period, by further mulcting the soldiery, and paying their native labourers part of their wages in rice, at a price fixed by the company's officer, at least ten per cent. above its market value, the troops and people were driven into revolt together. A narrative of the main features of that affair, which was led by Keigwin, have already been related in a previous chapter; it is only necessary to say here, in reviewing the events of the century, and the moral history of those transactions, that the inveterate depreciation of the military service by the mercantile community in England and in India was the true source of these evils. It is surprising to mark the courage and constancy of British soldiers under provocations of so much neglect and injustice. No other army could have maintained self-respect under so many indignities; nor could they have exhibited such greatness of soul as our poor soldiers have displayed, with so little example or encouragement from their civil masters,—

> "'Tis wonderful
> That an invisible instinct should frame them
> To loyalty unlearned, honour untaught,
> Civility not seen from others, valour
> That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
> As if it had been sowed."

Neither did the second revolt at Bombay teach the company—or at all events their civil officers—"justice to the soldier." Although (as has been shown in a previous chapter) Keigwin obeyed the mandate of the king, and delivered up the island, assured of immunity for himself and those who acted under him, the agreement was not entirely and faithfully kept by the government. It was probably not the intention of the directors to violate the terms of what may be called the capitulation, so extensively as they were violated, but they had from the first no intention of faithfully keeping it. The royal government countenanced no harsh treatment in the case. The violent and unprincipled president of Surat,—a man whom Dr. Cooke Taylor represents as having been as

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* The writer of this history, accompanied by a clergyman, saw the sleeping-room of a married soldier, quartered in an English provincial town, through which *a drain ran!*

"cowardly as he was cruel," Sir John Child,* barbarously and perfidiously, made the revolt a pretext for the gratification of his personal enmities, under pretence of jealousy for the honour of the company, although during the revolution the company was better served by the revolters than it had been under the management of Sir John Child's deputies. One of the company's own chaplains, already quoted, thus comments upon these proceedings:—"Such was a revolt which happily began and ended without bloodshed—if we except a wound inflicted at table by Thorburn on Keigwin in a drunken quarrel. Alarming as it was, and dangerous to the existence of Anglo-Indian power, it forms an episode in our history of which we are not ashamed. Keigwin emerges from the troubled sea of rebellion with a reputation for courage, honour, and administrative capacity. His crime of treason was in a measure atoned for by his moderation and shining qualities, and found some palliation in the provocation which he received, and which the president—as we infer from his subsequent conduct—must have aggravated. On the other hand, the clemency of the crown and company is worthy of all admiration, and leads us to ask, Where is the nation that can, like the English, vindicate the authority of its government, bring down the haughty front of successful rebellion, and at the same time not suffer justice to inflict a single pang on mercy?" The reverend writer seems carried away by his love of country to contradict by anticipation his own testimony, notwithstanding his general accuracy, for he immediately afterwards admits, on the ground of documents seen by himself, that the company privately countenanced the persecution of the pardoned revolters. He also gives this picture of the horrible and heartrending barbarity and cruelty of Sir John Child:—"It is true that accounts differ as to the manner in which the terms of surrender were observed; but if it should be shown that they were infringed, an imputation could not be cast upon the English government, nor, save indirectly, upon the company, but only upon their president. Writers who were favourable to the company simply state that they acted in good faith; their opponents accuse their servants of treachery, but with such obvious malice, that we suspect their veracity. Fletcher, who had joined the rebels, but whose conduct was, in other respects, unblemished, retained the command of his company. But Thorburn is said to have fallen a victim to Sir John Child's malignity, and there is every reason to believe that he was treated with singular harshness. It is possible that he was justly committed to prison, in consequence of his inability to satisfy the demands of his creditors; but when there, we are told, not a slave was permitted to attend upon him, nor his own wife to visit him. Hard treatment brought on a fever, and his life was in danger. The jailer conveyed this mournful intelligence to his wife, who hastened, together with her two small children, to the general's presence, and entreated that her husband might be provided with a medical attendant. The boon was denied, but she was permitted to share his sufferings. She soothed his pain one day and part of a night, after which he breathed his last. Shuddering humanity turns with distrust from the remainder of the narrative, and therefore we abridge it. On returning home she found the doors of her own house closed against her, and was obliged to take up her abode with her slaves and children in a small outhouse. Her relatives ventured to give her succour only at night, and by stealth. The widow of Thorburn was a proscribed outcast, till her beauty and sufferings attracted the love and compassion of an officer who commanded an East Indiaman, and imagined that he was independent of Sir John Child. He wedded her, and also her misfortunes. At the general's request he was deprived of his appointment. Grief soon put an end to his troubles and his life. The lady was again left a widow, with a thousand pounds of East India stock for the support of herself and family."

What the conduct of the company really was may be determined by their own despatches. In one of these letters they thus direct the president:—"As for Watson, that scandalous chaplain of Bombay, let him have no salary from us, from the time of his rebellion, nor any other officers there, as near as you can, without incurring a new hazard, until you are firmly settled in your government. And let Mr. Watson know he is no more our servant: banish him the island; and let him take care to pay for his own passage home, and provide yourselves another chaplain for Bombay out of some of our ships, if you can meet with any so much to your satisfaction as you have at Surat in the room of Mr. Badham, deceased."* The crime of Mr. Watson was that of ministering to the revolutionary army and people, which he might in any case, as a clergyman, have felt bound to do; how much more when the revolters acted in the name of the king?

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* It is surprising that so just an historical critic as Miss Martineau should overlook the real character of the Brothers Child in her admiration of their ability. Even as to talent, Sir Josiah was the head, and Sir John the hand, very much to the injury of the company, for he was rash, desperate, and vindictive, without directness, steadfastness, or bravery.

* *Letters from the Court to the President and Council*, 1684-85.

There is reason to believe that the prejudice against the soldiery,—the officers more particularly,—and persecution of them, and of all who took their side in these disputes, although finding ready acquiescence with the directors as a body, was chiefly the work of Sir Josiah Child, who ruled the company at home, by his personal address, simulation of ingenuousness, strong common sense, and extensive acquaintance with trade. Bishop Burnet thus notices him:—"This summer Sir Josiah Child died; he was a man of great notions as to merchandise, which was his education, and in which he succeeded beyond any man of his time; he applied himself chiefly to the East India trade, which by his management was raised so high, that it drew much envy and jealousy both upon himself and upon the company; he had a compass of knowledge and apprehension beyond any merchant I ever knew; he was vain and covetous, and thought too cunning, though to me he seemed always sincere."*

There is a curious and yet painful exemplification of the morals of the directors at home in their repeated attempts to open up a slave-trade with Western India. The following is a just summary of the letters from the court to the president and council of Surat, during July, 1683, and February, 1684, as they were quoted in the appendix of Colquhoun's treatise:—"Slaves were amongst the exports of the English factory at this time. The Island of St. Helena had been bestowed by the crown upon the company, and they wanted labourers for their plantations. So they desired their president at Surat to send them cargoes of negroes, with as little concern as if they had been any other kind of live or dead stock, and mentioned twenty pounds per head as the purchase-money. At first only males were exported, and these desolate beings remained at St. Helena without any of those domestic enjoyments by which even the life of a slave may be solaced. However, there is a point at which oppression defeats its own projects. Like many other animals when deprived of their mates, the slaves became troublesome. So wives were demanded for them. The honourable company do not, indeed, hint that their commercial minds were susceptible of pity, but their interests were in this case promoted by showing kindness to their human cattle. 'It may be convenient,' they wrote, 'you should send near as many female slaves as male to St. Helena, because the male will not live so contented, except they have wives.'"

A letter from the court to the president and council at Surat was written in May, 1683, which contained a postscript, probably the most singular which has come down to our times in connection either with the East India Company or the courts of England:—

> His majesty hath required of us to send to India to provide for him there one male and two female blacks, but they must be dwarfs of the least size that you can procure, the male to be about seventeen years of age, and the females about fourteen. We would have you, next to their littleness, to chuse such as may have the best features, and to send them home upon any of our ships, giving the commander great charge to take care of their accommodation, and in particular of the females, that they be in no way abused in the voyage by any of the seamen; for their provision and clothes you must take care to lay it in, and let them be set out with such ear and nose-rings, and shackles for ornaments about their legs (of false stones, and brass, but not with gold), as is usual to wear in the country, but let them not be used by them in the voyage, but sent to us apart.

Upon this extraordinary *postscriptum* in a despatch, the author of *The Early History of the Factory at Surat, of Bombay, and the Subordinate Factories on the Western Coast,* makes the following comment:—"Whether three unhappy creatures of precisely such ages, sizes, and features as were required, or whether, indeed, any were ever procured and forwarded, we are not informed. The court seemed as if they did not feel they were seeking to traffic in human beings. They write not of men and women, boys and girls, but only use the words male and female, as they might in reference to any strange animals. The reason why this order was sent is obvious. It was in the year 1683, when the company was seriously alarmed lest their exclusive privileges should be lost. A rival company were strenuously endeavouring to obtain a royal charter, and it was said that the people favoured their attempt. Even the king and council had taken the matter into consideration. The old company, therefore, strained every nerve to conciliate the monarch, and were anxious to indulge all the caprices of the royal and effete debauchee. They not only listened to his puerile request for toys with souls in them, but also would have them ornamented in such a manner as they supposed would satisfy the most fastidious taste."

British interests in India have, as already shown, been signally indebted to physicians, a class who at home have, to the present day, shown much disinterestedness and benevolence in the practice of their profession towards those whose necessities required their generosity. They have been equally distinguished for their public spirit and patriotism, in the navy, the army, and the cities of the empire, in the shipwreck, the battle, and the regions of pestilence and death. It is only when they are in competition with one another that they appear to disadvantage. In Scotland and Ireland medical men have always held a higher social place than in England; this fact, however difficult to account for, is indisputable. Fryer, a physician, already quoted as a traveller and author, passed through many strange adventures in India; and the authentic accounts of him reveal the manners of men of his profession in the English factories and settlements in the seventeenth century, and also disclose their peculiar relations to the communities in which they dwelt, and the natives beyond their own immediate sphere with whom, professionally, they were frequently brought in contact. Fryer's services as a physician began in India in 1673. He frequently attended the wealthier Portuguese and Dutch, and was called to great distances into the interior to visit rich Brahmins, Mohammedans, and even princes, when native skill failed to afford them succour. Fryer was an eminent scholar as well as a skilful *medicus;* his enterprise was energetic and courageous, his aptitude for dealing with the natives keen and prompt, and his observation of men and things clear and comprehensive. On one occasion he was sent for to Junar by the Mogul commander-in-chief, and the narrative given of his adventures there and by the way are amusing and very instructive as to the manners of the time and country, both native and European. The following abstract of his adventures has been given by the late vice-president of the Bombay branch of the Asiatic Society:—"On reaching his destination, Fryer attended the durbar, respectfully presented a letter from the English president, and met with a courteous reception; but after being told who his patients were, was desired to wait for the occurrence of a fortunate day. At length, being summoned to the harem, he found a bed hung with silk curtains, and was desired to place his hand under the curtains, in order that he might feel an invalid's pulse. At first his conductors played him a trick, and let him touch the wrist of a healthy slave; but when he declared that the owner was in robust health, there was extended to him an arm which gave signs of a weak constitution, and left him no doubt as to what should be his prescription. The following day the khan sent for him to bleed another of his wives. Across the apartment into which he was ushered a large curtain extended, through a hole of which an arm was stretched. As good luck would have it, there was behind this screen a number of inquisitive ladies, who, as they peeped through, so pressed upon it, that suddenly it gave way, and revealed the whole bevy fluttering like so many birds over which a net has been spread. None endeavoured to escape, but there they stood, pretending to be excessively modest, and peering at the doctor through the open lattices of their fingers. As for him, he found himself holding by the arm 'a plump russet dame,' who summoned the blood to her cheeks, and commanded that the curtain should be replaced. No offence was given or taken. The doctor was rewarded with a golden shower of pagodas poured into the basin over which his patient had been bled, and his servants, to his infinite satisfaction, drew them out of the extravasated gore. As he was returning, the bearers of his palanquin must have tried to enjoy a joke at his expense. But it was in the end no joke for them. Drawing near a small grove, they saw such a blaze of light created by fireflies, that they really were, or pretended to be, terrified. The learned doctor, not being milder and gentler than the rest of his countrymen, drew his sword, and, as he said, by opening a vein or two, let out the *shaitan* who had crept into their fancies. Yet the perpetrator of such a wanton and tyrannical act could listen with the most tender compassion to tales of misery which the natives told, and which probably were at that time as harrowing themes as the people of any country have ever dilated on." It is stated by the same authority:—"Fryer had the company's interests in view as well as his own. He did his utmost to open a trade between Junar and Bombay, suggesting that the Mogul general might in this way provide his army from Bussora and Mocha, in exchange for which he could give the ordinary merchandise of his country. However, the Mahratta army, possessing the intervening districts, were an obstruction in this route which probably was not overcome."

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* *History of his own Times*, book VI.

Bombay, the events of which occupy so much space in the history of this century, was not as enticing to our countrymen when they took possession of it, or for long after, as it at last became. Lord Macaulay furnishes some amusing notices in his *History of England* of the little interest taken by the English of that age in beautiful or bold scenery, although it is certain his lordship's picture of the period in that particular is exaggerated. The first British settlers at Bombay, and their successors for some time, could see nothing in the beauty of the situation to compensate its insalubrity and other local disadvantages. Certainly the condition of the island itself gave no promise of its ever assuming the aspect which it now wears. Anderson thus depicts its state and appearance at the time when the English were quietly settled down in it:—"Indeed, the place must have looked desolate enough. Large tracts of land, which have since been recovered from the sea, were then overflowed. At high tides the waves flowed to the part called Umerkhadi, and covered the present Bhendi Bazaar. Near where the temple of Mumbadevi stands, a place still called *Paydhuni*, or *feet-washing*, marks where a small stream of salt water was formerly left by the receding tide, and where persons might wash their feet before entering Bombay. Where Kamatapore is now there was then sufficient depth of water for the passage of boats. In fact, during one part of every day only a group of islets was to be seen. According to Fryer, forty thousand acres of good land were thus submerged. The rest of the island seemed for the most part a barren rock, not being extensively wooded, as at present, but producing only some cocoa palms, which covered the esplanade. The principal town was Mahim. On Dongari Hill, adjoining the harbour, there was a small collection of fishermen's huts, and a few houses were seen interspersed among palm-trees, where the fort now stands. On various spots were built towers with small pieces of ordnance, as a protection against Malabar pirates, who had become peculiarly insolent, plundering villages, and either murdering the inhabitants, or carrying them into slavery. The English also found, but soon removed, a government house, which was slightly fortified, defended by four brass guns, and surrounded by one of the most delightful gardens. Portuguese society was depraved and corrupt. The population did not exceed ten thousand."

This writer expresses his astonishment that the English did not recognise the advantages of the place, as the most important in India, both to their power and commerce. It appears, however, that the company did recognise its importance, by their persistent occupation of it, even through many misfortunes, and their removal thither of the presidency of Surat. They could hardly have foreseen its progress in the eighteenth century, and its ultimate greatness. The importance of a position in the transactions of commerce or war is relative: there then existed no such relative importance in the position itself to the native powers, or the rival European settlements, as afforded to either the English or other foreigners any ground of anticipating its subsequent greatness and relations. Events afterwards marked out Calcutta as a more suitable seat for English dominion in the East. The decay of the Mogul Empire, the conquest of the Mahrattas, the vast designs and bold attempts of the French, the various internal changes and revolutions in the peninsula, all contributed to give to Bombay the relative importance it finally attained; but these were events beyond the foresight of the most sagacious merchants or statesmen, and the British were too practical to indulge in vaticinations. All the importance was attached to Bombay that it deserved in the circumstances of that age, as soon as the English were long enough there to test its value, and its commercial and political relation to India generally.

When, towards the close of the seventeenth century, Bombay was improved by drainage, increase of population, enlarged commerce, and respectable public buildings, it was worthy of being the great centre and chief settlement of the English communities in India. The neighbourhood at that time differed very much in appearance from its aspect of a century earlier or a century later, and still more from the aspect it presents at present. The following description of a portion of the vicinity carefully deduced from the authorities, English and foreign, which afford any information upon the subject, is probably as correct as it is striking:—"At the other side of the small strait which separates Salsette from Bombay were the Acquada Blockhouse, and on the hill a mile beyond Bandora the Portuguese Church, which so gracefully overlooks the sea. The Roman Catholic services were well performed. A new landing-place led to a College of Paulitines, as the Jesuits were then called. Before the college stood a large cross, and before that was a space, which when the traveller from whose work this account is chiefly taken, visited it, was 'thwack'd full of young blacks singing vespers.' The collegiate establishment was defended, like a fortress, with seven cannon, besides small arms. Great hospitality prevailed, and distinguished guests were, on their arrival and departure, saluted with a roar of artillery. The Superior possessed such extensive influence that his mandates were respectfully attended to in the surrounding country, and the traveller who had the good fortune to be provided with his letters commendatory, was met by the people, wherever he halted, with presents of fruit and wine. The town of Bandora was large, with tiled houses. A view from mid-channel, embracing the town, college, and Church of St. Andrew, was extremely picturesque. At a distance of four miles was another church, described as magnificent; and the whole neighbourhood was studded with the villas of Portuguese gentlemen, many of whom lived in considerable state. To the east of Salsette, the sail by way of Thana to Bassein, which is now so justly admired, must in those days have been of unrivalled beauty. Trombay was adorned with a neat church and country seat. When Thana had been passed, the traveller's eye rested at every half mile on elegant mansions. Two of these deserve special mention. One, the property of John de Melos, was three miles from Thana. It stood on a sloping eminence, decorated with terraced walks and gardens, and terminating at the water side with a banqueting house, which was approached by a flight of stone steps. A mile further was Grebondel, the property of Martin Alphonso, said to be 'the richest Don on this side Goa.' Above rose his fortified mansion, and a church of stately architecture. Within Bassein were six churches, four convents, a college of Jesuits, another of Franciscans, and a library of historical, moral, and expository works. The Hidalgos' dwellings, with their balconies and lofty windows, presented an imposing appearance. Christians only were permitted to sleep within the walls of the town, and native tradesmen were compelled to leave at nightfall."

The termination of the seventeenth century in western India disclosed a condition of social existence in the English factories truly horrible. The older the settlement, the worse the settlers. There is scarcely any vice for which Surat and Bombay had not obtained a terrible notoriety. The number of English ladies who had during the last quarter of the seventeenth century arrived in India, with the hope of marrying rich factors or merchants, were generally successful in their speculations, but their behaviour as wives neither brought honour to themselves, nor happiness to their husbands. In all classes, high and low, the grossest immorality prevailed among both male and females, and writers of those times, such as Ovington and Alexander Hamilton, describe both Surat and Bombay as perfect hells:—"As regards the military at this period, the company had not been taught by bitter experience to treat them with liberality, and consequently they found that they themselves were treated by them with little respect. Their vexatious regulations infused a spirit of insubordination into the minds of all the troops, from the highest officer to the private soldier. Captain Carr, indeed, did not hesitate to insult the deputy governor in his council chamber. Unsummoned, he appeared before his honour to demand an inquiry into his conduct. He was told that he had not been sent for; but, as he had come of his own accord, he would perhaps be so good as to explain why he had not appeared on parade for two mornings. 'I had business,' was his laconic answer. The deputy governor mildly suggested that his business could not have been very urgent, and that it really appeared as if the captain was not anxious to perform his duty. Upon that Carr began to swear 'good mouth-filling oaths' at his honour, and when threatened with punishment by him, shook his fist in the deputy's face. The affair was terminated by the captain being placed under arrest, and confined to his own quarters. Such an example thus set by an officer was, as might be expected, imitated by private soldiers, and at last all fell into such a disorganized state that the governor could not find a man whom he would venture to make a serjeant or corporal."*

While the state of morals among military and civilians was the lowest, there were many faithful admonitions from the chaplains, who were more successful in resisting the tyranny of the chief factors than the military were. While the company's ships were playing the part of pirates, their chief representatives acting as oppressors, the agents cheating the company and the natives, and sometimes cheated by both in turn, and while all were eager for plunder, by sea or land, the following well-expressed prayer was offered daily in the factories, it having been sent out by the directors for that purpose†:—

> O Almighty and most merciful God, who art the sovereign Protector of all that trust in Thee, and the Author of all spiritual and temporal blessings, we Thy unworthy creatures do most humbly implore Thy goodness for a plentiful effusion of Thy grace upon our employers, Thy servants, the Right Honourable East India Company of England. Prosper them in all their public undertakings, and make them famous and successful in all their governments, colonies, and commerce both by sea and land; so that they may prove a public blessing by the increase of honour, wealth, and power, to our native country, as well as to themselves. Continue their favours towards us, and inspire their generals, presidents, agents, and councils in these remote parts of the world, and all others that are intrusted with any authority under them, with piety towards Thee our God, and with wisdom, fidelity, and circumspection in their several stations; that we may all discharge our respective duties faithfully, and live virtuously in due obedience to our superiors, and in love, peace, and charity one towards another, that these Indian nations among whom we dwell, seeing our sober and religious conversation, may be induced to have a just esteem for our most holy profession of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honour, praise, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The differences between the two companies, "the London Company" and "the English Company" having been introduced to India, especially by the embassy of Sir W. Norris, to the Mogul, in the interest of "the English" or "new company," embittered extremely the social state of the English living in India at the commencement of the eighteenth century, as it had during the last years of the seventeenth. Taking the whole of the seventeenth century, as it were, at a glance, the vicissitudes of the English were many, their fortunes fickle, their character contradictory, their defeats signal, their progress, nevertheless, indisputable, as their habits were bold and rude, and their spirit persevering and resolute. Wars from without and revolutions within impelled them forward, as the wind which beats against the ship fills its sails and assists its progress. They were also knit to the soil of India by the rude blasts of war. As the tree was shaken it made for its roots a freer soil every time it bent to the gusts which swept through its branches and threatened its destruction. The determination to hold on without flinching, so natural to the English character, was strengthened and trained by the rude discipline of the century, and gave a tone to the Anglo-Indian mind which it has never lost; but which, from war to war, conquest to conquest, and generation to generation, has come down to the present day, and has aided the English now in India to abide and subdue a military revolution and popular insurrection, the most sudden, vast, sanguinary, and appalling, recorded in the history of the world. The words of the reverend author of *Early Notices of the Factories of Western India*, written in review of this period, and its relation to events there, has eloquently expressed what will appropriately close this chapter :—" Such were the English at their first appearance on the Western coast of India. It must be confessed that the natives had before them a strange variety of models from which to form in their minds the character of an Englishman. Roe and Herbert, the acute diplomatist and the polished gentleman; Best, Downton, and other valiant mariners; the inquiring and literary Kerridge; hard headed, ungrammatical, and religious Joseph Salbank; wine-bibbing Rastell; Mildenhall, cheat and assassin; preachers or gospellers, half Anglican and half Zuinglian; orthodox chaplains; a few scampish, reckless travellers; and piratical, merciless captains—such a medley could scarcely leave any well-defined impressions upon the native mind. Probably opinions were decided by circumstances. The jovial Jehanghire found that an Englishman was a well-trained courtier and good boon companion; the Banyas of Surat found that he was a clever tradesman, and a hard driver of a bargain. But doubtless at first the popular feeling was one of fear, afterwards of contempt. Hindoos and Mussulmans considered the English a set of cow-eaters and fire drinkers, vile brutes, fiercer than the mastiffs which they brought with them, who would fight like Eblis, cheat their own fathers, and exchange with the same readiness a broadside of shot and thrusts of boarding-pikes, or a bale of goods and a bag of rupees. As time wore on, the estimation in which the English had been held, declined. After a few years there were but certain illiberal merchants, struggling that they might keep the market of Surat to themselves, and exclude by fair means or foul the Portuguese and Dutch. The celebrity which their naval skill and courage had gained for them soon passed away; the glory reflected on them from a royal embassy was soon forgotten. They were only known as shrewd and vulgar adventurers who had opened warehouses in India. Their existence was scarcely heeded by the Mogul despot, whose imperial sway was one of the most extended, and his throne one of the most splendid on the face of the earth. Yet that sway was destined to fall into their grasp; that throne to depend upon the forbearance and magnanimity of the successors of those peddling traders. These English were indeed regarded as men of an insignificant country, dissolute morals, and degraded religion; yet they were the pioneers of a people who now possess territory more than four times the size of France, and seven times that of Great Britain and Ireland. Let the British empire in the East, then, be compared to Gothic architecture, which began with its wooden buildings, thatched roofs, and rush-strewn floors, but was gradually refined into the groined roofs, elaborate mouldings, stately pillars, and delicate tracery of our magnificent cathedrals. Joseph Salbank and his contemporaries were of the ruder, not to say of the baser sort; but now the empire is a noble structure, the style and order of which remain to be further developed by ingenuity and labour; nor have they, we thank God, yet reached a period of debasement and decline."

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* Bruce; Anderson.

† Rev. Mr. Ovington.

CHAPTER LV.

THE HOME AFFAIRS OF THE COMPANY DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The eighteenth century, destined to be so full of great events in connection with the East India Company, found it struggling against prejudice and competition even in the place where it had its birth.* The rival company was not wiser, happier, nor more prosperous. Both these bodies became anxious as to their future position. The "committee of seven" which had been proposed (as noticed in a former chapter) in the answer given by the company to the king, was now believed to be an important instrument for effecting some practical measure. By a resolution of the General Court, April 17th, 1701, the committee of seven was empowered to receive any proposals which the rival (the English) society might make for a union. The remainder of the year was consumed in negotiations which frequently appeared likely to prove fruitless, but at the beginning of 1702, terms were mutually agreed upon, as a general basis of adjustment, to be however deferred for more mature consideration. These terms were—"That the court of twenty-four managers or directors should be composed of twelve individuals chosen by each company; that of the annual exports, the amount of which should be fixed by the court of managers, a half should be furnished by each company; that the court of managers should have the entire direction of all matters relating to trade and settlements subsequently to this union; but that the factors of each company should manage separately the stocks which each had sent out previously to the date of that transaction; that seven years should be allowed to wind up the separate concerns of each company; and that, after that period, one great joint-stock should be formed by the final union of the funds of both. This agreement was confirmed by the general courts of both companies on the 27th April, 1702. An indenture tripartite, including the Queen and the two East India Companies, was the instrument adopted for giving legal efficacy to the transaction. For equalizing the shares of the two companies, the following scheme was devised. The London Company, it was agreed, should purchase at par as much of the capital of the English company, lent to government, as, added to the £315,000 which they had already subscribed, should render equal the portion of each. The dead stock of the London Company was estimated at £330,000; that of the English company at £70,000; whereupon the latter paid £130,000 for equalizing the shares of this part of the common estate. On the 22nd July, 1702, the indenture passed under the great seal; and the two parties took the common name of 'The United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies.'"*

On this footing of co-operation rather than union, the two companies continued to intrigue and trade, to be jealous and to jar, until towards the close of 1707. At that juncture, the government resorted to one of its old oppressive measures towards the company. The statesmen and senators of that age, as well as the court, seemed to think that the chief advantage of fostering trade was the opportunity it ultimately provided for robbing the merchants. The government, in this instance, determined to exact a forced loan from both companies, indicating a spirit of impartial injustice. Fearing that any reluctance to advance the enormous sum of £1,200,000 demanded, would cause the court to admit private adventurers into rivalry with both companies, these corporations made haste so settle their differences with one another, and meet the emergency as best as they could. They agreed to refer matters to the lord high-treasurer of his majesty for final adjudication. On this foundation the act, 6 Anne, cap. 17, was passed; enacting that a sum of £1,200,000, without interest, should be advanced by the united companies to government, which being added to a former advance of £2,000,000 at eight per cent. interest, constituted a loan of £3,200,000, yielding interest at the rate of five per cent. upon the whole; that to raise this sum of £1,200,000, the company should be empowered to borrow to the extent of £1,500,000 on their common seal, or to call in monies to that extent from the proprietors; that this sum of £1,200,000 should be added to their capital stock; that instead of terminating on three years' notice after the 29th of September, 1711, their privileges should be continued till three years' notice after the 25th of March, 1726, and till repayment of their capital; that the stock of the separate adventures of the General Society, amounting to £7200, which had never been incorporated into the joint-stock of the English company, might be paid off, on three years' notice after the 29th of September, 1711, and merged in the joint-stock of the united company; and that the award of the Earl of Godolphin, settling the terms of the union, should be binding and conclusive on both parties. The award of Godolphin was dated and published on the 29th of September, 1708. It referred solely to the winding up of the concerns of the two companies; and the blending of their separate properties into one stock, on terms equitable to both. As the assets or effects of the London Company in India fell short of the debts of that concern, they were required to pay by instalments to the united company the sum of £96,615 4*s.* 9*d.*: and as the effects of the English Company in India exceeded their debts, they were directed to receive from the united company the sum of £66,005 4*s.* 2*d.*; a due debt by Sir Edward Littleton in Bengal, of 80,437 rupees and 8 anas, remaining to be discharged by the English Company on their own account. On these terms, the whole of the property and debts of both companies abroad became the property and debts of the united company. With regard to the debts of both companies in Britain, it was in general ordained that they should all be discharged before the 1st of March, 1709; and as those of the London Company amounted to the sum of £399,795 9*s.* 1*d.*, they were empowered to call upon their proprietors, by three several instalments, for the means of liquidation.*

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* *History and Management of the East India Company.* London, 1786.

* Mill; Bruce.

By indenture, *quinque partite*, dated 22nd July, 1702, made between various parties, the old company conveyed to the new (united) company, all its forts, settlements and dead stock of whatever kind. "By deed poll enrolled in Chancery, dated 22nd March, 1709, the old company, in pursuance of Lord Godolphin's award, and for the entire extinguishment of their corporate capacity, having granted, surrendered, yielded, and given up to the Queen, her heirs and successors, their corporate capacity or bodily politic, of Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies, and all their charters, capacities, powers, and rights, for acting as or continuing to be a body politic or corporate, by virtue of any acts of parliament, letters patent, or charters whatever; the Queen by letters patent, dated the 7th May in the same year, accepted the surrender; and thus, the right of trading to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, together with the government of the forts and settlements possessed by the English in India, became vested in the 'United Company of Merchants in England trading to the East Indies.' "*

The year 1708 was an important era in the company's history, the union of the two companies seemed to promise the extinction of the interlopers, and to terminate all grounds of quarrel with the court and parliament. The united company being heavy creditors of the state, had a claim upon the royal protection and favour, and for a very considerable time, independent merchants, however, energetic and enterprising, were of opinion that opposition and rivalry were hopeless. For a number of years the history of the company at home, although not barren of interest, was devoid of all exciting topics. In the meantime, even home events were gradually and quietly consolidating the company's power, and laying broad the foundation of that superstructure of greatness, which it was destined to raise.† During the reign of Queen Anne, several acts of parliament were passed, which had an important bearing upon the interests of the company; one was named—"An Act for enabling and obliging the Bank of England, for the time therein mentioned, to exchange all Exchequer Bills for ready Money upon demand, and to disable any Person to be Governor, Deputy-governor, or Director of the Bank of England, and a Director of the East India Company, at the same time." Another was entitled—"An Act for making good Deficiencies, and satisfying the public Debts; and for erecting a Corporation, to carry on a Trade to the South Seas, and for the Encouragement of the Fishery; and for Liberty to trade in unwrought Iron with the Subjects of Spain; and to repeal the Acts for registering Seamen." This act defined the limits of the charter granted to the South Sea Company, and prohibited that company from infringing the rights of the East India Company.

The 10th Anne, cap. 28, is entitled, "An Act for continuing the Trade and Corporation capacity of the United East India Company, *although their Fund should be redeemed.*" According to cap. 17, 6 Anne, it was provided that the government might redeem its debt to the company, and terminate the company's privileges thereupon, under certain conditions stated. The 10th of Anne repealed that proviso, and substituted another to the purpose expressed above.

In the reign of George I. there were two acts in which the company was interested. The first (7 George I., cap. 5) was entitled, "An Act to enable the South Sea Company to engraft part of their Capital Stock and Fund into the Stock and Fund of the Bank of England, and another part thereof into the Stock and Fund of the East India Company, &c." The greater part of this act refers to the South Sea Company. Section 32 relates to the borrowing of money on bond by the East India Company; part of section 33 relates to the same subject. The remainder is as follows:—"That it shall not be lawful for the said United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, or their successors, to discount any bills of exchange, or other bills or notes whatsoever, or to keep any bills or cash of or for any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, whatever, other than the proper monies and cash of the said united company." The other (7 George I., cap. 21) was called, "An Act for the further preventing His Majesty's Subjects from trading to the East Indies under Foreign Commissioners; and for encouraging and further securing the Lawful Trade thereto; and for further regulating the Pilots of Dover, Deal, and the Isle of Thanet." The following section remained in force till the abolition of the East India Company in 1858:—"The said united company shall be allowed to ship out stores, provisions, utensils of war, and necessaries for maintaining their garrisons and settlements, free of all duties; so as such duties, if they had been to be paid, would not have exceeded, or do not exceed, in any one year, the sum of three hundred pounds."

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* Bruce vol. iii. 635—639; Mill, vol. i. cap. v. 103, 104.

* *The Law relating to India and the East India Company*, p. 3.

† *History of the East India Company.* London, 1793.

Having noticed the influence of legislation upon the constitution of the company during a portion of the eighteenth century, it is important to our narrative to refer to the progress of the trade for some time after the union of the London and English companies in the General Association of English Merchants trading to the East Indies. As in the previous century, so during a considerable portion of this, the exports consisted in bullion, quicksilver, lead, and small portions of other metals: hardware in considerable variety, and a large assortment of woollen cloths.* The official value of these exports for the year 1708 was only £60,915. The following year it rose to £168,357. But from this it descended gradually, till, in the year 1715, it amounted to no more than £36,997. It made a start, however, in the following year; and the medium exportation for the first twenty years, subsequent to 1708, was £92,281 per annum. The average annual exportation of bullion during the same years was £442,350. The articles of which the import trade of the East India Company chiefly consisted were calicoes and the other woven manufactures of India; raw silk, diamonds, tea, porcelain, pepper, drugs, and saltpetre. The official value of their imports in 1708 was £493,257; and their annual average importation for this and the nineteen following years was £758,042. At that period the official value assigned to goods at the Custom House differed not greatly from the real value; and the statements which have been made by the East India Company of the actual value of their exports and imports for some of those years, though not according with the Custom House accounts from year to year, probably from their being made up to different periods in the year, yet on a sum of several years pretty nearly coincide.* In 1730 the value of the imports was £1,059,759; the exports of the same year were only of the value of £135,484. In fact, the exports did not increase from 1708 to 1730; the differences were of course paid in bullion. With regard to the rate of profit during this period, or the real advantage of the Indian trade, the company, for part of the year 1708, divided at the rate of five per cent. per annum to the proprietors upon £3,163,200 of capital; for the next year eight per cent.; for the two following years nine per cent.; and thence, to the year 1716 ten per cent. per annum. In the year 1717 they paid dividends on a capital of £3,194,080, at the same rate of ten per cent. per annum, and so on till the year 1723. That year the dividend was reduced to eight per cent. per annum, at which rate it continued till the year 1732.†

Although the independent merchants of England were, as *Englishmen*, debarred from all trade with the East, they frequently embarked their capital in foreign companies, the history of which will be given in future chapters.‡ This especially took place at the formation of the Ostend Company. The English East India Company urged the government of Great Britain to pursue English subjects thither, and make their engaging in any trade with India under any flag whatever severely penal.

In the year 1730 matters of great moment to the company transpired. The independent merchants believed that a favourable juncture had arisen for again opposing the company's exclusive claims. The circumstance of a new sovereign having ascended the throne inspired —or at all events sustained—the hopes entertained of breaking up the monopoly in the

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* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*. London, 1812.

* Mill; Whitworth.

† Mill.

‡ *The Case of the East India Company in* 1707. London, 1712.

Eastern trade, and petitions were presented to parliament in that year.* The debt which the government had incurred to the company was enormous, and the interest paid on it—five per cent.—was felt by the nation to be heavy. That debt, however, must be liquidated before the company could be abolished. There were yet three years before the charter would expire, under the clause of a three years' notice. The petitioners offered to raise the money due to the company by government, to pay it in five instalments within the three years, each instalment to bear four per cent. interest, until the whole was paid, when the entire subscription should only bear two per cent.† The proposers of the new scheme declared against all monopoly, alleging that the trade should be thrown open to private enterprise, the subscribers to the new fund having the control of all forts and factories, and receiving a duty of one per cent. on British imports in India, and of five per cent. on Indian imports in England. There was so much plausibility in this proposal, that many were taken with it, and a strong impression was made on the government and parliament. This company having no trade, could only make dividends to its subscribers from the interest paid by government and the duties to be levied in India and in England. The expense of the forts and factories, it was believed, would be defrayed by the territorial revenue connected with them. On the whole a dividend of six per cent. per annum was estimated as certain to be made to the subscribers.‡ The rate of interest on money was low in Europe during 1730—very low in England, and still lower in Holland. This circumstance made the merchants and capitalists of England very ready to subscribe. Many, however, conjectured that a far higher dividend than six per cent. per annum would be realized when the trade should be completely thrown open, as its increase to a vast extent was thought probable, from the large resources of the East, and the rapid development of British wealth and power. It was alleged that the duties would amount to a vast sum in a few years, and increase in a ratio promising wealth to the subscribers. The petitioners were connected with the cities of London and Bristol and the town of Liverpool, which in half a century had risen in population and importance with unexampled rapidity. Even Manchester did not afford so extraordinary an example of advancing commerce, for it had for ages been a considerable town, numbering fifty thousand inhabitants in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, but Liverpool at the close of the seventeenth century was a very insignificant place. The petitioners from each of these cities solicited to be heard by counsel at the bar of both houses. As the press had now assumed some importance in England, its advocacy of "the merchants' petitions" added to the effect which these documents produced both in parliament and on the country, and a very great excitement sprung up. The East India Company, and the relations of East Indian commerce to the national welfare, were discussed everywhere—on 'Change, in the senate, in the cabinet, in London coffee-houses, and in the homes of the people in the provinces. The argument which appeared to weigh most with persons generally was, that one-third of the stock of the East India Company belonged to foreigners, and it was not just that British subjects should have been laid under restriction for the benefit of such. It was also contended with much plausibility that the company, by dilatory management, extravagance, and encumbering itself with politics, wasted most of its profits, which, although very great in virtue of its monopoly, only permitted a dividend of eight per cent. per annum, in consequence of such drawbacks. The company put forth vast power in its own defence; and in the press and the parliament it found ready and able advocates. The turning point of the controversy was, as usual, a question of pecuniary advantage to the government. The company offered to reduce the interest upon the debt to four per cent., and to make a donation of £200,000 to the public exchequer, if their monopoly was renewed. The parliament, influenced by the cabinet, could not resist so tempting a bait. The opponents of the company found no favour from the moment that accommodation was offered. The old privileges were further continued to Lady Day, 1776, with the usual proviso of three years' notice, and with the additional provision that, should their exclusive privileges then determine, they should, nevertheless, be permitted to trade as a body corporate.* Matters, however, did not continue so long on that footing, as, in 1744, when the nation was engaged in a fierce war, the company opened negotiations with government, offering a million loan at three per cent., on condition of their monopoly being extended to 1780, and further by a three years' notice beyond that time. Their opponents were taken by surprise, the movement was so skilfully accomplished, and so secretly and suddenly undertaken.

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* Hansard.

† Anderson's *History of Commerce.*

‡ Anderson's *Commercial History of the British Empire.* London, 1764.

* Company's statutes—3 George II., cap. 14; 17 George II., cap. 17; and 23 George II., cap. 22.

From 1730 to 1744 the trade of the company was very steady. Their imports, according to the official value, approached a million sterling annually. Their exports increased to nearly half a million in value; but a large portion of these consisted in stores for the forts and factories. The imports were, in the main, paid for in bullion. Mr. Mill constantly presents this fact to his readers as a proof that the trade of the company was of little value. He did not fail to perceive that if there was a profit upon the imports, the trade was of value to the company; but he supposed it must be of little or no value to the nation, because bullion was exported for commodities received—a fallacy which had been exploded before the period when his history was written.

The year 1732 is notable as that in which the company began to make up annual accounts. In this year also the dividends were reduced from eight to seven per cent.; but in 1744 they were again raised to eight. The Dutch, during this century, were obliged gradually to lower their dividends from twenty-five per cent to twelve, although for a time they rose again to fifteen. The English company was much embarrassed by the conflicts with France; and the operations in India of Dupleix and Labourdonnais tended to lower the company's credit, and to depress its hopes.* The general impression among the directors, at the close of the first half of the eighteenth century, was desponding, and well it might be, in view of war in Europe and in India, the progress of the French there, and the disasters and humiliation of the British. Nevertheless, the trade maintained with India and the East was vast. Mill, relying upon Orme and the reports of the committee of secresy, thus exhibits it in figures:—

	Gold and Stores exported.	Bullion do.	Total.
1744	£231,318	£458,544	£689,862
1745	91,364	476,853	568,217
1746	265,818	560,020	825,838
1747	107,979	779,256	887,235
1748	127,224	706,890	834,114

The bills of exchange for which the company paid during those years were:—

1744	£103,349	1747	£441,651
1745	98,213	1748	178,419
1746	417,647		

The amount of sales for the same years (including thirty per cent. of duties, which remain to be deducted) was:

1744	£1,997,506	1747	£1,739,159
1745	2,480,966	1748	1,768,041
1746	1,602,388		

The official value at the custom-house of the imports and exports of the company, during that period, was as follows:—

	Imports.	Exports.
1744	£743,508	£476,274
1745	973,705	293,113
1746	646,697	893,540
1747	128,733	345,526
1748	1,098,712	306,357

The dividend was eight per cent. per annum, during the whole of the time. During the same period, the trade of the nation, notwithstanding the war, had considerably increased. The imports had risen from £6,362,971 official value, to £8,136,408; and the exports from £11,429,628 to £12,351,433; and, in the two following years, to £14,099,366 and £15,132,004.

The first half of the eighteenth century was comparatively one of quietness for the East India Company at home; though the possessors of its stock were frequently much alarmed by the threatened or actual reduction of dividends, the large loans which it was necessary to give the government, the contests prior to the union of the London and English companies, and the final arrangements which left it in the condition in which it existed at the close of the half century; yet, as compared with its anxieties and troubles in previous periods of equal extent, it was not unprosperous. A time, however, was now arriving pregnant with the mightiest issues. War between the English and French in India was already raging, and out of this turmoil it was destined, after much misfortune and shame, that the company should arise great and triumphant.

The events about to take place in India, and those which had already transpired there, were singularly influenced by men of remarkable character; and by incidents connected with them, which, independent of the control of the company, were ripening to effect its fortunes and its glory. Three men were born in Europe during this period, by whom the future of India was to be influenced more than by any other men who were destined to take part in its affairs during the continued existence of the East India Company. These three men were Dupleix, Clive, and Hastings. Dupleix was born at the beginning of the century, and had arrived in India and laid the foundation of a policy, while yet Clive was a schoolboy, and Hastings was a child. Their ages were different, and their successive irruption, as it may be called, upon the soil of India marvellously combined to alter its whole relations politically, and its ultimate destinies in every way. Dupleix, a Frenchman, sought the glory of his country, and devised a scheme by which he believed India would be subjected to France. His genius was lofty, and his adaptation to the task complete. Different in his intellectual constitution from Clive, he was fitted to originate what the latter could not. It may be doubted whether the peculiar genius of Clive would have had scope in India, had not Dupleix created a state of things peculiarly his own. Finding that condition of affairs in existence, Clive was, of all others, the man to enter upon the field already thus occupied, and to find in all around him the essential elements for promoting his own glory and the glory of his country. It was necessary for England not only to have her own Clive, but that such a man as the French Dupleix should precede him, and clear the path upon which he was to tread. Hastings was not adapted by nature to be the predecessor of Clive in the work which was providentially opened for the performance of the latter. As the contemporary, but more especially as the successor of Clive, Hastings could find his sphere, and in that sphere he was potential. There are few pages in history which more strikingly exemplify the prescient wisdom of Providence, than that which discloses the consecutive relationship of these three men in their destined work. This is not the place in which to give the history and character of Clive and Hastings; but the following notice of the position of them and of Dupleix, individually and relatively, by Miss Martineau, presents a picture as striking and instructive as it is well drawn. Selecting the year 1732 as an epoch, both in India and England, the gifted lady referred to briefly points out the state of things in Bengal, and shows how the arrival of Dupleix changed matters in French interests, small as were the positions and opportunities which he found there:—"The hour and the man had arrived for the French; and the hour and the man were approaching for the English. While the great Dupleix was beginning his reforms there in the prime vigour of his years, a child in England was giving almost as much annoyance to his relations as he was hereafter to cause to Dupleix. The Spaniards say that 'the thorn comes into the world point foremost.' It was so in this case. The uncle of little Robert Clive, then in his seventh year, wrote a sad character of him. 'Fighting, to which he is out of measure addicted,' said his uncle, 'gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness that he flies out on every trifling occasion.' At the same date, there was born in a poor parsonage in Worcestershire a forlorn infant, the son of a father married at sixteen, and soon after dead, and of a mother who died a few days after the orphan's birth, leaving him to the care of a grandfather, sunk in trouble and poverty. No one living could then have divined what connection could exist among the destinies of these three. Nor would it have been easier to guess seven years later. At that later date, Dupleix had purchased no less than seventy vessels, to carry his commodities to all parts of the known world, extinguishing in Bengal the English reputation for commercial ability, and bringing splendid returns to his own coffers. Robert Clive was then full of mischief—sitting on a spout at the top of the lofty steeple of Market Drayton church, and levying a blackmail of apples and halfpence, with his rabble rout of naughty boys at his heels, on the tradesmen who feared for their windows. As for little Warren, the orphan, then seven years old, he was lying beside the brook which flows through the lands of his ancestry, and, as he himself told afterwards, making up his mind to the personal ambition of his life—to be, like his forefathers of several generations, Hastings of Daylesford. On these three—the ambitious and unscrupulous French manager, already at his work, the turbulent English schoolboy, and the romantic child, dreaming under the great ancestral oaks, while living and learning among ploughboys—the destinies of British India were to hang. Through them we were to hold India as a territory, and by a military tenure; and to have a policy there, perhaps as important to the human race in the long run as that of the mother country—however much may be comprehended in that abstraction."*

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* *History of the British Empire in India.*

While the men and the home affairs of the company were maturing, by which the second half of the eighteenth century was to be influenced, and England to win an empire, many things were occurring in India which drifted in the same direction. Of these the company were not ignorant, and it is obvious that the directors were more observant of the political tendency of affairs in the Mogul empire, and the true policy to be observed in consequence, than historians generally give them credit for.†

Early in the eighteenth century the directors sent out specific orders to Bengal for their servants to *attend to the revenues*, and avoid all complications with the natives, and all attempts to extend the company's territory.* The following passage from their instructions shows the prudence which prevailed among the directors:—"Notwithstanding the doubts we had, whether it would be our interest to have the thirty-eight towns if granted, or whether they might not engage us in quarrels with the Moors,† if hereafter they should be resolved to take them away when they found them to flourish, of which, we find, by paragraph 85, you say, it would be of great use to us to have them. Having well weighed the profit on one side, and the trouble that may at one time or other be calculated upon on the other, we think it best for us to have only so many of them (when you can purchase them) as lie contiguous to our three towns above and below them, and those on the other side of the river within the same extent of ground as the towns, when purchased, reach on your side. . . . . We suppose, too, that when Jaffer Khan, or any other governor, finds you desire only part of what you might insist on, he or they may be the easier to give their consent, and not pick future quarrels; *for as our business is trade, it is not political (politic) for us to be encumbered with much territory.*" In another communication a few years later similar opinions were expressed:—"Remember, we are not fond of much territory, especially if it lies at a distance from you, or is not pretty near the water side, nor, indeed, of any, unless you have a moral assurance it will contribute, directly or in consequence, to our real benefit." ‡

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* *British Rule in India: a Historical Sketch.* By Harriet Martineau.

† *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India.* By Peter Auber, M.R.A.S. London, 1837.

The making of roads in a country where military operations may be necessary to preserve it, is recognised as a feature of military management which should always characterize the policy of occupying forces. The directors appear during the first quarter of the eighteenth century to have directed the attention of their servants to this important matter in the neighbourhood of their chief settlements, "as well to see through your bounds into the country of the zemindars, who attacked you some time before, as to facilitate the march of your soldiers when necessary to support your utmost outguards." § Sanitary as well as military advantage from the foregoing expedient was anticipated by the directors, for they add, "thereby the wind hath a free passage into the town, and likewise contributes to its healthiness." ||

The acquisition of the native languages on the part of their agents also engaged the attention of the directors. During the discussions which pervaded the London daily press in 1857–8 about the government of India it was frequently asserted that the company had discreditably neglected the encouragement of their agents in this particular. There is abundant documentary proof at the India-house to the contrary. Minute instructions are given in several of the letters of the directors concerning "the writers"—such as "encourage them all to learn the country languages, which are sooner attained by youth than by men grown." *

In 1725 the letters of the directors were chiefly designed to check extravagance, and insure more implicit obedience on the part of their servants.

Frequently the communications of the committee in London show a statesmanlike recognition of the events which were passing around their settlements and factories as the Mogul empire fell to pieces, like a building sapped at its foundations. Thus, at the close of the first quarter of the century, they write to their chief agent at Calcutta:—"The battle you mentioned to be fought by the vizier, wherein he was successful against the king's army, and killed the general, Mombarras Cawn, his sons, and several Omrahs, does, in our opinion, show that affairs in the Mogul's dominions are in the utmost confusion, and tend towards some extraordinary crisis. Our advices from Fort St. George say that the said vizier, Chicklis Cawn, was in the Metchlepatam country, and from thence intended to march to Bengal to enlarge his power. Time only must discover the event of these troubles; in the interim keep a watchful eye to preserve yourselves from danger, and keep up your friendship with the Hoogly government, which may be the more necessary in this critical juncture." †

The communications of the directors with their Bengal agents during 1731–2 explain the state of feeling in England towards the company, throw some light upon the origin of the public dissatisfaction, and reveal the fact, in contradiction of most modern writers who relate the home affairs of the company at that period, that the secret transactions of the directors were conducted with decision and energy:—"The badness of the goods sent us for two years past having not only raised a general clamour among the buyers, but also great uneasiness in the proprietors of the company's stock, and we being convinced that there has been a culpable neglect in the management of our affairs by the unequal sortment of the goods, deficiencies in their lengths and breadths, and excessive high prices, together with the vast quantities of fine unvendable articles sent us, contrary to our orders, and having kept back great quantities of goods we wanted and ordered, and have been employed for their private trade; by the first we are great sufferers, and by the last we are deprived of great profits that we might naturally have expected, those goods being greatly in demand; for these reasons, and to strike terror to those that succeed, we have thought fit to dismiss from our service six members. This extraordinary step we have been obliged to take, in order to remedy these and any such like evils, and to clear our reputations from the censure the world would otherwise throw upon us, that we connived at the bad actions of our servants, hereby convincing mankind that we are not biassed with favour or affection to any particular person whatsoever." *

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* Letter to Bengal, 3rd of February, 1719.

† The name then given commonly in England to all black races.

‡ General letter to Bengal, 16th of February, 1721.

§ Ibid. || Ibid.

* General letter to Bengal, 16th of February, 1721, and 14th of February, 1722.

† Letter to Bengal, the 1st of December, 1725.

The sagacity of the directors as to the effects upon themselves, as well as their servants, of any extravagance in the latter, is shown in their correspondence a little later, in reply to some favourable communications as to the improved habits of "the writers" which had been received from Calcutta:—"We are highly pleased that the extravagant way of living which had obtained such deep rooting among you is entirely laid aside. Whenever such a practice prevails in any of our servants, we shall always suspect that we are the paymasters in some shape or other, and it seldom fails of bringing them to penury and want; we must, therefore, both for your sakes and our own, earnestly recommend frugality as a cardinal virtue, and by a due regard to the said advice, we do not doubt but the diet and other allowances from us will be amply sufficient to defray all necessary expenses, as Bengal is not only the cheapest part of India to live in, but perhaps the most plentiful country in the whole world." †

The year following directions were sent out to regulate the conduct of the agents towards the company's tenants, which are full of justice, wisdom, and foresight. ‡

At the close of the year 1735 the company were fully cognisant of the progress of the French in India, and warned their agents of the coming peril—a peril so soon realized, so painfully experienced, so gloriously surmounted, and so efficiently turned to the interests of the company, and the welfare, honour, and glory of their nation:—"Now the French are settled at Patna, our chief and council must double their diligence, and keep all the Assamys they can true to our interest, and advance such of them as comply with their contracts sufficient sums of money to carry on their business, being cautious to make as few bad debts as possible. We should esteem it an agreeable piece of service if a year's stock of petre beforehand always lay at Calcutta, and as such recommend it to you, to use your utmost endeavours to accomplish it, provided it can be done without advancing the price, which, when obtained, will answer very valuable purposes." *

The council referred to in this paragraph of the letter of the directory was "a council of nine," appointed a few years previously, and which had its origin in the dissatisfaction felt by the directors with the assortment of piece goods sent them from Bengal, and the losses or low profits derived in consequence in the English market.

The growing energy of the Mahrattas drew the attention of the company to the necessity of superior defences for their stations, and for the first time, in their letter to Bengal, dated the 21st of March, 1743, the hiring of Lascars is referred to as desirable for the defence of Calcutta, a class often brought into requisition afterwards, and who proved generally useful in the service of the coasting trade, from the first acquisitions of the company in Bengal until its political extinction in 1858.

The administration of justice in India engaged the company's attention at home. †

The above proofs of the sedulous care of the directors are taken from their correspondence to their chief at Calcutta. Their letters to the other presidencies disclose the same industry and anxiety for the interests of the proprietary, and the welfare of such of the people of India as were committed to the company's charge. The correspondence with Fort St. George discloses such a multiplicity of subjects calling for the attention of the directors, and reveals so much acquaintance with Indian affairs, as to corroborate the allegation of industry and ability ascribed to them, and confute the assertion of Mr. Mill, that the company at this period knew little about India, and left the guidance of affairs there to their agents, being to a great extent merely passive spectators.

In the letters to Madras, municipal institutions, local duties, the introduction of native weavers to that place, relief to the distressed during a period of famine, the incursions of the Mahrattas, as well as all the varied topics

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* Letter to Bengal, the 3rd of December, 1731.

† Letter to Bengal, the 31st of January, 1734.

‡ Letter to Bengal, January, 1735.

* Letter to Bengal, the 12th of December, 1735.

† Letter to Bengal, the 9th of March, 1747.

of trade are discussed in the most minute and ample manner.

In the correspondence with this presidency the same vigilance was shown as in the Bengal letters, concerning the progress of the French, so soon to be the great topic of interest in India and Europe. Thus the directors write:—"The most particular intelligence procurable concerning those powerful competitors, the French, and their commerce, must be annually communicated to us, inserting the number of ships, tonnage, imports, and exports, with the situation of their affairs, and our other rivals in trade upon the coast of Coromandel." *

The communications made to the Bombay presidency involved as many subjects, and as intricate; and it is impossible to pursue the maze trodden by the thoughts of the directors without admiring their dexterity and capacity for transacting business on a large scale, and involving vast social and political interests. Who can refuse the meed of approbation to such sentiments as these, designed to guide the Bombay president in his relations to the native powers:—"So far, indeed, we will grant that it is prudent to suspect them, and to be upon your guard, but there is a great deal of difference in point of charges betwixt a defensive and offensive state of war, which latter must always be the case while we live in open war; besides, the continuing in such a state compels our enemies to increase their forces, and makes them by degrees to become formidable. And what is the end of all? Why, we have a great deal to lose, and they have nothing of any value that you can take from them." *

The president at Bombay was put upon his guard against the French, but not in terms so frequent or urgent as those of Madras and Calcutta.

It is impossible to peruse such documents without the conviction that much that has been culled by modern writers, to whom the archives of the India-house have been accessible, has been selected for a partial purpose, and unfairly represents the general tenor and full scope of the motives, policy, and procedure of the company at home.

The interests of the company in the Eastern Archipelago were not of that importance during the first half of the eighteenth century which they ultimately became, and which, in the earlier expeditions of the company's captains, they bid fair to become. But the directors were hardly the less exempt from trouble and anxiety on their account. If the rising star of the French threw a blighting ray upon their prospects in continental India, the withering avarice and tenacious power of the Dutch were calculated to check enterprise beyond the Straits, and to render it, when undertaken, a source of the deepest concern to the directors.

To the company's interests as involving competition with various European societies attention must now be turned.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE OSTEND COMPANY.

When the political and religious despotism of Spain had forced the best of her maritime provinces in Europe to appeal to the sword—the final arbiter between the oppressor and the oppressed—and they had nobly, after a fierce and dubious struggle, achieved their independence, the seven united provinces of the Netherlands were received into the rank of nations, and by the rapid development of those powers which they had displayed in the struggle, applied to the cultivation of their resources, they acquired wealth, power, and dominion, chiefly at sea.

His catholic majesty, who had been the legal sovereign of the Austrian or Spanish dominions, and of the United or Dutch Netherlands, ceded to Albert and Isabella the ten provinces that continued faithful to him when the seven others had thrown off the yoke. This happened in 1598; and in the deed of conveyance it was declared, that none of their subjects should be at liberty to send any ships, or to traffic in either the East or West Indies, upon any pretence whatever. In vain they remonstrated. Philip, considering that the removal of the prohibition would be prejudicial to Spain, rejected peremptorily all these appeals. The trade of the united provinces was consequently ruined; their cities, formerly hives of industry, were stripped of their populations; and even Antwerp, renowned through the commercial world as its capital, the emporium of

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* Letter to Fort St. George, the 30th of December, 1737.

* Letter to Bombay, 1741.

Europe, was reduced almost to a solitude, its harbour without shipping, and its marts deserted.

By the demise of the Archduchess Isabella her dominions reverted to Spain; and the king, to ingratiate the Cardinal Infanta with his new subjects, granted the Netherlanders liberty to trade to those parts of India open to the Portuguese then subject to the crown of Spain. But of this favour they did not reap the advantage; for in the very year it was granted (1640) Portugal asserted her independence, and obtained entire sway over such Indian possessions as the Dutch had not yet wrested from them.* Unfortunately, as it subsequently transpired, no evidence remained of this concession except a letter from the Infanta, which merely asserts that his majesty had such an intention.

The year 1698 arrived before any further effort was made to open the trade with the East. Charles II. of Spain granted his subjects a charter to trade to such parts of India and the coasts of Guinea as were not occupied by other European states. His death deprived them of the opportunity of availing themselves of the privilege, for on his demise, in 1700, the succession to the throne was contested, as already observed, and the war which ensued convulsed Europe for the space of thirteen years. When peace was concluded, the Netherlands fell under the dominion of Austria, and remained subject to the same restrictions which affected them under the Spanish sceptre, and they were thus excluded from the trade of the East, as they had been for several years. Thus they continued until Prince Eugene of Savoy was placed over them as governor-general, when another attempt was made to open a correspondence for them with the East. The emperor was favourable to this movement; and the fact is, that the narrow-minded policy of Philip had reduced to poverty these once industrious and prosperous provinces. They were at this time actually a burthen on the empire. There was an obstacle, however, in the way, and that was the jealousy with which the European monopolists of the Asiatic trade looked upon any new comer. Preparations were privately made, and two ships were despatched, equipped by private individuals, and furnished with royal passports. After a long delay, they started on their voyage in 1717. Having been successful, several other merchants resolved to make a venture. The trade continued to be prosecuted for some time in the same unostentatious manner. Some foreign merchants, who were aware of this auspicious commencement, made proposals to the court of Vienna for the formation of an East India Company, with the emperor's charter for a certain number of years. Their proposals were received, and every disposition to favour the scheme manifested.

In the meantime—in October, 1719—advices reached Vienna that one of the passported vessels had been seized by a Dutchman in the service of the West India Company on the coast of Guinea, and confiscated, with her whole cargo, in the most summary and questionable manner.* The emperor made an immediate demand for satisfaction and compensation for the sufferers. So little regard was paid to the imperial demand that another ship, belonging to Ostend, was soon after captured by the Dutch East India Company. The merchants of Ostend, with a spirit worthy of a happy result, declining further negotiations, with all possible expedition fitted out some vessels of war, with which they meant to make reprisals. They put to sea with the emperor's commission; Captain Winter, the master of the ship that had been captured on the coast of Guinea, commanded one of them. Conceiving that he was justified by his commission, he proceeded to the Downs, and there meeting with his own ship, he seized her, with a cargo of ivory and gold-dust, the property of the West India Company. That company complained to the states-general, whose ministers at Brussels and Vienna energetically remonstrated, and were warmly supported by the influence of Great Britain; but after the recent refusal of the Dutch to satisfy the imperial government, it could scarcely be expected that Austria would hearken to these demands, unless under the influence of fear. Austria on this occasion maintained her dignity; the ministers at Vienna remained firm, and insisted that the subjects of the emperor having first suffered, it was but reasonable they should be the first redressed. This reply was no small evidence of independence, considering the great naval strength of the remonstrant powers, who it was evident had agreed to make common cause. The firmness of the Austrian ministers gave confidence to the empire; and such a popular fervour was created in favour of the projected company that, in the year 1720, five large ships were fitted out, and in the year following six more—three for China, one for Mocha, one for Surat and the coast of Malabar, and the sixth for Bengal.

This independent spirit roused the ire of the Dutch to such a degree, that they seized on a vessel richly laden by the merchants of

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* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 294.

* *La Verité du Droit, &c.* Bruxelles, quarto, 1723.

Bruges, and sold her cargo, notwithstanding the interference of his imperial majesty. The English were not inactive; they also captured an Ostend homeward-bound vessel on the shores of Malabar, very richly laden. These misfortunes so disheartened the new company that orders were issued to lay up a new vessel just completed. However, this despondency was of brief duration. In the months of May and June, 1721, two of their ships arrived from the Indies, and in the following December two more. Their cargoes were sold at a price which amply indemnified them for their recent losses, and left them a balance which enabled them to pursue their commerce with greater vigour than ever. All that appeared to them necessary to their permanent success was a legal establishment; but though the emperor had authorized the associated merchants in 1719 to take in subscriptions for a joint-stock company, and even specified some of the privileges he was disposed to grant to them as a corporation, yet being unwilling to come to an open rupture with the Dutch, he would much preferred to have them continue to trade under the authority of his passports, which they might receive as individuals. The merchants, elevated by prosperity, both present and prospective, and regardless, even if of observant, of the inconvenience[*] it would be, particularly at that juncture, to quarrel with the maritime powers having money at their disposal, resolved to use their utmost efforts to command the best possible position; and with this object they commissioned some of their directors to proceed to Vienna, where they had friends of great court influence. These directors were liberally supplied with instructions, and, what is often more effective, good bills for a large amount of money. Their mission was successful; and they succeeded in obtaining a charter, the privileges conceded by which were co-extensive with their demands, and as liberal as that of any company in Europe.[†] It comprised several articles, the principal of which were—that the capital was to consist of ten million florins, in shares of one thousand each; the prizes which their vessels might make in time of war were to be entirely their own, and to be sold for their profit; all the ammunition, provisions, artillery, and naval stores, requisite for the forts and factories of the company were exempted from duties and impositions in their passage through the territories of the emperor, or any of the lordships or ecclesiastical communities in the Low Countries; and, lastly, all the goods transported by the company's ships were to pay for all customs and duties, inwards and outwards, four per cent. and no more, till the expiration of the month of September, 1724, and from that six per cent. for ever. An ambassador, invested with the necessary powers, was also sent to the court of Delhi to settle an alliance with the emperor, and to thank him in his imperial majesty's name for the permission he had granted the company, not only to erect a factory, but a fort, to protect their commerce in his dominions. The great expectation which his imperial majesty had formed of the future of this undertaking, of the addition it would bring to the wealth of his subjects and to the public revenues, influenced him to hold out still further encouragement than he had hitherto done. He intimated that he would remit all duties and customs for the period of three years, and would make the proprietors a present of three hundred thousand florins in ready money, to indemnify them against any losses they might sustain in the first stages of their operations.

The liberality and munificence of the sovereign found an echo amongst, not only his own subjects, who all—merchants, bankers, nobles, and gentlemen—displayed the utmost zeal, but also English, French, and Dutch, concerned in naval and mercantile affairs, united in support of the undertaking.

The widely-spread fame which the company had already acquired, the enthusiasm excited in its favour, the patronage with which it was supported, the resources at its command, the preparations it had initiated, the great and comprehensive objects at which it aimed, startled all the maritime nations of Europe; a common fear for their commerce pervaded them, one and all, and an identity of interests bound them to combine for mutual protection. In these days of more enlightened views, when exclusiveness in trade is practically shown to be as prejudicial as most monopolies, the feverish anxiety manifested by our forefathers at the exhibition of a strong competitor in the market, can be scarcely appreciated, unless by a few antiquated protectionists. "We need not wonder," says an able historian of the middle of the last century, "that this new company at Ostend should occasion such noise throughout all Europe, or excite great discord and disturbance, so as to render the chapter that treats of the Ostend Company as remarkable a part of general history as any that find a place therein."[*] The warmest allies and most faithful friends of the emperor were the most violent in their opposition.

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[*] *Memoires Historique et Politique*, tom. lxx. pp. 676—781.

[†] *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 1165.

[*] *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. p. 66; Macpherson's *Commercial Dictionary*; Postlethwaite's *Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*.

On the 5th of April, 1723, Pesters, the Dutch minister at Brussels, presented to the Marquis de Prie, the Austrian governor of the Netherlands, a memorial setting forth that by a treaty of Munster, in the year 1648, the Spaniards and the Dutch had agreed that each nation should preserve its trade and navigation within the East Indies, as it was then conducted. He observed that the Dutch had assisted the emperor to obtain the dominion of the Netherlands, and that they could not expect so bad a return as the establishment of a trade in direct violation of that treaty, and of the confirmation of that treaty by the twenty-sixth article of the barrier treaty, wherein it was expressly stipulated, that commerce and all that depends upon it, in whole, and in part, should remain on the footing established, and in the manner appointed, by the articles of the treaty of Munster; that the barrier treaty was guaranteed by the King of Great Britain, at a time when his imperial majesty was actually King of the Netherlands, the inhabitants of which could claim no other rights by passing from the dominion of Spain to that of the emperor, than those they enjoyed by the treaty of Munster as subjects of Spain. He concluded by requesting that the patent *said* to have been granted, should not be published or should be revoked, and that no ships should be allowed to sail from the Netherlands to India, either by virtue of a patent or any other kind of authority.

The Marquis de Prie, who had a personal interest besides the national one, in the success of the company, as he was deriving great emolument from the temporary licenses to the ships, and would derive a far greater from an increasing trade, advised his sovereign against granting the charter. Prince Eugene and his other ministers also represented to him that the establishment of the proposed company could not fail to give offence to the maritime powers by whose means he had become the monarch of the Netherlands, and that on these grounds the measure was equally inconsistent with his interest and with his dignity.*

The English East India Company also entered their protest, and expressed their uneasiness at seeing the progress of the Netherlanders; and they complained that much of the capital invested was by British subjects, that the trade was conducted by men brought up in their service, who were seduced, by extravagant pay and promises, to employ their talent, and extensive knowledge of the Indian trade, to the prejudice of their native land. This last seems to be the only feasible plea they had.

In the year 1721, the British parliament had passed an act (7th George I., cap. 21), for a rigorous enforcement of the penalties formerly enacted against British subjects going to India in the service of foreigners, and against smugglers of Indian goods into any part of the British dominions. This act, however, had little effect: another (9th George I., cap. 26) was passed in 1723, more expressly prohibiting English subjects from being concerned in the proposed company for carrying on the East India trade from the Austrian Netherlands, on penalty of triple the value of their subscriptions to the capital of that company, or imprisonment. British subjects found in any part of India, and not in the service of the East India Company, are declared to be guilty of high misdemeanour, and are to be seized and sent to England, in order to be punished. The minister of his Britannic majesty at Vienna, also protested; yet the emperor, strong in what he believed to be the justice of his case, resolved not to submit to dictation, and, abandoning the cautious line of policy he had hitherto prudently pursued, in August, 1723, published the charter which had been prepared in December, 1722, and postponed in deference to the protestations of the English and Dutch.

In the preamble to the charter,* the emperor not only took all the titles of the house of Austria, he also added to them that of King of Spain, and styled himself King of the East and West Indies, the Canary Islands, the Islands of the Ocean, &c. He granted to the company for thirty years the right of trading to the East and West Indies, and to both sides of Africa.

Satisfied that they would procure their charter, the company had, in January previously, dispatched a vessel for Bengal, in order to take possession of the fort there, which the Emperor of Delhi had some time before permitted them to build for the security of their factory.

No sooner had the company opened subscription books, than their head offices at Antwerp were crowded and encircled with applicants for shares. At noon next day the subscriptions were filled, and before the month closed, the shares sold at a premium of from twelve to fifteen per cent.

The Dutch companies, both East and West Indian, demanded permission to oppose the Ostend Company by force of arms. The

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* Macpherson *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 296.

* The charter was published at Brussels, in Latin, German, Flemish, English, and French.

French king, chagrined to find that after repeated attempts he could not achieve what at Antwerp was accomplished in a day, issued an *arrêt*, by which he strictly forbade his subjects taking shares in it, entering into its service, or selling them any ships, and threatening the offenders with confiscation and imprisonment. In the year following, the King of Spain pursued a like course.

These jealous precautions, and those of the nations more immediately interested, did not impede the successful prosecution of the enterprise. The speculations of the new company progressed prosperously at home and abroad. Most of their officers, who had served under the foreign companies, perfectly understood their duties; and, from their local knowledge, had very little difficulty in convincing the Indian princes and chief men, that it was their interest to encourage in their markets as many competitors as possible, and thus they counteracted the strenuous efforts made by the active agents of their rivals to acerbate the nations of India against them. With extraordinary rapidity several factories were established, and a far-spreading and profitable intercourse with the rajahs of the district cultivated. They made two settlements, that of Coblom, between Madras and Sadras—Patnam, on the coast of Coromandel, and that of Bankisabar on the Ganges, and were in search of a place in the Island of Madagascar, where their ships might touch for refreshments.*

An unexpected event occurred about this time, which promised to secure the future of the company. Philip of Spain entered into close alliance with the emperor, his late rival for the throne of Spain, and whose pretensions, supported by the arms of Great Britain and the United Provinces, had devastated that kingdom, and produced a long and ruinous conflict amongst the powers of Europe. By one of the treaties—that which is dated May, 1725, and particularly relates to commercial matters—it was provided that the ships of the contracting parties should be received in a friendly manner into each other's ports, "which same proviso is also to take place in the East Indies, on condition that they do not carry on any trade there, nor be suffered to buy anything besides victuals, and such materials as they want for repairing and fitting out their vessels." By this article the liberty was conceded to the company's ships, of obtaining refreshments, and of repairing in Spanish ports which are conveniently placed for those sailing to or from China. A market in Europe, and seemingly also in the Spanish colonies, was provided for them by the thirty-sixth article, which engages that "his imperial majesty's subjects and ships, shall be allowed to import all sorts of produce and merchandise from the East Indies, into any of the states and dominions of the King of Spain, provided it appears from the certificates of the East India Company erected in the Austrian Netherlands, that they are the produce of the places conquered, the colonies or factories of the said company, or that they came there; and in this respect they shall enjoy the same privileges which were granted to the subjects of the United Provinces, by the royal cedulas of the 27th of June, and 3rd of July, 1663."

The publication of this treaty impressed friends and foes with the conviction that the company rested on a firm and secure basis; but the more profoundly observant detected the seeds of future trouble in this apparently desirable arrangement, and a few of the partners availed themselves of the opportunity of selling out, while prospects seemed so fair and promising.

Considering the alarming sensation created by the incorporation of the Ostend Company, it will not appear to be a matter of surprise that all the nations whose interests were thought to be at stake by it, were struck with consternation. A large party for a long period existed in Spain, who looked upon the exclusive possession of its colonial trade as the highest and most valuable prerogative of the crown;* by which, indeed, they were particularly distinguished from the rest of the subjects of that monarchy, who were all prohibited from a participation in it—and were as hostile to the late opening of it as any of the English, French, and Dutch. To such an extent was this dissatisfaction carried, that a proclamation was affixed to the gate of the Spanish ambassador in Rome, containing these words:—"The Spanish nation do hereby promise a reward of a hundred pistoles to any ingenious person who shall point out a single article in the three treaties lately concluded at Vienna, by which they are to be gainers."†

To counterbalance this alliance between Austria and Spain, the sovereigns of Great Britain, France, and Prussia formed a treaty in the September following, by which they guaranteed the integrity of the territories belonging to each "in and out of Europe;" and also "all the rights, immunities, and advantages—particularly those relating to trade—which the said allies enjoy, or ought to enjoy, respectively." *

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* Raynal's *History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. iii. p. 31.

* See on this subject *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 198, in which it is stated, and truly, that it was in submission to this feeling, that Philip, in 1638, rejected the petition of the Netherlanders for permission to trade to the Spanish settlements.

† *Recueil Historique d'Actes, Negotiations, Memoires et Traitez.* Par M. Rousset, tom. ii. p. 214.

The states-general hesitated and deliberated for a considerable time before they consented to be a subscribing party to this compact, and did not officially become so till August, 1726.

In the interval, while these machinations were being perfected, the company was advancing with rapid strides. Several ships had arrived from India and China, freighted with valuable cargoes, the sales of which amounted to above five million florins. In September, 1726, a meeting of the proprietors was held, and the directors had the agreeable duty of placing to the account of each two hundred and fifty florins, the complement due on each, seven hundred and fifty only having been paid out of the thousand. This addition was equal to a dividend of thirty-three and a half per cent. on the capital paid up and employed in the trade.

The alliance formed between Austria and Spain being based on personal and selfish motives, was sacrificed for still more selfish ones. The royal confederates, with whom were united the Dutch republic, having guaranteed to support the pragmatic sanction—the object of which was to secure the succession of Maria Theresa to her father's, the emperor's, dominions—the object dearest to his heart, the interests of the Ostend Company, were sacrificed as a matter of minor consideration. By a treaty concluded in May, 1727, it was agreed that their privileges should be suspended for seven years, during which no ship was to sail from Ostend for India, but those which were on the voyage were insured an unmolested return; and should any of them, in ignorance of the treaty, be taken, they were to be freely restored.

In a treaty between England and Austria, which was signed March 16, 1731, the succession of Maria Theresa was formally guaranteed by Great Britain; and the emperor, on his part, bound himself to the total suppression of the company, and never to permit any vessels to sail to India from the Austrian Netherlands, nor any other country which was subject to the crown of Spain, in the time of King Carlos II., reserving to the Ostend Company a right to send two ships, each only for one voyage to India, to receive the merchandise imported by them, and to sell the same, as they should think proper, at Ostend.

The suppression of the company did not eradicate from the minds of the proprietors nor that of the emperor, the wish and determination to pursue the trade they had so auspiciously commenced, provided it could be persevered in without violation of the recent treaty. They had only two ways left, and neither of them promising, by which that could be done—the first to make use of some port in the Austrian dominions which never owed allegiance to Spain; the second, to make a convenience of a port belonging to a foreign prince. From either of these they thought they could trade under the authority of passports as before.

The only ports belonging to Austria, besides those of the Netherlands, were Trieste and Fiume, both at the head of the Gulf of Venice, but neither fit by art or nature for the purpose. There was no roadstead for large vessels. The emperor, who was as desirous as any one interested for the establishment of an East India trade, did everything in his power to improve them, and paid a visit in the year 1728 to Trieste, and was present at the launching of a small ship-of-war, and personally encouraged the men who were engaged in making the projected improvements. At length these undertakings were abandoned as fruitless; and the emperor and his subjects, with regrets the more bitter from the promise of their former efforts, were obliged to relinquish all share in the advantages of Indian commerce.

Expelled from their native land, the company sought in foreign countries that asylum which at home they were obliged to abandon. They applied to the Kings of Poland and Prussia, and from both they received assurances of protection and passports. But those feeble powers could not shield them from the enmity of the great nations who sought their utter annihilation. The *Saint Theresa*, while sailing under Polish colours, was seized in the Ganges, and confiscated. It is true the Polish minister remonstrated; but what chance had he against governments who braved, in the same cause, the formidable union of Austria and Spain. The *Apollo*, with a Prussian passport, entered the Elbe and reached Stade, a town then belonging to England. Here she was received as a Prussian craft, and also at Hamburg, where she arrived September, 1731. But when it was ascertained that she belonged to the Ostend Company, and had landed the greater portion of her cargo, and the latter had been advertised for sale, the British and Dutch ministers presented a strong memorial to the magistrates of Hamburg, requiring them to sequester the ship and cargo. A general meeting of the inhabitants was convened to consider the demand, and, much to their credit and independence, their deliberate reply was that the Elbe was free to the entire German empire; and all vessels, except those of the enemies of the empire and pirates, had a right to come into it; that they could not refuse to admit a vessel bearing the Prussian colours, more especially as she had been received as a Prussian ship in Stade, a port belonging to his Britannic majesty, and also at a port in Ireland, where she had called for refreshments; that they could not be justified in interfering with any ship in their port beyond demanding and receiving the customary duties. They therefore begged the King of England and the states-general not to insist upon what they had neither right nor power to do, nor to involve them in disputes between the higher powers of Europe. This reasonable and creditable remonstrance was ineffectual, and a second memorial was presented, the tone of which was menacing; but on further reflection, it was considered advisable not to push the matter to extremities, which might stimulate the emperor to vindicate the freedom of the Elbe, and the King of Prussia to support the honour of his flag. Ultimately the sale was completed, and at length the company consoled itself with, as they thought, having secured the means of carrying on their trade without interruption and with success.

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* The Ostend Company is not mentioned in this treaty, but obviously the words "particularly those relating to trade," allude to the right claimed of opposing that company.—MACPHERSON.

While this matter was in debate, one of their vessels was homeward bound and daily expected: an advice boat was sent to meet it, with instructions to put into Cadiz, and there to await further instructions. At Cadiz, the cargo was transported on board a French vessel, the commander of which signed bills of lading for the delivery of the goods as the property of a Spaniard at Cadiz, to a merchant at Hamburg. As soon as these transactions were communicated to the British and Dutch governments, a formal application was made to the emperor, soliciting him to put a stop to these infractions of the late treaties. To avoid a rupture, the emperor was advised to order his minister at Hamburg to request the senate to sequester the merchandise, as the property of a company whom he had suppressed, and who were prosecuting their trade in defiance of his orders. Though the senate, in reply, informed him that it was found by the ship's papers, that the cargo was Spanish property, the emperor insisted, the goods were sequestered, and at length the senate was coerced to prohibit the citizens from having any concern with vessels or cargoes so circumstanced; but the proprietors were allowed to withdraw, privately, their goods. The decree by which this prohibition was proclaimed, is dated the 15th of January, 1734.

The two ships which the company had a right to send according to the terms of the treaty of March, 1731, sailed from Ostend in April, 1732, and returned in the end of the year 1734.

The apparent facility with which the emperor abandoned a company in whose success he was so truly interested, and even contributed to their dissolution when he apparently might, with effect, have protested against the violation of the rights of such a city as Hamburg, and the flags of Poland and Prussia, when, as he was perfectly aware, it was his own interest and those of his subjects that were chiefly at stake, is no puzzle to the student of the history of that period, who is aware of the rapid fluctuation of politics which had characterized the relations of the European powers. At this very juncture, the emperor was engaged in a war with the combined powers of France, Spain, and Sardinia, and the neutrality, if not the active adhesion, of the Protestant states was to be purchased at any price.

Before closing the chapter it may be well to say, that in the hostility so determinedly shown to the establishment of the Ostend Company, the opponents to it were actuated by a motive as equally strong as commercial jealousy. In England and also in Holland it was argued "that the trade of the latter, if lost to her, would remove into the Austrian Netherlands, and that thereby the balance of power in Europe would be vested in the house of Austria, and the popish interest would be strengthened." And this consideration is the one which so firmly united England and Holland—whose mutual jealousies and rivalries were no secret—in their combined and persevering exertions to effect the ruin they so completely accomplished. In a pamphlet entitled, "Importance of the Ostend Company Considered," which appeared in 1726, the question is thus effectively argued:—"That by the ruin of the trade of Holland, the power of Europe would be broken, and the Protestant interest weakened, is undeniable; for the United Provinces, with Great Britain, hold the balance, and are the supporters of the Protestant interest. Of the truth of this assertion the two last wars are an undeniable proof. For without the numerous and well paid troops of these two nations, what could the rest of the allies have done? Could they alone have obliged France to make such a peace as was concluded in 1697? Could they alone have driven the French troops out of the empire, or out of the Netherlands during the last war? Could they alone have maintained in Flanders forces superior in number to those of France? Could they alone have carried on the war in

Portugal and Spain? Could they alone have been powerful enough to force King Philip to abandon Spain, as would have certainly happened, humanly speaking, if the fatal change of our ministry had not interposed and prevented it? No, certainly no. It was the wealth and the riches of Great Britain, and of the United Provinces, that enabled them to maintain so many troops as put the allies into a condition, not only of making head against France, but gave them a superiority in number to the forces of that crown, and enabled them to fit out such large fleets, as kept the naval power of France in awe, and thereby preserved the liberties of Europe from becoming a prey to the boundless ambition of Louis XIV.; and therefore, by their wealth and riches, they are equally powerful to protect, support, and defend the Protestant interest from being oppressed by the popish powers of Europe." And it proceeds to show, had not these Protestant powers acted in union during the struggle, the Protestant interest in Europe, in all human probability, would have been sacrificed. It then proceeds: "Thus it plainly appears that when the powers of Great Britain and the United Provinces are the supporters of their liberties, that it is a maxim among the powers of this part of the world, not to suffer either of these nations to become a prey to the House of Austria or Bourbon. . . . . But suppose the United Provinces should sit still and not join its forces in favour[*] of the liberties of Europe, or the Protestant interest, Great Britain could not be powerful enough to give such an additional assistance as would equal what the United States would or could do, and *vice versâ*. Consequently Great Britain or the United Provinces cannot support the liberties of Europe or the Protestant interest without the assistance of the other."[†] "That the balance of power would be turned to the side of the house of Austria, and the popish interest strengthened thereby, are the necessary and unavoidable consequences. For since by the ruin of Holland, one of the supporters of the balance of power of Europe would be destroyed, and no other nation would rise up in its stead,—for the Hollanders would be so dispersed, as not to make any nation become powerful enough to undertake with Great Britain so great a charge,—and we could not alone be able to maintain it;—and since most of the popish merchants of Holland would retire to Antwerp, Ghent, and Bruges in the Austrian Netherlands, and consequently draw to those towns all the trade they carried on in Holland,—it is manifest that the Austrian Netherlands would soon become the staple of all Europe as formerly, and soon grow as rich and powerful as Holland now is. Whereby the mighty power of the House of Austria, supported and strengthened by the riches and wealth of the Netherlands, would so inevitably be threatening ruin to the rest of Europe, as it would now endanger its liberties, if backed by all the force and wealth of Holland. And that the popish interest would be strengthened by the ruin of Holland is a consequence thereof. Because no new Protestant state could arise in the room of Holland to join with Great Britain in supporting the Protestant interest. And we alone could not be the defenders of it, and therefore the popish interest would of course become too strong for the Protestant cause."[*]

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[*] The author uses "against the liberties," it was a phrase of the time, the words, "the enemies of," being understood, p. 30.

[†] Pp. 6, 7, 8.

[*] In a search made among the popular English literature of the time, the only pamphlets which were met with, was one entitled, Mr. Forman's Letter to the Right Hon. W. Pultney, showing how pernicious the Imperial Company of Commerce and Navigation lately established in the Austrian Netherlands, is likely to prove to Great Britain, as well as to Holland, printed in 1725, and the pamphlet quoted in the text, with the title there given. In the opening paragraph, the anonymous writer refers to Forman, whose letter, it appears, was published the year previous. Both pamphlets are seemingly the productions of Forman, and are so ranked in Watts's catalogue; we have quoted so freely from it in order to show that the popular feeling in England against the company was not one merely of commercial rivalry. Indeed such could have been scarcely the case in that day, when the English merchants, and nation at least, were opposed to the monopoly of the East India Company.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE DANES IN INDIA AND EASTERN ASIA.

As early as the eighth and ninth centuries the Danes had become the terror of northern nations; and from their piratical incursions England, Ireland, and Scotland, suffered long and severely. The two former they succeeded in subjecting to their iron rule; and the last-mentioned, although injured by their descents, held out no temptation, as did the sister kingdoms, to the establishment of a permanent settlement. Normandy they also overran, and in it they succeeded in permanently settling. Their expeditions were in general maritime. To hazard the perils of crossing a stormy sea, three or four hundred miles in breadth, without the guidance of a compass, required no ordinary spirit of enterprise. The many islands with which the seas that break upon the shores of Denmark are studded made them familiar with the deep, and stimulated them to face more distant dangers. Thus to their maritime position they owed that superiority at sea which then neither England nor France, nor any other European state, had the means to dispute.

Few indeed of the kings of that country during the middle ages, until we descend to the reign of Valdemar II., displayed any eminent ability. This prince ascended the throne in 1203. Animated chiefly by religious zeal, he subdued the province of Livonia; but here his conquests in that direction ended, as the country held forth no inducements, commercially or politically, to extend his territories on the southern shores of the Baltic.

In those days the commerce of the Danes extended to Lubeck, the earliest commercial town of consequence, appropriately termed by modern writers the Venice of the Baltic; to the mouths of the Vistula, where they established a town—Dantzic *—called after themselves; to the more remote provinces of Courland and Esthonia; and to Holstein. The Danes also fixed themselves in Naples, which they subdued, and thence sent their vessels to cruise upon the coast of Asia.†

At this time—the fourteenth century—the association of the Hanse Towns had risen to considerable power and greatness, and actively struggled for the freedom of commerce in the north of Europe. Denmark, commanding the great entrance to the Baltic, was frequently involved in conflict with them in its efforts to enforce a toll upon all vessels trading to its waters; and to this imposition England, by treaty, submitted in the reign of Henry VII. (1490), but in return the English were allowed to appoint consuls in the chief seaports of Denmark and Norway.

It is not a matter of surprise that a people of the habits and pursuits of the Danes should share in the newly-evolved enthusiasm and enterprise which had then startled Europe into activity.* Christian IV., who then held the sceptre, was a prince possessed of the qualities the time and occasion demanded. With a praiseworthy zeal for the improvement of his subjects, he stimulated their industrial aspirations. Manufactures were encouraged, and commercial pursuits promoted. A proposal which was made to him of opening a trade with the East Indies was received with avidity. Of the successes of the Portuguese, and of their immediate successors, the Dutch and English, he was fully apprised, and was desirous that his people should share the honours, experiences, and emoluments of such distant explorations. In the year 1612 he extended his sanction and encouragement to a body of enlightened and adventurous merchants in Copenhagen, who had associated for the purpose. A capital was raised by the issue of two hundred and fifty shares of a thousand rix-dollars† each, for sending a squadron to the East Indies.‡ The officers in command were recommended to obtain a settlement on equitable terms, to preserve faith with the natives, and to avoid, as far as possible, any disputes with any of the European states there represented. With these prudent and politic instructions, and fortified with their sovereign's commission, the company's ships bore away to their remote destination from the Island of Zealand, and reached, in 1616, the coast of Coromandel.

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* *Dantzic*, or *Dansvik*, signifies a Danish town or port.

† *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 2.

* The Portuguese and Spaniards had possession of the commerce of the East, and, it may be added, also of the West, for almost a century, which brought to them not merely the vast treasures of those rich and extensive quarters, but also the great portion of the wealth of Europe; but as soon as an opening was made for other European powers to that commerce, it is remarkable with what avidity the most of them entered into it. Elizabeth granted a charter to the first English East India Company on the 31st of December, 1600. The united states of Holland incorporated theirs by an *octroy*, dated the 20th of March, 1602; the French king, Henry IV., by his *arrêt*, dated the 1st of June, 1604, gave his approval to a similar association; and, as has been stated in the text, Christian IV., King of Denmark, granted his charter in 1612.

† A rix-dollar is equivalent to about three shillings of English money.

‡ *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. iv. col. 754.

In all probability the kind reception of the adventurers by the natives resulted from the observance of the judicious instructions given them at home. Having stipulated with the prince of the district in which they landed, the port of Tranquebar* was conceded to them, and, to the credit of the Portuguese, few of whose good deeds are recorded by our historians, they exhibited no selfish rivalry; on the contrary, they assisted them in their negotiations for a settlement. In 1621 a fortress in the European style was erected for the protection of the harbour and the town.

The Danes had not been long in possession of this settlement, when a circumstance, both unforeseen and important, occurred which presented to them an opportunity of making a conspicuous figure in the East. To place this in full light, it is necessary to go back a few years from the period arrived at. In 1609 a truce, previously noticed, was made between the Spaniards and Dutch, who had been engaged in a long and tedious war. The states and the Prince of Orange thought it expedient to communicate the event to the King of Ceylon. This office was entrusted to Peter Both, who was sent to India as governor-general. On his reaching Bantam, a man in a very subordinate position, Van Boschower, was dispatched, invested with full powers. He was received at the court of Ceylon with the highest respect, and concluded a treaty, which was ratified by the Dutch governor and his council. He had, during his stay, ingratiated himself with the sovereign and his queen, and such were the inducements held out to him by them, that he consented to remain at their court. His was not the general fate of foreign favourites. He cultivated the good opinions of the natives, married a native lady of the first rank, was presented with a principality, and became the sovereign of some thousands of subjects, and the master of a considerable revenue. Displeased by the want of faith of the Dutch, and the violation of some terms of the treaty lately concluded through his agency, and hoping to be able to obtain redress from the states-general, he prevailed on the sovereign to send him to Europe with the title of ambassador. He also was empowered, in case of failure with the united states, to treat with any European potentate. He started on his mission in May, 1615, accompanied by his wife. The man whom they had recently sent out in a very inferior capacity, the Dutch authorities would not recognise as a prince. This insult occasioned an interruption of the negotiations. After deliberation he proceeded to the court of Denmark, and arrived there in July, 1617. He was gratified with his reception. His proposals were eagerly received, and a treaty concluded with the company and Christian IV. A man-of-war was fitted out, and placed at his service, to convey him and his retinue to Ceylon. The company also sent some ships of theirs to accompany him. Their departure took place in 1619. On the voyage the ambassador died, and, through the impatience and offensive behaviour of the commander of the squadron on his arrival at Ceylon, an opportunity was lost to the Danes of establishing themselves on very favourable terms there, which seemed to have been providentially presented.

The settlement at Tranquebar was progressing in the meantime with a success truly astonishing, and far exceeding the realization of their most sanguine hopes. This prosperity induced them to undertake the establishment of factories upon the opposite coast of Malabar, where the pepper trade abounded, and of sending their ships to the most distant parts of India. In the short period of twenty years they had opened a trade with the Moluccas, and were by its proceeds enabled to send home large and rich cargoes from all parts of the peninsula; and Denmark could boast a trade inferior only to that of the Portuguese and Dutch.

This rapid and uninterrupted progress did not fail to incur the jealous notice of their European rivals; but a fortunate concurrence of circumstances restrained them one and all from overt acts of hostility. The Portuguese, subjected to the yoke of Spain, were manfully battling for their independence. The Spaniards very seldom sent their merchantmen beyond the Straits of Malacca. The Dutch had their attention engrossed by grasping at a monopoly of the spice trade; and the distractions by which England was rent limited her power in those distant seas. To this necessitated neutrality the Danes owed, in a very great measure, their rapid and uninterrupted growth; and furthermore, they derived from the distractions of the other European settlers elements of strength. On terms of amity with all, they extended their sympathies and aid in common, and furnished to all applicants arms, ammunition, and provisions, and reaped enormous profits from this extensive trade.

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* Tranquebar is surrounded by the British district of Tanjore, and situated between two arms of the Cavery, a hundred and forty miles south-west of Madras. It is defended by bastion ramparts, faced with masonry, and at its south-east angle is the citadel of Dansburgh. The population numbers twenty thousand.—MACCULLOCH'S *Geographical Dictionary.*

The ultimate success, as already recorded, of the Dutch in the East, disturbed this commercial prosperity; and the Danes, in common with other European nations, found themselves excluded from several branches of trade, a considerable share of which they had previously possessed undisturbed, and which, if they had succeeded in retaining, would have enabled them to realize the brilliant hopes their short and successful career had justified them in entertaining.

The experience of the simple peasant has vulgarized the proverb, that "trouble never comes alone;" the philosophy of history enforces its truth by multiplied examples, and this period of Danish history supplies an instance. That good and wise prince, who cheered by his patronage into activity the awakening enterprise of his subjects, and who had been favoured with a life sufficiently long to witness the magnificent development of his infant project, at the crisis when the Danish adventurers of the East encountered the formidable rivalry of the Dutch, and were threatened with being swept from the path of their commercial speculations, became involved in the northern wars, and was thus incapacitated from forwarding from home those supplies of men and ships which the exigency so urgently demanded.

In fact, in consequence of the non-arrival of supplies from Europe, the regular communication with Tranquebar was interrupted, and with results which might be expected. The colonists were prevented from sending home their ships as they previously had done. Deprived of that market, their means were crippled, their commerce dwindled to an insignificant degree. and contrasted humiliatingly with the apparent splendour of their town and fort, which they had magnificently embellished in the days of their prosperity; and so low had they sunk in a brief space, that they became contemptible, not alone to the Europeans, but to the natives.

In 1661 Gautier Schouten, the celebrated Dutch traveller, visited Tranquebar; and the statement which he has given of its condition may be relied on. He observes, as if it were something remarkable, that there were two Danish vessels in the harbour; and he adds, that their flags were but rarely visible in any other Indian port. He also records that they were on bad terms with the Moors, and in constant apprehension of their hostilities. In the midst of these dangers, and thrown upon their own unaided resources, the Danish settlers deserve the highest credit for the determination with which they braved all, and succeeded in maintaining their position. In the height of their distress they prudently discharged with regularity, from the revenues of their town, their liabilities to their garrison, which they maintained in full strength. Their outposts, or rather dependent factories, on the Malabar coast, in Bengal, and a more considerable settlement at Bantam, supplied them with several kinds of commodities and manufactures, which were embarked on board the vessels they sent to Surat, into the Bay of Bengal, to the Straits of Malacca, and to the Island of Celebes.* For want of sufficient capital, they were compelled to surrender this trade into the hands of the Moors and Hindoos, to whom they hired their ships. Their condition may be comprehended from the fact that during this time they were enabled to send to Europe only one vessel in the space of two or three years.†

The diminution of their consequence exposed them to more imminent danger; and the Rajah of Tanjore, within whose territories Tranquebar was situated, thought it was in his power to expel the Danes, and rid himself of their proximity. The splendid town and fortress which they had erected were temptations too strong for his sense of morality. On the slightest pretexts, and without just pretence, he sought cause of quarrel, and was in the constant practice of interrupting their land communications. This he was the more easily enabled to do, as the territory of Tranquebar extends only six miles from north to south, and three miles inland, constituting in all only fifteen square miles.‡ His daring soared so high, that he sometimes ventured to lay siege to the town and fortress; and it is related by an English traveller§ that on one occasion (1684) the Danes were reduced to such extremities, as to be compelled to pawn three of their bastions to the Dutch for such a sum of money as would enable them to keep their garrison and the people of the town from dying by starvation. This aid they discharged the following year; but their having been enabled to do so strengthened some suspicions previously circulated, that in their distresses they sometimes had recourse to very questionable means for the replenishment of their exchequer. On this occasion these vague rumours assumed a more palpable form, and it was said that an English ship, called the

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* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, par Guyon, tom. iii. p. 77; *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 754.

† *Commerce des Danois aux Indes*, p. 51.

‡ Thornton's *Gazetteer of the Territories under the East India Company*.

§ Hamilton's *Account of the East Indies*, book I. p. 352.

Formosa, bound to Surat, and which had called at Calicut for supplies, and had never reached its destination, had met with foul treatment. This charge was sustained by the fact that continued discharges of cannon had been heard not long after she had sailed from Calicut, and at the same time two Danish vessels were cruising from Cape Comorin to Surat. Whatever degree of credibility may be placed in the charge against the Danes, it is a fact that the doubts were never satisfied.*

Some bad feeling may have been engendered by the suspicions thus stated, but the English were not prevented by them from extending their assistance shortly after to the Danes in their utmost need. A large sum of ready money† was offered to their inveterate enemy, the Rajah of Tanjore, for the purchase of Tranquebar, when it should be in his power to deliver it. When this profligate bargain had come to the knowledge of the party most deeply concerned, they applied to Mr. Pitt, the English governor at Fort St. George, and were generously assured of succour should the exigency require it.

The rajah was fully resolved to complete his part of the contract, and made preparations to do so. He, with all the expedition he could command, assembled an army of between thirty and forty thousand, marched on Tranquebar, and cautiously commenced his offensive operations by opening trenches about a mile from the town. The soil being sandy and shifting, he began his work by planting two rows of cocoa-nut trees in close order, and at the requisite distance, and filled up the intervening space between the rows with sand. These trenches were nearly as thick as a town wall, and so high that the besiegers were covered from the fire of the Danes. They worked with such zeal and perseverance that in the space of five months, they had pushed forward their trenches to within pistol-shot of the defences, and had with their batteries nearly destroyed one of the bastions, when the promised and eagerly expected English reinforcement arrived. It was much needed, for the Danish garrison was composed of two hundred Europeans only; an unequal number of Indian Portuguese, and about one thousand natives, a force totally inadequate to defend a wall one mile and a half in circumference.

With the characteristic bravery of their countrymen, the English, though distrusting their raw levies, Hindoo and Portuguese, on the second day after their arrival, resolved on taking the field and provoking their enemies to a contest. As the sun rose, the small army of the besieged emerged from the gates, the native contingent leading the way, and the English in close order in their rear. The Hindoos had no sooner reached the plain than they treacherously divided to the right and left, leaving the small body of Europeans exposed to the numerous force of the enemy, who, with apparent resolution, emerged from their trenches in good order, armed with swords and shields, and seemingly prepared to engage hand to hand. The English and Danes, few in number, abandoned by the greater body of their little army, became apprehensive of the issue; but their confidence was soon restored, the first peal of the guns from their batteries struck terror into their timid foes. They fled in the utmost confusion, and their trenches would have been levelled, had the victors come prepared with implements for that purpose. In a few days after, a second sally was made with better preparations and greater success, which was entirely owing to the English, who, though left unsupported by the Danes, and deprived of the services of their commander—who had to retire at an early hour, severely wounded—charged and routed a body of musketeers and pikemen, and, subsequently, the Moorish horse, reached the trenches, and returned triumphantly with the loss of half their men to the town. This successful affair, so gallantly achieved, compelled the rajah to abandon the siege, and to leave the Danes in the enjoyment of their town, to recruit their impaired resources, and prosecute their commerce in peace.

As the consequence of the state of things here slightly sketched, but sufficiently ample for their relation to the principal objects of this history, the trade of the Danes in the East was reduced to a very low ebb at the opening of the eighteenth century. An effort was then made to give a new impulse to enterprise. The first movement was to enlarge the town, to increase the number of residents, in the hope that their revenues would improve and be better and more advantageously regulated. Application was accordingly made by the company to Frederick IV. a prince not unworthy to be a successor to Christian IV. Much of the depression and gloomy prospects of the Danish colonies, he attributed to the neglect of religion, and the consequent laxity of morals, and with a resolution worthy of the Christian, and creditable to the statesman, he determined to send missionaries thither. Dr. Francke, divinity professor of the University of Halle, in Saxony, was consulted, and he judiciously selected Zeigenbalg and Plutschau, names now immortalized. They landed on the coast of Coromandel, in July, 1706. Their reception was far from being encouraging. Their mission was treated as chimerical and unpracticable. The results of their labours in the missionary field have been previously related, and the notice of them here is for the purpose of elucidating the effects they produced on the polity of those amongst whom they were destined to labour. It must be confessed that those who anticipated—and many did at the time—that the conversion of the natives would add so many loyal and useful subjects to the Danish government, that disciplined they would become better soldiers than any of their countrymen, that the acquisition of the numbers calculated upon would add both to the wealth and the strength of the Europeans, promote an improved agriculture, and the introduction of new manufacturers, have been disappointed. Contrary to the calculations then made, the trade of Denmark in the East has gradually declined, until Tranquebar itself was sold, in 1845, to the English crown. Nevertheless, it must be confessed the colonists improved, their villages as a consequence augmented, the people lived better, and the government of Tranquebar found itself more secure than it had been previously.

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* The publicity given to this rumour at the period, and subsequently the confidence with which it has been asserted, and the credit given to it in Indian records and traditions, appear to be sufficient justification for the repetition of an accusation so grievous to a nation professing Christianity, boasting a civilization, and in friendly relations with this empire. However reluctant to reiterate it, the historian has a stern duty, and paramount to such considerations. In justice it is added that similar offences are alleged against other European adventurers in the Indian waters.

† Fifty thousand pardoes.

A proposal was made about this time to Frederick, which promised to accelerate his projected improvements in Asia, by Joseph Van Asperen, a shareholder in the Ostend Company, which had recently failed. His scheme seemed feasible, and held out great prospects. He represented to the king that there generally prevailed an active spirit of speculation, and that men's minds were naturally directed to the East Indies, a field which had yielded a rich harvest to preceding adventurers, which hitherto had been only partially explored; that the failure of the Ostend Company, was entirely attributable to the disproportion of the means to the end, the causes such as could not attend that undertaking in any other country, least of all in Denmark, whose commercial pursuits had been uninterruptedly persevered in for more than a century; that all that was required was an adequate increasing capital, which could be easily raised by opening a new subscription upon favourable terms; that men of experience in the trade were not wanting, as naval and mercantile agents were to be had in sufficient supply amongst those who had been just discharged from the service of the bankrupt company. Influenced by these plausible representations, the king was induced to sanction the proposal; and, to facilitate its adoption, the Danish East India Company was transferred from the city of Copenhagen, to the borough of Altena, a place belonging to the crown of Denmark, and contiguous to the free city of Hamburg. This translation of the company, though seemingly well contrived, as will be seen, somewhat marred its success.

In order to draw support from speculators in other nations, his majesty granted a new charter, dated in April, 1728, for promoting the commerce of the said company to the Indies, China, and Bengal. The following summary of the contents of this charter may not be considered alien to the character of this history:—To the new subscribers was conceded an equal participation in the grants, octroys, and privileges secured to the said company by his majesty and his predecessor, and likewise in all the forts, settlements, revenues, houses, magazines, ships, and effects, and in short in all the possessions of the company and future acquisitions. The old shares which, as has been stated, numbered two hundred and fifty, of one thousand rix dollars each, were to remain as they were, with all the rights of the new shares, and the directors were bound to declare and affirm that the liabilities of the company did not exceed one hundred and sixty thousand rix dollars in specie. The united company was obligated to discharge those claims, upon condition that the old shares were entitled to no dividend till the year 1733; it was stipulated, that if the debts exceeded that sum—of which no suspicion beyond this proviso appears to have been entertained—the old shares were answerable for the overplus, and the new shares protected from any demand to meet such a contingency. The value of each new share was settled at one thousand rix-dollars in bank or specie, whereof twenty was to be paid upon account of Mr. Alexander Bruguier, banker, at Hamburg, or in the manner prescribed by the company at Copenhagen in 1727. All future calls in that year were not to exceed five per cent.; the call for the next year not to exceed twenty-five per cent; the balance of the capital not to be called upon without the resolution of a general court of the company. If the entire sum of the said one thousand rix dollars for the new share were not paid on or before the year 1738, the proprietors of the old shares were to have an interest at the rate of five per cent. allowed them for the sum they had paid over and above the new subscribers; every subscriber was allowed to take shares for the bearer, signed by the company, and those who so preferred it, might have them inscribed in the company's books. There was to be paid for each transfer two rix dollars to the company, and half a rix-dollar *to the poor.* The creditors of the company were allowed to take new shares for the sums due to them, provided they discounted on the said debts thirty per cent. for that year for each share, and twenty-five per cent. for the next year. The shares purchased under these conditions were entitled to the same dividends as the others. The said shares were released from liability of seizure, or stop upon any account whatsoever, as was declared in his majesty's octroy. The directors were to communicate yearly to the shareholders an account of the affairs of the company, and that account was to be taken as the data for appropriating the dividend to be specified in a general court of the company by the majority of voices. The directors were not allowed to undertake any trade or commerce in the East Indies upon the company's account, without the consent of the members thereof, and still less were they allowed to dispose of or lend the company's money to any person whatever, for which they were to be answerable *in solido* in their own names and estates. They were to be bound by oath to the exact observance of this article, and for a faithful administration of the affairs of the company for the common benefit and advantage of the members thereof. All the merchandise sold in any place but Copenhagen, was to be paid for in the bank of Hamburg to the account of one or more merchants, and most substantial tradesmen, for the company's account. These merchants were to be chosen, and appointed in a general court of the company by a majority of voices, and in no other way upon any pretence whatever. The said merchants or cashiers were to be paid money, but upon orders signed by three directors at least. The money paid the first year was to be placed at the disposal of the directors, till new ones to be added to them were chosen. The capital arising from the new subscriptions was to be laid out in sending ships to Tranquebar, Bengal, and China, and for no other use whatever. No more money was to be kept in cash than what would be deemed necessary for repairing, fitting and sending out ships, as in the preceding article. A general court of the company was to be summoned as soon as possible, in order to choose four new directors out of the new subscribers who might be all foreigners.

The first announcement of this association was hailed with demonstrations of approval and confidence, and the Dutch, the countrymen and friends of the projector, Van Asperen, expressed a great inclination to embark in it; but this disposition was soon repressed. The support of a foreign undertaking was denounced in Holland, as a high offence against the mother country; and the directors and shareholders generally of the East India Company did not fail, in their jealousy for their own interest, to denounce most vehemently the Dutch approvers of the scheme. In a short time after active means were employed to deter Van Asperen, and to nullify the impression he had so extensively made. This movement amongst his own countrymen prejudiced other countries likewise, and a check was given to those favourable demonstrations which shortly before had promised support, security, and success to the enterprise. The removal of the company from Copenhagen to Altena, which, in the beginning of the operations of the company, appeared to be a master-stroke of policy, was now used against it with great success. On the edifice erected for the accommodation of the directors and employés of the company, the following inscription had been placed in conspicuous characters:—"Here is the new India-house for carrying on the commerce of Tranquebar, China, and other places." Although intended merely to attract the attention of the public, it subjected the project to very grave suspicions. Its opponents insisted that this was avowedly a new company, to which the maritime powers had an unquestionable right to object; whereas the old company of Copenhagen was, even in their opinions, established in its legal right to that trade by prescription. Again it was argued that the East India Company at Altena, was only an invention to revive the mysteries of stock-jobbing, and enable those who were in the secret to realize immense fortunes, under the colour of a trade with India, when in reality no such trade was seriously speculated on. It was further added that the royal concessions, in their character, were so very extensive and so highly disinterested, that it was extremely difficult to apprehend that an absolute prince such as was the King of Denmark, would, by the voluntary surrender of the liberties of his subjects, bind them any longer than till they could have answered the concealed purposes of this plausible proposal.* Notwithstanding this serious and unexpected check, the project met with such success, that the managers were encouraged to commence preparations for such an expedition as would be creditable to them. Several experienced adventurers hastened to Copenhagen, and proffered their experience and services, and all the country became soon acquainted with the character of the undertaking, and its great national importance. High expectations were entertained of its success, the popular feeling was enlisted in its favour; men of all grades promoted it with a patriotic zeal, feeling that whatever conduced to the public advantage, ramified to the benefit of every, even the most insignificant, individual in the commonwealth. In this state of public excitement it may be assumed that the utmost vigour was directed to the preparations. In this forward stage of progress, opposition to the company became a matter of state policy with foreign nations, and was prosecuted as such by the ministers of Great Britain and Holland at the court of Denmark. Lord Glenorchy and Mr. Dassenfeldt, the representatives of their respective courts, were instructed to act conjointly in this affair, and to exercise all their influence to procure the abrogation of the powers bestowed on the company. In obedience to these instructions, the following protest was drawn up and presented by them to the court of Denmark:—

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* *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii.; p. 51; Raynal's *History*, vol. xiii. p. 204—206.

> "His majesty the King of Great Britain and their mightinesses the states-general of the United Provinces, foreseeing the injury the transferring of the East Company from Copenhagen to Altena, will do to the commerce of their subjects, and perceiving with concern that almost at the same instant they are making so great efforts to stop the progress of the Ostend Company, the King of Denmark, their good old friend and ally, is setting up another, equally prejudicial to their subjects, have ordered the subscribing ministers to make most humble representations to his Danish Majesty, hoping from his majesty's friendship, that as soon as he shall be informed of an uneasiness this novelty gives them, he will withdraw the privileges lately granted to that company, and leave it on the ancient footing as always has subsisted at Copenhagen. Accordingly, the subscribing ministers desire your excellency to make a report thereof to the king, and to procure them a favourable answer. Done at Copenhagen, July 31, 1728.
>
> "GLENORCHY AND DASSENFELDT."

The courteous phraseology in which this extraordinary interference and demand were couched, did not recommend the pill to the relish of his Danish majesty and his advisers. However, he deemed it advisable to reply, and he assured the maritime powers that "they had totally mistaken him in the matter, because it was never the intention to erect a new company, or to transfer that which had now existed above one hundred and ten years from Copenhagen to Altena; that this was manifest from the copy of the incorporation, which granted no new powers to the company, but barely confirmed the old ones; that the voyages proposed directly for China, could not be esteemed an infraction of treaties, not more than the voyages formerly made by the company's ships from Tranquebar; that, further still, his majesty was not restrained, by any treaty whatever, from maintaining and supporting the commerce of his subjects to the Indies, either from their establishments in that part of the world, or from Copenhagen; that the law of nature and nations, not only gave him a right, but made it his duty to promote the welfare of his subjects, and to extend their trade as far as was in his power; and, finally, that as he did not encourage this commerce with the view of injuring the East India Company in England or Holland, but purely with a design to benefit his own subjects, he could not discern how this should expose him to the resentment of any power whatever." Whatever may be said in favour of the justice and cogency of these arguments, they did not satisfy the courts to which they were addressed. A protest was prepared to show the insufficiency of them, and the right which the maritime powers had to expect that his majesty should comply with their demands, and withdraw his protection from the company. This memorial was delivered by the Earl of Chesterfield, and the deputies of the United Provinces to Mr. Greys, his Danish majesty's minister at the Hague, in the summer of 1729, from which time it does not appear that any further applications were made on the subject.*

Though the early progress of the company was retarded by this vigorous opposition, it eventually proved favourable to it. Frederick, now verging to the grave, and equally reluctant to be involved in fresh troubles, and unwilling to compromise the interests and rights of his subjects, withdrew his support from the Altena Company, but at the same time he recommended it to the patronage of his son, who shortly after succeeded him on the throne by the title of Christian VI. The withdrawal of the king had the salutary effect of weeding the company of all the speculators who were merely interested in the traffic in shares, and stimulated several to engage in an enterprise the promising nature of which was demonstrated by the powerful jealousy which it had provoked. The dreadful conflagation with which Copenhagen was visited and laid in ashes towards the end of Frederick's reign, retarded the operations of the company; but the revival of commercial confidence, and the liberal and well-directed encouragement of his successor, shortly after gave it an impulse which was attended with felicitous results.

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* See *Historical Register; Recueil Historique d'Actes, Négociations, Mémoires et Traités.* Par M. Rousset, tom. v. p. 35; *Universal History*, vol. xi.

In a very short space of time order was restored; the East India house at Copenhagen, the dockyards, and magazines, were put into repair, the direct commerce with China established, and so judiciously conducted that it continued steadily to increase for several years after, and the trade to Tranquebar was better regulated, and yielded a more profitable return than it had done at any previous period.

The details connected with the after history of the Danish Company necessarily become involved in the history of the progress of the *British Empire in the East*, and shall receive such passing notice as may comport with their importance.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE MINOR EAST INDIA COMPANIES:—SWEDISH, PRUSSIAN, TRIESTE, AND SPANISH.

THE SWEDISH COMPANY.

IT was to the ruin of the Ostend Company, that Sweden, as well as Denmark, owed the establishment in its dominions, of an East India Company. Though a brave and hardy race, and celebrated in the earliest accounts we possess of the northern parts of the world, for the boldness of their ocean enterprises, the Swedes were among the last of the European nations to engage in maritime speculations. Their passion was war, and in its pursuit they left to the merchants of the Hanse Towns whatever little commerce their country supplied, and this was almost exclusively confined to the fisheries on their coasts.

The famous Gustavus Adolphus, while engaged in the war with Poland, entertained the design of opening a trade to the East for his subjects, and such as were desirous of co-operating with them, and for that purpose issued letters patent, dated at Stockholm, June 14, 1626; but the wars which shortly after broke out in Germany, so engrossed his attention, that for the remainder of his life he had no opportunity of paying the attention it deserved to his enlightened and patriotic project.

In the reign of Christina, the learned daughter of Gustavus, though some of the Swedes had planted a colony in North America, none of them made any effort to share the wealth which abounded in eastern realms.

The desolation which the wars of Charles XII. inflicted on his country was not redeemed by the splendour of his barren victories. The little commerce that had previously struggled for existence, during his turbulent and ungenial rule was exhausted. Perhaps the only beneficial result of his adventurous reign was, that many of his subjects who had fled to foreign countries to escape the miseries war had inflicted, having gleaned knowledge and the fruits of their industry, in the following reign—when Sweden began to recover—returned to enrich it, and every encouragement was held out to induce enterprising foreigners to visit Sweden and settle there. Encouraged by these favourable indications, and other concomitant circumstances, one Mr. Henry Konig, an eminent merchant at Stockholm, proposed to form an East India Company. He submitted his scheme to the king and his ministers, and proved to their satisfaction that there were various parts of Asia and Africa, with which a trade might be remuneratively established, without infringing on existing treaties, or impinging on the possessions or interests of other states. He argued that Sweden at all times was entitled to the common right of nations, of which in times past, had she thought it expedient, she might have availed herself; that never was offered so favourable an opportunity as the present. To ensure success, he argued that the assistance of skilled and wealthy foreigners should be enlisted—the former to conduct a commerce which the latter would essentially serve to initiate and to sustain. He assured them that he knew, from his own commercial acquaintance, that there were several capitalists who had withdrawn from the Ostend Company, anxiously on the look out for a profitable and safe investment, who, if judiciously encouraged, would lend their zealous and efficient co-operation.* He succeeded in seriously impressing both the sovereign and his advisers with the assurance that there would be no great difficulty in finding both men and money in prosecuting this commerce with success; and in such a manner, as to hazard no risk of loss by trade, or by opposition from other powers. All his statements having been carefully examined, it was resolved to authorise Konig to associate together as many as he could find willing to enter into the speculation, and, with the advice and consent of the senate, the king granted him a charter, dated June 14, 1731,* precisely one hundred and five years after letters patent, for the like purpose, were signed by Gustavus. This charter has been pronounced to be one of the best digested instruments of its kind extant. A summary at least of it here is essential to the comprehension of what remains to be said upon the subject:—The king hereby concedes to Henry Konig and his associates, the liberty of navigating and trading to the East Indies for fifteen years, and with the inhabitants of all countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, with the Island of Japan, wherever they shall think proper or convenient, with this single restriction—that they shall not trade in any port belonging to any prince or state in Europe without free leave first had and obtained. The ships engaged in this traffic shall constantly take in their lading at Gottenburg, to which port they shall return with all the merchandise they shall bring with them from the East Indies, and cause the same to be publicly sold as soon as they can. The said Henry Konig shall pay to the King of Sweden, during the said fifteen years, one hundred thalers for every *last* employed in their trade, within six months after the return of each ship. The company's ships must be built in Sweden, and be rigged and equipped with Swedish materials; and no foreign ships or materials must be employed, unless it be found impracticable to procure such in Sweden. The ships may be armed as the company think proper, and carry the Swedish flag. The company may make their capital any sum they think proper. They may export silver, bullion of all kinds, except Swedish coins; and they may import all kinds of merchandise from India. Their seamen and soldiers are exempted from being pressed into the king's service; these ships are never to be hindered from sailing, under any pretence whatever; their commanders are invested with the same power of maintaining discipline on board ship, which the commanders of the king's ships possess; and they are authorised to oppose, by force of arms, all pirates and others who may attempt to molest them in any part of the world. The goods imported by the company are exempted from paying duties, except a very trifling acknowledgment upon removing them. The company's business is to be conducted by three directors, who must all be Protestants, native or naturalized subjects of Sweden, and residing in the kingdom, and Henry Konig is named the first of them. If any director betrays his trust, or acts in any respect improperly, the proprietors may apply to the college of commerce, who are empowered to suspend him, in which case the proprietors are to elect another in his stead. All foreigners who are proprietors of the company's stock, or are employed in their service, shall be naturalized on making application to the king; and their property shall be, on no account, liable to arrest. All other subjects of Sweden are forbidden from trading within the company's limits, on pain of forfeiting their vessels and cargoes. The king promises to renew, alter, or enlarge the company's privileges, if it shall be found necessary for promoting the prosperity of their trade.

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* *Universal History*, vol. ii. p. 252; Macpherson's *Commercial Dictionary*.

The reason why the charter was of such limited duration—fifteen years—is, that it was thought it would be the best expedient either to afford an earlier opportunity of rectifying any imperfections incident to new undertakings, or to satisfy, in some degree, the denouncers of the scheme, many of whom strenuously opposed it.* Being restricted from interfering with the settlements of other nations, the company was guarded against any reasonable grounds of complaint, or even jealousies on the part of any of them, and the effects of this precaution was seen in the very first stage of proceedings. Their preparations were made without remonstrance or molestation. Two large ships were built and soon got ready for sea, furnished and armed in the most efficient manner. Men were scrupulously selected for supercargoes. Their abilities, moral worth, and intimate acquaintance with the duties of their office were the qualifications. The officers and sailors were selected with similar discretion. In fact, everything was regulated with judgment and caution, and in two years after the charter was granted, the *Frederick* and *Ulrica*, so named from the king and queen, put out from the harbour of Gottenburg, to encounter the perils of the ocean in search of the productions of Indian climes.

The king had officially notified to the states-general the establishment of the company, adding, at the same time, his earnest resolve to rigidly enforce the restrictions which forbade their interference with the trade of other European nations, and an assurance was given that he would pay ready money for whatever refreshments or repairs might be wanted in the ports of any of his allies. He expressed his hopes that those moderate demands would be readily granted. He had to make a second application to elicit a reply, which was indeed a very qualified one. Their mightinesses said, that though they could not be expected to favour the new company, they would give every necessary succour to his majesty's subjects. As further evidence of the interest with which the king watched the development of the company, and to mark their appearance in China with a special token of his royal favour, he invested Mr. Colin Campbell, the supercargo of the *Frederick*, with the character of his ambassador to the Emperor of China, and some other oriental princes.

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* *Supplement au Corps*, tom. ii. p. 2, and p. 305; Postlethwaite's *Commercial Dictionary*.

* Raynal, vol. iii. p. 40.

At the starting of the company their stock varied from one voyage to another. It was said to have amounted to a quarter of a million of our money in 1753, and about two hundred thousand only at the last convention. However, there were no data accessible to the public by which they could accurately estimate it, for the accounts were never publicly exposed. The Swedes had in the first stages much less interest in the stock than they subsequently acquired, and in consequence of this the government deemed it politic to throw some mystery about it. With this object it was enacted that any director who should divulge the name of a proprietor, or the sum he had subscribed, should be suspended or even removed, and forfeit all the money which he had invested in the speculation. This policy of concealment, which seems so inconceivable in a free country, was persevered in for thirty-five years. It was, however, provided that twelve of the proprietors should investigate the accounts of the directors once in four years, but the auditors were nominated by themselves; and in England it is known by unpleasant experience what little security such provision yields. In subsequent years the power of appointments was conveyed to the proprietors, and, as a matter of course, with the beneficial effects that usually attend honest inquiry and unrestricted publicity. As Raynal tersely observes,[*] "Secrecy in politics is like lying; it may preserve a state for the moment, but must certainly ruin it in the end. Both are only serviceable to evil-minded persons."

The first vessels sent out were well received by the Chinese, and permission was granted to them to establish a factory at Canton, on the same terms as were enjoyed by the other European powers having establishments in that city.

At the time when the arrival of the ships was eagerly expected in Sweden, a letter was received from Mr. Campbell, conveying the disagreeable intelligence that on the return of the *Frederick*, as she was at the entrance of the Straits of Sunda, she was fired upon by seven Dutch vessels, captured, and led into Batavia. The Dutch commodore alleged that he was acting under the orders of his government, and would have captured the vessel even if the King of Sweden were aboard. On complaint being made by the Swedish minister to the states-general, they, and also the directors of the Dutch East India Company, protested that they had never issued such orders. The ship was soon liberated, and an insult to the Swedish flag was never after offered by the ships of the Dutch company. The *Ulrica* reached Gottenburg without any accident, and the voyage proved moderately profitable. This good commencement spirited on the directors to renewed exertions, and to hope that succeeding expeditions would prove still more satisfactory.[*] They were not disappointed. The way in which the servants of the company conducted themselves, won for them the esteem and favour of the native authorities, and inhabitants generally, of Canton; and they showed themselves disposed to favour them in every possible way. Their trade, notwithstanding the loss of some of their vessels, proved exceedingly remunerative to the shareholders and the nation at large, for by it they were enabled to export a considerable quantity of Swedish merchandise, and but a very inconsiderable portion of their oriental importations was consumed in the country. The money obtained from foreigners for what they exported, far exceeded the amount of bullion transmitted to the Indian markets. Thus, the exchange was greatly in favour of Sweden, and the inevitable result of such a state of things was soon made visible by the increase of the precious metals, and the improved habits, social comforts, and increasing demand for labour.

At home the company met with some impediments. They were obliged to take foreigners principally into their service, and there being no nation in Europe more jealous than the Swedes, this generated a great deal of discontent. The populace murmured that the bread was being taken out of their mouths. These complaints were as unjust as they were illiberal; those whom they directed their wrath against were spending their earnings, as a matter of course, amongst them; and those against whom a plausible charge could be brought—the non-resident shareholders—were overlooked and escaped the popular indignation. To subdue this irrational ferment, an order was published announcing that at least two-thirds of the seamen on board their ships should be native Swedes. As this order could not be executed in consequence of the paucity of native mariners, the common people, who were the great bulk of the malcontents, quickly discovered the silliness of their clamour, and were at length convinced that the company had done no more than what circumstances justified and their charter privileged, and that no undue partiality existed for the foreigners.

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[*] Le secret dans la politique est comme le mesonge: il sauve pour un moment les etats, et les perd a la longue. L'un et l'autre n'est utile qu'aux mechans.—*Hist. Philos. et Polit.* tom. iii. p. 215. *Imprimé a La Hayè,* 1774.

[*] Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India.*

In the year 1746 the company's charter was renewed, and the term of their exclusive trade prolonged to the year 1766.

From the first establishment of the Swedish company, every partner was at liberty to withdraw his capital upon the termination of the particular voyage for which it was invested, and hence arose the fluctuations already noticed. Experiencing the injurious effects of this precarious state of their stock, it was agreed, in the year 1753, that from that time forward it should be fixed and permanent, and that any proprietor wishing to withdraw should, as in other joint-stock companies in Europe, find a purchaser. At the same time the king, to enable the company to maintain its position against the rivalry of the Prussian trade recently established at Embden, agreed to a commutation duty of twenty per cent. upon the value of the East India goods consumed within the kingdom, instead of the lastage duty, hitherto paid by every ship for each voyage. But in the year 1765, when the charter was nearly expired, the government not only resumed the lastage duty, but also demanded the arrears alleged to be due since 1753. This was not the only attempt made by the government to obtain a participation in the profits. A renewal of the charter was granted in 1766 for a term of twenty years, and as a consideration for this favour the company were obliged to lend to the state above one hundred thousand pounds sterling, at six per cent. interest. As a security for this, they were allowed to retain in their hands the duty payable upon every ship, till the whole of that debt was liquidated.

The chief trade was with China, and the commerce of that vast kingdom and those to the east of it, being looked upon by the other European nations, as merely incidental to their Indian trade, was the cause why the Swedes were permitted to pursue it without interruption and jealousy. Four-fifths of imports were teas, the consumption of which was very small indeed in Sweden, owing to the check it received by the imposition of a tax of not less than twenty-five per cent. All the rest of their imports were exported on paying to the state eight per cent. on the produce of the sales. By far the largest quantity of teas thus sold fell into the hands of foreigners—and realized ready money—chiefly for the purpose of being smuggled into Great Britain. This clandestine trade was carried on with very great success for years, till it received its death-blow in the year 1784 by the passing of an act for lowering the duties on teas. The produce of these public sales was variable, of course influenced by the number and tonnage of the vessels engaged in it, and by the demand. Raynal says it may be affirmed that it has scarcely ever fallen below two millions of livres,* and has never risen higher than five millions.†

THE PRUSSIANS IN INDIA.

The name of Frederick the Great of Prussia will live—with his faults and his virtues—in the grateful remembrance of a people, it may be said peoples, whom he raised from a state of depression to be a kingdom, great in its victories, great in its intellectual progress, great in the councils of the greatest nations, and great in its alliances, political and matrimonial.

Having enlarged and secured his dominion, he was deliberating on the best means of enriching it, when a fortunate event put him in possession of East Friesland, in 1744. This province contains the city and port of Embden, the only one he possessed in his dominions, and this he proposed to make the seat of a flourishing trade with India. Embden is the capital of the little province of East Friesland. It is a considerable seaport, now belonging to Hanover, situated on the river Ems, or Embs, at its influx into the North Sea, at the Bay of Dollart. About three centuries ago it was reckoned one of the best ports in Europe. The English, compelled to abandon Antwerp, had made it the centre of their relations with the continent. The Dutch had for a long time endeavoured to appropriate it, but in vain. At length it excited their jealousy to such a degree, that they attempted to fill up the port. It commands all the essentials to entitle it to be the emporium of a great trade. The only inconvenience it seemed to labour under as the seat of Prussian commerce was its distance from the bulk of the Prussian dominions, and the delay which would be incurred in succouring it in an emergency; but Frederick was of opinion that the terror of his name would be its protection, and in this persuasion he established there the East India Company.

To further his views, he decided on the incorporation of an East India Company, and for the accomplishment of this he held out hopes of encouragement to foreigners. The expectation of royal patronage, particularly from a prince of his great reputation, speedily brought around him several ready to co-operate with him in the maturing of his project. These were mostly composed of Englishmen, Dutchmen, and Frenchmen, who set at defiance the restrictions which their respective governments had framed to prevent their subjects from joining any such alien speculations.

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* £83,333 6*s.* 8*d.*

† £20,833 6*s.* 8*d.*

The new Prussian company was incorporated under the title of the Asiatic or China Company, on the 11th of September, 1750, for the term of fifty years. The charter states that during that period they were privileged to send two ships every year to China. All goods imported by them, and sold to foreigners, might be exported without being subject to dues; and the company might export any article manufactured in the king's dominions without paying any duty. Foreigners subscribing to the company's capital acquired all the privileges of Prussian subjects. Noblemen might subscribe without derogating from their dignity. All countries to be conquered by them were to be their own property. They were also invested with the privilege of carrying on several manufactures, and the herring, cod, and whale fisheries, and to trade in all places where their vessels could have free access, &c. &c.

In the course of four or five years the company dispatched six ships to China; but it is asserted—and there are very strong grounds for adopting the statement—that very inefficient, if not improper agents, were entrusted with the management, for of all the European adventures in those days of profit and plunder in the East the Prussian company alone were unfortunate. On winding up their accounts, when the war put an end to their commerce, in 1756, they discovered that their profits amounted to one-half per cent. in the year.

On the 1st of January, 1753, the king established a second company, also at Embden, for trading to Bengal, and the countries adjacent thereto, during the space of twenty years, and with permission to send as many vessels as they pleased. The usual privileges of joint-stock companies were granted to them, including the power to make their own laws, to choose their directors, subject, however, to his majesty's approval.

The capital was limited to one million Brandenburg crowns, in shares of five hundred crowns each. The formation of the original company could not be completed; and some other persons, with the king's permission, obtained the charter, and opened subscriptions at Embden, Breslau, Konigsberg, Magdeburg, Antwerp, and Hamburg. They proposed to send one or two ships on experimental trips to Bengal as soon as the funds subscribed would admit.

After several delays a ship was dispatched to Bengal, and a factory established there. It was cast away in the Ganges in the year 1756. In the year 1761 the second was sent out by the company to look for the remains of the first. This was not attended with success; no profits were realized, and all hopes of establishing a trade with that part of India abandoned. The Asiatic or China Company, however, continued to carry on some kind of trade with China; but eventually Embden itself reverted to the possession of Hanover, and Prussia ceased to have any interest in it.

THE IMPERIAL COMPANY OF TRIESTE.

This company owes its existence to one William Bolts,* an Englishman, who, having served in India, and being dismissed the service of the English East India Company, transferred his allegiance to Maria Theresa, the Empress of Austria, and was received by her as one of her subjects. In testimony of his gratitude, he laid before her a proposal for establishing a trade with Africa and the East Indies, and to make one of her ports at the head of the Adriatic the seat of it, and thus obviate any objection, on the score of treaties, which might be started against such an establishment in the Netherlands. To enable him to carry his project into effect, he solicited the empress to let him have an assortment of metals, cannon, and small arms, from the imperial mines and manufactories, to the amount of one hundred and eighty thousand florins, and to allow him two years for the payment.†

The scheme was received with royal favour, and a charter conceded, dated the 5th of June, 1775, whereby he was authorized, during the space of ten years, to carry on a trade, with vessels under the imperial flag, from the Austrian ports in the Adriatic to Persia, India, China, and Africa; to transport negro slaves from Africa to America; to take goods upon freight either for the imperial ports or any others for account of foreigners, whose properties shall not be liable to confiscation, even if they should belong to nations at war with her; to take possession in the queen's name of any territories which he might obtain from the princes of India: and the charter declared that the vessels belonging to him should be exempted from arrest or detention at all times, whether of peace or war; and that he should be provided with necessary passports, and care taken to obtain redress for him if attacked or molested.

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* Mr. Bolts arrived in Bengal in the year 1760; he resigned his appointment in the company's service in 1766. Finding that he proposed remaining in India in defiance of their regulations, they were obliged to make use of the powers vested in them by parliament, to send him home.

† This was condoned by the empress's successor.

Bolts took into partnership Charles Proli and Company, of Antwerp, merchants, to the extent of one-third of the business. It was agreed that two ships were to be got ready, loaded at Leghorn and Trieste, and that Bolts was to accompany them, for the purpose of establishing factories and commercial relations in India, leaving the charter in the hands of his partners, who were to open a house of India trade in Trieste. Bolts proceeded to London, and there bought a ship. When he got to sea he superseded the English captain, hoisted the imperial colours, and sailed into Lisbon. There his crew was seized upon, and carried off by an English frigate. Nothing daunted, he soon collected another, composed of Italians, arrived in Leghorn, and thence steered for India. Having founded three factories on the coast of Malabar, one on the Nicobar Island, and one at Delagoa, on the coast of Africa, he returned with three ships to Leghorn, in May, 1781.

The success of this adventure so pleased the Grand-duke of Tuscany, that he granted a charter to Bolts, which secured to him the exclusive trade between Tuscany and all the islands beyond the Cape Verde Islands, to be conducted with two ships under Tuscan colours.

So far successful, and favoured by two princes, his fortune seemed to be guaranteed; but such was not the case. On the contrary, he found himself much embarrassed. This, as he represents the matter, was entirely owing to the want of faith on the side of his partners. Whoever was to blame, as soon as his creditors heard of his success, they crowded to Leghorn, and seized on his three ships and cargoes. To release himself from this position, he was obliged to involve himself still further with the firm, and ceded to M. Proli and Company the imperial charter, and also the Tuscan charter, in order to raise a joint-stock of two million florins; he further renounced any right he might have in the profits made by the ships they had sent to China, except a commission of two per cent. upon the gross sales of the cargoes; and he took upon himself the liabilities of a ship called the *Grand-duke of Tuscany*, with her cargo, which had been seized at the Cape of Good Hope by the French and Dutch in 1781, and also of another vessel expected from Malabar. For these advantageous concessions the firm, "in friendship," lent him £6280 16*s.* 8*d.*, at five per cent. interest, to pay off a debt contracted on the joint account, and agreed that he should be at liberty to send two ships to India or China on his own sole account, only paying to them a rate of commission of six per cent. on the gross amount of the cargoes in Europe. This agreement was confirmed by Joseph II., who also authorized them to raise the sum of two millions of florins, the proposed amount of the capital of the new IMPERIAL COMPANY OF TRIESTE FOR THE COMMERCE OF ASIA.

Proli and Company immediately opened subscriptions to raise this capital. The existing stock they valued at one million of florins, and for the remaining million they offered shares at one thousand florins each. They declared themselves directors at Antwerp, and Bolts, and another not yet elected, directors at Trieste.

At a meeting of the partners—the only one ever held—in September, 1781, it was proposed to send out six ships for China and India, two for the east coast of Africa, and three for the Northern Whale Fishery, and Proli and Co. engaged to procure the money, and were authorized to do so.

In November, 1786, Bolts, on his own account, fitted out a large vessel for the north-west coast of America, to take advantages of the fur trade, there newly opened, and to convey the cargo to China. He proposed that the ship should pass round Cape Horn, and after loading at Nootka, and selling the furs in China, return to Europe by the Cape of Good Hope, and thus have the honour of accomplishing the first Austrian circumnavigation of the world. The measures which he adopted promised an assurance of success.

To superintend the voyage Bolts had engaged four officers, the companions of Cook in his perilous wanderings; five naturalists were also engaged to extend the demesne of science; and a Bermudian sloop was purchased to serve as a tender, but these preparations were all frustrated, as Bolts asserts, by the malicious intrigues of his brother directors, whereby he sustained an enormous loss, and was obliged to engage the ship in another way.

The other directors were not inactive in April, 1782. They boasted they had six million florins at command, and six ships under the Austrian flag in active service; but their ardour was somewhat moderated by the intelligence which about this time reached them, that their factory at Delagoa had been destroyed by the Portuguese, who claimed a right to that territory. Five of the company's vessels arrived from China, at Ostend in 1784, which had been made a free port by the emperor on his visit there in 1781. But the fortunate arrival of so many ships, with nearly three millions and a half pounds of tea, besides other goods, was counterbalanced by the loss of the *Imperial Eagle*, which was arrested by the creditors, and involved the loss of three hundred thousand florins. This disheartened several of the shareholders, and induced them to withdraw. Their stock was sold at thirty-five per cent. below par, and afterwards the holders were more unfortunate still, for in the year following the company was declared bankrupt to the amount of ten million florins.

This company encountered no opposition from the jealousy of the other nations of Europe with the exception of the petty kingdom of Portugal; and, in all human probability, its success had been brilliant, were it not for the jealousy and differences of Bolts, and the copartners

THE SPANIARDS IN INDIA.

The latest of the nations in Europe which established commercial intercourse with India was Spain, though the Spaniards were the first after the Portuguese who crossed the Pacific, and navigated the Indian Ocean.

In the fifteenth century, while the Portuguese were energetically prosecuting their discoveries, extending their trade, and establishing their power in the East, their neighbours, the Spaniards, were, with equal activity and success, securing boundless treasures in the West,* Columbus having added the newly discovered western continent to its dominions. There was no state to dispute the sovereignty of the vast extent of sea and land to which they claimed a right, nor did either power then apprehend that—by the giant strength of the sluggish denizens of the swamps of the Lowlands or the isolated inhabitants of the isles of the West—those splendid demesnes would be rudely torn from their grasp; and confidently they calculated when the sovereign pontiff, in the plenitude of his assumed temporal dictatorship, had decided that a meridian drawn from the north to the south, three hundred and seventy leagues westward of Cape de Verde, should bound the mutual possessions and right of maritime discovery of the two kingdoms,† that no son of mother church would impiously dispute so venerable an adjustment.

Several years elapsed after the discovery by Columbus of America, before an attempt was made to explore the ocean which it was conjectured extended far away to the west of it. Vasco Nunez de Balboa, a Spanish adventurer, guided by some Indians, was the first European who was gratified by beholding its broad expanse. This occurred in 1513. The court of Spain, in 1515, dispatched Juan Diaz de Solis, who had previously sailed along the coast of Brazil, to attempt a passage to the South Sea and to India along the southern shore, part of the recently discovered continent.* This expedition proved disastrous: in an encounter with the Indians on the banks of the Rio de la Plata many of his followers were slain, and the survivors returned to Spain.

A second attempt was made to reach India from a Spanish settlement on the southern coast of Mexico. Vessels were fitted out for the voyage; but unfortunately the timber made use of in their construction was so subject to be wormeaten, that in a few weeks they ceased to be seaworthy, and thus terminated these preparations.

It was reserved for Fernando de Magalhanes (Magellan) to attempt this with success. Notwithstanding the recent arbitration of the pope, the line of demarcation was not so definitely drawn as to obviate the origin of disputes. The splendid empire secured in Asia to Manuel of Portugal excited the jealousy of his brother Fernando, King of Castile, and he made several fruitless attempts to be allowed to participate in its advantages. After the death of that prince a disaffected Portuguese, who had served Manuel with distinction both in Ethiopia and India, and complained—perhaps not without cause—that royalty's rewards were not commensurate with the perils encountered and the results realized, fled to the court of Castile, and there succeeded, perhaps with little effort, in impressing on the new king, Charles V. of Austria, that, by the division made with the papal line, the Molucca Islands geographically belonged to Spain. To these he also proposed a shorter route than that by the Cape of Good Hope—namely, by the Brazils. In August, 1519, he set out with five ships, with absolute power over the crews. Steering towards the Canaries, he doubled the Cape de Verde, passed the islands of that name, and boldly steered into the limitless waste of the Western Ocean. He coasted along the shores of Brazil, daunted by no dangers of unknown waters, warring elements, mutinous crews, or fierce gigantic Patagonians, whose naturally large physical proportions were extravagantly exaggerated by the nervous fears of his apprehensive followers. He passed the *land of giants;* and in September, 1520, arrived at a cape which he called after the eleven thousand virgins, and then entered the fearful straits which immortalise his name and his toils. Passing through a series of perils of more than romantic interest, he at length reached the Philippine Islands, after a passage of fifteen hundred leagues. Here he lost his valuable life in a conflict between two native chiefs, the quarrel of one of whom he was imprudently induced to espouse. Only one—the *Victoria*—of his six vessels returned to Spain; she arrived there in September, 1522,* bringing home a cargo of spices taken in at the Molucca Islands, and with only eighteen men, survivors of the battles and voyages, who, having returned by the Cape of Good Hope, had the honour of being the first circumnavigators of the globe. Had Magalhanes returned, he was to have a patent for exclusive trading, for the period of ten years, with the countries which he should have discovered. "If," says Dunham,—and he is perfectly justified in making the observation,—"the object of the expedition failed through the catastrophe of its leader, he will be considered by posterity as by far the most undaunted, and in many respects the most extraordinary man, that ever traversed an unknown sea."

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* Raynal's *Histoire des Etablissements dans les Indes*, tom. ii. p. 236.

† Dunham's *History of Spain and Portugal*, vol. ii. p. 280.

* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce in the East*, p. 319.

The Portuguese were startled by the discovery of this new route to Asia, the claims laid to the Moluccas, and the endless pretensions which, by possibility, might arise out of them; but Charles, who was now not only King of Spain, and sovereign of the seventeen rich provinces of the Netherlands, but also Emperor of Germany, was too powerful to be influenced by threats or aggressions. Three hundred and fifty thousand ducats of gold, were paid to Spain in consideration of its desisting from further trading in those oriental regions; however, the right was reserved of resuming that trade on the repayment of the money advanced. The bargain was concluded by a treaty executed at Saragossa, on the 22nd of April, 1529.

By this treaty the commerce of the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, was secured to Portugal as long as it continued independent of Spain. On the union of these kingdoms some time after, the Portuguese settlements, as dependencies on Spain, were exposed to the hostilities of the English and Dutch, who were engaged in war against the latter power. The Portuguese, however, were expelled from the Moluccas at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Several subsequent efforts were made to find out a shorter route than by the Straits of Magellan, but without success. The Spaniards were, therefore, confined to carrying on the trade with the Spice Islands from their lately established settlements on the western shores of America. The commodities of the East and West were transported by land carriage across the narrow Isthmus of Panama.

In 1564 the Philippine Islands were brought under the dominion of Spain by Miguel Lopez de Legaspi. In the island of Zebu he founded a town called San Miguel; and in the island of Leuconia he erected Manilla, destined to become the capital of the Spanish dominions in the Eastern seas, and was greatly enriched by the commerce with America, China, and other rich countries and islands. It is called by the Spaniards the pearl of the East.

The branch of commerce which is most cultivated at Manilla is with Acapulco, in Mexico. Thither ships are sent annually, called galleons. The origin of this trade is rather curious, and is sufficiently important to justify a passing notice. It is thus told by Macpherson:—"The missionaries whom Philip II., in his zeal for the propagation of the Catholic religion, had sent to convert the natives of the Philippine Islands, represented to him that they could not perform the sacrifice of the mass for want of flour and wine, and they proposed and requested that those necessary articles should be brought to them from Acapulco, the nearest Spanish port on the continent of America. The king, notwithstanding a strenuous opposition made by the council of the Indies, acceded to the proposal of the missionaries, and licensed the viceroy of Mexico to send every year a vessel to Manilla loaded with flour and wine, and gave strict orders that no other merchandise whatever should be carried to or from Manilla. After the importation of the flour and wine had gone on for some years in strict observance of the royal mandate, the viceroys of Mexico and Manilla agreed among themselves that the annual vessel, instead of returning quite empty to Acapulco, should carry a parcel of Chinese and Indian silks and cotton piece goods to be sold for their joint account. When the energy of the Spanish government declined, the vigilance of the council of India relaxed, or perhaps their complaisance to the viceroys increased; in consequence of this, the trade of carrying oriental merchandise to Acapulco was pursued to such an extent as to require two ships of from fifteen to eighteen hundred tons burthen, which arrived annually at Acapulco, heavily freighted with rich stuffs of every kind, and also linens made in China, in imitation of the French fabrics; diamonds, pearls, spiceries, drugs, tea, porcelain, &c., sufficient for the consumption of the great province of Mexico. The returns consisted of cochineal, confections, mercery goods, some European trinkets, and the original articles, flour and wine; but the chief part of the return cargo was uniformly silver, to the amount of five or six million dollars. This trade, begun by the two viceroys for their own emolument, appears, upon the subsequent augmentation of it, to have been shared by the inhabitants, and became very prejudicial to the trade between Spain and Mexico by supplying the colonists with an innumerable variety of articles of Indian and Chinese manufacture, which, by their superior cheapness, and most of them also by their superior beauty, rendered the rival European fabrics in a great measure unsaleable, and very much impaired the king's revenue—not only by the deficiency of the duty upon merchandise exported from the kingdom, but also by depriving him of his share of the silver, which would be imported into Spain if not diverted to Manilla, whence it was carried to India and China."*

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* Dunham's *History of Spain and Portugal*, vol. iii. p. 312.

In consequence of this state of things, it was often a subject of serious consideration to Spanish governments whether it would not be to the interest of the mother country to abandon the Philippine Islands.

To this predisposition is to be attributed the policy adopted by the Spanish monarchy in 1720, which, reluctant to relinquish the sovereignty of so many islands, yielded to the remonstrance of the council, and the persevering clamours of the merchants, and imposed a strict prohibition of the use of Chinese and Indian manufactures. This arbitrary measure produced great dissatisfaction; and after a long controversy the colonists at length succeeded in procuring its reversal in the year 1734.

Up to this date there was no direct trade with India, if we overlook the interval from 1580 to 1640, during which Portugal was a portion of the Spanish dominions. Indeed, a direct trade was forbidden by the treaty of Munster, concluded in the year 1648, whereby it was agreed between the King of Spain and the states-general that neither of them should use the East India trade in any other manner than was then practised—that is to say, that the Dutch should only sail by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Spaniards only from their settlements in America. Spain faithfully abided by this arrangement, and never made an attempt to infringe upon it till the year 1733, when a royal charter was granted to Don Emanuel de Arriaga and his associates, under the name of THE ROYAL COMPANY OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS, vesting in them during a period of twenty years the exclusive privilege of sailing to both sides of Africa, and to all the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope. They were empowered to carry the royal colours upon their ships, which were exempted from all duties, in the same manner as if they actually belonged to the royal navy, their officers also being on a footing of equality with those of that service. They were allowed to export bullion without paying any duty. The company were to pay at Cadiz a duty of eight per cent. on spices, and five per cent. on all other descriptions of goods imported by them. The capital was fixed at four thousand shares of one thousand dollars each, to be subscribed at Cadiz. The business of the company was confined to nine directors, appointed by the king, each of them possessing twenty-five shares in the company. The king subscribed for four hundred shares, constituting a tenth of the capital.

It has been alleged that there never existed a *bona fide* intention of engaging in commerce, but that that company was concocted for mere stock-jobbing projects. There is no evidence to sustain this condemnatory accusation. It is far more probable that its progress was stopped by the failure of the galleons, and the intrigues of the Chinese merchants in the Philippines.

Another interval of thirty years elapsed without an effort, but in the end of the year 1764, the *Buen Consejo*, a king's ship sailed from Cadiz, and passing the forbidden Cape,* arrived at Manilla, and returned in 1766, with a cargo of eastern produce. Thirteen more voyages followed in the same route, the last of which was completed in 1784.

At this time the charter of the royal Guispuzcoan Company of Caraccas expired, and it was deemed a favourable opportunity, with the aid of their disengaged capital, of establishing a company which would embrace the commerce of both continents. The scheme was sanctioned by the king, and a very liberal chapter granted, dated March 10, 1785, consisting of one hundred articles, of which the following are the most important:—"THE ROYAL COMPANY OF THE PHILIPPINES is established for twenty-five years.—The capital is to consist of eight millions of 'pesos sencillos'† divided into thirty-two thousand shares of two hundred and fifty pesos each, to which all persons, of whatever description, not excepting ecclesiastics, either individually, or corporately may be admitted to subscribe.—The king subscribes a million of dollars for himself and his sons, besides his stock in the Caraccas Company, and he hopes that the National Bank of San Carlos, and the other bank in Spain and the Havannas, will show their zeal for the prosperity of the nation, and the advancement of its commerce, by subscribing largely.—The Caraccas Company shall be incorporated into the Philippine Company, and all their stock be brought into the capital at a fair valuation.—The prosperity of the Philippine Islands being one of the principal motives which induced the king, in his paternal love for his subjects, to establish the company, three thousand shares, shall be reserved for the inhabitants of those islands of every description, whether Spaniards or Indians, whether individuals or communities, to subscribe for them at any time within two years after the publication of the company's charter within the islands.—The shares may be transferred by indorsements, as is practised in those of the National Bank, and at such prices as the parties may agree for." The company were prohibited from raising money upon interest; but if a greater capital were required, they, with the king's permission, might raise an additional sum by a subscription among themselves. A statement of the company's affairs was ordered to be published for the information of all concerned, and copies to be forwarded to the agents in the Indies and the Philippines. During the term of the charter no Spanish vessel, except of the royal navy, or of the company, had permission to go to the Philippine Islands or to India, and no ships but those of the company were privileged to sail direct from Spain to the ports of South America, the Philippines, or India. The company's ships might trade to the other Spanish dominions in America, as other Spanish subjects do, without any exclusive privilege. The company might carry silver or merchandise to the ports of Asia, paying two per cent. on foreign goods, and nothing on Spanish goods or money. They might ship every kind of oriental goods, not excepting piece goods of silk and cotton of every description, at the port of Manilla for Spain, without paying any duty. On their arrival in Spain, they should pay four per cent. rated on the current prices, and a drawback of three and a half per cent. was allowed on re-exportation. The laws formerly promulgated for prohibiting the admission of muslins and other cotton goods, were repealed with respect to those imported by the company. For the encouragement of the Philippines, their products were exempted from duty, when borne directly to Spain. The business was to be conducted by a junta of government, or direction authorised by the king, and consisting of three directors chosen by the king, three by the company, two by the National Bank, two by the Bank "de los Gremios" two by the Bank of Havanna, and one by the Bank of Seville (if those bodies should hold a sufficient amount of stock), and also two stockholders, being in all twelve directors. The king's secretary was empowered to summon a meeting of the junta, when he saw fit, and to act as president.

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* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 321.

* Macpherson, p. 324.

† A *peso sencillo*, 3*s*. 4½*d*.

The project was far from being approved of by the people of Manilla. They did all in their power to injure and bring it into discredit. The discouraging reception which they experienced, however, did not daunt the agents who arrived. They applied themselves to direct the industry of the aborgines to the cultivation of indigo, cotton, pepper, and silk, which they intended to make the staples of the trade of the Philippines.

In 1789, permission was extended to all European vessels to import into Manilla every kind of Asiatic goods, but by no means European, and to receive in return the merchandise of Spain, Spanish America, and the Philippines, and any foreign merchandise imported by the company. This permission was to extend to three years.

With royal favour, large contributions by the king, the extensive privileges conceded, and its wide range of commercial operations, this company did nothing worthy of its inauguration. It is true, commerce was very much deranged by the war which was occasioned by the memorable French revolution; but it must be said to their credit, that with the proceeds of the few cargoes which arrived, and the sale of their stored merchandise, they paid off the money they had borrowed, and some dividends of from five to seven per cent.

CHAPTER LIX.

FRENCH ENTERPRISE IN INDIA AND THE EAST, TO THE TIME OF THE FORMATION OF "THE PERPETUAL COMPANY OF THE INDIES."

OF all the European nations attracted to the East, there is not one whose history is so interwoven with that of the English in their Asiatic transactions as our gallant neighbours the French. In Europe the two nations have been always rivals, and, with very brief intervals, belligerents. There were many interests purely Asiatic, which aggravated the causes of quarrel, involved hostilities at home, and embittered national antipathies. The dire consequences of these rivalries are to be read in the jealousies, intrigues, and fierce, and for some time dubious, conflicts that were maintained for supremacy in India. The narration of these will necessarily form an interesting and considerable portion of this work. It is not consistent with the plan proposed to do more in this chapter than to epitomise the history of the pertinent events which attended the arrival of the French in India, and briefly to trace their progress, until they are placed face to face with their great, persistent, and victorious opponents, whence the records of their deeds commingle.

Though the French were amongst the latest of the European maritime powers to avail themselves of the immense field of wealth thrown open by the discovery of the ocean passage to India, it is a singular fact, not generally known, that they were nearly as early in their discoveries as any nation of the West. In the reign of Louis XII., and in the month of July, 1503, Sieur de Gonneville, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and discovered a great country to which he gave the name of the Southern Indies. He remained there for six months, and brought home with him a young noble of that country.* The extraordinary tales which were circulated of the luxuriant productions of the Portuguese and Spanish discoveries, the rich cargoes arriving from them, the amount of wealth which they drew from the eager purchasers of every part of Europe, and the consequence to which the fortunate kingdom above mentioned had reached, did not affect the excitable inhabitants of France. The cause of this apparent indifference is to be sought in the facts, that the French people, warlike in temperament, were absorbed by the conflict in which they were then engaged, and had neither inclination nor time for the cultivation of commerce, and many of the other arts of peace. The period referred to was one chequered with civil discord, and in addition to this, some of its writers say, that France, with its rich, salubrious, and extensive territories, had not the same incentives as the inhabitants of the limited domains of England and Holland. But a better reason still is that France was not a maritime power, nor had it the facilities to become so in an equal degree. The British, Dutch, and Danes were inured to the dangers of a rough sea, and prepared to seek fortune in the teeth of billow and gale.

One of the ablest princes that have ruled France, was Francis I. His comprehensive mind perceived the advantages which would result from the cultivation of foreign commerce. He proposed to his subjects the benefits which would flow from it, and exhorted them to undertake long voyages. The last of his immediate descendants, Henry III., was equally alive to its importance. In 1578, he issued an edict in which he pressed the same views, but with little success. In the reign of Henry IV., an adventurer, Gerard Leroi,* a native of Flanders, who had been several times to India in the service of Holland, presented himself in France, and offered his services as a pilot, in the event that an East India Company should be formed. This offer was accepted, and the company accordingly incorporated under the king's letters patent granting an exclusive right of trade for fifteen years, on the setting out of their first ship. The enthusiasm with which the proposal of Leroi was first greeted soon cooled, as is unfortunately too often the case; and the company was dissolved without realizing any of those brilliant expectations which had been promised and were anticipated: indeed it did not even initiate a promising movement. Leroi, who fully understood the benefits which France, and he as the projector, would derive from the success of his scheme, did not relinquish his hopes. In the following reign he again came before the public, and, by the patronage of some friends at court, was enabled to enrol his company. The letters patent from Louis

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* *Mémoires touchant l'Etablissement d'une Mission Chrétienne dans le Troisième Monde, presente à N. S. P. le Pape Alexandre VIII. par une Ecclesiastique Originaire de cette méme Terre:* 1663, 8*vo. Déclaration du Capitaine Gonneville, datéd Juillet* 19, 1505.

* Marle's *Histoire de l'Inde*, tom. v. p. 211.

XIII., bear date, March 2, 1611. This much having been accomplished, operations were suspended for some years, owing to disputes amongst the proprietors, and consequent want of funds. At the end of that period of inaction Muisson and Canis, both merchants of Rouen, petitioned the king. They requested that the privileges granted to the company should be transferred to them, pledging themselves that if their prayer were granted, they would in that very year dispatch ships to India. This proposal was of course strenuously opposed by all who had an interest in the existing company. At the suggestion and recommendation of the court, the matter was satisfactorily adjusted: a coalition of both parties was the prudent consequence, and an exclusive power was granted them of trading to the Indies for twelve years, and many other privileges. The letters patent were dated July 2, 1615, and were registered in parliament, September 2.

In the following year, two ships were fitted out. The officers selected for the command possessed the necessary qualifications—for the voyage in those days was looked upon as very extraordinary. They reached India in safety, but here they found they had a difficulty to encounter which had never been thought of. The great portion of the sailors were Dutchmen. On their arrival, the Dutch president of the Indies, published an order commanding all the subjects of the states-general who were on board these vessels to quit them immediately. This order was obeyed, and both the French captains were abandoned by their men, and thus rendered incapable of returning to Europe. One of the ships was sold for a mere trifle; the largest vessel returned safely to France, and, although the company had the misfortune of being reduced to one vessel, the proceeds of the voyage yielded a balance in their favour.

A second expedition was decided on, and prepared with creditable speed. Commodore Beaulieu who commanded one of the former vessels, sailed October 2, 1619, from Honfleur road with three ships. The commodore has left a curious and instructive narrative of this voyage, from which it appears that the vessels were well built and provided with every essential requisite, and the voyage conducted with skill and address. Two of the ships obtained their cargoes at Achen, in the Island of Sumatra, but the third was lost on the coast of Java, having on board goods to the value of eighty thousand pounds. The commodore charged the Dutch with having sunk her and all the men aboard. The two surviving ships returned to Havre, in December, 1620.

Disheartened by the prospective recurrence of such disasters, the company abandoned the intention of proceeding to India, and confined themselves for the time to the establishment of a colony in the Island of Madagascar, from which they calculated, at no distant day, to be able to prosecute their voyages to the original destination. But these hopes were also doomed to disappointment. By a series of misfortunes and a continuance of misgovernment, all their returns thence fell far short of the expenses incurred in the maintenance of their settlement. The consequence was the dissolution of the company, and for several years no effort was made towards pushing a trade with the East Indies, and no beneficial result remained to mark the existence of previous expeditions.

The next attempt made by the French to share in a commerce which was enriching all the nations engaged in it, was under the patronage and guidance of one of the ablest and perhaps most unscrupulous statesmen that France, fertile in such productions, has ever given birth to—the celebrated Cardinal Duke de Richelieu. He fully appreciated the great national benefit which would flow from diverting French speculation into commercial channels. In his views upon this subject,* he shows that he grasped it with a master mind. He saw that France, the greatest nation on the continent, had, during preceding centuries, concerned itself with wars, which were, and had been, expending its vast resources in barren operations; whilst the neighbouring states of Holland—an insignificant corner of the earth, consisting of stagnant pools and marshes, producing beer and cheese merely—by its commercial enterprise, had not only been enriched and elevated, but had become the factor of Europe, and supplied it with many necessaries, and a great portion of its luxuries. He reflected how in England, a comparatively small island, by its commerce in cloths, lead, iron, and coal, had penetrated to all parts of the world with —he remarked—the exception of China. Genoa, he also adduces as an illustration; and then proceeds to show the advantages which France had over them all. The fleets of other nations were manned by her sailors; the fisheries on her coasts were abundant and prolific; and the abstinence from flesh meat of the Roman Catholics during the third of the year, threw open a market for the sale of their produce. It was fertile in corn, wine, flax, and hemp; and everything essential for naval purposes was to be had there in greater abundance than in Spain, England, or Holland; the chief commodities imported into France were articles of luxury, and could be manufactured with greater profit there than in those countries in which they were wrought, as the materials were the productions of the French soil. The entire chapter from which these few observations are extracted is worthy even now of perusal. The Cardinal did not rest satisfied with speculating on this subject. He resolved to give an impulse and an aim to French enterprise, and undertook to do it, as was his habit, with earnestness and energy. In June, 1642, while England was in the throes of civil convulsion, liberal privileges were granted to a company under his own immediate patronage. He did not live to guide or observe its proceedings, and his loss must have been a serious impediment to the infant project. Enough, however, had been done to secure it royal patronage; the privileges were confirmed to it by Louis XIV., or rather by the regency, as that great prince was still in his minority. Though in the undisturbed enjoyment of these exclusive favours during the twenty years following, the result by no means responded to the patronage bestowed, or the hopes indulged in. Every year a vessel was dispatched to Madagascar and no farther; but many of them were lost on the passage, and those which escaped lost several of their crews by scurvy. So that all that France enjoyed of the East India trade was, a company without revenue, whose utmost ambition was to establish and maintain a colony in Madagascar, and in this they were equally unsuccessful.*

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* *Testament Politique*, p. 133, &c.

On the expiration of their privileges, a private speculator, the Duke de la Meillerai, resolved to make a venture to India on his own account. He actually dispatched two ships which reached the French settlement in Madagascar, the possession of which was yielded to him, but which he discovered was not worth keeping. It was insinuated at the time in Paris, and spread to the other places, that this adventure of the duke involved no personal risk, and that being master of the ordnance, he had made free with the king's stores. After his death the Island of Madagascar was sold by his son for about twenty thousand livres, a sum, it was asserted, far above its value.

It is a subject for reflection to what cause or causes can be attributed the fact, that up to this period the French were the most unsuccessful of European adventurers, especially as their failure was not the consequence of the hostility of their competitors. These pages is not the place to discuss the question. Yet it may be pertinent to observe that there were some circumstances of an external character which contributed to frustrate the efforts of the company. One of these was the murder of Foucquembourg, who, on his return from Madagascar, in 1646, was assassinated on his road to Paris, it having been falsely suspected that he had a quantity of valuable jewels concealed upon his person. This blow was prejudicial to the interests of the young company, having been by it deprived of the opportunity of consulting him on the affairs of the East, losing also his memorials and other papers, which would have been of singular use to them. Another misfortune was the death of M. Flacourt, who, on his returning to Madagascar with the king's commission as governor and commander-in-chief of that settlement, was attacked by Barbary rovers, his ship blown up (1660), and he with two hundred others perished.* The third great calamity was the death of the Duke de la Meillerai,† after he had satisfactorily compromised with the company, and had assured them of all the assistance in his power. This last disappointment led to the dissolution of the company, which surrendered its privileges in order to make room for a projected association.

In addition to the external prejudicial influences already mentioned, it must be said that the very patronage so much valued and so much sought after, constituted a more serious obstacle because its many latent evils were inherent and inseparable. When Richelieu determined on the formation of his company, he induced the chief men of rank and wealth to embark in it. The consequence was that there was always some great nobleman at the head of it. His creatures were appointed to every employment, and sycophancy, and not merit, capacity, or services, was the most effective recommendation. This favouritism, and the obvious imbecility of the management, repelled the best judges of the means of successfully carrying on the commerce of the Indies. By the English and Dutch these abortive efforts were treated with contempt, and all Europe passively permitted a monopoly of that trade to the maritime powers previously in possession of it.

The reign of *Le Grand Monarque*, rich in so many historic souvenirs, was fated to mark with its indelible impress the commercial as well as other departments of the commonwealth. As soon as Louis XIV. attained his majority, and took into his powerful hands the rudder of the state, he almost instinctively selected for his ministers men whose transcendent abilities and ample expanse of mind justified the accurate perception that singled them from the crowd that thrust themselves upon royal observation.

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* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. pp. 86, 87.

* *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 67.

† *Histoire de la Compagnie des Indes*, p. 22.

Amongst these was the famous Colbert, of Scotch descent, whose brilliant services contributed in no small degree to make his sovereign the greatest in Europe. Well versed in public affairs, and having given his master, Mazarin, repeated proofs of his ability and sagacity, he was recommended by that minister to Louis XIV. as the person most competent to reform the deranged finances of France. He not only applied himself to remedy the abuses which time and the dishonesty of public servants had created; but he also determined on developing fresh supplies of revenue, and, amongst other measures, he conceived the design of reviving the defunct French East India Company; nor was he disheartened by the repeated failures which had attended previous undertakings.*

Warned by past failures, he resolved to act with caution and foresight. He accordingly summoned to his councils several merchants and seamen, whose Indian experiences could furnish him with such information as would enable him to steer clear of the rocks and shoals on which his predecessors foundered. The consequence of his inquiries was that he ascertained that there were three principal difficulties in his path. The first was the raising of the capital. The French merchants were ready enough to take shares, but not so ready to meet the calls. The second was the necessity of excluding foreigners, in order to make it national. Though this he looked upon as essential to its success, he was aware that by this exclusion he rendered more difficult the realization of the requisite funds. The third and greatest difficulty was the securing to the company such privileges and powers as might satisfy strangers and natives as to the security of their properties, and place the management in the hands of directors in whom unlimited confidence could be reposed. Having maturely considered the project in all its bearings, and formed his own conclusions, he then communicated the details of his scheme to M. Charpentier, of the French Academy, a man of deservedly great literary reputation.

The document† thus prepared is a masterpiece in its way; and as reference must necessarily be made to it, a few explanatory extracts may be here appropriately introduced. It prefaced with stating that, as former plans had failed for want of funds, that danger was here provided against, since, in addition to the constant protection which the government was determined to give, the king himself, and the greatest and the wealthiest persons in the nation, were determined to supply funds in abundance to place it on an equally sound pecuniary basis, to say the least, as was the Dutch East India Company at the period of its institution. The disappointment which had attended the previous companies afforded no substantial grounds of apprehending a similar fate. Few such undertakings were successful in their first stage. The Spaniards had suffered severely in their early expeditions to America, yet they persevered, and were eventually successful. The English colony in Virginia had failed four or five times, and at length accomplished its objects; and even their neighbours, the Dutch, then in so flourishing a state, were unfortunate in the commencement.

The paper then proceeds to show that the island of Madagascar, a considerable portion of which was in their possession, was a country capable of vast improvements, and of becoming of far more consequence than any settlement possessed by the Dutch in the East Indies; incomparably more commodious and secure than Batavia, which they had made their capital residence.

As to the security of the company, it was a well-known fact that only a very small part indeed of the island of Java was in the possession of the Dutch, and that the rest of that large and populous country was occupied by a variety of fierce and turbulent nations, animated with a bigoted zeal for the Mohammedan religion, and detesting bitterly all who professed the faith of Christ; and, in fact, that every one of their colonies in the East was beset with enemies, whom their perfidy and cupidity had provoked: that by fixing their principal post in Madagascar, the French company would enjoy advantages never held by the Dutch in Batavia, because the island was equally convenient for carrying on the commerce of the Red Sea or the Bay of Bengal, and was eligibly situated for the dispatch of ships to China and Japan, affording a desirable station for refitting and provisioning on their return.

Having shown these grounds for the anticipation of success, the memorial then proceeded to explain the means by which the project was to be carried into execution. It stated that six million livres—about three hundred thousand pounds English—was demanded for the equipment of twelve or fourteen large ships, from eight hundred to fourteen hundred tons burthen. That a squadron of this force was necessary to convey such a number of emigrants to Madagascar as would suffice for its occupation and defence, and form such a colony as would realise the objects of the company. An assurance was given that his majesty would advance one-tenth of the capital, and that the nobility and monied men of the kingdom would come liberally forward to contribute in proportion to their means, and to the national importance of the undertaking. The personal interest which his share in the funds would give to his majesty was adduced as a guarantee of his deep interest in the enterprise, and as a further encouragement he was willing to secure to the company an exemption from half their duties on all exports and imports to and from India, and, in addition to these marks of his favour, he undertook the responsibility of all the losses which would be incurred for the first ten years. Private persons were allowed to contribute in what instalments they pleased, till the entire capital subscribed was paid up.

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* *Testament Politique de M. Colbert,* p. 182.

† *Discours d'un Fidèle Sujet du Roi, touchant l'Etablissement d'une Compagnie Françoise pour le Commerce des Indes Orientales.* Paris, 1664, quarto.

The king not only permitted foreigners to take whatever shares they pleased, but to encourage them thereto, he likewise consented that such as subscribed ten thousand livres—afterwards changed to twenty thousand or upwards—should thereby acquire the right of naturalization, without any other trouble. This was a great boon, for by it the heirs of any alien shareholders were entitled to inherit their properties and effects, and, moreover, in case of hostilities with their fatherland, they escaped the liability to confiscation. It was also declared that the affairs of the company should be managed by their own directors, chosen from amongst themselves, and in their hands the funds of the company were to be deposited; that foreigners should be eligible to the direction, provided they had an adequate interest in the stock of the company, and resided in France. To save them as much as possible from the delays and other annoyances of protracted litigation, the directors were privileged, after being heard in the inferior court, nearest to the place where the cause of action arose, to appeal directly to the parliament.*

Thus did the celebrated Colbert, by a lucid statement stamped with the authority of his name, clearly demonstrate that the accidental mishaps of the past should not deter the French nation from making another effort to secure that share in the world's commerce to which its position fairly entitled it. He convinced the public that all former disappointments were justly attributable to the want of capital, and the absence of judicious direction, and that repeated failures did not destroy the great natural advantages which Madagascar possessed in its soil, productions, and above all in its geographical position; and thus he succeeded in convincing all, that in the new undertaking, success was imminent,—that the whole design would be soon a fact.

On this firm basis, and hailed with such hopes, was established the new and the fourth French East India Company, by an edict worthy of the object,—comprehensive, liberal, and ably drawn up, dated August, 1664, and soon after registered in parliament—containing forty-seven articles and fixing the shares—or as they were first called actions—at one thousand livres each. It reserved to the company a power of making further calls upon the proprietors, but not to exceed half the amount of each share. The charter was granted for fifty years, to afford an ample opportunity of forming great settlements, and the prospect of reaping the advantages of them.

The terms were faithfully observed, and every laudable means employed to impress upon the public mind the favour with which the government watched every proceeding; but the government did not limit itself to watchful observation, it used active measures. Officers, whatever corps they belonged to, were granted leave of absence without the forfeiture of pay or promotion; from the public arsenals was supplied whatever was requisite for the building, equipment or victualling of the ships, and exempted from all duties; the government engaged to pay fifty livres per ton for all goods exported from France to India, and seventy-five livres for every ton thence imported; it was agreed that the settlements of the company should be defended with a sufficient military force, and that the outward and homeward-bound ships should be furnished with as strong a convoy as the exigencies should demand. Even hereditary titles and honours were promised to such as should distinguish themselves in the service of the company.*

M. Colbert reasonably calculated that the new company would do honour to that reign, and to his administration; he consequently gave it an undeviating support to the last.

The favour in which the project was held at court, made it popular through the country.† Numbers volunteered to proceed to Madagascar,‡ and regulations were prepared for the government of the colony there, which deservedly won public approbation, though in many respects very strict. In March, 1665, four large ships equipped for war as well as for trade, carrying five hundred and twenty men, sailed from Brest, and arrived safely in Madagascar, the July following. This voyage was conducted with such spirit, diligence, and success, as to gratify not only the proprietary, but the nation at large, and every one was now inclined to speculate upon the visions of oriental wealth and national greatness which the enthusiastic had imagined.

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* *Vie de Jean Baptiste de Colbert.*

* Abbé Raynal's *History of India*, vol. ii. book IV. p. 222. London—Strahan, 1783.

† Ibid. vol. ii. book iv. p. 222.

‡ *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii. p. 74.

The new colonists, as if they considered the old appellation one of sinister omen, changed the name of Madagascar, and called it *Isle Dauphine*. Shortly after the return of this expedition, a great reinforcement was forwarded, a regular form of government established, and also the company's first and chief residence, as M. Colbert originally contemplated, was erected in imitation of the establishment which the Dutch had raised in Batavia.

Although the coast of Madagascar is bordered with an unrefreshing fringe of barren sands, this sterility terminates at the distance of a league or two inward. The interior of the island is in perpetual vegetation, producing spontaneously, both in the forests and open grounds, cotton, indigo, hemp, honey, white pepper, sago, bananas, spices, and a variety of nutritious plants, foreign to other climates. Oxen, sheep, hogs, and goats feed day and night in the plains; there are copper mines, and it was reported that gold and silver abounded there.* Nothing was more easy than for the French to appropriate to their purposes all these advantages, and to establish a more solid and productive colony than any at that time possessed by the Europeans in Asia. "It was impossible" says Raynal,† "that so fortunate a revolution could have been effected by violence. A numerous, brave, and uncivilized people would never have submitted to the chains with which a few foreigners might have wished to load them. It was by the soft mode of persuasion, it was by the seducing prospects of happiness, it was by the allurements of a quiet life, it was by the advantages of our police, by the enjoyments attending our industry, and by the superiority of our talents, that the whole island was to be brought to concur in a plan equally advantageous to both nations. The system of legislation which it would have been proper to give to these people, should have been adapted to their manners, their character, and their climate."‡ Such were the advantages which the French company might have seized on and enjoyed in Madagascar, but these were sacrificed through the misconduct of their agents, "who were lost to every sense of shame: they secreted a part of the funds entrusted to their management, they wasted still more considerable sums in useless and ridiculous expenses, they made themselves equally odious to the Europeans, whose labours they ought to have encouraged, as to the natives of the country, whom they ought to have gained over by gentleness and by favour. Acts of iniquity and misfortunes were multiplied to such a degree, that in 1670, the members of the company thought proper to resign into the hands of government, a possession which they held from its gift. This change of administration did not bring about a better state of things. The French settlers on the island in about two years after were massacred, and the few survivors of this memorable butchery withdrew from a soil stained with their crimes and reddened with their blood."

In 1667, it was resolved that some ships should proceed from Madagascar to the Indies with instructions for fixing an introductory establishment there. The two gentlemen selected to superintend this expedition were judiciously chosen, and possessed the requisite experience and judgment. The first of these was a M. Caron, who had spent several years in the Dutch service, and had risen to be the president of the factory of Japan, where he suffered severely, and having sought for an indemnification from the authority of the states-general in vain, retired in disgust and returned to France, at a crisis, too, when such a man was wanted. He was soon introduced to the minister, treated with distinction and favour, and consulted on every subject in which the interests of the new company were involved. The other was M. Marcara Avanchinz, a Persian; and native of Ispahan, the capital of Persia, a man of high birth and great influence at home, and from whom the company expected great things.

The squadron arrived on the 24th of December, 1667, at Cochin, and was courteously received by the Dutch governor, and thence proceeded to Surat, where it had been decided the first French factory was to be erected. In 1669, Avanchinz was dispatched to the court of the sovereign of Golconda, where he had several powerful and personal friends, by whose favour he expected to be able to secure the privilege of trading through that kingdom, of purchasing whatever merchandise was required, of employing manufacturers, and of obtaining licence to establish a factory at Masulipatam. This was a delicate mission, and his objects difficult of acquisition. It was a well-known fact that the Dutch and English, whose influence was very great at the court of Golconda, had failed in obtaining concessions not nearly so important, and that the representatives of these two nations had instructions to use all their influence to frustrate the efforts of the French; at the same time he was scantily supplied with money, an article as indispensable to an oriental, as to a European, diplomatist. Not disheartened by these untoward circumstances, he proceeded to Golconda, there successfully accomplished this important negotiation, and on the 5th of December, obtained a firman from his majesty, by which the French company was privileged to trade to all parts of his territory, without paying export or import duties—a favour the Dutch were never able to obtain, and which the English had secured at very great expense in 1665. The successful agent thence proceeded to Masulipatam, where he had his firman registered; he also settled a factory there, of which he was appointed president, and in that capacity conducted the trade of the company with zeal, honesty, and diligence. These eminent services did not shield the honest Persian from envious aspersions and foul imputations. His competitor, M. Caron, by his intrigues had ingratiated himself into the highest degree of favour with M. Colbert, from whom he obtained an order in 1671, by which he himself was raised to the second post in the East India Company's service, and all the friends of Avanchinz were removed from their employments, and subjected to prosecutions, although in the order there was not one charge brought against him, nor a word to incriminate him. He addressed a full and satisfactory justification of his conduct to the minister, who, after a minute and searching examination, made an impartial report to the king, who entirely approved of Avanchinz's conduct, and testified to his innocence by a solemn *arrêt.**

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* Raynal, vol. ii. book IV. p. 224.

† Ibid. p. 233.

‡ Raynal's *History of the Settlement and Trade of the Europeans in the East Indies*, vol. ii. book IV. p. 235.

It is allowed that the factory at Surat was established by Caron, and also that at Bantam in the Island of Java, which the French held until the Dutch became masters of that kingdom, and succeeded in excluding from it both the French and English. These events occurred some years after his death. The selection of Surat as the chief seat of operations was judicious. The advantage of its situation was appreciated equally by the English.

Surat is supposed to be one of the oldest cities of Hindostan, being mentioned in some of the earliest records, although in the beginning of the thirteenth century it was nothing more than a mean hamlet, consisting of some fishermen's huts standing upon the river Taptee, a few miles distance from the ocean. It was greatly exposed to the attacks of pirates, and on several occasions was subjected to their ravages. To check these destructive inroads a fortress was built there in 1524. At this period it had risen to distinction; its importance was considerably augmented when the Moguls made themselves masters of it. Being the only seaport town in their occupation, it became the emporium of all articles of foreign luxuries, and the depot from which they were transported to all parts of that extensive empire. At this early period the Europeans, who had no great settlements, here purchased Indian produce, and Surat then possessed a navy superior to any of the neighbouring ports. The ships of this port were strongly built and durable, and mostly of a thousand or twelve hundred tons burden. Large fortunes were realized by the traders, and several were masters of a quarter of a million, and some were far more wealthy. The plunder of this place by Sevajee, 1664, has been previously recorded. It repeatedly became the prey of the pirates; nevertheless, it continued to be the richest and most populous city in India. It received in exchange for its exports porcelain from China; silk from Bengal and Persia; masts and pepper from Malabar; gums, dates, dried fruits, copper, and pearls, from Persia; perfumes and slaves from Arabia; great quantities of spices from the Dutch; iron, lead, cloth, cochineal, and hardwares, from the English. After a residence of some time there, Caron began to think that Surat was not the best place for the chief settlement of the French. He took a dislike to the situation. He wished to find a more central and less exposed position either on the peninsula or in some of the Spice Islands, without which he thought it impossible for any company to support itself. His attention was directed to the Bay of Trincomalee, in the Island of Ceylon, the harbour of which was styled by Nelson "the finest in the world." It is almost land-locked, and the water is so deep that it is all but practicable to step, in many places, from the shore on board the large vessels moored alongside.* He accordingly sailed for that port with a powerful squadron lately arrived from Europe under the command of La Haye, who was ordered to act under his direction. This project, which should have been kept strictly private, was incautiously divulged and bruited abroad, and a public and deliberate attack was proposed instead of a secret and sudden surprise. The French, it is said,* were intimidated by a fleet in no condition to fight, and which by no possibility could have received orders to engage. The greater portion of the crews and of the land forces fell victims to want and sickness; a small body of troops was stationed in a small fort that had been erected, and was soon constrained to surrender. A few who survived the hardships of the expedition—having gone to the coast of Coromandel in search of provisions, which they failed to procure at the Dutch settlement of Tranquebar or any where else—in their extremities made an attack upon St. Thomas, where, they were informed, a great store of provisions was hoarded. The town was easily and quickly captured by the French, who carried the fortifications, though formidable and in good repair, by storm, in 1672. They were not left long in possession. They were attacked and compelled to surrender in about two years afterwards; the Dutch, who were at war with Louis XIV., having aided the Indians in their expulsion. This disaster would have effectively crushed the enterprise after all the expense and royal encouragement that had been given, had it not been for M. Martin, who had come out amongst the late arrivals from Europe. He collected the survivors of the two colonies of Ceylon and St. Thomas, and with them he peopled the small town of Pondicherry, lately ceded to him, and which was rapidly acquiring wealth, population, and importance. But neither private enterprise nor royal favour succeeded in ensuring the prosperity of the new company. It became, every succeeding day, more and more apparent that matters were verging from bad to worse, and ruin was inevitably approaching with rapid strides. To consider in this emergency, and to endeavour to devise some remedy, a general court of the proprietors was summoned at Paris, and a faithful report of the embarrassments, perils, and apprehensions of the company was submitted, and the entire particulars, through the influence of M. Colbert, were presented to the king, who issued a declaration, September, 1675, by which he directed a dividend of ten per cent. to be granted to all the shareholders who paid up the amount of their subscriptions, and he allowed to all defaulters time to the 1st of July following to complete their payments, and then they were entitled as well as the others to the dividend. All those who should not have paid up on the day named, forfeited all money contributed by them, and this money was to be appropriated to the use of the company. In addition to these princely favours, a debt of four million livres was discharged by his majesty, in compliance with the edict by which the company first received the royal patronage, and he also freely forgave four millions which had been advanced for their service. In the following year he gave a new proof of his deep interest in the welfare of the company, by relieving from all duties merchandise bought at their sales, except what was transported to Lyons, and even this was relieved from a great portion, having only to pay the one-fourth. During the ten first years of its existence it was thus preserved from dissolution solely by the munificence of the sovereign.

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* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. p. 146; *Hist. de la Compagnie des Indes*, pp. 63 and 64.

* Macculloch's *Geographical Dictionary*.

In 1681 some private persons having assured the proprietors that they would embark their fortunes in the Indian trade on being provided with licences, an application was made to the king for power to grant them. This was readily conceded on the following conditions:—"That these traders should transport themselves and their effects on board the company's ships both outward and homeward, and that they should pay their freight and passage before their departure; but that the goods they brought home, precious stones only excepted, should be exposed in the company's sales, and their produce fairly accounted for: that these licences should be in force only for five years, and if they should be found prejudicial to the affairs of the company, the directors might abridge or cancel them at their pleasure." *

There was no favour, however extravagant, which was sought from their liberal patron, Colbert, that was not granted; yet this careful and generous nurture communicated neither vigour nor success to the speculation. When that statesman died, in 1683, the spirit of this stimulated commerce died with him. The company continued to have a nominal existence, and kept up not only a court of directors in Paris, but, copying the example of the Dutch East India Company, maintained chambers of direction at several ports, a council in India,—although their affairs were in a state of rapid decline; and their general account, in 1684, exposed the fact that instead of realizing profits, they had then actually lost one half of their capital. This sad state of affairs was attributed to three causes chiefly: the war with the Dutch, which continued from 1672 to 1678; the frauds of their servants in Madagascar and India, who sacrificed to their cupidity the interests of their employers (it was no secret that in the ruin of the company several large private fortunes were made by their officers); and lastly, to the culpable indifference of the shareholders who had neglected to pay up. In this deplorable condition of their affairs, another effort was resolved upon to retrieve, if possible, the trade of the company, and it was resolved for that purpose to introduce a thorough reform, and change the entire system of government; to suppress all the little insulated chambers of directors, and to commit the entire management of affairs to the hands of twelve directors, who were to reside in Paris. Each of these was required to qualify, by the payment of thirty thousand livres upon the forfeited shares or actions, and to be allowed reasonable salaries. It was also decided that all defaulters were to forfeit their shares to the company, with a reservation that if in two years they should have paid in all their instalments, they should recover their former rights and have all their shares restored. These regulations were confirmed by royal edict, in February. 1685. The company were empowered, if they so pleased, to resume the sovereignty of the island of Madagascar, which they had surrendered in 1670, or to leave it, if they thought proper, in the king's hands. After considerable deliberation and some delay, it was resolved that the island should be left entirely to the crown, and this act was confirmed by the king's arrêt, dated June 4, 1686. Some time after this remodelling of the company, eight new directors were added for the avowed purpose of increasing the capital. Each of these was obliged to lay down forty thousand livres in case he possessed twenty thousand of the company's stock, and sixty thousand if he were possessed of none. These contributions, swelled with the sums advanced by the proprietors, so increased the available capital of the company, that now the most cautious and intelligent men of business began to feel sanguine of success, and these anticipations were confirmed by the dividends made in that year and in 1691, amounting in the whole to thirty per cent. This cheering aspect of affairs was soon overcast by an indiscretion of the minister, and a proof thereby supplied to show, that however ineffectual the power of the ruler may be to foster and render successful any great social enterprise, his power to check and destroy cannot be overrated. "In order," says one of the authors of the *Universal Modern History*, "to understand that there is nothing easier for a minister than to destroy a branch of trade by an ill-judged and untimely interposition, the following instance, one of the most material points in the history of French commerce, deserves attention. The French East India Company finding that gold and silver brocades and painted cottons were articles in the quickest demand, struck into that branch of trade, by which they were very considerable gainers; and, that they might encourage the artizans of their own country, they imported chiefly white cottons, and caused them to be painted in France after the Indian manner, by which they had the command of the fashions; and when people began to be tired with one sort of goods, they revived their appetites by introducing another. The demand for these goods being by this means kept up and continually increasing, the manufacturers in France set up a general clamour, that they were sacrificed to strangers; and that if a stop was not immediately put to the importation of these silks and cottons, they should be all starved. Upon this, out came an edict, dated January, 1687, by which this branch of commerce was prohibited; and it was with very great difficulty that the company procured leave to sell off what they had in their hands, and what might arrive by the next ships; but what was most extraordinary they were required to break all their moulds for printing, without considering that this was as much a manufacture of France as any other. As to the brocades they were allowed some little indulgence, which, however, did but just keep them from sinking; with the assistance of some other favours, which the few friends they had left at court, not without much solicitation, had obtained. By this the reader may see how little safety there is for trade under any arbitrary government, where all things depend at best upon the understanding of a minister, which is a very precarious tenure, or very often upon his caprice, or the influence that he is under, which is the most dreadful situation people can be in that have any property at all." *

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* Raynal, vol. ii. book IV. p. 263.

* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom. iii. pp. 158—160.

The farmers of the public revenues, whose influence with the government in France was very great, also complained that the revenue was prejudiced by the privileges and immunities granted to the India company. The result was that the minister abstained from violating the original edict, but means were soon devised of gradually undermining these immunities, though they were not taken away. They were next prohibited from selling piece goods to foreigners, on the assumption that if they could not buy Indian goods from the company, they would be obliged to purchase French; but the fact was the foreigner ceased to attend their markets. The next step was the imposition of a heavy duty on raw silk. In this narrow spirit of commercial legislation all the pains taken by Colbert were rendered abortive, and as the inevitable result of such imprudent restrictions, after a very brief gleam of prosperity, the affairs of the company relapsed into a state of cheerless inactivity, which was rendered all but extinct by the effects of the European war which commenced in 1691.

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* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 87.

Having so far followed the fortunes of the company in consecutive order, the progress of their affairs in India imposes the necessity of going back a few years. After Martin had made a settlement, with the consent of the rajah, in Pondicherry, a fine opportunity was presented to the French authorities of making an establishment in Siam. Some French missionaries had visited that kingdom, and had conducted themselves with so much forbearance, propriety, and friendliness, that they are said to have secured the love of the people, and to have inspired them with respect for the French generally.

Previously to this, a Greek adventurer, Constantine Faulkon, had travelled into Siam, was well received at court, and soon rose in favour with the sovereign. In the course of time, he was raised to the very important post of prime-minister or barcalon. In this elevation he treated both the prince and the people despotically. The former was weak, sickly, and without issue. The minister entertained the notion of securing the succession to himself, and he is charged with the criminal intention of removing the ruling monarch out of his path. To enable him the more effectively to compass his ends, he resolved on attempting to make the French subservient to his scheme; he therefore sent ambassadors to France, in 1684, to tender his royal master's alliance, and to offer some sea-ports to the French merchants, and to ask for ships and troops.

Louis XIV. eagerly took advantage of this unexpected proposal, which he justly considered calculated to benefit, in no small degree, the Indian Company. He accordingly dispatched a squadron to cultivate the favourable opportunity offered, but this object seems to have been only secondary, for the French writers say that it conveyed a greater number of Jesuits than of traders, and in the treaty which was concluded between the two kings, under the direction of the Jesuit Pachard, much more attention was paid to religious concerns than to those of commerce.* The hopes created by the early success of the Christian missionaries were blasted by the conduct of the Jesuits now imported. These paid too much court to the unprincipled minister, who had, at this time, by his arrogance and ambition, estranged from himself the affection and respect of the court and the people. The missionaries, as his creatures, became unpopular, and the public hatred was soon transferred from their persons to their teachings, and to such an extent was this odium carried, that it provoked a popular revolt, during which their churches and monasteries were exposed to the fury of the superstitious and the licentious.

The fortress of Bangkok,* built at the mouth of the Menana, had been given up to the French. It was very favourably situated for commercial purposes. The Menana flows through a valley of that name, and is the most important river in that kingdom, passing through the greater part of it, and, monopolizing its trade and navigation,† after a course of eight hundred miles, falls into the gulf of Siam by three channels. The town was also an excellent mart for all the productions of China, the Philippine Islands, and all the eastern parts of Asia. The situation of Siam, between two gulfs, washing coasts respectively one hundred and sixty and two hundred leagues in extent, gives it a command of the navigation of all the seas in that part of the world. Mergin, then the principal harbour in the kingdom, and said to be one of the best in Asia, was likewise ceded to them. This port would have greatly facilitated the trade with the coast of Coromandel, and chiefly with Bengal. It secured an advantageous intercourse with the kingdoms of Pergu, Ava, Arracan and Lagos, where the finest rubies in the world, and some gold dust, were to be found.‡

These great opportunities were lost upon the French. The officials of the company and the Jesuit fathers were equally ignorant of their commercial advantages; and eventually, when Faulkon's treasons were ripe for execution, having but feebly assisted in his enterprise, they were involved in his disgrace, and the fortresses of Mergin and Bangkok were wrested from the French garrisons by the most cowardly people in the East.

During their very brief sojourn in Siam, the French made an attempt to plant a settlement in Tonquin. They considered that a trade could be carried on with safety and advantage with a people which had been for several centuries in commercial communication with the empire of China.

Expelled from Siam, the French Company, surrendering all hope of being able to make an establishment in the remote parts of Asia, began to regret the loss of their factory at

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* Raynal, *History of Settlement and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. ii. p. 265.

* From its situation, this town has become the great centre of all the commerce of Siam.

† Blackie's *Imperial Gazetteer*.

‡ Raynal, vol. ii. p. 272.

Surat, to which they could not return, as they had left without discharging the liabilities incurred there. The Mogul government, which was anxious to encourage the traffic of Surat, and to attract as many vessels as possible to that port, often solicited them to pay their creditors. This they failed to do, and therefore could never recover from the obloquy to which their bad faith had subjected them.

Excluded from all other parts of Asia, the French were compelled to concentrate all their attention on Pondicherry, and on its effective fortification. But these designs were interrupted by a fierce war, which, though deriving its origin from remote causes, now broke out, and in which the French nation had to maintain a contest provoked by its own aggrandizing ambition against a confederation of the most powerful states in Europe.

To the prudence and ability of M. Martin was the safety of the French settlement, and the prevention of the total ruin of the company, due. The famous Mahratta chief, Sevajee, having approached the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, threatened with his formidable force to overwhelm it as a dependency of his enemies. By the friendly offices of a neighbouring Indian prince, however, a treaty was formed with Sevajee, and license granted to trade in his dominions on payment of one thousand six hundred rupees. This treaty was concluded in 1680, and the territory had been purchased, the year previously, of the Rajah of Visapore. The only apprehension that was now entertained by the French, was lest the son of Sevajee, who was now the Peishwa, and had become the master of Pondicherry by right of war, might resent any attempt to fortify it; but his permission was obtained in 1689, and then it was strongly surrounded with defensive works.*

As soon as intelligence was conveyed from Europe of the declaration of hostilities there, the Dutch, who had for some time looked on with jealousy at the rising importance of Pondicherry, offered very large presents to the Peishwa, in whose dominions it lay, to eject the French; but, with a morality which should have put the Christian to the blush, the son of Sevajee rejected those offers with contempt. "The French," he said, "had fairly purchased that settlement, for which they had paid a valuable consideration, and that, therefore, all the money in the world should never tempt him to eject them." What the Peishwa refused to do, the Dutch themselves accomplished. They besieged Pondicherry in 1693, having arrived before the place with a fleet of nineteen sail, and an army of three thousand men, with a fine train of artillery and six mortars, and to ensure their conquest, they applied to the new Peishwa—whose laxity of principle, it is to be hoped, was not the result of Dutch ethics—who, on receipt of about twenty thousand pounds, made over to them the whole country. After a good, protracted defence, M. Martin, who was still director-general, surrendered upon very honourable terms. On the conclusion of the peace of Ryswick, 1696, the Dutch were compelled to restore it, and in a much better condition than they found it. They had built new walls, and seven bastions, and, in fact, had made it one of the best defended fortresses in India.

Martin was again appointed governor, and dispatched from France—to which after the surrender he had returned—with a squadron, having on board two hundred regular troops for the augmentation of the garrison, and with orders to put the place in such a state of defence that, in case of a second war, it would be in a condition to repel any assailants. He took out with him for that purpose several able engineers, a vast quantity of military stores, and everything necessary to ensure security. He managed the affairs of the company with such skill, integrity, and wisdom, that he was enabled in the space of four or five years so to improve the town, that it could be scarcely recognised by its appearance. Not only were the fortifications completed, but the garrison was increased to eight hundred men; one hundred new houses were added, a plan for a large town laid out, into which, in a very few years, he drew more than sixty thousand inhabitants; and in 1710 it had become one of the most considerable towns in the hands of the Europeans.* Had Martin's efforts been seconded by a liberal policy at home, the French company would have been placed upon a level with its more favoured rivals, the Dutch and English.

The intelligence and patriotism of M. Martin could effect no more than laying the basis of the future success of the company by impressing on the natives a very favourable opinion of the French, by the incessant and scrupulous attention he paid to training up well qualified and conciliatory agents; by the information he, with great industry, accumulated for his and their direction; by the excellent system of administration he established and maintained in his government; and by the daily increase of inhabitants in Pondicherry. But all these prudent and salutary measures failed to invigorate the waning prosperity of the company, subject from its infancy to such inherent disorders as were calculated eventually to effect its dissolution.*

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* *Memoire dans les Archives de la Compagnie des Indes, num.* i., quoted in the *Universal Modern History*, vol. ii.

* *Histoire des Indes Orientales*, tom iii. p. 231, 232.

Martin's original intention was to re-establish on a firm basis a great empire in Madagascar, and with that object he transported thither nearly seventeen hundred colonists, who, though cheered with the hopes of enjoying a delightful climate, and realizing a rapid fortune, encountered on their arrival nothing but famine, dissension, despair, and death. Their fate rendered all after efforts apparently impracticable. The shareholders became defaulters. The government which had pledged itself to give without interest a fifth of the subscribed capital, and who on those terms were at this period liable for only two million livres,† advanced it from the exchequer, in order to sustain a project so much in royal favour; and some time after, it generously made a grant of what at first was a loan. This encouragement failed to effect its object, and the company were obliged to confine their operations to Surat and Pondicherry, and to abandon their settlements at Bantam, Rajapore, Tilseri, Masulipatam, Gombroon and Siam.

The fierce war of 1689 considerably increased the embarrassments of the company, even by the success of French arms. Several privateers, fitted out in the ports of France, by their vigilance and intrepidity, gave great annoyance to the traders of England and of Holland. The Indian goods which fell into their hands by the seizure of several prizes, the privateers were enabled to sell at a comparatively low figure. Though remunerative in comparison with their outlay, this competition had the effect of compelling the company to sell at prices under the first cost; and when they made complaints to the minister, he did not feel himself justified in sacrificing to their interests a body of men, who so seriously annoyed the enemy, and rendered such essential services to their country.

Every resource having been exhausted, the conviction became general that the company could not persevere unaided; therefore they, in 1707, complied with the proposal of some wealthy merchants, who agreed to send their own ships to India, upon the condition that they should allow fifteen per cent. to the company, upon the merchandise which should be imported by them, reserving the right to take such share in the ships as their circumstances should permit. Even after this they were reduced to the necessity of making over the entire and exclusive exercise of their privilege to some privateers of St. Maloes, still reserving the same power which had for some years warded off their extinction.

Although thus involved, and their situation desperate, the company in 1714 solicited from their royal founder, protector, and patron, a renewal of their charter, which was on the eve of expiring, and which they had now enjoyed for nearly half a century. When this application was made, their entire capital had been expended, and their debts amounted to ten million livres;* nevertheless, their request was granted for ten years. Upon the death of Louis XIV. which occurred shortly after this renewal of the charter, the Duke of Orleans became the regent. To him the company applied for a prolongation of their term. In seeking this favour, the real object is said to have been to obtain a recognition of their privileges, in the expectation that should they so far succeed, they would be able to obtain from him more solid advantages, and such help from the treasury as would enable them to revive their trade. From the public they had no credit to expect, the period of their new charter being so very limited.

These expectations were defeated by the financial derangements, which, having their source in a remote period, had been fearfully augmented in the late reign, and had come to a crisis in 1715. Instead of having money to lend, the crown was enormously in debt, and the regent and his ministers, instead of having money to give away for investment in commerce, were engaged in devising means to make the commerce of the kingdom subservient to their own pressing demands—to fill the exchequer, to pay off the obligations of the crown, and to discharge the accumulated claims on the government and the nation. The contrivances to meet these exigencies were long known in France by the name of the System; and they, with their consequents down to the revolution, form no inconsiderable portion of the history of modern France.

One of the most popular expedients then proposed was that of the celebrated Law, a Scotchman; and it is more than probable that the high estimation in which the memory of the celebrated Colbert, the descendant of a Scotchman, was held, gave an impulse to his popularity. This state empiric engaged to re-establish the finances. His first step was the establishment of a bank. The success which attended its early operations silenced the arguments and clamours of his opponents. This bank commenced business in 1716. The gratitude of the French rose so high, that they pronounced the services he had rendered worthy of the most honourable monuments and testimonials a nation could in its gratitude bestow. Thus estimated, it is not strange that he found himself with influence enough to organize the Western company, the privileges of which were at first restricted to the trade of Louisiana, and to the beavers of Canada, but shortly after the Western company secured its charter, the companies trading to Africa, the East Indies, and to China, were incorporated with it. This amalgamation ambitiously proposed to pay off the national debt, and thus relieve France from the accumulated obligations of ages, which had long weighed heavily on her, and which threatened to crush her to the earth.

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* Raynal's *History of Settlements and Trade in the East and West Indies*, vol. ii. p. 285.

† £83,333 6*s*. 8*d*.

* £416,666 13*s*. 4*d*.

The edict of "Amalgamation" extinguished the titles of East and West India Companies, as well as those of the minor companies associated, and substituted the comprehensive name, "The Company of the Indies."

To this new company was granted the exclusive privilege of trading from the Cape of Good Hope to the utmost extent of the East Indies, as also to the islands of Madagascar, Bourbon, and France, the coast of Sofala in Africa, the Red Sea, and Persia, to the dominions of the Mogul, of the King of Siam, and of the Emperors of China and Japan, and also to the South Seas, from the Straits of Magellan to the East Indies, and rigidly excluding all the other French subjects from those parts under pain of the confiscation of their vessels and effects.* All the property and possessions of the amalgamated companies were secured to them, but they were made responsible for all the just liabilities these companies had incurred. To enable them to enter with effect upon their extensive sphere of action, they were authorised to issue new shares, to the amount of twenty-five million livres, to be purchased with ready money only, on the same terms that the West India Company possessed shares to the amount of one hundred million.

CHAPTER LX.

FRENCH ENTERPRISE IN INDIA AND THE EAST FROM THE FORMATION OF "THE PERPETUAL COMPANY OF THE INDIES" TO THE WAR WITH ENGLAND.

So popular was the new undertaking that in an incredibly short time, instead of twenty-five million livres, fifty millions were subscribed. In this state of prosperity the company volunteered to pay off, at the rate of fifty millions in every month, the enormous quantity of paper in circulation, amounting to nearly sixty millions of our money. As an acknowledgment of this generous and patriotic proposal, the king, by an arrêt dated July, 1720, changed the terms on which their privileges were granted, declared the company perpetual, and restrained himself and his successors from treating them as other companies had been treated, and from this time they acquired and bore the title "The Perpetual Company of the Indies."

The capital, as has been already noticed, consisted of the original capital of the West India Company, and the twenty-five millions added thereto upon the amalgamation; but in order to guard the new company against stock-jobbing, a revision of the shares was made, in 1723, in order to ascertain which of them had been obtained fairly and by purchase. The consequence was that in the same year the king fixed the shares at fifty-six thousand, and thus the capital on which dividends were to be paid, was settled at one hundred and twelve millions, and upon this the king assured to them a yearly revenue of eight millions four hundred thousand livres. This revenue from the state was given because the company, by the proposal to undertake the national liabilities, had placed itself in the position of a public creditor.

In 1725, by another arrêt, five thousand shares were cancelled and burned, and the capital reduced to that extent, and their dividend secured by the annual payment of eight millions from the taxes on tobacco, the exclusive, perpetual, and irrevocable privilege of selling which was conceded to them in 1723, and confirmed to them in 1725, together with the profits arising from the Canadian fur trade.† Thus the fund for the annual dividends, was as effectively guaranteed as it could by possibility be. As a collateral security the commerce of India was assigned, and the proceeds thereof were to be allowed to accumulate for some time, and to be eventually appropriated to strengthening the funds for promoting that important trade, and placing it in a position to yield a large revenue to swell the annual dividends. With such securities, such extensive privileges, ministerial patronage, and brightening prospects, it is not matter of surprise that the shares were eagerly sought for, and rose into high estimation at home and abroad.

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* *Histoire de la Compagnie, des Indes*, p. 112; *Universal History*, vol. ii. p. 122.

† *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, tom. ii. col. 1080.

This short sketch of affairs in France was necessary to elucidate French proceedings in the East, and to show how the repeated failures of all the attempts made for the prosperous cultivation of the Indian trade, had convinced most men that a repetition of such efforts would be equally unsuccessful; and that to prosecute it with success demanded the immediate supervision of the government. The ministers consequently resolved on taking it into their own care. It was decided to advance large sums of money on the speculation. In order to guard against the annoyance which would be likely to arise in the early stages of their operations, they undertook to pay the shareholders a stipulated dividend annually, such as was considered reasonable; and they furthermore considered that it would be prudent to suffer the profits, should any be yielded, to accumulate for some time, that sufficient funds might be available, as well in Europe as in India. This decision they did not make public; concluding that as soon as it was ascertained that profits accrued, the majority of the proprietors would insist on a distribution. They therefore judged it best to furnish no accounts, and also, to satisfy public expectation, to proceed actively to work. Accordingly, towards the close of the year 1720, the ministers, while they had money in their hands, enabled the company of the Indies to equip three ships for sea, which, in addition to a large cargo of European merchandise, conveyed a large sum in specie and bullion. This spirited proceeding raised the credit of the company and enhanced the value of the shares; and, as if in expectation of large returns, port L'Orient was put in a condition, by new improvements and the erection of magazines, to serve as a convenient depot for the expected commerce. The result of these spirited efforts is thus ably stated by an author frequently made use of:*—"Yet, in the midst of this seemingly settled and regular establishment, the 'Perpetual Company of the Indies' remained upon such a foundation as nothing of the like nature ever stood upon before, and with respect to which the time will not be lost upon the reader if he will be pleased to reflect this company had a vast capital, but nominal only, for in reality and at the bottom they were without funds; their commerce as described, or rather prescribed, by the edict of UNION, was, beyond comparison, more extensive than that of any trading company in Europe, and the means of carrying on their trade as much out of comparison less. Besides all this there was another circumstance no less extraordinary than the other two, which was, that the directors of this mighty company, whatever they might seem in the eye of the world, were really under direction themselves; that is, they depended for instructions, ships, money, and everything else, upon the ministers of state; and yet, to speak from what time and experience have taught us, these very instances of weakness and instability appear to have been the sources of all their good fortune. For the directors, in quality of that employment, having the capacity of only representing the state that things were in, and the necessity they were under, had no temptations at any time to depart from the truth; with this additional check upon them, that if they did, it would have certainly been discovered, and themselves removed. On the other hand, the ministers of the day, knowing that their continuance in power must always depend on the maintenance of public credit, took care to furnish the directors with such supplies as were requisite to keep the machine of their commerce in constant motion, that the opinion which the public entertained of the restitution of their affairs might be fortified from their progress; thus their balance, which originally arose from necessity, and in some measure from accident, was more happy in its operations than any contrivance that could have been formed by human wisdom to answer these ends." *

This ministerial supervision and encouragement—which would in England be as ruinous in practice, as it is amongst a free people vicious in principle—resulted beneficially for France, subjected to despotic rule. During the fourteen succeeding years, sometimes three, sometimes four ships were sent annually to the East, and by slow but steady progress the affairs of the company were restored and strengthened. However, with this prosperous state, there was no accumulation of funds for distribution amongst the shareholders; the profits realized were swallowed by their increasing expenses, as the increase of the Indian commerce imposed the necessity of re-establishing their old factories and raising new ones. Indeed, for some of the early years their outlay exceeded their income, and though their European rivals, witnessing the steadily increasing extent of their trade, the regularity with which they exported to Europe, and being unacquainted with their secrets, thought their affairs to be in a flourishing state, yet such was not the reality; gradual supplies were required, and without such assistance many years would have rolled over before their commerce would have become self-supporting.

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* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 139.

* The author has drawn this train of reasoning from the *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, to which the reader is referred.

The directors of the company sustained its credit by the prudent disposition of the supplies from the East, and kept things in tolerable order; they had paid off the heavy liabilities of the various companies in the UNION, though these far exceeded their assets.*

To Orry, who had been appointed, in 1773, to superintend the finances of France—which he managed with surprising success—the great impulse henceforth given to commercial enterprise in the East is fairly attributable. It has been generally admitted that he was an upright and disinterested minister; but that his character was sullied by a harshness of temper, which contrasted offensively with the suavity of the courteous French. The apology which he once made when a friend reproached him for this blemish, was characteristic and not very creditable to the nation:—"How can I behave otherwise? Out of a hundred people I see in a day, fifty take me for a fool and fifty for a knave." His brother, De Fulvy, who had less principle, but possessed more affability and a greater share of capacity, was entrusted with the affairs of the "Perpetual Company of the Indies," and under such able direction it could not fail to prosper. These able ministers plainly understood that further supplies were demanded, in order to command a more remunerative trade and to extricate the company from existing difficulties. Before this was done, a most rigid investigation of their circumstances was made, and then, their affairs having been placed in the best possible position, the requisite sums were advanced. The minister's foresight was gratified by flattering results. On the termination of the second year, the returns from the East were doubled, and a fair prospect was presented of a large additional increase; and, in fact, the third year yielded thrice as much as they had been. Port L'Orient, which had been laughed at as a depot erected for an imaginary commerce, seemed now to have been providentially and wisely provided for a trade which had become considerable and regular; and so rapidly did it continue to progress that in 1742 the public sale there amounted to the large sum of twenty-four millions of livres, that is, about one million of English money, besides which they reserved goods in the stores to the amount of four million livres; and the first ships that arrived in 1743, brought home a still more valuable cargo.

All the European powers, but more especially the maritime, were alarmed by this advancement of a company so insignificant and feeble a few years previously; but these apprehensions would have been considerably modified had it been reflected that it was all artificial—a hot-house plant, which in an ungenial location had, by applied heat, been forced into a premature, if not an unnatural, luxuriance, and therefore subject to very probable casualties, any one of which would suddenly withdraw its sustenance, dry up its sap, and destroy the forced exotic; while its acclimated neighbour gathered strength from the soil and healthful growth. Much of the success, it must be owned, is attributable to the long continued peace which blessed the pacific administration of Cardinal Fleury. The true condition of affairs was made manifest to the Company and the world, during the war of the succession to the throne of Spain, which broke out in 1740, and involved France and the chief of the nations of Europe in the quarrel. But this war had been carried on for some time before the exposure was made, or any suspicion of it reached the company or the public. On the contrary, the company relying on its fancied prosperous resources, thought it its duty to give its assistance to the nation. England and France having taken opposite sides, the war between them was stimulated by their contiguity and rival positions. The enormous expenses incurred by France, forced M. Orry, though very reluctantly, to inform the directors that public affairs were so complicated that they had no more pecuniary aid to expect from the exchequer, and should entirely rely upon their own resources, and carry on their trade in future as best they could. This disclosure and intimation scattered to the winds their delusive prosperity, and all which they had been doing for several years perished by the first exposure. The shares of the company, which had previously reached to two thousand livres and upwards, suddenly fell to eight hundred.* But this was not the only injury inflicted; a worse than this was that the governments of Europe had learned that French commerce could not exist, as in other countries, independent of royal bounty. In France it was supported by the state, in other countries it powerfully contributed to their support. Though, as has been just stated, this commerce fell by one adverse blast, the company was not extinguished, and new appliances were devised to restore it to life. The proprietors, having recovered from their first painful surprise, were enabled by the aid of a few lotteries to extricate themselves from their immediate difficulties, and to resume operations.

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* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 134; Raynal, vol. ii. p. 327.

* *Universal Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 138.

During the prosecution of the war the government did not overlook nor neglect the affairs of the company in the East. A sufficient force was forwarded thither, not merely for defensive but for offensive action, and the officials selected for the civil, naval, and military services, proved the judgment of their appointments, and showed themselves equal to the exigencies of the crisis.

Dumas was sent to Pondicherry, and had not been long there, when he prevailed upon the court of Delhi to grant him leave to coin money. This permission the French valued at about twenty thousand pounds annually. He also managed to obtain possession of the town of Karical * which entitled him to a considerable share in the trade of Tanjore. Some time after this the Mahrattas invaded the Deccan, defeated and slew the Rajah of Arcot. His family and several of his subjects sought refuge in Pondicherry, and were kindly received. Ragojee, who commanded the conquerors, demanded the surrender of the refugees and moreover a sum of money, amounting to one million two hundred thousand livres, as arrears of tribute; to which, he alleged, the French had formerly submitted. Dumas, with a generous resolution, replied "that he could not consistently with the honour of the great monarch whom he represented, surrender up helpless refugees who had thrown themselves upon his protection; that every Frenchman in Pondicherry would readily sacrifice life for their protection, and that his own life would be the forfeit if his sovereign knew that he listened to the proposal of paying tribute; and, finally, that he was prepared and resolved to defend his post to the last." This manly tone had effect. Pondicherry was not attacked; no prisoners surrendered; no tribute paid.

Though the Mahratta army amounted to one hundred thousand men, still the French were in the position to make a formidable, if not a successful, defence. The place was regularly fortified, and well stored with provisions; the garrison consisted of between six and seven thousand men, and its walls were protected by between four and five hundred pieces of cannon.* The conduct of the French on this occasion recommended them to the favour of the Mogul and his ministers, who ever after manifested the greatest kindness for Dumas, and the highest respect for the French nation. But this gratitude did not terminate at the mere expression. The young Prince of Arcot came in person to testify his sense of obligation, and presented a very fine elephant with splendid trappings; to this he added the cession of three districts in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, to Dumas personally, and this grant was confirmed by the Emperor of Delhi, and Dumas raised to the dignity of nabob, and to the command of four thousand five hundred horse. These favours were all personal; but, through his intercession, he procured them to be assigned to his office. Immediately after, in 1741, he surrendered his power and his office into the hands of his successor, Dupleix, whose transactions will more appropriately form a portion of the English division of this work; in those stirring scenes where the two great nations prosecuted—as no other nations can—the war-struggle for supremacy, and where he comes into no ignoble conflict with Admiral Boscawen.

Whilst Dumas was reflecting such credit and distinction upon himself and his country, the government sent an equally illustrious man, Bourdonnais, to another of the French settlements. The progress of events there challenge and merit attention.

The Mauritius, or the Isle of France, may be fairly said to have been, at that time, peculiarly the possession of the "Perpetual Company of the Indies." It was not included in the grants of any of the previously existing companies; not that they claimed no right, nor had overlooked it; for it is on record that nearly one hundred years previously to its concession, the French government had entertained the idea of planting a colony there. This island is said to be one of the most romantic and picturesque-looking in the Eastern hemisphere. It lies four hundred miles east of Madagascar, and about two thousand three hundred miles from the Cape of Good Hope, and nine thousand five hundred from England. The first who made any settlement in it were the Dutch, in the year 1598, when they changed the name from Cerné to Mauritius, in honour of their Prince Maurice. The more tempting treasures held out to them further East, induced them to abandon it in 1710, and it was afterwards taken possession of by France in 1721, and was called *Ile de France*. It may be here said, that in the possession of that country it continued to remain till the year 1810, when the British government, exasperated by the great mischief done to our merchant vessels and East Indiamen by attacks made from this island, and apprehensive of similar results to our traders by the French men-of-war and privateers, sent, in that year, an expedition for its capture, in which they succeeded. At the peace, in 1814, the possession of it was notified, and from that time it has continued annexed to England. There is no exact account of the way in which the French first possessed it; but it must have been during the period the old East India Company's privileges lasted: however, the monument of possession taken, inscribed with the new name, erected by the Chevalier de Fouqeray, is dated September 3, 1721. Its first inhabitants came from the Isle of Bourbon, and were neglected, if not forgotten, during the space of fifteen years; and it was only in 1735, that the Perpetual Company decided on its occupation, and sent Bourdonnais to accomplish their designs there.

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* This town and district are situated within the British district of Tanjore, in the presidency of Madras, near the Coromandel coast of the Bay of Bengal, on a small estuary of the Cavery. The French territory is completely surrounded by the British, and contains an area of sixty-three square miles. It was restored to them at the general pacification in 1814, on condition that no fortifications should be erected thereon.—THORNTON'S *Indian Gazetteer*.

* Raynal, vol. ii. p. 331. The author in the *Universal Modern History*, says that the Mahrattas continued in the field all the year, 1740, till the month of April, 1741, and plundered every place within their reach, and tried without success what menaces would do with the Governor of Pondicherry: they at last accepted a small present and retired.—Vol. xi. p. 183.

This man, since so famous, was born at St. Maloes, and had been at sea from the early age of ten. No consideration could induce him to withdraw from his profession, and in every one of his uninterrupted voyages he was successful, and had signalized himself by some remarkable feat. He was the first Frenchman who suggested the idea of sending armed ships into the Indian sea; his skill in ship-building was well known, and also his capabilities in navigating and defending a ship. His schemes were comprehensive, and not distracted by his minute acquaintance with details. He apprehended no difficulty, and possessed the rare and eminent gift of inspiring all under his command with a confidence of his powers and in their results. On arriving at his post his first care was to master the difficulties of his situation. He acquired an accurate knowledge of the island, and his next care was to instil a spirit of emulation into the old settlers, who had pined and become inactive from the neglect with which they had been treated by the mother country. He subjected them and the recent arrivals to a wholesome discipline. He made them cultivate rice and wheat for the supply of the Europeans who might touch on their coast, and he knew that a regular supply would draw many traders thither. In a short time all the ships bound for India were hither attracted, assured that they would find all the refreshments and conveniences required after such a tedious voyage. Three ships, one of which was of five hundred tons burthen, were equipped and dispatched from the dock he had constructed, and he soon proved to the authorities at home, to what an important position their new dependency could be raised. These beginnings, pregnant with great promise, as is generally the case, did not meet with the approval of men of little minds, and a reply of Bourdonnais to one of the directors who charged him with having enriched himself, while he had exhausted the supplies of the company, deserves notice:—"I have managed mine according to my own judgment, and those of the company according to your direction."

He proposed to the government to place at his command a sufficient squadron, with which he would await, at the Isle of France, the commencement of the impending hostilities with England; and he promised when that event occurred, that he would proceed to the Straits of Sunda, and on that station—through which most ships sailing to or from China passed—would intercept all the English ships, and protect the French. Whatever might have been the result of this expedition if effected, there is no doubt whatever it was ably conceived. His antecedents, and what he afterwards did with a feeble force, confirm the opinion that it would have been fearlessly conducted, and would have seriously affected English interests in the East. Happily, his project was not executed on the scale he proposed, though the minister approved the plan.

Five vessels had been actually fitted out for him, and he had sailed with them. But he had scarcely departed when the directors, feeling annoyed because the destination of the squadron had not been communicated to them, regretting the expense incurred, and jealous of the power this appointment conferred on a man of whose previous influence they were apprehensive, remonstrated with the minister on the absurdity of it, assuring him that there was no reason to fear that the war in Europe would disturb the neutrality, which it would be as much the interest of the English as of the French to observe in the Indian waters. These remonstrances, unfortunately for France and the company, prevailed. Bourdonnais was recalled, and the promising opportunity lost of perhaps destroying the small squadron shortly after sent from England to Asia, of making the French masters of the Indian seas, and probably of ruining the English settlements in those regions. Hostilities soon after commenced between England and France.

Bourdonnais deeply regretted the great political blunder, and remonstrated in vain with the directors and minister. Without money, without means, and without magazines, he by perseverance succeeded in forming a squadron composed of a sixty gun ship and five merchantmen, which he converted into men-of-war. With this small armament he successfully attacked the English squadron, and forced them to abandon for a time the coast of Coromandel; he attacked and took Madras, and proved to the home government, that, had he been well supported, he would not have met with the reverses which will be noticed when treating of the achievements of the English arms in the Eastern conflicts with the French.

Before the close of this chapter, in order to make complete the history of French commerce in the East, up to the period at which we have arrived—namely, the eve of the commencement of hostilities arising out of the war which was declared in 1740 between England and France—it is necessary to supply a brief account of the French Chinese Company, which though absorbed in the amalgamation which constituted the Perpetual Company of the Indies, deserves notice for its previous and independent action.

The French historian makes mention of four companies which were formed for cultivating a trade with China. The first of these was formed in 1660, by the exertions of Fermenel, a wealthy merchant of Rouen, who had induced several others to join with him in the speculation, and amongst these were men of very high rank and influence. Religion was the great stimulant, as the object of most of the supporters was to transport to that vast country several prelates and priests, whom the pope had appointed to preach the gospel there.* The royal sanction was granted to it in 1664. The commercial results were so trivial, that a second voyage was never made. The second company was established by virtue of a treaty with the East India Company in 1698, supported by an arrêt of council, dated January in that year.

The arrêt was granted to M. Jourdan, a merchant, who equipped with great expedition a vessel of large tonnage, which sailed in the month of March following, and returned safely with a large and profitable cargo in August, 1700. The success of this experiment raised the expectations of the public in no ordinary degree. The same vessel was again prepared for the voyage, and returned in 1703, with equally remunerative results, though she had a narrow escape from shipwreck on her return in the Canton river. In consequence of these successful trips, letters patent were granted to the proprietors in 1705, by which they were incorporated with the title of the "Royal Company of China;" and, with the consent of "the East India Company of the Indies," their privileges were to terminate with those of the latter company. Within the space of eight years, three ships returned with cargoes consisting principally of silks, but a prohibition having been imposed on that commodity, the owners, in disgust, declined to continue their speculation. It may be also that this resolution was influenced, and in no small degree, by the apprehension created by the war which France then waged against most of the powers of Europe. Their privileges they still retained, and these extended not only to the coasts of China, but also to Tonquin, Cochin China, and the islands adjacent, and all the other traders of France were excluded from them.

In the year 1713, another China Company was formed under letters patent altogether independent of the East India Company, for a term of fifty years, extending from the month of March, 1715. This company dispatched two ships to China, one of which returned to Ostend in 1718, and the other in the same year to Genoa; but in 1719, it was swallowed up in the Company of the Indies.

In 1740, and from that to the present, Pondicherry was the seat of the governor-general of the French settlements in India. The affairs of the company were then in a flourishing condition; they retained their beaver trade in Canada, and the slave trade on the coast of Africa, which they lost the succeeding year. They had not only peopled the Isle of France and brought it to a state of prosperity, but they bestowed the same blessing on the Isle of Bourbon, and rendered both valuable possessions to France. Their trade was carried on to such an extent, and with such brilliant success, that they excited the jealousy of the Dutch and English companies. In the year 1734, their sales at L'Orient amounted to eighteen million livres, and in 1740, they reached twenty-two millions. In fact, having grasped at too much, they became sensible that their trade was too extensive for their resources, and that it was impossible for them to manage it to their satisfaction and benefit. Accordingly, in the year 1730, they importuned the king to take off their hands the trade of Barbary. He also resumed the trade in tobacco, which had been farmed to them; out of this, however, they reserved an annual revenue of eight millions. In the following year the company surrendered Louisiana into his hands, and paid one million four hundred and fifty thousand livres for being suffered so to do.

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* *Histoire de la Compagnie des Indes*, p. 93.

The company was not without its adversaries, and some of these calculate their sales at a lower rate, but in their statements they advisedly exclude the imports from China, the Mauritius, and Bourbon, and all the private goods imported by the officers and men engaged in their vessels.*

CHAPTER LXI.

BRITISH AFFAIRS IN CHINA DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The century opened with discussions as to the quantity and consequences of the export of silver to China, just such as occupied the city financiers in London during November, 1858. To lessen these exportations, on account of the Chinese trade, the directors of the East India Company ordered their supercargoes to send to Madras from China £20,000 in gold.*

During the first few years of the century Chinese commerce was carried on mainly between Surat and Bengal on the one hand; and Amoy, Chusan, and Canton on the other. Condore and Mocha, were also entrepots of Chinese trade.†

The Chinese adopted the vexatious and oppressive expedient of compelling Europeans at Canton to transact all their business with one man called "the emperor's merchant." This was fiercely and perseveringly resisted; for the emperor's merchant proved himself incompetent, besides he had neither capital nor goods, his patent of exclusive trade being his sole property. He finally allowed others to trade on condition of their paying to him five hundred "tales" per ship. A four per cent. duty was after some time levied: the company's agents thus describe its origin; and it is inserted here as strikingly illustrative of the spirit of Chinese procedure ever since:—"It may not be amiss in this place to take notice, that this four per cent. is an imposition lately crept upon us by the submission of our predecessors the two preceding seasons. One per cent. of the four is what has been usually given by the Chinese merchants to the linguist upon all contracts, and the linguist was used to gratify the Hoppo out of this sum for his employment. The other three were first squeezed from the China merchant, as a gratuity for upholding some particular men in monopolizing all the business, and this used to be given in a lump, so that by undervaluing the goods, and concealing some part, they used to save half the charge; but to show how soon an ill precedent will be improved in China to our disadvantage, the succeeding Hoppos, instead of the persuasive arguments such as their predecessors used, are come to demand it as an established duty."

In the year 1704, Gerardini, a celebrated painter of those days, a native of Italy, who had spent eight years at Pekin, adorning the emperor's palace — at the instance of the Jesuits—desired to embark for Europe in a good ship. The emperor sent orders to the Hoppo at Canton to facilitate his purpose: by this means the merchant fleet, lying in the Canton waters, was enabled to depart free from the impediments and vexations by which ships were commonly obstructed.

It was not until the year 1715 that the intercourse of the English with the Cantonese assumed a regular and systematic character, although the struggle of the earlier English adventurers to open up commercial communications with China had been so brave and so persistent. Tea now became a commodity of considerable export, but silks constituted the staple of trade. A house was occupied at Canton by the company's supercargoes, and their transactions assumed importance. M. Auber affirms that the usual course of procedure, on the arrival of ships off Macao, was for the supercargoes to land for the object of ascertaining how affairs stood at Canton and whether they might proceed and do business with their ships in safety:—"These points proving satisfactory, the ships proceeded to the Bocca Tigris, where some of the Hoppo's officers came on board. The supercargoes then intimated their intention of waiting upon the Hoppo, who invariably admitted them to a direct interview; at which, after compliments, they stipulated, through their linguist, for the observance of a series of articles, generally to the following purport:—

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* Peter Auber.

† Ibid.

* Macpherson's *History of European Commerce with India*, p. 273. Raynal, after relating these particulars adds:—"Il est des Empires où l'on vend également le droit de se ruiner, celui de se délivrer et celui de s'enricher, parceque le bien et le mal, soit public, soit particulier, peuvent y devenir un objet de finance."—*Hist. Phil. et Polit.* vol. viii. p. 110.

"1st. They demanded a free trade with all people without restriction.

"2nd. That they might entertain in their service what Chinese servants they pleased, and turn them away at their pleasure; and that if their English servants should commit any disorder or fault deserving punishment, the Chinese should not take upon them to punish, but should complain to the supercargoes, and they would see them sufficiently punished according to the crime.

"3rd. That they should have liberty to buy all sorts of provisions and necessaries for their factory and ship, at their will.

"4th. That they should pay no custom or other duties for any goods they should bring on shore and not dispose of, and that they might ship them off again free of all duties. That they should pay no duties for wine, beer, or other stores expended in their factory.

"5th. That they should have liberty to set up a tent ashore, to mend and fit their casks, sails, and rigging, and other necessaries.

"6th. That their boats should have liberty to pass the several custom-houses or boats as often as should be thought fit, without being called to or examined on any pretence whatsoever, when the British colours were hoisted, and that at no time their seamen's pockets should be searched.

"7th. That their escritoires and chests might be brought on shore into their factory, and be carried on board ship again on their departure, without being searched.

"8th. That the Hoppo would protect them from all insults and impositions of the common people and mandarins, who were annually laying new duties and exactions which they were forbidden to allow of.

"9th. That the four per cent. be taken off, and that every claim or demand the Hoppo had, should be demanded and determined the same time with the measurement of the ship.

"As the supercargoes required these several privileges, the linguist signified the same to the Hoppo; who consented that all should be granted according to their request, excepting the last article, as to the remission of the four per cent. duty, which he could not agree to. The supercargoes represented that it was a great hardship and imposition, and that they must insist on it; but at last, finding all that they could say was to no purpose, they let the argument drop."

Matters went on after this manner until 1720, when the native merchants with whom the English supercargoes transacted business, formed themselves into one body, or, as it was called by the company's agents, a "Co-hong." This combination was for the purpose of raising prices, so that by never underselling one another, the English and other agents were at their mercy. For a time, trade was from this cause almost impossible. The English, however, found means to present their case to an imperial officer of authority, whom they called the Isontock, who summoned the Co-hong to his presence, and threatened that if it were not speedily dissolved, he would dissolve it for them in a manner more certain than agreeable.

In 1721, an officer of the Hoppo was accidentally killed near Whampoa, and the Chinese took up the matter with much injustice and resentment, seizing the petty officers of some of the ships, and menacing the supercargoes. The English seem to have been the sole sufferers on this occasion. Once more the company's agents found means to reach the higher officials by their influence, which they exercised with such force and address, that the mandarin who menaced and insulted them, was ordered into custody, and a promise given that he should be bastinadoed with bamboos, and turned out of the emperor's service.

Acting upon orders from home, the supercargoes, in 1722, made renewed efforts to create a trade fair in itself and free. In this year much injustice and large imposition of fines was inflicted upon the English in consequence of the accidental death of a Chinese boy in a paddy field, from a shot fired by the mate of an English ship at a bird.

In 1727, in consequence of the exactions and impositions practised by the emperor's officials, the supercargoes intimated their intention to withdraw to Amoy. This alarmed the trading community, and most of the restrictions were withdrawn. The removal of grievances was, however, merely to alter the purpose of the supercargoes to go elsewhere, and when it was supposed that such a resolution was laid aside, the system of impositions was renewed, and ten per cent. duty was laid upon all goods sold by the merchants. The supercargoes and Europeans then at Canton, of whatever condition, resolved to place their complaints in person before the Isontock. Every obstruction possible was raised to their doing so, and on one occasion they had to break through the outer gates of the city, and, to the amazement of the Chinese, force their passage to the residence of the great authority. Here they met with chicane, insolence, fraud, falsehood, and the grossest injustice, and they received at last some partial redress, but were informed they must never come again with complaints. It is strange that no fault appears to have been found with them for marching in a body against the will of mandarins into the great presence. What a miniature picture of the events of modern times at Canton such proceedings present: the same spirit of cheating and prevarication on the part of the Chinese, and the same energy of will and daring on the part of the representatives of the western nations.

The supercargoes wearied at last of their attempts to obtain justice from the Cantonese authorities, endeavoured to make known their grievances to the court of Pekin, in 1728—thus exhibiting another feature of the picture presented to the world in the connection of Europeans with Chinese affairs of late years. As there was no way of applying force to the convictions of the emperor, it does not appear that he listened to their appeals, nor even that their complaints reached him.

The Chinese continually interfered with European ships and boats, and, contrary to existing agreements, when under the flags of their respective nations, adding yet another point of resemblance to so many parallels in the state of affairs in those days to that which brought on the Chinese war with France and England in 1857. This practice became intolerable in 1730, and continued for three years to be perpetrated in a manner which could serve no purpose, but that of insult to the Europeans, and the gratification of an overbearing tyranny on the part of the Chinese.

Meantime, the attempts of the English to obtain a commerce with Amoy failed, the prejudices of the people and the tyranny of the superior classes rendering it impracticable.

Kien Lung succeeded to the throne in the year 1736, and he immediately issued an edict abolishing the ten per cent. duty. He, at the same time, showed a jealousy of Europeans, by insisting that within fourteen miles of Canton, all armed ships should surrender their arms until they were again leaving. As no doubt was entertained that the mandarins would steal the stores of war deposited in their custody, the ship's captains were very unwilling to comply with these requirements.

On the publication of the edict, the native and European merchants were summoned to hear it read, and commanded to prostrate themselves in homage to the emperor. This the Europeans refused, and the ceremony was waved, the Europeans making valuable presents to the Isontock.

After these events, the chief agitation was in connection with the 1950 tales exacted beyond the measurage duty upon ships. The letters of the supercargoes to the directors in 1738, imply, without clearly expressing it, that the depositing of warlike stores by ships' captains was not insisted upon.

One Foo-yuen, who appears to have had much cunning as well as authority, raised new difficulties in the way of trade in the year 1741. Indeed, with the exception of brief intervals, there was always some official sufficiently powerful, venal, capricious, or tyrannical, to impede the free and fair interchange of commodities.

Towards the latter end of the same year, the first English ship of the royal navy visited Canton. It was the *Centurion*, under the command of the far-famed Commodore Anson, whose captures of rich Spanish ships, especially when carrying specie, so injured the Spaniards, enriched himself and his crews, gained reputation for his daring and nautical skill, and gratified his country. The Chinese were not disposed to be courteous to the commodore, and that officer, being ready and prompt in his actions, was about to resort to force, but for the interposition of the merchants. The commodore was averse to diplomacy, and long consultations; his mode was to make his wants plainly known, and to take redress for injuries without any other delay than what was requisite to obtain a simple and speedy reply to his requisitions. The result was the Chinese greatly respected him when they found their first few attempts at procrastination in vain, and granted him whatever he desired, his requests being only reasonable and just. The impression his presence and manners created among the Chinese officials was aided by an exploit against the Spaniards. Yearly a vessel leaving Spain sailed from Acapulco and Manilla to Lisbon. Anson attacked and captured this splendid prize, and bore it into the river of Canton. The Chinese, although filled with admiration of the commodore's spirit and enterprise, could not let the opportunity slip of obtaining in an indirect way some share of his booty: they demanded duties upon the ships and cargo. He purchased provisions and stores of the Chinese merchants, who would not deal unless paid beforehand, and then would not fulfil their engagements. Anson demanded an audience of the viceroy, by letter, and sent it by one of his officers. Before a reply could arrive, a desolating fire broke out in the city which destroyed one hundred of the principal shops, and eleven streets of warehouses, and would have probably destroyed the whole city, but for the opportune arrival of the commodore and his crew, when, by the exercise of systematic and intelligent efforts, as well as by dauntless daring, the fire was subdued. The viceroy was so much pleased with the discipline and courage of the commodore's men, that he granted an audience. The commodore presented a statement of his own grievances at the hands of the merchants who undertook to supply him with provisions and stores, and also of the hardships to which the supercargoes had been subjected by venal mandarins. The only reply he received was that the viceroy wished him a prosperous voyage to Europe. Neither the commodore's services to the city, nor the sensation created by his dashing bearing and exploits could charm the Chinese where money exactions were concerned. They continued to cheat and to oppress after the commodore's departure, and in spite of the imperial edict.

An affair occurred in 1747, which widened the breach between the two parties. An officer refused permission to the mandarins to allow his escritoire to be examined. The Chinese demanded that he should be delivered up to punishment, and the linguist of the supercargoes was put in chains. The supercargoes resisted, and much contention ensued, the Chinese resorting to various acts of treachery, to get into their possession some of the company's agents, who, supplied with provisions, shut themselves up, their reputation for the effective use of fire-arms preventing their cowardly assailants from close attack. It is not clear from existing records of those transactions, how the company's employés emerged from this particular difficulty; but in the year 1751, the supercargoes were engaged in the same monotonous and fruitless task of negotiating for the remission of the obnoxious "tales" upon the shipping.

The Chinese continued for a number of years to devise every ingenious means for tormenting the Europeans and embarrassing trade. Edicts were in vain published by imperial authority; the mandarins frustrated, by cunning in administration and false representations, any good intentions entertained at Pekin. Among the most annoying embarrassments of the trade was the appointment of what were called security merchants. M. Auber describes this peculiar and oppressive measure in the following terms, under the chronological heading of 1754:—"A discussion took place at the same time with reference to the practice of naming security merchants for each ship, a practice which, it was stated, had not existed above twenty years, and to which the merchants themselves very strongly objected, as they thereby became responsible to the government for the duties and customs on all the goods imported in such ships, whether purchased by the security merchant himself or any other person. In like manner, he was also accountable for the duties on export cargoes, and he became subject to demands for curiosities brought out in the ship; so that he was either impoverished, or the company charged excessive prices for the commodities of trade. An interview was obtained with the Isontock on the 29th July, who received the supercargoes very courteously, but refused to give them a written answer to their application that the merchants might be released from security; and on the 9th August, two merchants were named for each ship, notwithstanding their entreaties to be excused; but they were informed that any deficiency would be levied upon the whole body."

In the year 1753, the directors at home forwarded instructions for the encouragement of the study of the Chinese language by their agents, and sent out two young men to study at Canton, for the purpose of becoming efficient linguists.

During the same year a mission was sent to Limpo, in the hope of reopening trade there, but it was unsuccessful as to any ultimate and long extended benefit.

The supercargoes became so wearied of the oppressions to which they had been subjected, that in 1754, they declined allowing their ships to come up to Whampoa. The Isontock did not feel it to be to his interest, in the face of the emperor's edicts, to allow the trade altogether to vanish from Canton; so he promised redress of grievances, and afforded a proud, yet courteous reception to the supercargoes. During this year, the privilege of walking within certain limits on Dane's Island was accorded to European seamen.

In the year 1755, a new series of disputes arose from the prohibition of trade with private merchants and shopkeepers of Canton, all dealings being confined to the Hong merchants with rigorous strictness. After much verbal conflict, some slight relaxations of these stringent orders were allowed.

An important revolution in the trade with China occurred in 1757. The emperor, by edict, prohibited all foreign trade conducted by Europeans with Eastern China, and the European establishments at Limpo, Amoy, and Chusan had to be broken up. Such foreign commerce as might be conducted at these ports by natives was subjected to double duty, and although the native vessels of other Asiatic countries were allowed to enter the ports, they dared not while there carry guns, ammunition, or even sails. The whole trade with China was limited to Canton. This was supposed by the Europeans to be the work of the ever scheming Canton merchants, who, by bribing the imperial ministers, hoped to obtain a monopoly. So sternly were Europeans interdicted the ports of Eastern China, that vessels touching there could not obtain the smallest quantity of the necessaries of life, even when in the most serious want of them. The East India Company appointed a Mr. Flint, a man of resolution and ability, to proceed to Limpo, with presents of looking-glasses for the emperor, and a letter requesting permission to reside for some time at Nankin, as the representative of English merchants. On arriving there he was repulsed rudely, and returned to Canton. Upon his arrival at that place, the Isontock requested an interview, and, at the time named, he proceeded to the palace of that great functionary, accompanied by the supercargoes as a body. They were allowed to enter within the first and second gates, and were then disarmed of their swords. They were commanded by the mandarins to prostrate themselves before the Isontock, but on refusal, were thrown down and much abused. To their amazement, it was discovered that the object in sending for Mr. Flint was to kidnap him. He was told he was the emperor's prisoner, for going to Limpo without permission, and that he was to be incarcerated for three years at Macao, or near it, after which he might visit Canton, to transact his business, and depart never to visit China again. The native who translated into Chinese the petition which he sent to the emperor from Limpo, was that day to be beheaded. The protests of the supercargoes were unavailing: Mr. Flint was actually held a prisoner for nearly three years at Macao. The foreign supercargoes of all nations met at the house of the chief agent of the English company, and informed the Isontock that they believed such tyranny was unknown to the emperor, and that their respective nations would find means to make him acquainted with the disloyalty and unlawful proceedings of his officers: they were treated with contempt. They had no force to back their protestations, therefore the Chinese did not respect or heed them: under the cannon's mouth they would have consented to justice, not otherwise. The traders, especially the English and Dutch, were ready to bear almost any indignity, if commercial gains could be secured, although, without that proviso, they were more ready to resist than any others.

The directors in London sent out Captain Skottowe, in 1760, to "settle the differences which had sprung up." The captain commanded the *Royal George*, and brought a letter from the court of the company to the Isontock. His instructions were curious, and his demands were very specific:—"He was not to be seen in the shops, or purchasing Chinaware. That if he wished to purchase any goods he was to send for the merchants and not to go after them, and never to appear in undress in the streets, or at home when he received visits: he was to be called *Mr.* Skottowe, not *Captain*, and it was to be given out that he was the brother of his majesty's under secretary of state, who had the honour to write the king's letters.* The court's address requested the liberation of Mr. Flint, who they stated was a British subject as well as a servant of the company; and after expressing their mortification at their exclusion from Limpo, pointed out the exactions and grievances from which they desired relief, viz.:—1st. The 1950 tales. 2nd. The six per cent. on imports, and the two per cent. on all silver paid the Hoppo. 3rd. To be allowed to pay their own duties, and not through the merchants who are styled securities, whom they charged with applying it to their own purposes. 4th. That the Hoppo should always hear the representations of the supercargoes, and that an appeal might be made by them direct to the Isontock." The company seem to have imagined that all these arrangements were very cunning and very clever. The Chinese laughed at them. It was unnecessary to offer statements of grievances, or arguments for the justice of their demands; the Chinese were already aware of the grievances and convinced of their injustice. With them the only question was what force the barbarians would employ; negotiations not backed by a fleet would always be unavailing, unless some singular combination of circumstances favoured the negotiations. *Mr.* Skottowe, his cause, and his country, were treated with supercilious scorn. This the company might have understood would have been the case, for there had been a hundred years' experience of the Chinese already, and it ought to have been well enough known that the traders, officials, and people were alike destitute of honour and principle, and were capable of barbarous cruelty, when opportunity allowed. So little knowledge, however, had the English people acquired of China, that in the year 1762, at the suggestion of the Royal Society, the directors sent out certain queries as to the affinity of the Chinese and Egyptian languages, both bodies believing that the languages were identical.†

Feuds, oppressions, complaints, petitions, remonstrances, threats, and interruptions of trade, continued until 1771, when a British ship of war having submitted to indignities at the instigation of the supercargoes, who feared that the trade might otherwise suffer, a native merchant named Puankhequa purchased for 100,000 tales the dissolution of the Co-hong; the money was repaid afterwards by the supercargoes.

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* Captain Skottowe's brother was employed under Government.

† *China, an Outline of its Government, Laws, and Policy.* London, 1834.

A curious circumstance occurred at the close of the year, of which the directors were advised by their agents to the following effect:—"A small vessel arrived at Macao on the 23rd September, commanded by a Hungarian baron, Maurice Augusto Madar Beniofski, which event occasioned much speculation. He was at Macao, but not obtaining permission to proceed to Canton, the supercargoes could not procure intelligence, having no opportunity of meeting him. It was stated that he came from Kamtschatka, but by what track, or what were his motives, were unknown. He subsequently claimed the protection of the French, and had a chop procured for him and some of his officers to go up to Canton; and by their being mentioned in the chop (which was procured by Puankhequa), under the denomination of French merchants, and the Hoppo's officer at Macao having had them described to him differently before, he returned the chop to Canton, and would not suffer them to proceed. The mandarins were apprehensive they might be Russians, and Puankhequa, fearful of being involved in embarrassment, declined interfering. They remained at Macao until the French ships left China, in which they were to embark for Europe."

It is remarkable, in connection with this circumstance, that the celebrated Gibbon met with this Hungarian captain subsequently in Paris, and wrote to Dr. Robertson, the historian, then in the zenith of his reputation, describing him and his adventures. Gibbon's letter to Robertson was as follows:—"A few days ago I dined with Beniofski, the famous adventurer, who escaped from his exile at Kamtschatska, and returned into Europe by Japan and China. His narrative was amusing, though I know not how far his veracity in point of circumstances may safely be trusted. It was his original design to penetrate through the north-east passage, and he actually followed the coast of Asia as high as the latitude of 67° 35′, till his progress was stopped by the ice in a strait between the two continents, which was only seven leagues broad. Thence he descended along the coast of America, as low as Cape Mendocin, but was repulsed by contrary winds in his attempts to reach the port of Acapulco. The journal of his voyage, with his original charts, is now at Versailles, in the *Depôt des Affaires Etrangères*, and if you conceived that it would be of any use to you, for a second edition, I would try what might be obtained."

About 1764, the Chinese set up a claim to try according to their laws all Europeans who had offended other Europeans, a prerogative strenuously resisted by the supercargoes. A French seaman killed a Portuguese seaman in the service of the English, while in the house of a native merchant, and then fled for protection to the French consulate, where he was maintained, the French at that date having assumed much importance at Canton. As the offence was perpetrated in the house of a Chinese, the government determined to force the consul's house, to prevent which, when matters came to an extremity and the French found they had no adequate means of resistance, the man was given up to the Chinese officials, by whom he was publicly strangled. This seems to have intimidated the Europeans generally.

A Captain M'Clary, who destroyed a country ship, supposing it to be Spanish, was incarcerated until the English paid seventy thousand dollars for his liberation. This event is variously fixed at 1779-80 and 81; it also showed the Europeans that the native government was determined to enforce its authority.

In 1779 two royal ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, arrived off Macao, being in want of provisions and naval stores. While there tidings arrived of the death of Captain Cook, the distinguished navigator. These English ships had been as far north as 70° 44′, where they were stopped by the ice.

The year 1780 was rendered important to the English at Canton by one of their company, named Smith, refusing to recognise the authority of the company in these parts. He was forcibly seized, but, nevertheless, in all other respects politely and kindly treated, and sent home. This was by the command of the directors.

Captain M'Clary again brought the English into trouble at Canton. Hearing that war had broken out between his countrymen and the Dutch in Europe, he made prize of a Dutch ship in Chinese waters, and the government of the emperor, or, at all events of his viceroy, were as indignant as the governor of a European nation would be under similar circumstances. The viceroy could not get at the captain this time, but he threatened to seize all the English at Canton, unless Captain M'Clary gave up his prize, by doing which the dispute terminated. Scarcely did one quarrel end than another began, and the Chinese were prepared for every contingency, as far as craft and treachery could qualify them for new inflictions of injustice. The company's officers could not obtain the payment of debts from the natives, nor the repayment of advances. From such causes the English trade suffered up to 1784, when fresh disturbances inflicted still heavier injuries on commerce. A shot fired from an English ship accidentally killed a Chinaman. The officers of the viceroy demanded that the gunner should be given up. The English declared that the gunner had escaped; the viceroy demanded that some one else from the ship should be given up in his stead. The supercargo of the ship proceeded to the authorities to explain the circumstances; he was induced to go into the city, where he was detained until the gunner should be surrendered. All the European natives united, manned their boats, and presented an imposing force. The Chinese officials opened negotiations with other Europeans to detach them from the English, towards whom the officials seemed to bear a peculiar hatred, but this stratagem did not succeed. The Americans appeared in a prominent way, for the first time, on this occasion, acting with the Europeans throughout. After much parade of resolution, upon which the Chinese looked with a patient and quiet bearing, the English, as usual in their Chinese transactions, surrendered all they had with so much uproar contended for: the poor gunner whom they declared had absconded, they were obliged to admit had been all the time on board ship, and they allowed the Chinese to bear him away captive, for the trade was stopped. They "recommended the gunner to the protection of the Chinese!" The mandarins told them "not to be uneasy as to his fate!" The man was strangled, and the same day the agents of all the European nations at Canton were informed of the event, and that in case any Chinese subject fell by the hands of a European, no matter how, several lives from that nation would be exacted as a penalty. The emperor's disapproval of the falsehood to which the English had resorted to preserve their countryman, was also conveyed in haughty, menacing, and insulting terms. The conduct of the English throughout the transaction was calculated to lower their nation. After declaring that they would endure all perils rather than surrender the life of an innocent man, who could neither have foreseen nor controlled the accident, and after having declared that he had escaped, they delivered him up, begging mercy for him, when, as might be supposed, their prayer was treated with mockery. The Chinese showed throughout a keen knowledge of the persons with whom they had to deal, and the surest mode of accomplishing their object. The "select committee" at Canton, in addressing the court of directors in London, take marvellous credit to themselves for ordering up the boats, and the imposing martial appearance they made, to which they attributed the termination of the troublesome affair. The surrender of the unfortunate and guiltless gunner to be murdered, rather than stop the trade, really ended the matter. The following extract from the despatch of the select committee shows how determined the Chinese government were to have blood for blood, even when a subject of the empire was slain by accident, and the difficult position in which the English were placed, until at a much later period, treaties, with difficulty enforced, gave some assurance of security:—"From the circumstances that followed the seizure of the supercargo, the frequent mention of Mr. Pigou's name, the president, in the several conferences with the mandarins, and the express stipulation that he should not leave Canton, and the concurrent testimony of every Chinese deserving of credit whom we have conversed with since the termination of the affair, there does not remain a doubt that the local officers' determined resolution in the beginning was to seize the person of the chief, if they found that of Mr. Smith ineffectual. As repeated experience shows the utter impossibility of avoiding the inconveniences to which we are constantly subject from the imprudence or wilful misconduct of private traders, and the accidents that may happen on board their ships, it were to be wished that the powers, if any, which we really possess over them, were clearly and explicitly defined, or if no law, or construction of law, now existing allows of such powers, how far the absolute commands of the government under whose jurisdiction we are, will justify our compliance, and how far, in such a case, the commanders and officers of the honourable company's ships are bound to obey our orders; at present equally destitute of power to resist the unjust commands of government and to carry them into effect, we know of no alternative but retiring to our ships for protection."

Some time after these misfortunes, several English sailors were attacked on Dane's Island, and one man killed. The president of the English factory brought the matter under the notice of the authorities. The man was found and arrested, and a communication was made to the president that he was strangled, but no proof was ever afforded of the fact, although the English believed, or what was more likely pretended to believe, the representations made to them. At all events, their conciliatory bearing was rewarded by a visit of the Isontock, who, for the first time, on this occasion entered a European house.

In 1787 the select committee received a despatch from the court of directors regarding the fate of the gunner, and the conduct of the factors on that occasion. This despatch was so wise and just as to set on its proper basis the policy of the English agents. The following extracts point out principles of action and probabilities which were for a long time applicable to the relations of the agents at Canton, and the current of events there, and, indeed, until wars and treaties in the nineteenth century modified and influenced them all:—"Experience had shown that the court of Pekin would use its power to carry into execution whatever it declares to be the law. Individual Chinese may be, and often are, afraid of Europeans, but the government was not so. Despotic in itself, ignorant of the power of foreign nations, very superior to the divided and small states that surround it, the Chinese esteem themselves not only the first nation in the world, but the most powerful. Such circumstances and such notions had naturally produced a high and imperious spirit in the government, but no fear." Adverting to the attempt at intimidation on the part of the factory, and the effect it might have produced on the mandarins, it was remarked, "if they had any apprehensions, it must have been of their own government, which absurdly supposes that if a mandarin is active and diligent in performing the duties of his office no disturbance can happen, and of course if any does, it must proceed from his negligence." This oppressive and unjust system of Chinese policy was supposed to have operated on the occasion in question, for the Fooyouen was degraded soon after, and for some time not permitted to go to the court of Pekin.

The power of the company's agents at Canton to send away refractory persons of the English nation was defined and declared by an act of parliament, which tended to prevent embarrassments of a particular description. The conduct of English seamen had long been a thorn in the side of the president. The tars of England were bold and unruly, and were prone to attack the sailors of other European nations, partly from national invidiousness, and partly from a desire to try their strength with others, arising from the exuberance of their daring. The court of directors sent out regulations calculated to stop these practices.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the Chinese showed more jealousy of the English than of any other nation. This arose from the victories of the English in Bengal, and from a conviction that as in India so everywhere, when once they got a territorial footing they could not be expelled.

The supercargoes and captains of ships were painstaking to avoid offence and were conciliatory; but it was all in vain. The opinion held by the Chinese could not be removed, that while the English were low they would be submissive, provided they were permitted to a certain extent to trade, but that if allowed to grow strong, they would drive all before them with a high hand.

In the year 1792, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas being then members of the English cabinet, set their minds upon an embassy to China, and arrangements were made with the directors of the East India Company to send out Lord Macartney. The directors and the ministry differed as to the measure, but were agreed as to the man. The English were now the principal traders from Europe in the Chinese market, and the trade was deemed valuable, especially in silks and teas. It was supposed by the cabinet, that the address of Lord Macartney might remove the differences which existed, or, at all events, ascertain the nature of the jealousy which the Chinese entertained of the English, and whether their exclusive conduct arose from a fixed policy, or one that was capricious and temporary. The East India Company knew the state of matters in these respects already, and had no faith that any ambassador could mend it, but, as often before, they deemed it politic to fall in with the views of the government, however divergent from their own.

The ambassador embarked at Portsmouth on the 26th September, 1792, on board the *Lion*, Sir Erasmus Gower, captain. Our space will not allow of a minute description; the author of an account of the British and Foreign embassies to, and intercourse with, that empire, sums up, in the following laconic style, the history of Lord Macartney's embassy, published in London shortly after his return. "The whole course of the embassy, from its arrival and disembarkation at the river Pe-ho; its progress towards Pekin; the designation on the flags of the boats in which Lord Macartney and his suite embarked, 'the ambassador bearing tribute from the King of England;' the consent of his lordship to go through the ceremony before the Chinese throne, provided a Chinese did the same to the picture of the King of England; the journey of his lordship and suite to Ge-hol, the country seat of the emperor, who was in his eighty-third year, and who rose each morning at three o'clock and retired at six in the afternoon; the ceremony being waived by the reception of the ambassador on merely bending his knee; the studied respect shown to the embassy and suite amidst the jealous and careful watchfulness of the Calao and

Legate; the degradation of the latter because he had not gone on board the *Lion* on her arrival with the ambassador, as desired by the emperor, and being consequently obliged to wear an opaque white instead of a transparent blue button, and a crow's instead of a peacock's tail pendant from his cap; together with the various entertainments given by the emperor, are so fully detailed in the account of the embassy published shortly after its reaching England, that it would be quite superfluous now to enter upon them. The embassy was about fifty days from the period of landing at Pe-ho to that of its quitting Tien Sing on its return to Canton."

The aim of the Chinese court was to trick and outwit his lordship. It had no intention of negotiating honestly or prosecuting trade on terms of mutual advantage, but was desirous of keeping open every point which would by its uncertainty leave to the stronger on the spot the power to determine the issue off hand. Lord Macartney thought otherwise, but he was deceived. The issue falsified the expectations of Pitt and Dundas, and confirmed the prognostications of the directors of the East India Company.

Most of the forms and ceremonies which were observed during the embassies of the Russians and Dutch, noticed on previous pages, were insisted upon with Lord Macartney: after hundreds of years the court of Pekin was still the same. His lordship chiefly attributed the failure of his negotiations to the alarm created by the exploits of the English in Hindostan.

His "celestial" majesty condescended to write to his English tributary, declaring that none of his requests could be granted; that they were impracticable, and in fact improper. Having given a most explicit refusal in terms not insulting, except so far as they were haughty and assuming, "the emperor of the universe and the son of Heaven," thus exhorted the King of England on the subject of the latter's petition:—"I again admonish you, O king, to act conformably to my intentions, that we may preserve peace and amity on each side, and thereby contribute to our reciprocal happiness. After this, my solemn warning, should your majesty, in pursuance of your ambassador's demands, fit out ships in order to attempt to trade either at Ning Po, Tehu San, Tien Sing, or other places, as our laws are exceedingly severe, in such case I shall be under the necessity of directing my mandarins to force your ships to quit these ports, and thus the increased trouble and exertions of your merchants would at once be frustrated. You will not then, however, be able to complain that I had not clearly forewarned you. Let us, therefore, live in peace and friendship, and do not make light of my words. For this reason I have so repeatedly and earnestly written to you upon this subject."

On the 4th September, 1794, Lord Macartney arrived in safety with his ship. The wonderful perseverance of the English was not exhausted; failure seemed only to sharpen their persistence. Presents were sent from England to the emperor, and his great officers, and every step in presenting them was marked with extraordinary deference to Chinese custom and prejudice. These presents consisted of such manufactures as it was supposed would be profitable to the English to sell, and pleasant to the Chinese to buy. The manufactures were accompanied by letters from his majesty and his ministers, as well as from Lord Macartney; and all were as sanguine of success as if the Chinese had only just been heard of, and the writers of the epistles had never studied human nature in its oriental phases.

The viceroy and the Hoppo at Canton pretended that the letters and presents must have been intended for their predecessors, and therefore it was improper to receive them; but the despatches and gifts for the emperor were forwarded. Some slight relaxations at Canton followed, but they were of short duration.

In 1800 an English ship-of-war fired into a Chinese boat at night, the crew of which, the captain had reason to believe, intended to cut his cable, as he had been repeatedly robbed. A Chinese was wounded, another leaped into the river and was drowned. The new viceroy was somewhat partial to the English, but the usual demand was made for the person who fired to be delivered up to a Chinese tribunal. The traders at Canton fearing that nothing short of this would satisfy the authorities, without recommending the surrender, indicated its necessity. Captain Dillon bravely said that no sailor of his should be examined but in his presence, and with adequate guarantee for his safety; but he would take upon himself the act done and its consequences, and it would then remain for the Emperor of China and the King of England to settle the dispute as one that pertained to themselves. This bold procedure at once preserved the sailor, who had merely performed his duty, the Chinese boat having refused to be warned off, and the honour of England was maintained. The wounded Chinese recovered, and, under the pretence that the drowned man had been in fault himself in leaping overboard, the viceroy declared that he had no further demand to make on the gallant captain.

Some English sailors, who had escaped from an American ship, on board of which they had been barbarously ill-used, were received at a place remote from Canton, most kindly treated, and sent to the factory. This circumstance led to mutual acts of politeness, and tended to soften the asperity of the intercourse.

The century closed, leaving the English in possession of but few advantages in their trade with China which they had not when first they found any footing there. Fear of English arms began to prevail, and induced a constrained respect, but deepened the dislike of the Chinese people and officials to the English nation.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE BRITISH IN WESTERN INDIA DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century was destined to be one of deep interest to India. Events of the greatest magnitude were determined by an all-wise Providence for its history. Eastern India became the chief theatre of the exploits which throw such a halo of romance over the history of the period. Western India, containing the oldest settlements of the company, demands, however, the first notice. The century opened at Surat upon scenes of strife and bitterness between the two companies, to which reference has been made in previous chapters, as darkening the character of English commerce during the closing years of the century which had just passed away. Sir Nicholas Waite and Sir William Norress waged incessant warfare upon one another, being what might be called the plenipotentiaries of the two companies in India. The amount of money consumed in bribing the Mogul and his great officers and chief religious advisers was enormous; and as this rivalry of corruption was intense, and the court was influenced by no views of what was just, but simply by venality, it was impossible for his imperial majesty to administer speedy any more than "cheap justice." * To such an extent did the rivals carry their animosity, that the old company refused to allow deceased servants of the new to find a resting place in their graveyard at Surat, and but for the superior charity of the Armenians these deceased Englishmen must have remained unburied.

The diary of the English Company's factory at Surat retains painful evidence of the broils and debauchery of their servants there at the beginning of the century. The author of *The English in Western India* presents the following terrible picture:—"Possibly it will occur to the reader, as it has occured to the writer—that the *dramatis personæ* in this chapter are all men of bad character; that I only present offensive details which are relieved by no examples of goodness and honour. I can only say that I represent the matter faithfully as recorded by the best authorities of the age. Vices were then trifles; to be corrupt and to corrupt others was the fashion. I do not find a word of anything good in the local annals either written or printed."

Scenes of violence and bloodshed were common among the highest officials, and their language was such as might be supposed common to the lowest blackguards, although in official documents there was much cant, and the assumption of spirituality. The most striking features of English character at Surat were at this time tyranny, and general contempt for law. Men were cast into prison at the caprice of the president, swords were drawn by members of council against one another on occasions that were trivial. Each official seemed to take pleasure in oppressing him who was just below him, and all treated such of the natives as were in their service as if they were brutes, rather than men and brothers. The author last quoted gives the following as a sample of the headstrong and brutal character of the English at the beginning of the century, showing that under the Stuarts, after the restoration, the English character had rapidly deteriorated, so that they could scarcely be regarded as men resembling their fathers of half a century before:—"John Wyatt had command of the guards for the day, and about eleven o'clock at night left the apartments of Mr. Demetrius and Mr. Wright for his own quarters. At this time he was much intoxicated, although quite sober and rational when brought before the council at five the next morning. After leaving his friends, when he came near his own door, the sentry challenged him, upon which the captain became extremely angry, drew his sword, and made a thrust at him. The sentry fled, and one who was stationed at Woodford's door followed his example. Both made for the main guard, pressed hard by their persecutor. Just at that moment the sand of the hour-glass had run out, and the sepoy, in whose charge it was, called to another to strike the gong. This seemed to add fuel to Wyatt's rage; he instantly ordered the corporal of the guard to relieve and bring the sentry before him. He then commenced to beat the poor fellow, asking him how he dared to have the gong struck without waiting for his orders. The other meekly replied that he was merely acting according to established rule, but for the future he would only act as the captain should think proper, and begged that he would cease beating him. Wyatt then took the man by the arm, deliberately turned him round, and ran his sword through his side. The sepoy dropped down dead upon the spot. This savage madman added to the barbarity of his crime by kicking and otherwise abusing the corpse of his murdered victim. The deputy governor was immediately summoned from his bed, and had the murderer secured. The decision of the governor in council was, that Captain Wyatt should be deprived of his commission, confined in irons, and sent to England." This sample of English life at Surat is followed by another on the same pages, which will suffice to illustrate the utterly corrupt state of social existence in the factories:—"In March, 1701, we find John Hall, Provost Marshal, confined to the Fort of Dongari. There was once an intention of giving him an ensigncy; but he was then charged with being an infamous drunkard, and in other respects a bad character. When required to clear himself of these charges, he only cursed and swore at every one, from the highest to the lowest, expressing a hope that the time might come when he would have his revenge. The government were obliged to put him in confinement at Dongari, although, as they significantly remarked, 'having too many such as he is in that or one fort or other, and with submission to your excellency in council, if they were all sent home, there would be a happy riddance of them.' Hall was accordingly shipped off, but Sir John Gayer, the general, and his council, thought that his masters had acted too precipitately."

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* Bruce's *Annals*, 1700—1702.

The dawn of the century in Bombay witnessed a succession of fearful calamities. Crime was the first and greatest of these, for Bombay was even worse than Surat. A pestilence broke out, which carried away very many of the natives, and, at its termination, only seventy-six Europeans remained alive—a proportion of these exhausted by sickness. Scarcely had the pestilence spent itself, when a violent storm raged along the Malabar coast, swept the island of Bombay of its produce, levelled property in the city, and, notwithstanding the shelter of the harbour, wrecked nearly all the ships there.* The poverty of the factories was such, that the agents had not sufficient food; indeed the whole island was on the brink of ruin. Sir John Gayer informed his masters that there was only one horse fit to be ridden, and only one pair of oxen which were able to draw a coach.

While matters were in this state at the factories, all India, but more especially western India, was in turmoil. Within five days' march of Bombay, Singhar was besieged by one of the many Mussulman powers into which the Mogul empire was breaking. The Mahrattas (Marathas) were rapidly growing in power, they were unquiet neighbours, levying contributions on the country, and preventing, by their devastations and forays, the cultivation of indigo.† The Mahratta fleet infested the harbour, keeping the English in perpetual alarm.‡

Whenever a trouble happened to the English in India, they found the Portuguese Jesuits at the bottom of it. The intrigues of those unprincipled men were at this time exerted to cause attacks from the Mahrattas, and prevent the arrival of provisions at Bombay. Perceiving the low state of the English from the combined causes above-named, the Portuguese sought occasion for quarrel, and at last assembled a fleet in Bombay harbour. At this juncture, the Arabs, who just then professed friendship for the English, arrived with a superior fleet, destroyed the Portuguese ships, landed on the island of Salsette, and put to the sword not only the garrison, but women and children. Such of the Portuguese as escaped, were glad to find shelter and protection with the English.

An ambassador from the King of Abyssinia to the general and president of Bombay, proposed the opening of commercial relations. He was received as well as the unfortunate circumstances of the presidency at the time allowed, and was sent back with such presents as the general was able to bestow. The documents connected with this interesting episode in the history of Bombay are nearly all lost, but the following singular letter, from the president to the king, at once throws light upon the times, and remains as a curiosity in the archives of literature and politics:—

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* Bruce, 1702-3.

† Bruce's *Annals*.

‡ Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*.

> *John Gayer, general for affaires of the Right Honourable East India Company in India, residing at Bombay, sendeth greeting to his most excellent Majesty Thoran, King of Abissine, and worshipper of Jesus, the Son of Mary, according to the laws of the Blessed Messias.*
>
> Your Majesty's royal letters and present of seven horses, twenty slaves, and three horns of civit I was honoured with in behalf of the Right Honourable East India Company, by your noble embassador, Dumontre, whome received with all possible demonstration of honour, love, and affection, and have continued the same to him all the time of his abode in these parts, and now have taken care to transport him back to your territories with the President of the Right Honourable East India Company to your most sacred majesty, an account of which comes with this. That your most excellent majesty will graciously be pleased to accept thereof, and to lay your royal commands on me for the future, as in your most serenely and princely wisdome shall seem meet, is most humbly desired.*

The negotiations in England for the union of the two companies (noticed in a previous chapter), did not promote concord among their servants in India. Sir John Childs, in the former century, had brought the company he served to the verge of bankruptcy, by his ill-judged aggressive policy; and the agents of the English Company, which was solvent, objected to a junction with the London Company, which was in a state of all but declared insolvency. The agents of the London Company could not be brought to regard their rivals as other than interlopers. It required years of discreet interposition by the directors of the united company to cancel the malignant jealousies which raged between these two classes of agents in India.

The miseries to which the servants of the old company were subjected at Surat were great, in consequence of the offence taken by the Mogul because of the plunder of native merchant ships by rovers. Indeed the factors of all nations then having factories at Surat suffered more or less on this account, but the English company's agents continued to gain favour with the viceroy, and escaped these trials. The Rev. Mr. Anderson, quoting the diary of the London Company's factory at Surat from the 30th August to 11th October, 1704, thus depicts the condition of the Europeans at Surat at that unhappy juncture:—"The servants of the old company who were confined within the walls of their factory were the Right Hon'ble Sir John Gayer, general, the Hon'ble Stephen Colt, president, the worshipful Ephraim Bendell, Bernard Wyche, the accountant, and Purser Marine, the chaplain, four senior and five junior factors, six writers and one surgeon. Instead of being encouraged to hope for a speedy release, these unfortunate persons were almost reduced to despair by hearing that some Europeans had committed fresh acts of piracy. Two piratical vessels had sighted five vessels belonging to Mussulmans, and immediately given them chase. Under cover of the night two of these merchant men proceeded on their voyage without molestation, a third had been compelled to alter her course, a fourth had been driven ashore at Swally, and the fifth captured. Great sensation was caused at Surat when these facts were known, and the governor asserted that the pirates came from Bombay. Alarmed at his threats the factors prepared to defend themselves within their walls. In anticipation that their usual supplies of provisions would be withheld, they had ordered a stock to be laid in, but sufficient time was not allowed them, and they were soon reduced to extremities. An ox, which they used for drawing water, was with great difficulty kept alive by feeding it with the straw in which wine had been packed, and at last was killed for food. Meanwhile the infuriated governor had seized the brokers of both the Dutch and London companies, hung them up by their heels, and flogged them until he extorted from them a promise to indemnify the losses of the native merchants with a payment of seven lacs of rupees. He then resolved to lay hold of the factors, and that he might starve them out the sooner, drove into their factory three English strangers whom he had apprehended, and who he trusted would help to consume their provisions. Nor did he spare threats, but vowed that he would have them alive or dead. They in reply declared they would never give themselves up, and would rather die than suffer again such misery as had been inflicted on them in their former confinement. At last, after twelve days, the governor moderated his fury, and consented to allow them a small supply of provisions. As an aggravation of their sufferings they not only knew that their rivals, Waite and his friends, were at liberty, but could see that they had hoisted the union jack as if to flout at their misery. The perseverance which they manifested when their circumstances were almost desperate, was highly honourable to them, and their fortitude was a credit to the English name."

At the end of the year 1705, a Mogul army approached within three days' march of the coast opposite Bombay. There were not then more than forty English soldiers to defend it, and the condition of the place was, if possible, more wretched than it had been a few years earlier. Its story, up to the end of 1707, offers little diversity in this respect.

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* *Diary of the London Company's Factory at Surat,* 1701-1704.

About this period, a person afterwards notable as father of the historian of India in the eighteenth century, Mr. Orme, arrived in India. It appears from the memoir of his son, attached to the *Historical Fragments*, that the elder Orme went out in 1706 as an adventurer, and was employed as a surgeon at Ajengo. He afterwards became chief of Ajengo; his second son, the great historian of a certain portion of Indian history, was born there.

However culpable the conduct of the agents and factors at Surat, native oppression was such as might have "driven wise men mad." Every annoyance that ignorance, insolence, and arrogance could offer was put upon the English. So much did they live in daily alarm for life and honour, that at the time the Emperor Aurungzebe died, Sir George Gayer, when he heard of it, dared not promulgate it, but communicated it in an allegory to the directors in London. Anderson, condensing the accounts in Bruce and Elphinstone, thus recounts the matter:—"He represented on the first of March, 1707, 'that the sun of this hemisphere had set, and that the star of the *second* magnitude, being under his meridian, had taken his place; but that it was feared the star of the first magnitude, though under a remoter meridian, would struggle to exalt itself'—in other words, that the emperor had died, that Prince Azim, his second son, had assumed the imperial title, and marched towards Delhi, and that Prince Alam or Moazim, the eldest son, was marching to dispute the throne with him. This actually occurred, and a great battle was fought near Agra in June, in which Prince Azim was killed. Moazim then became Emperor, with the title of Bahador Shah."

While the Mogul interest pressed heavily upon the English, the Mahrattas were scarcely less alarming in their menaces. Sevajee, the great chief, was dead; but so many daring adventurers rose up, pirates by sea or robbers by land, who called themselves Sevajee, that the name and functions of the man who combined so strangely the offices of prince, general, and bandit, were perpetuated. Repeatedly, from 1703 to 1708, one Sevajee or another invested Surat, fired its suburbs, and compelled the Europeans to take extraordinary measures for defence. The Mahrattas hired Arab rovers, who attacked English ships, but were nearly always beaten by a fifth of their force. Pegu, with its teak forests, so admirably adapted for ship-building, was the chief place where these expeditions were fitted out, the king of that country favouring the pirates. From the situation of Pegu, the Arabs were enabled to cruise at once into the Bay of Bengal and through the straits into the Archipelago, so that their ravages ranged from the Arabian Gulf to Japan. By sea and land the English and other Europeans were harassed by robbers. The Dutch alone successfully combatted these great difficulties. They blockaded Swally, captured the Mogul's ships, and compelled him to redress their grievances.

Among the sea robbers whose acts were most infamous were various English, and one Hamilton (who afterwards lived in Scotland) perpetrated so many terrible outrages, that his ambition appeared to be to reach the uttermost verge of crime and cruelty.

A proclamation was sent from England, offering pardon to all pirates who surrendered and made confession, and rewards to all pirate crews who would deliver up their ships and commanders. Commodore Settleter arrived with this proclamation. It was soon proved that many who were supposed to be Arab cruisers were English, for this measure nearly put down piracy.

There can be no doubt that a general impression unfavourable to the honour and honesty of all Europeans had sprung up in the native mind, and the conduct of the strangers justified it. A moral influence of the most unfavourable nature was exercised by all the European nations upon the natives. Bruce, in his *Annals*, quotes a strange letter to this effect from President Pitt, who was grandfather of the great Earl of Chatham:—"When the Europeans first settled in India, they were mightily admired by the natives, believing they were as innocent as themselves; but since, by their example, they are grown very crafty and cautious, and no people better understand their own interest; so that it was easier to effect that in one year which you shan't do now in a century; and the more obliging your management, the more jealous they are of you." Like his great descendants, President Pitt was a man of extraordinary force of character, and a keen discriminator of men and things, but he took up a prejudice in favour of "native innocence" common in his day, the races inhabiting India having the address to conceal their motives, feelings, and opinions probably better than any other people in the world. The experience of the English, after a hundred years' knowledge of them, was not calculated to confirm an opinion of their simplicity or ingenuousness.

The sufferings of the British from native misrule at the close of the first decade of the century, led to a deep impression that unless the native powers were made to fear Europeans more, justice, or even exemption from greedy exaction and rigorous oppression, was not to be hoped for. The Rev. Mr. Anderson thus describes the injuries endured by the English at this period, and no writer has ever written more impartially of his countrymen, neither extenuating their errors nor unduly lauding their virtues:—"There was no power sufficient to protect the merchant either by land or sea. If he wished to convey his goods from Surat to Agra, he could only hope to defend them against plunderers by mustering a strong party, and setting regular guards at each camping place, as though he were in an enemy's country. Even then he might be overpowered by the free lances of Hindostan. Still more dangerous were the paths of the ocean. There he must entirely depend upon his own resources, for it would be vain to seek protection from the law. Nay, the proud emperor appealed to the despised strangers that his shipping might be protected, and they were expected not only to defend themselves, but also the mariners and traders of a vast empire. Yet he and his subjects, helpless haughty barbarians, affected to despise the English, wronged them incessantly, imprisoned their chiefs, insulted their envoys, fleeced their merchants, and drove them to turn upon their oppressors in despair. Thus the evils of native rule compelled English merchants to protect their warehouses with battlements, and all the muniments of war. Then, as they still suffered injuries, the facility with which they managed to defend themselves suggested defensive operations, and led to territorial aggrandizement. Politicians think, or rather say, that because it is an age of commerce it cannot be an age of conquest. But the fact is, the necessities of commerce throw open the door to conquest, and the defence of their trade first suggested to the English a policy which ended in the subjugation of India. Short as this history is up to this point, it yet seems a labyrinth of human follies and errors. Religion, however, which is the only solid basis of all knowledge, enables us to trace through it all a mysterious clue of divine providence and divine direction. European vices and native vices bear an overwhelming proportion on the record, and the catalogue is relieved by few items of virtue. But as two negations make an affirmative, so the vices of European and natives have produced a positive good. The thirst for riches, the unscrupulous efforts of ambition, the reckless violence which often struck Hindoos with terror—all these were the disgrace of the English, but yet they hurried them on to empire. The perfidy, the cunning which overreached itself, the cowardice, the exclusive bigotry, which disgraced the natives, smoothed the way to their subjection; and surely these two results are being directed by the Universal Benefactor to good. We know of no other way in which India could have been regenerated. Had the English in India been a set of peaceful saintly emigrants, what impression would they have made upon the country? Had the natives placed confidence in each other, and been united under a common faith, how could they have given way to the encroachments of a few foreigners?"

Mucn, that would otherwise be unaccountable in the condition of the English in India during the early part of the eighteenth century, becomes explicable by a knowledge of the apathy which prevailed in England in reference to India and Englishmen there. The merchants discussed keenly the profits and prospects of trade in the East, but the statesmen, professional men, litterateurs, men about town, the middle classes, &c., took no notice of it, and hardly knew what their fellow-citizens in the East either achieved or suffered. The accounts sent home to the directors were kept to themselves, or to some extent made known in open court, and the people at large knew and cared nothing about India. English authors in either the seventeenth or early part of the eighteenth century, seldom refer to India, still less to their countrymen within its precincts. Butler and Dryden do refer to Gujerat—barely refer to it: Evelyn, Pepys, and a few others, were accustomed to go into the city to ascertain the quotations of India stock. From 1708 to 1740, India is hardly named by any author whose works have come down to us. Indeed, there is a singular deficiency as to the authorities for this portion of Indian history. Few have written at all concerning it; existing documents are meagre; no period of the history of India, as to British interests and transactions, is so barren of recorded incident. The documents that are extant chiefly relate to western India.

At the close of 1708, the company, under the stringent necessity of economy, had withdrawn their factories from the following places on the western coast of India; namely, from Cutch, Brodera, Raibagh, Rajapore, Batticolo, Onore, Barselore, Mangalore, Dhurmapatam, Cananore, Paniani, Cranganore, Cochin, Porca, Carnopoly, and Quilon,—all of them small establishments, in which probably the only European residents were a factor, and a writer, who served him as assistant. But they retained their principal fort on the island of Bombay, besides smaller forts at Mazagon, Mahim, Sion, Sewree and Worlee; forts and factories also at Carwar, Tellicherry, Ajengo, and Calicut; and factories at Surat, Swally, Broach, Ahmedabad, to which was afterwards added a residency at Cambay.*

The operations of the Ostend Company not only gave uneasiness to the East India Company in London during the next dozen years, but the arrival of their ships in India created quite a sensation; and no manner of falsehood, fraud, and violence was left untried by English, Dutch, Portuguese and French, to prevent them from trading. In another chapter, the formation and history of this company was sketched; it is here pertinent only to say that its attention was less directed to western India than to other Asiatic fields of commerce.

The correspondence of this early portion of the century discloses a number of singular terms and phrases now unknown, but then belonging to the vocabulary of Indian trade, such as "Brauels, chelloes, dutties, geinea stuffs, perpetts, scarlet drabs, lungees, tapseils, meeanees, &c." Calico, indigo, rice, sword-blades, hardware, muskets, saltpetre, powder, are words continually occurring; the names of spices much less frequently than formerly, but tea was written oftener as the century waxed older.

In 1715 the population of Bombay Island was sixteen thousand.† It is remarkable that at that date a great change had taken place in the sanitary influences of the locality, so that Mr. Cobb considered an Englishman might live with nearly as good health there as anywhere, if he adapted himself to the climate. The year 1716 was signalized by the inhabitants generally, but more especially the merchants, voluntarily consenting to increased taxation, in order to put Bombay in a better state of defence. A few years ago, an inscription was removed from the Apollo gateway, which conveyed the information that the town wall was completed that year, Charles Boone being governor. This man was an accomplished scholar and a good man.‡

The year 1718 saw another important change at Bombay. The company resigned their feudal claims upon the landowners, on condition that a tax should be imposed upon all who resided within the town wall.|| From 1712 to 1720 a taste for antiquities prevailed, and efforts were made by various learned and industrious persons to examine and describe the caves of Elephanta, so deeply interesting to the antiquary. These efforts have been pithily summed up by an able reviewer, in the following brief account:—"A taste for Indian antiquities was now exhibited for the first time, and we note the observations of two gentlemen at Elephanta, as they show the gradual dawn of knowledge, and preserve the memory of some monuments which time and the ruthless hands of barbarians have since destroyed. Captain Pyke, who then commanded an East Indiaman, and was afterwards governor of St. Helena, went in 1712 to explore the caves—an enterprise attended both with difficulty and danger; for intelligent guides were not easily found, and the cruisers of Kanhojee Angria were constantly on the look out, ready to pounce upon and kidnap any Europeans who might come within their reach. As Pyke and his party approached the island, they took for a landmark the figure of an elephant sculptured in stone, with a small elephant upon its back, the greater part of which has now disappeared; and a little further on was another statue, called 'Alexander's Horse,' of which there are now no traces. The explorers speculated on the origin of the subterranean temple, which has since exercised so much the fancy of imaginative and the judgment of learned persons, and deciding against the claims of Alexander the Great, leaned to the conclusion of Linschoten, who, in his *Voyages to India,* pronounced them to be the work of Chinese merchants. The smaller caves they found to be used by the Portuguese for cow-houses, and an aristocratic Vandal of that race had been amusing himself by firing a cannon in them and destroying the images. Captain Pyke made faithful sketches of the various figures, which were afterwards engraved and published by the Society of Antiquaries. George Bowcher, formerly a servant of the old, then of the new company, and afterwards residing for many years as a free merchant at Surat, devoted his attention to the literary monuments of the Parsees, and in 1718 procured from them the *Vendidad Sade,* which in 1723 was sent to Europe, where it remained for long as an enigma, oriental scholars not being able even to decipher its characters. Governor Boone also had drawings made of the figures in the caves of Elephanta, and a descriptive account written. He was clearly a man of elegant and refined mind, who loved classical and antiquarian studies; and a Latin inscription placed by him over the Apollo Gate of the fort, as well as one on a bell which he presented to the new church, exhibit him as tinged with some knowledge of Roman and mediæval antiquities."

The erection of a church in Bombay, which

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* Macpherson's *History of Commerce.* Milburn's *Oriental Commerce.*

† Rev. Richard Cobb's *Account of Bombay.*

‡ *A New Account of the East Indies,* being observations and remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, who spent his time there, from 1688 to 1723. Edinburgh, 1727.

|| *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society.*

afterwards became the cathedral, was one of the improvements of the early part of the eighteenth century. At that time, the English much neglected their ministers, and they alone of all Europeans who settled in India built no churches. Some writers complain that when the great men of the English factories gave banquets, the Roman Catholic priest always had the place of honour at table conferred upon him, and the clergyman of the Dutch church the next, but the English clergyman occupied a low place, their inferiority in the esteem of their host being thus strongly marked, and as tamely acquiesced in by the objects of this disrespect. The church was completed in 1718, the steeple at a subsequent period. The consecration was very imposing; "Ramajee" and all his caste, with a crowd of natives, being spectators, who, with the courtesy characteristic of them, stood the whole time. The governor, council, and ladies retired after service to the vestry, and "drank success to the new church in a glass of sack." The day was one of great rejoicing. The conduct of the chaplain throughout these proceedings was full of zeal, and marked by wisdom, goodness, and prudence. That the fabric might be maintained, a "new custom's duty was levied upon imported merchandise." Mr. Cobb, the chaplain, was not satisfied with building a church, he spared neither rich nor powerful in his sermons, but with a stern fidelity insisted upon all, even to the governor and council, conforming to the requirements of Christianity. On one occasion, he refused the communion of the Lord's Supper, to a member of the council, notoriously a violator of the decalogue, and for this, and for his public rebukes of the sins of the high officials, which was called "political preaching," he was suspended by the governor and council. Fifty-two years after the ungrateful and cruel treatment he received, he published his book upon Bombay. Soon after the church was completed, a joint-stock bank was established, but its history, so far as can be gathered, was nearly identical with those which of late years have carried so much destruction and sorrow through English society. The chief direction was in the hands of the council, but that circumstance did not afford safety. Sums were lent without security, and were never repaid, and business was conducted on unsound principles. The want of success in establishing a suitable bank was a great evil, as it was much required, and would have met with the support of the wealthy natives.

The administration of justice was truly horrible: the natives exposed themselves to punishment by their treachery and treason, for some of the wealthiest among them were constantly in correspondence with the enemies of the English, instigated partly by love of gain, partly by sympathy with any native party, however bad, when opposed to the foreigners, often by religious bigotry, and not unfrequently from a settled antipathy to English laws, and their administration. Conspiracies among the natives to ruin one another by legal processes were tempted by the condition of English law, and its uncertain action, and this temptation was largely yielded to. The English government on some occasions resorted to torture, to extort confession from alleged criminals. Witchcraft was believed by the highest functionaries, and laws administered founded on the belief. Sometimes when natives were accused, and condemned on false evidence, and their innocence was subsequently demonstrated, they were *pardoned*, and received some slight pension in lieu of their confiscated property. The government of the English in Bombay during the first half of the eighteenth century was as essentially unjust as the character of those entrusted with it was demoralised. The punishments for witchcraft were flogging (this was inflicted on women) *at the church door*, and *penance in church.*

The civil administration of the military department was the worst possible. Robbery in every form was perpetrated upon the soldiery by purveyors and others, almost with impunity. The exposures at home, in this latter half of the nineteenth century, of the wrongs perpetrated upon the British soldier, are horrible and surprising, but fall far short of those endured, without redress, by the men serving at Bombay, natives and British. The contempt entertained for the natives was often displayed in a manner transparent and absurd, the governor and council often exposing themselves, by their mean tricks and low artifices, to the contempt of the natives in return. The following entry appears in the diary of the proceedings of the council of Bombay, May 22nd, 1724:—"There being four horses in the stables, altogether unserviceable, and if offered for sale not likely to fetch anything, the president proposes presenting them to four of the most considerable Banian merchants on the island, which may be courteously taken; and to render them the more acceptable, offers the dressing of them with a yard and a half of red cloth; which the board agreeing to, the warehouse-keeper is hereby directed to issue out six yards for that purpose, to be presented on his majesty's birthday, the 28th instant." The native merchants and capitalists of

Bombay knew a good horse as well as "their masters," and must have been amused at the trick, while they despised the meanness of those who resorted to it.

As the century advanced, the dangers to which the English in Western India were exposed thickened. The breaking up of the Mogul empire brought novel perils to them, for when they had nothing to apprehend from that fading power, new authorities started into existence everywhere, and each was a danger to the Europeans. In 1720 the chief and council of Surat wrote home a graphic description of the *disjecta membra* of the old Mogul empire, and the especial alarm which each of these occasioned to the English interests. Several of the usurping authorities had fleets, which they chiefly used for purposes of piracy.

Kanhojee Angria, a Mahratta (Maratha) chief aspiring to royalty, was the principal sea pirate amongst the native competitors for dominion. He fixed his head-quarters in a strong fortress of the province of Bejapore, which was called both Gheria and Viziadroog. This place was built upon a rocky site, on a promontory of the Concan, about eighty-two miles north of Goa. The whole coast, nearly from Goa to Bombay, was under the control of this piratical chief, and in every bay and creek he had vessels or a fortress. In 1717 the rovers of this sea king captured the English ship *Success*. The company declared war, in retaliation for this outrage, hoping soon to reduce the robber chief to the necessity of seeking terms. His resources were, however, underrated by the English, and for more than thirty-seven years the war continued. This may be readily believed from the mode of warfare adopted by Angria. His fleet was composed of grabs and gallivats, varying from 150 to 200 tons burthen. The grabs carried broadsides of six and nine pounder guns, and on their main decks were mounted two nine or twelve pounders, pointed forwards through port-holes cut in the bulkheads, and designed to be fired over the bows. The gallivats carried light guns fixed on swivels; some also mounted six or eight pieces of cannon, from two to four pounders, and all were impelled by forty or fifty stout oars. Eight or ten of these grabs and forty or fifty gallivats, crowded with men, formed the whole fleet, and with smaller numbers their officers often ventured to attack armed ships of considerable burthen. The plan of their assault was this:—Observing from their anchorage in some secure bay that a vessel was in the offing, they would slip their cables and put out to sea, sailing swiftly if there were a breeze, but if not, making the gallivats take the grabs in tow. When within shot, they generally assembled as soon as they could astern of their victim, firing into her rigging until they had succeeded in disabling her. They would then approach nearer and batter her on all sides until she struck; or, if she still defended herself resolutely, a number of gallivats, having two or three hundred men on each, would close with her, and the crews, sword in hand, board her from all quarters.* In 1719 an attempt was made to surprise Cavery, a fortified place in possession of this pirate king. The garrison was apprised of the intention, and the plan was defeated. One Ranea Kamattee, a native of rank in Bombay, was tried and convicted for the offence; but as the evidence against him was extorted by torture, the governor himself having in private applied the thumbscrew, little credit was given to the judgment, which was ultimately reversed, facts having come to light which brought home the treachery to certain Portuguese in the English service, who, to screen themselves, forged documents to convict the unfortunate Kamattee, who, no doubt, wished well to the cause of any native power opposed to the English, although innocent of the particular act of treason for which his property was confiscated and his person imprisoned.

In 1720 four of the piratical grabs and ten gallivats captured the English ship *Charlotte*, and brought her a prize into Gheria. The English at length determined to attack Gheria itself: a fleet, with strong detachments of troops on board, the whole under the command of one Walter Brown, was dispatched against the stronghold of the enemy. At the outset, Mr. Brown encountered an unlooked for difficulty. The natives were unwilling to supply provisions for the fleet, and raised an outcry, because some cattle were slaughtered to provide the ships with beef; their belief in metempsychosis being outraged by such an act.

Walter Brown at last set sail, and reached, unopposed, the entrance of the river upon which Gheria was situated, where he landed his soldiers, an operation which the enemy appears to have permitted without attack; but no sooner were they disembarked and prepared to march, than they were assailed; but their assailants were defeated. The enemy, however, hovered around the small party of British, resisting their progress step by step, but always without success. On one occasion, a platoon of Angria's soldiers gallantly held the ground until within "range of partridge shot," as the records of the event express it, when a discharge of that missile killed half their number: several of the English were at the same time killed by the bursting of a gun. The enemy still retired, until they obtained the shelter of their fort.

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* Orme's *History of Hindostan*, book v.

While the troops were thus engaged the fleet was also actively employed, sixteen of the piratical craft were destroyed, and the fort cannonaded, but the ships' guns made no impression upon its strength. Finding that the fortifications were impregnable, Mr. Brown drew off his ships and re-embarked his troops.

The English were struck by the skill and bravery of the enemy, and the latter were no less impressed by the dash and strength of their adversaries. Certain Portuguese auxiliaries to the British behaved badly in this affair, and were taunted for their cowardice by letters from Angria himself. The Governor of Bombay made celebration of the victory on the return of the expedition, and Angria wrote to him jeeringly for rejoicing over the flight of his forces, for he (Angria) still remained ready to defeat again English or Portuguese, or both combined.

It appears, from the obscure records of this period, that the Dutch had made an attack previous to that of the English, and with results in all respects similar.

Angria proposed terms of peace to Governor Phipps, of Bombay, soon after these events, but the governor refused to treat until the European prisoners held by the Mahratta were given up. The correspondence between the governor and Angria is singularly interesting, and as, on the whole, the rude Mahratta had had the advantage in war, so had he also in argument, and especially in that description of reply which insinuates the *tu quoque*. The editor of the *Bombay Quarterly* has ingeniously, and also ingenuously, compared the productions of these eminent correspondents, and given its gist in the following comment:—"We can now smile at the wise saws and edifying proverbs with which his (Angria's) epistles are garnished; but at that time they must have been gall and wormwood to his correspondents. He condescended to make proposals of peace, but Governor Phipps, in reply, refused to treat until his European prisoners were released. Angria then sent the following rejoinder:—Recapitulating with the utmost exactness the subjects contained in the letter which he had received, he observes how his excellency reminds him that he (Angria) is solely responsible for their disputes; that the desire of possessing what is another's is a thing very wide of reason; that such insults are a sort of piracy; that if he had only cultivated trade, his port might have vied with the great port of Surat; that those who are least expert in war suffer by it; that he who follows it merely from love for it will find cause to repent; and, lastly, his excellency refuses to treat for peace until all prisoners are restored. All these matters are then passed under review by Kanhojee, who meets his correspondent's arguments with subtlety and skill in repartee. He delicately hints that the English merchants have also a desire of possessing what is another's, and are not exempt from 'this sort of ambition, for this is the way of the world.' It was incorrect to say that his government was supported by piracy; it had been established by the Maharaja Sevajee, after he had conquered four kingdoms. If his port were not equal to Surat, it was not for want of indulgence shown to merchants. As for their appeal to the sword, there had been losses on both sides, and it was true that such as love war will find cause to repent, 'of which,' he slyly insinuates, 'I suppose your excellency hath found proof; for we are not always victorious, nor always fortunate.' He concludes by an assurance that he will agree to an exchange of prisoners; that if the governor really desire peace, he is quite ready to meet him half way; and adds, 'as your excellency is a man of understanding, I need say no more.' "*

In 1722 the English sent an expedition against "Angria Colaba." This was commanded by Commodore Matthews, and consisted of three ships; the troops being chiefly Portuguese. This enterprise failed utterly, the Portuguese being once more unfaithful.

The Dutch, with a far superior fleet to any yet sent against the Mahrattas, were defeated in attempts to bombard and storm the fortifications of Gheria, in 1724. The repulse of the Batavians was destructive and signal. Angria was a man of a high order of courage, great naval and military skill, so far as military and naval science were then understood, and of an original genius.

The English suffered very much from other pirates even while engaged in fierce struggle with Angria. The Sauganians had troubled the merchants from the beginning of the century, and continued to do so, more or less, until the first forty years of it had passed. They were particularly active while the Europeans were concentrating their attention in a warlike way against Angria. One of the fiercest battles which took place was between the English merchant ship *Morning Star* and a fleet of five ships manned with two thousand men. According to the English account,* there were only seventeen fighting men on board the *Morning Star*. There were, however, a considerable number of other men, as she was a large ship. Twenty-six native merchants and one native seaman went on board the enemy's fleet, according to the accounts—which are given with some plausibility—for the purpose of dissuading the pirates from their purpose.* It might be supposed that one or two of these natives to each ship of the enemy would have been sufficient for negotiatory purposes, and that the rest had proved themselves more loyal in standing by the guns of the *Morning Star*. After a series of attacks upon the British ship, during which she was twice boarded, and three times set on fire, her captain and crew all wounded, several mortally, the *Star*, by the good seamanship with which she was worked, contrived to leave the enemy's fleet entangled with one another in such confusion, during the last effort to board her, that she was enabled to escape to Bombay. The native merchants were ransomed, and the commander of the piratical squadron hanged by order of his superior, for allowing a few Englishmen to repel so great a force.† The accounts of these transactions handed down to us are incredible, a few wounded men are represented as repelling thousands, even when a footing was gained upon the deck of the ship they defended. If these representations be correct, there is nothing in the naval history of England comparable for valour, skill, and fortune, to the exploit of the *Morning Star*.

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* *A Chapter in the History of Bombay*

† *Consultation Book of the Bombay Government*, 6th Sept. 1720.

Another combat of an English ship with Madagascar pirates, or pirates who had made that island their haunt, partakes of as much of the marvellous as the conflict just related; for, although not presenting scenes of such wonderful heroism and strength, the address of a certain captain surpassed that which we read of in any other authentic story of sea-fights with pirates. This narrative comes down to us chiefly on the authority of Alexander Hamilton.‡ Three ships, two British and one belonging to the Ostend Company, now (as was seen in another chapter) come into notoriety and activity, were lying at anchor off the island of Madagascar. Two Dutch-built pirates attacked them. Being fitted exclusively for war, the two vessels were more than a match for the three merchantmen. The Ostender made sail, followed by the British ship *Greenwich*, and escaped. They seem to have left their companion in danger, in a shabby way, for she made fight, but ran by accident on some rocks, pursued by the lesser pirate ship, the larger having given chase to the two successful fugitives. The pirate in pursuit of the *Cassandra* also went upon the rocks, while seeking to board her expected prize; the positions of the two ships were favourable to the *Cassandra*, which raked the pirate's decks, killing or driving the crew below. Affairs were in this attitude when the other piratical ship returned from her unsuccessful chase, and sped to the assistance of her consort. The English captain manned his boats, and gained a position in shoal water, where he could not be pursued. According to the story transmitted to us he had the hardihood to offer or ask truce, and go on board the pirate, where his persuasive powers were such that he succeeded in gaining immunity, and even *a present of the ship whose guns he had silenced*, his own having become a wreck. There is nothing in the relation of this transaction to justify the assertion that the English merchant captain was able to give proof that he had pursued the same calling, thereby exciting a fellow-feeling, a suspicion which might be fairly entertained from the cordiality with which he was treated when he and his late assailants came to understand one another. At all events, when he reached Bombay he was feted, and as Captain Massey, who signalized himself at the Redan in the Crimean war of 1854-5, remarked, "had the inconvenience of being made a hero." The generosity of the pirates was not, however, appreciated at Bombay, for an expedition was fitted out against them, under Commodore Matthews, who met with no better success than he had obtained at Angria Colaba.

The perfidy of the Portuguese had ever been a source of anxiety at Bombay. There were at least 6000 Portuguese there who professed loyalty, but were seditious to a man. The people would probably have fallen in with English interests, and become identified with the prosperity of a government which it was not possible to disturb, but the Jesuit portion of the clergy—and nearly all were of that order—irritated the public feeling perpetually, and kept alive a hatred to the English, impotent, except to torment, but often bringing disastrous consequences to the Portuguese themselves. The English endured these things with much toleration, for there had existed a considerable sympathy with Romanism on the part of many of the officials and writers who professed Protestantism. The annoyances offered by the constant enmity and treasons of "the Portugals" became at last unbearable, and the president and council took the matter into serious deliberation. The mode of securing some loyalty from the Portuguese subjects, which the officers of the company hit upon, was the assumption of the ecclesiastical patronage of the Roman Catholic churches. This had previously been in the hands of the King of Portugal, who, by that means, was enabled to possess himself of precise information as to English affairs at Bombay, and to disturb its government whenever he pleased. This power he more effectually secured by giving the people of the parishes a *veto* upon his patronage. The council determined to seize this patronage, and so to administer it that none but clergymen of reputed loyalty should exercise pastoral functions among the Roman Catholics of the island. The East India Company approved of the policy of their Bombay subordinates. The measure was carried out, no clergyman being allowed to officiate at the altar until he took an oath of allegiance to the king of England—an oath not to preach against the civil rights of the East India Company, and an oath to submit in civil matters to its orders. The priests resisting, the churches were transferred to clergymen of the Carmelite mission, under the superintendence of Don Frey Mauritio, who held authority direct from the propaganda at Rome. The Don entered upon his episcopal functions with no good will from the Portuguese clergy. He and his Carmelites took the following oath :—" I, Don Frey Mauritio, of Sancta Teresa, Bishop of Anastatipolis, vicar-general in the empire of the Great Mogul, of the Island of Bombay and the jurisdiction thereof, do swear upon the holy evangelist (on which I have placed my right hand) entirely to obey His Most Serene Majesty of Great Britain, and that I will never, directly or indirectly, teach, preach, or practise anything contrary to the honour and dignity of the crown of his said Most Serene Majesty, or to the interest of the Right Honourable English Company, and that I will pay all obedience to the orders of the Honourable the Governor for the time being, and to exercise the Roman Catholic religion according to its primitive institution, without any alteration. In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand this 6th day of May, 1720." Padre Frey Pedro, of the most Holy Trinity, and Frey Elizel de St. Joseph took and subscribed the same oath.

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* *Diaries of the Bombay and Surat Governments.*

† Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas.*

‡ *New Account of the East Indies.* By Alexander Hamilton.

This oath was taken in October, 1719. As soon as the ceremony was over, proclamation was made by the governor and council, requiring "all inhabitants, of the Roman Catholic religion, to pay the same obedience to the bishop, Don Frey Mauritio de Sancta Teresa, and the priests appointed by him, as they formerly did to the Portuguese bishop and priests." The Rev. Don remained in his episcopate until his death, in 1726, when he was succeeded by "Peter of Alcantara, called Bishop of Areopolis, in Asia Minor, and apostolic vicar of the Mogul Empire, the kingdom of Isdal Khan, Golconda, and the Island of Bombay." As soon as the proclamation was issued, recognising Don Mauritio in the episcopate, the Portuguese priests received notice to quit the island in twenty-four hours, an order which was enforced.

It was expected by some in the English interest, favourable to the policy adopted, that a schism would arise, by which the Roman Catholic party must be weakened. The ultimate result justified such speculations, in some degree, for ecclesiastical disunions among the Roman Catholics of Bombay, dependent upon claims of episcopal jurisdiction, sometimes arising before the courts of law, have long troubled that community. The immediate result was not in accordance with these expectations, for the people refused to discuss the matter, and looked on with apparent indifference, although they felt many misgivings and much disapprobation. In the governments of "the general of the North," as the Portuguese chief officer was styled who controlled the factories in Bassein, Diu, Damaun, &c., &c., the Portuguese clergy offered strong remonstrances; but the people were quiet, as it is probable they were advised, under the circumstances, to be. The measure did not eradicate the ill-will entertained towards the English, as heretics and supplanters. There was a change of policy on the part of the Roman clergy, but no change of feeling, except that the new clergy did not regard the English, from a national, as they did in a religious point of view, with such keen hatred. Still there existed a repugnance towards the English, which, whether ethnological or circumstantial, showed itself when events called it forth, so that the Roman Catholics of Bombay were esteemed by the English undesirable subjects.

The expelled priests, in concert with the people who had appeared so passive, and probably with the knowledge and concurrence even of the new clergy, made representations to the King of Portugal, to whom they really held allegiance. These were forwarded to the English court, and increased the distrust and dislike with which the Portuguese at Bombay were regarded by the company. What advice arrived from Portugal to the Portuguese descendants in India it is difficult to say, but the representative of that government in the north of Western India proceeded to extremities, prohibiting all communication with Bombay, until the expelled priests were restored; he interdicted also the transport of provisions, and seized English vessels when opportunity was afforded. The English were not likely to allow of these affronts without retaliation, they accordingly proclaimed that all "Portugals" holding property in Bombay who were absent from the island, who did not return in twenty-one days, would be considered rebels, and their property would be confiscated. The absentees did not appear, and the property was seized.

This proclamation was conveyed from Bombay to Salsette by two passengers; the Portuguese placed them in irons and carried them about, as little boys in England on the 5th of November carry effigies of Guy Faux. The mock triumph was first exhibited in Tanna, then in Bandora, where they were hoisted on a gibbet, but were taken down again and sent back to Bombay bruised, torn, and exhausted, after experiencing almost every form of insult and coarse indignity.

The English promptly accepted this as a declaration of war, the long negotiations of modern times not being then fashionable with Englishmen in the East. A detachment of soldiers marched to the straits of Makin, and shelled the fortified church of Bandora. The Portuguese, who were disposed to defend it, were speedily put *hors de combat*, and the terrified inhabitants begged for mercy; this was granted without any exaction but a promise to abstain from injuring defenceless Englishmen. This pledge was given by people, clergy, and civil officers, accompanied by the warmest expressions of regret for conduct which could not be justified among nations practising humanity, or honourable in war. After exchanges of courtesies, the English withdrew, and the Portuguese immediately prepared to strengthen the place, so as to be enabled to perpetrate fresh acts of cowardice and brutality with tolerable prospect of impunity. New and more cowardly injuries on unarmed Englishmen and peaceful coasting boats followed. The English again appeared, again shelled the church, and after slaying many, and filling the place with consternation, responded to a renewed cry for mercy, by renewed generosity and forbearance. After this, except by the private assassination of Englishmen, no further outrages were committed.

In the year 1706, a "savage pirate" had captured an English ship called the *Monsoon*. A Portuguese frigate conquered the pirate, and retook the prize, but instead of giving it to the owners, as the ostensible peace between the two nations and the requirements of humanity would have enjoined, the Portuguese war ships proved as dishonest as the pirate, and kept the prize. The facts of the case did not become known to the English for years after, and then other troubles prevented action from being taken in the matter. In 1715 the English were disposed to revive the memories of old injuries, and sent the Worshipful Stephen Strutt, deputy governor of Bombay, to demand reparation from the viceroy of Goa. He was also commissioned to visit the factories south of Bombay, such as Carwar, Tellicherry, Calicut, and Ajengo, to inquire into the systematic and extensive frauds practised there by the company's own agents. He did not embark on these errands until October, 1716, just a year and a day after his commission to do so was signed. His squadron consisted of but two ships, and he had scarcely passed Malwa, when he was attacked by the Mahrattas, a grab and a gallivat attempting, with astonishing intrepidity and much skill, to cut off a valuable ship which accompanied the commissioner. Although the rovers were beaten off, they managed to escape unhurt in either man or ship. Such, however, were the perils which, little more than a century and a half ago, attended a cruise along the southern Bombay coasts.

Arriving off Carwar, his worship found a Portuguese squadron of considerable power stationed there to protect the coast from pirates, which task their crews were too cowardly to perform, while they robbed every merchantman whose confidence they invited and betrayed. These rogues would, no doubt, have attacked the English commissioner had they not been deterred by their fears.

His worship landed at the different factories, creating consternation when the objects of his mission became known. He acted with moderation and judgment, rectifying, at all events *pro tempore*, many abuses, dismissing dishonest servants, and promoting those of good repute. At Goa, his worship hired a priest to be the advocate of the proprietors of the English ships, but his eloquence was as little potent as the viceroy's honest efforts, and all reparation for the affair of the *Monsoon* was, in polite but firm terms, refused.

It does not appear that the English took any measures for the recovery of damages for the *Monsoon*. Whenever their affairs fell into very great hands—like these of the Worshipful Mr. Strutt—a compromise of some sort, a diplomatic defeat, or a humiliation, mostly resulted: whenever the general community of the English anywhere took up a matter, it was usually carried out with daring courage, promptitude, and corresponding success.

The state of the factories south of Bombay, at that time, are disclosed by the reports of this voyage of Mr. Strutt. Carwar he found fortified, the Mogul having robbed it some time previous. The Dessaree, the rajah of the neighbouring country, invaded Carwar in 1718, and besieged it for two months; but succour arriving from Bombay, he was obliged to raise the siege, but not until after many perils to the garrison, and those who came to their assistance. The troops sent from Bombay could with difficulty be landed in consequence of the high surf. The first attempt was unfortunate,—eighty men were either killed, drowned, or fell into the hands of the enemy. When the second attempt was successful, a pause in the operations on both sides was made, which lasted for six weeks. Four hundred men then attacked the enemy, covered by the guns of the small craft, and the Dessaree received a severe chastisement, leaving two hundred men upon the field. One hundred and fifty Arabian horses, which had arrived for the Dessaree, were captured, and a number of his coasting craft. The enemy returned and hovered about Carwar, no action taking place until a large force, arriving from Bombay, of 2280 men were landed. The enemy began to retreat; the English officers, instead of offering hot pursuit, practised a variety of manœuvres remarkable only for military pedantry and professional folly. This conduct encouraged the enemy, who, at first, puzzled by what they had never before seen, at last supposed that what was performed from sheer conceit of military tactics resulted from fear, and consequently rallied and charged. What followed is only told by a prejudiced witness, Alexander Hamilton. He declares that the English commander ran away, and threw off his uniform to render his flight more successful. The other officers, whose tactics were so pompous and scientific, followed the example of their superiors, and the men, without officers, were assailed with such advantage as speedily left two hundred and fifty of them dead upon the field. They would all have been driven into the sea, but that their flight was covered by the guns of the floating batteries, which had been prepared to cover the landing.

According to the testimony of Hamilton, the English made no efforts to retrieve their dishonour, but acted on the defensive, although the total number of the Dessaree's forces was only 7000. His finances at length failing, he drew off his army, leaving the English unmolested, but entertaining contempt for their capacity and courage. The grand subject of difference between this chief, and Taylor, the head of the English factory, was the right to the spoils of such ships as were thrown upon the coasts. Both these persons were "wreckers;" the Dessaree considered that he had a natural and inherited right to rob shipwrecked mariners of all nations, and the English chief considered that he might as well take the right of plundering the unfortunate of all nations in such circumstances, excepting, of course, those of his own. This contest might be called the war of the wreckers. The company were obliged to withdraw the factory, for the native hostility and contempt was irreconcileable, and the English there had lost all moral power. What reverses the British experienced; how frequently their capacity proved deficient; what general mediocrity was displayed by them on land! How marvellous that the company still extended its power, although all its branches and the parent stem were violently subjected to the rudest blasts of adversity: as the oak which is most fiercely shaken by storms, takes the deepest root in the soil where it is planted.

Calicut had been one of the oldest stations of the Europeans in India. The English were prospering there; but in 1714 the Dutch seized some land, which they declared had been assigned to them by compact with a former rajah, and began to build a fort. The English were anxious to have them removed before the fort was finished, but did not dare to attack them openly. They intrigued with the rajah, who, like the English themselves, in this case preferred a treacherous and underhand course to open and manly hostilities. By a base, cowardly, and perfidious scheme, the Dutch were attacked, and many assassinated; but they soon returned, exacting heavy vengeance, and re-establishing themselves with sufficient solidity. From that day, English interests at Calicut rapidly declined; they were unable to compete with the Dutch as traders, and the whole of the business which they had conducted was, by the fair competition of men of superior business capacity, withdrawn from them. The Dutch were too well prepared, and knew how to defend themselves too well, for any attempt to rob them by force of their well-earned success; so the English removed to Tellicherry, leaving a Portuguese interpreter behind, as their only representative.

Tellicherry was one of the ports earliest occupied by the French, the account of whose rise and fall in India belongs to other chapters. At this period their name was somewhat important in Western India, although that was not the region where their power was developed. When at Tellicherry they erected a mud fort, and as it has been the fate of Frenchmen to found foreign settlements, and build fortifications for Englishmen to gain possession of in some way, so was it at Tellicherry. The old mud fort of the French became English property in 1708, the principal Nair of the place claiming the right to dispose of it, and choosing, for purposes of his own, to make it the property of the English. They erected a stone fortification upon the site of the mud-built defences, and it always turned out in India that where they fixed themselves resolutely, no power was able to extirpate them, except in some season when accident performed what force otherwise would have failed to achieve. A mania for building seized the English at Tellicherry; they "fixed" their capital in walls and batteries, and soon experienced the usual inconvenience in all matters of a purely commercial nature.

According to that indefatigable asperser of his countrymen, if engaged in the company's service, Alexander Hamilton, the garrison were drunken and dissolute; the officers not only setting a horrible example, but in the most tyrannous manner compelling the men to drink, that they might themselves profit by the sale of "peneel." Thus the meanness with which most writers charge the English traders of this period settled in India, was quite as signally shown, and more culpably practised, by "officers and gentlemen." Disturbances soon ensued between the native authorities and the English. The former endeavouring to exact exorbitant duties, the latter setting the tariff of the "Nair" at defiance. Mutual bitterness often issued in blows, and these conflicts continued for a long time.

The calamities of the English in Western India were very numerous in the first quarter of the eighteenth century—the massacre of Ajengo is one of the most unhappy illustrations of this remark. A dispute arose, as usual, about duties or tribute; the English appealed to the Ranee, and went in a body to her highness's palace:* they were waylaid and most of them massacred. The English imagined they saw the hand of the Dutch in this, as they did in most transactions that were adverse to them; but the latter published a strong and ardent protestation of innocence, and an indignant denunciation of "the detestable massacre."

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Western India began to feel the influence of events connected with British interests in Bengal. Thus the factory was altogether removed from Surat in 1712, in consequence of the robbery and oppressions of the native governors of that place, and for three years the English trade was stopped there; but in consequence of an embassy sent from Hoogly to the Mogul, matters were arranged, and the factors returned. This was in 1716, and as a result of the success of the Hoogly embassy, the agents were allowed to attach fifteen acres of ground to the factory. Thus, territorially, the English illustrated the Spanish proverb, "Give me room to sit down, and I will make myself room to lie down."

The firman of the emperor resulting from the Hoogly embassy was favourable and just. Seldom has a public document been drawn up with more skill and honesty. The framers, and the emperor for whom it was prepared, were actuated by a sincere desire, not only to avoid complications in future, but so to provide against them as to render them almost impossible, while his imperial authority was respected. Yet it did not long secure the English from grosser outrages than ever. As the latter have been accused of not acting upon the law as laid down in this firman, the document is given to the reader, who must be convinced that the interests of the English lay so strongly in a just compliance with the treaty, that they never would give any occasion for its violation. The following translation of the firman from the Persian was made by Mr. Fraser, one of the factors, and entered in the records:—

"Governors, Aumils, Jagheerdars, Foujdars, Crories, Rhadars, Goujirbans, and Zemindars who are at present, and shall be hereafter in the Soubah of Ahmedabad and the fortunate port of Surat and Cambay being in hopes of the royal favour,—Know that at this time of conquest, which carries the ensign of victory, Mr. John Surmon and Choja Surhud, English factors, have represented to those who stand at the foot of the high throne, that customs are remitted on English goods all over the empire, except at the port of Surat; and that at the said port, from the time of Shah Jehan, two per cent. was fixed for the customs; from the time of Aurungzebe, three and a half per cent. was appointed; and in other places, none molested them on this account; and in the time of Bahador Shah, two and a half per cent. only was fixed, and is in force until now; but, by reason of this oppression of the Muttaseddees, the English withdrew their factory three years ago; and in the Soubahs of Behar and Orissa this nation pays no customs; and in the port of Hoogly, in the Soubah of Bengal, they give yearly three thousand rupees as *Peshkush*, in lieu of customs. They hope that a yearly peshkush may be fixed at the port of Surat in lieu of customs, as at other ports, and they agree to a yearly peshkush of ten thousand rupees.

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* The line of descent in the reigning family passed to females, to the exclusion of males.

"This order, which subjects the world to obey it, and which ought to be followed, is issued, in order that, as they agree to pay ten thousand rupees as peshkush at the port of Surat, you should take it annually, and on no account molest them further; and whatever goods or effects their factors may bring or carry away by land or water, to or from the ports of the Soubahs, and other ports, you are to look upon the customs thereof as free; let them buy and sell at their pleasure, and if any of their effects are stolen in any place, use your utmost endeavours to recover them, giving the robbers up to punishment and the goods to their owners; and wherever they settle a factory, and buy and sell goods, assist them on all just occasions, and if their accounts show that they have a claim upon any merchant, give the English their just due, and let no person injure their factors. They have likewise petitioned that the Dewans in the Soubahs may have on demand the original Sunnud, or a copy with the Nazim's or Dewan's seal affixed. It would be difficult to produce an original in every place, and they hope that a copy under the Crory's seal will be credited; and if they do not demand the original Sunnud, they will not be molested on account of a copy with the Nazim's or Dewan's seal; and in the island of Bombay, belonging to the English, where Portuguese coins are now current, the fortunate coins may be struck according to the custom of Chinapatam; and any of the company's servants who may be in debt and run away, must be sent to the chief of the factory; and the company's servants must not be molested on account of the Foujarie and Abwab Munhai, by which they are vexed and discouraged. This strict and high order is issued: —that a copy under the Crory's seal be credited; and that fortunate coins struck in the island of Bombay, according to the custom of the empire, be current; and if any of the company's servants run away in debt let him be taken and delivered to the chief of the factory; and let them not be molested on account of the Abwab Munhai. They have likewise represented that the company have factories in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and that they are willing to settle in other places. They hope that wherever they settle a factory, forty beegahs of land may be graciously bestowed upon them by the king; and that when their ships are driven ashore by storms and wrecked, the governors of the ports oppressively seize their goods, and, in some places, demand a fourth part. The royal order is issued, that they act according to the customs of the factories in other Soubahs; and as this nation has factories in the king's ports, and dealings at court, and have obtained a miraculous firman, exempting them from customs, take care equitably of the goods of their ships which may be wrecked or lost in their voyages, and in all matters act conformably to this great order, and do not make an annual demand for a new grant. In this be particular.—Written on the 4th of Safir, in the 5th year of this successful reign." *

Notwithstanding the exceeding perspicuity of this firman, only a few years were permitted to elapse, when the native authorities and merchants at Surat conspired to extort money from the English. The first attempt of this sort was very characteristic of a Mohammedan government. The English were informed that their factory and the ground annexed to it, by firman, was given to a great saint who took a fancy to it, and from whom the emperor could withhold nothing. It was at the same time intimated that a present to the governor might be instrumental in preventing the transfer, as he would use his influence with the aforesaid saint, not to be persistent in his desires to possess the property of the English. The latter submitted to this exaction, based upon so flimsy a pretence, but intimated that if their factory were taken from them, they would leave Surat, and if driven to do so, they would blockade the port and ruin its trade.

Soon after another occasion arose which gave an opportunity for extorting money from the English. A strange ship, which was generally supposed to be Danish, cruised in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, capturing Mogul shipping. When tidings of these piracies arrived at Surat, there was a terrible outcry amongst the native population. The English factory was attacked by the populace, and the lives of its inmates endangered. The English were told that they must make good whatever the merchants of Surat lost by pira-

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* The following explanation of the terms used in this firman, may be desirable for persons unacquainted with Indian terms. *Aumils* are collectors of revenue, or superintendents of districts. *Jagheerdars*, holders of assignments of land. *Foujdar*, a police magistrate at Surat; his duties were confined to the suburbs and places in the vicinity. *Crory* or *Karoory*, an officer who makes himself responsible for the rents of a district. *Rhadar*, a collector of duties payable on the roads. *Goujirban*, a collector of duties at ferries and passes. *Zemindar*, a landowner, who paid a yearly sum to the king. *Muttaseddee*, an accountant for the Soubah. *Peshkush*, a present or tribute. *Dewan*, the receiver general of a province. *Nazim*, the first officer of the province. *Abwab Munhai*, a tax on forbidden things, such as spirituous liquors, courtesans, &c. *Soubah*, a province. *Sunnud*, a patent or charter.

cies, and no remonstrances on their part, upon the unreasonableness of making them responsible for the acts of robbers, either of their own or any other nation, had the slightest effect upon the governor, who placed guards upon the factory, virtually making prisoners of its inmates. The company's broker was assaulted in open durbar, and finally incarcerated. Upon this, the English chief laid in stores of provision and ammunition, as far as clandestine means allowed him, and prepared for the defence of the factory. When this was accomplished, he ordered the English ships lying off, to lay an embargo upon all Mohammedan vessels. The governor was compelled, in order to put an end to such an inconvenience, to open negotiations, and promised that no molestation of the English or their property should be again permitted, the president, on his part, promising to make compensation if it were proved that a piracy was committed by an English ship in the company's service. Thus the only argument of any validity in the esteem of the natives—force, soon brought matters to their ordinary course. These events were followed by sanguinary feuds and foul conspiracies among the natives themselves, in which the English had no part, but which more or less affected their interests. Gradually, however, they became more influential, and governors found it to be their interest and duty to afford them opportunities of peaceful and equitable trade.*

At Cambay, where the English had a small factory, their history was a counterpart of that of their countrymen at Surat. The English continued to outwit the extortioners, and retain the factory, and carry on some commerce, although the country around was often laid waste, and the town repeatedly fired by contending freebooters. Every rajah was a robber, and the people did not like them the less on that account.

The following passage from "A Chapter on the History of Bombay," in the *Bombay Quarterly*, of January, 1856, must read very strangely to those who laud "the great Mohammedan democracy:"—"The followers of Hameed Khan next appear on the horizon, levying thirty-five thousand rupees on the town, and demanding a thousand from the residency. 'The first time they went back with a put-off,' writes Mr. Innes, 'the next with a flat denial, and I have not heard from them since, further than that the governor and the Geenim fellow here has advised them to desist, the latter adding that the English even would not pay them. They are but two hundred men, and I am under no manner of apprehension of danger.' The governor then locked, and affixed seals to, the English broker's warehouses. This measure Mr. Innes 'judged to be bully;' so counteracted it by menaces and two cases of drams, which were more effectual than money in subduing the rapacity of these licentious Mussulmans. The seals were removed, and the eccentric resident a month later replies to the congratulations of his superiors with this counter-hint:—'I shall have regard to your hint of the governor being dry; though I have quenched his thirst at my own charge too often for my pocket.' Terrible days were those for merchants and helpless ryots. Pelajee, Kantajee, Hameed Khan, governors from Delhi, and certain Cooly chiefs,—all squeezed them in turn, until the cultivators refused to till the ground, and the country was threatened with famine. After Hameed Khan's followers had gone away almost empty, a new deputy-governor was appointed, on condition that he should send to Ahmedabad ninety thousand rupees, to be extorted from the inhabitants. No sooner did the unhappy merchants and shopkeepers hear of his approach, than they hid themselves, or made their escape to the neighbouring villages. For six days not a man was to be seen in the streets of Cambay, although his excellency threatened that unless the people made their appearance he would deliver the city to indiscriminate pillage."*

Early in the eighteenth century, and some considerable time before the company's agents were sent thither, independent Englishmen went to Scinde, and introduced a coasting trade between Saribundur, on the Indus, and the western parts of what is now called the Bombay presidency. Among the interlopers who adventured upon this traffic, was Alexander Hamilton, author of *The New Account of the East Indies.* He found the coasts and inland roads swarming with robbers, Beloochees, and Mackrans, who, the *Bombay Quarterly* suggests, were the fisher caste. Captain Hamilton having in his voyages encountered and conquered various pirates, obtained a reputation along the coast which kept many in awe of his sword who were very desirous to plunder his property. On one occasion, he sold goods to certain merchants in the interior of Scinde, who dared not convey their purchases in consequence of the predatory hordes who beset the way. Hamilton, in order to secure the payment, undertook to escort the goods to their destination. He joined a Kaffela of fifteen hundred beasts of burden, the same number of men and women, and a guard of two hundred horsemen. His own party consisted of thirteen sailors. The strange cavalcade had not proceeded far, when troops of robber horse presented themselves in large numbers, brandishing spears and swords. Hamilton placed the baggage animals in a line as a barricade, with the cowardly native horsemen on the flanks; he armed his sailors with fusees, and appointed them to eligible positions for an effective defence. The robbers sent forward one of their number, who demanded unconditional surrender; menacing promiscuous slaughter, in case of refusal. One of the sailors shot the miscreant through the head. Possibly the robbers considered that some mistake had been committed, for a second was sent on a like mission, who met with the same fate as his predecessor. A third coming to reconnoitre the cause of these misfortunes, fell dead from another shot the moment he came within range. The enemy became panic-struck, and the escort of the merchants taking advantage of their disorder, charged them with effect, slaying some, and dispersing the whole. Hamilton, according to his own account, was regarded as a hero of surpassing prowess, alike qualified to humble robbers by land or sea.

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* *Surat Diary*, July, 1724, Feb. 4, 1725.

* Letters from Daniel Innes, in the *Surat Diary*, 1720 to 1725.

Towards the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the East India Company established its agents in Scinde, and carried on with difficulty a desultory trade in that region.

It is impossible to peruse the proceedings of the British during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, especially in the light of documents such as have of late been examined, without coming to the conclusion expressed by an American divine, not generally favourable to the English nor to the character they displayed in the acquisition and development of their Indian empire:—"In considering the course of policy pursued by the English, which has resulted in their acquiring in India one of the largest empires ever known, there appears much less to censure in the Directors and controlling power of the East India Company in England, than in their agents in India. Increase of territory has not generally been the desire of the proprietors or directors of the company, and in accordance with this view have been the general spirit, and often the positive character, of their instructions to their agents in India."[*]

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE BRITISH IN WESTERN INDIA DURING THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Notwithstanding the scantiness of English records, at all events of published records and accessible manuscripts, the history of the English in Western India during the second quarter of the eighteenth century affords interesting incidents, and such as illustrate the progress of British power. It has been as truly as eloquently written by a reviewer in the *Bombay Quarterly:*[*]—"A mercantile company transformed into one of the great powers of the earth, and driven by the force of circumstances to the conquest of an empire, is, like other effects which we do not trace to their causes, regarded as a phenomenon. This is merely because historians have been able to collect only a few facts relative to its earliest days, and those facts separated by frequent and large lacunæ. But an object of the present narrative is to show that the growth of English dominion, although fostered by a superhuman arm, was regulated by fixed and natural laws,—even by laws similar to those which regulate the development of the human mind. The East India Company was trained and gradually brought to maturity by a process parallel to that through which a little inmate of the nursery may have passed when first starting on the race for fame. The possessor of a wooden sword, a penny trumpet, and a diminutive drum, glows already with military ardour as a gay regiment passes by him, and the spark is fanned into a flame by hard knocks at school, struggles in manly games, and perhaps town and gown rows at the university, until he submits to the preliminaries of drill, enters on real campaign, and in due time appears as a distinguished officer. So with respect to the East India Company, if its servants had been allowed to live peaceably in its nursery of Surat, without provocatives being offered to their military propensities, there would have been no more probability of their becoming a political power than there is at present of any steam navigation or railway company becoming one; and at the breaking up of the Mogul empire they might have been found, like ancient Britons when the Roman legions were withdrawn, incapable of defending themselves against distant rovers or predatory neighbours. But they were very soon taught the necessity of self-dependence,—of looking to none but themselves for an assertion of their rights. The clamours of a ferocious mob endeavouring to beat down their factory gates first induced them to keep a small establishment of peons as a domestic police; the oppressions which they endured under native governments then convinced them that a fortified factory and an insular stronghold were required; next, because their trade would otherwise have been at the mercy of pirates, they built, equipped, and armed a fleet of grabs and gallivats; lastly, their very existence depended, not only on their maintenance of standing armies, but on their ability to cripple the strength of adversaries by invasions of their territories. We do not, indeed, assert that they have in every single instance been thus involuntarily led to aggression, or deny that they have more than once wilfully disturbed the comity of nations; but we maintain that they never contemplated the seizure of a province, much less of the Indian continent, until compelled by the force of circumstances; and that the Anglo-Indian is the only empire in the world which has not owed its origin to a lust of conquest. And it is highly instructive to observe that the events of the company's history form a regular chain, which was none of their forging. In welding the links together they were unconscious agents of Him who, holding nations in his balance, puts down one that He may set up another."

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[*] *India, Ancient and Modern, Geographical, Historical, Political, Social, and Religious; with a Particular Account of the State and Progress of Christianity.* By David O. Allen, D.D., Missionary of the American Board for twenty-five years in India.

[*] July, 1856.

At the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century matters in Western India had advanced to this condition, or a state of things approximating to it—that either the English must retire from India, allowing hordes of savage pirates, robbers, and Mahrattas to drive them out, in spite of firmans and treaties with the Moguls, or the sword of England must defend the commerce of England in India, and the lives and property of Englishmen on its shores.

In the last chapter reference to the daring and deeds of Angria has been frequently made. In the period now about to be treated, that able pirate became more conspicuous still as a creator of English history, for he did more than any other Indian chief to draw out the valour of the English, and to cause them to nurse their military talents and resources.

In 1728 he made an offer of pacific settlement, but, in a few months afterwards, he captured the company's galley, *King William*, and made its master, Captain McNeal, a prisoner. This officer he held for years in bondage, and only gave him liberty on the payment of a large ransom. On the 12th of January, 1730, the English made a treaty with the Bhonislays of Sawunt Wave, for the purpose of holding Angria in check; but it did not answer their expectations. The death of Kanhojee Angria occurred the same year.* He left two sons, between whom his government was divided. Their names, which occur frequently in connection with this period of the story of the English in India, were Sukagee and Sumbhagee. The former obtained Colaba; the coast southward was assigned to the other, who was the younger brother. Both these chiefs imitated their father in his rapacity and daring, and, except when they quarrelled with one another (like the members of all Indian families), they were equally the enemies of the English. The elder, however, had not long an opportunity of proving his propensities, for he died in 1733, while proposing peace to the British, and his envoys were actually before the president at Bombay. Sumbhagee prepared to possess himself of his brother's inheritance by legitimate claim, but a natural brother, who partook of much of the spirit of their father Kanhojee, attacked Colaba, and took it by escalade, in a most intrepid manner. He was prompted to this act, and assisted in its performance, by the Portuguese, who were always meddling and intriguing, and always, in the long run, to their own destruction. All efforts to displace this chivalrous man were in vain. His power increased, he formed alliances, and extended his enterprise, and attempted the fort of Ageen, under the protection of the guns of which reposed the fleet of the Siddee of Jingeera. The rapid strides of his ambition and power alarmed the Bombay government, and Captain McNeal, then at liberty, was ordered to assist with a squadron the fleet of the Siddee. The squadron was not promptly dispatched, as its commanders lacked enterprise, for a considerable time elapsed before the ships left Bombay. It would have been better had they not left at all, for the orders received at Bombay were so unmilitary as to make the expedition simply ridiculous. Some muskets and powder were presented to the endangered ally, and the squadron left him to his fate, which was speedily sealed by the success of the enemy.

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* *Consultation Book of the Bombay Government.*

Emboldened by success, and learning to despise the English, from their previous timid and time-serving policy, this scion of the house of Angria advanced his pretensions and his forces in the more immediate neighbourhood of the English. On the river Pen, which flows into the harbour of Bombay, stood a town called Rewanee: this the modern Angria seized, and thus commanded the communications between the Island of Bombay and the continent.

At this time, Bajee Rao, whose name is so illustrious in Mahratta history,* was in the zenith of his influence, and he had the discrimination to see that the resources, position, and character of the English ensured their ultimate superiority to all surrounding powers. He flattered them, and, in the name of the Rajah of Sattara, opened negotiations with them, and, in very humble terms, requested that they would not permit their fleet to interfere with his naval enterprises. Unfortunately, the Peishwa was in alliance with Angria, and they therefore would not offer those tokens of good-will which they desired.

The English meditated new hostile projects against their unrelenting foe, and, in order to accomplish their purposes, formed alliances with the Siddees. The *Bombay Quarterly* describes this condition of affairs as follows:—"Messrs. Lowther and Dickenson had arranged with the several Siddees of Jingeera a treaty of alliance, afterwards ratified by their government, according to which both parties bound themselves to act in concert against Angria, and not to treat with him except by mutual consent. They agreed that all prizes taken at sea should be allotted to the English, and to the Siddee all conquests made on land, with the exceptions of Khanery, which, if taken, should be delivered with all its guns and stores to the English, and the fort and district of Colaba, which should be demolished. The contracting parties were to divide equally between themselves the revenues of Colaba, and the English to build a factory and fort at Mhopal in that district, situated between the rivers Pen and Nagotana." To this paragraph the following note is added:—"The above account of operations against Angria is imperfect, but as complete as could be compiled from the mutilated records of government for the months from June to December inclusive, and March, 1734. Grant Duff, who chiefly depended for his knowledge of the records upon extracts furnished him by Mr. Romer, the political agent at Surat, has not alluded to these events, which belong to Maratha history, and are only worthy of notice as exhibiting the first attempts of the English at offensive warfare." It is passing strange that so high an authority should describe this as the initiation of offensive war! The career of Sir John Childs and the policy of Sir Joshua Childs were evidences, as well as the bitter misfortunes they produced, that this was not the first essay in offensive warfare in India on the part of the British, whatever might be the merits of the cause in either case. The English, about this time, succeeded in intercepting Angria's fleet, by a squadron under the command of three captains, whose authority, as far as one can gather from the records of their proceedings, was equal. The enemy fled and escaped; the usual results of divided command, irresolution and ill-concerted action, ruined the undertaking.

The English found the Siddees of little use. The Mahratta spirit had stopped the career of these once renowned cruisers of the Indian seas: their day of glory, such as it was, became obscured; the Angrian star shone out cloudless. Family disputes broke out in the renowned and formidable house of the fierce Mahratta sea kings; a fraternal jealousy left scope for English diplomacy, for as the English became warriors in spite of themselves in India, so also did they become diplomatists. Captain Inchbird was deemed very efficient in that department, and was dispatched from Bombay for the express purpose of using his knowledge of native languages, usages, and dispositions, to foment the dispute between the Angria brothers, so that they might not coalesce for the injury of English interests.

Naval operations were undertaken which were committed to Commodore Bagwell. After long watching for the enemy, he at last, on the 22nd December, 1738, descried nine grabs, and thirteen gallivats, issuing from the fortified port of Gheria. He bore down upon them, although their force was vastly superior to his. They fled, and sought shelter in the river of Rajapore. As usual they were successful in flight, and although they suffered from the commodore's broadsides, they knew how to elude him. In spite of his vigilance, while he pursued this flotilla, other armed ships of the enemy captured English merchantmen. The English commanders seemed generally to possess more courage than capacity, more enterprise than intelligence. The conduct of the men, both military and naval, was perfect, daring to the uttermost, enduring, loyal, and obedient, worthy of being led by better men than their country generally assigned to the task.

The resources of the pirates were constantly recruited by the captures they made:

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* Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas.*

all sorts of military stores were obtained by plunder from English ships.

Soon after the cowardly flight of Angria's fleet from Commodore Bagwell's little squadron, four large East Indiamen were attacked by a powerful piratical flotilla belonging to the same chief. A single ship of the commercial squadron beat them off and punished them severely. The English in their sea encounters with the pirates were deficient in smartness, promptitude, and vigilance, but their courage, gunnery, and physical strength were dreaded by their foes; their capacity to tack and work large ships in action also inspired a salutary fear in their foes.

The *other* Angria, called Menagee, was a false friend and a weak foe. His perfidious insolence, cowardice, meanness, violence, and sometimes daring enterprise, were the subjects of perpetual complaint at Bombay. The grand diplomatist of the government and council, Captain Inchbird, was at last obliged to change the use of the tongue and the pen, for that of great guns and the sword; cruising about, he made prizes of Menagee's fishing-boats, grabs, and gallivats. Nevertheless, the latter seized the Island of Elephanta. When at last reduced to misfortune by his brother, he became the sycophant of the English, and humbled himself to beg their aid. They gave it, saved him from his enemies, and made him more an enemy than ever. There are men, says Charles Lever, who would betray you to the very men from whom you saved them. Such was Menagee Angria. It would strike a casual reader of the old documents which disclose the events of this period, that the English meddled too much, entangled themselves too frequently with weak alliances, and believed the promises of princes too often, if not too implicitly; a close study of their peculiar dangers, treatments, temptations, and deficiencies, however, extenuate such errors in some cases, and in others justify the resort to means which, in ignorance of all the peculiarities of the situation, would now be pronounced culpable.

Soon after the beginning of the second quarter of the century, the Rajah of Sattara became a very conspicuous person, although the vizier was virtually the sovereign, and the rajah little better than the prisoner of his ostensible servant. The rajah was regarded as the Mahratta, *par excellence*, the Sevajee of the day. Before his encroachments the Portuguese were steadily receding; fort after fort fell, factory after factory was plundered, and but for the protection of the English in some instances, a few years would have sufficed for the hordes of the rajah to sweep the Portuguese from the seaboard of Western India.

The English believed that an alliance with the Portuguese against the encroachments of this powerful enemy was their true policy, but as was commonly the case, their practice was time-serving and timid; they consumed in debate the time required for action, and were too late in the aid they offered, or proffered an amount of assistance so obviously below what was necessary, as to be equivalent to the refusal of help. Certainly, the Portuguese deserved nothing at their hands. The assistance rendered was, as might be expected, repaid with treachery. Morally, the Portuguese were no higher than the natives,—often lower. The impossibility of putting any faith in them, much influenced the procedure of the East India Company's agents. When the English really did render efficient and successful assistance, no gratitude or goodwill was evoked. The British were the objects of a deep, deadly, religious animosity, which no services could appease. This was well understood on both sides, and the impressions mutually produced by even acts of kindness on the part of the more fortunate English, did nothing to heal the feud.

The year 1739 was a memorable one for both nations, in consequence of the fall of Bassein. This city, the largest and richest oriental city ever built by the Portuguese, was besieged by the never-resting Mahrattas, whose determination to expel the Portuguese from India grew stronger as their efforts were crowned with success. The position of the city was one of considerable importance to the lords of Bombay; for, if a powerful power like that of the Mahrattas held it, they would by that means endanger the commerce and liberty of those who occupied Bombay. This may be seen, and also a glance at its present condition obtained, from the following well-drawn sketch:—"Situated at the northern extremity of that narrow arm of the sea which clasps the islands of Salsette and Bombay, is the ruined city of Bassein. It is a monument of departed greatness, and a love of splendour, as distinct from the love of money, for which the English were so famed. Its fertile soil still rewards the fortunate cultivator; but its streets are scenes of utter desolation, its buildings roofless, its tombs of lordly bishops and governors mouldering as the bones they conceal, and twisted roots struggle successfully to displace the stones of its massive walls. There, where a fanatically religious, irrationally proud, and coarsely dissipated people kept high festivals, led gorgeous pageants, toyed in wanton amours, and drowned the intellect of their species in Goanese arrack, or the heady wines of Oporto,—there silence and ruin sat supreme.

until at last a speculator's drastic energies have introduced the creaking mill, and jarring voices of native labourers. For years the tenantless city was itself a monument of the Indo-Portuguese race, and a fertile theme for the meditations of romantic visitors. 'It reminds me,' wrote Bishop Heber, 'of some story of enchantment which I had read in my childhood, and I could almost have expected to see the shades of its original inhabitants flitting about among the jungle which now grows in melancholy luxuriance in the courts and areas of churches, convents, and houses.' At the period of which we write, Bassein stood uninjured by an enemy, unshorn of its grandeur, having been for two centuries in undisturbed possession of the Portuguese, whose historian declares that it was the largest city which his countrymen had built in India, and comprehended the greatest extent of territory. Seven churches of an almost uniform style, had little to strike the observer, except their size and rather elegant façades; but surrounded, as they still are, by the ruins of tenements belonging to monastic orders, they testify that the Portuguese had a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge. The city was protected by a strong wall and ramparts, flanked with bastions, and so fearful were the inhabitants of a surprise, that for long no Mahratta had been permitted to pass a night within the gates."*

The Mahrattas laid siege to the place, which they conducted with bravery, skill, and persistence never before equalled by them. The Portuguese resisted with a bravery rarely equalled by any people. It seemed as if, in the hour of their decline, they were once more to appear glorious, like the flame of a decaying lamp, bursting brilliantly upwards before it totally expires. The city at last surrendered, when defence was no longer possible even by the wisest, strongest, and bravest, 800 officers and soldiers, as well as many inhabitants, having perished, the enemy having lost 5000 men, or, as the English at Bombay believed, 20,000. The besieged, during their arduous struggle, implored the assistance of the English, both as to skill and money. The advice tendered was impracticable; some money was lent on the security of six brass guns taken down from the defences. The acceptance of security by the English has been much censured; but when a former governor lent money for the defence of an ally, the company compelled him to refund it from his own purse, alleging that he did not hold money for political speculations, but for commercial purposes and the defence of Bombay, and he had no right to lend the company's money without its order, however he might please to act with his own. The acceptance of the guns as security, which ought to have been used for the defence, has been also charged against the English as an act of selfishness; but the guns had been previously removed from the defences, on the strange ground that the king would value them too highly for the governor to risk their injury, and for the additional strange reason that the hands and hearts of Portuguese were better defences than mere matter! The English, therefore, asked only for the security of guns which were not used, and were not intended to be employed against the enemy. Besides, at the very time the Portuguese were crying out for money to the English, without offering any adequate security, the Jesuit establishments of the city were rich, and refused to part with their plate and treasures. Some assistance was obtained from them, after the English declared their want of authority to lend the company's money; but even then it was bestowed with reluctance. Most of the troubles to which the Portuguese were exposed were either occasioned or aggravated by that ecclesiastical party: so infatuated were they, that when, a short time before the siege of Bassein, the Mahrattas were investing Tanna, and it became necessary, on the advice of the English engineers sent to assist, to break down all buildings which might impede the fire of the besieged, or offer cover to the foe, the members of the Jesuit order resisted, and successfully resisted, all attempts to comprise their property in the necessary demolitions, until the English, with a high hand, compelled the measure to be carried out. When Bassein fell, the English, acting within what they supposed to be the limits of their authority, sent a strong naval escort, and brought off the whole garrison and all the Portuguese civilians of the place, to the number of nearly 1000, who were fed in Bombay at the public expense. The guests behaved as badly as the hosts behaved generously. The Jesuits had undertaken to lend a certain sum for the payment of the troops, in order to enable the latter to purchase food and other requisites for prolonging the defence. Their reverences now refused to fulfil their promise, while the Portuguese soldiers were mutinous against their officers, and filled Bombay with tumult. Both parties agreed to use the English as referees. The governor and council decided against the Jesuits; but the fathers were not so willing to yield to a decision against themselves as to make a reference. It was necessary for the English to give hints that force must be employed to induce the Jesuits to fulfil their pledges and abide by the reference. The troubles of the English from their guests did not end there; broils and bloodshed constantly occurred among the Portuguese soldiers, who also wounded and robbed the inhabitants of Bombay, and it had become a serious consideration whether the council must not send this vile military rabble away, when the time arrived with the opportunity for their own withdrawal. They then refused to embark unless fresh arrears were paid to them; the English advanced the money to the Portuguese governor, a brave and magnanimous man.

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* "Bassein, as it is and was:" *Bombay Quarterly.*

The English were beset with importunities to assist other beleaguered Indo-Portuguese cities,—to lend money, without security, for their defence, while the Jesuit fathers were in possession of treasures which could only be wrung from them by force, in the service of a country which had loaded them with honours and riches, and was so devoted to them. They acted as men who owed no allegiance to the Portuguese crown, but whose service was due to a distinct power for whom their resources must be reserved, from whatever country derived. The remnant of the Portuguese were withdrawn from Bombay, by arrangements made by their own viceroy at Goa; but so absurdly defective were their plans that the drooping soldiers and civilians had to march a long way overland to Goa, and fight their way, leaving a third of their number slain or in the hands of the Mahrattas. The gallant governor of Bassein was made an exile and a beggar by his ungrateful country.

The English became now the protectors of their old enemies, and with much discomfort to themselves. They counselled the surrender to the Mahrattas of certain small forts which could not be defended, under a treaty securing peace to their other possessions. Had this not been done, either the Mahrattas or Angria would have taken them. It was with great difficulty, through the redoubtable diplomatist, Captain Inchbird, that the English persuaded the Mahrattas to act towards the Portuguese with any forbearance. When the arrangement was effected, the Jesuits refused to allow any portion of their property to come within the stipulated surrender, and preached so seditiously to the ignorant people, that an insurrection was raised. Fear of the Mahrattas, on the one hand, and the necessity of leaning upon the English, at last prevailed with the people, and the reverend fathers, after many protests and denunciations against Mahrattas, English, and Portuguese politicians, were obliged to give way. The English, whose pity was strongly moved by the sufferings of the Portuguese people, were made indignant and angry by the selfish, bigoted, unpatriotic, and mad proceedings of the Jesuit fathers: they acted as if their minds, absorbed in one class of ideas, were unable to comprehend any other, however obviously justice, or the exigencies of circumstances, might demand calmness and good sense.

In this year of disaster to the Portuguese, the English sent a complimentary letter to the supposed head of all the Mahratta tribes, the Rajah of Sattara, by Captain Gordon; and another letter to the Peishwa, by the ubiquitous Captain Inchbird. These letters were full of compliments, while the private instructions of the envoys were full of intrigue and treachery. This the English justified by the fact that they had to deal with persons without honour or forbearance—that it was necessary, if possible, to fathom all their schemes, safety depending upon the result, and that such salutary and essential objects only could be obtained by playing a superior part to their adversaries in the game of finesse. It is scarcely necessary to add that a direct and manly part would have answered better all purposes that ought to have been entertained at all.

Captain Gordon proceeded to Sattara, and delivered his credentials to the rajah. The captain was charmed with the magnificent scenery of the Deccan, which was not known at Bombay, and which in the appropriate place has been described in this work. Gordon's object was penetrated by a son of Bajee Rao; but nevertheless, it was impossible for the young man to make so sure of the conclusion to which he had come, as would enable him to act in any way against the company's representative. On his return, Captain Gordon had an interview with the Peishwa himself at Poonah, which city was then enriched by the plunder of Southern, Central, and Western India, and by the commerce which was created by the residence of the English at Bombay. Gordon fancied that the Peishwa against whom he was intriguing was not unfriendly to the English, and that within the whole region which was traversed by the envoy the English were popular. This arose from an impression that, as compared with the Portuguese, they were a people of religious toleration; as compared with the Dutch, they were conciliatory and polite to native powers; their demand for the products of the looms of Poonah made them very popular with the weaving population of the city and populous country around; and their possessions in India were of a character to command respect from those who held power and success in reverence. At Surat, Bombay, Tellicherry, Madras, and on the Hoogly the English were strong. At Surat they had no territory except the little ground connected with the factory, but most of the merchants were their debtors. They did not, like the French, settle there, and stay long enough to incur large debts, and then flee to other places, in order to make them the scene of similar dishonesty. Bajee Rao, whose word was law from the foot of the Rajah of Sattara's throne to the remotest bounds of Mahratta incursions, respected the English for the firm way in which they had kept their footing, and their probity in payment. The rajah thought the English a good sort of people; Bajee Rao, who really possessed the power of the rajah, thought them useful; the citizens of the great city of Poonah almost deemed them necessary. Each of these tribunals pronounced a favourable verdict, and speculated after its own way as to the future. The people of Poonah wished for larger orders for their beautiful fabrics, and looked to the English to obtain them. Bajee Rao considered them as "the balance of power," and the most reliable commercial people who traded with the peninsula, and a nation not to be intimidated, nor lightly to be provoked in war; the poor rajah considered them clever and rich, and begged them to send him presents of "pigeons and turkeys, and European fowls and birds." It does not appear that Captain Gordon effected any object contemplated by his mission, but he made some blunders in the attempt to conceal his object, brought back a great deal of useful information, political and commercial, preserved accurate and written detail of what he saw and heard, and was probably the most economical envoy ever sent out by the East India Company from any of its presidential capitals.

Captain Inchbird's mission was to the Mahratta at Bassein. He was met by the general there, who, however, demanded as a preliminary the payment of a certain sum. It does not appear plain whether this demand was for tribute or a simple piece of extortion; the captain however refused, and neither blandishments nor menaces could induce him to give any money. He boldly replied that his country submitted to no impositions, which, however, was a barefaced untruth, as the policy of the company always was to buy off, by money payments, the enemies by which they were surrounded, so long as doing so could be made to comport with profitable trade. Inchbird discovered that the Mahratta chiefs were all well acquainted, quite as well as he was, with the objects for which Captain Gordon had been sent to Sattara. It was obvious from this circumstance that the company's officers were in some cases unfaithful, or that the president and council of Bombay were surrounded by spies and traitors in the persons of their confidential native employés. Inchbird was a man well fitted for his office; he extricated himself from the difficulties and dangers with which the penetration of the Mahrattas, of the double game his employers were playing, had thus unexpectedly beset him. He even succeeded in blinding his astute interrogators, and persuading them that their interests lay in alliance with the English, or at all events, in a material obligation of peaceful and commercial intercourse. His mission terminated much to his own credit by arranging the terms of a treaty, dated the 12th of July, 1739, which was ratified at Bombay. According to this, the Peishwa conceded to the English free trade in his dominions. The contracting parties mutually engaged that debtors endeavouring to evade their responsibilities should be either delivered up, or compelled to pay all that was due; that runaway slaves should be seized and restored to their masters; that if the vessels of one power should be driven by stress of weather into the ports of the other, assistance should be rendered them; and that such vessels as were wrecked on the coast should be sold, one-half the proceeds of sale being paid to the owner, the other half to the government on whose coast the wreck might be thrown.*

Soon after these transactions, Bombay was filled with consternation by "wars and rumours of wars," in which these terrible Mahrattas had the chief part. Preparations were making for enterprises which were variously interpreted, but the terrified inhabitants of Bombay believed that for an invasion of their island, the gathering together of arms and men, and ships, on various points, was intended. Spies or merchants made known that Poonah was a focus of military preparation; and cannon foundries were at work on a large scale, producing guns and mortars of larger calibre and better manufacture than had been known among the native powers of India. Many of the people of Bombay buried their valuables or fled. The president was afraid to send away the ships of war as convoys with the merchantmen, lest the Mahrattas from Salsette or Bassein should make a descent. Such ships as went without convoys were captured by some one of the half-dozen of distinct piratical powers which made these seas a terror to the unprotected merchant. When the convoys were sent, indications of a sudden attack appeared, which increased until the return of the naval squadron afforded protection; the people of Bombay all the while living in the utmost consternation. Matters assumed a condition of alarm and uncertainty as bad as had ever been experienced since the English came into possession of it.

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* "The First Wars and Treaties of the Western Presidency:" *Bombay Quarterly Review.*

On the 9th of November, 1739, while Bombay was thus overcast with gloom, a storm burst over the coasts of South Western India, such as had not been known to living men. Three of the company's largest and best armed ships, commanded by three of their ablest and bravest officers, foundered, and all on board perished. When the terrible tidings reached the agitated community of Bombay, fear struck every soul, and the belief universally prevailed that the days of prosperity in Bombay were numbered. The place was at the mercy of strong and powerful enemies.

Their fear was followed by what appeared to be a foretaste of their fate. Sumbhagee Angria, their old and malignant enemy, sallied forth, swept the harbour of Bombay of the fishing-boats then upon its waters, and made captives eighty-four men of their crews.

In this state of suspense, the factors, garrison, and community of Bombay must be left for a while, until some notice is taken of other portions of Western India, where British interests sustained the pressure of the times, and where the condition of affairs exercised some influence upon the fortunes of Bombay. As in a chain, the weakness of some links changes the power of the whole concatenation, however strong the other links with which the weaker are connected, so it was with the chain of forts and stations where the English now transacted their business. These forts and stations were as grappling irons, which were fixed to the great prize which the English adventurers were to board and capture and keep for ever. However unconscious the English were of their actual relation to the country, as it regarded the political action of their power upon it, and the working of those natural laws in the moral government of God, by which nations affect nations in the various contiguities into which they are brought, it is not now difficult to see how these laws were at work, and how consistent, consecutive, and ramified the influences which were gradually consolidating English power. The very seas and storms which tossed the bark of English fortunes, bore it in safety over the shoals which lay in its course, and against which, in calmer seas, it might, probably, have been made a wreck.

Tellicherry was a very important station commercially and politically. After Bombay, it was the most important position, in every respect, which the English occupied in Western India during the first half of the eighteenth century. It was so much thought of by the directory at home, that a chaplain was assigned to it, a privilege accorded only to Bombay and Tellicherry. When they received him, which was about this time, they did not know what to do with him. How to value his sacred ministration was not their first care, but what place they should assign to him in society! This was a question too puzzling for the intellect of the East India Company's servants at Tellicherry in those days, and they referred the doubtful investigation to the pellucid minds of their superiors—the president and council of Bombay. The latter were amazed and angry that such a question should be sent in the midst of "struggles for life," whilst the Mahratta was knocking with his spear butt at every one's door. They perceived at once that the chaplain should take his place *after the factors!* Such was the esteem in which English commercial men in the service of the East India Company in the early part of the eighteenth century held professional men, and especially the members of the most sacred and learned of all professions. The English in India were not disposed in those days to worship their priests, and seemed more willing to do without them than the factors of one hundred years before.

With or without a chaplain—and whether or not the possessor of that office was treated as a scholar and a gentleman ought to have been, which seldom was the case in the company's factories in those days — Tellicherry grew rapidly in power and in relative importance. In relation to other English possessions it was of some note. The factory of Onore was subordinate to it. This lesser settlement was celebrated for the pepper which grew on the lowlands, and for the sandal wood which was native to the rocky heights in the neighbourhood. Onore itself acquired some considerable celebrity in the annals of after wars. Bajee Rao and his Mahrattas had plundered the country around, levying tribute upon the Carnatic far and wide, so that the inhabitants of Bednure and Balgee left their fields uncultivated, and caused the functions of the English factors at Onore for a time to be suspended. This occurred in 1727, but how long this state of alarm lasted, it is difficult to conjecture. Up to the year 1740, the fear of Mahratta freebooters depressed cultivation, and, consequently, trade in this district, more or less.

The general position and relation of Tellicherry to English interest, may be seen by the following brief and accurate description by the author of *The First Wars and Treaties of the Western Presidency*:—

"The town of Tellicherry was built on a rising ground near the sea, in a country consisting, like all Malabar, of low hills and narrow valleys, and was in the petty kingdom of Colastry, though closely bordering on that of Cotiote. Moderate land-winds, with cool and refreshing breezes from the sea, made the climate celebrated amongst Europeans for its salubrity, and they were in the habit of styling Tellicherry the Montpelier of India. To the west of the town, on a neighbouring hill two hundred and twenty feet in height, the English had a large, oblong, ill-constructed, and worse situated fort, containing a place of worship for themselves, and also for Roman Catholics, a handsome residence for the chief, warehouses, offices, barracks, and other public buildings. Opposite the fort, at the distance of a mile from the land, lay the shipping, where the water varied in depth from ten to twelve fathoms; and between the fort and shipping, on some rocks about four hundred yards from the shore, a small battery was annually raised for protection of the trade, and as regularly removed before the monsoons set in. Overlooking both town and fort was a tower called Cockan Candy, and a redoubt called Codoley, which could only have been rendered capable of defence against a regular army by a large outlay of money. Several other outworks also had been built on the land side: a mile and a half to the southward, and close to the sea, was the fort of Moylan, belonging to the English, and at one time or another they raised fortifications on the small island of Dhurmapatam, two miles and a half north-north-west of Tellicherry, between the territories of Colastry and Cotiote; on the Island of Madacara, about three quarters of a mile from the shore, stood another small fortress, so situated as to command the entrance to the river of Billiapatam, about twenty-one miles from Tellicherry. Dhurmapatam, of which they obtained possession in 1734, was extremely fertile, so that the lowlands yielded two crops of grain annually, and from such as were near the sea, salt was procured. The chief and factors at first attempted to cultivate the ground themselves, but unsuccessfully, and afterwards, by letting portions on lease to a Captain Johnson, who much improved it, and to some natives, they raised an annual revenue of 13,880 fanams, in addition to 6,598 fanams which Tellicherry and Moylan yielded. The cultivation of the coffee plant, which was early introduced from Mocha, soon became highly remunerative. Dhurmapatam would have afforded a much better site for the company's factory than Tellicherry, as it was encompassed by three rivers, had a bold front towards the sea, a fine sandy road for ships, and was not commanded by any neighbouring hills. No fewer than five fortified works were built upon it, two of which protected the entrance of the river. Near it, and in the sea, was Grove Island, two hundred and fifty feet in length, on which also was a battery. We should observe, however, that the English were only now commencing to raise these fortifications, and that in enumerating them all, we have a little anticipated events; but even in 1730 the monthly expenses of the garrison required to defend them all, amounted to seven thousand rupees, and the company groaned under such a burden, which in those days appeared almost insupportable."*

In relation to the native powers, Tellicherry was securely placed. The surrounding chiefs were comparatively feeble and always at feud. Some were bribed, others made friends by complimentary letters and titles, &c. The factors at Tellicherry were adepts in the diplomacy requisite in dealing with small rajahs; in no other part of India had the company's servants an opportunity of becoming so expert. It was in relation to other European, or at all events to one European power, more particularly, that Tellicherry was at this juncture most important. The French were now firmly settled in India (as a future chapter will show), and their ambition was boundless. Before the first half of the eighteenth century had run its course, the idea of making the whole peninsula a French conquest inspired the French, and especially their chief, the great Labourdonnais.

At Surat, the French were dishonest and insolent traders, and the patrons of Capuchin friars, whose chief work seemed to be the conversion of the English, among whom they made some converts, a matter likely enough, when the half Protestant character of the company's servants there is considered; their ignorance, indifference, and irreligion left them open to persuasive advocates of any plausible system, true or false. In 1722, the French were invited to settle in Malabar by the Boyanores chiefs, who, alarmed at the growing power of the English, were eager to find some strong European nation to place, as it were, between themselves and the dreaded encroachments. The French fixed upon Myhie, about three and a half miles from the English fort of Tellicherry. The position chosen was superior to the English station both in a sanitary and military point of view; but a quarrel with the Boyanores deprived the Gauls of a station which would have seriously menaced the English settlements in that quarter. As early as 1725, the French disappeared from Myhie. In a chapter devoted to the progress of the French East India Company, the reader had an opportunity of marking how, under the auspices of Richelieu, Colbert, Louis XIV., and other powerful persons, the French merchants had opportunity provided and means supplied to carry on schemes of enterprise in the East. Here it is only necessary to observe that while the French had been, for a considerable time, well established in their "Isle of France,"* so they had acquired a powerful position at Pondicherry, which was the seat of a French governor. This city was strongly built, well fortified, and populous without being encumbered with masses of helpless natives. When Labourdonnais arrived, it possessed more than 70,000 souls. The natives of the surrounding districts often fled to it for safety from the marauding Mahrattas. In 1734, Dumas was governor, and began to raise money with the effigy of the king of France. He was also proclaimed a Nawab of the empire, and three large and fertile districts of territory were assigned to him. In 1741, Dupleix arrived and found it a flourishing place, which it might have continued, if not ruined by his ambition.

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* *Bombay Quarterly*. Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*, and the Reports of the Tellicherry Factory, supply the materials for this description.

The English factors at Tellicherry had the honour, if such it may be regarded, of fighting the first field action, at all events with artillery, against the native Indian powers. This event came about as follows:—The French, after having been driven from Myhie by the Boyanores, fled to Calicut, but were reinforced, and recaptured their old settlement. From that time they became more firmly fixed as very near neighbours of the English, and proved to be very unneighbourly, as they constantly incited the petty chiefs against them, and against one another, when, by so doing, the peace of the English might be endangered. On several occasions, native chiefs assembled ostensibly for hunting parties, and with the intention of trespassing upon the English territory, so as to lay foundation for a subsequent claim, on the principle that none hunt but on their own ground. This was a common prelude to some meditated land robbery in India, when one petty chief coveted the domains of another. The English, being apprised of this, occupied a neighbouring hill, upon which and in the vicinage of which the trespass was expected to be made. At the time and in the manner the English had been led to believe, the great hunting party appeared, accompanied by a number of French military officers, evidently abetting the scheme and pointing out how it could most skilfully be accomplished. The English lay in ambush, and the moment the trespassers trod their ground, discharged their musketry upon them, bringing down many. The sham hunters being numerous and well armed, charged the hill; but the English, prepared against such an eventuality, had placed small cannon in position and swept off the intruders, who fled before this unexpected demonstration. The English, pursuing, skirmished in the plain, which was wooded, and kept up all day a dropping fire, in reply to that of their opponents, who were finally driven away. Next day, in greater numbers and better armed, believing that the English would suppose the danger over, the hunters returned; but the English had knowledge of their projects, and were prepared on all points to give them a warm reception. The second day was, in every respect, a repetition of the first, and the French and their native tools were much chagrined at the result. On a minor scale, these armed trespasses were practised for several years prior to 1730.

These occurrences prepared the native mind for intrigues and plunder, and led to alliances on the part of the French and English with neighbouring tribes; so that while the two great European nations were at peace with one another, they were indirectly at war in that part of Western India, through the media of the petty rajahs of the district. These ambushes and skirmishes may not be called field engagements, or dignified by the name of battles; but at length an opportunity arose for fighting a real battle against a native force.

In 1738-9 a war took place between the Malabarese and Canarese. The English took the part of the former, who, in a very cowardly manner, allowed their European ally to bear the brunt of the war. They acted as the Spaniards so frequently did in the wars waged under Moore, Wellington, Evans, and other generals on their behalf—kept at a distance until the fortune of battle was decided. The English, having inflicted defeats upon the Canarese, succeeded in intercepting their communications with their fortress of Modday. Rugonath, the Canarese general, made efforts to gain the fort, but the English dealt destruction to his forces. At last Captain Sterling, the English commander, permitted the unfortunate general and his beaten army to enter the place. The forbearance was not lost upon the Canarese chief, who sought the protection and friendship of the English. During these operations, the Malabarese looked on from a distance, leaving the English to fight their battle.

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* Better known as the Mauritius, the name given to it by the Dutch after their Prince of Orange.

Up to the close of the half century there were other skirmishes of a similar nature, in which the natives were equally deficient in courage and the English in any permanent advantage. The assistance which every enemy of England in India—at all events every native enemy—derived from the French, enabled them to harass the factories and put the factors to expense; it also laid the foundation of those fierce wars with France in which that power was so seriously humbled and injured.

The condition of the East India Company's factories in Malabar at the close of the half century was, in almost every case, one of trouble and danger, mainly from the intrigues and warlike proceedings of the French, although Dutch, Portuguese, and natives also did their part in making the last decade of the half century one of struggle and conflict to the company. The Dutch and English were engaged during this period in angry discussions, especially at Surat and Ajengo. The Dutch, very learned and much given to argument, in the management of which they excelled, set up claims to exclusive trade in those places, on the ground of old treaties with native princes granting them a monopoly. The English factors were by no means so well educated or expert at their pens as the Dutch; they were prompt to answer in their own direct way, that they were there by treaty with the soverigns of the country, and would stay there until driven away by the strong hand. Which hand was the stronger the Dutch at that advanced period were not disposed to try.

The conduct of the Portuguese was as foolish as faithless. While begging help from the English in one direction, they were in another insolent, overbearing, and aggressive. The French quarrelled with all, made enemies of all, but especially provoked and showed hostility to the English. The natives kept no faith, but robbed Europeans and also one another as occasion offered, and forced the English at last, as did also the French, to be combative. The following is a brief but accurate view of the general condition of Western India in relation to the English at this time:—"Before the British aspired to make conquests in Western India, the whole coast between the harbour of Bombay and Aguada, near Goa, was in possession of pirates. The Angrias of Colaba, the Siddees of Rajapore, the Angrias of Gheria, the Malwans and Sawunts, were the ruling families, and claimed the districts on the sea board from north to south, according to the order in which their names are here mentioned. To the south of Goa were the British stations of Carwar, Honawur, and Tellicherry; also the following forts, some of which are still to be traced on the map, but the names of many appear to be lost. First came the forts of Cauligur and Seevashwur belonging to the Rajah of Soonda; then Peergur and Simpigur belonging to the Portuguese; two forts, the names of which were unknown, in the district of Ancola, belonging to the Rajah of Soonda; Condamum Berum, Mirjaugur, Rajamungur, now called Rajamundroog, Cuntim, Chundauver, Honawur, Bockraw or Gursupa, Munky, Moodeshvur in the sea, Cundapoor, Bassanore, which included four forts, named respectively Ganjolly, Dungree, Cundapoor, and Cadnore, Barkoor, Cappy Carpary, Moolky, Malkem Patem in the sea, Mangalore, Coombla, Consaresat, Chundragiri—all belonging to the Rajah of Bednore; Baikool, belonging to a Nair; Hossdroog, belonging to the Rajah of Bednore; two forts of Nelleasaroon taken by the French from the Rajah of Bednore; Mally, Mallaly, Ramdilly, and Hunmuntgur, belonging to the French. The towns of Murjee and Bassanore, respectively to the north and south of Honawur, were, according to Forbes, supposed to be the Musiris and Barace of the ancients; but for this allocation there does not seem to have been sufficient reason. Near Mangalore was a celebrated temple of great antiquity called Kurkul, and a colossal image of the god Gomateshwur. A little way to the north of Tellicherry was Cananore, a sea-port, possessed by Ali Raja, petty ruler of the Maldives. Sailing from Tellicherry to Ajengo, the southernmost factory of the British, the voyager passed the French settlement of Myhie; then Sacrifice-Rock, so called because an English crew had been massacred there by pirates at the commencement of the century; Calicut, the decayed sea-port of the Zamorin, where there was no longer a British factory, but only an agent; Brinjan, where was an English banksal or storehouse; Chetwa, a Dutch settlement; then Cranganore, the seat of a Portuguese archbishopric until it fell into the hands of the Dutch; the town of Cochin, with its extensive fortifications constructed by the Portuguese, but afterwards also captured by the Dutch; Porka and Calicoulan, Dutch factories for the purchase of pepper and cassia; and then Coulan, another town with numerous churches and strong fortifications taken by the Dutch from the Portuguese. Sailing three leagues further, he passed Eddava, once a Danish factory, but where only a Portuguese agent of the

British then resided, and after three more leagues he arrived at Ajengo.*

"This account of the towns and forts on the coast, though not complete, is the best that can be drawn up with the aid of English records. It satisfies us that the inmates of the factories must have been dependent for their quiet and security not only on the dispositions of their native neighbours, but still more on the state of European politics. They were now so strong, that if they offended a native chief they suffered annoyance, not danger; but if Great Britain were involved in a war with France or Holland, an invasion from Myhie or Cochin might bring captivity, death, and ruin. In these factories, therefore, we find especial interest taken in the affairs of Europe, whilst the communications with the French and Dutch settlements are elaborate and important."†

At Tellicherry the alarm concerning a general war in Europe influenced the proceedings of the factors, both in the internal economy and external relations of the settlement. In the years 1740-1, this expectation was more general; and both the English and the French at Myhie were looking forth eagerly for orders to begin the war in India. England and France were at this time jealous, angry, and hostile; they were expending their resources on opposite sides of a struggle to which England had not yet committed herself as a principle. In 1744, however, the war broke forth, which, extending itself to India, produced such remarkable results. During the few years which intervened, the English and French in the neighbourhood of Tellicherry were close commercial competitors and rivals for native influence. It is here impossible to do more than refer to this as the key of many complications of the English with the natives; the detail must be reserved for chapters exclusively given to the conflicts of the English and French. The English had the best of the struggle which went on ere yet war was proclaimed; they were more successful in gaining influence over the natives—in securing the best of the pepper trade, and in creating annoyance to their adversaries: their action was more continuous, persevering, and steady, and their resolution more dogged and obstinate. The French were successful in gaining over one influential native, who was as dangerous to his friends as to his enemies; this was one Ali Raja, a rash, active, unprincipled Mohammedan zealot. He made various plundering expeditions to the English island of Bhurmapatan, where he destroyed both property and life.

Frequently during the last decade of the first half of the eighteenth century the Mohammedans of Malabar were in a state of frenzied religious excitement. The Moplahs, a particular order of fanatics with whom the shedding of infidel blood was a profession, slaughtered many persons, the Portuguese priests whom they intensely hated suffering more particularly at their hands. These outrageous bigots conspired to murder all the European and Christian inhabitants of Malabar, but their plot was detected, and its authors punished or put to flight. The native chiefs professed to abhor these people and their acts, but were in reality delighted to hear of them, and extended protection to the assassins as widely as they dared. The French showed more dexterity in dealing with these persons than the English did; and, indeed, generally in suppressing native crime within their settlements, they were more skilful than their rivals; yet they maintained the forms of law, and dispensed substantial justice. However disposed at times the British and French were to mutual forbearance, the conduct of the native chiefs so complicated each as rendered it difficult to preserve a neutral attitude. If a native chief desired to prove his friendship for French he attacked the English; or if, in alliance with the latter, he molested the French. The French seldom had a war with a native chief that the English were not obliged either to aid the latter, or to mediate, so as to preserve the company's treaties and obligations. Thus matters continued at Tellicherry until the breaking out of the great French war.

Ajengo, situated lower down the coast than Tellicherry, was an old settlement of the English, and one of the pleasantest in India. It was built on the banks of a small river which flowed rapidly between wooded banks, winding its bright way deviously, and forming picturesque islets, which were crowned with the luxuriant verdure of a land of perpetual summer. The pretty town was surrounded with gardens glowing in the bright attire of tropical floral beauty. The defences were four bastions commanding the approaches by land and sea, and mounted thirty-two eighteen pounder guns. The sea approach was further protected by a battery of twenty guns. The defences were in bad condition during the last ten years of the half century. There was but one gunner, and he was both blind and insubordinate. The French ships of war came very often to look at Ajengo, and the King of Travancore came too often to ascertain whether, as the ally of England, it was necessary for him to exterminate the expected invaders. This man was a terror to the Dutch, over whom he obtained several victories, disastrous to their power in these parts. He had been the minister of the queen of Atringer, whose power all native princes respected; but he betrayed her, and usurped her authority. He became sovereign of a territory which ranged along one hundred and twenty miles of coast, southward from Cochin, but was of uncertain breadth; it, however, extended far into the interior, and comprised rich provinces. The annalist of the East India Company's factories in Malabar, gives the following curious account of the opinions, practices, and policy of this fierce bandit:—"So great was the quantity of blood shed in his wars, that, when smitten with temporary remorse, he was induced by Brahmans to make an atonement,—such an one as could only have occurred to the wild imaginations of orientals excited by superstition and avarice. With two hundred and fifty-six pounds of the purest gold was formed the image of a cow, into which, on the twenty-first of March, 1751, his majesty entered, and there remained three days. At the expiration of that time he made his exit, purified from all the crimes of his past life, and regenerate. Congratulatory presents were sent him from the Dutch and English chiefs of Cochin and Ajengo, and the cow being cut into small portions was distributed amongst the interested inventors of this method for the remission of sins. From that time the ceremony, though rare as the hecatombs of the Greeks and horse-sacrifices of Northern India, became national, and some years afterwards, when Forbes was residing in Travancore, the reigning sovereign raised himself by it from a low to a high caste—an instance of exaltation unparalleled in modern times, but not without precedents in Hindoo antiquity." This prince was as brave as he was superstitious—as warlike as he was tyrannical. To the British he was for a long course of years, not only courteous, but kind, carrying on trade with them, and proving true to his agreements.

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* *Diary of the Select Committee, Jan.* 1758. Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs,* vol. i. chaps. i. xi. xii; vol. ii. chap. xvi.

† *The East India Company's Factories in Malabar,* by the Editor of the *Bombay Quarterly.*

The English undoubtedly assisted this fierce king in his wars with the Dutch, although they were unwilling to acknowledge it when challenged by the Dutch agents to account for their conduct. The Hollanders, as much to test the professed neutrality of their British neighbours as for sake of any advantage to be derived, requested permission to march through the company's territory to attack his belligerent majesty of Travancore, but the request was refused, although arms and ammunition reached his sable majesty from the English arsenal. It was, at all events, in some measure from this cause that the Dutch, in 1740-2, suffered so much, and sustained such mortifying reverses. From causes which the English did not profess to know, the soldiers, and even officers, of the Batavian army deserted to the English, who refused to surrender them. When the fort of Colesly was lost by the Dutch, after the King of Travancore had maintained a long siege against it, proof was afforded that to the deserters harboured by the English, he owed his success. Still, when he offered to the English the exclusive trade of all the pepper and cloth produced in his dominions not required for its own consumption, if they would form an alliance offensive and defensive with him, they peremptorily refused. He found the French more accommodating. Notwithstanding this show of peace on the part of the British, the Dutch attributed their misfortunes to the factors of that nation, and threatened to drive the English out of the land: a more formidable power soon after essayed to do what the Dutch menaced, and was itself destroyed.

The King of Travancore, finding the French deceitful, and the English more bent on trade than war, refusing to be his ally for aggressive purposes, suddenly turned round and proposed an alliance with their enemies. The Dutch, who had strongly denounced the immorality of the English in cultivating the friendship of such a robber and assassin as the despot of Travancore, immediately accepted his alliance, and the proposal upon which it was based of driving all others out of India who disputed their combined supremacy. The king intended to use the Dutch for his own purposes, and then cast them away; they hoped to employ his resources for objects exclusively their own, and then turn upon him and subjugate him: the grand object of the alliance was, that each of the allies might find by it more facile means of robbing and destroying one another. Such was the political morality of India, native and European, at the close of the half century, the events of which are here related.

To the British in Ajengo, 1746 was a year of unusual peril. The topasses or native troops revolted, incited by a well-paid Mohammedan officer in their service. The mutiny was suppressed by means of sheer resolution on the part of the factors, and the ringleaders were punished. Thus early the English had warning of how little reliance was to be placed in native troops. In the field they had deserted on many occasions, in the garrison it was now found that they could be mutinous at a juncture when its safety rested upon their fidelity.

In the Ajengo diary of 1751 there is a curious record of how impossible it was for the English to hold any intercourse with the Portuguese without sustaining some injury.

The Portuguese bishop of Cochin was one Don Clement Joseph. He intrigued against the Dutch, who conquered that city, and they expelled him. The English had always some among their factors everywhere who leaned to the Church of Rome, or, at all events, considered it as the next best system to the Church of England. They were not such uncompromising Protestants as the citizens of the States-General. Don Joseph was welcomed with his priests and retinue to Ajengo, where shelter and succour were afforded him in his troubles, on the usual condition that he and his would be subject to the laws by which English citizens were bound. Don Joseph accepted the hospitalities sought so piteously and offered so generously, with protestations of gratitude and conformity to English interests. Scarcely had he been quietly located when he endeavoured to corrupt the English European soldiery, hoping to make proselytes of them, and thereby attach them to the Portuguese interests. This treacherous work was carried on so clandestinely that some success attended it before discovery prevented the further extension of mischief. The bishop was seized, and he and his associates were charged with acting as spies, and transmitting treasonable information as to the garrison, &c., to the Portuguese and French. They were placed as prisoners on board an English ship bound for Bombay. The bishop's intrigues were as active by sea as on land, and he laid a plan for the escape of his people, and for making the English captain its disloyal accessory. His schemes were again discovered, but no punishment was inflicted upon him, he was allowed to withdraw to a Portuguese settlement, taking with him his converts, whom he persuaded to transfer their allegiance from their own sovereign to that of Portugal. The English had had a very long experience of the Portuguese, their priests and superior clergy, and they might have concluded that their engagements would have been kept no longer than a chance of safety attended the violation, and that to pervert the minds of the troops, sow sedition, and betray the condition of the garrison to such of the rival powers as were Roman Catholic, would result, as a matter of course, for any indulgence accorded.

Dependent upon the government of Ajengo were several other factories on the Malabar coast, of less importance, but each of which had its exciting history. The French were the interlopers in these days, and stirred up the native rajahs against the minor as well as the major stations of the English traders. The author of *The East India Company's Factories in Malabar*, gives a sketch of these minor stations so brief, yet so pertinent and complete, that it conveys all that need be written upon the subject, and nearly all the reader would desire to know of these lesser agencies:—"At Brinjan was a banksal or storehouse, the English resident of which was jealously watched by the native chief, and not being permitted to raise a flagstaff, was fain to hoist the British colours on a tree. Ruttera, where a century before the English had a small factory, had long since been deserted by them, and although it was within the limits of the company's privileges, the French attempted to open a trade there. The chief of Ajengo immediately dispatched a corporal and ten privates in a manchau, together with another well-manned and well-armed boat, to seize the interlopers; but on the native rajah declaring that if the French were molested he would raise the country and destroy every man of the detachment, they hastily retraced their steps. The French afterwards sent an agent with three chests of treasure to Coletche, where he succeeded in opening a warehouse. At Eddava, half-way between Ajengo and Coulan, the English had a warehouse, the business of which was transacted by a Portuguese linguist, who did a little for them in the pepper trade, and a great deal for himself by intriguing with the natives. At Cotiote, although close to Tellicherry, there resided an European agent from the factory of Ajengo. Richard Secker was appointed to this post, and his brief occupancy is one of many examples to prove what must have been the miseries of faint-hearted civilians at that time. His residence, a native hut with a roof of rotten leaves, was an insufficient protection from the weather, and during the heavy rains he was compelled to shift his bed from place to place in the vain hope of finding a dry spot of rest; his single room served for kitchen, parlour, and all; at night it was overrun by vermin, and to his horror he frequently found himself bitten by rats. He had not a single companion, and, unable to converse fluently in the native language, was excluded even from the barbarous society of the place. His spirits gave way, and instead of purchasing pepper, his time was taken up with indicting accounts of his wretchedness, and petitioning to be removed."

The smallest stations dependent upon Tellicherry were more important. Carwar had been an early settlement of the company, and since they had been obliged to close it in 1720, they made repeated efforts to re-establish themselves there. The French offered every opposition which indirect influence could wield. The Portuguese, at the very time the English were compassionating them elsewhere—affording them succour in some instances, and hospitality in many—were malignantly hostile to the re-establishment of the English at Carwar, and soon after the second half of the eighteenth century commenced, suddenly, in a time of peace, while the English were persecuted by the natives, appeared with a fleet off the coast, landed troops, attacked the English without summon to surrender, or declaration of war, and easily carried by their overwhelming numbers the fort on Peer Hill, from which the English had no means to dislodge them. The only moral defence the Portuguese offered was one which, if valid, justified war and a general attack upon the English settlements, but could not mitigate the atrocity in a time of peace of a wanton and cowardly attack with an overpowering force upon a weak and almost defenceless station. They alleged, after the old fashion, that they were the original traders to the East; that the English were interlopers; that, moreover, the latter were not the friends of the Jesuits, and had insulted them. This last charge was untrue; the English having rather petted that order, until their treachery and arrogance in many cases, and their treason in all, compelled their punishment or expulsion from British settlements. Horcawur, and a few other small places, were established or resuscitated about 1750—some of them rather before that date, and others shortly after; and in connection with one or two of these, events occurred which were exciting to the English and had some influence on their future fortunes, but the narrative of which fall properly within the relation of the occurrences of the second half of the century.

Students of Indian history have been struck with the coarseness of the English factors as compared with the first British settlers in India, and in comparison also with contemporary factors of other nations. The Dutch had at all their stations the humanizing influence of chaplains, who were selected for their piety, learning, and zeal, and who much restrained their flocks, who were probably as much given as the English to the vices of the day and of human nature in their circumstances. The administration of justice was, amongst Dutch, Danes, and French, far superior to what it was among the English. The Dutch lawyers were frequently very eminent. International, maritime, and commercial laws were studied by the Dutch merchants, who in general intelligence and respectability much surpassed the English. The French were dissolute, but their manners were cultivated. They were hardly less sincere in the conflict of commerce and diplomacy, but they were much more polite than their British rivals. The correspondence between the French and English extant, places our countrymen in a far inferior position in point of education, manners, and good behaviour; the composition and even spelling of the English letters are barbarous. Probably there are no public letters of that day in existence so low-bred, vulgar, and ill-written as those of the English factors of Tellicherry, in reply to communications courteous and very elegantly expressed. There was a low, ruffianly tone about the correspondence of that day which contrasts painfully with the letters of the English factors of one hundred years before. This allegation has been made in several of the Indian periodicals, and a writer in one of the quarterlies thus puts it:—"In the Diary of Ajengo we notice the last traces of that excessive vulgarity which disfigures the mediæval, much more than the most ancient, records of the company. The manuscript—written, it should be observed, not by a clerk, but by the European secretary himself, and signed by the chief and council—abounds with such passages as the following:—'The other boat was *a cruizing* to the southward; we found in her a letter from *a black fellow* the French *keeps* at Caletche;' 'the moors are *a preparing* an army;' 'five sail of men-of-war were *a fiting* out to *releive* Commodore Bennett;' 'the king is *a going* to a feast;' 'we *were let known*' of a certain event. Everywhere the natives are designated 'black fellows;' what we now call a native apothecary was with the factors 'a black doctor;' a regiment of sepoys was 'a black regiment,' or 'a black battalion,' and, using a curious form of elliptical expression, they always styled the letters of native correspondents 'black advices.' Indeed this epithet *black* was long afterwards applied to natives even in official documents, and, as Mill indignantly remarks, Sir Elijah Impey could find no better title than 'black agents' for the native magistrates and judges of India."

CHAPTER LXIV.

MADRAS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE BREAKING OUT OF HOSTILITIES WITH THE FRENCH IN 1744.

Although towards the close of the first half of the eighteenth century events were of magnitude and importance at Madras, it was the dullest portion of the company's settlements in India at the beginning of the century, and for many years after. The traders proceeded in their routine, buying and selling, sometimes quarrelling among themselves and oppressing one another, and sometimes enlivened by danger from without. The neighbourhood of Fort St. George was constantly a scene of contest amongst the native powers; but the factors had been long accustomed to that, and took no interest in the wars, and rumours of wars, which raged around them, except when their own interests and those of their employers were menaced.

The directions from London to the governor of Fort St. George were wise and peaceful; he was ordered on no account to mix himself up with the disputes of the petty rajahs in his vicinity, and to avoid all complications by political alliances, either with native princes or Europeans; while commercial covenants, based on mutual advantage, were to be sought and respected. That the directors were intent upon the peaceful and populous settlement of their territory around Fort St. George, is made evident by directions to promote the influx of industrious and quiet inhabitants, of whatever creed or race. The directors thus wrote to the council on this subject:—"What is of the last importance to us is, that the bounds be filled with useful inhabitants, and the only way to get and keep them is by a steady and constant, just and humane government, doing right to every one, and not suffering the voice of oppression to be heard, or so much as whispered in the streets. We hope Mr. Pitt has been careful, and will continue and persevere therein, which will be for his honour and our advantage. The increase of the inhabitants and of the revenues, and the lessening of the annual expense, will be to us the most convincing arguments of his good management, especially if thereto be added (as we expect) the due care of the investments."

There appears to have been well-organized local government. Charles Lockyer wrote, in 1711, "They have a mayor and aldermen, who exercise the same authority as in corporations in England. Quarrels, small debts, and other business of the meaner sort, are decided by them at a court of six aldermen, held thrice a week in the town-hall. Black merchants commonly apply to this court, but Europeans usually seek favour of the governor. When any are not satisfied by the mayor's justice, they may appeal to a higher court, where for much money they have little law, with a great deal of formality. Here a judge allowed by the company presides, who on the report of a jury gives a final decree of European malefactors; they hang none but pirates, though formerly here have been men put to death for other crimes, whence I am apt to think that the governors had then great powers." He adds: "Lawyers are plenty, and as knowing as can be expected from broken linendrapers and other cracked tradesmen, who seek their fortunes here by their wits."* Notwithstanding this advantage, the administration of justice was considered by the directors in London to be so deficient in Madras, and in India generally, that in 1726 they represented to his Majesty George the First, "that there was great want at Madras, Fort William, and Bombay, of a proper and competent authority for the more speedy and effectual administering of justice in civil causes, and for the trying and punishing of capital and other criminal offences and misdemeanors."† In result of this representation, measures were taken by the English government, by which many improvements, and unfortunately some abuses, were introduced in the three presidencies; the chief alterations affected Bombay, but Madras was also influenced by these new arrangements.

In the correspondence between the directors and the factors, the chief concern seems to have been how best the expenses of the establishments, civil and military, could be effected. In order to accomplish this, and to maintain an attitude of increased independence as well, the governor refused the usual presents to the nabob, and his conduct met the approbation of the directors.

In 1725 permission from the court of ditors was given to the governor to rebuild the silver mint, but it was strictly ordered that there should be "no charge of ornaments," but that the money should be expended on the "useful and substantial." Writing of

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* Quoted in Kaye's *Administration of the East India Company*, part iii. chap. i.

† Auber's *Analysis*, p. 229.

"the east curtain at Fort St. David's, and the covering of the garden-house, and the Cudalore factory," the directors say—"It is a prodigious sum our buildings there and at Fort St. George have cost us, so that every motion for laying out more sounds harsh."

In 1732 a discussion ensued concerning the lowering of duties on trade, but the directors pleaded the state of finance at home against any reduction. This year, measures were taken to induce large numbers of native weavers to settle at Madras, which circumstance mainly arose from the urgent advice of the directors some years before, to "encourage the settlement of the natives within the bounds." Soon after, there was great scarcity of rice, and consequent famine; the president and council of Fort St. George used the most active, politic, and humane exertions to mitigate the horrors of the crisis, and earned very strong expressions of approbation from the directors.

The Mahrattas harassed the president and council. To give a detail of their proceedings would be to repeat incidents too similar to those which have been recorded in connection with affairs in the sister presidency of Bombay. The English acted with great spirit in repelling all incursions, and refusing all demands for tribute,* and the directors sustained their policy, lauded their measures, and incited their resolution.

The following letter of the 21st January, 1741, exemplifies this:—"The Mahrattas invading, overrunning, and plundering the Coromandel coast, give us a most sensible and deep concern, more especially as they come within our bounds, and sent you a most insulting message, tacked to an enormous and unheard-of demand, which you did well to answer from the mouths of our cannon, and thereupon to put yourselves in the most defensible posture; we hope that long before now the coast is well rid of them, and that the country powers have been roused to defend their subjects' property against all such formidable enemies in future; however that may be, you must by no means become tributary to, or suffer contributions to be levied upon us, either by the Moors or Mahrattas." Notwithstanding this high commendation, the directors considered that peace might not have been made on such advantageous terms, if the wisdom and courage of the president and council had not been acted upon from home:—"You will see how much we approve of your measures in making peace with the Mahrattas, at the same time we perceive if it had not been for our express orders, you would not have judged so well for our interests, by being overcome with your false fears. This may intimate to you how acceptable it would have been to us, had you pursued the same measures with respect to all other Indian powers."

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* Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*. This authority has been frequently quoted during the progress of this work, it is therefore appropriate while making our acknowledgements to its gifted author, to inform our readers of his decease while this work has been passing through the press. As few men have contributed more to a correct historical knowledge of Southern India than Mr. Duff, the reader will be interested in a short sketch of that author's own personal history. It is abridged from the *Banffshire Journal*, the editor of which, from his local connections, had peculiar sources of information as to the early life of Mr. Duff. His public services are well known to all persons acquainted with modern Indian history, as his writings are appreciated by all who are students of the history of the native races in India:—"The late Mr. J. C. Grant Duff was the eldest son of Mr. Grant, of Kincardine O'Neil, and was born in Banff on the 18th of July, 1789. One of the earliest recollections of his childhood was seeing his father dry before the fire the newspaper which contained the account of the execution of Louis XVI. (in 1793). Mr. Grant Duff was in the habit of telling many anecdotes of his early life in Banff, some of which were curiously illustrative of a state of things from which we are separated by half a century, which has produced more changes in the state of the country than any other in Scottish history. From Banff his mother removed to Aberdeen, where her son James was for some time at school, then for a longer period a student at Marischal College. It had been intended that he should proceed to India as a civil servant, but the arrangements which had been made towards this end fell through at the last moment, and, impatient of longer delay, the boy, then only sixteen years of age, accepted a cadetship and sailed for Bombay. After a short period of study at the cadet establishment he was ordered to join the Bombay Grenadiers. The first affair of importance in which he was engaged was the storming of Maliah, a strongly fortified town, which was defended with the energy of despair by the crew of freebooters and cut-throats to whom it belonged. The party, commanded by Ensign Grant, then only nineteen years of age, was almost cut to pieces, and the adventures of their boy leader were of the most romantic description. It was not, however, till the close of the day's work that he had any idea of the desperate character of the service in which he had been engaged. 'This, I suppose,' he observed to an old officer, 'was mere child's play compared to Bhurtpore.' 'I doubt that,' answered his senior; 'the round shot at Bhurtpore were far worse than here, but, for snipping, I think this beat it.' Mr. Grant's careful attention to his duties did not remain entirely unrewarded. He became Persian interpreter to his regiment, as well as adjutant, at a very early period, and long before he quitted the regular line of the service his position and influence were far greater than his rank in the army would naturally have indicated. At last his day of good fortune dawned. The keen eye of Mountstuart Elphinstone, then resident in Poonah, saw in the young soldier an instrument fitted to his hand. He made Lieutenant Grant his assistant, in conjunction with Captain, afterwards Sir Henry Pottinger, and the friendship which then began between master and pupil, remained unbroken till the death of the latter. He had not been long attached to Mr. Elphinstone when the Peishwa threw off the mask which had for some time indifferently concealed his bitter hostility to the English name. The residency was taken, plundered, and burnt. The decisive fight at Khirkee punished the insolence of the treacherous Mahratta, and a long train of operations, in which the subject of this memoir was constantly employed, partly in a military and partly in a civil capacity, completed his overthrow. It now remained to settle the country, and to this object Mr. Elphinstone immediately addressed himself. The unwearied labours and great abilities of his young assistant were rewarded by the 'blue riband of Western India,' the Residency of Sattara. He was not quite thirty years of age when he was sent, with only one European companion and a body of native soldiery, into the middle of the great and warlike province, which was the centre of the Mahratta confederacy. His mission was to bring order out of chaos, civilization out of barbarism, peace and prosperity out of war and desolation. How he grappled with his great task, and how he succeeded in these benevolent objects it would be long to trace. . . . . The long and enthusiastic labours of Captain Grant soon broke down a constitution of no ordinary strength, and, after five years, his physicians insisted on his return to Europe, not as the means of buying health, but as absolutely essential to his existence. About two years after his return to this country he succeeded to the estate of Eden, which had descended to his mother while he was absent in the East. It was upon this occasion that he assumed the name of Duff. Mr. Grant Duff's first task, after returning to England, was to complete his *History of the Mahrattas*, a work in three octavo volumes, for which he had collected the materials at vast

The dangers of the English at Madras now thickened fast, and great preparations were made to avert them, by keeping on terms with the natives and strengthening the fortifications. The progress of the French, already described as so annoying in the Bombay presidency, was still more alarming in that of Madras. The coast of Coromandel and that of Malabar were both within the schemes of French and native ambition, and both were plundered by pirates, whose activity never tired, and who emerged from every defeat with fresh vigour. The position of Madras exposed it on either side to the apprehension of enemies, and the state of fear in which its peaceable inhabitants generally lived at this period was such as to make "life in Madras" by no means enviable. The greatest embarrassment of the president and council was the correspondence of the directors, whose orders were frequently contradictory; and, while stimulating the factors and the garrison of Fort St. George to exertion, they blamed the smallest outlay, and even reduced, and, but for the urgent remonstrances of the president and council, would have still further lessened, the number of troops in Fort St. George, and the small maritime force kept off the coast. Thus they write at a period when, in Madras, men's minds were failing them from fear, in view of the vast interests at stake and the overwhelming number and power of their enemies:—"You will see that we are utterly averse to the keeping up of such a marine force as you require. We are unanimously of opinion the force we now allow you is sufficient for your safety and our purpose, which, in short, is our own defence and no further." This communication was made at a time when the directors were urging the president to send them all the information in their power about the French, and in a tone and style which betrayed great uneasiness. The directors would not lay out money for military purposes until their stations were on the verge of destruction. Everything—safety, honour, and their position in India, was risked rather than the expense of even a very moderate outlay for military purposes.

The president and council did not show such a mean and foolish jealousy of the military as was shown by the authorities at Bombay, and they consequently employed officers of intelligence in treating with the Mahrattas. For this, however, they received severe censure from the directors, who appear, at this juncture, to have entertained an intense jealousy, if not absolute dislike, of military men:—"We must also remark here our dissatisfaction at your employing none of our council in the important transactions with the Mahrattas and others, for notwithstanding any pretended superior capacities in those you did employ, we do not reckon military men proper judges of these affairs; but rather that they have a strong bias in their minds." The peace with the Mahrattas, which was concluded in July, 1739, between Mr. Law, governor of Bombay, on behalf of the company, and Bajee Rao, the first minister of "the most serene Sou Rajah," did not secure peace to the English in Madras any more than in Bombay. Its fourteen articles were all violated, in one way or other, by the Mahrattas. Sometimes the authority of the Sou Rajah was pleaded against that of the Bajee Rao, and often the agents of the latter, notwithstanding his well-known respect and admiration of the English, set at nought their obligations of duty to their master, and of peace to his ally.

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expense and with no small personal labour, amidst his public duties at Sattara. In 1825 he married the only child of Dr., afterwards Sir, Whitelaw Ainslie, the author of the *Materia Medica Indica*, and long well known in the scientific circles of Edinburgh and Paris. He then settled at Eden, and devoted himself for many years to improving—nay, we may almost say re-creating—his property. Till very recently we believe he never drew a farthing from the estate, but expended every year more than the entire income upon increasing its value and its desirability as a residence. Early in the year 1850 Mrs. Grant Duff succeeded to a small estate in Fifeshire, which had been long in her mother's family, whereupon her husband assumed the name and arms of Cunninghame in addition to his own. Later in the same year the death of an uncle of Mrs. Grant Duff, the late Mr. Douglas Ainslie, added largely to the property of the family. The deceased leaves a daughter and two sons, the elder one member of parliament for the Elgin district of Burghs."

The agents of Fort St. George seem to have taken considerable interest in the repression of the piracies of Angria, and the prevention of that tyrant's seizing the territory of the Siddees, for their letters to the directory at home, in 1735, acquaint their honours that Angria was "shut up," and in straits, in consequence of the measures taken against him. These representations do not well agree with such as were made by the council of Bombay, who knew Angria better than did that of Madras. Yet in the year following, the directors, in their general letter to Bengal, take for granted the representations made to them concerning Angria from Fort St. George, and base upon them expectations of economy.

At this time Madras was of considerable importance. Charles Lockyer, a little earlier, described it as "a port of the greatest consequence to the East India Company, for its strength, wealth, and great returns made yearly in calicoes and muslins." The fortifications were of considerable relative strength. The citadel had four bastions, and curtains, on which were mounted fifty-seven pieces of ordnance, one of which was a mortar. The main guard was the western, which was kept by "an officer's guard;" the eastern guard was maintained by a corporal's party. The English town was defended by batteries, crescents, and flankers; one hundred and fifty guns and three mortars were mounted here, and thirty-two guns on the outworks. Eight field pieces were ready to be employed around the fort as circumstances admitted or demanded.

The "Black City," where the natives resided, was beyond the fort, and surrounded with a brick wall of considerable height and great thickness. This separate town, as it virtually was, had a defence of artillery, and was well fortified. To the southward lay Magna Town, where the Mosullah boatmen lived, a hardy and venturous race.

Beyond these fortified environs, the company held valuable territory. Within a circuit of about three miles, lay villages called Egmore, New Town, Old Garden, &c., which were rented out to merchants or farmers. Lockyer says, viewing the whole of the city and suburbs, that it had "good fortifications, plenty of guns, and much ammunition." He further describes it as a "bugbear of the Moors, and a sanctuary to the fortunate people living in it."

There was a large church in Madras, which had some pretensions to architectural taste, the interior decorated with curious carved work; it had very large windows, and a fine organ. There were no bells, as the Brahmins regarded them with certain superstitious feelings which it was deemed judicious not to countenance. There was a public library, which was at least respectable; and beneath the room in which the books were placed, a school was held, which was free. It is curious that there was a loan society for poor persons connected with the church; certain funds not required for ecclesiastical purposes being lent out to poor, industrious persons, at the rate, then low, of seven per cent.

The internal economy of Madras was such that some alleged the English drew as much revenue from Madras as the Dutch from Batavia, which Lockyer thought improbable. The writer last referred to gives as interesting sketches of Madras early in the eighteenth century as the Rev. Mr. Anderson, in his work on Western India, has recently given of Surat and Bombay up to that period from still earlier times. Writing of the revenues, he says:—"A seagate custom of £5 per cent., yielding 30,000 pagodas per annum; and a choultry, or land custom of two-and-a-half per cent. on cloth, provisions, and other goods brought in from the country, yielding 4000 pagodas. Anchorage and permit dues, licences for fishing, arrack and wine, tobacco and beetle-nut farms, mintage, &c., furnished various sums." The income of the various officials furnished no temptations to retain their posts against their conscience:—"The governor had £200 a-year, with a gratuity of 100; of the six councillors, the chief had £100 per annum; the others in proportion—£70, £50, and £40 per annum; six senior merchants had annual salaries of £40; two junior merchants, £30; five factors, £15; ten writers, £5; two chaplains, £100; one surgeon, £36; two "essay masters," £120; one judge, £100; and the attorney-general, 50 pagodas. Married men received from 5 to 10 pagodas per month, as diet money, according to their quality; inferior servants, dining at the general table, had no other allowance beyond their salaries than a very trifling sum for washing, and oil for lamps."* It is evident that the servants of the company could never have supported themselves at Madras, had it not been for their carrying on private traffic, which was as injurious to the interests of their employers, as the like practice was elsewhere.

There was no name so prominent in Madras, during the early part of the eighteenth century, as Mr. Thomas Pitt. This gentleman has been sometimes confounded with his cousin, a Mr. Pitt who first went to India as an "interloper," then became an agent of the new or English Company, and afterwards was known as "President" and "Consul Pitt." Mr. Thomas Pitt obtained celebrity for his prudence and good temper in the management of the affairs of the company in troublesome times. He was also made notorious by the possession of the celebrated "Pitt diamond." Captain Hamilton declared that it was obtained in a way not creditable. According to his account, a Mr. Glover saw it at Arcot, and induced the owner to offer it for sale to the English at Fort St. George, and that he placed in the owner's hand 3000 pagodas as a guarantee. The pledge was broken by Pitt, and the money forfeited by Glover. Much doubt has been thrown upon this story, as Hamilton was so thorough an asperser of the company and its servants; but on the other hand, Mr. Pitt's friends have never fairly accounted for his possession of this extraordinary gem.

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* Lockyer's *Trade of India*, p. 14.

The settlement of Madras, as well as those of Bombay and Surat, were troubled by Dutch fugitives and deserters, and by the insolent demands of those who made reclamation of them. The factors seem to have received all deserters—Dutch and French more particularly—who were disposed to serve in the ranks of the military. Some of these proved bad soldiers, and deserted again to some other power when opportunity served; but others, like many mercenaries in all nations, and in all times, were faithful to the service which they adopted, and proved good soldiers.

As the events connected with the Madras presidency during the portion of the eighteenth century which expired before the war broke out between the British and French settlements, were less striking than those which made up the same period in the eastern and western presidencies, the space required for their treatment is proportionably small; accordingly, some subjects not alone applicable to Madras, but as much so to either of the other presidencies, may, with propriety, obtain notice here. In a chapter devoted to commerce, the present way of doing business in India was stated and explained; in the early part of the eighteenth century, the mode was somewhat different, as were also the materials of trade. Then, especially at Madras, the products of the town were the grand subjects of export to England. The spice trade fell away during the eighteenth century, and so rapidly did the demand for spices fall in Europe, that the Dutch, who mainly relied upon it, were great sufferers. In some places, the Batavian commerce was ruined, and so quickly did the prosperity and resources of the Dutch East India Company vanish, that when England found herself crossing swords with France in India, it was a matter of little account in the great contest what part the Dutch might take, or whether they should take any. The English, while they dealt largely in pepper, and considerably in cloves, were more desirous to obtain dye stuffs, and the products of the weaver's shuttle; and the decline of the demand for spice in Europe, did not therefore affect their commerce, except so far as it favoured it by removing the great spice merchants, the Dutch, from competition with the English in other matters. The swift decay of the resources of the Dutch prevented them from putting forth their energies in the departments of trade which flourished in the hands of the English; yet, at the beginning of the century, neither French nor British had a position of power, or a prospect of extensive and triumphant commerce, to be compared with the Hollanders.

The way in which commodities imported from Europe were disposed of at Madras and the cities of the other presidencies was by auction, the same mode as that adopted in London for the sale of oriental produce.

Previous to the breaking up of the Mogul empire the Europeans generally travelled some distance into the interior, or sent their goods thither by such reliable agency as they could find. There was then some protection, the chief danger being of plunder under the name of purchase, by the native governors of the Mogul. But when the empire was sinking step by step to dissolution, there was little protection for goods sent into the interior, and this branch of commerce, by which the factors had personally profited, became greatly reduced. The English found their treaties with the Mahrattas of great value, and although these were often violated, where territory was concerned, where ships were wrecked upon the coast, or where a chance of piracy was offered, yet they often secured the passage of goods by the hands of the native merchants to important marts and bazaars in cities far removed from the seaboard. At the very time the English at Calcutta were cutting the Mahratta ditch, to intercept the cavalry of Bajee Rao, the English, both at Madras and Bombay, were carrying on friendly intercourse, buying the products of the looms of Poonah, and sending thither, and all through the provinces of the Rajah of Sattara, the imports from England.

The agents of the company purchased the piece goods at the different cities where they were made; those agents were generally natives, as Europeans would have been in danger of being robbed, as indeed their native agents frequently were. When the goods were brought to Madras, Calcutta, Bombay, Surat, and other ports, they were deposited in warehouses situated within a certain defined, and generally fortified space, called the factory. It was necessary to arm and discipline the inmates of the factories, and to place the buildings in situations affording scope for defence, also to loop-hole the walls of the warehouses and residencies, and fix strong embrasures to support cannon, so that in case of any oppression on the part of native rulers, or incursion of predatory tribes, the trading depot of the company might be also the citadel of the traders. The mode of bringing the weaver's work to market was exceedingly complicated. The whole process has been thus described:—"The European functionary, who, in each district, is the head of as much business as it is supposed that he can superintend, has first his banyan, or native secretary, through whom the whole of the business is conducted; the banyan hires a species of broker, called a gomashtah, at so much a month: the gomashtah repairs to the aurung, or manufacturing town, which is assigned as his station, and there fixes upon a habitation, which he calls his cutchery: he is provided with a sufficient number of peons, a sort of armed servants, and hircarahs, messengers or letter carriers, by his employer; these he immediately dispatches about the place, to summon to him the dallals, pycars, and weavers: the dallals and pycars are two sets of brokers, of whom the pycars are the lowest, transacting the business of detail with the weavers; the dallals again transact business with the pycars: the gomashtah transacts with the dallahs, the banyan with the gomashtah, and the company's European servant with the banyan. The company's servant is thus five removes from the workman; and it may easily be supposed that much collusion and trick, that much of fraud towards the company, and much of oppression towards the weaver, is the consequence of the obscurity which so much complication implies. Besides his banyan, there is attached to the European agent a mohurrer, or clerk, and a cash-keeper, with a sufficient allowance of peons and hircarahs. Along with the gomashtah is dispatched in the first instance as much money as suffices for the first advance to the weaver, that is, as suffices to purchase the materials, and to afford him subsistence during part, at least, of the time in which he is engaged with the work. The cloth, when made, is collected in a warehouse, adapted for the purpose, and called a kottah. Each piece is marked with the weaver's name; and when the whole is finished, or when it is convenient for the gomashtah, he *holds a kottah*, as the business is called, when each piece is examined, the price fixed, and the money due upon it paid to the weaver. This last is the stage at which chiefly the injustice to the workman is said to take place; as he is then obliged to content himself with fifteen or twenty, or often thirty or forty per cent. less than his work would fetch in the market. This is a species of traffic which could not exist but where the rulers of the country were favourable to the dealer; as everything, however, which increased the productive powers of the labourers added directly in India to the income of the rulers, their protection was but seldom denied."*

The way in which the government of the factory and of the territory at Madras was conducted in the first half of the eighteenth century was, with some slight variations, identical with that of Calcutta, and of Bombay. At that time each presidency was independent of the other. Up to the year 1707, the business of Calcutta had been diverted from Fort St. George, but after that date it was separate and independent. Each presidency corresponded directly with the directors in London. The governing body, or president and council, was composed of a body seldom less in number than nine, seldom more than twelve, including the president, according to the will of the directors in London. The members of council were selected from the superior civil servants, but occasionally, especially at Bombay, the chief military officer sat in council. Business was decided by majorities. The members of council also served in subordinate offices, indeed if they had not done so they could hardly have subsisted, so small were their salaries, and so profitless their honours. Doctor Hayman Wilson writes as accurately as strongly when he thus describes the condition of these men:—"There were no lucrative offices, for many years, under the company's administration. For some time, the salaries of the chiefs of Bombay and Fort St. George, did not exceed £300 per annum, and those of merchants and factors were but £30 and £20 per annum. Even as late as the acquisition of all real power in Bengal, the salary of a councillor was £250 per annum; of a factor, £140; of a writer, as then lately increased, £130. The advantages made by the company's servants, arose from their engaging in the internal trade, and also in the trade by sea to all eastern ports north of the equator, except Tonquin and Formosa. In either of those branches of trade, much depended upon convenience of situation; and, so far, the company's servants were dependent upon the principal, with whom it rested where to employ them. The official emoluments attached to any situation, were, in all cases, of small amount."

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* Mill, vol. iii. lib. iv. cap. 1.

When members of the council were appointed to be chiefs of subordinate factories, they still retained their place in the council, and gave their voice in its affairs; this regulation, although a personal protection to the chiefs, and a support to their authority, was also a shield to their misdoings, especially when their private interests obtained more of their time and zeal than the service of the company. In fact, it was difficult, almost impossible, for a subordinate to obtain justice from an oppressive superior, or for a man not a member of council to make himself heard, and cause his wrongs to be redressed by the governing body. The president generally overruled the council, and well-nigh did as he pleased; and in few places during the history of oppression in this world, have men been more hopelessly subject to tyrannical caprice, than in the factories of the Honourable East India Company. Mill, quoting the select report of the committee of 1783, thus describes the functionaries and their investment with office and authority:—"The president was the organ of correspondence, by letter, or otherwise, with the country powers. It rested with him to communicate to the council the account of what he thus transacted, at any time, and in any form, which he deemed expedient; and from this no slight accession to his power was derived. The several denominations of the company's servants in India were, writers, factors, junior merchants, and senior merchants; the business of the writers, as the term, in some degree, imports, was that of clerking, with the inferior details of commerce; and when dominion succeeded, of government. In the capacity of writers they remained during five years. The first promotion was to the rank of factor; the next to that of junior merchant; in each of which the period of service was three years. After this extent of service, they became senior merchants; and out of the class of senior merchants were taken, by seniority, the members of the council, and when no particular appointment interfered, even the presidents themselves."

For one hundred years Madras had been the chief settlement of the British on the coast of Coromandel, and notwithstanding the rapid rise of Calcutta from the year 1717, it still retained great influence in India, and was famous for its population and riches all over the East. The extent of territory of the English extended at least five miles along the coast. The treaty obtained by the Calcutta embassy in 1715-17, had given three villages to Madras, which were of value for their population and the fertility of the circumjacent country. Not less than a quarter of a million of inhabitants occupied the company's boundaries and owned its authority when the clarion of war was sounded, and Madras became a sharer and a sufferer in the grand tournament of France and England for ascendancy on the shores and plains of India.

CHAPTER LXV.

EVENTS IN BENGAL FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE BREAKING OUT OF HOSTILITIES WITH FRANCE IN 1744.

THE settlements in Bengal had steadily acquired importance during the closing years of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth centuries. The most notable thing in connection with that settlement during the early part of the eighteenth century, was an embassy sent to the Emperor Ferokshere, then at Delhi, in 1715. Two of the most intelligent factors of the presidency were sent on this mission, which proved to be one of great results to the company. Several letters of these worthy envoys are still in existence, and deserve to be classed with the "curiosities of literature." The first of these communications which gives any detail, is directed to the authorities at Calcutta, and is as follows:—"Our last to your honours, &c., was from Agra the 24th ultimo, which place we left the same day. We passed through the country of the Jaats with success, not meeting with much trouble, except that once in the night, rogues came on our camp, but being repulsed three times, they left us. We were met on the 3rd July by Padre Stephanus bringing two Seerpaws, which were received with the usual ceremony by John Surman and Coja Surpaud. The 4th, we arrived at Barrapoola, three coss from the city, sending the padre before to prepare our reception, that if possible we might visit the king the first day, even before we went to the house which was got for us. Accordingly, the 7th, in the morning, we made our entry with very good order, there being sent a munsubdar of two thousand munsub, with about two hundred horse and peons to meet us, bringing likewise two elephants and flags. About the middle of the city we were met by Synd Sallabut Caun Behauder, and were by him conducted to the palace, where we waited till about twelve o'clock, till the king came out, before which time we met with Caundora Behauder, who received us very civilly, assuring us of his protection and good services. We prepared for our first present, viz., one hundred gold mohurs; the table-clock set with precious stones; the unicorn's horn; the gold scrutoire bought from Tendy Caun; the large piece of ambergris; the aflo, and chellumche manilla work; and the map of the world; these, with the honourable the governor's letter, were presented, every one holding something in his hand as usual. Considering the great pomp and state of the kings of Hindostan, we were very well received. On our arrival at our house, we were entertained by Synd Sallabut Caun, sufficient both for us and our people; in the evening he visited us again, and stayed about two hours. The great favour Caundora is in with the king, gives us hopes of success in this undertaking; he assures us of his protection, and says the king has promised us very great favours. We have received orders, first, to visit Caundora as our patron, after which we shall be ordered to visit the grand Vizier, and other Omrahs. We would have avoided this if we could, fearing to disoblige the Vizier; but finding it not feasible, rather than disoblige one who has been so serviceable, and by whose means we expect to obtain our desires, we comply with it. —*Delhi, or Shah Jehanabad, July 8th*, 1715." In another letter "their honours" are informed that the emperor had left Delhi, not considering that he had as much authority in his capital under the circumstances in which he fancied himself, as he would in some province of his empire. His majesty, under the pretence of worshipping at a peculiarly sanctified place, twenty coss from Delhi, got clear of the entanglements which environed him at his capital; and although the Omrahs petitioned him to return, and he moved round the city eight or ten days, he finally located himself at a distance, and thence issued his orders. The ambassadors followed him, and experienced many and great difficulties in the performance of their arduous task, not the least of which was the neglect of their superiors, who left them without remittances until they were reduced to the greatest necessities, and at last respectfully wrote, dated *twenty coss from Delhi, 4th August*, 1715, that unless they received supplies of money they could not go on with their business, and intimated that if not provided with means of performing the duties imposed upon them they must sink to the last straits. It is not recorded what reply "their honours" made to their ambassadors in distress, but it is to be supposed some money was sent, for they "went on with their business." It is impossible for any student of the company's proceedings at this period, not to be struck with the mean and despicable parsimony which was constantly exhibited not only without real economy, but causing in the long run very extensive loss. Yet, besides this unjust and greedy penuriousness, might be frequently seen a shameful extravagance where the greater personages were concerned.

In a letter dated Delhi, Nov. 3, 1715, the envoys inform their employers of the dangerous illness of his majesty, and the success which attended the efforts of a medical man who accompanied them in restoring his health. The native physicians had been called in without avail, and his majesty was reduced to much distress of mind, as his marriage to a princess of renowned beauty was to have taken place at that time, and he was extremely impatient of its postponement. When all hope of recovery through the usual court physicians had failed, Mr. Hamilton, the English surgeon, was invited to prescribe for his majesty. The disease was happily one within the management of the faculty, and in a very few days the emperor was pronounced convalescent. Coja Surpaud, the native gentleman under whose auspices the envoys had travelled and been presented to court, was thanked by the emperor, and many encomiums upon the wisdom and science of his friends the English were used by the Mogul.

Again, on December 7th, the ambassadors directed a letter from Delhi to their superiors at Calcutta, in which a most curious account is given of the complete recovery of the emperor, and his gratitude to Mr. Hamilton. The following extract cannot fail deeply to interest the reader:—"The king was pleased the 30th to give him in public, viz. a vest, a culgee set with precious stones, two diamond rings, an elephant, horse, and 5000 rupees, besides ordering, at the same time, all his small instruments to be made in gold, viz. gold buttons for coat, waistcoat, and breeches, set with jewels: the same day Coja Surpaud received an elephant and vest as a reward for his attendance on this occasion. Monsieur Mart was to have received a reward the same day with Mr. Hamilton; but considering it was not for the credit of our nation to have any one joined with him, especially since he had no hand in the business, we got his reward deferred till three days afterwards, when he had a vest, an elephant, and 1000 rupees; a favour purely owing to his majesty's generosity, and because he was his servant. We have esteemed this a particular happiness, and hope it will prove ominous to the success of our affairs, it being the only thing that detained us hitherto from delivering our general petition; so pursuant to the orders we received from Caundora, the king's recovery was succeeded by the giving in the remainder of our present (reserving a small part only till the ceremony of his marriage should be over), and then delivered our petition to Caundora, by his means to be introduced to his majesty. Synd Syllabut Caun, who has all along managed our affairs under Caundora, being at that instant and some time before much indisposed, we were obliged to carry it ourselves, without taking care to have his recommendation annexed. Since the delivery, Coja Surpaud has been frequently with Caundora, to remind him of introducing it to his majesty, but has always been informed no business can go forward till the solemnization of the king's wedding is over, when he has promised a speedy dispatch. All offices have been shut up for some days, and all business in the kingdom must naturally subside to this approaching ceremony; so that we cannot repine at the delay."

The result of the singular providence which attended this embassy was the issue of a firman (a phirmaund), before the close of the year 1715, conferring additional privileges upon the company, and giving far better security for freedom of commerce than any previous firman. When the directors at home heard of this great success, new arrangements were made conferring upon their servants at Calcutta new dignity and privilege. By anticipation Bengal has been called a presidency; but it was not until 1707 that it was so ranked, and not until after the events at Delhi turned to such prosperous account for his employers by the patriotic and gifted Hamilton, that Calcutta was regarded by any as the probable seat of Indian government, the president and council of which should one day preside over the affairs of India, and be only responsible to the directors in London.

The success of the ambassadors excited the envy of the imperial politicians, as that of Mr. Hamilton excited the envy of the native medical practitioners. A train of events was laid by the jealousy thus caused, which issued in war, to both natives and English, and in defeat, disaster, and subjugation to the former, as in victory and conquest to the latter.

Jaffer Khan (or, as some write it, Jaffier Chaun) held the government of Bengal under his imperial majesty. The office was not only one of great honour, but of power almost sovereign, and the influence of Jaffer at the imperial court was paramount. His conduct towards the English was unjust and cruel. He was determined, if possible, to render nugatory the privileges of the imperial firman, without involving himself in the displeasure of the Mogul by a direct refusal to put in force his orders. Before the ambassadors left Delhi they had some knowledge of this state of affairs, and on their return at Cossimbazar, they addressed the council at Calcutta on the subject, with whom they had previously corresponded, as to what was best to be done so as to yield nothing to the khan and in no respect offend the emperor.

"*Cossimbazar, August* 15, 1717.

"We are entirely of your opinion that you ought not to acquiesce in Jaffer Cawn's (Khan) refusing obedience to the king's royal orders, nor sit quiet under his disobedience of them; we never entertained such imaginations, but rather that he ought to be compelled to it by such means as your honour thinks best. You are sensible that no black servant in the country dare speak with that peremptoriness to so great a man as Jaffer Cawn, as sometimes the nature of our affairs require, on which consideration we ourselves went in person to him, and showed him the phirmaund, and demanded the free use of the mint as before advised. Mr. Feake disputed the point himself with Jaffer Cawn in the Hindostan language, face to face, Eckeram Cawn Duan and others being present, with ten or a dozen munsubdars and several of the mutsuddies, in a public court, who were all eye and ear witnesses to the smart and warm replies Mr. Feake at last made him: the whole durbar was surprised, and several whispered to Coja Delaun with a seeming fear in what the dispute might end. Jaffer Cawn remained silent for some time, and then ordered beetle to be brought, and dispatched us with a few sweetening words, that he would rest satisfied he should not be our enemy, but see what was to be done, and the like, which is a customary cajole he uses to get rid of company he don't like, as was plain he did not ours, for he never had so much said to his face since he has been a duan or subah, nor does he usually give any one such an opportunity. Nothing that was necessary to be said or done remained, but giving the duhoy, which experience has taught us is of no value with Jaffer Cawn, who suffers nothing to be sent to court without being read and approved by him: those officers dare as well eat fire, as send anything unknown to him. Our vakeel, though an elderly man, and possibly not so brisk as some others, yet he has the character of the boldest vakeel in this durbar; he once before did give the duhoy, and shall do it again, if your honour, &c., please to give orders; but we crave leave to offer some reasons we have against doing it at this juncture."

The khan was incensed against the bold spoken Englishmen, conceived against their nation an intense hatred, and determined to thwart their interests at all risks. The English counterplotted his excellency with considerable skill, and were well supported in their efforts by wily natives, whose diplomatic temper caused them to enter with zest into the cause of the English, when once their interests were engaged. Curious disclosures were made, and prompt information given to the English, so that the actions of the khan were well spied; but the conduct of the superior officers at Calcutta was neither so skilful, nor active —so bold, nor yet so cautious, as that of their subordinates, whose duty it was to take part in these transactions. The success of the English in this most important of their diplomatic affairs, at all events previous to the great French war, has been attributed to a bribe opportunely given to a eunuch in the service of either the vizier or the emperor, and constantly in attendance upon the durbar. Mill and Wilson sanction this opinion, and give the following account of the mode by which they ultimately secured the concessions sought—the abuse on the part of the English traders of those privileges, the decisive suppression by the native government of Bengal of these abuses, the consequent enterprises of the English in the coasting trade, and the rapid development of Calcutta, its commerce, and its power as the result:—"The power of the vizier could defeat the grants of the emperor himself; and he disputed the principal articles. Repeated applications were made to the emperor, and at last the vizier gave way; when mandates were issued confirming all the privileges for which the petition had prayed. To the disappointment, however, and grief of the ambassadors, the mandates were not under the seals of the emperor, but only those of the vizier, the authority of which the distant viceroys would be sure to dispute. It was resolved to remonstrate, how delicate soever the ground on which they must tread; and to solicit mandates to which the highest authority should be attached. It was now the month of April, 1716, when the emperor, at the head of an expedition against the Sikhs, began his march towards Lahore. No choice remained but to follow the camp. The campaign was tedious. It heightened the dissensions between the favourites of the emperor and the vizier; the ambassadors found their difficulties increased; and contemplated a long, and probably a fruitless negotiation, when they were advised to bribe a favourite eunuch in the seraglio. No sooner was the money paid than the vizier himself appeared eager to accomplish their designs, and the patents were issued under the highest authority. There was a secret, of which the eunuch had made his advantage. The factory of Surat, having lately been oppressed by the Mogul governor and officers, had been withdrawn by the presidency of Bombay, as not worth maintaining. It was recollected by the Moguls, that, in consequence of oppression, the factory of Surat had once before been withdrawn; immediately after which an English fleet had appeared; had swept the sea of Mogul ships, and inflicted a deep wound upon the Mogul treasury. A similar visitation was now regarded as a certain consequence; and, as many valuable ships of the Moguls were at sea, the event was deprecated with proportional ardour. This intelligence was transmitted to the eunuch, by his friend the viceroy of Gujerat. The eunuch knew what effect it would produce upon the mind of the vizier; obtained his bribe from the English: and then communicated to the vizier the expectation prevalent in Gujerat of a hostile visit from an English fleet. The vizier hastened to prevent such a calamity by granting satisfaction. The patents were dispatched; and the ambassadors took leave of the emperor in the month of July, 1717, two years after their arrival. The mandates in favour of the company produced their full effect in Gujerat and the Deccan: but in Bengal, where the most important privileges were conceded, the subahdar, or nabob as he was called by the English, had power to impede their operations. The thirty-seven towns which the company had obtained leave to purchase, would have given them a district extending ten miles from Calcutta on each side of the river Hoogly; where a number of weavers, subject to their own jurisdiction, might have been established. The viceroy ventured not directly to oppose the operation of an imperial mandate; but his authority was sufficient to deter the holders of the land from disposing of it to the company; and the most important of the advantages aimed at by the embassy was thus prevented. The nabob, however, disputed not the authority of the president's dustucks, a species of passport which entitled the merchandise to pass from duty, stoppage, or inspection; and this immunity, from which the other European traders were excluded, promoted the vent of the company's goods. The trade of the company's servants occasioned another dispute. Besides the business which the factors and agents of the company were engaged to perform on the company's account, they had been allowed to carry on an independent traffic of their own, for their own profit. Every man had in this manner a double occupation and pursuit; one for the benefit of the company, and one for the benefit of himself. Either the inattention of the feebly interested directors of a common concern had overlooked the premium for neglecting that concern, which was thus bestowed upon the individuals intrusted with it in India, or the shortness of their foresight made them count this neglect a smaller evil than the additional salaries which their servants, if debarred from other sources of emolument, would probably require. The president of Calcutta granted his dustucks for protecting from the duties and taxes of the native government, not only the goods of the company, but also the goods of the company's servants; and possibly the officers of that government were too little acquainted with the internal affairs of their English visitants to remark the distinction. The company had appropriated to themselves, in all its branches, the trade between India and the mother country. Their servants were thus confined to what was called 'the country trade,' or that from one part of India to another. This consisted of two branches, maritime and inland; either that which was carried on by ships from one port of India to another, and from the ports of India to the other countries in the adjacent seas; or that which was carried on by land between one town or province and another. When the dustucks of the president, therefore, were granted to the company's servants, they were often granted to protect from duties, commodities, the produce of the kingdom itself, in their passage by land from one district or province to another. This, Jaffer Khan, the viceroy, declared it his intention to prevent, as a practice at once destructive to his revenue, and ruinous to the native traders, on whom heavy duties were imposed; and he commanded the dustucks of the president to receive no respect, except for goods, either imported by sea, or purchased for exportation. The company remonstrated, but in vain. Nor were the pretensions of their servants exempt from unpleasant consequences; as the pretext of examining whether the goods were really imported by sea, or really meant for exportation, often produced those interferences of the officers of revenue, from which it was so great a privilege to be saved. Interrupted and disturbed in their endeavours to grasp the inland trade, the company's servants directed their ardour to the maritime branch; and their superior skill soon induced the merchants of the province, Moors, Armenians, and Hindoos, to freight most of the goods, which they exported, on English bottoms. Within ten years from the period of the embassy, the shipping of the port of Calcutta increased to ten thousand tons."

The terms of the firman were, that the cargoes of English ships wrecked on the Mogul coasts should be preserved from plunder; that a fixed sum should be received at Surat in lieu of all duties; that three villages contiguous to Madras, which had been granted and again reserved by the government of Arcot, should be restored in perpetuity; that the island of Diu, near the port of Masulipatam, should be given to the company, for an annual rent; that all persons in Bengal who might be indebted to the company, should be delivered up to the presidency on the first demand; that a passport (*dustuck*), signed by the president of Calcutta, should exempt the goods which it specified from stoppage or examination by the officers of the Bengal government; and that the company should be permitted to purchase the zemindarship of thirty-seven towns, in the same manner as they had been authorized by Azeem-oos-Shaun to purchase Calcutta, Suttanutty, and Govindpore.

The directors at home, while much pleased with the new advantages derived through Mr. Hamilton, at Delhi, were very anxious that economy should be practised in Calcutta, that attention should be directed to the revenues, and all possible care taken to make no acquisition of territory beyond that which had already fallen to them. The company was very solicitous that its military strength at Calcutta should be reduced; but this, it appears, the agents positively refused, on the ground of the necessity of troops to maintain freedom of commerce and personal security. Various significant events occurred, the detail of which need not encumber these pages, which soon proved the wisdom of the president and council of Calcutta in this particular. On the 3rd of February, 1719, the directors wrote, actually forbidding their officers to take possession of the territory granted by the late firman, but only so much of it as lay above and below the town on the river at both sides. On other subjects, the following extract shows the spirit of the company at that juncture:—"We come now to take notice of that which we must always have a due regard to, viz., the articles of our revenue. We need not repeat the reasons; we have often mentioned them. The assurances you have given us, that you will, and still do, continue to enlarge our revenues all you possibly can without oppression, and faithfully promise your utmost endeavours, as well to augment them as diminish the expenses, excepting that of the military, which you would not lessen, are so many acceptable instances of your care and zeal for our service. We can desire no more, but to see these promising blossoms ripening into fruit. We would not have them enlarged by oppressing any, the poorest person; and allow the reason you give for continuing your military, that it is the best argument you can use for supporting our privileges and the trade, to be very substantial; the experience at Cossimbazar, and for bringing down your goods, are pregnant instances of it, among many others."

On the 16th of February, 1721, the directors again wrote to the president and council at Calcutta, urging them to use whatever address opportunity afforded to obtain the privileges granted in the firman of 1715, but not to claim any territory, if the distance at which it lay from Calcutta was inconvenient, as trade, not territory, was the company's object. In that letter, the directors review the political position of Bengal with much astuteness, and compare the pretensions and prospects of Hyder Cooly Khan and Jaffer Khan with intelligence and foresight. These two influential natives were rivals for political power: Jaffer Khan had the advantage of long-acquired influence in Bengal, and a strong party, who were inspired, by terror of his energy and cruelty, and by identity of interest, to serve him in all extremes. Cooly Khan was a favourite with the emperor and a friend of the English. When viceroy at Surat, he caused the firman in favour of the English to take effect there, in spite of the opposition of formidable native influences and the intrigues of the rival European powers. There was some probability of his succeeding Jaffer Khan in the government of Bengal. The president and council had advised the directors of the contending claimants for power and the modes in which they were conducting their contention, asking for counsel as to the impending crisis. The company, in reply, left matters pretty much to the discretion of its officers, except as to the non-acquisition of any lands that were not of some immediate necessity to the preservation of their trade. As usual, the most impressive obligations are laid on the council to spend no money for any purpose, if by possibility such expenditure could be avoided, and, at all events, to consume no money in the rival intrigues of the two khans, until it might be seen, with some certainty, how the competition would end: in such case, they were not to offend Jaffer, if power lay with him; but if there were any chance that Hyder Cooly might turn him out, then the council must support their own friend with all means at their disposal. Such was the policy of the directors, and it probably harmonised with that of the council at Calcutta, judging not only from the course pursued by the latter, but from the spirit in which it was followed.

It is singular that while, in 1857–8, certain parties accused the company of never having paid attention to public roads, that in the correspondence of the directors with their president at Calcutta, in 1721, an anxiety for covering with roads the territory then subject to them is clearly expressed. Nor would it be difficult to prove that ever since, except when the ravages of war, or the failure of crops, desolated the country, or when the revenue, from these or other causes, was exhausted, the directors at home have always been solicitous to open up facile communications through their territories. One difficulty, at this early period, presented itself, that the native powers either chose to take offence, or to claim compensation for danger or injury supposed or pretended by them, in consequence of creating highways.

The following is a specimen of the policy which, in 1722, the directors desired to be observed towards the native governors in Bengal: it is taken from the "general letter to Bengal," written on the 14th of February, in that year. Considering that this counsel is given at a time when the council of Calcutta had assured the directors that it was "pretty easy with the country government," it indicates that, in the opinion of the directors, the time was approaching when gentle measures must be seconded by decision and force, if their interests with the governors of provinces and petty rajahs, who took upon themselves more than the authority assumed by the Mogul, was to be considered. The blending of diplomacy and decision, finesse and force, which this document commends, must be very edifying to modern adepts in Indian policy, and modern censors of Indian politicians:—"The accounts you give us of being pretty easy with the country government, notwithstanding the unsettled condition of the country, is acceptable, and much more your proceedings in clearing Contoo, the Cossimbazar broker, when seized by the nabob, and your boats when stopped by the several choukies. These are so many new proofs of the necessity of putting on a face of power and resolution, as we have often mentioned, to recover our privileges when openly infringed, and softer methods and applications for redrèss prove ineffectual, and that even the country government are afraid when you give them the duhoy in a prudent manner, and on well-grounded occasion. Yearly experience shows you that they are always watching for opportunities to get money out of you, as in the dispute of your making the road for the benefit of your towns. Let it be your constant care (as hitherto, by what appears, it has been), to give them no just handles if possible. We need not add (because it hath been often recommended to you), that you continue to keep fair with the Hoogly government, which, with a little prudence, may be done at a cheap rate, even your usual piscoshes. Be equally careful to keep up a good understanding with the nabob, so as good words and a respectful behaviour, without paying too dear for it, will contribute. Is there no likelihood of contracting a friendship with one or more of his favourites, to make your way to, and the obtaining your requests from, him more easy? Such things have been practised formerly, and particularly by President Eyres, who, by his intimacy with Mirza Mudusfa, first obtained the grant of your towns."

In 1726 a Mayens court was established in Calcutta, mainly on the model of that originally instituted at Madras. It does not appear that it produced as much satisfaction in Calcutta, as courts of a similar nature in the capitals of the sister presidencies.

In 1725 Jaffer Khan, the enemy of the English, died, and was succeeded by Sujah Khan, his son-in-law, who established his government in Moorshedabad, then a large, populous, and trading city, and, in many respects, well adapted to be the capital of Bengal. Ally Verdi Khan, one of his omrahs, accompanied him, remaining constantly by him, and exercising influence over his mind. In 1729 Ally was appointed governor of Behar, which place, together with Orissa, had been first united with Bengal, under the government of Jaffer Khan. Ally Verdi was an intriguing and dextrous man, and, by a bold stroke of policy, suddenly given, but long prepared, he had himself proclaimed as the Nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. These events were gradually opening the way for the development of greater changes, which were soon destined to pass over the lower provinces of India.

For several years the chief features of events in Bengal were those which marked the progress of trade. Efforts were made to prevent the natives from inroads upon the Calcutta territory, without necessitating armed collisions. Endeavours were put forth to outwit the native diplomatists, whose treachery and chicane were so much a delight to those endowed with these aptitudes, that they appeared to practise them for the enjoyment their exercise afforded, when nothing for their masters or themselves could be gained by such practices.

The administration of the Bengal territory was at this time kind and prudent on the part of the directors at home, and, so far as their intentions were carried out, were beneficial as well as benevolent to the natives. Thus when, in 1738, a fierce storm swept over Calcutta, damaging houses and fields, and carrying destruction to hut and homestead, the directors thus address their agents:—"We approve of your relieving the inhabitants, on their suffering by the storm the loss of their dwellings and great part of their substance, and in forbearing to collect the revenues of the poor people in the town for some time." In the succeeding year, when famine smote where storm had desolated, the council afforded extensive relief to the natives, and obtained for so doing the approbation of their employers, who thus addressed its members:—"You did well in prohibiting the exportation of rice on the scarcity; the welfare of the place, on all such melancholy occasions, must be first and principally regarded. We cannot but acquiesce, on so general a calamity, in your taking off the duty on all rice brought into the town; and approve of buying a parcel with our money, to deliver out in small parcels at the bazaar rate."

Events now occurred of warlike importance to Bengal and to the English. It will be recollected by the reader that Sevajee, the daring Mahratta, overran the greater part of Hindostan. In the year 1735 the Mahrattas obtained authority to collect a fourth part of the revenues of the empire, except in Bengal. In 1739 Nizam-ool-Moolk, the subahdar of the Deccan, became jealous of the growing ambition and power of Ally Verdi, the nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, as before related. The nizam instigated the Mahrattas to demand the *chaut* (fourth part of the revenue) for Ally. They soon advanced from Poonah and Berar, concentric points of their power and resources, to Burdwan. The celebrated Bajee Rao, already brought before the reader when narrating the events which occurred on the opposite shores of the peninsula during this period, was the leader of the fierce hordes of the invaders, assisted by his commander-in-chief, also brought before the reader's notice while relating the history of the Bombay presidency. The wild Mahrattas swept over Bengal, as the descending waters of the Ganges or the Brahmapootra deluge the plains in the rainy season. The feeble inhabitants of Bengal displayed no capacity even for flight, and in great numbers fell victims to famine or wild beasts in the jungle.

The English at Calcutta took advantage of the occasion to demand from the nabob permission to build some field works around their territory. These, when completed, were of the simplest kind, chiefly suitable for intercepting horsemen and artillery. The circuit of these works was called the Mahratta Ditch, and extended for seven miles around Calcutta, along the bounds of the territory then recognised by the nabob as belonging to the company. Ally Verdi was a man of resolution and energy; he recruited his forces, and in the following year, by the aid of men from the upper provinces, attacked the Mahrattas, who were spread over his territory. These, as the floods retiring after the monsoon find vent in the current of the great rivers, rapidly concentrated, and retreated to the shores of

Malabar and the valleys of the Deccan. Ally Verdi had been out of favour with the Mogul, because of his ambition, and his seizure of Behar and Orissa, but he was now restored to the light of the imperial countenance, petted, and rewarded by an ostensible recognition of all the titles and powers he had rebelliously assumed. On his part, engagement was made to send to Delhi a considerable tribute annually.

In the interval of space which followed, the council at Calcutta was agitated by questions connected with the administration of justice, more particularly the taking of oaths; Brahmins, Mussulmans, and others refusing to be sworn in the modes most agreeable to the English. These difficulties, and the disputes and denials of justice which arose out of them, were settled by the directors at home sending out specific regulations for such matters, which were liberal and enlightened.

During the progress and solution of these affairs the French were, in every direction towards which they operated, gaining ascendancy over the native mind. The chiefs and rajahs had believed the English irresistible at sea, until Angria and other pirates contended with them so successfully; but just before the bursting forth of the war with France that opinion had somewhat abated, although still the English war ships were esteemed as, at least, equal to those of the Dutch and superior to those of any other power. As traders, the Dutch stood first and the English second in order; but the formation of companies at Ostend and in Prussia, as well as in Denmark, which were soon understood by several of the native powers, led to the belief that there were other European nations which, as traders, and perhaps as mariners, might rival the British. The French were considered inferior to the English both as merchants and sailors, although in the latter capacity they at last acquired, by the conduct of Labourdonnais, a rapid fame. As soldiers, the English were esteemed by the natives to be prompt, obstinate, and brave in battle, but inferior to the French in taste for the profession of arms, and in the science of war. The natives believed that the English were fighting shopkeepers; but they regarded the French as cavaliers, as men above the mere instincts of trade, and who, like the natives themselves, considered the profession of arms a renown: they were esteemed as the Rajpoots of Europeans. The every-day carriage and air of the Frenchman was *à la militaire*, while that of the Englishman, even when decked in uniform, was brusque, ungainly, and gave the impression of the shop. These were the real feelings of the natives. They could readily credit any account of obstinate battle maintained by Englishmen, but that they could launch forth armies on a great field as Frenchmen could, or as the generals of the great Mogul might be supposed able to do, was beyond credibility. A little time soon dissipated these impressions. The short quietude which Bengal saw after the Mahrattas had fled before the skilful arrangements and attacks of Ally Verdi, was like the dropping of the curtain between the scenes in the drama: that curtain was soon to rise on a more eventful act, involving scenes more varied and startling than India had witnessed; and from amidst the transitions and tumults caused by the passing of armies, and the thunder of European war on Indian fields, the English were destined to come forth the heroes and the victors, before whom Indian and European were forced to bow, as the native shrub and the exotic together shed their foliage and drop their branches before the path of the resistless storm.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGULAR NAVY AT BOMBAY, AND OF REGULAR MILITARY FORCES IN BOMBAY, MADRAS, AND BENGAL.

IN previous chapters, notice has been taken incidentally of the formation of military establishments at Bombay, and of the employment of armed boats and ships to protect the harbour, and the commercial transactions conducted in the Indian Ocean.

The earlier occupation of Bombay entitles it to more especial as well as prior attention in this matter, as compared with the other presidencies. Indeed the only one of the three presidencies which has arrived at the dignity of maintaining a regular navy is Bombay, although Bengal has a marine service which more resembles a mercantile than a warlike navy. Madras possesses no maritime establishment. The Bombay navy protects the coast of Malabar, as well as the commercial interests of England and India in the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, and the Indian Ocean. The Bengal marine is of service along the Coromandel coast, and throughout the Bay of Bengal.

In previous chapters, the progress of the company's mercantile marine has been related with ample detail, and the warlike operations of merchant ships in the seventeenth century, and those in the early part of the eighteenth century conducted by "grabs" and "gallivats," depicted. It has been seen that the company's martial marine (if it deserved the name) was in a low condition as to the number of ships, men, and guns in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, but the quality of both men and material were excellent. It is very difficult to supply the place of good sailors and experienced officers in time of war, if during peace a country, on the ground of economy, discharges them. The East India Company did not think so when, in 1742, a peaceful period, the economical merchants of the directory resolved to retrench by discharging seamen, and "putting ships out of commission,"—as we say in modern phraseology. The reductions were intended to be more considerable than became actually the case, for the president and council were slow to reduce the maritime power of the presidency, and by references home of one sort or other, postponed the evil day. At last, the economical arrangements were effected, and the abridged navy of Bombay assumed the following dimensions. There were—"A superintendent, eight commanders, (one of whom was styled commodore), three first lieutenants, four second lieutenants, four third officers, and six masters of gallivats. The superintendent's salary was £220 per annum; a commander's, from 60 to 80 rupees per mensem; a first lieutenant's from 32 to 40; a second lieutenant's, 24; a midshipman's, 12; a surgeon's, from 31 to 40; a gunner's or boatswain's, 22; a carpenter's, 26; an able seaman's, 9; a native officer's, 10; a marine topass's, 6; and a lascar's, 5. Amongst the ships, ranked first 'the fighting vessels,' the principal of which were two grabs, called the *Restoration* and *Neptune's Prize*, the former being manned by eighty Europeans of all ranks, and fifty-one lascars; the latter, by fifty Europeans and thirty-one lascars. On each of the prahims there had usually been thirty Europeans and twenty lascars; but these numbers were now slightly diminished. As frequent complaints of favouritism were made by the officers, it was at last resolved that promotions should be regulated according to dates of commissions."*

The result of these reductions, so far from being a saving of money, as was expected by the directors at home, was a source of loss, and of great danger to the trade with India. The coasting trade was at last stopped, in consequence of the daring piracies effected by Arabs, Mahrattas, Europeans, &c. The *Bombay Quarterly* gives a brief sketch of the disasters which followed the reduction, before matters arrived at a crisis, in the following terms:—"An immediate consequence of these reductions was, that the mercantile marine, now larger than ever, suffered serious losses from pirates, and the company received some severe blows. The *Tiger*, a gallivat, when disabled by a waterspout, on her passage from Gombroon, was boarded by subjects of the Siddee at Mufdafarbad. Her crew, after a severe conflict in which seven fell, were overpowered, and she was carried away as a prize; but on a proper representation being made to the Siddee of Jinjeera, whom the Siddee of Mufdafarbad acknowledged as lord paramount, she was restored. Near the port of Surat cooly rovers swarmed, and waited for their prey as the ships lying at the bar attempted to discharge their cargoes. The treaty which had been made with Khem Sawunt was, as soon as the government of Bombay was supposed to be without power, shown to be waste paper, for in spite of it that chief made prizes of seven boats valued at eighteen or nineteen thousand rupees. The Malwans seized others valued at ten or eleven thousand. The subjects of the Peishwa showed themselves equally rapacious, and although their government, when appealed to, promised that the offenders should be punished, it was only on the improbable supposition that they could be discovered and convicted. Even Menajee Angria, whilst professing to be a close ally of the British, countenanced his subjects in attacking their vessels, and never hesitated to pick up a stray boat, if he could hope to escape detection; yet on one occasion he rendered a valuable service in rescuing the *Salamander*, an English ketch, which had been captured off Colaba by the fleet of Sumbhajee Angria. Seven grabs and eight gallivats, in the service of the last mentioned pirate, after fighting for a night and day with the *Montague* and *Warwick*, two East Indiamen, carried off five boats and a Portuguese ketch sailing under their convoy. A vessel, however, which he had taken and sold for ten thousand rupees, was recaptured by Captain Charles Foulis, of the *Harrington*. But nothing could compensate the merchants of Bombay for the losses they had sustained." Under such circumstances, they held meetings and made representations to government of their desperate state. So great was the in-security, that the bankers would make no advances upon goods or ships. The diaries of Bombay, Surat, and Tellicherry abundantly prove that such was the condition of affairs. The peace principle was carried out into a fair experiment, and its most ardent admirers could not fail to admit that if carried out a little longer, its only result to English commerce in the Indian seas would have been annihilation, to the company bankruptcy, and to peaceful commercial sailors captivity and slavery.

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* *Bombay Diary*, 13th Aug., and 26th Nov., 1742; and 16th Feb., 1743. *Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

The company did not at first feel the full force of the blows struck at commerce in those waters. Native merchants, and native ships, coasters, first suffered, but at last the proudest ships of the company were damaged or captured.

The French were the means, it is well known, and generally recorded by historians, of causing the English to organize a large native army, and that nation was also the occasion of the organization of a well-equipped naval force in the company's service. In the year 1744 war broke out between England and France, and the latter became famous for her privateers. Two of that description, of half men-of-war, half pirate ships, sought enterprise in the Indian seas immediately that war was declared. One of them was the *Apollo*, fifty guns; the other, the *Anglesea*, of forty guns. The latter, from her name, had probably formerly been an English ship. After committing ravages in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope, and of Madras, they cruised in the neighbourhood of Bombay.

To meet this small force, the government of Bombay could do nothing but send out grabs and fishing-boats, well-armed, to look out for British ships, and warn them of their peril. This saved several very richly-laden ships, whose escape was narrow. A large Indiaman, the *Anson*, did not heed, or could not understand the signals, and was attacked by the *Apollo*. The conflict was long and fierce. The English ship, neither constructed, armed, nor manned to resist such vessels as the *Apollo*, nevertheless fought until utterly disabled, and then her captor was found to be in so shattered a condition, that she was unable to continue her cruise; for every man hit on board the Indiaman, nine were struck on board the privateer. This conflict is the more remarkable, as it is the only recorded naval action between the English and French which ever took place off the coasts of Western India. The directors were so pleased with the heroism displayed by the crew of the *Anson*, that they voted them a gift of more than two thousand pounds sterling.

After these events, means were taken to augment the Bombay navy. "In the enlarged marine service were three ships, each of which carried twenty guns, a grab with twenty guns, from six to twelve pounders, five ketches carrying from eight to fourteen guns, from four to six-pounders, eight gallivats, and one prahim. Two other ships were employed alternately as guard-ships at Gombroon. On each ship or grab were from fifty to seventy Europeans; on each ketch, from six to thirty; and two or three on each gallivat. To the list of officers were added two commanders, one first, six second, and three third lieutenants. At the same time the first attempts were made to improve the religious and moral character of both officers and men, orders being sent from the court of directors for the regular performance of divine service on board all the vessels, and a strict prohibition of all gambling, profane swearing, and indecent conversation. As, however, it was thought that these reforms would be incomplete until the Bombay marine should have an official uniform like a regular service, a petition was presented in 1761 by the officers to the governor in council, and they were ordered to wear blue frock-coats turned up with yellow, dress-coats and waistcoats of the same colour, and according to a regulated pattern. Large boot-sleeves and facings of gold lace were the fashion for the superior grades; whilst midshipmen and masters of gallivats were to rest contented with small round cuffs and no facings. With increased numbers, improved discipline, and fine clothes, the Bombay marine became a little navy, although it did not venture to assume that name. The English fleets, with their first-rate men-of-war and frigates, now floating in the harbour under the command of Admirals Watson, Cornish, Pococke, and Stevens, threw it into the shade, but at the same time taught it emulation and efficiency."

Such is a brief narrative of the early establishment of the Bombay navy. Its deeds, as shown in the course of this history, will be the proofs of its efficiency, as those events are related which gave opportunity to the maritime force of the company to distinguish itself.

The military establishment of Bombay had its origin when the company was put in possession of Bombay Island. The various events connected with the raising of troops, and their character, moral and military, have incidentally been related in foregoing chapters. The army at Bombay deteriorated gradually from the first fine body of royal troops, who garrisoned it until towards the close of the first half of the eighteenth century. The number of men was necessarily greater as the company's interests expanded, but the quality of the troops became worse, until the increasing consequence of the French, and their intriguing and aggressive policy, caused the president and council of Bombay to feel that the western presidency must have something that might be called an army. "In 1741 it consisted of but one regiment, consisting of a captain, nine lieutenants, fifteen ensigns, a surgeon, two sergeant-majors, eighty-two sergeants, eighty-two corporals, twenty-six drummers, three hundred and nineteen European privates, thirty-one mustees—by which term we conceive mastisa's, or Indo-Europeans are meant —nine hundred topasses, twenty-seven servants, two subneeses or native paymasters, a linguist, and an armourer—in all fourteen hundred and ninety-nine men. They were distributed into seven companies. Their monthly pay amounted to 10,314 rupees.*

There was a native militia of sepoys numbering seven hundred men, native officers included. The appearance of this body on parade must have presented the most extraordinary spectacle ever witnessed on occasion of reviewing troops. They were differently apparelled — some wearing a uniform like English soldiers, some in the habiliment of English tars; or, rather, partly attired in the uniforms of three services. Rude native military uniforms decorated others. A few made themselves like South Sea islanders, by bedizening themselves in the most fantastic manner; very many wore scarcely any apparel at all—the usual piece of calico wound round their body serving for raiment and uniform. Their arms were as various as their costumes, muskets, matchlocks, swords, spears, bows and arrows, and many nondescript weapons provided by themselves under the idea of being peculiarly warlike and terrible. Except in war they were seldom mustered; most of them were attached as "peons," servants, bearers, runners, &c., to the civil servants; just as at this day, but under different regulations, the sepoys are employed. They were very badly paid, and worse treated, kicked, smitten, flogged, at the caprice of the civil servants to whom they were attached. They endured degradation and misery with marvellous patience, and, on the whole, preferred the military to other employments, as was proved by the eagerness with which they re-enlisted, after having been "broke." The system of peons was adverse to the progress of the army; it was not until 1752 that these men were struck off the military roll, and their expense charged to the civil department. In Bengal and Madras the sepoys were better disciplined, and some were brought to Bombay; but they refused to serve except at higher pay than the custom was to give the natives of Bombay. The latter were offended at the invidious distinction, and murmured, so that the practice of employing Madras and Bengal sepoys in the western presidency was given up. Ultimately, the transfer of sepoys from Bombay both to Bengal and Madras became usual. There existed a strong indisposition among the members of the company in London to pay for military, and the instructions to the president and council to reduce expenditure by a reduction of their military force was incessant. Thus a European regiment was removed from the fort at Sion, and its place supplied by topasses, by which a saving of 14,364 rupees was effected, but the safety of the place was endangered, and the president and council of Bombay filled with anxieties and cares, when their minds should have been free to attend to the company's business. The topasses were very uncertain soldiery; being of mixed Portuguese and Indian descent they had the prejudices of both races: they were generally of the religion of the Portuguese, with a large leaven of native idolatry. It was not without cause, therefore, that the president and council expressed their apprehensions when ordered to occupy so important a place with such rabble for soldiers:—"For Sion was a frontier post, and topasses were so little accustomed to strict discipline, that they might easily be surprised by a sudden invasion from the Mahratta country; and what was most strange of all, their homes, where their wives and children continued to reside, were in Salsette, then part of the Mahratta dominions. It was remembered that when the Portuguese were defending Tanna, they had been intimidated by the enemy seizing their families, and threatening to slaughter them unless the fortress capitulated; and was it to be doubted that the same plan would be resorted to in the case of the British? Then these soldiers in buckram would only enter the service on condition that they should be permitted to take their meals and attend mass on the other side of the strait; many actually, when on duty, left their posts for these purposes, and the dismissal of a hundred and seventy-two only caused a temporary abatement of the evil. A foolish economy and ignorance of the native character were the only reasons why this fatuous system was continued, even when the age of Indian conquest had commenced. On the one hand, the frugal court of directors would not increase the topasses' pay from four to five rupees per mensem, which would have induced them to bring their families within the company's limits; on the other, they still retained the opinion that natives would not submit like topasses to be organized on the European system."*

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* *Bombay Quarterly*, April 1857.

The officers of the company's service were both European and native, the latter frequently proved unfaithful, and were generally hostile in their hearts to all Europeans. The English officers were men of low birth, who had followed occupations the meanest, and were uneducated, with few exceptions. Officers have, in some few cases, sustained important local commands, who had attained to the rank of captains without being able to write! Existing documents in Bombay reveal the plans and shifts to which the civil authorities were frequently put, to avoid the inconvenience attendant upon the illiterate character of their officers. The pay of the European officer was small, and he accordingly adopted various expedients for plundering the men under his command in their food and clothes, until mutiny at last taught the government that the robbery of the soldier was neither a humane, honourable, nor safe mode of paying the officers.

The retrenchments of the directors were not long in operation; the menaces and violence of the French and of the Mahrattas, as well as the known designs of other enemies, compelled an augmentation of force at Bombay and Tellicherry, and the factory at Surat was strengthened in such way as the position of the English there allowed. A change in the commanders attended upon increased garrisons. Officers of distinction in the royal army were sent out, and young gentlemen of birth and education were appointed as cadets. Sepoy regiments were gradually enrolled in imitation of the French; and royal regiments of infantry as well as regular companies of artillery were sent from England. Such changes were carried out with more earnestness when, in 1744, the war burst forth between the settlements of the two great European nations. In 1746, while the conflict was proceeding, the president and council raised at Surat a native force of two thousand men. It was deemed politic to collect these men from various septs and nationalities—Abyssinians, Arabs, Mussulmen of India, Hindoos, and, probably, a few Jews, topasses, and Parsees were among them. The creation of this force enabled the president, the next year, to send from Bombay considerable assistance to Fort St. David.

In the desire to obtain experienced officers soon after the foregoing events, the governor engaged one Goodyear, a major of artillery, who served on board the fleet of Admiral Boscawen. To this officer the command of the garrison at Bombay was consigned, and he took rank as a member of council, a circumstance which raised the status of the military. The salary of this high officer was but £250 a year, with allowance for servants, palanquin, and mess. A local company of artillery was then raised, and the old system of gunners and assistants was abolished. Ten companies of infantry, seventy men to each company, were next raised. The officers and non-commissioned officers raised the total number in the battalion to 841. Promotion went by seniority, except in especial cases; and then the governor was bound to inform the directors on what grounds he departed from the rule.

It was a curious circumstance that all Roman Catholics were excluded from service, even in the ranks of either the artillery or infantry; yet, nevertheless, the service was so popular with many of them that by degrees, in spite of every prohibition, they continued to enlist until, for a short time, a majority of the soldiers were of that persuasion. The physical and moral character of the troops was very bad; old men, invalids, criminals, and deserters, to a large extent, made up the muster roll. The hopelessness of finding sober and able-bodied Englishmen, to enlist in their service, led the company to seek recruits in that common recruiting ground of Europe—Switzerland. In 1752, Captain Alexander De Zeigle, and a Swiss company under his command, arrived in Bombay. This scheme failed. Dupleix, the French general, with the foresight for which he was characterized, predicted the result. The Swiss had hardly commenced their duties, when they found their soldierly pride wounded by insults and oppressions of various sorts, and their miserable pay afforded them insufficient subsistence. Discontent, neglect, insufficient food, and sickness, wasted their numbers; and a large proportion of the remainder deserted to the French, where they were received as brothers and fellow-countrymen. As the places of the deceased, and those who deserted, were filled up with topasses, the Swiss company soon became only such in name.*

In August, 1753, Major Sir James Foulis, Bart., took command of the troops. He introduced many reforms useful to both officers and men, but which were unpopular among both. Ultimately he conciliated the affections of all classes of his soldiers, and was then thwarted by the civil officials, until, at last, under a stinging sense of insult, he resigned his post and returned home. All efforts to establish the discipline of the company's troops on a solid basis failed until the mutiny act was made applicable to India by a bill which passed the British parliament in 1754. The act took effect on the 25th of April in the same year, and is one of the memorable incidents of British legislation for India. On the first of October following, this act was proclaimed at the fort gate of Bombay. The troops, who were drawn up on parade, were asked if they were willing to serve under the terms of this law, and they unanimously assented. The topasses probably did not understand its provisions, for they pleaded ignorance when arraigned for violation of the act for a considerable time afterwards, although every two months it was read at the head of every company. Many date the formation of the Bombay army from the day when the mutiny act was proclaimed at the fort of Bombay.

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* *Bombay Diary. Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

* *Bombay Diary*, 17th of October, 1752; 3rd of April, August, and November, 1753; 7th of December, 1756; 20th of September, 1757; 20th of May, 1760. Speech of William Beckford, Esq., in the House of Commons, 19th of February, 1754.—*Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

In order to carry out the design, so generally entertained among official persons, of perfecting military force, a secret and select committee for the management of military and diplomatic affairs was appointed at the beginning of the year 1755, by the court of directors, and ordered to correspond by ciphers of two kinds with committees similarly constituted in each of the three presidencies. The author of *The Rise of the Navy and Army at Bombay*, in the review published in that city, observes :—"To the skilful management of these boards must, under divine Providence, be attributed the success of these grand operations by which Great Britain first obtained political power in India."

Towards the close of the year 1755, Major Chalmers arrived at Bombay in command of three companies of royal artillery, which enabled the local artillery company to improve itself upon their model. The year following, according to the *Bombay Diary*, the number of regular troops on the island, was 1571. Of these 126 were in hospital; 986 were Europeans, comprising Germans, Dutch, Swedes, and a few Swiss, as well as English: the remainder were topasses. Besides this regular force, there was a brigade of 3,000 sepoys: these were distrusted both by the authorities and the regular force. At Surat and Cambay, where there were small sepoy garrisons in the factories, the factors expressed their doubts both of their fidelity and courage, and preferred arming Arabs, notwithstanding their occasional bursts of fanaticism, and the fierceness and waywardness of their temper. Even after the battle of Plassey proved how sepoys might be disciplined and wielded, there was throughout Bombay a great reluctance to employ them. In 1759 a separate corps of 500 sepoys was disciplined on the English system. This was the first attempt in the Bombay presidency, to use the sepoys as regular troops. The same year, when a French invasion was anticipated, it was estimated that on an emergency 15,750 men could be called out for service at Bombay; but not one half of them had ever smelt gunpowder, and not a quarter had learnt their drill. The number was made up thus:—Of the king's artillery were mustered 236 men; of the company's, 285; of the company's European infantry, 848—thus making 1,369 disciplined troops. There were also of sepoys that had been some time in garrison, 955; of sepoys that had lately been withdrawn from the Siddee's service, 754; of sepoys recently enlisted at Surat, 209; of Arabs, 316; of recruits raised in Scinde, 178—in all 2,412 irregulars. In the marine service there were 450 available men. Covenanted servants, captains of merchant vessels, free merchants, and other Europeans, who formed a separate corps, amounted to ninety-eight. The native population, capable of bearing arms, amounted to 3,017, and that of Mahim to 1,865, exclusive of clerks in offices, 648 labourers who were also a separate corps, and 150 private slaves—the whole amounting to 6,539 able-bodied persons. So silent are historians of British India regarding the rise of the European and native army, that their readers might almost suppose it to have been without any rudimental germ, never to have passed through the slow processes of growth, but to have sprung at once into vigorous existence. We read of no mortifications, no blunders, no failures to which men must ordinarily submit before their institutions attain to full strength. Such, however, there certainly were. Even when soldiers had been found, and the living material provided for the ranks abundantly, there was continual perplexity when attempting to make the proper arrangements for clothing, arming, paying, provisioning the troops, and other similar matters. At first clothing was issued to Europeans once a year; to topasses and others, once every two years. Long before the time for renewing it arrived, the men had supplied themselves with garments purchased by themselves; otherwise they must have marched in rags; and there appeared on parade a most curious variety of costume. The first reform in the dress of sepoys, who had up to that time retained the clothes in which they enlisted, was to provide them with a jacket of red broadcloth and linen turban, to distinguish them from the enemy. Not until 1760 was it finally arranged that all the troops should be clad in uniforms corresponding to those already used in Madras and Bengal. Then the men made numerous complaints of the deductions from their pay to purchase these uniforms, and the regulations on the subject were frequently revised. It was difficult also to determine the periods of issuing pay; at first the Europeans were paid daily; then they were kept a month in arrears, it being supposed that all their cash would be required for debts contracted in the interval, and could not therefore be expended in drunken revels; and lastly, when they murmured loudly against this, the worst plan of all was adopted—that of issuing their pay monthly in advance. At the same time, as they were suffered to procure their own food so long as they dealt with the tradesmen whom the barrack-master patronised, and had no regular mess, their diet was usually bad and unwholesome.*

Courts-martial were much abused by officers, although frequently the only means by which they could protect themselves from the oppressions and insults of the factors. It is a curious circumstance, that the great Clive was mixed up with disputes connected with such transactions, when, as Colonel Clive, he served at Bombay in 1756. On that occasion the great man quarrelled with the president and council for appointing an officer junior to himself as president of a court-martial. Yet, although so prompt to assert his own rights and privileges, he was ready enough to trample upon the prerogatives and insult the dignity of inferior officers himself when they fell under his displeasure.

The hostility between the army and the civil authorities about 1760 is a fearful episode in the history of the Bombay presidency. "Defiance of authority seemed to have become the governing principle of the military. The new code of military law, the importation of regular troops from England, the organization of an army with European discipline and admirable appointments, had produced no better fruit than this. The spirit which animated the officers was active also in the ranks. Desertions were frequent, and Sir James Foulis estimated the annual loss from this cause and death, at ten per cent. So many men deserted from the factory in Scinde, that sufficient were not left for its defence in case of a sudden surprise, and it became necessary to release some prisoners for want of a guard. Punishments were of frightful severity, but apparently without any good effect. At Surat eight Europeans deserted during the military operations; all were retaken; one was shot, the others received a thousand lashes. Of seven topasses who deserted a little later under extenuating circumstances, five were sentenced to be shot, but as an act of mercy, permitted to escape each with eight hundred or a thousand lashes. Even the king's troops were contaminated, and at Tellicherry, when called into active service, loudly and insubordinately uttered the old complaint of want of beef, protesting against the fish rations provided for them on four days of the week."* The Bombay army was frequently used on service in the other presidencies during its more perfect formation, and after discipline and military law became established.

In 1754, the few Swiss then left, three companies of sepoys, and Captain Forbes's company of Europeans, from Bombay, and 150 topasses from Tellicherry, were sent to Madras. These were followed by fifty topasses from Ajengo, and a considerable number of Indo-Portuguese recruits. These troops, commanded by Captain Armstrong, served under Major Lawrence. The captain and his troops complained bitterly of the partiality and injustice of Clive, and his inequitable distribution of prize money. The conduct of the hero in return was marked by cruelty, malice, and persecution, with a contempt for law and military order, when either stood in the way of his own strong passion and indomitable will.

The Bombay army, whether serving in its own or in the sister presidencies, continued to have cause of complaint against the government. Perhaps, on the whole, they were better treated in Bombay than in either Bengal or Madras. During the whole history of the Bombay army, the government was chargeable with culpable neglect of the comfort, health, and life of its soldiers. The whole British army in India was thus ungenerously disregarded, until after the English nation was awakened by the disclosures of the Crimean campaign to the danger and disgrace of such disregard of the happiness and efficiency of the noblest soldiers in the world. Yet, even then, the system of neglect was but slowly abolished. In October, 1858, public opinion in Bombay on these matters was thus expressed in the *Bombay Standard*:—"The people of England are beginning at length to reflect that, if India is from henceforth mainly to be maintained by British troops, the foremost matter to be seen to is how best to preserve the health and economize the energies of the men. They are right in this; these are the very first things to be considered. We have hitherto proceeded either as if they were the last, or as if there was no particular occasion for bestowing any consideration on them at all. Until within the last ten years the Horse Guards acted as if their aim had been to destroy and demoralize the men as fast as possible, and the mutinies themselves have not had the lives to answer for Whitehall red-tape has destroyed within the past twenty years. The men were provided with the heaviest and most inefficient weapons and worst possible clothing, to begin with; these we shall pass by, as the home authorities begin to see the error of their ways, and amend. A rigid attention to the regulations, as the regulations in these matters were wont to be attended to, would have lost us last year's campaign. By some extraordinary arrangement the men were, till 1850, in three-fourths of cases, dispatched so as to be sure of arriving during the rainy season, when their services could not be required and their health was certain to suffer. The allowance of intoxicating liquor during the voyage was such as to make one-half of them drunkards before they touched Indian ground at all. The Horse Guards never condescended to consult the India-house as to the date of dispatch, nor did the home military powers deem it requisite to state beforehand for what presidency troops were intended. A regiment turned up of a rainy morning at Bombay or Madras which the military authorities at these places respectively believed on its way to Calcutta, when the barracks were damp, moss-grown, or mildewed, and not the slightest preparation had been made for the reception of troops. The remedy for this last was brought about by a newspaper. On hearing the matter made constant subject of complaint, and being assured that no representations sent to the home authorities received the slightest attention, we, in 1842, caused our London correspondent to insert in his shipping list the number of men embarked, and the place of their destination. We are speaking under the most rigid review of facts; all these things were duly tabled at the time, with the full approval of authority. The men, as already stated, on arriving in the rains, were started for the Deccan as quickly as possible; but it is only within these ten years that the slightest shelter on the way was provided for them; on they marched through floods of water, under deluges of rain, sleeping in swamps for six nights on end. The transfer from Bombay to Poonah commonly in these days cost one per cent. in the course of a fortnight, or at the rate of twenty-four per cent. on the year, had this rate of mortality been kept up. As we had taught the men to drink on the voyage out it was but natural the accomplishment should be kept up, so every morning, when the stomach in the East is most weak and languid, and tea and coffee are naturally wished to soothe it, we fired off the 'morning dram'—a dose of red-hot poison, to inflame the blood and bowels and create a thirst other drams could alone allay. Old officers told you that the abolition of this would create universal mutiny. In the first year of his reign the Marquis of Dalhousie said the abomination should cease, and it did cease; the most inveterate drunkard was ashamed to complain, all but confirmed drunkards held it a blessing to be kept aloof from temptation. All these things came to pass within ten years, to the saving of the lives of thousands; until within these twenty years none of them ever seem to have been thought of. So far have we done well, but we have barely made a beginning. The task before us when once commenced will be found quite as easy as those now seem that have been performed, and infinitely more important."

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* *Bombay Diary*, 14th of November, 1755; 10th of February, August, 1756; 5th and 12th of August, 1st of September, and 2nd of October, 1757; 4th of October and 13th of December, 1758; 7th of August and 3rd of October, 1759; 11th of March, 1760. *Surat Diary*, 1st of June and 10th of August, 1756; August 1757; 5th of April, 1759. *Diary of the Secret Committee*, 1755 and 1756. *Letter from Calcutta*, dated 5th and 7th of July, 1756.—*Bombay Quarterly*, April, 1857.

* *Bombay Quarterly*.

The military system of Madras progressed very slowly. There was a strong objection to enlist the natives, from a fear that the power thus raised might turn against those who created it:—"But here were special objections to the enlistment of Mahratta and other native sepoys. They belonged to races with which the English would ere long perhaps be at war; their language, manners, religion, were not only distinct from those of the English, but their superstitions regarding caste were so inflammable, that a single spark might set them in a blaze; they had not been used to the military system of Europe, and probably would not submit to its stringent discipline; and lastly came the most important consideration of all,—their wives and children lived under the shadow of native powers, and remained as hostages that their husbands and fathers should never resist the chiefs who had natural claims upon their allegiance. On these grounds, it might not only be fairly concluded that the sepoy would be an unsafe protector; he might also be a treacherous friend and dangerous spy. For what arguments could be urged against these cogent ones for rejecting his services? What inducements could be expected so to counteract the influence of established custom, religion, and family ties, as to make him a loyal soldier? The offer of seven rupees a month, and the prospect of twenty, were the only inducements that could be thought of; and these had been already met by native states, who actually offered higher pay. No patriotism, no chivalrous sentiments, no lust of conquest were to kindle enthusiasm in sepoys, and secure their constancy. The only bond between them and their employers was to be the pittance of a soldier's pay."

Amongst the Europeans at Madras there was no military spirit. The factors were unwilling to carry arms, and the young men of England were reluctant to enter upon a military life in India, and especially in Madras, which was supposed to be wholly without attractions. The language of an Indian reviewer of the present day, in retrospect of this period, is strikingly applicable:—"The people of England were tranquil, prosperous, and selfish; indisposed both at home and abroad to attain celebrity by acts of enterprise or enthusiasm. This prosperity, torpidity, and lack of generous sentiment are especially to be observed in India. The age of discovery and adventure had passed away; the age of military exploits had not begun; so that the characters and actions of Anglo-Indians were for the most part flat and insignificant. Hawkins, Best, and Downton were almost forgotten; even the era of Aungier, Oxenden, and Child seemed as the days of the giants; and as compared with them, the governors of this time felt themselves but ordinary persons; whilst on the other hand, Clive was still giving and receiving black eyes at Merchant Tailors' school, or spending his indomitable energy in clambering up the church tower, and playing tricks upon the tradespeople of Market Drayton. In this middle age the highest ambition which the English of India could entertain was to accumulate money and retire. The larger number stopped far short of that, contenting themselves with a life of idleness, sensuality, or reckless dissipation, which was usually terminated by disease and an unhonoured death."

The military preparation at Madras, when, at the close of the half century, the French appeared off its coasts, was deemed considerable; a few hundred soldiers only were British, several thousand were topasses and sepoys.

The climate of Madras is, from its southerly situation, the hottest in India. The troops of that presidency, European and native, have always been severely tried by the burning sun in any field operations; yet, with the infatuation which has generally characterised the economical and sanitary departments of British military management, the troops have been clothed in a manner which has caused numerous deaths, from the time of the first service of European soldiers in Fort St. George to the present day. That the reader's attention is not unnecessarily called to this subject, the reports of medical men, both civilians and military, and various treatises published by them during 1858, abundantly prove. The following remarks on the clothing of our Indian army, from a London scientific periodical, is a valuable contribution to the intelligence which is requisite and ought to prevail on this matter:—"The flowing burnous of the swarthy Arabian and the loose-fitting snowy robes of the Indian tell us, clearly enough, what are the natural habiliments of the inhabitant of tropical regions; the European, indeed, left to himself in those climes, quickly rids himself of his dark woollen coverings, and gladly adopts the light cotton dress of the natives. The voice of nature, however, of reason, and of science, makes no impression on the stiff ear of the martinet colonel, or on the well imbued red-tapist soul of bureaucracy. We still are obliged to hear of dragoons charging the enemy under a sun throwing down its burning rays of 115 degrees, with their brows compressed by helmets, the metal of which would burn the hand laid upon it; our soldiers still march, or stagger along, with stocks and tight buttoned-up woollen jackets; and the best heat-absorbing colours are, in many cases, the dresses they wear. We wish now to say one word about the soldier's dress; and hope that a fact demonstrated both by experience and science may meet some willing ear among the authorative few. Dr. Coulier has lately investigated, scientifically, the nature of the soldier's different habiliments as agents protecting him against heat and cold. His experiments show that a thin layer of white cotton placed over a cloth dress is sufficient to produce a fall of seven degrees per cent. in the heat of it. He gives the following table, which shows the effects of the sun's rays upon the temperature of tubes centrigrade, covered with the following different articles of dress. Thermometer in the shade, 27·; exposed to sun, 36· Tube not covered, 37·5; tube covered with cotton shirting, 35·1; with cotton lining, 35·5; with unbleached linen, 39·6; with dark-blue cloth, 42·; with red cloth, 42·; with dark-red capote cloth, 42·5; with red cloth for the 'sous-officers,' 41·4; with dark-blue cloth for ditto, 43· Here, then, is the fact scientifically demonstrated, that a diminution of temperature, such as might suffice to prevent a soldier from being struck down by the heat of a tropical sun, may be obtained simply by placing a white cotton covering over his dark woollen dress. These are Dr. Coulier's general conclusions:—1. The colour of soldiers' clothes has very little sensible influence over the diminution of caloric.—2. All kinds of textures are capable of absorbing a certain quantity of hygrometric water in alatent state. The quantity is considerable in the case of wool, but linen absorbes less, and cotton least of all.—3. This absorption takes place without any immediate loss of its caloric by the body.—4. The colour of clothes has a great influence upon the absorption by them of solar rays; and whatever the nature of the clothes, the greatest advantages are obtained by covering them with white-coloured materials, when the wearer is exposed to the burning sun."*

In Bengal the progress of raising a native army was similar to that at Bombay and Madras; but the natives were there sworn—organized as regular soldiers, as has been already stated in this chapter. It does not appear, however, that this took place quite so early as many suppose; for in 1707, when Calcutta was exalted to the dignity of a presidency, the garrison was augmented to 300 men, who were chiefly sepoys. During the Mahratta incursions of 1739, and following years, some progress was made in disciplining native companies. In 1743 the directors wrote to the president and council at Calcutta, acknowledging their services in organizing Lascars and militia, and providing material of war; but no mention is made of sepoys, yet at that time great progress had been made in preparing sepoys for service. The directors, in all probability, not paying particular attention to that feature of their servants' efforts, class the sepoys under the words Lascars and militia:—"We entirely approve of the necessary precautions taken on the Mahrattas' invasion to prevent a surprise, by hiring a number of Lascars, forming the inhabitants into a militia, surveying the town, fortifications, guns, purchasing some small arms, and the like; the expense upon such an urgent occasion we cheerfully acquiesce in, relying upon your care and frugality in disbursing our money on every article." The directors, in the same letter, encourage the council to proceed with their excellent military organization, so as to be prepared for further dangers from the same quarter. "As the province is liable to the Mahrattas' incursions, we would have such additions made to our fortifications as you upon the spot shall deem requisite for the security of the settlements, putting us to no further expense herein than is necessary."

Acting on this general, but cautious direction, the council proceeded with its military measures, which were more in reference to the perfection of the resources they had, than to any increase of them; and among the other useful acts to which they resorted, was the more complete discipline of their sepoys, so that regular troops, well organized on the European system, chiefly natives of the upper provinces of Bengal, but some few Assamese, Burmese, Peguins, men from the coast of Coromandel, and even recruits from Malabar, were numbered among them.

When Clive became acquainted with military affairs, he, both at Madras and Bengal, called forth the energies of the sepoys: indeed, whatever was done before his time was only a preliminary to what he accomplished. He caught up the French idea of drilling the Spahis (sepoys), and ranking them with European soldiers in the field.

The histories of the Madras and Bengal armies, up to the breaking out of the great eastern war with France, are brief, while that of Bombay, the oldest presidency, covers a large space of time. The progress of the Madras and Bengal armies up to this point was uniform as short; that of Bombay was chequered and eventful, and, if minutely pursued, involving numerous incidents interesting to military men of all nations, but especially to English officers, and still more especially to those who have served the East India Company. From the period of the great oriental struggle with France, the histories of the three armies so blend with the general development of English conquest and glory that the story is one: no separate treatment is required to mark successive stages of advance.

Having followed the progress of the English in continental India up to the period of the French war, and the improvement of the navy and army of the company to a date several years later; having directed attention to the action on India and Indian affairs in the eighteenth century of the different European nations whose relation to the East has been traced in previous chapters; frequent reference having been made to the companies organized in Ostend, Denmark, and France, in rivalry of those of the other European countries earlier in the field of oriental commerce; having given also brief notices of the minor associations formed in Prussia, Trieste, and Spain;—there will be no necessity for digressions in the future story of English power in the East, in affairs connected with those nations, excepting the French. The position of England immediately after the period already treated could hardly be understood, and the development of her success could with difficulty be appreciated, unless her relative standing, as compared with all her competitors, was seen, and especially with the greatest of them—France. To the preliminary quarrels with that nation the reader's attention will now be directed.

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* *Medical Times.*

CHAPTER LXVII.

JEALOUSIES AND QUARRELS WITH THE FRENCH PREVIOUS TO THE FIRST BREAKING OUT OF WAR BETWEEN THEM AND THE BRITISH IN INDIA.

"COMING events cast their shadows before," is a saying as true and philosophical, as it is trite: it contains a beauty and significance in its mode of thought and expression, which are strikingly reflected in the actual facts of history. During the early part of the eighteenth century, especially from the year 1730 to the breaking forth of war, the relations and feelings of the French and English in the Indian peninsula plainly portended the coming struggle. Such events as were approaching were too mighty and momentous not to cast the shadow of their coming. The minds of both French and English were in a state of preparedness for war; events partly produced this condition, and partly brought it forth to view as far as it existed independent of them. Historians have neglected the signs of the times in India previous to the war, as indicative of the relations of England and France there at the moment when the trumpet of battle was sounded, and as foreshadowing their probable relations when the spoils of the field should be gathered. The writers of Indian history are generally too hasty in hurrying from one great prominent event to another, to perceive, or at all events to describe, how these arise from minor incidents, or from facts and principles of which these minor incidents are tokens. Looking carefully at the attitude of England and France on the peninsula for a number of years before war was declared, it was obvious that between two such nations a struggle for mastery must arise. In laying the foundation, as well as in raising the superstructure of their plans and policy, each nation acted in a manner characteristic: the French were impressive, brilliant, and dashing; the pomp of arms and the parade of military power were, in their measure, as conspicuous at Pondicherry and Myhie, as in Paris. The English plodded along perseveringly, holding by what they acquired tenaciously, wasting no words or polite expressions to their flattering competitors; rude, obstinate, enduring, arduous, fierce in encounter, the Britons held on their course in peace and war, if their condition at the factories might with accuracy be described as either, at a time when over their serenest day clouds and tempests gathered, and when in the most quarrelsome episodes they were sure to find some unlooked for ally, or some peace-compelling fortune. For more than a century the power of the English had grown slowly but surely; as the tree which has been long rearing its trunk strikes deeper its roots, so it had been with them. The French career had been short and brilliant; it was like a graceful shrub, with much display of foliage and blossom, but however vigorous as to its kind, unable to resist the buffeting of storms which might beat upon the sturdy oak in vain.

Pondicherry, although it did not assume a position of great power before 1741, when Dupleix made it the centre of his operations, yet several years earlier, under Dumas, it was of consequence, and exercised control over the factories or *comptoirs* of Chandernagore in Bengal, Karical on the coast of Coromandel, and Myhie on the coast of Malabar. On the western coast of India the French were better traders than on the Coromandel shore, except at Surat, where they were more missionary than mercantile, and were intensely solicitous to make converts of the English.

In 1722, their first settlement appears to have been made in Malabar. Boyanores (referred to in a previous chapter) invited them to settle there, as his alarm at the growing power of the English became intolerable to himself. The position selected by the new-comers was supposed to show judgment and taste, but they displayed more skill in the selection as soldiers than as merchants. The place chosen was an eminence with a commanding view, and convenient site. A river discharged itself into the sea near the spot, but it was navigable a considerable distance up its course. Without being landlocked, the harbour was sheltered from all prevailing winds. A factory was built on the hill, and thus the settlement of Myhie was established. This spot is worthy of note, as in the conduct of its factors and garrison there were more indications of an intention to undermine and thwart the English than in any other of the French settlements. The future conflict was, as it were, anticipated between Myhie and the English settlement of Tellicherry, but four miles distant.

According to Auquetil de Perron, it was in 1725 that the French settlers at Myhie first quarrelled with the natives. The Boyanores suddenly made an incursion, cut down the French flag-staff, and drove the factors away, who retired to Calicut. As the Boyanores, although so jealous of the English, were thus for a short time more friendly with them than previously, their hostility was attributed to the English, whom the French believed to be jealous of their rising influence. They considered their own influence to be as the golden star of day, and that of the English as the silver star of night, whose light should soon be quenched in that of the more glorious orb. This or very similar phraseology was employed by them in their various communications with the French directors. They alleged that one of the two powers must gain empire in India, that the glory was reserved for France, that England believed as much, and was sick with envy at their rising fortunes. It was not, however, deemed sound policy at Pondicherry to attribute openly to the English at Tellicherry or Bombay the aggressive proceedings of Boyanores, but preparations were promptly made to chastise the latter, and to teach the former that "France was too strong for savages, native or English." Five merchant vessels were laden with troops and stores, and the whole placed under M. Pardaillan Gondrin. Under his command, and next in authority, was Bertrand François Mahé de Labourdonnais. He had just arrived in Pondicherry with the rank of second captain, when the expedition was about to sail. As he had obtained great reputation for his knowledge of naval engineering, then little understood, and of naval gunnery, rather better known, and as the fame of his pamphlets on naval affairs published in Europe had reached Pondicherry, he was at once placed in high official relation to M. Gondrin. The descent at Myhie was a masterpiece of skill. The enemy, in great force, prepared to resist, but Labourdonnais invented a species of raft, on which he protected his troops by bales of cotton, and disembarked in the face of the enemy nearly in order of battle without losing a man. The subsequent conflicts, however, cost loss of life, and demanded much spirit and courage. Labourdonnais was the real commander of the expedition, and won the glory of its success, the details of which are not of sufficient importance for our story. On shore as well as at sea, Labourdonnais was the genius of order and authority; he occupied the place, secured the position, and made it strong in the face of native foes and English rivals. Historians and biographers notice, as a singular coincidence, the name of the officer and of the place so easily captured by his inventive genius—*Mahe;* but this name seems to have been subsequently given to the place by the French, and not until they had ultimately evacuated it, and then rather by those who wrote about it than by those who acted in it. In the documents of the English factory at Tellicherry, and in other contemporary records, it is always called Myhie, so that the coincidence upon which so many French writers and some English love to dwell had no existence.*

The fame of this expedition and of Labourdonnais sped all over India, and created unpleasant feelings in the English communities, and especially in Tellicherry, the nearest to the scene of the exploit. The English there felt extreme apprehension that a conflict for ascendancy must soon begin, and they, with their characteristic bluntness, took no pains to conceal what they felt. The French, on the other hand, knowing that the English were rather deeply rooted in India, and that Tellicherry must for some time be stronger than Myhie, and Bombay more powerful than Pondicherry, acted warily, and assumed the utmost cordiality and courtesy; which, when it appeared safe to set aside, was lightly thrown off, and a tone of haughty defiance, and insolent contempt adopted in its stead. The French commander, on his arrival, opened a correspondence the most bland and insinuating with the chief of the English factory, who responded in a brusque and business-like tone and form, which contrasts strangely with the studied language of the French commander. This correspondence was singularly characteristic, and throws more light on the men, and their modes at that juncture, than could be brought to bear upon them by a far more extended narrative. This correspondence never appeared in print, except once some years ago, in an Indian periodical; it is, therefore, interesting for its novelty, as it is on account of its "inuendoes, diplomatic evasions, and other curious characteristics." Mr. Adams, the chief, eight years before made the chaplain a present of plate, on which was an inscription in classical Latin; "but if he ever had any scholarship, his letters would show that it had been long ago rubbed off in the warehouse of Tellicherry." The French commander thus opens the communications:—

On board ship La Vierge de Grace,
November 29th, N. S., 1725.

MONSIEUR,—I am charmed that the affairs which have conducted me to this coast, have given me this day the pleasure of your acquaintance. It will not be my fault, if there is not a perfect union reciprocally between us.

The subject of my voyage to this place, has no other view than to revenge the insults and perfidiousness that the French nation have received from the Prince of Burgorah, and I shall go directly about making him repent it, if he wont submit to reason. I hope, through the perfect union that is between the two nations, if I should want any succour, to find it from you, whom I address preferable to any other. In return I offer everything that depends upon me, and am perfectly, Monsieur,

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* Mr. Mill commits this error uniformly, calling the place *Mahe*, and as most modern writers follow Mill slavishly, this name has obtained currency in England.

Your very humble and very obedient servant,
Pardaillan Gondrin.

P. S.—I am desired by Monsieur Perier to assure Mrs. Adams of his respect, and I have the honour to assure her of mine.

To this polite letter the English chief replied in terms coarse but candid and pertinent:—

Tellicherry, November 20th, 1725.

Monsieur,—It was with the greatest satisfaction imaginable I received the honour of yours by Monsieur Louet, and shall on all occasions take the opportunity of cultivating and strengthening our new acquaintance, promising on my part, it shall not be my fault if there is not a perfect union between us, congratulating your safe arrival on this coast.

Am obliged to you for the notice you give me of the occasion of the voyage you have undertaken; the Malabars have always been perfidious, which the English have very often experienced, and was designed for these three years last past to have made Boyanore sensible of their resentment. The reason why they did not unknown to you. However, may depend shall observe a strict neutrality, and serve you what we can, consonant to the perfect union between the two nations in Europe. But cannot but complain of the usage we have received from Monsieur La Tuet of the *Triton*, to whom have sent twice, to admit our boats to go into the Myhie river, and fetch out the hon'ble company's goods lying there, but he would not permit it. As heard of your coming was not pressing with him, but hope to receive better usage from you, in which request your positive answer, that may accordingly take measure to get those goods, and advise my superiors. Your concurrence in this will demonstrate your resolution to keep to the good union and harmony between the two crowns, and lay me under the obligation of serving you with all readiness.

My wife and self are highly obliged to you and Monsieur Perier for kind remembrance, and in return tender our services, and am, Monsieur,

Your very humble, &c.,
Robert Adams.

The French landed, conquered, but lost forty men, and on the evening of the same day, their chief wrote to Mr. Adams:—

From the Camp at Myhie,
December the 2nd, N. S., 1725.

Monsieur,—The gracious letter which you had the goodness to write me, obliges me to give you an account of the descent I made to-day, and forced the intrenchment, which appears to me different from what the Indians are accustomed to make.

Where I took two pieces of cannon. I believe this will give you pleasure from the regard you have to what relates to me. I shall not fail acquainting you of what happens for the future in this expedition, having the honour to be perfectly, Monsieur, &c. &c.,

Pardaillan Gondrin.

P. S.—Suffer me, if you please, to place in this my respects to Mrs. Adams.

One came and assured me, sir, that they saw very nigh this morning, in the time of action, ten Englishmen. I would not believe it to be true, but I am obliged to tell you, sir, that all Europeans which I find with arms in their hand I shall hang.

The skill displayed in blending politeness with insinuations against the English is admirable. The trenches were not such as the Indians were accustomed to make, and as there were no other Europeans in the neighbourhood but the English of Tellicherry, the implication was plain. Ten Englishmen were seen "very nigh," in the time of action. The polite commander, of course, could not believe the like, but, at the same time, out of pure love and courtesy was obliged to inform his English friend that all Europeans found in arms he would hang; as if Europeans had not a right to take service with a native prince. The plain-spoken Englishman denied the impeachment, and urged the redress of grievances:—

Tellicherry, November 21st, 1725.

Sir,—This night was honoured with your favours of this date, and am obliged to you for an account of your success against Boyanore, in which wish you joy.

Am sorry any one should inform you that any English were under arms against you this day. That would be acting the same that have so often complained of; therefore you will harbour no such thought.

In my last, wrote you about some merchandise that lies in Myhie river, belonging to my hon'ble masters, to which you have not been pleased to reply. Beg the favour futurely you will please to write your mind on that and other public affairs to John Braddyll, Esquire, who is here a commissary for the hon'ble English company on this coast.

My wife and self are obliged to you, and in return she gives her respect, and I am, sir, &c. &c.,

Robert Adams.

The directness of the Englishman brought the diplomatic quibbling and nonsense of the French commander to bay. He at once dropped his politeness, addressed the council instead of his friend "the English chief," and intimated his scorn of mercantile matters:—

To the Council for affairs of the English nation at Tellicherry.

From the Fort at Myhie,
December 4th, N. S., 1725.

Gentlemen,—I received the letter you had the goodness to write me. You tell me of boats of merchandise which you have in the river. Give me leave to tell you that 'tis talking Greek, for I neither understand, nor will I embarrass myself in affairs of commerce; for I meddle in nothing but matters of war. You may, for the future, in such like cases, apply to Monsieurs Mollandin and Tremisot,

I have the honour, &c. &c.,
Pardaillan Gondrin.

The English, still true to their matter-of-fact character, apply to the gentlemen to whom the bombastic commander referred them, who reply that they are too much engaged in war to be tormented with such small affairs of trade; that they could not decide the point even if they had time, and it was worth their while; and finally recommend their interrogators to apply to the council of