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A
LETTER
FROM AN
OFFICER
AT MADRAS,
TO A
FRIEND
FORMERLY IN THAT SERVICE,
NOW IN ENGLAND;
EXHIBITING THE
RISE, PROGRESS, AND ACTUAL STATE,
OF THE LATE
UNFORTUNATE INSURRECTION
IN THE
INDIAN ARMY.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

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1810.

A LETTER, &c.

MY DEAR G—

I NOW sit down to give you a summary of those strange events, which, from causes unimportant in the view of a careless observer, have led to a state of unexampled confusion in public affairs. This will reach you through the kindness of a friend who has promised to deliver it in safety. I should otherwise hesitate to incur the risk of committing my sentiments to paper, as it is confidently asserted and believed, that no seal, or form of confidence, can insure secrecy, or shield the writer of opinions not entirely favourable to the present measures, from the vengeance of that rigour beyond the law, which now rules over our miserable settlement.

I anticipate all the horror you will feel at learning that the army in which you so long served, and the companions with whom you largely shared in the applause which was eminently due to enthusiastic ardour, loyalty, and

valour, stand now branded, (and justly too) with the name and character of rebels; that those who have ever been forward to shed their best blood in the cause of their country, who boasted, as a proud distinction, the honour of bearing a commission in the *Madras army*, and stood foremost in subordination and willing obedience to the government, have recently entailed indelible disgrace on themselves, and reflected it on the corps, whose honour was entrusted to them, by the guilt of open resistance to the authority which, as soldiers and as subjects, they were bound to obey.

In contemplating events which have led to a result so extraordinary as the actual rebellion of a considerable portion of the *Madras army*, it is natural to seek for some cause, which has produced a subversion of all those honourable principles which had hitherto distinguished and characterized that branch of the *Indian army*; for gratuitous rebellion, without an object, or a cause, or an intelligible plan, is an idea which a reflecting mind does not readily admit. Yet this is the state of the case which our government has deemed it wise to publish to the world, and this is the doctrine, which whoever would be thought a dutiful subject is called on to profess to believe.

So long as an appeal was open to superior powers, legally constituted to controul the acts of the local government, no extent of grievance, real or imaginary, could justify, or even palliate, a crime so monstrous as rebellion: no acts, however oppressive, could give to a military man an excuse for disobedience or resistance. Those irritated and deluded men, who influenced the army to that unnecessary extremity, have incurred an extent of guilt which demands the extremity of legal punishment; they have forfeited their lives to the offended laws of that country, in whose defence they would, at the moment of their deepest guilt, have laid them down with pleasure; and their punishment, which every man who thinks as a soldier ought not only to anticipate but desire, will afford a dreadful warning to those who may, in future, be disposed to suffer private feelings, however cruelly excited, to supersede the obligations of public duty, or to subvert those principles of obedience which every soldier, on embracing the profession, especially binds himself to render to those whom the laws of his country have empowered to direct and regulate his public conduct. Such are the feelings of every reflecting mind; but he must be either more or less than man, who can separate these feelings from

those of genuine compassion for the fate awaiting many highly meritorious but mistaken men. You will perceive, by the blotted paper before you, that a frigid sense of public duty has not extinguished feelings of another description in mourning over the fate of our old companions in arms. But if, "albeit unused to the melting mood," and with a mind unruffled by any secret self-reproach, such be the tendency of my reflections, what must the feelings be of those whose measures have unnecessarily led to this most horrible result?

I will endeavour to trace the progress of those unhappy events which appear to have led to this distressing conclusion.

At the departure of Sir John Craddock, the officers of the Madras army were certainly in a state of considerable discontent, but neither disloyal nor seditious: their attachment to their country, and to the cause of public authority, was firm and unshaken, but they were disgusted with the effects of an alledged partiality to a favoured branch of the army, with the contempt too flimsily disguised, with which the Commander-in-Chief had always treated that, particularly their own (exaggerated perhaps in repetition): and, by some opinions he had given in a case of military-trial, which, although well merited

by the individual, were offensive to the established opinions of the service at large, and indicated (perhaps the result of a phraseology not always intelligible) an assumption of powers very distinctly denied to him by the laws of his country. It is but justice to the character of that officer, to add, that he preserved to the situation which he held by an arrangement with the Governor, resulting from his decided conduct, that influence and patronage in military appointments, which a most injudicious order from the authorities in England, received in the year 1806, had taken from the Commander-in-Chief and vested in the Governor alone. This measure, however, which was suspended during the command of Sir John Craddock, took full effect on the succession of General Macdowall, while the exclusion of the Commander-in-Chief from council, by an arrangement equally absurd, completed the degradation of his office.

On the succession of General Macdowall to command, the frankness and apparent sincerity of his manner derived popularity from contrast with his predecessor; and he studiously encouraged this sentiment by the conduct which he imprudently, and perhaps improperly, adopted, from the moment he assumed the command

The exclusion from the rank and functions of counsellor, of an officer specially appointed to the command of the army, was an unusual measure, and was calculated to raise his personal resentment in the same degree that it lowered the importance of his station, not only by impairing his influence, and consequently his authority, with the army, but by degrading* his actual estimation in public opinion. To maintain that influence of which he was deprived by this change in the constitution of the army, he courted popularity with the officers at large; he lamented, without reserve, his inability to support their interests in council, or to oppose alterations injurious to their welfare; he commented on the degradation of the army in the person of their Commander-in-Chief; and assuming the character of their *representative*, induced them, without reflecting on the

* A striking instance of this proposition (which in England would not be well understood without an example) occurred immediately after the General's arrival at Madras. His Highness, the Nabob of the Carnatic, sent a complimentary message, desiring to receive a visit from the General, but the next day, (having learned the uncommon restriction on his situation and powers) sent another message, intimating his desire, that the visit might be postponed until the Commander-in-Chief *had taken his seat in council.*

absolute absurdity of the *term*, to consider the alteration which had been made in the constitution of the local government, as a real military grievance.

In truth, the idea of injury to the army in the exclusion of the Commander-in-Chief from council, and from the exercise of military patronage, was not entirely fallacious, although it was crudely formed, improperly presented to their notice, and certainly not in the province of the officers of the army to discuss. The Governor in council possesses, and practically exercises, the right of determining, in the last resort, on all questions of a military nature; appoints officers to command; to the staff, and to all situations of military trust; decides even on claims of military rank; of course, on military applications involving the disbursement of public money; directs all military movements, and enacts, confirms, or changes, (at pleasure) all regulations for the conduct of the military service; the reports and projects of officers of the staff, formed under the orders of their military superiors, and sometimes by the direct command of the government itself, are submitted to the council for adoption or rejection; and these reports often involve considerations of the utmost importance to the army and its of-

ficers. Not one member of the council, as now constituted, is competent, either from professional habits or accidental acquirement, to discuss any military question with intelligence and propriety: and hence acts of serious injustice might obtain the sanction of the government without any intention on the part of any of its members to decide erroneously. The fact is obvious: it was felt by the officers of the army: and when they lamented among themselves that they had not a *representative* in council, they had it just as much in contemplation to organize a Sanhedrim, or crown an emperor of Lilliput, as to urge those claims to elective or other rights, which, with much ingenuity of wire-drawn inference, have been imputed to them by high authority. This unlucky term certainly afforded no proof of logical precision or rhetorical skill: the persons who employed it meant simply to express an obvious fact, which nothing but wilful perversion could misapprehend; namely, that a person possessing military knowledge, is a necessary member of a council, in which the sole power is vested of deciding the most important military questions, and that, as no such person was a member of that council, they were deprived of the fair and necessary means of having their pretensions un-

derstood by those who are appointed to decide upon them.

The first overt declaration of military dissatisfaction during the present government, was manifested chiefly by his Majesty's troops, and was occasioned by the diminution of allowances; which regiments previously serving on the Bengal establishment had experienced on their transfer to that of Madras (where they found the prices of every necessary of life more than doubled), and others, who, on their passage from England, had landed at Prince of Wales Island, and there received for a time the superior rates of Bengal pay. A memorial was prepared, soliciting to be placed on an equal* footing with the Bengal army in point of allowances. It was signed, as I have understood, by the officers of all the regiments of his Majesty's service on the coast, with only one exception that I have heard of; and, as the supposed grievance was common to his Majesty's and the Company's officers, they united equally in the

* The Court of Directors, in 1796, announced their desire and intention to equalize the allowance of the three presidencies. That body is said (I hope the rumour is unfounded) to have recently pronounced such an expectation to be unreasonable and absurd. The absurdity at least is not particularly obvious.—EDITOR.

prayer of the petition. At the earnest desire of Sir George Barlow, General Macdowal wrote to the officers commanding his Majesty's regiments to discountenance and stop the intended memorial; his influence succeeded in effecting that object, and the signatures of the officers in his Majesty's service were withdrawn.

The next cause of agitation was a proposal originating with the Quarter-Master-General, and which was adopted and officially announced in the general orders of the 3d May, 1808; namely, that the arrangement, by which officers commanding native corps supplied and conveyed the camp-equipage of their respective battalions, was to be abolished. This measure requires a more detailed description, because it led to more important consequences; and as the advisers of government have taken particular pains to misrepresent the incidents to which it gave rise in all the official publications of the government on this subject, it becomes the more necessary to state the facts with accuracy.

The plan of providing and carrying the camp-equipage of the army, by a species of contract with the officers commanding native corps, who received a fixed allowance for supplying the tents, carriage, and followers, and

defraying all incidental expences connected with their efficiency, was first suggested, as you may recollect, in the year 1791, when Lord Cornwallis, retiring with the crippled remains of his army from his first attempt on Seringapatam, called on the officers of the army to exert their individual means to do, what, in that hour of deep distress, he found it impossible to accomplish by the resources of the public. It will probably be also in your recollection, that the expectation of success in this instance, was the result of very recent experience, inasmuch as the bulk of the equipment for the intended siege of Seringapatam had absolutely been conveyed to its destination by the exertions of the individual officers of the army, at a time when Lord Cornwallis, in the plenitude of his power, as governor-general and commander-in-chief, with the assistance of the most able officers at the head of his public departments, had found it impossible to command the means, which were readily brought into existence by the united zeal of the individuals under his command. My Lord Cornwallis knew how to excite and direct that zeal; his call for assistance in the provision and conveyance of camp-equipage was obeyed with alacrity, and, in

some instances, at great expence: the required equipment sprung up as by enchantment, but, at the conclusion of the war, the allowance was struck off, and the services of the officers were left unrequited by the advantage which they had reasonably anticipated from the expected permanency of the measure.

In the year 1799, similar difficulties in the army under General Harris gave rise, as you may remember, to a similar expedient; and the subsidiary force of Hyderabad, under Colonel Dalrymple, was, by the very same means, re-equipped in a few days, and commenced its march from Seringapatam in pursuit of Dhondia by a similar exertion of the officers. These repeated proofs of the efficacy of this means, and of the constant and miserable inefficiency of the antient system, caused, in 1802, the adoption of a professedly permanent plan for providing on this principle the camp-equipage of the officers and of the native corps of the army; the expected and acknowledged profits of the contract in peace being computed as balancing, if not exceeding, the greater expences attending the period of war, and relieving the public from all expence of quarters, in garrison as well as tents in the field, at a lower rate than had

been paid under Lord Cornwallis's calculations for providing and carrying camp-equipage alone.

On the faith of this plan, adopted as a permanent regulation of the service, the officers commanding corps entered on the contract at the commencement of an active war, and, after incurring, in the course of the Mahratta campaigns in the Dican, unprecedented expences, to produce acknowledged and unexampled efficiency, they looked to the return of peace for reimbursement and remuneration, with that confidence which they were entitled to place in the faith of government, clearly implied, if not distinctly pledged, for the permanence of a plan which had been sanctioned by the approbation of the Court of Directors. That spirit of innovation which distinguished the period from 1805 to 1808, struck at this system, which had been the theme of praise with every officer who had the experience of field-service to guide his judgment. The Quarter-Master-General was instructed to devise a change, and this germ of discord was the result of his cogitations.

The report which was produced, suggested the plan denominated *new*, which was substituted for that of 1802; but its novelty chiefly

consisted in the hypotheses of certain occult energies in the heads of public departments, which former commanders-in-chief had not been able to call into action, and in applying cumbrous and newly invented forms to the principles of the antient and exploded system, which experience had shewn to be practicable only on paper, and on actual service to have been uniformly productive of inefficiency and absolute failure. The provision of carriage was certainly on a more permanent plan, but the radical defect of continuing to load the public departments with minute details, which experience had shewn them incapable to direct with efficiency, was uncured, and by any similar means incurable. With you it is unnecessary to enter into a detailed consideration of the merits of the two systems; but if the authority of great names may influence a question of this nature, there is something more than mere sound in the practical judgment of such a man as Earl Cornwallis, the founder of the calumniated measure; of General Harris, who adopted it from necessity; of General James Stuart, than whose a sounder judgment does not exist on every branch of military arrangement, and who, on the experience of every one of those campaigns, recommended its adoption

as a permanent measure; of sir Arthur Wellesley, who, on the actual experience of its effects, expressly ascribes to the operation of this system his being enabled to perform those movements of unexampled rapidity and efficiency which are the admiration of every military man capable of receiving lessons from experience. I will not draw a parallel between such supporters and the subverters of the system!

The report which the Quarter-Master-General made to Sir John, was in a confidential, but official form: but after the measure which he recommended had been approved by the supreme government, it became publicly known at Madras by communication (as is understood) from Sir George Barlow to the Adjutant-General. The measure of abolishing the contract was offensive to those who, having little else to lose, saw that wrested from them in the advantageous period of peace, which they had been suffered to retain without remark during the difficulties of a protracted warfare. The Quarter-Master-General, in his report, had argued on the baneful effects of this system; not from fact, for all fact was adverse to the inferences which he drew, but from abstract theory and hypothesis: the contract was by him represented as "*placing the interest of officers commanding*

corps at variance with their duty; "making it their interest that their corps should not be in a state fit for field-service;" "furnishing strong inducements to neglect their more important duties;" "divesting their attention and pursuits from the discipline of their corps;" and finally, as "wanting that efficiency which it professed to ensure." Such was the substance of observations at considerable length, which the Quarter-Master-General, in his report, declared to have been "suggested by six years' experience of the practical effect of the contract system;" an advantage not possessed by those who devised the plan, and by an attentive examination of its operation during that period of time.

This declaration gave a *body* to the insinuation which the officers commanding corps, and who had held the contract, considered as a stigma cast on their conduct and characters, in the execution of a public duty; and while they disclaimed, perhaps more explicitly than was demanded by the facts of the case, any title to discuss the expediency or *justice* of the alteration adopted by government, on the ground of this report, they individually applied to the Commander-in-Chief to direct such investigation as he should deem to be proper, for as-

certaining their conduct in the execution of this branch of their public duty, in order that delinquency, if proved, might be adequately punished, and that the innocent might be acquitted of the unmerited reflection which they deemed to be conveyed in the report of the Quarter-Master-General.

The Commander-in-Chief, piqued by the slight with which he considered himself to be treated by the government, in their adoption of an essential change in one of the most material equipments of the army without even the decent form of appearing to consult his opinion, refused to comply with their request; and assigned as a reason, in answer to every application, that "as he had not been consulted with regard to the abolition of the tent contract, he did not feel himself at liberty to take cognizance of any matter connected with that subject on any individual application."

The officers complaining, foiled by this reply in their attempts to obtain an investigation into their own conduct, thought that they might attain the same end by compelling the Quarter-Master-General to prove the grounds on which he had inserted in his report the insinuations which they deemed to be injurious to their character: and adopting that form of

combined appeal which the reply of the Commander-in-Chief very unadvisedly seemed to prescribe, they jointly accused Lieut. Col. Munro of having falsely aspersed their character in his report. This charge * they forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief, on the 23d of August, 1808, and requested that on it Lieut. Col. Munro might be brought to trial. The Commander-in-Chief after some deliberation consulted Lieut. Col. Leith, the Judge-Advocate-General. That officer in a laboured report confounded the measure of abolishing the contract (the act of government) with the reasons given for recommending the change (the act of the Quarter-Master-General alone), and advised (with a degree of ardour not altogether prudent in an office, where at least the semblance of impartiality was reputed to be a requisite qualification) the rejection of the charge as a ground of procedure against the Quarter-Master-General; urging at the same time, that a charge of *conspiracy* against that officer should be founded upon it, on which he would undertake to convict the complainants, if entrusted with the conduct of the prosecution.

The Judge-Advocate's opinion was commu-

* Appendix, No. 1.

nicated by a letter of the 30th of November, from the Adjutant-General, by order of the Commander-in-Chief, to Colonel the Hon. A. Sentleger, the senior of the complaining officers, with intimation that, "in consequence, all farther proceedings had been for the present postponed." The Judge-Advocate had stated in the progress of reference, that legal grounds did not exist for the trial of the Quarter-Master-General on this charge; and on being requested to explain more particularly the grounds of his opinion, he advised the Commander-in-Chief to consult the Company's Advocate-General on those grounds, of which he, as a lawyer, was the most competent judge: General Macdowall in preference consulted Mr. Marsh, a regular English barrister, who had during Col. Leith's absence in England officiated as judge-advocate-general. His opinion, delivered at considerable length, was at direct variance with that of Lieut. Col. Leith, and pronounced that *just and legal grounds* appeared to exist for bringing the Quarter-Master-General before a military tribunal, upon the charge preferred against him by thirty-two officers commanding corps.

The officers to whom the Commander-in-Chief had transmitted the Judge-Advocate-Ge-

neral's opinion, denied its justice; they perceived the partiality marked in the studied omission to consider the clause of the report which gave the connection of alledged fact to the observations of which they complained, namely, the clause which declared these remarks to be the result of experience and practical observation: and on the 5th and 12th of December, two of their number separately, by letters from Trichinopoly, and from Chittledroog, urged the Commander-in-Chief to proceed in the trial of Lieut. Col. Munro. Shortly after this period, however, the more moderate course was adopted of appeal to the Court of Directors, to whom the complainants stated the case in a perfectly respectful memorial. In this appeal they declared that they suspended the proceedings, which they had commenced, to obtain relief by process of military trial: they besought the Honourable Court to free them from the recorded stigma thrown on their characters by the Quarter-Master-General's report: they recited the offensive paragraphs, and again explicitly disclaimed all pretension to the right of discussing the expediency or propriety of the *measure* of abolishing the tent contract, confining their complaints to the insinuations alone, which were understood to have

produced its adoption.* This memorial was in January 1809 forwarded through the Commander-in-Chief to the government for transmission, and by them it was rejected and returned as *unnecessary*. I do not exactly know the date of this rejection, but Lieut. Col. Munro was placed in arrest on the 20th of January 1809, and warned for trial on the original charge.

This may be the most convenient place to observe, that if, as the Quarter-Master-General insinuated, any deficiency in the equipments of the camp-equipage department, had in point of fact arisen from the neglect or cupidity of commanding officers holding the contract, no record of such deficiency can be traced. It was the duty of the office, at the head of which Lieut. Col. Munro is placed, and in which he had served either as deputy or principal, from the first institution of the system of contract, to examine the returns, and make quarterly reports to the Military Board of the state of the camp-equipage, cattle, and followers attached to each corps, as certified on muster, and monthly inspection: and the *perfect good condition* of all these equipments stands vouched

* Vide Memorial, Appendix, No. 2.

by his own reports, during the whole and every part of the period to which his *practical observation and experience refers*. If, therefore, the report proposing the abolition of that contract was meant to convey the most obvious meaning which the arguments bear (and among other allegations it directly asserts the inefficiency of the system), that report is at variance with the other official reports of the Quarter-Master-General's office. Those reports were *public*, supported by regular musters, and exposed, if erroneous, to instant detection; the other was *private*, standing solely on the personal assertion of the Quarter-Master-General, and regular investigation was denied—both could not be true.

The total absence of any thing in form of proof, in the course of the report, constitutes in itself the most powerful evidence that the insinuations were groundless.

The highest authority in India has recently told us, that *because* the report of the Quarter-Master-General had induced Sir J. Craddock (whose projected innovation it was intended to support), the commander-in-chief in India, the government of Madras, and the supreme government, to approve a plan founded on the basis of assertions individually made by its author,

(which others contended to be “false and infamous insinuations, injurious to their characters as officers and gentlemen,”) * the stigmatized officers are guilty of *extreme injustice to the individual, and studied insult to government*, in attempting to disprove the assertion, by requiring a public investigation of its truth or falsehood. With all deference to that high authority, the insinuation to their prejudice, *if false*, was not less *false*, from the fact of its having misled those high authorities to believe and to act upon it; and the respect and deference due to their opinions rendered it only a more imperative duty in the officers who felt themselves to be calumniated by the reasoning of the report, to remove the aspersion by the most public refutation of the alledged slander.

The same high authority has styled the charge against Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, “*a collusive and pretended accusation against him of calumny and slander;*” while “*the tent contract, or rather its abolition, was in effect the subject;*” that the object was “*to withdraw the direction of all military arrangement, regarding the regulation and economy of the ar-*

* Vide Appendix, No. 1. *

“ *my, from the legal authority of government, in order to place it in the shape of courts martial, under the direction of the officers of the army themselves ;*” and the arrest of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, by order of the Commander-in-Chief, on charges preferred against him by thirty-two officers of rank, is termed “ *the most tyrannical and detestable abuse of power by which an innocent and highly meritorious individual was ever oppressed.*”

These are strong terms, and come from “honourable men,” professing to be engaged in the temperate examination of a question on which it was their duty to pass an impartial and temperate decision. I have, however, seen the letters which were addressed to the Adjutant-General, in reply to his communication of the Judge-Advocate’s opinion, and of the Commander-in-Chief’s intention to postpone proceedings in consequence. The expression of unqualified acquiescence in that determination, and of humble hope that, when prevailing difficulties should be removed, his Excellency would direct an investigation either on the accused or accusing parties, as should appear to him the most proper course to attain the ends of justice, (for such is the tenor of the application,) appears to be a sufficient answer

to this moderate and temperate opinion of a “*collusive and pretended accusation.*”

One of the principals in this *collusive and pretended accusation*, who requests a trial on *himself*, is the same person who, a few days afterwards, in farther proof of the above-cited observations, persuaded those who partook in his feelings, to withdraw their charge, and submit the case respectfully to the Court of Directors for decision !

If the Commander-in-Chief, in the exercise of that power which is expressly vested in him by his Majesty’s warrant, bearing the sign-manual, and by authority of an act of the legislature, and which power the same act, when any of his Majesty’s forces shall be serving in India, *expressly withdraws from the Company’s government*, is guilty of “*a most tyrannical and detestable abuse of power,*” in following the legal course to bring an accused officer to trial, what is the language which shall accurately describe the character of that authority, which assumes the right to impede the course of legal process, and, without a trial, brands with epithets so odious the conduct of an absent officer in the exercise of powers strictly legal ?

The high authority from which these decisions proceed, and the tone of superior wisdom

with which they are promulgated, renders it necessary to examine the question with care. The military code for the government of the East-India Company's forces, is not an annual but a permanent act of the legislature of Great Britain, in the 27th year of the reign of George the 2d, (A.D. 1753). The second clause of the act empowers his Majesty to grant a commission or warrant, under the sign-manual, to the Directors of the East-India Company, who shall have power to authorize the residents and councils, at their principal settlements, to appoint courts-martial, &c. But the third clause (immediately following) is in these words:

“ III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, that when, and so long as any of his Majesty's forces shall be employed to act in defence of any of the said Company's settlements, or to assist against any of their enemies in the East Indies, the power of appointing courts-martial, or authorizing such appointments as aforesaid, shall be in the Commander-in-Chief of such his Majesty's forces for the time being over such of the said Company's officers and soldiers as shall belong to the principal settlement, where or from whence such forces shall be employed.”

The following extracts from the Articles of War under this act, are inserted for the convenience of reference, as applicable to the case of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro's arrest; as the Articles of War may no longer form the chief part of your library.

Sect. 2. Art. 2.

Any officer or soldier who shall behave himself with *contempt or disrespect towards the General*, or other Commander-in-Chief of the forces, or shall speak words tending to his hurt or dishonour, shall be punished according to the nature of his offence by *the judgment of a court-martial*.

Sect. 9.

Of Redressing Wrongs.

If *any commissioned officer*, or inferior officer, or soldier, shall think himself wronged by *his superior or other officer*, he is to complain to the commanding officer of the regiment, troop, or company; *who is hereby required to summon a court-martial for the doing justice to the complainant*.

The letter and the spirit of this article was strictly adopted in the conduct of the officers

commanding corps, on the wrong which they *thought* they had sustained from Lieutenant-Colonel Munro's insinuations to their prejudice; and the Commander-in-Chief strictly obeyed the injunctions of this article; he took measures for *summoning a court-martial for the doing justice to the complainants.*

The arrest of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, on the 20th January, 1809, is thought to have been accelerated by a conversation between him and the Commander-in-Chief on a subject entirely distinct from that of the charges which took place about this time and irritated the feelings of General Macdowall to a considerable degree. The strange practice had recently prevailed of arranging the movements of troops, and other measures of a military nature, by communication between the Secretary of Government and the Quarter-Master-General, who, in consequence of these communications, transmitted orders to the out-stations, for detachments, formation of field corps, and other important military objects, without any communication whatever with the Commander-in-Chief of the army. Abstract reports of these movements were usually sent on the 1st and 15th of each month, from the office of the Quarter-Master-General to that of the Adju-

tant-General, for the periods immediately preceding these dates, but until this routine brought them through the Adjutant-General to the Commander-in-Chief, he possessed no information on the subject. This extraordinary fact was brought to his notice in consequence of the accidental mention by a young officer at his table, of a movement of which he was entirely ignorant. He directed reports and returns to be examined, and found that above 3400 men of the army he was said to command, were then in motion without any consultation with him on the occasion.

The General, in presence of his aid-de-camp, and of the Adjutant-gen., questioned the Quarter-Master-Gen. with regard to this fact. Lieutenant-colonel M. defended the measure, and distinctly stated, that *he*, as a confidential officer of the government, was the channel of their orders for these movements of troops, which, as a point of *courtesy*, might be made known to the Commander-in-Chief, but to the knowledge of which he must be aware that he had no claim of right. The *audacious insolence* (as General Macdowall afterwards named it) of this speech from an officer of his immediate staff, greatly incensed the Commander-in-Chief, and was supposed to have determined the mea-

sure of trial, in which this circumstance might perhaps have formed the substance of a distinct charge. A general* order by the Commander-in-Chief, dated the 17th of January, directing, that all orders for movement that might be received from the Quarter-Master-General's office, should be instantly reported to the Adjutant-general for the information of the Commander-in-Chief, confirms the leading facts of this occurrence, which is of general notoriety, or at least of general belief.

The interference of officers commanding corps ceased with the arrest of Lieutenant-colonel Munro, who was on the 21st, in reply to a letter he had addressed to the Commander-in-Chief, acknowledging his arrest, informed that General Gowdie would in a few days succeed to the command, and assemble a court-martial for his trial, and that if acquitted he would have the opportunity of bringing to trial those, who, by the charges they had preferred, he might consider to have traduced his character.

Colonel Munro applied to the Commander-in-Chief to report his arrest to government, and to transmit a letter he had addressed to the Chief Secretary on the occasion. On the 23d

* Appendix, No. 3.

General Macdowall declined to transmit that letter, informing Colonel M. that in a case "*purely military*" he considered the application of appeal it contained "extraordinary, indelicate, and disrespectful."

The letter which the Commander-in-Chief had declined to forward was enclosed by Colonel M. to the Secretary to government, accompanied by the refusal of the Commander-in-Chief to be the channel of its transmission. In the letter to the Secretary he declared that he would not have made the appeal if he had conceived the case to be purely military.

On the following day the Chief Secretary to government informed the Commander-in-Chief by letter, that Colonel M. had appealed to the government; that the Governor in council had looked in vain in the report for any just ground of complaint against him, and would support *their public officer*: that they adopt *as their own act*, and *approve the opinions* it contains as *confirmed by every competent authority*; that if trial were allowed, they should consider it as involving the discussion and trial of the late Commander-in-Chief's measures, and those of the council; that a previous communication might on such a case have been expected from the Commander-in-Chief; and finally, that they

earnestly recommend the release of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro from arrest.

On the 25th the Commander-in-Chief replied at some length, and for reasons adduced, lamented that *he could not comply with the recommendation the government so earnestly urged*; he informed the Governor that he would direct a charge to be exhibited against Lieut.-Colonel Munro for disrespect to himself, in the appeal he had made on the occasion of the arrest; and quoted in support of his conduct the following opinion of Lord Cornwallis, when governor-general and commander-in-chief, as equally expressing the principles on which he acted on the present occasion:

“The *warrant* which I possess from his Majesty, and the commission I hold from the E. I. Company, guide me in the important duties attached to my situation, and which vest in me certain powers, which I cannot without danger abandon.”

On the same day (the 25th of January) General Macdowall issued an order*, taking leave of the army, whom he complimented in strong terms, commenting at the same time with considerable imprudence and asperity on the re-

* G. O. 25th January, 1809. Appendix, No. 4.

cent changes in the constitution of the government, which he describes as having deprived him of “*his rights*,” a restoration of which could alone have enabled him to exercise “the functions of his station, as the representative of the army, with honour to the service, and credit to himself.” *This order was published in the garrison of Fort St. George, under the usual sanction of the Governor, (without which no order can be there published;)* and this circumstance is worthy of particular remark in reference to what follows.

On the 27th of January, the Secretary of government desired to know from General Macdowall, by command of the Governor in council, if they were to understand that he (General M.) declined compliance with the orders of the government; as under the explanation in his (the Secretary's) letter of the 24th, the Governor in council considered it to be equivalent to an order.

Gen. M. in reply, on the same day, says, that referring to his commission, which directs obedience to the orders of the Governor in council, he considers that obedience limited to orders that are *legal*; and as he deems those which he has received to be *illegal*, he can only obey them *under protest*, if the Governor in council should

persist, after this explanation, in directing his submission to the release of Lieutenant-Colonel Munro from arrest.

The Secretary to government instantly acknowledged the Commander-in-Chief's letter, and conveyed the positive orders of the government for Colonel Munro's release from arrest, which order the Commander-in-Chief obeyed.

A circumstance occurred during the course of these events, which would seem to prove that the want of communication, alluded to in the first letter of the government, had not kept them even in official ignorance of the arrest of Colonel Munro, and that the measure of preventing his trial had not then been in their contemplation; for, on the 21st of January, a letter was addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel Martin, then about to embark for England, informing him, that in consequence of a request from the Judge-Advocate-General the Commander-in-Chief had received the instructions of the Governor in council, to direct him to remain, that he might appear in support of the charges against Colonel Munro, preferred by him and other officers.

On the 28th of January, the Commander-in-Chief embarked for England; but prior to

his embarkation he wrote a general order*, announcing that he had been compelled by the order of the Governor in council to release Lieutenant-Colonel Munro from arrest, a measure which had prevented his intention of bringing him to trial for disrespect to himself, for disobedience of orders, and contempt of military authority, in having referred to the authority of the civil government†, in defiance of the judgment of the officer at the head of the

* Appendix, No. 5.

† The following extract of a letter from Lord Cornwallis is said to have influenced the late Commander-in-Chief's opinions on this occasion:

Extract of a Letter from Earl Cornwallis, then Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief to Madras. (1789.)

The regular authority under which all military orders should be issued is either that of the officer who may be appointed Commander-in-Chief by the Court of Directors, or that of the government itself, if circumstances should render it expedient for the Board to exercise avowedly the functions of that officer.

Before I conclude this letter, I must express my wish that it should be recollected by the *civil* and *military* departments at Madras, that the Adjutant-general of the Company's troops on that establishment, cannot, without the greatest irregularity, (unless, as I before mentioned, the functions of the Commander-in-Chief should be exercised by the Board) have any direct communication with the *civil government*.

army, who had placed him in arrest; conduct which he considered subversive of military discipline, in violation of the sacred rights of the Commander-in-Chief, and as holding up a dangerous example to the service; of all which he expresses his strong disapprobation, and for which *he reprimands* Lieutenant-Colonel Munro.

This order, dated on the same day, viz. the 28th, was, by the Commander-in-Chief, delivered to Colonel Capper, the Adjutant-General, with his orders for its immediate publication to the army. Colonel Capper, who desired the General's permission to accompany him on board the ship in which he was to sail, transferred the order in his presence to his deputy, Major Boles, with directions to publish it to the army that evening.

In the usual routine of publishing all orders, a copy of this order was submitted to the Governor, who, by a general order of the 31st of January*, when the ship in which General Macdowall had embarked had sailed, but was still in sight, annulled his appointment of Commander-in-Chief, directed the orders of the 28th to be expunged from every public record,

* Appendix, No. 6.

and suspended from the Company's service Major Boles, the Deputy-Adjutant-General, for having obeyed the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, in signing and giving currency to "a paper of this offensive description."

The Adjutant-General, on returning from the ship in which the Commander-in-Chief had sailed, was informed of this order, and hastened to exculpate his deputy, by waiting on the Governor, to inform him, that Major Boles had acted by his orders. He was denied admittance, but communicated the purpose of his attendance to the staff in waiting; the intimation was acknowledged on the 8th of February, by a general order, which declares he also "is implicated in giving currency to the Commander-in-Chief's orders," and suspended from the Company's service. This manly conduct of Colonel Capper, "*Adsum qui feci; in me convertite ferrum,*" failed of its generous purpose, he was himself punished, but his testimony was deemed insufficient to exculpate his deputy.

On this subject it must ever seem extraordinary to a military man that a difference of opinion could exist, still more that the authority of the government should be committed in support of the principle of giving to military men the privilege of refusing obedience at their own

discretion. It must ever be most hazardous for a military man to incur the risk of disputing the legality of the orders of his superior officer; independently of the very slender shade of distinction between disobedience and mutiny; and the recorded cases, in which officers have been acquitted, who have put to death on the spot, inferior officers, who have hesitated to obey their commands; an officer who presumes to deliberate, ought to be completely satisfied, that the order which he hesitates to obey is so evidently and palpably contrary to some known law of the land, as to leave no doubt that a court-martial would be satisfied with this plea for disobedience. But in the case now under consideration, there could be no illegality except by inference and association, for the power to reprimand an inferior is an undoubted prerogative of every military commander, to be exercised by him on his responsibility; and as the order of the 25th of January (which was certainly much more offensive*

* The two orders are inserted in the Appendix, and the reader will judge. But it is peculiarly worthy of remark, that the copies of the order of the 25th of January, which have hitherto been published in the English newspapers, have been uniformly dated the 28th, thus leaving to different tastes and judgments the selection of that which to each may seem the best ground for the order of the 31st.—EDIT.

than that of the reprimand to Colonel Munro of the 28th) had been published in Fort St. George, with the sanction of the Governor himself; no officer of the staff could suspect that criminality should be imputed to him for circulating the subsequent order of reprimand.

The Governor-General has recently favoured us with a very elaborate and rhetorical disquisition on the military virtue of disobedience of orders, and however much the thinking part of the army differ from his Lordship in the theory of the case, it is my serious conviction that these doctrines have tutored many others in the sophistry of defending the merits of insubordination, and at all events I cannot but observe, that their recent practice has been guided more by his opinions than their own*. They have very liberally exercised their discretionary power in questions of obedience to the government of Madras; who, on the same principle I suppose, are *actually busied at this time* in teaching the native troops the propriety of ascertaining, by mature reflection, the abstract nature of their obligations, before they render obedience to their regimental-officers. God grant that the success of their endeavours may not lead to its

* See Appendix, No. 7.

most direct and obvious tendency—to the ruin of the empire of Great Britain in India.

The treatment of the Commander-in-Chief, and the suspension of the Adjutant-General and Deputy, gave *universal* disgust to the army. The officers of a distinguished regiment in his Majesty's service, were forward in resenting the insult offered to their service in the person of their General, by the most contemptuous behaviour to the Governor. In this, as in every other case of common grievance, they vied with the officers of the Company's service in complimentary attentions to the Adjutant-General and his deputy. Those officers were invited to the regimental mess, their healths were toasted with particular distinction, as *military martyrs*, they were universally considered to have done their duty, and no more than their duty, and to have suffered unmerited punishment.

The arbitrary abuse of authority displayed in this act towards two officers who were highly and generally respected, is the single fact which gave birth to those dangerous combinations, and lighted that violent flame which has since produced such dreadful consequences.

The ferment was too violent in its first ebullition, to escape the notice even of the govern-

ment. On the 6th of February, 1809, they issued an explanatory order, declaring to the army that the supposed insinuations of the Quarter-Master-General's report, which had given offence to officers commanding corps, had never been by them supposed, or by the Quarter-Master-General intended, to convey any insinuation to their prejudice. One singular inconsistency in this order, is worthy of remark, from being the production of the same authority which, six days before, had suspended Lieut.-Colonel Capper, and Major Boles, from the service, for obeying the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, for which they had been rendered responsible. The 2d paragraph of the order of the 6th of February, declares, "*that it would have been*" (in the case of the Quarter-Master-General) "inconsistent with the evident principles of justice, that a public officer should have been liable to the obloquy of a trial for an act not his, but *that of his superior.*" We must suppose that the TRIAL is alone obnoxious to justice; *punishment without trial, for the act of a superior*, would seem to be liable to *no obloquy* in this new code. How valiant and how mean is despotism! This explanation, worthy *at the proper period*, of a great, a magnanimous, and a liberal go-

vernment, would, a month sooner, have completely appeased the agitation which the report had produced; now, it was worse than useless. The individual grievances of the small number of officers commanding corps had sunk to insignificance, in the comparative magnitude of the injury which every officer, whether of the King's or Company's service, felt to have been offered to the military character, in the wanton, unjust, and unnecessary suspension, without trial, of two officers of distinguished station and character, *for obeying the orders of the Commander-in-Chief*, and the feeling was aggravated at this moment by the arbitrary removal from office of several officers, highly and justly respected for public character and talent, who were hurried off from Madras without any cause being assigned for these portentous measures.

To justify these proceedings to the higher authorities in England, Mr. B. the Chief-Secretary to government, and Private-Secretary to Sir George Barlow, was dispatched express, *on public duty*, while the permission to proceed to England, solicited by Major Boles, was twice refused, although actually suspended from rank, and left with his family destitute of the means of subsistence. No other opportunity was likely

to occur for some months, yet, no sooner had the Lushington, on which Major Boles had agreed for his passage, sailed with this express, than he obtained free permission to embark, whenever he could find an opportunity to do so!

Sir G. Barlow himself, a stranger to the characters and persons of those he had been appointed to govern, of personal habits adverse to the degree and sort of communication which could alone ensure correct knowledge on these subjects, and with local experience only of a settlement every way differing in circumstances from that in which he now presided, was supposed to have selected, with peculiar unhappiness, two men as military advisers, who were perhaps the least qualified of any that could possibly have been chosen to remedy the defects which I have noticed. Lieut.-Colonel Leith, the Judge-Advocate-General, had long been removed from the exercise of military duties, and devoted to the contemplation of legal difficulties; this, with his habits of retirement, and reserved manners, had long estranged him from military society. Lieut.-Colonel Munro, with talents of considerable promise, had, by the favour of two preceding Commanders-in-Chief, been prematurely raised to a station far above his claims

from rank or service. In the attainment of this object, he had, with humility of manners ("for lowliness is young ambition's ladder") devoted himself to the interest of his patrons with much apparent zeal, and, in their various contests with the Governors of their time, had maintained the "indefeasible rights" of the Commander-in-Chief, and his exclusive title to the patronage, controul, and arrangement, of every branch of the military department, with a degree of ardour which had attracted considerable notice. On Gen. Macdowall's accession to the command, with very limited powers to advance the interests of his friends, *the paramount authority of the Governor* was said to have become the theme of the Quarter-Master-General's individual and official eulogium; and he was now described as standing forward, doubtlessly in the humble conviction of the errors of his former judgment, to deny that the Commander-in-Chief of an army could even claim, *of right*, to be acquainted with its movements; the officers of the army, whether correctly or otherwise, did not seem to impute the change to moral conviction: the most intimate of his former associates were the first to estrange themselves, whether from this or other causes I cannot correctly state, but it has been remarked

that these very officers have been most prominently distinguished by the rigours of this reign of terror.

To both these persons the late Commander-in-Chief had given ground of offence, by countenancing the charges preferred against the one in opposition to the opinion and official advice of the other; and these circumstances were stated to have indisposed them to such as might be considered to have shared in the offence, or to have enjoyed the friendship or favour of the General. When therefore, although the release of Lieut.-Colonel Munro from arrest rendered the evidence of Lieut.-Colonel Martin no longer necessary for the purpose of his trial, that officer was officially informed, on the eve of the departure of the ships, that his leave to proceed to England was recalled; a general belief prevailed that this unnecessary detention was the prelude to farther misfortune. Lieut.-Colonel Leith, on the 29th of January, waited on Lieut.-Colonel Martin, intimated the intention of the government to punish all who had concurred in the charges against Colonel Munro, and then urged him, with great earnestness, to express *sorrow* for having signed the charges, as a species of half apology; in which case, he intimated that he might yet be permitted to sail

that evening, in the ship in which he had paid for his passage: he declined to express what he did not feel, and his detention was enforced. On the 2d of February, a member of the council, whose spontaneous profession, that he acted without authority, excited an opposite belief, urged Major Boles, by arguments of a similar nature, to avert the ruin which the government, by their representations to England, would entail on him and his family, (by apology and acknowledgment of error in his obedience to the Commander-in-Chief); in which case, he should be restored to his rank and office. Major Boles dreaded dishonour more than he feared oppression; and this attempt also failed of success.

Whether these overtures were the result of a secret consciousness of injustice, and of fears for the result, which induced their authors to attempt to bribe the injured parties to an implied admission of their guilt, for the purpose of giving a colour of justification to their own proceedings, it is impossible to pronounce: whatever was the motive, the end was not obtained; and the attempt, which soon became publicly known, added to the general indignation which already prevailed.

On the 8th of February, an order of the

Governor removed Captain Marshall, the Secretary of the military-board, from that office, to be Paymaster at Vizagapatam, and he was commanded to quit the Presidency without delay*. Mr. Roebuck, the Military Paymaster-General, was at the same time sent with as little ceremony to the same place, as Commercial-President, and Mr. Maitland, a gentleman not in the Company's service, was removed from the situation he had held, as a Justice of the Peace. The appointment of the two former to offices of trust was a direct admission that no imputation against their public administration of the offices they had filled was the cause of their removal; but the manner, as well as the fact, of their removal from offices of much superior emolument and distinction, marked the proceeding as a measure of punishment, while the total silence of the order, with regard to the motives of the measure, seemed to shew, that the reasons, whatever they might be, were not fit to be avowed.

The deficiencies of public avowal were supplied by general conjecture. It was remarked

* His application for a few days leave to adjust his accounts, as Secretary to the military fund, was rejected, and his immediate departure ordered.

by those who seemed to have access to authentic information, that Captain Marshall, whose duties, as Secretary to the Military-Board, rendered him the organ of that board, in the enforcement of the standing regulations of the service, relative to the controul of expenditure in the departments of provisions and military stores, and field-equipments, had remonstrated against certain alledged assumption of authority by the Quarter-Master-General, as contrary to those regulations, and had animadverted on the public inconvenience of innovations which that officer was stated to be daily attempting to introduce, with the apparent view of removing, by degrees, the authority of the Military-Board, to increase the influence of that department over which he presided. It was also remarked, that Mr. Roebuck, and Mr. Maitland, had, in a recent cause, in which their private fortunes were at stake, prosecuted to conviction in the Supreme Court, for perjury and forgery, two persons, whose cause the advisers of government had induced them to support and defend at the public cost, and it was notorious that this act of the government entailed on those two gentlemen irretrievable ruin.

The interference of the executive power in the administration of public justice, is an omen

of monstrous import in any country, and I can be at no loss to conjecture the feelings with which Englishmen will learn that even some of the jurymen who pronounced an unpalatable verdict were visited with proscription. I am not so intimately acquainted with the civil derangements of this period as to give them in detail; the removals were numerous and extraordinary, and comprised a large portion of the talent and respectability of that branch of the service, including the Accountant-General, who will probably have arrived in England long before this letter, and is perfectly qualified to render a clear account of any thing he may undertake to explain. Colonel St. Leger too (who had first signed the charges against Colonel Munro) had, even before Gen. Macdowall's departure, in the arrangements formed by the Quarter-Master-General for composing the force for the service in Travancore, been directed to remain in cantonment with one troop and the sick of his regiment (the 6th cavalry), while the remainder of his regiment, and all the disposable force of the division, was ordered to march for actual service, under an officer junior to Colonel St. Leger. The indignant feelings of this officer induced him to dispatch to the

Commander-in-Chief an immediate remonstrance against this public injury, and to demand a court-martial to vindicate his character: the measure became known, while the application was in course of transmission, the arrangement was corrected, and the *intended insult* was not allowed to take its ultimate effect. It would scarcely be credited, were not the fact indisputable, that this remonstrance gave the first intimation to the Commander-in-Chief, public or private, that a force was assembling for field-service in Travancore!

Although many of these and subsequent circumstances were trivial in themselves, the whole had considerable influence in actuating the officers of the army to a combined expression of their sentiments; and when Major-General Gowdie, who had succeeded by seniority, to the command of the army, arrived at Madras, he found the military officers of his Majesty's and the Company's army united in resentment against the Governor and his supposed confidential advisers, and the civil servants of the Company, governed by similar feelings, for injuries sustained, by themselves.

To great personal bravery, an overflowing

zeal, and that extent of experience, which a man of small capacity for observation or reflection can gain from many years of service, General Gowdie added the quality of inflexible adherence to opinions once formed, and the reputation of good-nature. His staff, selected chiefly from his kinsmen, were young men not yet qualified to assist him. The suggestion of others, or his own sense of the absolute necessity of some man of experience in military details, to conduct the duties of the Adjutant-General's office, led him to renew the overtures to Major Boles; the General's influence with government was promised to effect his restoration to the service and to office, (although again it was asserted that the overture was unauthorized,) if the Major would acknowledge error, and express contrition: his known want of all pecuniary resources, except those which he derived from service, was strongly urged; but he again declined to sign his own condemnation and dishonour, in a case where he was conscious of nothing but innocence, and the strict performance of his public duty.

The officers of the royal regiment of foot had, after entertaining at their mess the suspended officers of the staff, marked their sense

of the insult offered to their service in the person of their late Commander-in-Chief, by refusing to accept invitations to dinner from the Governor, whose Secretary was said to have been in vain employed to induce a change in their determination. The Commander of the forces undertook the office of mediator, and, after assuring them that he considered it to be *their duty* to meet him at the Governor's table, and would view their refusal as a want of respect to himself, did succeed in obtaining the performance of this singular duty.

With a battalion of the 18th regiment of Sepoys, then in garrison, whose officers had also declined to accept Sir G. Barlow's invitations, the General was less successful; and this corps, which had only a few days before marched into Madras, was again marched, at a great and apparently unnecessary expence to the public, a distance of 500 miles, to occupy a post represented as likely to become the grave of any corps that might be stationed there!

On the 25th of March, a battalion of the 11th regiment was also ordered from Madras, as the Commander of the forces is stated to have informed Major Lindsay, who commanded it,

“ because Major Boles had been invited to their “ mess;” and on the 27th, although the example of the royals and artillery was pleaded, the order was enforced.

At the same period, Major Sutherland Macdowall, the Deputy Adjutant-General was removed from office; surprized at the measure, he respectfully applied to the government to know the cause, but in vain. His application to the Commander of the forces, for similar information, produced a reply unique in its kind: Gen. Gowdie acknowledged the merit and value of his services, and expressed his regret that “ *existing circumstances, of which he was not competent to judge,*” had deprived him of the “ services of a man of such sterling ability, “ and for whom he had the strongest personal “ esteem and regard.”

Lieut. Stock, assistant in the office of the Military-Board, whose public and private conduct had conciliated the respect and esteem of all who knew him, was, on the 24th of March, removed, without any reason assigned, to a situation of inferior credit, at Vellore. Conjecture in this, as in many other cases, supplied the want of better information; and it was remarked, that Lieut. Stock had, for some time,

declined all personal intercourse with the Quarter-Master-General.

Even the students at the Military-institution had their share of the general proscription! These boys had sent one of their number to Coventry, for entering the mansion of the Governor. This was one of the branches of public establishment, which had been drawn within the vortex of the Quarter-Master-General's controul. An order from the government appeared for dispersing the class, professedly founded on a report from Gen. Gowdie, which he declares he had never made or seen.

Even the nomination of an aid-de-camp by Gen. G. was objected to, because the officer named, a young man of excellent character, but whom General Macdowall had patronized, was *said* to have signed a memorial to the Court of Directors, of which Gen. Macdowall was *said* to have taken charge. *The allegation was not true*, but the Commander of the forces was compelled to give up his choice of an officer for his own staff, and (as he declared in a letter to Lieut. Scott, the officer he had promised to appoint,) a friend of the Governor's Military-Secretary, to whose person he was a stranger, was placed in his family as his personal staff.

The influence of a Commander, thus dignified, could not be expected to produce much good. Memorials, various in violence and absurdity, as the tempers of those who composed them, were drafted and tendered for adoption at the different stations of the army; most of these effusions were abortive, and among them that most distinguished in absurdity, a surreptitious copy of which, obtained by this government, furnished to that of Bengal the text for their dissertation of the 27th of May. An address to Major Boles, (Lieut.-Colonel Capper having previously embarked for Europe) was more successful, and obtained the signature of almost every officer of the Company's army, and of some of his Majesty's regiments. In this address, to the expression of approbation of his conduct was added an intimation, that an arrangement had been made for securing, for his support, a sum equal to the allowances of which he had been deprived by suspension; and a pledge was given, that similar support would be provided for every officer who might, in future, be removed by the government, on grounds of similar injustice.

The principles of this address are so obviously unsound, in the judgment of every dispassionate

enquirer, that it is hardly conceivable how any set of men could deliberately have allowed themselves to sign and act upon it. You and I, however, who have witnessed the eagerness with which our countrymen in India join in any plan which has for its apparent object the relief of merit in distress, can estimate the strong effect of such a feeling, when applied to the case of Major Boles, whose want of fortune was as notorious as the punishment which had been undeservedly inflicted on him. The address, in itself, was imprudent and improper, even without the clause, which gave a pledge for future error; but a generous, though erroneous, feeling overcame the colder sentiment of respect and duty to the government, shaken as that sentiment had been by the numerous causes, of which I have selected but a few. An ebullition of equally imprudent but most honourable feeling in the Captain of the Governor's body-guard, who was then serving with the forces in Travancore, brought the paper in question to the notice of Sir G. Barlow. This officer had signed the address to Major Boles; and having done so, deemed his continuing to hold the command of the Governor's guards incompatible with this avowed dissent from the

justice of the late proceeding. He publicly and formally, in an official letter, requested leave to resign his command; and, at the same time, viz. the 19th of March, from that abhorrence of duplicity, which is the characteristic of his noble mind, and from a sense of delicacy to the individual, he stated, in a confidential form of communication, to his own particular friend, then military-secretary to the Governor, for Sir George Barlow's personal information, the measure in which he had joined, and the feeling which had produced his resignation. The Governor, whose feelings never embarrassed his determinations, placed this private and confidential communication on public record, and when the designs over which he then brooded were ripe for execution, made it on the 1st of May, the instrument of ruin to one of the bravest, noblest, best, most honourable, zealous, and loyal officers, in that or any other service—
Captain James Grant.

The discontent of the army had hitherto been represented, and believed by the Governor, to be confined to the friends of Gen. Macdowall, or to those of the number who had been displaced from offices of trust and honour. When the receipt of this address, and intelligence of

interests of his advisers, the measure had tended only to increase the general disgust at his rule; wisdom or common prudence would have dictated a revision of the measures which had produced such effects: and I am convinced that at this period of the scene which I have endeavoured to describe, the restoration of Colonel Capper and Major Boles to office, or even their restoration *to the service*, by the removal of the sentence of suspension, would have restored order by an act of justice, as the result of appeals to England on the removals of other individuals from the presidency, would have been confidently expected to correct the errors of the local government.

Measures of conciliation were not however to the taste of this government or its advisers. Lord Minto's letter of the 20th of February, 1809, approving of their conduct had been received: extracts from it were circulated to the stations of the army, and they pursued the arbitrary system of terror with increased vigour from their confidence in the strength of his support.

The Commander of the Forces on the 10th of April, was instructed to combat, by a circular letter, the address to Major Boles, which was supposed to be then in circulation. In this

the numerous signatures to that document, of individuals of the first character, both in his Majesty's and the Hon. Company's service, had shewn to the Governor what nothing but wilful blindness could prevent his perceiving, that the discontent, reputed to be partial and unimportant, was only limited in extent by the limits of his government; and that, although he had filled the vacant offices with men devoted to the production, he attempted to prevent any contribution for the support of this officer, by stating that in his, the generals, opinion, Major Boles had forfeited all claims to the sympathy of the Army, by rejecting, the overtures which the General (*but without authority*) had made, and on the acceptance of which he would have *made it his business* to get him reinstated in rank and official situation. The only effect produced by this humane production was to confirm the determination of the officers to whom it was communicated, in supporting Major Boles, whose conduct they approved.

The mass of the army treated this letter with ridicule, contrasting the importance therein assumed by General G., when he spoke of *making it his business* to obtain the reversal of an important act of the government, on condi-

tions *wholly unauthorized by them*, with his recent confession to Lieut. Scott, that he had not influence even to obtain the appointment of his own aid-de-camp, for the officer to whom he had promised that situation in his family.

The seizure of the papers* of individuals, and the arrest of their confidential writers, † for examination on oath, as to the papers they might have copied, were among the energetic measures of the day. On the 11th of April, Captain Barlow, by command of the Governor, conveyed from the office of the Military Board two official writers, and a third young man, who had been in the private employ of Captain Marshall, to the council-chamber, where, in presence of Sir G. Barlow, Mr. Falconar, Lieut. Col. Leith, and Captain Barlow, the Company's Advocate examined them on oath, as to the subject of papers they might have copied for Captain Marshall, or

* The first attempt of this kind was an exertion of extra-official and unauthorized energy on the part of a member of the Board of Trade, who had in 1807 taken on himself to seize the papers of a gentleman in the civil service. This was one of the first acts to which sir George Barlow on his arrival at Madras had extended the sanction of his *ex-post facto* approbation, and which has since, according to general belief, been deemed worthy of respectful imitation.

† Clerks.

others (a point which few writers in India are competent to state ;) as to the company he kept; the conversation he was *seen* to hold; and other particulars of a similar nature. Such is the account given by these men of their examination, immediately after it occurred, and when still in a state of agitation, which rendered their narrative as indistinct as their evidence had probably been. Lieut. Col. Barclay, the town-major, at the same time seized in the Black-town, a private writer, from the counting-house of a private gentleman, holding no office under the government, for similar interrogatory, Mr. James Balfour his master having been a friend of Gen. Macdowall.

In addition to these public measures of coercion, the commander of the forces was on the same day directed by the government to supersede, in the command of corps, four officers named to him, as suspected of being indisposed towards the government (*soupponné d'être suspecte*), and not content with this unreasonable power themselves, they delegated to Gen. G., whose powers of appreciating merit are sufficiently notorious, the authority to exercise a similar act of coercion whenever his private information might lead him to think it proper.

When by such means a sufficiency had been

obtained of what was dignified with the name of *evidence*, the public operation of a system of general terror commenced by the promulgation of the general order of the 1st of May, 1809.*

This order was founded on *private examinations* of native writers, probably incapable of comprehending or reciting the tenor of the papers they had copied, if even divested of the influence of the agitation which I have described; on *private informations* from persons whose names and credibility, as well as the facts they professed to state, are said to have been concealed by the Governor, even from his council; and on the private and confidential communication, honestly, but most imprudently made by Captain Grant to sir George Barlow, in explanation of the grounds of his personal conduct. By this order, four officers of rank and character were *suspended from the Company's service* in the most disgraceful manner; the commandant of artillery was *removed from all military charge and command*; three other officers, two of whom were of rank, were *deprived of command and appointments on the staff of the army*; and the stigma was sent in

* Appendix, No. 8.

pursuit of another who had sailed for Europe. In the number of these proscriptions were two officers whose gallantry and distinguished good conduct on active service had but two short months before been honoured with the public and recorded thanks of the government; Lieut. Col. Chalmers and Sentleger: and the guilt of the whole was confidently asserted to be *ascertained*. The measures of rigour thus announced were accompanied by a direct effort to excite dissension and jealousy between the King's and Company's troops, praising the former for a forbearance which hitherto they had not shewn, and the division of the army serving at Hyderabad received an unlooked-for compliment addressed to them with a like design.

A burst of universal indignation followed the promulgation of this order. If men of this high class, it was observed, were objects of suspicion, public accusation ought to be supported by public proof. The fixed principles of the British constitution and the more rigid letter of martial law entitled them to public trial before they should suffer public degradation and punishment. No man's character, no man's situation in life, could be for a moment safe, if anonymous accusation were considered as con-

stituting proof; if reputation could be whispered away by wretches whom no epithet of contempt can adequately describe, and if the name of an officer branded with infamy by the *fiat* of the Governor of Madras was to be held forth in public proclamations to the army and the world, as a man divested of the honourable principles which constituted his sole earthly possession; of all claim to public commiseration, or to the last refuge of the unhappy—the sympathy of an afflicted family of which he was thus declared to be unworthy!

In the case of Col. Robert Bell, the commandant of artillery, the cause of his removal had been distinctly stated to be “*for having promoted the circulation of a seditious paper among the officers of the corps of artillery at the Mount;*” a fact asserted in the order, like every other allegation it contained, to have been *ascertained*; the proof resting on the credibility of an unknown accuser. The officers of the artillery at the Mount, with one exception only, instantly, solemnly, and publicly, in a most respectful and proper letter addressed to Col. Bell, declared that he had never, directly or indirectly, done what was imputed to him;* but on the contrary, that he had uniform-

* See Appendix, No. 9.

ly discouraged the discussion of any of those questions which agitated the public mind. Their solemn assertions as officers and men of honour were disregarded: Col. Bell remained deprived of military command; and no particular delicacy of sentiment can be required for appreciating the feelings of these officers, thus virtually, but most distinctly, insulted by the government, by the imputation of deliberate falsehood. The officer who alone did not sign this declaration, had been gratified on the day of Col. Bell's removal by appointment to a staff office of importance at the Presidency, from the favour of the Governor in council.

It is confidently asserted, by those who seem to have had good opportunities of knowing the facts, that the conclusions of the government, in the case of Lieut. Col. Martin and Captain Marshall, were equally groundless; the writers examined having mistaken a most respectful appeal to the Court of Directors, which they had copied under the direction of those officers, for that of an offensive nature on the same original subject to which the questions of the government were directed, and which memorial it is notorious that these two officers decidedly disapproved, and most certainly did not encourage. Mr. Balfour's writer had merely copied

for Captain Coombs, late aid-de-camp of Gen. Macdowall, the orders and documents which had appeared subsequently to his departure on the subject of the General's conduct, and which, as an act of attention and justice to his absent patron and friend, Captain Coombs had connected by a summary of the events to which the documents referred. The charges against Lieut. Col. the Hon. A. Sentleger were refuted by the written declaration of every officer under his command; and in the case of the other officers, with the circumstances of which I am not so well acquainted, there is reason to infer an equal degree of exaggeration or error. The tenor of Lieut. Col. John Bell's conduct, at the mess, at the artillery, at the Mount, had been grossly falsified by some of the corps d'espionage. That high-spirited and highly respected officer, who had recently arrived from England, uniformly discouraged the agitation of political questions; he first affixed his name, as truth and honour demanded, to the address to Col. Robert Bell, disavowing the facts on which he had been removed from command; but when it was proposed that the officers in a body should wait on their late commandant to present the testimony, he combated this design in a speech of considerable animation, and actu-

ally succeeded in dissuading them from its adoption, as unnecessary to the justification of Col. Robert Bell, and liable to the imputation of being an act of ostentatious disrespect to the government. This strictly military, loyal, and respectful conduct of Lieut. Col. John Bell, was perverted into a seditious oration. He was peremptorily ordered to quit the Mount in twenty-four hours, and proceed to Seringapatam.

He strongly felt the unmerited insult; and it is greatly to be feared, or rather certainly to be inferred, that the keen sense of injury on this occasion has strongly influenced his recent criminal and fatal resistance of the authority of the government in the garrison of Seringapatam.

The compliment which was offered to the subsidiary force of Hyderabad on a want of common feeling with the rest of the army, which a sense of public duty alone had hitherto induced them to suppress, produced the effect of giving free vent to the long-smothered flame: they assumed a tone of violence hitherto unexampled; they declared to the rest of the army, by a circular letter, their union in the sentiment of disgust at the conduct of the government; they disclaimed all title to the proffered commendation, and at the moment when

Col. Close had been nominated by the government to command that force, its officers, in the height of that paroxysm of rage which had not yet begun to abate, in a direct address to the Governor in council, dated the 15th of May, required the abrogation of the general orders which on the 1st of the same month had been issued to the army.

It is scarcely possible to conceive a situation more extraordinary than that, in which the miserable policy of persevering in a floundering series of error to support an original act of fundamental injustice, had now involved the government of Madras. It would be superfluous to point the inference which obviously occurs to the mind, when the officers of an army, acknowledged even by the order of the first of May to have been ever "no less distinguished for their obedience and discipline, than for their achievements in the field," shrink from the commendation of the government they serve, and spurn its praises as dishonour.

The letter of the supreme government to that of Madras, dated the 27th of May, had been received, and was about this period circulated for the information of the army. The effect of this elaborate production did not accord with the apparent expectations of its author. Lord

Minto, bred to the Scotch bar, handled the cause of the Madras government with all the ability of an advocate for his client. His pleading had judiciously thrown into shade, or totally omitted, all the bearings of the case which formed the groundwork of the opposite argument; begging the question on every disputable point, he introduced a mass of popular doctrine on the principles of the British constitution, in answer to supposed pretensions, unasserted claims, and arguments that had never been urged. Truisms inapplicable to the case were clothed in language that did honour to his Lordship's talents for composition, and their splendour for a while dazzled the judgment of his readers, although warned against the admission of "confused analogy." Singularly enough, the chief object of this essay was to expose the absurdities of an imaginary "memorial, supposed to be addressed to him from the officers of the Madras army," which, as far as adoption, signature, presentation, and avowal are required to constitute an instrument, had never any existence. This fact will unquestionably excite your astonishment; but I pledge myself that the memorial never was presented to Lord Minto or to any other public authority, and that it was

decidedly reprobated by a large majority of the respectable officers of the army. Forty-two closely *printed* pages of argument on subjects extremely interesting to the great body of the officers, charging them in no very measured terms with pretensions, arguments, and designs involving the deepest guilt, which certainly they contemplated for the first time in the perusal of his Lordship's dissertation, seemed little calculated by their circulation to arrest the discussion of the subjects on which they treated: and the novel doctrine, that slander is disarmed of its sting, and should be welcomed with respect when it had obtained belief with high authorities; (par. 46.) that the promotion of legal trial constitutes a "*monstrous proceeding*;" (par. 50.) while its prevention was a just, legal, and indisputable interposition of authority; (par. 50.) that the obedience of the Commander-in-Chief to this assumption of power (against which he formerly protested) is a proof of its legality; (par. 60.) that in reprimanding an officer under his command and one of his immediate staff, the Commander-in-Chief is guilty of sedition; (par. 67.) and that an Adjutant-general and his deputy, who under general principles of subordination were peculiarly bound to give the example of

that obedience which it was their duty to enforce, should on that occasion have been subject to the penalties of sedition for not being guilty of disobedience to their Commander-in-Chief; (par. 81.) were propositions so evidently repugnant to reason and justice, that even the eloquence of a Governor-General could not procure them credence.

It was remarked, however, that a clause of reservation was annexed to the opinion on each of the more delicate questions, which seemed to evince a doubt of its propriety even in his Lordship's mind; and that he desired to entrench himself behind the only genuine ground, namely the incompetency of the army, under any legal form, to take on themselves the decision of any question whatever. They traced in his Lordship's view of the powers of Governor and Commander-in-Chief, the continued influence of that contest which he had maintained in Corsica on a subject of the same nature in which the cause he argued was his own: and they regretted that his Lordship had quitted the profession of the law before he had attained its highest honours, as the acknowledged privilege of an advocate to press forward to decision on the evidence of one party, might have been corrected and matured by the appropriate ha-

bits of the bench, which dictate the delay of decision till both parties have obtained an impartial hearing. His Lordship's presence on the Coast about, or rather before this period, might have been highly beneficial to the state, but his elaborate dispatch tended only to weaken his influence.

The farther persecution of Major Boles, for no other reason that can be devised, except his extreme prudence in withdrawing himself altogether from society, excited additional indignation. I have already stated, that he had been twice refused permission to proceed to England while it was possible, and freely permitted when it was impossible: he was now, for the purpose of proceeding south round the Cape of Good Hope, transported north to Bengal. Lieutenant Colonel St. Leger and Captain Marshall had a similar destination.

In the progress of that system of inquisition which nothing could escape, private intimation that Captain Marshall, the proscribed, had dined with the mess of the Madras regiment, on his route to Visagapatam, had been followed by the supersession of Captain Andrews who then commanded the regiment. His successor Lieutenant-Colonel I., a man of feeble intellect, filled with desire to manifest his gratitude to

those who had procured him the command of the station, officially reported that the Quarter-Master of the regiment at the regimental mess had alarmed his loyal feelings by giving as a toast, "*The friends of the army.*" Congenial absurdity gave public importance to this trivial circumstance; by return of post the proposer of the toast was deprived of a staff-appointment which he had held for several years; and the officer who had either seconded the proposal, or first drank the toast, was sent to solitary banishment in an unhealthy hill fort. These officers, for whose dismissal and exile no reason had been assigned, requested investigation; it was refused: and another officer, who had been appointed Quarter-Master, hesitating to accept the post, the officers of the corps were informed by the Lieutenant-Colonel, "that he had received
" intimation from the Commander of the forces,
" that such conduct should be followed by the
" dispersion of the regiment, which should be
" disbanded."

"At this period a detachment was unfortunately ordered from the regiment to serve as marines on his Majesty's ships, (a duty from which it was understood that his Majesty's troops in India had recently been exempted by orders;) and another detachment was ordered to prepare for

embarkation to Prince of Wales' Island. For these duties, the two officers already condemned without trial were expressly named in the orders from head-quarters. This unusual interference marked the intended duty as a punishment, and the reported exemption of his Majesty's troops from a duty thus allotted to the Company's gave to the measure a character of degradation, and confirmed in the heated minds of the regiment the belief of its intended dispersion. Officers and men joined in a determination to resist; they confined the Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding, whose folly had been the source of the evil, and, joined by the native battalion and artillery company in garrison, resolved to maintain the place in avowed mutiny, and to open a communication with the force at Hyderabad.

Intelligence of this event, when received at Madras, occasioned considerable alarm: on the 30th of June, Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm, who had recently returned from a mission to Persia, was appointed to command the regiment and station, and proceeded to Masulipatam, where he was also nominated president of a court of enquiry, ordered to assemble there. Employing conciliation rather than violence, he succeeded to a great extent in re-

claiming for a time the deluded garrison; but by this conduct he offended, and perhaps alarmed for their own influence, the advocates of the coercive system; and on his return to the presidency towards the conclusion of that month, it was remarked that he had lost the confidence of the Governor: as did every man who attempted by moderation to stop the wild career of men irritated to madness, and to lead them back by reason and persuasion to the path of duty.

The actual seizure of the Fort of Masulipatam by its mutinous garrison, and the declaration of the subsidiary force at Hyderabad, that they would not obey the government until the order of the 1st of May should be rescinded, seemed to mark the precise period when the time for conciliation was past. Every practicable means had for some time been taken for obtaining re-inforcements of European troops for the purpose of armed coercion; and on the 26th of July a measure was adopted, which certainly was entirely consistent with the former proceedings of the government.

On that day it was resolved to demand from all the officers of the Honourable Company a solemn declaration on honour, "That they would obey the orders, and support the au-

“thority of the Honourable the Governor in
 “Council of Fort St. George, agreeably to the
 “tenor of the commission which they held
 “from that government.” The requisition,
 although extraordinary, implied no obligation
 beyond that which the acceptance of a com-
 mission more solemnly and unequivocally in-
 volved; and there was a singular obliquity of
 thinking, in supposing that men who were con-
 sidered to be determined to abandon their most
 sacred obligations, should hesitate at the minor
 guilt of dissimulation. The test however was
 accompanied by a letter to be previously read
 to the persons required to sign it, containing the
 most unqualified intimation that the government
 considered a great portion of its officers to
 be *seditions*; that this test was therefore re-
 quired of them for the purpose of ascertaining
 those who were fit to be trusted, and to such as
 should not instantly sign it, the alternative was
 announced of “being removed from the im-
 “mediate execution of duty with the troops,
 “and allowed to remain at an appointed station
 “in the receipt of their ordinary allowances,
 “until the situation of affairs, and the temper
 “of their minds, should admit of their being
 “employed with advantage to the state;” in
 the anticipation of refusal, directions were gi-

ven to place the officers of his Majesty's ser-
 vice (whose praises were coupled with the sedi-
 tion of the Company's) in the command of the
 Company's troops, and in the staff situations
 held by the Company's officers, an expecta-
 tion not calculated to produce the most concili-
 atory manner of executing the instructions,
 which, with few exceptions, it fell to their pro-
 vince to enforce. The letter concluded with
 desiring the native troops to be informed that
 their European officers were engaged in a cri-
 minal pursuit of objects, personal to themselves,
 and desirous to involve the native troops in their
 guilt, cautioning them to refuse belief to the
 suggestions of their officers; holding out the
 expectation of reward to the natives, and order-
 ing force, if necessary, to march for effecting
 the objects described.

It is worthy of particular remark, that the
 officers of his Majesty's service had no cause to
 dread the injuries which formed the present
 ground of discontent in the Company's army;
 suspension without trial, being a power which
 no Company's government dares to exercise
 over an officer exclusively commissioned by the
 King.

At most of the stations, officers of his Majes-
 ty's service commanded; at the Presidency and

the Mount this most ungracious order was communicated in the most ungracious manner ; and at Trichinopoly the officers who adopted the alternative of retirement, were sent like common felons to confinement, and marched in the same state to Tanjore!

Of above twelve hundred officers present with the Coast-army, only one hundred and fifteen signed the test. The triumph of duty over feeling prevailed with a few, and a sense of interest with many more. But no stronger proof of the impression which the test was calculated to inspire could exist, than the fact, that the effect of a measure of which they could have no previous idea, was on 1100 out of 1200 officers at various stations, without the possibility of previous concert, exactly the same, that of exciting indignation and disgust. Indeed no man of sensibility could listen to such an address without that feeling, and it is not matter of surprise that the alternative offered was accepted by nearly the whole, who rejoiced in an opportunity, which seemed distinctly to invite their temporary retirement to that private station, which presented itself to their fancy, as the post of honour, described by the most eminent of our Poets. I could name to you some hundreds of officers, who, with faltering steps and bleeding

hearts, were prepared to make the last sacrifice to duty in marching against their deluded brother officers ; who hailed the alternative of retirement, as a reprieve from the bitterest punishment which public authority could inflict. Some indeed have supposed that the measure was intended to produce this effect, while others, who think that any thing savouring of humanity, would be a forced construction of any part of the system, have ascribed the measure to a still more hateful and incredible source.

I have described the result of the test, at three of the principal stations, and shall now briefly advert to what occurred at the others. At Bangalore, Colonel Gibbs of His Majesty's 59th, an officer whose conduct had particularly commanded the respect and confidence of the Company's officers under his command, delayed obedience to the order, against which he strongly remonstrated, because, as he had declared, he was confident in the loyalty and obedience of every person under his command, and was aware of the consequences which the communication of such an order must produce on the minds of any men jealous of their honour ; he was compelled by a renewed and peremptory order to enforce it, and every officer retired. In the ceded districts and the northern division the

officers, with the exception of a few of the staff, universally refused. In Travancore and Malabar the officers declined (as my letters from thence describe it) "to acknowledge the receipt of an insult," but assured their commanding officers, that they would be obedient, and, in every possible extremity, faithfully perform their duty. These commanding officers, Colonel Forbes and Colonel Stewart of his Majesty's service, acting with discretion, stated the circumstance to government, and were, it is said, strongly rebuked for preferring reason to violence. At Nundidroog, a battalion of the 3d regiment of native infantry, and the charge of that impregnable garrison, was left to the senior Subidar; the whole of the European officers, including the Commandant, having declined the test, and retired towards their appointed exile. At Seringapatam, some indecision appears to have occurred with regard to the course to be pursued; the circumstances became known to the men of the battalion of artillery, and the native corps in garrison, who declared that they would not be separated from their officers; Colonel Davis commanding the division, who had gone on the 30th of July to

* Appendix, No. 10. Major Welsh's singular letter.

that garrison to enforce the order, was for a time detained as a prisoner, but afterwards released: a detachment of his Majesty's 80th regiment was sent out of the garrison, which shut its gates, and determined on absolute resistance, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Bell, of the artillery.

In that gradation of insanity, produced by gradations of injury, and the re-action of feelings permitted to overstep the boundaries of duty, the crisis had now arrived, which I conscientiously believe, not one of the officers then in resistance had contemplated, until irritated beyond the controul of reason. They had, in a period of phrenzy pledged themselves to support each other, and on a mistaken idea of what honour required from such a pledge, they acted to the injury of their honour, and to the disgrace of the service to which they belonged.

On the 3d of August the government announced in public orders to the *native troops* that a considerable number of their European officers had renounced their allegiance, and were removed from the exercise of authority; and called on them to give obedience exclusively to the government, and to those officers whom the government might appoint to command them.

On the same date Colonel Close arrived at Hyderabad, and attempted to take the command of the force. Lieutenant-Colonel Montresor, who still exercised a limited command over the detailed duties of the troops, met him and reported their state; his Majesty's 33d regiment being the only corps fully under his command: the officers commanding the other corps, wished to enter into stipulations with Colonel Close: he demanded their obedience, and appealed to their feelings as soldiers, as subjects, and as men, in terms which produced the most evident agitation in their minds; but without immediate success. Finding his efforts with the officers unavailing, he addressed himself to the native troops, and, in a tone of peculiar eloquence and animation, demanded of them to obey him as the officer appointed by the government, to whom their regimental officers were disobedient. If any man in the service could have effected such an object, Colonel Close was that man. *Habit* and *discipline* prevailed against him. The men obeyed the officers in the customary gradation of command, according to the course of instruction by which every soldier is habitually taught to deem no order binding that does not come through its appointed channel. After a short and anxious

struggle to recall them to allegiance, Colonel Close observed indications of intended violence, and felt himself compelled to demand the only alternative which seemed to remain, namely, that he should be either their commander, or their prisoner. The field-officers, however, treated him with the highest veneration, deprecated the idea of personal disrespect, refused to consider him as a prisoner; and appeared to feel most poignantly the situation in which they stood. They had originally given way to the violence of younger men, who had gained ascendancy from numbers; and Colonel Close, after a display of ability, firmness, and ardent zeal, which elevated his high character even in the opinion of those who most opposed him, left the cantonment after requesting Colonel Montresor to resume the degree of command which he had been able to exercise, to avoid the dreadful consequences of total anarchy.

The effect of this scene was various as the minds which were called on to consider it. The senior officers, roused to reflection by the eloquence of Colonel Close, viewed with horror and remorse the extent of their guilt; the younger and more violent men resolved on measures of extremity. The natives were at this time steady in their attachment to their

officers, and so much alarmed and provoked at the idea of being separated from them, and placed under the command of young officers from the King's service, that they entered into a solemn pledge to each other to destroy the 33d regiment, if it should attempt to oppose them; the cavalry proposing that they should be allowed to charge them first. Circumstances, which accidentally occurred, tended to prove the reality of this feeling, and it was most fortunate that the prudence of Colonel Montresor prevented such a catastrophe.

The garrison from Masulipatam, and the field detachment at Jaulna, were summoned to join the Hyderabad force, which had prepared to march on the 9th of August, but was prevented by the temperate and conciliatory remonstrances of Colonel Montresor. The garrison of Masulipatam, which had been calmed by Colonel Malcolm's exertions, when he left that place on the 22d July, was, by the subsequently proposed test, replaced in mutiny, and had determined to march on the 8th of August to Hyderabad.

At this period the proclamation of the Governor-General, of the 20th of July*, announ-

* Appendix, No. 11.

cing his intention to proceed to the coast, for the purpose of making himself more accurately acquainted with circumstances, and endeavouring to reclaim the officers to a sense of their allegiance, reached Masulipatam, and was forwarded to Hyderabad. Reflection had already operated powerfully; Colonel Close's oration, for as such it eminently deserves to be distinguished, had shown to all but the most violent, the abyss into which they were about to plunge; they eagerly caught at the opening for escape offered by Lord Minto's proclamation; and, on the 11th of August, addressed a letter to his Lordship, submitting to his authority, signed the test, and asked amnesty for themselves and brother officers at other stations, to whom they earnestly recommended the immediate adoption of similar measures*.

On the same date a scene occurred, near Seringapatam, of a nature to recall to a sense of duty all in whom that sentiment was not utterly extinguished. The leaders of insubordination, in that garrison, had summoned to their aid two battalions from Chittledroog, which had marched on the 6th, and, after being harassed by the Mysoor horse, placed for that

* Appendix, No. 12.

purpose, on their route, had, on the 11th, approached within four miles of Seringapatam; a regiment of dragoons, his Majesty's 59th regiment of foot, a regiment of native cavalry, and a battalion of native infantry, both officered from his Majesty's corps, had marched from Bangalore, under Colonel Gibbs, to intercept this detachment. Worn out by a march of 180 miles in five days, the Sepoys from Chittledroog, at the moment of attack, were incapable, had they been willing, to make resistance; and, on the appearance of the dragoons joining the Mysore horse in the charge, threw down their arms, and endeavoured to escape across a nulla, beyond which a swamp of paddy fields would aid their escape to the fort, whence a detachment had sallied to make a diversion in their favour; all but the rear guard had crossed, when the dragoons charged the unarmed and unresisting Sepoys, and cut down 150 of their number. Captain Mackintosh, their commander, who had crossed the nulla, returned to endeavour to stop the carnage, and was wounded and made prisoner; the other officers, with above one thousand men, got into the Fort of Seringapatam without farther loss, one young officer excepted, who died from excessive fatigue.

On the 9th of August, the government had, by general orders, pardoned the non-commissioned European officers and privates of the European regiments at Masulipatam, excluding the officers as rebels. This order was, on the 14th, read to the regiment by General Pater. The men declared that they would accept of no pardon in which their officers were not included; a considerable agitation ensued; but the proscribed officers at length succeeded in persuading the men to *return to their duty, and leave them to their fate.*

The government had resorted to the most dangerous of all expedients to counteract the existing disaffection, by causing letters to be written to native officers, and employing agents to tempt the men, by promises and other means of persuasion, to desert their European officers, who were stated to be unworthy of respect and obedience. It was safe to trust to such a man as Colonel Close the personal exercise of such a dangerous discretion; and it may be added, that after his failure, it was absurd to expect more powerful effects from the intervention of any other agent. But the very success of an attempt thus thrown abroad to work desolation, under the blind, distant, and uncontroled direction of chance, was infinitely more to be

apprehended than its failure, and it was fortunate that, in every instance that I have heard of, the receivers of such letters uniformly waited on their officers to report the fact, treated them as forgeries, and declared that these attempts only bound them more firmly in their attachment.

The first effect of this system was unfortunate. Letters, of the tendency above described, received by native officers at Jaulna, from the office of the Adjutant-general, were immediately communicated to their officers. This large and effective field-force, when summoned to march to Hyderabad, had resisted the measure, and remonstrated against violence; the present incident, added to the intelligence of the test, threw its officers into a state of phrenzy; they actually marched on the 14th, confident in the unshaken attachment of the native troops, and published a most inflammatory manifesto, to explain the objects of their movement. The intelligence of Lord Minto's proclamation, and the submission of the officers at Hyderabad, reached them on their second march, and they returned to their former frontier station.

A laboured account, stating that nearly the whole of the rebel force from Chittledroog

had been destroyed," had been published under the authority of the government, on the 18th of August, and the *unhappy fate* of the whole had been pourtrayed in a very moving picture, inserted in the general orders, and translated for the edification of the native troops; it so happened that one of the battalions at Hyderabad was raised at the same place as one of those stated to have been destroyed, and both corps were nearly connected by family relationships. The account of this destruction produced the greatest agitation in the battalion alluded to, and through it in all the other corps. The women called loudly on their husbands and brothers to revenge their relatives, who had been butchered by the *Europeans*; and, it is difficult to determine, whether the storm would have burst on the 33d regiment, have terminated in a renewal of the scenes of 1806, or have involved the horrors of both, had not a private letter, which Colonel Montresor judiciously made public, contradicted the official statement. On the 30th of August, the government thought proper to contradict their narrative of the 18th, but the agitations which have been produced among the native troops, by the communications made

to them, under the authority of government, are assuming the most serious forms, and I shudder to contemplate their probable consequences.

Seringapatam surrendered unconditionally on the 22d of August; and all resistance is considered to be now at an end.

I have hastily described the progress of actual resistance and rebellion, not only from a dislike to dwell on a subject so painful, but from a persuasion that you will receive it at length in public documents, which you will of course peruse with the doubts and reservations arising from the example which I have just recited.

Lord Minto arrived on the 11th of September, and if he sees with his own eyes, and hears with his own ears, he may yet do much good, although his powers are greatly weakened by the unguarded approbation he bestowed, without a thorough knowledge of the nature of the system which he praised.

I inclose, together with copies of all the papers to which I have hitherto referred, an address, stated to be from the principal inhabitants of Madras, to Sir George Barlow, who answers and thanks in that character, the Chief

Judge, without his colleague, two members of the council; the participators of his measures; without the senior member, who is stated to have opposed them, and an assemblage of dependants, civil and military; including the Governor's own personal staff, who, in allusion to the official station and habits of its supposed author, were said to have been subpoena'd to sign what they had not been assembled to propose or discuss. A very differently signed address may be expected to Lord Minto: a meeting has been regularly announced by the Sheriff, and the sentiments towards his predecessor will procure him abundant congratulations, although he does not himself precisely correspond with the notion we have formed, from some examples yet fondly remembered, of "a patriot Governor-General."

Sir George, since he, like the non-conforming officers, has been obliged to retire for the present from the functions of that office, is said to claim, for his measure of influencing the Sepoys, the whole merit of subduing insurrection. Nothing can be more completely unfounded; the Sepoys adhered, even to the bad cause of their officers, until the moment of their submission, with an attachment at which all must rejoice, who know how to look beyond the present mo-

ment for the means of permanent prosperity in India. To the effect of Col. Close's address to the European officers at Hyderabad, their consequent reflection on the evils of civil war, and other countless mischiefs necessarily resulting from the fatal system they had adopted, and, above all, to the opening for hope afforded by Lord Minto's opportune proclamation, of the 20th of July, must be ascribed the return of the insubordinate to duty and obedience.

What may be the conclusion is a speculation at this moment of the utmost anxiety to all those (and they constitute the whole mass of society), who have friends they esteem, deeply involved in measures which they cannot but condemn, and who feel an interest in the future prosperity of India. May the Almighty grant firmness and decision to our present ruler, to inflict with promptitude, and according to due course of trial, those dreadful punishments, without which, the future exercise of government must be impracticable: and this work of imperious necessity, once over, and the requisite mercy extended to minor offenders, may the Source of all Mercy pour into his heart the wisdom to correct, by a radical change,

those errors in the recent system, which we view as the chief cause of all the evils we deplore!

I am,

My dear G——,

Your's, &c.

Madras, Sept. 13,
1809.

APPENDIX.

N. B. Many of the Papers transmitted with this Letter having already appeared in the daily Prints, have on account of their length been omitted by the Editor, such extracts only being retained, as appeared to be absolutely necessary for the information of the Reader.

No. 1.

CHARGE.

WE the undersigned Officers do hereby charge Lieut.-Col. Munro, quarter-master-general of the army, and captain in the Madras European regiment, with conduct unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman in the following instance, viz.

In having, in his plan for the abolition of the tent contract lately held by officers commanding native corps, made use of false and infamous insinuations, thereby tending to injure our characters as officers, and otherwise injurious to our characters as gentlemen.

Signed by thirty-two Officers Commanding Corps.

No. 2.

MEMORIAL from the OFFICERS commanding NATIVE CORPS upon the Establishment of FORT ST. GEORGE, to the Hon. COURT of DIRECTORS of the Hon. EAST-INDIA COMPANY, &c.

SHEWETH,

1. That we, the undersigned Memorialists, officers, commanding native corps upon the Madras Establishment, have the honour, with all deference and respect, to solicit the attention of your Honourable Court to the subject of our appeal, which we, with the utmost duty and submission, offer to your consideration.

2. Your Memorialists beg to state, that Captain JOHN MUNRO, of the European regiment on this Establishment, and quarter-master-general of the army, delivered some months since to the Commander-in-Chief at Madras, certain proposals, bearing date 30 June, 1808, recommending the abolition of the tent contract, which, on the 1st of July last, was taken from officers commanding native corps in your army, at Madras.

3. Whether the tent contract, as consistent with the good of the public service, should or should not have continued to exist, is a subject your Memorialists will not presume to trouble your Honourable Court upon; but certain articles which the Quarter-Master-General has inserted in his proposals, as motives that prevailed with him for recommending the abolition of the tent contract, your Memorialists have to observe, no less excited their surprise, than did the feelings of poignant concern, in perceiving such dishonourable principles so unjustly attributed to them.

4. Your Memorialists will here furnish the extracts from the Quarter-Master-General's proposals, on which they ground their complaint to your Honourable Court:—

“ Six years experience of the practical effects of the existing system of the camp-equipage equipment of the native army has afforded means of forming a judgment relative to its advantages and efficiency, which were not possessed by the persons who proposed its introduction; and an attentive examination of its operations during that period of time has suggested the following observations regarding it:—By granting the same allowance in peace and war for the equipment of a native corps, while the expences incidental to that charge are unavoidably much greater in war than in peace, it places the interest and duty of officers commanding native corps in direct opposition to one another; it makes it their interest that their corps should not be in a state of efficiency fit for field-service, and therefore furnishes strong inducements to neglect their most important duties.

“ By charging commanding officers of corps with extensive concerns, immediately affecting their private interests, it calculated, particularly in the field, to divert their attention and their pursuit from the discipline and management of their corps; objects that should furnish them with sufficient employment for the whole of their time.

(Signed) “ JOHN MUNRO,
“ Quarter-Master-General of the Army.”

5. Your Memorialists, with the justest sentiments of deference to your Hon. Court, beg to state that these

articles unequivocally convey a most cruel and wanton insult, as well as an injurious aspersion (we all feel it) to officers who have faithfully served their country, many for nearly 30 years, some more; in affirming, that upon the experience and observation of six years, formed upon the judgment of practical effect, it appears, officers commanding native corps have strong inducements, from interest, to neglect their most important duties, in order that their corps should not be in a state of efficiency fit for field-service.

6. Your Memorialists conceive that these assertions, in their application with regard to time, and operation with respect to effect, are no less than accusing them of having sacrificed the interests and security of the public service for a base purpose, and of having violated that trust which your Honourable Court, which Government, and which the Commander-in-chief, in certain confidence place in them. Your Memorialists perceive in them also an insinuation of an utter dereliction of the pride of military spirit, in their having a wish, from pecuniary motives, not to be prepared to meet the enemies of their country.

7. Impressed with those painful sensations, which such serious imputations cannot fail to create, your Memorialists, in several instances, without delay, and with all possible respect, separately addressed themselves to his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-General HAY MACDOWALL, upon the subject of the Quarter-Master-General's allegations. His Excellency had the condescension to answer the several applications of appeal; but in a circular reply, observing in substance, that as he had not been consulted with regard to the

abolition of the tent contract, he did not feel himself at liberty to interfere in any matter connected with the subject, upon individual application.

8. Your Memorialists have to state to your Honourable Court, that, in consequence of this notification, feeling the injury done them by the insinuations in the Quarter-Master-General's minute, they adopted the means of redress which appeared to them to be most consistent with their ideas of justice, and, with the duty they owe to their superiors; submitted to their immediate principal; the Commander-in-Chief, the substance of their complaints, in the form of a military charge; but finding that this mode was considered by the Judge-Advocate-General to be irregular, or ineffectual towards the vindication of their injured feelings, they respectfully abide by that opinion for the present, and have solicited a suspension of the direct charge against the individual, while they appealed to the candour and justice of your Honourable Court, trusting it may please them to order an investigation of the subject, as from an investigation alone can they hope for a removal of the disgraceful impression which the insinuations in the Quarter-Master-General's proposals are calculated to produce, and which your Memorialists in confidence beg to assure your Honourable Court are equally unfounded in fact as they are injurious to the characters of the officers of the Honourable Company's army.

9. Your Memorialists have further to state to your Honourable Court, that had the Quarter-Master-General promulgated his injurious insinuations, serious as they are, in his capacity of Captain in the European regiment, a conscious integrity might, from the repugnance your Memorialists feel to complain, have

treated them probably with a dignified silence, or with private dissuasive admonition; but, armed with the authority of the Quarter-Master-General of the Army, your Memorialists are of opinion that they obtain a consequence and consideration, which, it is apprehended by them, cannot fail to influence the public mind, not only in India, but in Europe; and create a belief, that a Quarter-Master-General could not possibly circulate such serious assertions, against a body of officers of that army of which he is Quarter-Master-General, without an existing just cause.

10. To remove such an impression, and to establish upon incontrovertible testimony, that the officers commanding native corps have faithfully fulfilled those duties which the public service expects and requires from them, are the primary objects which gave birth to that solicitude on the part of your Memorialists, for an investigation. A secondary object is to stamp with due effect the nature of that offence in promulgating such serious and erroneous matter, so highly injurious to their characters as officers and gentlemen, as well as to the respectability of the Honourable Company's service in general.

11. Your Memorialists anxiously hope, that when the magnitude of the subject of which they complain shall be taken into consideration by your Honourable Court, it will fully appear to your judgment that they are not actuated, in their appeal, by any frivolous or unreasonably tenacious principles, on any object not strictly connected with that perfect moderation and temperate pursuit of justice, which your Honourable Court, in its wisdom and consideration, are ever dis-

posed to attend to, with those who, under the feeling and firm persuasion of just complaint, claim your protection and support.

12. Your Memorialists, through the medium of their immediate Superior, his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Lieut. Gen. HAY MACDOWALL, transmit their memorial; and in relying upon that distinguished liberality and goodness which have invariably marked his attentions to them, to give their cause that support which in his judgment it may deserve; they will with every sentiment of profound respect and deference submissively wait for, and obediently conform to such decision, as your Honourable Court shall, in the justness of your wisdom, determine upon their cause.

Madras, Signed by thirty-two Officers,
Dec. 1808. Commanding Native Corps.

[This was rejected by Sir GEORGE BARLOW, and returned to General MACDOWALL.]

To the ADJUTANT GENERAL of the ARMY.

“SIR—We the under-mentioned Officers, commanding native corps upon this Establishment, have the honour to forward the accompanying memorial which we request you will lay before his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Lieut. General HAY MACDOWALL, and which we have to solicit his Excellency will take such measures as to him may appear most suitable for the transmission of the same to the Hon. Court of Directors.

“The Commander-in-Chief being already so well acquainted with the general and particular circumstances that gave rise to the immediate subject of appeal, it be-

comes wholly unnecessary on our part to enter into any further explanation for his Excellency's information.

“The long series of years which the Commander-in-Chief has served with the Coast-army, and that benign goodness with which he has invariably, both in his public and private character, distinguished many of those who now appeal through his authority, under a period of painful concern, creates every confidence and hope that his Excellency will, as our immediate superior, condescend to honour our memorial with such assistance and support, as in his judgment the subject has claim to; and which, we are fully persuaded, cannot fail to give it the most impartial introduction to the attention of the Hon. Court of Directors.

“Madras Establishment, Dec. 1808.”

[Signed by 32 Officers commanding Native Corps.]

No. 3.

Extract—GENERAL ORDERS, 17th January 1809.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief is pleased to direct that officers commanding divisions, stations, corps, or detachments of corps, shall, on the receipt of orders directing the movement of any part of the troops under their command, forward by the same day's Post a copy of such orders to the office of the Adjutant-General of the Army, under similar exceptions to that contained in the 4th paragraph of the 7th section of the code of regulations respecting special orders from the secret department of government, when such copies shall be addressed personally to the Commander-in-Chief or officer commanding the forces, and superscribed—Secret.

No. 4.

GENERAL ORDERS.—BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

“ Head-Quarters, Choultry Plain, Jan. 25, 1809.

“ The moment is now arrived when Lieutenant-General M'Dowall is to take leave of the Company's army, whose ardent courage, consummate discipline, and persevering firmness, have been displayed in the achievements of those brilliant exploits which have secured its own glory, and added to the British Empire extensive fertile regions of incalculable value and importance. May your patriotism, valour, and worth, be acknowledged and rewarded by your King and the East-India Company, in proportion as they are known and appreciated by your Commander-in-Chief!

“ Had Lieut. General M'Dowall succeeded to the high and enviable office with all the advantages enjoyed by his predecessors, he would, upon first assuming the command, have promulgated his sentiments on so flattering an event; but the circumstances of his appointment were so humiliating and unpropitious, that he declined addressing the army, in the anxious hope that the Court of Directors might, on further deliberation, be induced to restore him to his right, by altering the new and extraordinary forms of government, and have enabled him to exercise the function of his station, as the representative of the army, with honour to the service and credit to himself; no prospect of such an occurrence being at all probable, in justice to the army and to his own character, he has determined to retire.

“ On quitting a country where he has passed the greatest part of his life, and where he possesses many

dear and respectable friends, Lieut.-General M'Dowall cannot view his separation from a body of men he is sincerely attached to, without suffering the most painful sensations from the nature of the service he can have little chance of ever meeting with them again, but he is bound to declare that the whole of their conduct meets with his entire approbation, and he will boldly affirm, without danger of contradiction, that his Majesty has not, in any part of his dominions, a more loyal, patriotic, and valiant class of soldiers and subjects, than the officers composing the army at Fort St. George. That success may continue to attend their steps; that their dearly bought laurels may never decay; and that their bravery and discipline may gather additional wreaths in the field of honour, is the sincere prayer of a man who will never forget them!

(Signed)

“ F. CAPPER,
“ Adj-Gen. of the Army.”

No. 5.

GENERAL ORDERS.

G. O. By the Commander-in-Chief.

*Head-Quarters, Choultry Plain,
Jan. 28, 1809.*

The immediate departure of General Macdowall from Madras will prevent his pursuing the design of bringing L. Col. Munro, Quarter-Master-General, to trial, for disrespect to the Commander-in-Chief, for disobedience of orders, and for contempt of military authority, in having resorted to the power of the civil government

In defiance of the judgment of the officer at the head of the army, who had placed him under arrest on charges preferred against him by a number of officers commanding native corps; in consequence of which appeal direct to the Honourable the President in Council, Lieut. Gen. Macdowall has received a positive order from the Chief Secretary, to liberate Lieut. Col. Munro from arrest.

Such conduct on the part of Lieut. Col. Munro being destructive of subordination, subversive of military discipline, a violation of the sacred rights of the Commander-in-Chief, and holding out a most dangerous example to the service; Lieut. Gen. Macdowall, in support of the dignity of the profession, and his own station and character, feels it incumbent on him to express his strong disapprobation of Lieut. Col. Munro's proceedings, and considers it a solemn duty imposed upon him to reprimand Lieut. Col. Munro in general orders: And he is hereby reprimanded accordingly.

T. BOLES,
Dep. Adj. Gen.

No. 6.

GENERAL ORDERS.—By Government.

*Fort St. George,
Jan. 31, 1809.*

“It has recently come to the knowledge of the Governor in Council, that Lieutenant-general M'Dowall did, previously to his embarkation from the Presidency, leave, to be published to the army, a general order, da-

ted 28th inst. in the highest degree disrespectful to the authority of the government; in which that officer has presumed to found a public censure on an act adopted under the immediate authority of the Governor in Council, and to convey insinuations grossly derogatory to the character of the government, and subversive of military discipline, and of the foundation of public authority. The resignation of Lieutenant-General M'Dowall of the command of the army of Fort St. George not having been yet received, it becomes the duty of the Governor in Council, in consideration of the violent and inflammatory proceedings of that officer, in the present, and on other recent occasions, and for the purpose of preventing the repetition of further acts of outrage, to anticipate the period of his expected resignation, and to annul the appointment of Lieutenant-General M'Dowall to the command of the army of this Presidency. Lieutenant-General M'Dowall is accordingly hereby removed from the station of Commander-in-chief of the Forces at Fort St. George.

“The Governor in Council must lament, with the deepest regret, the necessity of resorting to an extreme measure of this nature; but when a manifest endeavour has been used to bring into degradation the supreme public authority, it is essential that the vindication should not be less signal than the offence; and that a memorable example should be given that proceedings subversive of established order can find no security under the sanction of rank, however high, or of station, however exalted.

“The general order in question having been circulated under the signature of the Deputy Adjutant-General

of the army, it must have been known to that officer, that in giving currency to a paper of this offensive description, he was acting in direct violation of his duty to the government, as no authority can justify the execution of an illegal act, connected as that act obviously in the present case has been with views of the most reprehensible nature; the Governor in Council thinks proper to mark his highest displeasure of the conduct of Major Boles, by directing that he shall be suspended from the Company's service.

"The general order left by the Commander-in-Chief for publication, under date 28th inst. is directed to be expunged from every public record, and the Adjutant-General of the Army will immediately circulate the necessary orders for that purpose.

"By order of the Hon. Gov. in Council,

"GEO. BUCHAN.
Sec. to Government."

No. 7.

Extract from the Officers at Nundidroog.

"The Right Hon. Lord Minto has admitted the right of soldiers on some occasions to consider the nature and tendency of orders: under this sanction we solemnly protest against measures, which, if persevered in, cannot fail to ruin our Honourable masters. We see the evil already far advanced; we behold the probable consequences of the present system; and we shudder for the fate of British India."

No. 8.

G. O. By the Honourable the Governor in Council.

Fort St. George, the 1st of May, 1809.

The zeal and discipline by which the military establishment of *Fort St. George* had long been distinguished, induced the Governor in Council to expect that the measures which the violent and intemperate acts of the late Commander-in-Chief had imposed on the Government, would be received by all the officers of the army with the sentiments of respect and obedience prescribed by the principles of military subordination, and due to the government by which those measures were adopted, as well as to the authorities to which they were ultimately referred. The Governor in Council has however learned with a degree of surprise proportionate to the confidence which he reposed in the discipline of the army, that soon after the departure of the late Commander-in-Chief, proceedings of the most unjustifiable nature, and correspondent to the example which he had afforded, were pursued by certain officers of the army.

The most reprehensible of those proceedings consisted in the preparation of a paper addressed to the Right Honourable the Governor-General, purporting to be a remonstrance in the name of the army against the acts of the government under which it serves. That paper is not more hostile to the authority of this government than to the first principles of all government.

It maintains opinion is directly adverse to the constitution of the British service, and is calculated to destroy

every foundation of discipline, obedience, and fidelity. The secrecy observed in preparing this seditious paper, prevented for some time the discovery of the persons engaged in that proceeding. But it has now been ascertained that Captain Josiah Marshall, late Secretary to the Military Board, and Lieutenant Colonel-George Martin, lately permitted to proceed to *England*, were principally concerned in preparing and circulating the memorial in question; and that Lieutenant-Colonel, the *Honourable* Arthur Sentleger was active in promoting its circulation, employing the influence which he derived from the important command confided to him by the government, for the purpose of attempting the subversion of its authority, and spreading disaffection among the troops which it had entrusted to his charge.

It has also been ascertained, that Major John De Morgan has been active in the circulation of the memorial.

The Governor in Council is also under the necessity of noticing another paper of a most dangerous tendency, lately in circulation at some of the military stations, purporting to be an address from the Officers of the army to Major Boles, the late Deputy Adjutant-General. In this address a right is assumed to decide on the acts of the government, by condemning in unqualified terms the sentence of suspension passed on Major Boles; and an encouragement is held out to other officers to violate their duty to the government, by affording a pecuniary indemnification not only to Major Boles, but to all such officers as shall suffer by any act of the government which the subscribers to the address may deem exceptionable. This paper, so incompatible with the military

character, and so repugnant to the first principles of military discipline and government, was forced on the attention of the Governor by Captain James Grant, Commandant of his body-guard, who, while holding that confidential situation, and employed by order of the Governor in Council under the Resident at *Travancore*, transmitted a copy of the paper to be laid before the Governor with an avowal that he had affixed his signature to it, and a defence of the grounds on which he adopted that proceeding.

It has also been ascertained, that a paper of a similar tendency has been circulated among the officers of the corps of artillery at the *Mount*, and that its circulation has been promoted by Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Bell, the officer commanding that corps.

The Governor in Council regrets that he is obliged to notice also the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers (commanding in *Travancore*,) and Lieutenant-Colonel Cuppage (lately commanding in *Malabar*, and employed with the troops under his orders in *Travancore*,) who appear to have taken no steps whatever either to repress, or report to the government the improper proceedings pursued by part of the troops under their orders. It is not sufficient for officers holding commands, to avoid a participation in such proceedings; it is their positive and indispensable duty to adopt the most decided measures for their suppression, and to report them to their superior authorities.

It has further been ascertained that Captain J. M. Coombs, Assistant Quarter-Master-General in *Mysore*, has been concerned in these reprehensible proceedings.

It becomes the painful duty of the Governor in Coun-

cil to mark with the displeasure of the government the conduct of the abovementioned officers, who have been engaged in a course of measures equally dangerous to the existence of discipline, to the foundations of legal government, and to the interests of their country.

The undermentioned Officers are accordingly declared to be suspended from the service of the Honourable Company until the pleasure of the Honourable the Court of Directors shall be known :

Lieutenant-Colonel the *Honourable* Arthur Sentleger.
Major John De Morgan.
Captain Josiah Marshall, and
Captain James Grant.

Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Robert Bell is removed from all military charge and command until the pleasure of the Honourable the Court of Directors shall be known : but he is permitted to draw his regimental pay and allowances.

Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Chalmers is removed from the command of the subsidiary force in *Travancore*.

The undermentioned officers are removed from their staff-appointments, and ordered to join the corps to which they stand attached :

Lieutenant-Colonel Cuppage, Adjutant-General ; and
Captain J. M. Coombs.

The Governor in Council considers it to be proper to avail himself of this occasion to correct a misapprehension highly dangerous in its tendency, which has arisen in the minds of some of the officers of the army with regard to the nature of the authority of the Governor in Council. This misapprehension appears to have origina-

ted in the general order published by the late Commander-in-Chief on the 28th of January last, from which it might be inferred that the authority of the Governor in Council is only of a civil nature ; whereas by the express enactment of the legislature, the entire civil and military government of the Presidency of *Fort St. George* and its dependencies is vested in the Governor in Council. It is therefore to be distinctly understood, that no officer, of whatever rank, while serving under the Presidency of *Fort St. George*, can, without incurring the penalties of disobedience to the legislature of his country, issue any order in violation, or to the derogation of the authority of the government ; and that every officer complying with an order of that description under any pretence whatever, renders himself liable to the forfeiture of the service, and to such legal penalties as the nature of the case may demand.

While the Governor in Council deems it to be proper to afford the foregoing explanation, he feels himself at the same time bound to acknowledge that the principles to which he has adverted, had never been called in question until the publication of the abovementioned order of the late Commander-in-Chief ; on the contrary, these principles had been invariably acted upon by the government and by the officers of the army of this Presidency, who have been no less distinguished for their obedience and discipline, than for their achievements in the field.

The Governor in Council also experiences the most sincere satisfaction in publishing his conviction that the majority of the army have resisted all participation in the improper and dangerous proceedings

described in this order; and it is an act of justice to the troops of his Majesty's service to declare his entire approbation of the order, discipline, and steady adherence to duty, which they have invariably manifested. The information before the government does not enable the Governor in Council to distinguish by the expression of his approbation all the troops of the Company's service that have manifested the same dispositions; but he deems it to be proper to notice on this occasion the satisfactory and exemplary conduct of the part of the army composing the *Hyderabad* subsidiary force. The Honourable the Governor in Council is also confident that such officers as have inadvertently yielded to the misrepresentations of individuals who have been engaged in the prosecution of designs equally fatal to the honour and to the interests of the army, will in future manifest in the service of the government the obedience, fidelity, and zeal, which constitute the first principles of their profession, which hitherto distinguished the army, and which are indispensable to the prosperity of the British Empire in *India*.

By order of the Honourable the Governor in Council.
(Signed) A. FALCONAR,

CHIEF SEC. TO GOV.

By order of Major General Gowdie,
Commanding the Army.

No. 9.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, ROBERT BELL.

Sir,

The Officers of the Artillery now at St. Thomas's Mount have learnt with extreme regret, that by the orders of government, under date the 1st of May 1809, you have been removed from the command of their corps and this cantonment.

Permit us upon this occasion to express to you the happiness we have long experienced in your society, as an individual; the high respect we entertain for your military character, and the conviction with which we are thoroughly impressed of your being on every occasion actuated by a generous zeal for the public service, and the purest principles of private virtue, and professional honour. With such sentiments of esteem, it may be supposed, that the cause stated by government for the suspension of your functions has greatly distressed us; and firmly believing, as we do, that the Governor in Council must, on this occasion, have received information regarding you, altogether incorrect, we seize this early opportunity, in justice to you and to ourselves, to make this solemn and unequivocal declaration, that you have neither directly nor indirectly countenanced or influenced the circulation of any papers of the tendency alluded to in the above order; on the contrary, you have invariably evinced the greatest disinclination to making any comments whatever upon late occurrences.

With feelings of the highest respect and with a sin-

ere hope that we may soon again enjoy the honour and happiness of being under your command,

We remain, Sir, your sincere Well-wishers
and very obedient Servants,

(Signed) JOHN BELL, Lieut. Col.
and Twenty-eight Artillery-Officers.

No. 10.

To Col. DAVIS, Commanding, Mysore.

Sir,

I have this morning received your official letter, giving cover to a copy of a letter from government, under date the 26th ult.; and have in reply to state, that I tendered the paper in due form to all the officers present here, who (unanimously) refused to sign it. I have delivered over the command to Supadar Bohool Sing, a most respectable and good soldier, whom I had some trouble to persuade to supersede his European officers in the command of the corps and station. The enclosed will fully explain any thing farther.

August 6th, 1809. I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) I. W—h.
late Major.

No. 11.

Extract from Lord Minto's Proclamation, or General Order of the 20th July, 1809.

The occurrence of this afflicting event*, combined with the agitation which unhappily prevails among the offi-

* The mutiny at Masulipatam.

cers of the army of Fort St. George, renders it the duty of the Governor-General to proceed without delay to that Presidency, in the hope of being enabled successfully to appeal to those sentiments of loyalty and attachment to their King and their Country, which his Lordship in Council yet confidently ascribes to the general body of the officers of the Coast-army, whose zeal, fidelity, and professional achievements have hitherto been the theme of just and unqualified applause, and by an accurate knowledge of all circumstances which have attended the late agitation, to devise such means as may best tend to avert the impending dangers of anarchy and insubordination, and re-establish the foundations of public security and national prosperity in this important branch of the British Empire.

No. 12.

(Copy.)

Secunderabad, 11th August, 1809.

We the undersigned officers of the Company's army, attached to the Hyderabad subsidiary force, awfully impressed with a sense of the dangers that threaten the country, and not less actuated by those pure sentiments of loyalty and patriotism, from which we have never departed, beg leave to assure you that we attribute the want of success of Colonel Close's mission to the sudden and unexpected manner in which he presented the test that was proposed for our signatures; relying however, as we are now disposed to do, upon the jus-

...tice, wisdom, and clemency of your Lordship, we do not
hesitate in avowing our determination to abide by your
Lordship's decision; and as a proof of the sincerity of
our principles, have subscribed the test which now ac-
companies this address: at the same time most earnestly
appealing to your Lordship's generosity for granting a
general amnesty to us and to all those who have been en-
gaged in the late unhappy events.

To the Right Honourable Lord Minto, &c. &c. &c.

...Circular to the Stations of the Army.

The above address with the test has been signed
and dispatched by all the officers of the force: imperi-
ous circumstances demanded, and mature reflection im-
pelled them to the measure which they earnestly im-
plore their brother officers to adopt as speedily as possi-
ble.

(Signed) The Officers of the H. S. Force.

13th August, 1809.

FINIS.