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JOHN COMPANY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE
ITS HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS

THE BODLEY HEAD



To Honourable Sir Thomas Smythe President of the Virginia Company
 and for one his Wife to the great Emperours
 of Russia Governours of Hon^{ne} and famous
 Societys of Maritima Trade to the East
 Indies Muscovy, the French and some
 Islands Companyes Treasures for Virginia etc
 Simon Dyson sculp Lond^{on} A^o 1610 Jo^h Woodall excudit

SIR THOMAS SMYTHE

JOHN COMPANY

BY

SIR WILLIAM FOSTER, C.I.E.

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

I don't pretend to paint the vast
And complex picture of the Past

For detail, detail, most I care
(Ce superflu, si nécessaire !)

AUSTIN DOBSON

LONDON

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

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P R E F A C E

THE reception accorded to *The East India House* has encouraged the publishers to venture upon a second volume of the same general character, though of a somewhat wider scope. This has enabled me to complete the domestic history of John Company by describing the period prior to his removal to what proved to be his permanent home in Leadenhall Street. That period divides into two parts: the first when, as a young man just commencing business, he was content with a few rooms in Philpot Lane for his offices, the second when, growing prosperous, he rented for a time one of the finest residences in the City (Crosby House). An account is also given of his experiences as a shipbuilder at Blackwall, and of the Poplar charities to which this experiment in some measure gave rise. Other articles narrate special incidents in his history, or detail the careers of a few of his notable servants, and the series winds up with an account of his master, the India Board.

Though many of the articles are new, others have appeared (many years ago) in various periodicals—the *Home Counties Magazine*, the *Scottish Historical Review*, the *Indian Medical Gazette*, and the *London Topographical Record*, while the one on the India Board was read as a paper before the Royal Historical Society and published in its *Transactions*. I have to thank those concerned for

PREFACE

their kind permission to make use again of these contributions. In every case the article has been revised, and in some of them considerable alterations and additions have been made.

Of the illustrations several have been taken, with permission, from materials in the India Office. Acknowledgments are also due to the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum for allowing me to use the official photograph of the Bromley Room, to the officials of the Coin Department of the British Museum for assistance in making up the plate of coins, to Mr Emery Walker for the use of his photograph of the portrait of John Dean, to the Wardens of the Saddlers' Company for permitting me to reproduce their ballot box; and to the late Mr W Paley Baildon for giving me some of the blocks and drawings used to illustrate the articles on Poplar Hospital and Poplar Chapel.

The opportunity may be taken to correct a misstatement on p 228 of *The East India House*. I there stated (though with a cautious "It is said") that Peter Auber lived to the great age of ninety-six years. This brought me a letter from one of his collateral descendants, informing me that he was only in his sixtieth year at the time of his death in Jersey in 1848. It may also interest some of the readers of the previous volume to learn that the drawing by Vertue, of the East India House in 1711, which was reproduced as its frontispiece, has since been presented to the London Museum. A replica is in the possession of the India Office Library.

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I

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

“**A**T Mr Thomas Smythe’s¹ house in Philpot Lane”—such was the first address of the Honourable Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies, and it says much for the thrifty ways of our ancestors that for upwards of twenty years (with one short break) this rich and powerful association should have been content with the use of a few rooms in the city mansion of its first Governor. How astonished would the earliest members have been had they been told that three centuries later the Company would be the owners of a magnificent building standing on a site of an acre and a half, employing hundreds of clerks and, in its numerous outlying warehouses, thousands of labourers! Still more would they have marvelled to learn that the association they had helped to found would one day oust the Great Mogul from his throne, and win for Britain an empire far more populous than that of the Romans at the zenith of their power.

Where, then, is Philpot Lane, the scene in which the

¹ The name was evidently pronounced “Smith,” for not only is it often spelt in that way, but also the Rev Samuel Purchas, in his *Pilgrimage* (ed 1626, p. 487), speaks of him as “our honourable Smith at whose forge and anvil have bene hammer’d so many irons for Neptune.”

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first act of the drama is laid ? It is easily found. Going from Gracechurch Street along Fenchurch Street, it is the first turning on the right, running down into Eastcheap. There is nothing remarkable in its present-day aspect ; it is an ordinary, rather mean-looking, City street, lined with plain solid buildings, occupied chiefly by wine merchants, tea-dealers and fruit-brokers. By day there is the usual scurry of business life, at night the place is as silent and deserted as a graveyard. But at the time when Queen Elizabeth gave the East India Merchants their first charter, the appearance of the Lane was very different. Narrow as it now is, it was even narrower then, and in lieu of the modern pavements and asphalted roadway we must imagine an uneven surface, possibly cobbled, with a kennel running down the centre to carry off the rain-water. Of the quaint gabled houses that stood on each side some idea may be gained from Aggas's well-known map of Elizabethan London, though of course we must not for a moment impute formal accuracy to his details. The materials used were almost exclusively timber, lath and plaster, and the buildings had small windows and high-pitched roofs. Internally, save for a large sitting-room in the better class of house, they were cut up into a number of small, dark, smoky apartments, sparsely furnished, and to modern eyes singularly comfortless. Still, picturesque the architecture of the time undoubtedly was, and the irregularity of the street alignment, and the frequent breaks caused by tree-cumbered gardens, added yet further to the charm.

Where exactly Smythe's house stood we cannot now determine, but apparently it was not far from the Fenchurch Street end of the lane, for occasionally it is spoken of as though it were in Fenchurch Street itself. We may also infer that it was on the western side, with a back

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

entrance from Gracechurch Street Thomas Smythe, the Governor's father (generally known as "Customer Smythe," because for many years he farmed Queen Elizabeth's customs), had a house which is described as being in the latter thoroughfare, and which contained a hall of



LIVERY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

considerable size, where a mathematical lecture was delivered by Dr Hood in the year of the Spanish Armada. As the son's house, which in any case stood close to this spot, also included a large hall,¹ where the general assemblies

¹ Hanging in this hall, Purchas tells us, was an Esquimau canoe brought home in one of the North-west voyages, of which Smythe was an unuring promoter

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of the East India Company were mostly held, we may fairly conclude that the building was the same in both cases, and that it extended, with its courtyard and approaches, from the one street to the other. It is quite possible that, after his father's death in 1591, Smythe made alterations and additions on the Philpot Lane side, which henceforth became the principal frontage. How large the mansion was may be inferred from the fact, stated by Dr Maclean in his *Letters of Lord Carew*, that in 1619 the Marquis Tremouille, special envoy from the French King, found accommodation there for himself and a train of 120 persons.

Such was the house in a corner of which the East India Company commenced its long and splendid career. Some historians, misled, it may be, by the large amount subscribed for the first voyage and by the subsequent importance of the Company, have pictured it as starting business on a grand scale. It has been stated, for instance, that, in addition to the ordinary staff of a commercial body, Richard Hakluyt was appointed Historiographer, to hand down to posterity a minute record of its great achievements, but this is a misreading of an entry in the *Court Minutes* for January 29, 1601, where Hakluyt is spoken of as "the historiographer of the voyages of the East Indies," referring, of course, to his well-known work, just published. In point of fact the promoters of the new venture went to work in a much more sober and economical fashion. They did not forget that the enterprise was still in the experimental stage, that the Company's charter was liable to determination at two years' notice, and in any case, unless renewed, would expire in 1615, and that at any moment the discovery of the long-sought North-west Passage to the Indies might turn the trade into another channel. They were glad enough, therefore, to accept the offer of their

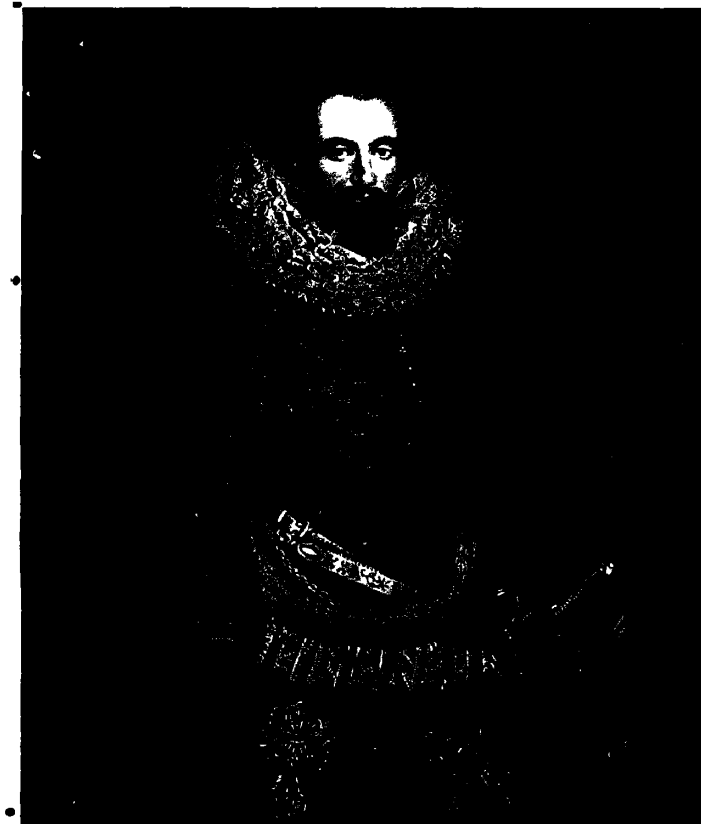
THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

Governor to carry on their business in his house , and their whole staff at starting consisted of a Secretary, Richard Wright, who was one of Smythe's own servants, and had other work in hand as well, and a Beadle to take round the subscription• book and give notice of Court meetings. Nearly all the real work was done by the " Committees " themselves (Directors we should now call them), they collected the funds, purchased goods, ships, and provisions, interviewed factors and seamen, checked the accounts and wrote all letters of importance , while again and again we read that Master So-and-So was " entreated " to undertake some piece of work which a modern director would indignantly declare to be the duty of the staff. In Elizabethan days, it is evident, London merchants believed thoroughly in the maxim that if you want a thing well done you should do it yourself.

Within a few weeks from the formal grant of the charter the preparations for the Company's first voyage were completed, and by the beginning of February, 1601, the ships, under Captain James Lancaster, were almost ready to put to sea. Suddenly a most unexpected thing happened. Smythe, who was the heart and soul of the enterprise, found himself caught in the vortex of politics, and was committed to the Tower on a charge of complicity in the rebellion of the Earl of Essex. That hot-headed nobleman had been for months a centre of disaffection. Having by his own folly and arrogance forfeited the Queen's favour, he had chosen to turn his personal grievance into a national one and to pose as the champion of Protestant patriotism, aiming only at foiling the machinations of Cecil and Raleigh, who, it was hinted, were scheming to secure the succession to the throne of the Spanish Infanta. He had many friends—or perhaps we should say, the dominant party had many

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enemies—and the gatherings at Essex House were watched by the Government with the closest vigilance. Amongst other wild talk, a plan had been mooted for making a sudden attack upon the palace, with the object of securing the Queen's person and obliging her to dismiss the obnoxious councillors, but before any decision was reached, the Earl's hand was forced by an order to appear before the Privy Council. This summons he refused to obey, on the ground that there was a plot against his life. Obviously, such an open defiance would not remain unpunished, and that night was spent in agitated consultations between Essex and his friends, who included the Earls of Rutland, Southampton, and Bedford, the Lords Monteaule, Sandys, and Chandos, and many others of note. On the next morning (Sunday, February 8) several members of the Council, amongst them the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Keeper, appeared at Essex House. They were admitted, but only to be made prisoners, while Essex and his party, about two hundred in all, issued forth into the Strand. To attempt Whitehall was hopeless, for Cecil, who had long had in his hands the threads of the plot, had taken all necessary precautions. A barricade of overturned coaches at Charing Cross and the placing of guards at other likely points were sufficient security until further aid could arrive. Essex did not hesitate, but turning eastwards rode rapidly into the City. He was popular with the citizens, and in his desperation he staked everything on the chance that they would rally round him and enable him to make terms with his enemies. In particular his hopes were fixed on Smythe, who as Sheriff had great influence with the trainbands, and who, the Earl had been made to believe, was willing to assist him to the utmost of his power. Early that morning he had despatched a messenger to Smythe's



ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

house, but Wright, the latter's factotum, had refused to admit him. Another servant was sent later with a copy of a letter which Essex had drawn up for presentation to the Queen; the Sheriff, however, was with the Mayor hearing morning service at Paul's Cross, and the messenger was obliged to content himself with delivering his missive to Mrs Smythe, who had gone to the sermon at St Gabriel Fenchurch. As soon as possible she hurried home and showed the document to her husband, who had likewise returned in haste from the Cathedral, where the service had been interrupted by a message from the Court, warning the Mayor and Sheriffs to secure the City and send aid to Westminster.

There is no reason to doubt Smythe's subsequent protestations that he was absolutely ignorant of the Earl's intentions, and had given him no grounds for relying on his assistance. It is quite possible that, like most of the Puritan party, he was personally well disposed towards him, but it was quite another thing to support him in open disloyalty, and Smythe never wavered in his determination to take no part in the movement. He resolved to go at once to the Lord Mayor, but at the gate of his house he was met by an advance party of the Earl's followers, on whose heels came Essex himself and the rest. Clattering into the courtyard, in spite of the Sheriff's protests, they dismounted and called for beer, while the Earl, going into the parlour, declared that he had come to Smythe for protection, as his life was in danger. Smythe urged that in that case the Mayor's house was the fittest asylum, and earnestly begged him to place himself in the hands of that functionary. Essex thereupon said he would send for the Mayor, and desired Alderman Watts to undertake that duty. By some contrivance Smythe managed to slip

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away at the same time, and the two, getting out at the back gate, hurried off together to their colleagues

Meanwhile the Sheriff's unwelcome visitor, after resting a few moments, went out into Fenchurch Street and harangued the crowd which had gathered there, bidding them arm themselves and follow him, for the Queen was betrayed and the crown sold to Spain. But already in the neighbouring streets the heralds, protected by a strong guard under Lord Burghley, Cecil's elder brother, were proclaiming him a traitor; and though the citizens showed some signs of sympathy, none ventured to join him. Finding his efforts useless, Essex drew off his followers into Gracechurch Street, where he encountered not only the heralds but also the Mayor and Sheriffs. With the Mayor's approval, Smythe advanced to parley with the Earl, whom he again entreated to surrender to the civic authorities. The only reply he got was a fresh appeal to himself, "if he feared God, loved the Queen, or cared for religion", and, seeing that he could do no good, he turned his horse and rode back to the Mayor. Baffled at all points, and scarce knowing what to do for the best, Essex made his way up Lombard Street into Cheapside and so to Ludgate, apparently intending to get back to Essex House. At Ludgate, however, he found himself in difficulties. The gate was shut, and a guard placed there by the Bishop of London bent their pikes against him. His followers' rapiers—they had no other weapons—were of little use in such a contingency, and after a short skirmish they dispersed in confusion. The Earl himself, with his principal supporters, took boat from Queenhithe to Essex House, where they were quickly besieged by the royal troops. After defending themselves till the evening, a threat of blowing in the walls with gunpowder forced them to yield,

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

and Essex and his chief confederates were hurried to the Tower

To all appearance Smythe had come safely through the crisis. On the Monday, the Queen, after making some inquiries concerning Essex's messages, expressed her thanks to him for his exertions, and on the following day he presided as usual over a meeting of the East India Committees. But ugly rumours were circulating about the Earl's allusions to promises received from Smythe, and soon the latter was summoned to the Council-table, and, after a strict examination, was committed, first to the custody of the Archbishop of Canterbury and then, a fortnight later, to the Tower. He was at the same time dismissed from his office of Sheriff, Alderman (afterwards Sir William) Craven being elected in his stead. For a time things looked serious for Smythe, and his agitation brought on a fever which threatened dangerous consequences. However, the position slowly improved. On May 5 he was examined by a Commission which included the Chief Justice and Mr Francis Bacon, who, as every one knows, showed himself strangely zealous in hunting down his friend Essex and his reputed partisans. Apparently Smythe was able to convince his interrogators that he was innocent of the plot, for when, a few weeks later, he was brought up again at the Lord Keeper's house, he had "little said to him". He was not, however, liberated, for as late as December 23 we find him appealing to Cecil for release (*Calendar of the Hatfield MSS*, part xi p 530). At what date he succeeded in obtaining his freedom does not appear.

After Smythe's arrest the East India Committees continued their work for a time under the Deputy Governor. On April 11, however, as the Deputy was about to leave town for his health, and there was no sign of Smythe's

JOHN COMPANY

release, Alderman (afterwards Sir John) Watts was elected Governor. Even when Smythe was once more a free man, the Company did not venture to reinstate him, and Watts was succeeded, in July, 1602, by Alderman (afterwards Sir Thomas) Cambell. As Wright continued to be secretary, it is possible that the clerical work was still done at Smythe's house. The meetings of the Committees, however, were probably held at the residence of the Governor for the time being, while the General Courts took place at Founders' Hall.

At last the course of events took a more favourable turn for Smythe, and with the accession of James I fortune once more smiled upon him. To have been suspected of a partiality for Essex was no bar to the new sovereign's favour, and in May, 1603, Smythe received the honour of knighthood in that very Tower in which, two years earlier, he had lain a prisoner. Close upon the heels of this came the news that the East India venture had proved successful. Early in June a messenger flung himself off his horse at the Governor's door with letters from the *Ascension*, announcing that the fleet had reached Achin, in Sumatra, and had there founded a factory. By the 16th the *Ascension* was in the Thames, and the Committees were hurrying to engage warehouses in which to stow her cargo of pepper¹. The success of the voyage, which he had done so much to promote, naturally increased the estimation in which Smythe was held by his fellow-adventurers, and at the annual court of election (July) he was triumphantly restored to the Governor's chair. In the autumn the rest of Lancaster's fleet arrived, with more pepper and news of an establishment

¹ They were careful not to lead their servants into temptation. The porters engaged to land the pepper were provided with "suits of canvas doublets and hose *without pockets*."

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

at Bantam, in Java The *Dragon* and *Hector*, especially the former, had been sorely buffeted on the homeward voyage, and at one time Lancaster, giving up all hope, sent instructions to the master of the *Hector* to leave him "at the devotion of the winds and seas", but that is not the English way, and in defiance of all orders the *Hector* stood by her disabled consort till the weather moderated and repairs could be effected

Of the period between June, 1603, and January, 1607, we know very little, as the *Court Minutes* are unfortunately missing, but we glean a few facts from other documents of the time When the ships arrived, the plague was desolating London, trade was at a standstill, and money was scarce The shareholders were obliged to take out their dividends in pepper and dispose of it as best they could In these circumstances it is not surprising that some hesitation was shown in regard to a fresh venture, but a remonstrance from the Privy Council, with a significant hint that others were ready to take up the matter if the Company held back, quickly brought about a change of attitude, and in six months from the date of their arrival the ships were again at sea on a second voyage under Henry Middleton Apparently Smythe was not re-elected in July, 1604, but this is accounted for by his departure for Russia about this time as Ambassador from King James to "the Emperour of Moscovye" On his return in the following summer he was again made Governor In 1606, probably on account of his many other occupations, he yielded the chair to Sir William Romney, but in the next year he was once more elected, and thenceforward held the post for fourteen years For that period, at all events, Smythe's house was the centre of the Company's activities

At the beginning of 1607 the Company's officers were

JOHN COMPANY

still only three in number—a secretary, a book-keeper and a beadle. In the course of the year three more—a solicitor (at 40s. per annum and fees), a cashier and a husband—were appointed. The first and third of these would not require special office accommodation, so that the amount of additional space actually needed by the Company was small. Smythe's mansion appears to have been built round a central courtyard, and probably one or two rooms on the ground floor, opening into the yard, were given over to their use. Occasionally we hear grumbling at the inconveniences resulting from the limited space available, and by 1619 at least three rooms had been set apart for the Company's sole use, including one specially fitted as a strong room. This is shown by the following amusing extract from the *Court Minutes* of November 19 of that year. The "General Auditors," it may be premised, were shareholders specially appointed to examine the accounts, in consequence of some dissatisfaction (of which more anon) with the way in which affairs had been managed by the regular committees, hence, possibly, the unwillingness of the latter to go out of their way to oblige those indefatigable gentlemen.

"Master Deputye, being importuned by the Generall Audytors, made knowne their desire to this Court to have a new roome at their commaund, to which they may come at their pleasure, and not to be tyed to the howers that the thresourye [treasury] is open, and do motion for the ynner roome, wherein Master Thresourer doth dispose the money, because they may be accomodated with a fire and be at libertye to come in by five of the clock in the morning and sit tyll seven or eight at night (as they have done). But it was remembred that they approved at first of the roome which they now have and were well satisfied with the

THE COMPANY'S FIRST HOME

conveniencie thereof, and may have a fire either in the outward thresurye or in the counting house, and the ynward roome which Master Thresourer useth, being fitted and lyned both within and without (for securitie of the thresure) could not be spared, in the judgment of this Court, who held it a seasonable tyme to beginne and end with the daylight, and judgd it very inconvenyent and daungerous to have the gates opened at such earlye unseasonable howers, before most of the househould be stirring, and not fit to have fire and candle used so long together wher such great charge remayneth ”

One special grievance of the Company's book-keepers was that in their narrow quarters the sailors could not be prevented from looking over the books when receiving their pay. Though no scholar, Jack could generally understand figures, besides having a pretty shrewd notion of the amount he ought to receive, and it was particularly awkward to have to argue the question with him unprotected by any sort of screen. Disputes and threats of violence must have been fairly common, for it was not often that unruly mariners were awed into silence by such an apparition as that described in the following extract

“One Mr. Smyth being in Mr Governours house to presse up marryners for His Majesties service, some were of opinion that yt was not fitt to suffer him to doe yt in the house, because of terrifyinge saylours from comminge. Some contrarilie ymagined that yt was the better for the Company, because he prest none but such as the Company refusde, or stoode upon too highe tearmes with them. But to free all occasion of doubt, yt was thought that some small matter bestowed upon him by the Company would cause him to leave the house and seeke elsewhere, and therefore desired Mr. Offley to cause Mr Smyth to speak

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with Mr. Governour when the Courte is ended, and entreated Mr Governour to bestowe a matter of 40s upon him" (*Court Minutes*, December 18, 1613).

In October, 1617, an attempt was made to remedy the annoyance of having the building thronged with sailors, as shown in the following entry "A greate inconvenience beinge found that the marryners are enterteyned [*i e*, engaged] soe farre within the house, wherby itt is soe much the more annoyed and some other officers cannott bee soe private as is fittinge, it was therefore mociond to have some more convenyent place made up for thatt use neerer unto the gate, which was supposed might bee in the lower warehowse next the streate Butt some dissuaded from bestowinge any charge in thatt nature, conceyveinge that the house in Bishoppgate Streete will shortlie bee had, and therefore to endure some inconvenyences a while longer with a little patyence Butt because itt may bee effected with a very little charge, with deales thatt wilbee still fitt for service, they therefore entreated Mr Leate and Mr Offley to take the care and paines to effect soe much as they shall thinke fittinge for thatt present service"

Even when Jack himself was at sea, his wife (or some one claiming to be his wife) was giving trouble In July, 1615, it was decided that all petitions from mariners' wives should be referred to one of the Committees, as the Governor was much pestered by such applications and "cannot have that libertie and freedome in his howse which is needfull for preservation of his health but that he is troubled with their clamours and petitions" Every Christmas the Company distributed alms in Stepney to relatives of their sailors, but often, when winter was sharp, a body of wild-eyed women would invade Philpot Lane, demanding part of their husbands' wages to keep themselves and their

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children from starving. Officialdom could of course pay nothing without legal proof of authority to receive, and was, besides, unwilling to disburse any money on account of wages which might not be really due, for Jack might have died the day after leaving port, so Jill must trudge home again unsatisfied. One unhappy creature, failing to get relief, so far "exceeded the boundes of modestie and humanitie" as to leave her baby at the Governor's door, an act for which she was promptly committed to Bridewell. Poor Martha Bedell! She must have repented right heartily her indiscretion, for in those days a prison was a veritable Inferno.

The two or three rooms occupied by the staff of course did not represent the whole of the accommodation afforded to the Company by its Governor. No doubt the Committees held their courts in one of the parlours, while general assemblies took place in the large hall, recourse being had to the Merchant Taylors' Hall when an unusually large meeting was expected. In Smythe's hall, too, the Company gathered at times with festive intent. Thus in 1609, the Earl of Southampton having sent them a brace of bucks "to make merry withall, in regard of their kindnes in acceptinge him of their Company," some of the Committees were told off to arrange that "some dynner be made for the whole Company to have their parts thereof . . . at Mr Governours howse." When in 1619 the Dutch sent commissioners to smooth over the differences which had arisen between the two Companies, the delegates were entertained both at Smythe's house and in the Merchant Taylors' Hall, while a dinner was also given at the former place to the lords who had been appointed to act as the English commissioners. Doubtless there were other similar entertainments, but of a more

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private nature, to which the principal members were bidden by the Governor in order to honour such distinguished servants as Lancaster or Roe or Dale, or to meet the many lords who had been admitted into the fellowship. Civic hospitality has become proverbial, and we may feel sure that the famous London Tavern banquets of later days had their prototypes under the rule of the first Governor.

It was obviously a prudent policy on the part of the Company to keep on good terms with the principal members of King James's Court, and the latter on their side were by no means unwilling to oblige so wealthy and important a body. Alliances, matrimonial and otherwise, between the nobility and the magnates of commerce were as common then as now. We have already mentioned the admission of the Earl of Southampton to the freedom of the Company in the summer of 1609, and the *Court Minutes* record that the Governor was empowered at the same time to offer a similar compliment to the Lord Treasurer (the Earl of Salisbury), the Lord High Admiral (the Earl of Nottingham), the Earl of Worcester, and other noblemen. Early in 1618 Lord Chancellor Bacon solicited, and was accorded, the same privilege. In the same year one of the Committees boasted that the Company comprised the greater part of the nobility, judges and gentry, and the list of actual subscribers to the Second Joint Stock includes the names of fifteen dukes and earls, and thirteen ladies of title. Largely as a matter of necessity—for he was not loved in the City—James's favourite, the Earl of Somerset, was used by the Company as a go-between when they had favours to solicit from the King, and on the occasion of his marriage to the infamous Countess of Essex, they presented him with gold plate to the value of £600.

Although, as we have seen, the Committees had their

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occasional feasts, for the most part they lived laborious days and took life very seriously. References to religious topics are frequent in the records. Quite in the spirit of the time, the arrival of a ship from the Indies in safety was looked upon as a signal mark of Divine favour, requiring due acknowledgment in the form of a service of thanksgiving, at which the Court attended in state, while any unexpected blow to their trading was similarly regarded as indicating the displeasure of the Almighty. They were always most careful to impress upon the commanders of their vessels and the factors in India the importance of religious observances, and daily prayer, morning and evening, "with diligent eyes that none be wantinge," was the rule on all their ships. Naturally, the selection of a chaplain for a ship or settlement was looked upon as a most important duty. As a rule the candidate was required to preach a trial sermon from a given text¹, and on the following court day the Committees would discuss his efforts with the keenness of connoisseurs. Strict inquiry was made into the antecedents of any minister seeking an appointment. The verdict on one candidate (March 22, 1614) was "that there is as ill a reporte goeth of him as of any aboute this towne of his coate, soe that, havinge many good parts but his lyfe not awnswerable, they were unwillinge to employe him." At the same meeting another candidate was rejected because "he hath a stragglinge humour, can frame himselfe to all company, as he finds men affected, and delighteth in tobacco and wyne."

Just before Christmas 1616, at the church of St. Dionis

¹ These sermons were usually preached at the parish church, St. Bennet Gracechurch, which stood at the junction of Fenchurch Street and Gracechurch Street. It was burnt down in the Great Fire, rebuilt by Wren in 1685, and destroyed in 1867 to make room for offices

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Backchurch, in the presence of the Governor and Committees, the first native of India to be converted by an Anglican clergyman was baptized into the Church of England. This youth, "borne in the Bay of Bengala," was picked up at Bantam by the Rev. Patrick Copland, chaplain in Best's fleet, and on his arrival in England (1614) the Company resolved to have him placed at school and instructed in religion, with the idea of sending him out again as a missionary to his own people. In July 1615, Mr Copland was able to report that his pupil was ready for baptism, which it was thought should be "publickly effected, being the first fruits of India." The ceremony did not actually take place until December 22 of the following year, when the convert received the name of Peter, to which King James (for reasons not easily discernible) added the surname of Pope. The lad returned to the East with Copland in 1617, but what became of him is not recorded, though three letters of his (printed as an appendix to his tutor's sermon, *Virginia's God be thanked*, 1622) show that he was alive in 1620. These letters are written in Latin and prove that he had mastered that language in addition to English.

To the London clergy donations were frequently given. In October, 1614, for instance, the Governor suggested a grant of money to some of the poorer ministers of the City, "to have their prayers for the good and prosperitie of their voyadges", with the result that £100 was placed at his disposal for this purpose, though at the same time the Committees, with a touch of commercial shrewdness, recorded their intention "not to tye themselves unto the like annuallie, butt as God should move their harts upon occasions presented."

Such being the tendencies of the governing body, we

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can understand the indignation with which they learnt that Captain Saris, who had commanded the first English ships sent to Japan and was now staying as a guest at the Governor's house, had shown to several persons certain books and pictures of dubious character brought home by him. The matter was at once laid before the Court, as "a greate scandall unto this Compayne and unbeseeinge their gravitie to permitte", and Smythe "assured them of his dislike thereof, the rather for that yt was in his howse, and therefore purposed to gett them out of his [Saris's] hands yf possible he could, to bee burnt or otherwise disposed of as the Company shoulde thinke fitt, or else to free his house of them and him both". His remonstrances appear to have been effectual, for three weeks later "Mr Governor acquainted them that, greate speeches haveinge bene made of certaine bookes brought home by Captaine Saris, which causde the Companie and Mr Governours house to bee censurde, he hath procured them from Captaine Saris, and shut them up ever since, and nowe hath brought them forth, that such as have heard derogatorye speeches used upon the Exchange and elsewhere should nowe likewise be eye witnesses of the consuminge them in the fire, which he hoped would give satisfaction to any honestlie affected, that such wicked spectacles are not fostered and mayntayned by any of this Companie. And thereupon in open presence putt them into the fire, where they continued till they were burnt and turnd into smoke."

Saris had spent many years in the East, and apparently had acquired views on moral questions which were not at all to the taste of his masters. Quite otherwise was the unnamed individual referred to in the following extract from the *Minutes* of August 29, 1621. "A note unsealed

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was delivered to Mr Governour, sitting [in] the Courte, and thereinclosed a peece of gould of 22s., the direction : 'To the Right Worshipfull the Governour and Companie trading to the East Indies,' and it followed . 'Right Worshipful, maie it please you to be certified that one who in times past was employed in the service of the Companie did defraude the Companie in a small comoditie, under the valew of 20s , who since, beeing troubled in conscience, cann have no quiet till a full restitution be made to you to whome the wronge was donn, and therefore restoareth this inclosed, craving pardon for the offence, as from God, so from the whole Companie '

"The Court applauded much the good motion of this partie, and having freely and unanimously forgiven the offence, commaunded that the said peece of gould should be putt into the poores boxe , which by the Companies Secretary was perfourmed accordinglie "

The *Minutes* for September 25, 1617, furnish an interesting example of the tenacity with which the City guilds and fellowships maintained their privileges "A complainte havinge bene formerlie made by the Rulers of the Porters against Robert Pore, a porter employed by the Companie in their warehouse, for that he refuseth to submitte himselfe to bee registred amongst them, or to paye quartridge to their hall, hee pretendinge that hee is noe porter butt servaunt to the Companie, havinge never carried burthen in the streetes , and, beeing free of the Joyners, thinckes much to bee enforced to paye quarteridge to annother hall They thereupon desiringe leave to putt him in suite, these Committees were entreated to heare and determyne their difference And they producinge an Acte of Common Councell for their auctoritie, it appeared that, to bridle the abuses of straungers, whoe

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thrust themselves without order to carryinge of burthens, removeinge from place to place, whereby much wronge hath bene done and the parties nott to bee found, and the worke taken out of the handes of poore freemen whoe might bee releived thereby, it was therefore enacted that those Rulers should cause such personns to register their names with them and give three pence for the same, and take notice of their habitacions and removes whensoever they should happen. Theis Comittees conceyveinge the said order to bee very necessarie and good to maynetaine order in the Cittye, enjoyned the said Porie to submitte himselfe to bee registred accordinglye, and to paye the dutye imposed. Butt they urginge for their quarteridge to their hall, and demandinge half a crowne for the said registringe, these Comittees would not enjoyne to more then was mentioned in the said Acte, butt lefte them to themselves for any other thinges that shalbe questioned betwixt them."

The Committees were the recipients from time to time of many offers of new ideas, from suggestions of voyages to various unknown countries down to "a virginnall that may bee had of £14 or £15 price, for twoe to plaie upon at once, and by a pynne puld out one man will make both to goe, which is a delightfull sight for the jacks to skipp up and downe in such manner as they will, besides the musique". One man offered a plan for distilling fresh water from salt¹, nothing came of it, though the idea was

¹ A similar project was submitted by a foreigner in December, 1623, but the Court would say no more than that if the project could be proved feasible they would adopt it and reward the inventor. During the discussion on this point "it was remembered that Capteyne Towerson, beeing scanted of fresh water, with the help of stilles did draw both water and houlesome water"—an interesting episode which does not appear to be on record elsewhere. Later on, in November 1640, "a proposition was this day presented by letter

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certainly more worthy of consideration than a proposal made in 1614 that the ships should be supplied from a well in Suffolk, the water of which would keep five years. In 1619 an "old Frenchman" offered to reveal a way of cutting asunder the cordage of shipping with cannon-shot, provided he were paid a thousand pounds down and a pension of a hundred a year for life, the Committees, however, roundly declared that it was "but a trick," and refused to have anything to do with him. Then, too, offers of service came in from queer individuals. Thus, in October, 1615, "a younge man, one John Stamer, by trade a fletcher, made knowne his suite by wrightinge, that findinge his trade to decaye and devisinge of some course of life, hee was pinchd in his sleepe, and cald sundrye times in his sleepe by his name, willinge him to goe to Sir Thomas Smith and proffer his service for the East Indyas." Apparently the Committees thought there might be something worthy of respect in these supernatural promptings, for they resolved to grant the applicant's request and employ him on board one of the ships under the eye of the master.

But perhaps the strangest subject of debate recorded during this period is the following: "The Kinge of Sumatra haveinge manifested his affection to this nation by desyringe His Majestie to graunte him one of his subjects for wife, with sundrye proffers of priviledges to such

from Mr Mathew Cradock, made unto him by two Germans, for the extracting out of sea water fresh water which would never putrify but bee very usefull for their shippes in their voyages to the Indies' upon all occasions, and for instance a glasse of the said water was presented to the Court. But the Court being full of other busines could not at this tyme give any resolution heerein, but referred the same to further consideration." We may note, however, that an invention of this kind was tested during the homeward voyage of the *Mary* in 1639 (see *Voyages and Travels of Mandelslo*, 1662, p. 245).

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yssue as God shall send unto them, a proposition was thereupon red, made by a gentleman of honourable parentage, whoe proffereth his daughter in marriage unto him, she beinge knowne to some of this Company to bee a gentlewoman of most excellent parts for musicke, her needle, and good discourse, as alsoe very beautifull and personable ” This extraordinary proposal occasioned much discussion Some thought it an excellent suggestion, inasmuch as “ the marriage may (by the secrete providence of God) be a means for the propagation of the Gospell and very beneficiall to this countrye by a setled trade there ” Others considered that no good was likely to come out of such an alliance, either to the Company or to the young lady In the end it was decided to defer a decision until they could learn whether “ the action ytselve may by the judgment of the learned fathers of the Church bee approved and held lawfull ” Three weeks later the matter came up again “ The gentleman prosecuteth his former proposition for his daughter’s goinge to the Kinge of Sumatra, and haveinge heard of certaine objections made by some divines, hath collected certaine reasons and sett them downe in wrightinge to approve by Scripture the lawfulness of the enterprize, which were now red and held to bee very pregnant and good ” It was suggested that the King’s other wives would probably poison the young Englishwoman if she should find favour in his eyes, but to this her father replied that if His Majesty loved her he would take the necessary measures to preserve her against such practices At last the Court decided that the question had better be laid before the British Solomon “ yf hee [the father] could worke His Majesties consent, it was thought yt would prove a very honourable action to this lande and His Majestie.” As nothing more is heard

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of the matter, it may be taken that more sensible counsels prevailed. This was fortunate for the personable young gentlewoman, as the Achin Raja—the monarch here referred to—is described by one of the English factors as “almost a madman, wilful and wild,” with an unpleasant way of ordering the instant decapitation of any one who excited his anger.

Now turn we to our main story. The value of Smythe's services was fully recognized by the Company, at all events during the first few years. At the annual meeting of 1609 the sum of £500 was voted to him for “his paines taken in the place of Governour of the Company for the space of fyve yeares, in procureing the first and second patents,” and other benefits. This amount, however, he thought excessive, and so “His Worship, lovinglie accepting of the Companies kindnes herein, utterlie refuced to take the oath of Governor untill the Company were first contented to take backe of his said gratification the some of £250. The residue His Worship kindlie yealded to take.” In 1614 another £500 was voted to him, and in the following year a thousand marks (£666 13s 4d). The *Minutes* for 1616 and 1617 are missing, and we have no means of telling whether any further payment of the kind was made in those years. In 1618 and 1619 no allowance was even proposed—in the latter year avowedly because the “generality” were discontented and unlikely to grant anything to anybody. The Company was in fact making no headway, owing chiefly to the troubles with the Dutch, and many of the shareholders were inclined to lay the blame on Smythe's shoulders. To a great extent this was unreasonable, yet it must be allowed that, for an old man, he had rather too many irons in the fire. As his epitaph proudly recites, he was, at one time or another, “Governour

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of the East India, Moscovia, French, and Sommer Iland Companies Treasurer for the Virginian Plantation Prime Undertaker (in the year 1612) for that noble designe the discoverie of the North-West Passage Principal Commissioner for the London expedition against the Pirates, and for a voyage to the Ryver Senega upon the Coast of Africa one of the cheefe Commissioners for the Navie Roial " It had been well for his own peace of mind if he had decided to retire earlier, for when opposition manifested itself his pride was touched and he only clung the more desperately to office

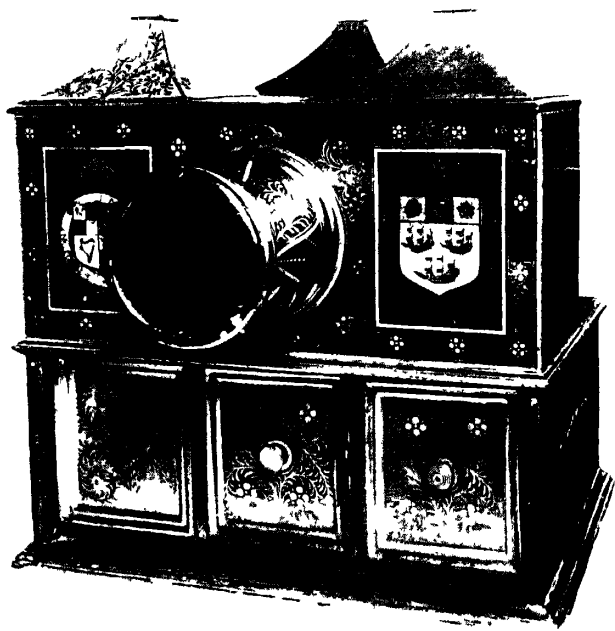
The storm broke first in the Virginia Company, the mismanagement of which was largely attributed to him "It had become the fashion in Virginia," writes Dr Gardiner (*History of England*, vol iii p 161), "to look upon him as the source of all the evils that had befallen the colony, and though there was probably some exaggeration in this, the charges brought against him were not without foundation His temper was easy, and he was lax in his attention to the duties of his office " After a struggle the reform party prevailed, and at the election of April, 1619, Smythe, much to his disgust, was passed over in favour of Sir Edwin Sandys, whereupon ensued a long wrangle between the two parties, in which the King's influence was exerted, though without avail, on the side of Smythe and his friends.

This agitation could not fail to react upon the East India Company, and accordingly, on July 2, 1619, we find the Committees gloomily contemplating the "disturbances and innovations intended at the Court of Ellection " These, they declared, originated with certain gentlemen, who, having been "taken into the Company by courtesie, do ayme to get all the goverment into their hands," whereas it was "a buysines proper onlie for merchants, and gentle-

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men unexperienct o manage buysines of that nature." As the most effectual way of dealing with the expected opposition, it was decided to induce "some person of countenance" to undertake the defence and persuade the generality to re-elect the present holders of office, and for this duty they decided upon Lord Digby, better known *perhaps by his later title of Earl of Bristol*. Smythe, no doubt, at once posted to court, where he not only secured Digby's assistance but the promise of help from a still more influential quarter

The general meeting took place on the same day. Smythe opened it with a speech of studied moderation. He had heard, he said, that "many of the generalitie are discontented and desirous to have the buysines for the election to be caryed in another forme then formerly hath bene" For himself, he had no wish to retain office, he and the other members of the administrative body had done their best for the Company, if any one had charges to bring, let him speak out, and in that case he would suggest the appointment of a committee of investigation, to report at a later court. Further, as some doubts had been expressed as to the financial position, he proposed the election of six or eight auditors from the general body to go thoroughly into the accounts. A motion was at once made for the appointment of such a body, but this was negatived on the ground that the election of the executive must necessarily be the first business. Then the winning card was played. Lord Digby rose and said that he had a message to deliver from the King. In this His Majesty assured them of his esteem for the Company and his determination to uphold them against the Dutch, and went on to say that he much approved the way in which their business has hitherto been managed, "and many of



THE SADDLETS COMPANY'S FALLOUT BOX

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them, having had often and free accesse unto him, he knowes the factes of some of them well, Sir Thomas Smith and some others, *and will not have any alteration of them.*" His lordship then proceeded to state his own opinion that "this is no convenient time now for alterations," particularly as delegates from the Dutch East India Company had just arrived to negotiate upon matters in dispute, "distractions may much hurt the buysines, and the Dutch may take advantage of innovations, having given out that they have as good frends at Court as the English." This strong intimation of the King's wishes, and of the damage likely to result to the Company's interests in the coming negotiations should they be ignored, made the position of the reform party hopeless. Undismayed, however, one of their number formally proposed a vote by ballot. "Before any question was propounded, Mr John Holloyay presented a balletting box,¹ to make the election by,

¹ Some years ago a ballot-box which has long been in use at Saddlers' Hall was discovered to be the very box rejected by the East India Company on this occasion. It is a handsome piece of work, being richly ornamented in gold and colours with figures of birds, beasts and flowers, somewhat in Chinese fashion. The box is about eighteen inches high, and measures at the base eighteen inches by thirteen. In the front is a projecting mouthpiece into which the hand was thrust in order to drop the ballot-ball into either the right or the left compartment, or (if a third alternative were given) into the compartment at the back, which was ordinarily shut off by a wooden screen. These divisions contain circular depressions, with holes in the centre of each through which the ball dropped into the drawer beneath. The front of the box is ornamented on the one side by the royal coat-of-arms, with the initials "I R" (Jacobus Rex), and on the other by the escutcheon of the East India Company, though in the latter the artist, working perhaps from memory, has inadvertently substituted a rose for the royal arms in the point of the chief. On the inside of the lid is the date 1619, which sufficiently connects the box with the one offered to the East India Company in that year. The Saddlers' Company's records throw no light on the question how the box came into their possession. A photograph of the box will be found in *Relics of the Honourable East India Company*, by Sir George Birdwood and William Foster, London, 1909, and another is here reproduced.

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a thing promised by him in the last yeare, as he said, and now performed, but the Lords and others present, houlding it a noveltie not formerly used nor knowne in theis elections, but a meanes to disturbe the whole buyssines

. did judge the aucthour thereof worthie of blame that did present it to interrupt the course intended by so gracious a message from His Majestie, and therefore caused it to be taken away, and concluded by erection of hands to have it put by for this yeare, and election to procede according to the ould manner without any alteration or innovation "

The result was now a foregone conclusion. Although, for form's sake three others were nominated with him, Smythe was chosen Governor "by a generall and free consent"

We have no official account of the 1620 election, but it appears that the pressure exercised in the previous year was repeated, for a letter of the time says that on July 4, "Sir Thomas Smythe without any contradiction was re-established Governor of the East India Company, by reason of a letter from the King wishing them not to alter their officers and Committees" No doubt, in invoking this unwarrantable interference, Smythe thought that he was acting in the best interests of the Company when a man has enjoyed a long lease of power, it is natural for him to look upon himself as indispensable and to regard all opposition as factious, but it is none the less to be regretted that this infraction of the freedom of election granted by the charter should have been brought about by the very person who had been chiefly instrumental in procuring the privileges of the Company

However, this state of affairs could not continue indefinitely. The opposition grew too strong to be resisted, and when the election for 1621 approached Smythe deter-

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mined to give way. The Company met on July 4 in the great hall of Crosby House. We can imagine the scene: the benches packed with the "generality" the little cluster of Committees and officials at the table at the upper end, and the bowed figure of the Governor in the chair he was soon to quit for ever. Here is the official summary of his opening speech. "Mr Governour declared unto the Companie the cause of assembling this Court, which was, according to their annuall custome, to chuse their officers, and to begin first with the Governour, and therewithall expressing his owne weakenes of bodie, said he was not so able for the place as some other they might make choice of, and therefore if they pleased to spare him they should see that he could as well obey as commaund, and that if they made a worthie choice (as he doubted not but they would), they should do well for themselves and for him, for that he hath good interest in the stock, being an adventurer almost 20,000 poundes deepe. And therewith remooved himself out of the chaire and satt upon a seate by."

Four names were proposed, including Smythe's, and according to custom the candidates withdrew. When they returned, it was to learn that "by erection of hands Mr Alderman Holliday was chosen Governour of the Companie for the yeare ensuing", and thereupon the new Governor was sworn and inducted into the place of honour. Smythe's opponents had thus gained what they had so long been striving for, and having done this, they were quite ready to join in recognizing the value of his past services. When, therefore, Halliday, who was an old friend of his, proposed at the end of the sitting to invite Sir Thomas's continued co-operation in the deliberations of the Committees, all present welcomed the motion.

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The termination of Smythe's governorship was closely followed by the removal of the Company's offices from Philpot Lane to Crosby House

We should have been glad to say in conclusion somewhat about the later history of the house in which the Company had found its first lodging, but on this subject we know practically nothing. Smythe himself was living there in January, 1625, but he retired before long to his house at Sutton-at-Hone, in Kent, and in that peaceful spot he died on September 4, 1625, probably of the plague, which was raging in the neighbourhood at the time. He was buried in the little church of Sutton-at-Hone. For a drawing of the tomb, which is a beautiful specimen of a Jacobean monument and well worth the somewhat tedious pilgrimage from town, see an article on Smythe by Mr. J. F. Wadmore in *Archæologia Cantiana* (1892). The epitaph we have already quoted in part. His will (which included small bequests to the principal members and servants of the East India Company "to make them ringes to weare for my sake") contains no mention of any property in Philpot Lane, but this need not imply that he had parted with his house there. If, as is probable, it was still standing in 1666, the Great Fire wrote "Finis" upon its history. The whole of that neighbourhood was devastated by the conflagration, and a certain Mr. Pepys, walking gingerly about the town on September 5, found "Fanchurch-streete, Gracious-streete, and Lumbard-streete all in dust"

II

AT CROSBY HOUSE

THE second home of the East India Company was Crosby House, Hall, or Place—for all three designations were used. At that time it was still one of the finest buildings to be found within the city walls. Its main features are well known, and it is only necessary to recall that the chief apartments were grouped round an outer court, entered from Bishopsgate Street by a gate over which the Company's secretary at one time had rooms. On the south-east side of this court was the great hall, which, as the reader will remember, was only pulled down (to be re-erected at Chelsea) in 1908. At right angles to this, on the north-east side of the court, was a somewhat similar erection, divided into two stories, a "great parlour"¹ (or, as some say, a dining-room) on the ground floor and a "great chamber" above. On the south-west was a corresponding building, the nature of which is still in doubt, while on the north-west the courtyard was enclosed by a wall running at the back of the houses abutting on Bishopsgate Street.

This magnificent edifice, the early history of which is too familiar to need recapitulating, was, at the beginning

¹ On September 30, 1633, a General Court of the East India Company was held in "the parlour," the Governor explaining that the hall was not available, owing to its being filled with goods lately received from the East, for which room could not be found in the warehouse.

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of the seventeenth century, the property of Sir John Spencer, one of the richest merchants of the day. Though he was interested in more than one of the great trading companies and was a prominent Levant merchant, his connexion with the East India Company was but slight. It is true that he was one of the original members, but he made no attempt to take part in the management, and although in 1609 he was amongst those nominated for the post of Governor this was a mere formality, since Smythe's re-election was assured. His chief relation to the Company was that of landlord. As early as 1607 we find the latter in occupation of the large warehouse he had built in the garden of Crosby House, and this, and successive build-ings on the same site, the Company retained to the very close of its history as a trading body.

In March, 1610, Spencer died and was buried in the neighbouring church of St. Helen's. His vast possessions, which current rumour estimated at £800,000, passed to his son-in-law, Lord Compton, who is said to have been half-distracted for a time with his good fortune. He, apparently, had no wish to reside at Crosby House, and its next tenant was the Dowager Countess of Pembroke—"Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother." In 1615, however, King James gave this lady for life a royal manor in Bedfordshire, whereupon, it may be, she determined to abandon her city residence, for, in the same year, Lord Compton leased Crosby House for twenty-one years at £200 a year, to Mr (afterwards Sir) William Russell, a prominent member of the Muscovy Company.¹

¹ Russell was evidently on terms of intimacy with Lord Compton, for, in July 1614, the latter intimated to the East India Company his wish that the former should draw certain dividends for him. On his own account Russell had a great deal to do with the Company. He was admitted to the freedom in October, 1609, having bought the adventure of his father-in-law, Sir

AT CROSBY HOUSE

How the connexion of the East India Company with Crosby House began, and why Russell gave up his recently acquired lease, we cannot now discover¹ The *Court Minutes* of 1615-17 would probably explain matters, but unfortunately they are no longer in existence All that we can say is that apparently the Company, or rather Sir Thomas Smythe acting on its behalf, secured a lease of the premises late in 1616 or early in 1617, and that the lease was for twenty-one years, commencing at Candlemas (February 2), 1617, at a rent of £200 per annum, with possibly a preliminary fine That such a step should have been taken at this particular time is explicable by the fact that the Second Joint Stock, with nearly four times the capital of its predecessor, was in the process of formation,

Francis Cherry In 1615, and again in 1619, he was elected a Committee, and at one time he had a considerable holding in the Company's stock He seems to have taken a special interest in the Persian trade From 1618 to 1627, and later from 1630, he held the post of Treasurer of the Navy He was knighted in 1618, and made a baronet in 1629 His grandson, Sir John Russell, married Frances, daughter of Oliver Cromwell, and became the father of John Russell, Governor of Fort William in Bengal (1711-13), and grandfather of Sir Francis Russell, Member of the Calcutta Council, and of Henry Frankland, also Governor of Fort William, 1726-28

¹ The Committees had already considered and rejected the offer of another house in the same locality On January 10, 1615, "Mr Governor acquainted them that one hath bene with him to make offer of my Lord of Argyles house, which was cald Fishers Follye, to sell yt unto the Companie, but they consideringe that it stooode without the Cittye and farre from the Exchange and espetuall places of comerce, held yt very unfitt for their service and not to be undertaken" This house, which was of large size and furnished with an excellent garden, is described by Stow, who says that its popular name was derived from the builder, Jasper Fisher, and from the fact that he had neither position nor means sufficient to warrant his embarking on so ambitious a project Its situation was on the eastern side of Bishopsgate Street Without, a little to the north of its junction with Houndsditch The property, after passing through various hands, came into the possession of the Earl of Devonshire The site is now indicated by Devonshire Street and Devonshire Square, the latter of which stands upon what was once the garden of Fisher's Folly

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and ampler quarters may well have seemed a matter of necessity. In these circumstances Crosby House, with its many rooms, great hall, and convenient warehouse (already filled with the Company's goods), no doubt appeared an ideal place for its headquarters.

But though a lease was secured, for some unexplained reason the actual transfer of the Company's offices was put off, and we next hear of Crosby House as the residence of an ambassador from Russia, who arrived in November, 1617, with a train of seventy-five persons, to say nothing of a second delegate who followed shortly after. The affairs of the Muscovy Company were then at a low ebb, and the King, on the plea that so important a trade must not be lost to the nation, had called upon the East India Company to come to its assistance. Smythe and his colleagues looked askance at this proposal, but His Majesty would take no denial, and at last it was arranged that the two Companies should form a special joint stock for a term of years to commence from Lady Day, 1618, each contributing £30,000 per annum. As, according to the custom of the time, the expenses of the embassy, while in this country, had to be defrayed by the merchants who were supposed to benefit from the negotiations, the East India Company came thus to have a special interest in these strange visitors. They remained until the following spring, when they took their departure after some visits to Court described by Sir Gerard Herbert in a letter¹ dated the 26th March, 1618.

The Russians having gone, Lady Pembroke seems to have resumed her tenancy, and in December, 1618, we find

¹ Quoted by Mr Sainsbury in the preface to his *Calendar of State Papers, East Indies*, 1617-21. The two ambassadors were Stephen Ivanovitch Volunsky and Mark Posdejeff (Hamel's *Early English Voyages to Northern Russia*, p. 257).

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her sons, the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, pressing the Company to grant her ladyship a lease of the place. However, reluctant they might be to forgo their own designs in this direction, the Court did not dare to refuse so powerful a family, and answer was therefore returned that they "were contented (to manifest their readines and willingnes to give all Their Honours satisfaction, although it be to their owne prejudice and shall thereby disapoint themselves excedinglie) to let the Lady have a lease therof for seven yeares (if it please God she live soe longe), with condition to keepe all the messuage in sufficient reparations, retaine it in her owne handes, without letting it to any others, and to answer the same rent unto the Company which they doe paye unto my lord of Northampton ¹ for the same, which is £200 per annum, wherof they paye for certaine wairehouses which the Company use the some of £60 and the rest, being £140, is to be answered by her ladyship"

These terms, however, were not to the taste of the Countess, who in May, 1619, renewed her request with the stipulation that the lease should be for a definite term of years, as otherwise she could not let off any of the rooms or cellars, as she wished to do. At the suggestion of the Governor, some of the Committees were deputed to confer with her representatives and to endeavour by every means in their power to induce her to forgo her demands, but in this they failed completely, and at a meeting held on June 15, "Mr Governor made knowne that my Ladie of Pembroke would not be aunswered by any persuasions concerning Crosbye house, and finding my Lords of Pembroke and Mongomerie so earnest therin, he was contented to surrender upp the lease wholie unto her

¹ Lord Compton had recently been made Earl of Northampton

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Ladyship¹ upon repayment of his mony disbursed, with some consideration for forbearance, which, although, it much discontented the Company, yet, finding no remeadie, they were enforced to rest patient. And advising what course to take about assurance of the warehouses the Company have in possession, som houlding them to be so convenient, with the yard for their use to drye pepper, as that they cannot be so well accomodated elswher, and therefore left them awhile to further consideration at some other more convenient time. But, conceyving no possibilitie of enjoying the mayne house, and that the Company, growing great, shall have some necessarye use of some large and convenyent house, both for Courts and offices to be kept therein, this Court therefore entreated Mr. Deputie, Mr. Threasurer, Mr. Leate, or any others of the Company, to enquire abroad and harken out wher they may have such a house, and upon what tearmes."

But however much they might "harken out," no place could be found so suitable for their purpose as Crosby House, and by the summer of 1621 an arrangement had evidently been come to with the Countess by which the Company were to be allowed to use part of the house for their offices. The approaching retirement of Sir Thomas Smythe from the governorship had no doubt a great deal to do with this, the intention being to quit Philpot Lane immediately after the election of the new head. This, however, could not be managed in time, and on July 6, 1621, the Court were forced to ask Smythe to allow them the continued use of his house for a while, "forasmuch as

¹ This must not be understood to mean that the lease to the Company was cancelled. They still remained responsible for the rent, and in July, 1621, on Lord Northampton's demand, they paid the £100 due for the six months ending the previous May, and ordered the amount to be recovered from Lady Pembroke's steward.

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Crosby Howse is not yet fitted ” The actual date of the transfer is not recorded, but is inferred to have been about the end of August or the beginning of September, 1621. Before a month had elapsed, the Company obtained possession of the rest of the house,¹ for on September 25 Lady Pembroke died and was taken away to be buried in Salisbury Cathedral. From that time the Company spoke of their headquarters as the “East India House,” though the term did not obtain general acceptance outside

As we have seen, Sir William Halliday became Governor, in succession to Sir Thomas Smythe, in July, 1621. His term of office lasted less than three years, namely, till his death in March, 1624. The chief event of that period at home was the protracted negotiation with delegates from Holland which resulted in the conclusion of a fresh agreement in January, 1623, but this is far too large a subject to be entered upon here, and we shall content ourselves with noticing one or two of the minor occurrences of these years.

Towards the close of 1621 we find the Company in collision with its workmen. First comes an account of difficulties with the sailmakers, who seem to have anticipated to some extent modern trades union methods. “It was also mooved that sayles should be made ready, whereto was answered that the sailes had bene readie much sooner if the Committees and their substitutes had not bene deceived with fals measures given them by the mastmakers, also the saylemakers, against whom the Company hath

¹For a few years Lord Northampton appears to have retained possession of one room, as mentioned in the following extract from the *Court Minutes* of September 20, 1626 — “[Mr Thresurer] further acquainted the Court that the Earle of Northampton being lately heere, hee moved his Lordshippe to spare them his study, which hee kept for his private use, right against the Paymasters office, which his Lordshippe condiscended unto, and yesterday hee sent the keyes thereof by his Steward and another gent, which Mr. Thresurer presented in Court to Mr Governour ”

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commenced sute in the Chauncery, do combine together, and deale underhand with the Companies workemen and have perswaded some of them to give over the worke Notwithstandinge, it was said that in despight of all rubbs the Companies worke shalbe done” On the samē day (December 27, 1621) “The Courte was informed that uppon Christmas Eve divers clothworkers, that had wrought to the Companie, did shew themselves much discontented, and fell into very mutinous and rayling tearmes, not in the Howse onely but in the open streete, against the Companie in gennerall and in particular against the Committees for the providinge of clothes [*i e* broadcloths for sale in the East], their behaviour beeinge so rude as it was much noted by the neighbours and such as passed by” The porter was sent to summon the principal malcontents to explain their grievances, with what result is not recorded At the same time it was suggested, amid general approval, that the Company should in future buy their cloths already dressed and dyed, in order to obviate the necessity of employing such ill-disposed persons

The *Minutes* of February 27, 1622, include an entry of some bibliographical interest “Mr Deputie [*i e* Morris Abbot] further acquainted the Courte that one Purchas, that wrote of the religions of all nations,¹ hath now undertaken a greate volume of all there voyages and did desire to have a sight of some of the Companies journalls that might give him lighte for the settinge downe the Companies voyages into th’ East Indies, whereint he desires to see but the historicall part, and will medle with

¹ His *Pilgrimage*, first published in 1613 The author’s name, by the way, should apparently be pronounced as Purkas It is spelt thus in the *Court Minutes* for October 8, 1624, and January 12, 1625, and he himself, in the anagram (*Pars sua celum*) that appears below his portrait on the title-page of the *Pilgrimes*, omits the *b* as superfluous

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nothinge elce Particularly he desires to see Sir Thomas Roes journall As for the broyles betweene the English and Dutch, *he will sett them downe otherwise then they lie in the journalls* The Courte gave waie to his desire, onely they ordered that Mr. Ellam and Mr. Lanman shall take care that nothinge be taken out of their journalls but that which is proper to a history and not prejudiciall to the Companie, and they entreated Mr. Deputy that he would take paines to peruse the notes before they were carried out of the howse” Later (October 8, 1624) Purchas was allowed to borrow the journal of Edward Monnox, from which he copied the account given therein of “the late Ormuz business” His work—the well-known *Pilgrimes*—was published early in 1625, and on January 10 the reverend gentleman in person presented an advance copy to the Company “The Court tooke in very thanckfull part the labours of Mr. Purchas, and in token of their good acceptance thereof did gratify him with £100, and the Company to have three setts of his books” From other entries it appears that he intended to include an epistle to the Company “wherein the generall injuries of the Dutch in the Indies was set downe”, but the publisher was afraid that this might get him into trouble, and although the Court deputed two of their number to persuade him and, if necessary, offer a small sum, he could not be induced to take the responsibility of printing it

The *Minutes* for 1622–23 are missing, and those for the succeeding year offer little to our purpose until we come to March, 1624 • In the latter part of that month Sir William Halliday was borne to his tomb in the church of St. Lawrence Jewry,¹ and the members of the Company found themselves

¹ During Halliday's illness Secretary Conway wrote, in a letter to the Attorney-General, that King James was “exceedinge sorrie, in regard hee

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called upon to elect a new Governor They assembled accordingly in Crosby House on March 23, and Morris Abbot (then Deputy Governor), Sir William Cockayne, and five others were nominated for the post After a protracted discussion on the question whether any one who was either a Farmer of the Customs or a Turkey merchant could be considered eligible for the Governorship, inasmuch as his duties in the latter capacity might conflict with his interests in the former, the actual business of election was brought forward "Of those gentlemen formerly nominated so many as were present being withdrawn, it grew againe a question, first how to proceed to the election, their being neither Governour nor Deputy to direct or moderate, next whether to chuse a Governour by erection of handes, as had bene usuall, or by the ballating boxe For the first, Mr Threasurer Stone was by the gennerall voice of the Company called into the chaire For the second, it was putt to the handes whether the election should be by the ballating boxe or not, wherein divers difficulties occurring and the day being farr spent, divers of the Company that had bene commaunded to attend His Majestie that afternoone, and a number of balles fitting for such an assembly not readily to be provided, it was therefore by erection of handes refused to chuse by the boxe But because there was exception taken to divers that were said to be there, that some were meere strangers and no brothers to the Company, others, though they were brothers, had no adventurc in the Company, it was therefore ordered that first a survey should be made and such as were found to be of either of those kindes not was a verie worthe and well deserving magistrate and minister to him " (*Home Counties Magazine*, vol ix p 277) One of Halliday's daughters, by the way, married Sir Henry Mildmay, who became the owner of Wanstead House, afterwards the seat of Sir Josia Child



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to have a voice , which beeing done, and no greate number of either being found, it was putt to handes, and every one of those that were in nomination were putt single to the choice, and it appeared that it rested betweene twoe, vizt Sir William Cockayne, Knight, and Mr Morris Abbott, the then Deputy But for a full and finall satisfaction, it was in thend agreed that to cleere the question, the Company should go out into the Stone Court of the East India Howse, and there so many as were for Sir William Cockayne to geather themselves togeather uppon one side of the Court, and so many as were for Mr Morris Abbott on thother side of the Courte, and so to be numbered by the powle , which was done, and by the major parte the election fell uppon Mr Morris Abbott ”

The Stone Court referred to must have been the one just outside the Hall, as shown in the accompanying illustration.¹ It must have been a quaint sight for the people of the neighbourhood, peering in at the gate, to see portly citizens pouring out of the Great Hall to form two parties on opposite sides of the Court, and Mr Treasurer going round and carefully counting their “ powles ”

Morris Abbot—Sir Morris he became the following year, being the first person accoladed by the new king—belonged to a peaceful family, for two of his brothers were Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Salisbury respectively , yet his long administration of fourteen years was one of trouble and tumult. Hardly was he settled in the Governor’s chair when the news arrived of the “ Massacre of Amboyna ” This judicial murder, after unspeakable torments, of ten Englishmen by the Dutch on an

¹ Reproduced from Mr Nash’s conjectural restoration, published in Robert Wilkinson’s *Londina Illustrata* (1819) Mr Blackburn, in his work on Crosby House, has criticized some unimportant details

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unfounded charge of conspiracy produced for the moment no little excitement. When Abbot and his colleagues laid the details before the Council, many of the Lords were moved to tears, while even the cynical John Chamberlain—the Horace Walpole of his time, as Sir William Hunter terms him—wrote hotly that the proper way to proceed was to “stay or arrest the first Indian ship that comes in our way, and hang up upon Dover Cliffs as many as we should find faulty or actors in this business, and then dispute the matter afterwards” But the commotion quickly subsided. James had just resolved to break with Spain and lend his active assistance to the Dutch, and in this he was entirely in accord with the general sentiment of the nation, with whom the success of the Protestant cause overrode all other considerations. Moreover, the Dutch Government acceded with all due alacrity to the demands of the English ambassador for satisfaction. They averred—no doubt with truth, for the incident could not have happened at a more unfortunate moment for them—their readiness to mete out exemplary punishment to the guilty parties, should the facts be as stated, but they urged that time must be allowed for investigation, the persons accused, with most of the material witnesses, were at the other side of the world, they must be fetched home and placed on trial in a regular legal manner, and all this could not be done in a moment. This was reasonable enough, and on his side James had no wish to imperil the Dutch alliance by fomenting the dispute, so, although in October he was prevailed upon by the urgent representations of the Company to issue instructions for the seizure of some Dutch East India vessels, they were looked for with a blind eye and easily made their escape.

This lukewarm attitude was viewed by the Company

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with the utmost indignation. To its members the outrage was not merely a piece of cold-blooded cruelty perpetrated on their defenceless servants, it was the culmination of a policy which aimed at the complete extirpation of their trade in the Malayah Archipelago. For ten years or more the struggle had been going on. By open force at some places, by crafty manipulation of the markets at others, the Dutch had managed to turn voyage after voyage of the English into a failure and to make many of the factories a mere drain on the Company's funds. The treaty of 1619, which was intended to secure to the English a satisfactory proportion of the trade, had utterly failed to attain this result. The resources of the Dutch were infinitely superior to those of their competitors, their organization was more perfect, their plans were more deeply laid and more thoroughly carried out. Except in India and Persia, they were winning all along the line, and even in those countries their competition was causing the Company great anxiety. Small wonder that at home the merchants gave way to despair, and time after time told their sovereign that unless they had redress they must abandon the trade altogether. In order to bring additional pressure to bear upon the Court, they at the same time did their best to stir up an agitation in the City. The narrative of the massacre was printed at the Company's expense and widely distributed. A sermon, dedicated to the Company in an epistle making a strong attack on the Dutch, and a pamphlet with ruffe woodcuts of the tragedy, were circulated by thousands. Arrangements were made for a play which—anticipating Dryden—was to rouse national feeling against Dutch insolence and cruelty. Finally, the Company commissioned Richard Greenbury, an artist of considerable merit, to paint an immense picture representing “lively,

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largely, and artificially" the Dutchmen torturing their innocent victims. This created a great sensation. Crowds flocked to see it, both at the painter's house and afterwards at Crosby House, and the feeling it aroused alarmed the Dutch residents in London to such an extent that they appealed to the Privy Council for protection. The second anniversary of the tragedy was at hand, and they feared lest the prentices and sailors should wreak on them a vicarious vengeance. On their complaint Abbot and his colleagues were summoned to the Council Board (February 18, 1625). For the pamphlet and play and sermon they disclaimed responsibility, but they admitted ordering the picture, not with any intent to stir up tumult but merely to keep in their house "a perpetual memory of that most bloody and treacherous villany." The Lords told them in reply that they must not go to work with books and pictures and plays, but must trust to His Majesty to defend their interests and secure reparation. They were admonished not to let the picture be shown to anybody, at least till Shrove Tuesday be past. The play was forbidden, the pamphlet called in, and as a further precaution a strong watch of 800 men was ordered for that particular day. At the next Court meeting instructions were given that the room in which the painting stood was to be kept locked and no one admitted on any pretext. Even this did not satisfy the government, for on the last day of February the Duke of Buckingham sent for the picture, which was thereupon escorted to his house by the painter and some of the Committees. It was never seen again, and the Company had to be content with browbeating the artist when he presented a bill for £100. He was blamed for letting so many persons see it at his house and for introducing unauthorized details, moreover, the Governor told him that another had proffered to

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cut the subject in brass for £30, which, he said, was a great deal more labour than to draw it on a cloth. In the end Greenbury was forced to be satisfied with a payment of £40.

In April, 1625, the Company's Secretary tendered his resignation. There is a note of dignified pathos in his account of the proceedings, which makes it worth transcribing. "The Courte tooke knowledge that Robert Bacon, the Companies Secretary, was willing to surrender his place, and himselfe being present made knowne unto them that hee is very sensible of the imperfections that age brings with it, neither is hee ignorant that the busines of the Company is like to growe greater, and therefore, finding by his owne inhability that his stay in their service will but keepe out a better, hee did in all humblenes surrender his said place of Secretary into the Companies hands, with many thancks for their patience in bearing with him in poynt of inability, desiring the Court to bee satisfied that in poynt of honesty hee had never willfully and knowne-ingly erred. Withall hee besought them to consider what time hee had spent in their service, togeather with some late chargeable accidents, as also his resolution to continue his respect to the Companie by doing them any other service wherein they shalbee pleased to employ him. The Court accepted of the said surrender of their Secretaries place, and thereupon the said Robert Bacon departed the court and gave way to their election of a new Secretary as shold best stand with their likings." It is pleasant to find that the Company behaved with liberality to their old servant. They resolved to pay his salary till Midsummer, and thereafter to allow him a pension of £50 per annum.

About this time the Committees grew uneasy about the remissness of their "Auditors," of whom there were

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six, each drawing £100 a year. As we have seen, the Auditors appointed in 1619 had asked permission to come at five in the morning and stay till seven or eight at night, but evidently their successors did not inherit their zeal, for complaint was made that they were not earning their salaries. The Court thereupon intimated that their attendance was expected every day from seven till twelve and from two till six, and some of the Committees residing near Crosby House were asked to keep an eye on their comings and goings, in order to detect any further remissness. A few months later the Auditors were allowed to absent themselves on Thursdays and Saturdays, and in 1626 their attendance was reduced to two days a week, their salaries being at the same time cut down to £50 per annum.

Another matter which disturbed the Company at this period was the safekeeping of its premises. On May 11, 1625, the Committees ordered "that there bee two locks and keys of the back gate of the East India House, th'one to bee locked only by day and the keys thereof to bee for the Committees passage to and from the courts, the key of th'other lock to bee kept by the Porter only, who is to shutt upp the back gate winter and summer at the going downe of the sunne, and not to open it afterwards upon any occasion whatsoever. And for those that live in the House, that they bee enjoyned to keape good houres and to come into the house in due tyme, vizt at or before ten of the clock in the evening, winter and summer, at which tyme the foregate is to bee shutt, and not to bee opened for any after that tyme." Some seven years later there was a fresh alarm, as shown in the following extract from the *Minutes* of October 10, 1632: "The examinacion and confession of [] taken before Sir Hugh Hamersley,

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Kt, revealing the intended plott in robbing of Crosby House, the Bridge House, and a house in Lymestreete by him and other his confederates, beeing openly read by Sir Hugh in court, gave just occasion to the Court upon this discovery to arme and prepare themselves against this enterprize And therefore as Mr Treasurer was intreated to use his best care and circumspeccion in the strengthening of the Treasury where it should bee found most weake, soe Mr. Blunt and Mr Spiller were required to cause stronge locks and bolts to bee sett upon the dores and gates of the outward and inward yards, and to bee alwayes provided with pistolls ready charged to withstand and prevent the danger and attempt that shall happen to bee made in the night upon any part of the House ”

Another threatened disturbance of a very different sort is recorded on the *Minutes* for November 24, 1624. Students of the time are familiar with the extraordinary liberties allowed by the law to “saltpetre-men,” owing to the necessity of obtaining a sufficient supply for the manufacture of gunpowder Hence the following incident “The Court was informed that one Edward Thornehill, a digger of saltpetre, doth offer to digg in the Companies warehouse in St Mary Axe, being parte of a chappell formerly consecrated to holy uses The man, being called, was told soe much by the Court, and that it wilbee a very unfitt thing to digg there, and the rather because within two yeares last past one hath been buried in that place, and therefore wished him to bee well advised what hee did , whereupon hee said hee wold take further consideration whether to digg there or not ” The “chappell ” referred to was evidently the old church of St Mary Axe Stow tells us that “ this parish, about the yeare 1565, was united to the parish church of St Andrew Undershaft,

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and so was St Mary at the Axe suppressed and letten out to bee a warehouse for a marchant ", and on April 7, 1624, £10 was ordered to be paid to the churchwardens for the Company's warehouse there The church is said to have stood on the west side of the street still known by that name, just opposite to the present Bury Court

A little later we find the Committees seduced by the offer of a bargain into setting up a coach of their own (April 23, 1625) . " The Court entring into consideration this day of the charges which the Company are many times at in hiring of coaches upon their occasions, either to Court or elsewhere, and the danger thereof, especially in this time of sicknes, to hire mercenary coaches which are common to all kind of people whole or sick, besides other inconveniences which of [have] been found of late by some of the Committees that have used those coaches, it is thought fitt, and so ordred, that the Company buy a coach to bee ready upon all occasions for the Companies service , and because Mr. Westraw [one of the Committees] was pleased freely to offer a coach of his to the Company for £20, which cost him not long since £40, the Court desired Mr Style and Mr. Munns and Mr Bell to viewe and peruse the said coach, and if they find it fitt and serviceable for the Companies occasions then to agree with Mr Westrawe for the same " The coach was still in use ten years later, for we then find a sum of money voted for its repair

The reference in the above extract to " this time of sicknes " reminds us that the accession of King Charles had synchronized, as did his father's, with a grievous outbreak of the plague So virulent was it that, after first reducing their meetings to one a week, the Court determined to stop them altogether , and between July 29 and October 4 not a single assembly is reported The

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delivery of cloths to be dressed and dyed was stopped for fear of spreading contagion, though at the same time, with the Company's usual consideration, substantial advances were made to the poor artisans who were thus thrown out of employment. More than 35,000 persons are said to have perished in this epidemic, and Evelyn says that "there died in London 5000 a week" "I well remember," he adds, "the strict watches and examinations upon the ways as we passed"

In 1626 the Company was again troubled with ambassadors, this time from Persia. At the beginning of 1624 the celebrated Sir Robert Sherley had arrived for the second time in England from that country, empowered, as he averred, to make offers on behalf of Shah Abbas for the diversion of the trade in Persian silk (a royal monopoly) from its ancient course through Turkish Asia to the new sea route by way of Bandar Abbas and the Cape. Sherley had left Persia eight years before and had spent most of the intervening period in a vain endeavour to induce the King of Spain to accept the offer of this commerce. The Company, ever distrustful of him, pointed to these facts as casting doubt on the value of his proffers and especially on his power to bind a capricious monarch like the Shah after so long an interval. At Court, however, he was warmly received, and when the Company refused to entertain his overtures, an attempt was made to get up an independent company for the Persian trade, under the active patronage of the King, Prince Charles, and the Duke of Buckingham. Suddenly an unlooked-for event upset the schemes of Sherley and his partisans, and gave the Company's representatives no small amount of satisfaction. In February, 1626, a native ambassador arrived from Persia, bringing letters from Shah Abbas to the King

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Not only did these letters ignore Sherley, but the new-comer, Nakd Ali Beg by name, denounced him as an impostor, tore up the papers which he exhibited as his credentials, and struck him in the face—treatment to which Sherley submitted with a meekness which disgusted the English courtiers standing by. The King, while showing his annoyance by slighting the Persian, was puzzled to decide between the two antagonists and, to settle the matter, resolved to send them both back to their master, accompanied by Sir Dodmore Cotton as English envoy. The Company was directed to find accommodation in its 1626 fleet for this bevy of ambassadors, and with this order the Court complied, though naturally with no great willingness. Unfortunately, all three managed to miss the ships appointed for them, and had to return to London to squabble together for another twelvemonth. At last, in the spring of 1627, they were packed off in safety. Nakd Ali Beg had been systematically slighted at Court and had been refused a farewell audience. As some atonement, the Company presented him with a silver basin and ewer and two flagon pots, besides his portrait, “exactly and curiously drawn by Mr Greenbury,” the painter of the Amboyna picture.¹ Seven of the Committees accompanied him to the Downs, to say nothing of “certain gentlemen of Lincoln’s Inn,” whose charges on this occasion were borne by the Company, in gratitude for their having entertained the ambassador at their Inn. The accommodation provided for the Persian on board ship is described as quite luxurious, and this degenerate follower of the Prophet was provided with “two butts of Canary

¹ The Company had ordered two of these portraits, paying for them twenty marks. The second, which was retained, I have identified as one of the paintings now at the India Office.



ST. JOHN SHELLY

AT CROSBY HOUSE

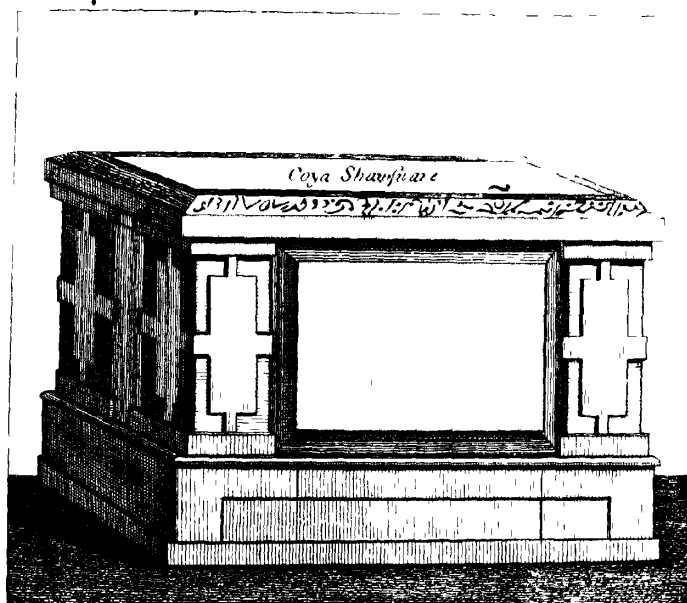
for his own mouth ”¹ Cotton and Sherley, on the other hand, were allotted cabins which the former stigmatized as kennels, and were left to find their own wine. However, they all got safely away in March, 1627, and for their further adventures the reader may be referred to the lively narrative of their fellow-traveller, Thomas Herbert

But not all the Persian's suite accompanied him in his journey back to his native land, one was left sleeping his last sleep under an alien sky. This was a certain Khwaja Shahsuwar, who had come over in charge of a consignment of silk, intended, it would seem, to defray the charges of the embassy. He had added to the general distraction by quarrelling violently with Nakd Ali Beg and putting himself under Sherley's protection, and had, moreover, behaved so strangely in regard to the sale of his goods that the Company had come to the conclusion that "his brain is a little cracked." The Privy Council, on being appealed to, ordered the Company to take over his merchandise, sell it, and return the proceeds to the King of Persia, after defraying the necessary expenses of the ambassador and his attendants. This decision produced a fresh crop of disputes, in the midst of which the Khwaja died, and the Company had to arrange for his burial. It was a matter of no small difficulty to find a suitable spot, but at last some one bethought himself of a little piece of waste ground under the shadow of the city wall, just outside the western boundary of the lower churchyard of St Botolph Bishopsgate. There, on August 10, 1626, he was decently interred, "by his owne son, who read certaine prayers and used other ceremonies, according to the custome of their

¹ The Company drew the line here. They took precautions to prevent the embarkation of one of the ambassador's disreputable London associates, special orders being given to the officers to see that she did not get on board in disguise

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owne country, morning and evening, for a whole moneth after the buriall, for whom is set up at the charge of his sonne a tombe of stone with certain Persian characters thereon, the exposition thus 'This grave is made for Hodges Shaughsware, the chiefest servant to the King of Persia for the space of twenty yeeres, who came from the King of Persia and dyed in his service If any Persian commeth out of that country, let him read this and a prayer for him The Lord receive his soule, for here lyeth Maghmote Shaughsware, who was borne in the towne of Novoy in Persia" (Anthony Munday's edition of Stow's *Survey*, 1633) Strype, in his edition of *Stow* (1720), adds that "the Ambassador himself, young Shawsware his son, and many other Persians, with many expressions of their infinite love and sorrow, followed him to the ground between eight and nine of the clock in the morning The rites and ceremonies that with them are due to the dead were chiefly performed by his son, who sitting crosslegged at the north end of the grave (for his tomb stands north and south) did one while read, another while sing, his reading and singing intermixed with sighing and weeping And this, with other things that were done in the grave in private (to prevent with the sight the relation) continued about half an hour But this was but this day's business for as though this had not been enough to perform to their friend departed, to this place and to this end (that is prayers and other funeral devotions) some of them came every morning and evening, at six and six, for the space of a month together, and had come (as it was then imagined) the whole time of their abode here in England, had not the rudeness of our people disturbed and prevented their purpose" It is a pathetic picture—these sons of Iran mourning, under the shelter of the grey old city wall, the



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comrade whom they were forced to leave in the land of the infidel, and none the less pathetic by reason of the lurking shadows in the background, waiting to disturb, with jeers and stone-throwing, a ceremony held sacred by most nations, however uncivilized

Over the stranger's remains was erected, as we have seen, a monument, of which a view, first given in Strype's *Stow* (1720), is here reproduced from Smith's *Antiquities of London* (1791). The monument has long since disappeared, having probably been destroyed at the time of the formation of New Broad Street, and the site is now covered by the offices that intervene between that thoroughfare and the churchyard

As might be expected from the characters of its members, the Company was often generous in response to appeals for money for religious purposes. On November 19, 1630, "Mr Deputy Bond, with other parishioners of the parish of Creechurch,¹ came in court, desiring the Companies benevolence to be given them towards the reparation of the said church, alleading that besides those monies collected by His Majesties breife and the voluntary exhibicion of many and what hath bin raised out of the parish, the charge is soe greate as to finish the said church it will cost them yet £1000 more, which they are never able of themselves to effect, the parish being but little and consisting of a very great number of very poore houscholders." The Committees viewed the application sympathetically, and recommended it to the general body of shareholders, who, at a meeting held a week later, granted "the summe of one hundred marks for glasing of the East window of the said church, this giuft being thanckfully accepted by the

¹ St Katherine Cree (Christ) Church, in Leadenhall Street, rebuilt at this time by Inigo Jones

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parishioners, and a promise made that the armes of this Company shalbe set upp in the said glasse window for a memoriall of their love to so religious a worke ” No doubt the parishioners duly performed their part of the bargain , but they could not prevent their successors from undoing what they had done All the old glass in the eastern window has disappeared, having been replaced partly by early eighteenth and partly by late nineteenth century work There is, however, in Britton's *Churches of London* (1838), a view of the interior of the building which shows that on the old glass in the lower panels were emblazoned the royal arms and four other coats, the details of which are indistinguishable It is probable that one of these bore the arms of the East India Company

Encouraged by the success of the parishioners of St Katherine Cree, the inhabitants of St George's, Southwark, applied in the beginning of December, 1630, for help to restore their church , but the Court, realizing that they must draw the line somewhere, “desired to bee excused that they cannot answere their expectation ” To their own parish church, however, they were already ready to contribute Regularly at Christmas they made one donation for the poor and another to the minister himself In October, 1633, a motion was made “for an addicion of the Companies benevolence towards the great charge the parish hath bin at for repaying and beautifyeing the church of St Hellens, being the parish church wherein the Companies house stands, forasmuch as the former colleccion in the parish is not sufficient but that they are still in debt The Court was therefore of opinion to enlarge their benevolence, yett the certain summe was not at this meeting agreed upon, but left to further consideracion ” The “further consideracion ” resulted in the Court determining to make up

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their former contribution of fifty pounds to a hundred, "in regard that every parishioner had bin once and were to bee assessed a second time, and that Gresham Colledge had contributed towards the said worke at two severall times 200 marks" It would seem that some of the money previously collected had been placed in the Company's hands at interest until required, as in 1632 the churchwardens drew from them a sum of £399 4s 4d. as principal and interest since November 1630 (*Cox's Annals of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate*)

We must now glance at a few entries more particularly affecting Crosby House itself On February 4, 1631, the kitchen chimneys, which were reported to be "very defective and in danger to fall, which may bee very dangerous to Mr Lee his servants, whose lodgings adjoynes to the backe side of the said chimmies," were ordered to "bee prescntly taken downe to the ground and newe built." In the following month the Court were informed that "the arches of the stone warehouse at Crosby House is very much decayed," and directions were issued for their early repair As the additional building erected in the garden by Sir John Spencer seems to have been termed "the brick warehouse," we must infer that part of the House itself—probably the great parlour, which we know the Company used as a warehouse later on—is here intended

The rebuilt chimneys were put ere long to a use which was enough to make Sir John Crosby turn in his sumptuous altar-tomb hard by The importation of crude saltpetre had become an important item in the Company's trade, and as it was advisable to refine it before offering it for sale, the question arose where this process could best be carried on At first it was decided that the Company's yard at Blackwall was the most suitable place This, however, was

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opposed by some of the Committees, and on October 17, 1632, the order was countermanded and directions were given that "the said saltpeeter should bee refyned in the backe garden at Crosby House, where a shedd is to bee sett upp with furnaces and all other things necessary for the performance of the said worke, and not at Blackwall" Even this decision did not stand, for two days later, after much discussion, it was resolved "to have it done in their great kitchin at Crosby House, where by setting upp onely two furnaces within the chimney (which willbee a small charge) the worke may bee there well done without annoyance or danger" In spite of the confident statement in the last clause, the nuisance thus caused to the neighbourhood must have been very great, though we do not hear that any one complained Our ancestors were used to strong odours, and the sanitary inspector had not to be reckoned with in those days Soon, however, the fumes began to tell upon the unfortunate men employed in the work, and the Company were forced to call in the aid of their Surgeon-General, John Woodall At a meeting held on April 26, 1633, "Mr Woodall acquainted the Court that the sicknes which is fallen upon those men that refine their saltpeeter is occasioned by reason they come fasting in a morning to the said worke, and therefore hee propounded to the Court that they wold bee pleased to allowe them some hott cawdles to eat before they fall to their worke, to keepe out the steame and smoake, which otherwise will gett into their stomacks and in short time kill them, their bodies being already sunck and much impayred The Court upon this informacion gave Mr Woodall order to prepare such breakfasts for them as hee shall conceive to bee good to recover their healths and prevent their sicknes, which they are pleased to allow them for a moneth or two"

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Whether the "hott cawdles" had the effect anticipated we do not hear, nor are we told how much longer the Company were allowed to go on polluting the Bishopsgate air with the fumes from their chimney

In November of the same year other people's chimneys began to trouble the Company. On the 4th, we read, "Mr Ellam acquainted the Court that hee is informed that Sir Edmond Sawyer, Kt, is raysing of a newe building on the backe of the Companies warehouse which doth undermyne the foundation of the said warehouse and may otherwise prove prejudiciall to them, as also that there is a chimney thrust upp by one of their neighbours that dwells neare Crosby House towards the streete, who by that meanes hath not onely incroached upon their lands but hath cutt away part of their gutter and taken their lead without order or leave from the Company. The Court, for the building of Sir Edmond Sawyers, ordered that my Lord Mayiour should bee forthwith attended and on the Companies behalfe desired to send one of his officers to Sir Edmond, desiring him to surcease his buildings untill the viewers of the Citty shall survey the same and make their report to His Lordshipp, and for the chimney, that the party that had erected the same should bee warned to the court to shewe cause by what authority hee hath presumed to make this inchroachment upon their house, without having first obteyned leave from the Company." The result of these measures is not stated.

Echoes of a great controversy are awakened by the following entries. "The Court, understanding that the collectors for the levyeing of the shipp mony are without and doe demaund payment of £20, being soe much as the Company are assessed for Crosby House towards that payment, did thereupon give order to Mr Mountny to

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pay the same unto them accordingly " (January 21, 1635)
"Ten pounds assessed upon the Companies house for shipp-mony was at this court ordred to bee paid by Mr Thresurer " (March 4, 1636)

We have next a note of feasting—a rather unusual feature of the Company's history at this period. In the spring of 1637 another Persian ambassador was on the point of departure from England in one of the Company's ships, and on March 8 "Mr Crispe, Mr Kerridge, and Mr Abbott were entreated to invite him to dinner at Crosby House upon Tuesday next, and Mr Sherburne to invite Sir John Finnett to accompany him, and for the better ordring of all things Mr Alderman Andrews, Mr Alderman Gayre, Mr Crispe, and Mr Abbott were entreated to agree with the cooke and butler by the great, and to direct that all things needfull may bee provided against that time " But merriment and feasting were out of place now. Not only was the Company's trade inert and lifeless, but the King, on whose favour it had hitherto relied, had inflicted a serious blow upon its interests by granting a licence to a group of determined competitors, commonly known as Courteen's Association, to trade to any part of the East Indies not actually occupied by the Company. Favoured with royal letters and flying the royal flag, the ships of the new association created confusion abroad and depression at home. With the general history of this rivalry we have here nothing to do, but we may note briefly one or two of the minor results. Alarmed at the prospect before it, the Company determined upon retrenchments wherever possible. On December 11, 1635, "A noate being read of the charge in making a new barge for the Company, it was thereupon ordred that their old barge, beinge worne out and unserviccable, shalbee forth-

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with carried downe to Blackwall, and there laid upp with her oares, and because it is conceived they shall have little or noe use of a barge hereafter, that their bargemen bee likewise absolutely discharged” The list of the Company’s home staff was next scrutinized¹ The Auditor’s salary was cut down from £100 to £50, the Husband’s from £200 to £150, whereupon he resigned altogether, affirming that he could not live on the lower rate, and most of the rest were reduced by sums varying from £10 to £30 At the same time it was resolved to give no New Year’s gifts at court, except (and the exceptions are noteworthy) to the Clerk of the Council, the Judge of the Admiralty Court and the King’s master cook²

The termination of the Company’s lease was now approaching, and negotiations on the subject had already taken place In May, 1633, a rumour being current that Lord Northampton intended to resume possession on the expiry of the lease, a committee was appointed to approach him in the matter Six months later, the Earl offered to extend the existing lease to 1654 or else “to lett a lease for three lyves,” the rent remaining the same, on a fine of £1000 The Company, however, would not consent

¹ In the *Minutes* for November 18, 1635, it is stated that the charges at home amounted to £5226, 13s 4d per annum

² The extent of these douceurs in normal years may be judged from the following extract from the *Minutes* of January 5, 1641 “The Court understanding that the Clerks of the Councell doe expect from the Company their accustomed remembrance or gratification which they have used to give unto them as Newyeares gifts, and likewise that divers of the Kings servants and noblemens secretaries, to whom the Company have customarily conferred some thanckfullnes upon them as a token of the New Yeare, doe expect the like, they were pleased upon consideration had of this busines to order that the Clerks of the Councell should bee gratified as formerly they have bin with £10 apeece, and likewise that £50 more shold bee disposed amongst the secretaries of the Lord Thresurer, Lord Cottington, Mr Secretary Vane, the King’s porters and keepers of the Councell chamber, and other inferior officers of the King’s houshold, as formerly hath bin used”

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to pay more than £400, and so the negotiations fell through. Lord Northampton renewed his offer in June, 1635, but though the Committees increased their bid to £500, they resolutely refused to give more. As neither side would give way, the only thing to be done was to let the lease run out, which it did at the beginning of February, 1638. Unluckily, at this interesting period the *Court Minutes* fail us for two years (July, 1637, to July, 1639), and we are consequently ignorant of the steps taken by the Company to find fresh quarters. It appears, however, that Crosby House was retained for nine months longer, during which period the Company was doubtless seeking, but in vain, for a suitable dwelling elsewhere. In the summer of 1638 Sir Morris Abbot resigned the governorship, in view of his approaching election as Lord Mayor. His place was taken by Sir Christopher Clitherow, who, when Lord Northampton would brook no further delay, offered to accommodate the Company at his own house in Lime Street, and this offer it was decided to accept.

The actual move seems to have been made at the end of October or the beginning of November, 1638, the formal tenancy of the new premises by the Company commencing on the first of the latter month. By November 26, Lord Northampton himself had taken up his residence at Crosby House, but he did not remain very long, for in June, 1640, he is stated to have let it for ninety-nine years to Sir John Langham. Ere long, the Company began to look back with regret to its comfortable quarters in Bishopsgate Street, and made one or two attempts to return thither.¹ Its connexion with Crosby House was not entirely severed for a long time. The Court still retained the brick warehouse in the garden, and, finally, it would seem, bought it

¹ See *The East India House*, pp. 16, 18

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outright,¹ and they also continued for a while in occupation of the vaults under the house itself. Later on, when Crosby House fell upon evil days, the Company hired a further portion for warehouses, and in a lease dated March, 1678, it is mentioned as being in possession of the withdrawing-room, the apartment above, and a little chamber at the north-east corner of the dining-parlour.

¹ They appear to have been still in possession of it in 1683-84, when they built further warehouses on an [adjoining ?] piece of land recently purchased "near Crosby Square." The site is supposed to be that now covered by the Jews' Synagogue, erected in 1838.

III

AN EXPERIMENT IN CURRENCY

FROM time to time appear in the sale-room specimens of what is termed "Portcullis money" Of this there are four denominations, often called the crown, half-crown, shilling and sixpence respectively, though "dollar" is a better name than "crown," and the smaller kinds are really half, quarter and one-eighth of a dollar All four denominations bear the same devices and differ only in size and weight As will be seen from the accompanying illustration, these coins have on the one side the Tudor emblem of the portcullis, with a royal crown above and the motto *Posui Deum adiutorem meum*, on the other, the royal arms, likewise surmounted by a crown, and flanked by the letters E and R, each with a small crown above The motto on this side is *Elizabeth D G Ang Fra et Hiber Regina* The figure like an O (technically a "large annulet") which precedes each motto is the mint-mark Both the portcullis and the legend *Posui*, etc, appear on several other coins issued during the reign

As long ago as 1745 these coins were described as "very scarce" (Leake's *Historical Account of English Money*, p 255), and from Thorburn and Grueber's *Coins of Great Britain* (1905) we learn that specimens of the crown have fetched as much as £10 and £12, of the half-crown, £9, 9s,



TORTOSA'S MONEY AND A KIM OF FIGI

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of the shilling, £15, and of the sixpence, £4, 12s. It may be added that, according to reports in the *Times*, at the Montague sale in 1896 a crown realized £13, 5s, and a set of the three smaller denominations, £15, 15s, while at the Barroñ sale in February, 1906, as much as £20, 5s was given for a particularly fine specimen of the crown. Current prices range from £4 or £5 for the sixpence to £15 for the crown, but much depends on the condition of the piece.

The following is the account given by Ruding (*Annals of the Coinage of Britain*, 1817, vol. II p. 177) of the circumstances in which this money was issued. "By virtue of a commission dated January 11 in the same year [1601], money was made of a kind unknown to the British Mint either before or since her [i.e. Queen Elizabeth's] time, for it was by law exportable, and intended for the use of the East India Company. It bore on one side the Queen's arms, and on the other a portcullis, and was called either Indian money, from the purpose for which it was struck, or Portcullis money, from the device impressed upon it. The weight of it was regulated according to the respective weights of the Spanish piastre or piece of eight reas, and the half, quarter and half-quarter of the same, though they are now usually called the crown, half-crown, shilling and sixpence. Some coinage of this sort was necessary, for the Queen, when she first incorporated the East India Company, would not permit them to transport the King of Spain's silver coins to the East Indies, though she was frequently solicited by the merchants. The reason which they assigned to induce her to grant this permission determined her to strike coins for the particular purpose of circulation in Asia. They represented to Her Majesty that her silver coin and stamp were not known in the East Indies, which they supposed would induce her to grant

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them a licence to send thither what silver they pleased. The Queen and her Privy Council replied that, for the very reason alledged, it was her fixed and unalterable resolution not to permit them to send the coin of the King of Spain, or of any foreign prince, to India; and that no silver should be exported by her merchants, but only such as should be coined with her effigies and picture on the one side and the portcullis on the other, of the just weight and fineness of the Spanish pieces of eight and pieces of four rials. Her prudent reason for this was that her name and effigies might be hereafter respected by the Asiatics and she be known as great a prince as the King of Spain. Of this money, however, they were not to be permitted to export what quantity they thought fit, but only so much as she and her Privy Council should approve of, for Her Majesty declared that she held it as a special and chief prerogative of her crown and dignity to put the portcullis upon all the silver the Company should send to the East Indies, and that she would have her merchants, as to the quantity exported, subordinate to her will, and not her will to be ruled at the merchants' pleasure. This was observed during the remainder of her reign, but in the next it was bought off."

For these statements (which have been accepted as correct by later writers) Ruding gives as his authority Thomas Violet's *Appeal to Cæsar* (1660), at the same time noting the discrepancy between the alleged determination of the Queen to have her effigies made known to "the Asiatics" and the fact that no such likeness appears on the coins. Violet, however, was evidently writing from hearsay long after the actual event, and, moreover, his character and aims make him an untrustworthy authority to cite. He was a London goldsmith who had made himself notorious

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by his fanatical opposition to the exportation of treasure ; the East India Company was naturally his special bugbear in this respect, and his immediate purpose in bringing up this story was to urge King Charles II to follow the example of his royal predecessor and to insist that all money exported by the Company should bear his likeness and the port-cullis.

For an authentic account of the episode we must go to the records, now generally accessible in the printed versions of the first volume of the Company's *Minutes* (*The Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies*) and of their *First Letter Book*. From these we gather that when the Committees were preparing to despatch their first fleet, one of the chief difficulties confronting them was the necessity of exporting a considerable stock of money for the purchase of return cargoes, since it was hopeless to expect that the sale of the goods sent out would realize sufficient for that purpose. To export English coins was out of the question, for that was strictly forbidden by the law of the realm, and the natural alternative was to make use of the Spanish dollar or peso of eight rials (the piece-of-eight familiar to readers of pirate stories), which was universally current in the East. Unfortunately it was by no means easy to procure these coins in large quantities at short notice, for England had long been at war with Spain. However, the Committees did their best. Endeavours were made to procure supplies from the western counties (where rials were not uncommon, owing partly to the trade between those parts and districts and countries using these coins, and partly, no doubt, to the results of the depredations of Drake and his compeers), from Calais, and from Rouen and Brittany, while members of the Company were encouraged to pay up their subscriptions in "dollers," reckoned at 4s. 6d apiece. Evidently,

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however, these measures failed of full success; and in their need the Committees turned to the Government for assistance. Already, when preparing in the autumn of 1599 for the voyage then projected (but afterwards abandoned), it had been in contemplation to ask that, in the event of such a shortage, the Mint should coin foreign money for the purpose (*The Dawn*, p 8), and now (November 11, 1600) it was decided that the Governor and others should ask the Lord Treasurer for a warrant to coin £5000 worth, out of bullion to be provided by the Company (*ibid* p 77). Fourteen days later instructions were given to apply in the same quarter for permission to use for the purpose such bullion as was already in the Tower, on condition of its replacement later (*ibid* p 87). Of the resultant negotiations we have no other evidence than their outcome. It seems a fair assumption that it was the wish of the Company, as before, to have the new coins made in exact imitation of the Spanish rials, but that the Queen and her Council boggled at the idea of using the Royal Mint for the purpose of counterfeiting the coinage of another prince, and resolved instead to strike special coins bearing the Queen's name and arms. That the motive was not, as asserted, an objection to the use of Spanish coin in the East by English merchants is shown by the fact that the new coins were only intended to supplement the regular rials¹. The matter had evidently been arranged before the close of the year, for in the charter establishing the East India Company (December 31, 1600) we find a clause empowering that body to export foreign silver coins or bullion to the value of £30,000 in any one voyage, provided

¹ The amount of coin taken out in the First Voyage was £21,742 (*List of Marine Records at the India Office*, p 1x), and out of this only £6000 was of the new coinage.

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that at least £6000 of that amount had been previously coined in the Royal Mint

A warrant was accordingly issued to the Mint officials to strike the new coinage. This was presumably done towards the end of December, 1600, or at the beginning of January, 1601, for on the fourth of the latter month we find the Privy Council writing to the Attorney-General, stating that the Warden of the Mint had represented that the warrant was defective in sundry points, and desiring him, if he considered the objections valid, to draw up a fresh commission (*Acts of the Privy Council*, 1600-01, p. 77). The outcome was apparently the warrant of January 11, 1601, to which Ruding refers. This has been entered on the Patent Rolls with that date (43 Eliz., part xi. 29), and a printed version will be found on p. 13 of *The First Letter Book*. In it, by the way, the new coins are referred to as testerns of eight, four, and two, and single testerns. No limit was fixed to the amount to be coined, and on January 15 the Committees of the Company decided to have, beyond the £6000 agreed upon, a supply to the value of £20, for distribution by the Secretary to "the Lords [of the Council] and other, as unto him shall seeme good" (*The Dawn*, p. 114). Presumably, since the rest were exported to the East, it was from this £20 worth that the coins which survive were mainly drawn. A final entry on the subject in the *Minutes* shows that on May 22, 1601, the sum of £29, 10s. was ordered to be paid to Charles Anthonie, Her Majesty's engraver, for the stamps used "for the East Indie moneys" (*ibid.* p. 174). The "standard poizes" for three of the coins were still in the Tower when Violet wrote, and are figured in his book.

The result of the experiment was an utter failure, as indeed might have been anticipated. Gerard Malynes, in

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his *Lex Mercatoria* (1622, p. 189), tells us that the novel coinage would not pass current in the East, "because the Spanish peeces of eight royalls had beene before that time counterfeited by other nations, which made the East Indians to doubt of our coyne, although without cause." The Company itself, in the petition mentioned below, said only that the money "was strange and unknowne to the people of those parts", and no doubt this was the real reason for the refusal to accept it. We have no information as to the course thereupon adopted, but it may be surmised that the coins were sold at their bullion value and melted down.

The experiment was not repeated, and indeed there was no inducement to do so, since the Company seems to have had no difficulty, in any of its later ventures, in collecting a sufficient number of Spanish rials of eight. Still, there remained that unhappy clause in the charter, which made the exportation of foreign silver dependent upon the recoinage of part of it. When, therefore, the Second Voyage was being prepared, the Company petitioned for leave to export foreign coins to the value of £12,000 only, without recoinage any portion thereof, and on February 23, 1604, a commission was issued granting their request, partly on the ground that the previous coinage had proved ineffective owing to its novelty, and partly on account of the fact that new stamps would be necessary (due to the accession of King James) and that these could not be got ready in time¹. Similarly, when the ships of the Third Voyage were about to be despatched, letters patent were obtained (January 5, 1607), authorizing the exportation of

¹ Patent Rolls, 1 James I, part xiv (37). The warrant is printed in full in Thurston's *History of the Coinage of the Territories of the East India Company*, p. 8.

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£20,000 in foreign money, "without any new coyninge" (*First Letter Book*, p 196) When the Fourth Voyage was under consideration, the Company applied for a similar concession (*ibid.* pp 207, 208, 214, 215), and letters patent to that effect were issued on February 8, 1608 (*ibid* p 224) At last the grant of a fresh charter by King James (May 31, 1609) afforded an opportunity of getting rid of the obnoxious clause, though in a manner that showed a certain reluctance to admit that the former requirement was a foolish one, and we find that the new grant gave the Company liberty to export foreign silver, in coin or bullion, up to £30,000 in any one voyage, the said silver to be carried out either intact or in "any other form, stamp, or fashion, to be coined within Our Mint within Our Tower of London, at their pleasure" It need scarcely be said that the Company never availed itself of the latter alternative

IV

THE COMPANY'S SURGEON-GENERAL

IN the days of Queen Bess or the first Stuart the men who went down to the sea in ships suffered many trials and ran many dangers of which the present-day sailor can form but a faint conception. All the inherent risks and hardships awaited them in an aggravated form. Ships were often badly constructed, with the result that cases of capsizing, even in calm weather, were not unknown. The seas were uncharted, the coasts practically unlighted. Enemies abounded, and it was no uncommon fate for a seaman to end his days as a Turkish or Algerine galley slave. In the most favourable conditions life on board ship was monotonously disagreeable, recalling Dr Johnson's gibe that "a ship is worse than a gaol," as having all the discomforts of the latter, with the additional chance of being drowned. Quarters were bad, the food indifferent, the water after a time almost undrinkable, while long voyages often meant short rations. It is hard to realize adequately the misery of a return voyage from the East Indies in a ship full of pepper, with a foul hull, and worn rigging, manned by a scanty crew containing a large proportion of sick men. Often the death-rate was so high that it became doubtful whether a sufficient number would survive to carry the vessel into the nearest port, and occasionally ships were found floating about aimlessly in

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mid-ocean with only corpses on board. Cockroaches and other vermin were a constant nuisance. One early navigator complains that, as food supplies diminished, the rats that swarmed in the ship grew so bold that they actually nibbled the toes of the sailors as they lay in their bunks.

Not the least drawback of the sailor's lot was the absence of any proper treatment in the case of disease or bodily injury. The science of medicine was comparatively in its infancy, and over the graver maladies the physician could exercise little or no control, when therefore scurvy or dysentery appeared on board during a long voyage the seamen died like flies. Still worse was the lot of those who were wounded in battle or injured by accident. Even on shore, in the hands of a skilful practitioner, an operation was an ordeal to be dreaded by the bravest, on board ship, where the surgeon was generally a raw hand, meagrely equipped, it must have been appalling beyond imagination, and many a badly-wounded man flung himself overboard rather than undergo the well-meant torture.

The Committees of the East India Company always showed a creditable solicitude for the alleviation of sickness and suffering, both on board their ships and in their factories on shore, but it soon became obvious that they could not by themselves determine either the fitness of candidates for the post of surgeon or the choice of suitable medicaments. For advice on both these matters they turned to a certain John Woodall, and from about 1614 until his death in 1643 they relied largely on his experience and judgment.

The main facts of Woodall's life will be found in the notice written by Dr Norman Moore for the *Dictionary of National Biography*. We are there told that he was born about 1556, the son of Richard Woodall, of Warwick,

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and Mary, daughter of Peirse Ithell, of North Wales. He commenced his career as a surgeon in Lord Willoughby's regiment. After spending eight years abroad, in Germany, France and Poland, studying foreign medical methods, he returned to England and, having been admitted to the Barber-Surgeons' Company, settled down as a practitioner in Wood Street, London. The plague of 1603 gave him an opportunity of applying the experience he had acquired on the Continent, but we know not what success attended the use of the secret remedy which he called his *aurum vitæ*. How he came to be employed by the East India Company is shown by the following extract from the minutes of a Court meeting held on December 13, 1613

“The Company being made acquainted that the surgion of the *Concord* is in hould [*i e* prison], and that Mr Woodall hath taken extraordinary paines in assisting to make provision for his chest (which was prepared by an apothecary whoe had sett downe £20 for that which Mr Woodall drewe him to allowe for £11), it caused them to weigh the necessitie of havinge some honest man of skill and knowledge to oversee the same buysines from tyme to tyme And Mr Woodall being held a very fitt person for that purpose, very sufficient, honest, and industrious, and one that may well be put in trust for that kinde to see yt carefully performed, they, considering that the health and lives of many of their men depended upon the same, desired Mr Governour to enterteyne him for that service and make him their officer and surveyer of their surgions chests, givinge him an oath to make the greater conscience of his doyings, and to lett him procure surgions that may bee honest and sufficient, and bringe them to Mr Governour and Committees to bee entertayned; and to see that whatsoever shalbe allowed to furnishe their chests

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shalbe provided, both the quantity and that which shalbe fittinge for their use abroad, accordinge to his skill and understanding , allowing him for his said service the somm of £20 for his yearlye salarye."

The arrangement with Woodall appears to have been concluded very leisurely, for the next mention of him in the records is on September 23, 1614, when he was sworn to provide competent surgeons and to fit up their boxes in a proper manner. After this it is rather startling to find him accused, in a letter sent home by the next fleet (*Letters Received*, vol 11 p 184), of thrusting unskilful boys into the place of "chirurgion" and filling their chests with rotten drugs, many of which did not correspond with the superscriptions on the boxes, but as no action was taken on these accusations we may conclude they were ill-founded. The only fault found with him by the Committees was on the score of his high charges, and even in this, after investigating the matter, they acquitted him of blame, declaring their conviction that he was "a very honest man and skilful in his profession." In January, 1616, he became Surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital—a post which he held till his death, and in March, 1618, the East India Company increased his salary from £20 to £30 per annum, to date from the previous Michaelmas. This was done upon his assertion that he made no profit either by the drugs he supplied or by the surgeons he nominated, and that "relying wholly upon their service he hath put himself out of his former practize." Two years later we find him in possession of sufficient funds to invest £1000 in the Company's stock. He was also, we may note, a shareholder in the Virginia Company, where he vigorously supported his patron, Sir Thomas Smythe, against the attacks to which he was subjected.

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That the ships' surgeons sent to the East at this time should be men of very moderate attainments was perhaps unavoidable, for no one with good prospects on shore would run the risks and endure the hardships of a long voyage at the very moderate rate of pay then ruling. Hence it appears to have been a common practice for Woodall to appoint apprentice pupils of his own to the post, with the stipulation that they should pay him a sixth of their yearly wages—an arrangement which is stated to have been approved by the Company in December, 1619. To mitigate the effects of their inexperience, he, in 1617, published a small quarto entitled *The Surgeon's Mate*, with a dedication to Sir Thomas Smythe, "my singular good patrone," and an address to the reader explaining that the work was intended for the instruction of surgeons employed to the East Indies. The interest of the volume is, of course, mainly professional, but it contains some passages quaint enough to arrest the attention of the casual reader. The "office and duty" of the medico of the ship included, we learn, not only tooth-drawing and blood-letting, but also ("for that the surgeons mate by due consequent is to be barber to the ships company") the gentle art of shaving. "It is to the credit of a young artist to take a vaine smoothly and neate, as also to shave well is praiseworthy." Among other things he tells us that the use of the cauterizing iron after amputation is often forborne, "by reason the terror thereof to the patient is great", and on this account, and "for speech of people, who are ready to scandalize an artist upon each light occasion," Woodall himself has long discontinued it. Of the amputation of a limb by means of the "dismembring sawe" ("this great and terrible instrument") a grisly account is given. The operator is warned to employ three strong men to hold the patient, while, as for the latter, "let him



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prepare his soule as a ready sacrifice to the Lord by earnest prayers " There is an equally unpleasant description of the operation of trepanning, which will make the reader thankful that he lives in the days of anæsthetic surgery. Indeed, the perusal of this book gives one a higher estimate of the courage of the Elizabethan sailors than any of the battle pictures in the pages of Hakluyt At the same time it leaves a pleasant impression of the author, as a shrewd, kindly man, zealous in his profession and eager to relieve suffering The remark of his biographer that he showed "a dread of rather than a reverence for physicians" is perhaps an additional testimony to his acuteness

The Surgeon's Mate was found so useful that fresh editions were called for in 1639 and 1655, the former containing a portrait of Woodall, engraved by G Glover It is, by the way, to the first edition of all that we owe the excellent likeness of Sir Thomas Smythe, executed by Simon Van de Passe in 1616, which has been reproduced as the frontispiece of the present volume Two other works by the same author were *Woodalls Viaticum, the Pathway to the Surgeon's Chest*, issued in 1628, and *The Cure of the Plague by an Antidote called Aurum Vitæ*, which was published about three years before his death The former contained a list of instruments and directions for the treatment of surgical cases We learn from it that an ordinary surgeon was allowed a chest costing £17, while a "surgeon-major" was given one of the value of £48 The second work included a full description of scurvy, and is said to be the first in which lime-juice was prescribed as a cure (though this had certainly been used many years earlier)

In his dealings with the Company, Woodall had always to run the gauntlet of hostile criticism, while strong efforts were made from time to time to oust him from his privileged

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position. Thus, at a General Court held in July, 1619, a proposal was brought forward that for the future all surgeons should be examined by the Barber-Surgeons' Company before appointment. This motion was successfully resisted by the Committees on the ground that such a proceeding was unnecessary, as every care was taken in their selection. Evidently, however, the Court were by no means disposed to trust blindly to Woodall's guidance. In March, 1620, we find that the boxes provided by him were submitted to the Barber Surgeons for approval before they were accepted, and in November, 1621, the Committees resolved to arrange themselves for the purchase of all drugs and simples required. The following year a further step was taken, for, much to Woodall's chagrin, other practitioners were allowed to compete with him in supplying surgeons' chests. Two doctors accordingly submitted sample chests, and it was proposed to refer the decision, between these and one of the Surgeon-General's providing, to a mixed committee of physicians and surgeons. Here, however, professional etiquette stepped in, for the doctors declared that, having already submitted their chests to the College of Physicians, it would be a "thing ill becoming their calling" to permit any surgeon to sit in judgment upon them.

The proposal to examine all surgeons before appointment was revived in February, 1624. It was objected that those who had already served in the Indies would scorn to be subjected to such a test, and although the motion was carried, it was decided that it should only apply to fresh comers. Eight months later another outcry was raised against Woodall, he being "charged to seeke his owne gayne by thrusting his servants upon the Company for surgions mates into the Indies, and that hee hath at this tyme twelve servants there." In reply to this he acknowledged that he

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had in recent years sent out twelve, but he alleged that only seven were alive, and that in all twenty of his nominees had died, that he had been at great expense in fitting them out, yet "the benefit hee makes of them is but their two moneths pay yearely", and that many of these apprentices of his had turned out skilful surgeons. With this explanation the Committees declared themselves satisfied.

Early in the next year Woodall found himself in serious trouble. Some money being due to him from Sir Thomas Meiry, one of the King's servants, he had the temerity to serve a writ upon that gentleman in the royal palace at Whitehall. Thereupon the Lord Steward, enraged at this presumption, committed him to prison. The Company, on being appealed to, preferred a petition for his release, alleging its urgent need of his services, but although the Lord Steward set him at liberty for about a fortnight, in order that he might see to the chests for the next fleet, he was promptly remanded to prison at the expiration of the time. Upon a fresh call for assistance the Company decided to "labour for" his release, but told him to use in the first instance all other means in his power. The result is not stated, but probably he obtained his freedom on making humble apology for his offence.

The general reduction of salaries which took place in May, 1628, resulted in Woodall's remuneration being lowered from £30 to £20 per annum. This sum appears to have been paid only in respect to his services in selecting surgeons for the Indies and fitting out their chests (for the contents of which he of course charged separately). But he had other claims on the Company for attending their sailors who were brought home sick and the workmen who got injured in their service on the river or in Blackwall Yard. In the Standing Orders of 1621 the Surgeon-General

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was required, either personally or by deputy, to be in constant attendance at the Yard, not only for the purpose of rendering medical assistance but also to cut the hair of the workmen (imagine a modern Surgeon-General being required to undertake this duty¹) For these services he was to receive twopence a month from each man's wages, and in addition he was at one time allowed the pay of a labourer. This regulation, however, appears to have been often evaded. In May, 1627, Woodall declared that he had received nothing for three years, whereupon the Court gave him £30 in full discharge of all claims. He received another gratuity (£20) in December, 1630, for his extra services during the past two and a half years, and a third (of £30) was granted three years later. At the end of 1630 the workmen and officers of the Yard petitioned for the reappointment of a resident surgeon, offering to pay their monthly twopences as before, whereupon Woodall was directed to provide for their needs, either personally or by deputy. But before long the monthly levy was again discontinued, for in April, 1634, when a fresh order was made for its payment, it was stated that Woodall had received nothing from the workmen for two years.

In 1633 Woodall had the distinction of being elected Master of the Barber-Surgeons' Company, of which he had been Warden six years previously. *The Visitation of London in 1633-35* records that his wife's name was Sara (formerly Henchpole), and that he had then four children living, three sons and one daughter. It also mentions that he claimed the right to use the arms of the family of Uvedall—a point on which the heralds offer no opinion.

Dark days had now come upon the Company. Money was none too plentiful, and all outgoings were narrowly scanned. At Christmas, 1635, the list of officials was

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revised, and salaries were cut down. Woodall's name is not to be found in the new list, and the following entry on the *Court Minutes* of May 8, 1640, shows that he was in fact left out in the cold.

“Mr Woodall at this Court petitioned that his wages might bee restored which was taken away from him ever since December, 1635, representing the cures hee hath performed since that time, having cured above 50 persons, and also that hee had contrived a booke of chirurgery for the good of the East India voyage in consideration whereof the Court was pleased by erection of hands to bestowe upon him £60 for all demaunds whatsoever from December, 1635, untill Midsommer next ”

Although no longer a salaried official, he maintained a close connexion with the Company. On January 7, 1642, a surgeon who had been engaged was ordered to be discharged, upon a report from Woodall that he was “a meere barbor ” He continued to supply the medicine chests required by the Company, and payments to a considerable amount are recorded from time to time. It seems to have been the practice to hand over to him any chests returned from the Indies, on the understanding that he would make due allowance in his bills for the value of their contents. In November, 1642, he complained that this had been stopped—apparently on a rumour that it was his habit to “new boyle the salves againe ” and charge them to the Company as though they were fresh medicines. This aspersion Woodall denied “upon his reputation,” though he admitted that he used these stale preparations in his hospital practice, “for the cureing of poore people ” Believing his story, the Committees ordered that he should be given the old chests as formerly.

He was now getting a very old man, and it is not sur-

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prising to read in the *Minutes* of June 23, 1643, that "Mr. John Woodall made his humble request to the Court that, in regard hee is growne old and beddrid and not able to followe his calling, and his children, being growne to mens' estates, lying very heavy upon him, the which, with the many losses and misfortunes that have befallen him in his estate, inforced him to bee a suytour to the Court that they would bee pleased towards the repayre of his languishing necessities and his better support now in his declyning and dying dayes to bestowe somewhat upon him" His appeal, however, did not meet with a very sympathetic reception, for the entry proceeds "The Court taking his said request into consideration, and understanding that upon the inquiry of some of the Committees that hee is not in necessity, but hath a sufficient estate, did by erection of hands deny to bestowe anything upon him"

This is the last reference to him in the Company's records, and in Richard Smyth's *Obituary* (Camden Society's Publications, vol xlv), we read that on August 28, 1643, "Old Mr Woodhall, the surgeon, died" His estate was administered by his daughter Margaret, who had married a certain Henry Eaton

Already Woodall's nephew, and former apprentice, Henry Boone, had been appointed "chirurgion" to the East India Company in his place (May 17, 1643). Boone had no fixed salary, but in January, 1648, he was given a gratuity of £80, partly in recompense for his care of the workmen at Blackwall Yard. He had also, of course, the gains derived from the sale of medicine chests to the Company and from the provision of surgeons for its vessels. Thus his life ran on for over twenty years. Then, having survived the Great Plague (which doubtless gave him plenty of work), he died in the summer of 1666. Under date of

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July 19 in that year, Smyth records "Old Mr. Boone, chirurgion, buried."

On July 25 applications for the vacant post were considered by the Court of Committees. The six candidates included Henry Boone, junior, and Thomas Woodall (possibly a grandson of the former Surgeon-General). The Committees, however, resolved not to make any definite appointment, but to employ one or other of the applicants "as they shall see fitt, or provide themselves where they best can, when they shall have any occasion." Thus the Company ceased for a long time to have any special adviser in matters of medicine or surgery.

V

THE COMPANY AND CHARLES II's MENAGERIE

IN all ages "strange beasts and fowls" have been regarded as gifts eminently suitable for royalty, and even to-day the practice has not entirely ceased, for did not the *Times* of September 19, 1924, announce that the Governor of South Australia had sent home a pair of young "mallee fowls" as a present to King George? ¹ Nowadays the disposal of such gifts raises no difficulty, as the Zoological Gardens will provide a fit home, but in early times the housing question was not so easily settled. When in 1255 Louis IX of France bestowed upon his royal brother of England an elephant (doubtless of African origin), which was brought by water from Wissant up the Thames to London, a house, forty feet by twenty, was built in the Tower for the accommodation of the creature. The expense of feeding it was imposed upon the Sheriffs of London, who must have felt much relieved when it died, within a couple of years after its arrival. ² The

¹ If we are to accept literally the statement made by another morning newspaper (now defunct), Queen Victoria in 1876 received a much stranger present. That journal recorded in its Court news that Sir Salar Jung had been received by the Queen "and offered his *muggur* as a token of allegiance, which Her Majesty touched and returned." Since, however, the writer could not have intended us to believe that a crocodile had been led into the Queen's presence, we must conclude that he had confused the word he used with *nuzzur* (a ceremonial offering, usually of a few gold coins).

² *Matthæi Parisiensis Chronica Majora*, vol. v p. 489. Close and Pipe

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Tower, however, continued to be the repository for lions and other wild beasts belonging to the Sovereign, and retained this position until 1834, when the collections, which were then quite extensive, were transferred to the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park

Skipping through the ages, we may pause to note the sorrows of one Jeremy Woodward, who, in the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign, laid his plaint before the Privy Council. He had brought from Germany two camels, in the hope that Her Majesty would purchase them, she, however, had refused to do so, and he now begged for permission either to sell them to some one else or to make show of them throughout the realm (*Hist MSS Commission Reports Hatfield MSS*, part xiv p 281) Further, we learn from the *Calendars of State Papers, Domestic*, that in July, 1613, an ambassador from Savoy presented James I with a tiger and a lioness (a lynx had been included in the party, but had died on the way), and that in November, 1617, a Russian envoy brought white hawks, live sables, etc In 1623 another elephant appeared—a gift from the King of Spain. This animal, which no doubt had come originally from Africa, reached London in July, accompanied by five camels The party found a temporary home in the King's Mews, the site of which is now occupied by the National Gallery The King was at Theobalds, whence he sent instructions that the elephant was to be well fed, and nobody was to be allowed to inspect it, the camels were to be taken daily to graze in St. James's Park, and later were to be sent to Theobalds, where special quarters were provided for them. The elephant was allowed four Rolls A picture of the elephant, drawn possibly by Matthew Paris himself, is reproduced in Hardy's *Catalogue of Materials for British History*, vol iii plate xvi I owe these references to Mr V H. Galbraith of the Public Record Office

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keepers—two Spaniards and two Englishmen, and the former reported that from September to April the creature must not be allowed to drink water, but must be given a gallon of wine a day. Since the cost of its maintenance was estimated at £275, 12s a year—to say nothing of the present of £150 to the Spanish official who had brought it over—we are not surprised to find Sir Richard Weston opining that the Lord Treasurer would be little in love with presents which cost the King as much to maintain as would a garrison. It was this elephant, by the way, that the Rev Samuel Purchas saw, as shown by a note at p 518 of his *Pilgrimage* (1626). How long it and its companions survived does not appear, but a play of 1639 (*The City Match*, ix 137) mentions among the sights of London “the camel, the elephant, dromedaries,” etc.

Whilst upon the subject of elephants, we may refer to a passage in *The Verney Memoirs* (vol II p 375), which says that “the Lord George Berkely’s elephant (who is five foot and four inches high) is to be sold by the candle at the East India House, sett up at £1000 and to advance £20 every bidding.” No clue is given as to the date, but this we can supply from other sources. In the British Museum there is an eight-page pamphlet, entitled *A True and Perfect Description of the Strange and Wonderful Elephant sent from the East Indies and brought to London on Tuesday, the Third of August, 1675*. The contents, however, belie the title, for, while we are given much information about elephants in general, concerning this particular one we learn only that it was landed at Whitefriars, and that it was young and small. The Company’s records tell us nothing directly, but the *Court Minutes* show that on February 8, 1676, permission was granted to Lord Berkeley to send two “blacks” to Bantam by the next ships, and in a letter to

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that place of the 29th of the same month these men are referred to as being those "that came over with the elephant" Evidently the creature had arrived in one of the five ships (possibly in the *Berkeley Castle*) that had reached London from Bantam in the summer of 1675, and we may surmise that it had been brought home by the captain for presentation to his patron, Lord Berkeley. As a prominent member of the directorate, the latter would have no difficulty in obtaining the use of the East India House for the sale, while the absence of any record of the transaction may be accounted for by the fact that the Company had no pecuniary concern in it

Another animal that excited much curiosity about the same time was a rhinoceros Under date of October 22, 1684, Evelyn notes in his diary. "I went with Sir William Godolphin to see the rhinoceros or unicorn, being the first that, I suppose, was ever brought into England She belong'd to some East India merchants, and was sold (as I remember) for above £2000" And from *The Verney Memoirs* (vol. II. p. 426) we learn that in 1686 twopence was being charged for an inspection of this strange creature If it had indeed come from the East (as asserted on the print to be mentioned later), it must have been brought by some "interloper" (as those merchants were called who traded in defiance of the Company's monopoly) We cannot say that its transport was impossible, for as far back as 1513 a rhinoceros had been sent from India as a present to the King of Portugal. This specimen was immortalized by Albrecht Durer in a well-known engraving, founded upon a sketch made at Lisbon In like manner the one to which we have been referring, as also (it would seem) Lord Berkeley's elephant, found an artist in P. van den Berge, who published in Holland a coarse mezzotint (of which a

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copy may be seen in the Print Department of the British Museum), with the title "Portrait au naturel d'un Elephant et d'un Rinoceros arrives depuis peu des Indes Orientales a Londres, 1686" Probably in this case also the artist had depended upon a sketch made by some one else on the spot

Three quarters of a century later an enterprising sailor, Captain Brooke Samson, of the *Hardwicke* East Indiaman, brought home from Bengal a young elephant, which he offered to the Court of Directors. What he imagined they would do with it does not appear, but they got neatly out of the difficulty by desiring him to present it to King George III in the name of the Company, and we learn that His Majesty was gracious enough to receive it "with great regard" (*Court Minutes*, September 21 and 28, 1763). Its further history may be gathered from a charming essay by the late Mr. Austin Dobson on St James's Park (reprinted in his *Side-Walk Studies*), in which he says "Among the attractions of the Georgian park-goers must be numbered what were popularly known as the 'Queen's animals'. These were an elephant (or elephants)¹ and a beautiful but unamiable female zebra, which someone had presented to Her Majesty. . . The zebra, of which there is a 'sculpture' in the *London Magazine* for July 1762, usually grazed in a paddock near Buckingham House, where it was the object of much popular curiosity and the pretext for several scurrilous lampoons. Where the elephant (or elephants) had harbourage we have not discovered, but,

¹ The doubt here expressed is probably due to a passage in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*, where a Welsh waiting-woman, describing her visit to London, writes that she has "seen the Park, and the pale ass of Saint Gimses and the sweet young princes, and the hillyfents and pye bald ass [*i.e.* the zebra], and all the rest of the royal family." There seems, however, to be no reason why we should follow her in her use of the plural

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like other favourites of fortune, both zebra and pachyderms fell ultimately upon evil days . The unfortunate zebra was sold to a travelling exhibition or menagerie, where in April of the same year [1773] she died Her sorrowing proprietor had her stuffed . Her eventual, if not ultimate, resting-place, with an elephant (also stuffed), was in an outhouse of the old Holophusikon or Leverian Museum in Leicester Fields ”

While the East India Company were not likely to take up precious cargo space in trying to bring home such bulky creatures as elephants and rhinoceroses, they were by no means unwilling to please the reigning monarch by finding room for smaller specimens Their thoughts were first turned in this direction by an application made, at the beginning of 1607, on behalf of the Earl of Salisbury for leave to send out a man in their ships to bring home “ paratts, munkies, and marmasitts ” for His Lordship Reply was made that, “ as the man may die and his things miscarrie,” it would be more convenient if the Company’s servants provided what was required , and accordingly the commanders of the Third Voyage were instructed to bring back the creatures mentioned “ or other straundge beasts and fowles that you esteeme rare and delightfull ” (*First Letter Book*, p 130) These instructions were repeated in the four following years, with the variation that the specimens obtained were intended for presentation to the King or “ any of the noble lords that are our honorable freinds ” (*ibid* pp 301, 347, 378, 416) Nothing seems to have resulted , and although we find notices of several animals brought home during the next thirty years, these seem to have been due to the enterprise of individuals. In 1619 Sir Thomas Roe, returning from his embassy to the Great Mogul, presented King James with “ two ante-

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lopes, a straunge and beautifull kind of red deare ” (*Embassy*, p. 521) Twelve years later Captain Weddell brought home a leopard for King Charles I and a cage of birds for the Queen. These he desired leave to present in his own name, but the Court of Committees decided to make the presentation themselves, in the name of the Company. In 1639 President Methwold, returning from Surat in the *Mary*, brought with him a tame tiger cub, probably for the same purpose. During the voyage, however, the tiger bit his master’s right hand badly, and a fortnight later repeated the offence by severely mauling an unlucky sailor, whereupon it was destroyed.

In October, 1620, some factors at Patna, writing to their Agra colleagues, added in a postscript “With our goods wee have sent a cupell of pratlinge birds, called mynnas, which wee have bought to bee sent to the Company, and intreate you carre may bee taken for theire conveyance to Surratt” (*English Factories in India*, 1618-21, p. 199). These *mainas* belong to the starling family, and are easily taught to utter words; hence they are frequently kept in India as cage birds. Patna seems to have been a centre of the trade, for Peter Mundy, journeying thither from Agra in 1632, met on his way some servants of the Diwan of Patna, who were carrying, as a present from him to the Emperor Shah Jahan, “some ten or twelve moynas, a bird of Bengala, which learneth to speake very plaine, in coulour and forme like a blackbird, but thrice as bigge” (*Travels of Peter Mundy*, vol. II p. 120). Those intended for the East India Company do not seem to have reached them, for no further allusion has been traced in the records, but the talking bird “from the East Indys,” which Pepys saw in the Duke of York’s chamber in 1664 (Wheatley’s edition of the *Diary*, vol. IV. p. 118), was doubtless a specimen which

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had been successfully brought home and presented to the Duke, probably by some sea captain

After the Restoration the Company were constantly called upon to procure for His Majesty specimens of the Indian fauna. Lions and tigers were not much to his taste, but in the gentler animals, and especially in birds, he took great delight.¹ St James's Park was the spot chosen for the preservation of such creatures. From Tudor times it had been a nursery for deer, and James I had installed a menagerie there. It was, however, reserved for Charles II to lay out the grounds and establish therein the royal aviaries. Storey's Gate is supposed by some to be named from its being on the site of the residence of Edward Storey, "Keeper of the King's Birds", while Birdcage Walk still commemorates the position of the aviaries under his charge. Of the collection we get a lively account in Evelyn's diary (February 9, 1665) "I went to St James's Parke, where I saw various animals, and examined the throate of the *Onocratylus* or pelican, a fowle betweene a stork and a swan, a melancholy waterfowl brought from Astracan by the Russian ambassador. Here was also a small waterfowl not bigger than a more-hen, that went almost quite erect, like a penguin of America. The solan geese here also are great devourers, and are said soon to exhaust all the fish in a pond. Here was a curious sort of poultry not much exceeding the size of a tame pidgeon, with legs so short as their crops seem'd to touch the earth, a milk-white raven, a stork, which was a rarity at this season, seeing he was loose and could flie loftily, two Balerian cranes, one of which,

¹ Samuel Pepys appears to have shared in this respect the tastes of his royal master. In addition to a canary and a blackbird that whistled tunes, he at one time possessed a tame eagle. He found it, however, so great a nuisance that he was glad to make it over to Mrs Turner, who had taken a fancy for it (*Diary*, Wheatley's edition, vol. iv p. 312)

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having had one of his leggs broken and cut off above the knee, had a wooden or boxen leg and thigh, with a joynt so accurately made that the creature could walke and use it as well as if it had ben natural, it was made by a souldier The Parke was at this time stored with nūmerous flocks of severall sorts of ordinary and extraordinary wild fowle, breeding about the Decoy, which, for being neere so greate a citty and among such a concourse of souldiers and people, is a singular and diverting thing There were also deere of severall countries, white, spotted like leopards; antelopes, an elk, red deere, roebucks, staggs, Guinea goates, Arabian sheepe, etc. There were withy-potts or nests for the wild fowle to lay their eggs in, a little above the surface of the water."

Numerous references occur in the Company's records to efforts made to obtain specimens for the royal collections Within a year of King Charles's restoration orders were sent to Surat (September, 1660) and to Madras (January, 1661) to provide rare beasts and birds for presentation to His Majesty From the former place the President and Council replied in January, 1662, regretting that they had been unable to procure any specimens. At Madras the Company's servants were more successful, and in November, 1661, they reported the despatch of "two greate and one small antelops, two pelicans, and two noorees or Maccasser parrots" This letter crossed one from the Company, saying that the King had been much pleased with some spotted deer that had come "from your parts," and ordering the factors to send by every ship two pairs of the handsomest deer of that kind available How anxious the Company were to meet the King's wishes is shown by the following entry in the *Court Minutes* for July 12, 1664 "The Court directed Captaine Prowd to

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repaire aboard the severall shippes and enquire what rarities of birds, beasts, or other curiosities there are aboard fitt to present His Majestie, and to take order they be not disposed of till the Company are supplied with such of them as they desire (paying for them) ” Nothing, however, appears to have resulted from this quest , and on August 22 following the Court, at the suggestion of the Governor, decided to assuage His Majesty's disappointment by presenting him with “ a silver case of oile of cinnamon ” and “ some good thea ” The latter consisted of two pounds and two ounces, and cost £4, 5s

Reverting to India, we find that when, on Christmas Day, 1665, Robert Master, the Chief of the factory at Karwar (on the Malabar Coast), died after a brief illness, his colleagues reported to Surat that his effects included “ two elks, a speckled deer, and an antelope ” In reply, the President said that these animals had been collected by Master, partly “ to be sett ashore to breed at St Hellena ” and partly for presentation to King Charles , but if they could not easily be sent to Surat for shipment, they were to be sold Apparently the latter course was taken, for we hear no more of the matter , and no doubt the factors had good reason for their action, since the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Dutch War had for a time severed all communication by sea between Surat and the subordinate settlements On the other side of India, however, the Agent and Council at Madras shipped a buck and three does for England in that same year (1665) Presumably they were confined in a pen on the deck during the long voyage , and considering the want of exercise, the exposure, and the lack of suitable food, it is not surprising to find that one at least of the does died The fate of the buck was a happier one. When the green valleys of St Helena

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came in sight, he made a bold dash for liberty. Leaping overboard, he swam to the shore and disappeared in the thickets. Let us hope that he there found a mate and, by raising a numerous progeny, repaid the Company for the cost of his passage to the island.

In March, 1668, the Company wrote to Surat for three pairs of spotted deer, and in the following year, at the King's request, twelve were asked for, three of them to be males. Thereupon the President and Council shipped two bucks in November, 1669, and two more in the following January. Writing to Madras in December of that year, the Company demanded eight spotted deer, adding "And if there bee any small parretts, about the bignes of sparrows, which are called noories, or any other of the like nature which are rarieties and pleasant to the eye or eare, send us some of them."

Similar orders were sent to Bantam in the following February. To Madras (November, 1670) and to Surat (February, 1671) the Company sent the following message: "Wee have received an intimation from His Majestie to procure for him such sortes of fowles as are exprest in the words following. The severall sorts of water fowles of broad bill kind and largest sorts, such as may be kept with English bread or corne or such feed as is in England. That it bee carefully enquired into to know their naturall feed. That they may bee of such sorts, large and the most beautifull, and as are not in these parts, and such as use to the land waters and not alwaies upon the sea."

In June, 1671, the President and Council at Surat reported that Diler Khan had given them, in return for some English greyhounds presented to him, "a beast of game called here a siagosh, esteemed a great rarity among the noblemen", and this animal was sent home the

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following November, together with a curious document,¹ describing the method of its employment in hunting and giving directions for its treatment when sick. A siagosh (Persian *siyah-gosh*, "black-ear") is a species of lynx, more generally called a caracal (Turkish *karah-kulak*, with the same meaning), which is still used in India for running down hares and other small game, much as the cheetah is employed in hunting larger animals.² Unfortunately, no information can be found whether this specimen reached England

Three young deer were sent home from Surat in January, 1672, with a message that no birds were procurable, and two years later a similar report was made, with an intimation that three spotted deer were being forwarded. From Madras a brace of deer were despatched early in 1673, and in December, 1675, the Company intimated to the Agent at that settlement that the King desired an annual supply of spotted deer, mostly does.

A curiosity of a different sort was sent home by President Aungier from Surat in January, 1675, with the following explanation. "The Governor of Surat having desired your President, by order from the Great Mogul, to procure him some parte of the mermaid fish, he employed some freinds bound to Bombass [*i.e.* Mombasa, in East Africa] therein, who brought him the whole bone or skeleton of said fish; which appearing to us a curiosity that might bee acceptable to His Majestie or to yourselves, wee have thought good to send it you by ship *Faulcon*, put up in a chest marked with your marke, and have desired Mr Sparkes, the chirurgeon of the *Faulcon*, to make it cleane and fit for your

¹ This I have printed in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* (vol xxx p 467)

² Both a caracal and a cheetah are said to have been in the Tower menagerie in 1829

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reception, which if hee doth well performe, wee desire you to consider his paines."

Writing to Surat on March 8, 1676, the Company said: "His Majestie desires no more cassa¹warrens¹; and for the spotted deere, that they be most female, of which send some by every shiping. He also desires the large bird with a crowne upon its head, comonly called the crowne bird or East India peacock a bird like a crane, but different in couller a bird less then a goose, being finer featherd, comonly called an East India goose: any sort of wild fowles, as duck, mallard, teale, widgeons, etc, soe that they are different in couller from ours and will feed upon any sort of grayne which we have in England What you can procure of any of theis sorts, or any fine wild fowle, send by the first ships, being very acceptable to His Majestie"

To this request the following reply was made in January, 1677 "Wee have issued out orders to your severall factors to procure such birds and deere as you require for His Majesties service, and now send you by these shippes some deere, male and female, the latter whereof are hard to be procured. As to water foule with broad bills, and those Indian geese with copple crown's, they doe not breed in these parts, but come only at certaine seasons, soe that, though they are often shott by fowlers, yett never taken young, soe as to send home or breed up Last yeare wee sent you two large birds called sarrusses, and now alsoe send you two more by these shippes They are much esteemed by these great men, and kept in the Kings court; their nature being to keepe strict watch, standing on one leg all night and, if any noise or accident happens, they take the

¹ The cassowary is not an Indian bird, and any specimens the King may have obtained are more likely to have come from Bantam

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alarum. Wee hope they will please you" "Copples crown" is a term (now obsolete) for a crest or tuft of feathers. The "sarruss" (Hindustani, *saras*) is the great grey crane (*Grus. Antigone*). The statement that this bird was employed as a sentinel is interesting. Certainly the noise made by even one crane would far outdo the cackle of the geese that saved the Capitol. Its call is said to be audible for a distance of two miles. A letter dated the following day states that the animals accompanying the cranes were eight deer, two antelopes, and one elk.

To Madras (December, 1676) and to Surat (March, 1677) the Company forwarded lists of birds desired by His Majesty, and added, in the former case, a request for two bucks and four does of the smallest size procurable of spotted deer. Further orders for does went to Madras and Bengal in December, 1677, and to Surat in March, 1678, and February, 1679, a supply of birds being also desired from the latter place. Deer were to be sent home yearly.

No reference to the subject occurs in the correspondence during the rest of the reign, but one is tempted to add one other requisition, though it relates to specimens of humanity, instead of animals, and they were apparently intended for the Duchess of Portsmouth, not for the King's menagerie. Writing to Surat and Madras in May, 1683, the Company said "His Majesty hath required of us to send to India to provide for him one male and two female blacks, but they must be dwarfs, and of the least size that you can procure, the male to be about 17 years of age and the female about 14. We would have you, next to their littleness, to choose such as may have the best features, and to send them home upon any of our ships, giving the commander great charge to take care of their accommodation, and in particular of the female, that she be no way abused in the

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voyage by any of the seamen For their provision and clothes you must take care to lay it in , and lett them be sett out with all such ear and nose rings and shackles for ornament about their legs (of false stones, and brass, but not with gold) as is usual to wear in the country , but lett them not be wore in the voyage, but sent to us apart."

No reply has been traced , but on March 6, 1685, the Company wrote to Madras . " You need not now take care for dwarfs, the Dutches of Portsmouth intending suddenly for France." It is hardly necessary to explain that the bird-loving monarch had died on the 6th of the previous month, and that his mistress had thereupon thought it prudent to depart

His dour successor seems to have taken little interest in his brother's zoological collection, and in any case he soon had weightier matters to engross his attention. The collection, however, so far as the birds were concerned, has lasted down to the present time, and some of the water-fowl that now disport themselves at the eastern end of the lake in St James's Park are supposed to be descendants of those which Charles II fed with his own hand What will be news to most readers is that the adjacent India Office has a special interest in the collection, as the representative of the East India Company which took so much trouble to furnish it with specimens from the East.

VI

AN EMBASSY FROM BANTAM

“**W**HERE exactly *is* Bantam ?” was a question once put to me by the distinguished author of a work upon the rise of the British dominion in India, and lest any reader should be disposed to echo the inquiry, it may be well to begin by saying that Bantam is situated near the north-western extremity of the island of Java, about fifty miles west of Batavia. Once the capital of a considerable kingdom—a mixed nation of Sundanese, Malays, and Javanese, predominantly Muhammadan in religion—it is now a mass of ruins, and the only justification for its retention on the map is its former importance. There is still a Dutch province of Bantam, covering the area of the old kingdom, but its headquarters are at Serang, a few miles inland from the former capital.

The town of Bantam was situated upon a good bay, close to the northern entrance of the Sunda Straits, which separate Java from Sumatra, while linking together the Indian Ocean and the China Sea. Thus favourably placed, as early as the sixteenth century it was a flourishing port, well known to the Portuguese and with a considerable number of Chinese merchants among its inhabitants. Its principal trade was in pepper, which was produced in large quantities in the neighbouring districts, but it was also a convenient centre for procuring spices and Chinese

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products, such as silk and ginger. In the English East India Company's first voyage Sir James Lancaster visited the port and established there (1603) a factory which, with slight interruptions, had been continued down to the time of our story. For a time the Dutch were our active competitors there, but they could not be content to share the trade with others, and so in 1619 they removed to Jakatra, where they destroyed the native town and built in its place a fortified settlement of their own, which they named Batavia (Nova). Of the quarrels that ensued between the English at Bantam and the Dutch at Batavia this is not the place to speak. Suffice it to say that our countrymen continued their commerce at the former place, despite the obstacles placed in their way by the Dutch and at times by the Sultan of Bantam or (as he preferred to call himself) of Surosoan. Though their trade was not of great volume, it had a certain value as the chief source of supply of pepper for the English market, while the place was also a distributing centre for English goods and for calicoes brought from India.

Naturally the Dutch watched with jealous eyes the progress of this commerce, the very existence of which prevented the consummation of their schemes for monopolizing the trade of the Eastern Archipelago. From time to time they quarrelled with the Bantam monarch and blockaded his port, greatly to the annoyance of their English rivals, but, though strong at sea, their military forces had many calls upon them in other directions, and they were compelled to postpone until a more convenient season the arduous task of subduing so large and warlike a kingdom, which covered over 2500 square miles. Meanwhile the Sultan was doing his best to strengthen his position militarily, and for this purpose, from 1662 onwards,

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he sent many letters and presents to the King of England and the English East India Company, begging for supplies of warlike munitions. The Company was not loth to send out muskets and powder, provided payment was forthcoming (a condition not always fulfilled, the Sultan having a royal dislike to being pressed for money); but the supply of heavy guns was another matter, because their exportation required the express permission of the crown. King Charles, however, from time to time forwarded cannon, in addition to small arms and ammunition, in return for the presents sent by the Sultan and the latter also obtained supplies from other European competitors, such as the French. This desire for heavy guns seems to have been the chief motive for the despatch of the embassy we are now considering.

At the time of the inception of the mission, the administration of the kingdom was shared between two personages, father and son, designated by the English factors the old and the young Sultan respectively. The former, whose name was Abul Fath, after reigning for many years, determined about 1671 to associate one of his sons with him in the government and gradually to relinquish his power to him. The process, however, proved a slow one—the father apparently finding it difficult to reconcile himself to parting with his privileges—and it was not until 1678 that the young Sultan, Abdul Kahhar Abul Nasr, became in reality an equal partner. Once established, he seems to have taken the lead with vigour. It was he who determined to send a mission to London—a decision of which the English factors advised their employers in a letter of July 23, 1681, adding that they had done their best to dissuade the Sultan from adopting this course. Their reasons for this opposition are not stated; but

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presumably they thought that the interests of the Company would not be furthered by the embassy, while it would undoubtedly entail considerable expense. Writing again on August 19, they said that the Sultan had at first intended to employ a vessel of his own for the purpose, but had failed to secure European mariners to man her, it would be necessary, therefore, to accommodate the envoys and their suite in the *New London*, which was one of the Company's trading vessels. This ship sailed towards the end of the following October, and in a letter she carried, dated the 25th of that month, the factors gave further details of the situation. The old Sultan was living "retiredly" and no longer meddled with the administration, while the young one had built a large fort, and they feared that, once he found himself in a strong position, his friendly attitude towards them would undergo a change. He had declared that his only object in sending the mission was to obtain ordnance from England. The ambassadors had been provided with letters to the King and Company to that effect, and were bringing the former a present of rough diamonds. To the latter they were to give 700 bahars of pepper, while they carried 300 more for sale in England. The whole quantity had been obtained from the factors themselves, who had parted with it unwillingly, as they had only the Sultan's word as security for payment.

The log of the *New London* has not been preserved, but we learn from other sources that the vessel reached the Thames towards the end of April, 1682, and anchored off Erith. A newsletter noticed in the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, under the date of April 27, announces the arrival of the ambassadors, and a letter from Charles Bertie to the Countess of Rutland, dated the 29th (*Historical MSS Commission, Twelfth Report*, Appendix v.

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p. 71), says "Two days since arrived the ship *London* from the East Indies, having on board another strange embassy, from the King of Bantam There are two with the character of ambassadors, by name Keay Nebbe We-pria and Keay Nebbe Gia Sedanna,¹ with eight more of that King's servants along with them, besides 20 more of their attendants They bring His Majesty a present of diamonds from that King, and have been coming ever since October last It is believed wee of the East India Company must defray their charges during their stay here, so that this embassy will bee as great a spectacle to our people as that of the Marocco ambassador has been."

Concerning the experiences of the ambassadors in England little could be gleaned from the extant records of the East India Company Of one important document—a complete narrative of their stay, which was sent by the Company to the Sultan when they returned—I obtained a tantalizing glimpse, but this was nowhere to be found, and so I was forced at first to content myself with putting together such meagre references as were available, chiefly from the *London Gazette* and contemporary literature Fortune, however, is sometimes unexpectedly kind, for, a few months after I had completed my account, a packet reached me from Holland, in which I found, to my great joy, a reprint of an article contributed to the *Tydschrift van het Koninklyk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten*

¹ Mr C O Blagden has informed me that "Keay Nebbe" represents *Kiah Ngabeh*, which are titles commonly used in Java, and that the personal names of the ambassadors were apparently Nayawipraya and Jayasedana respectively Though their English hosts were slow in comprehending the fact, they were on an equal footing, the reason for sending a pair of envoys being a fear on the part of the Sultan that one might die during the mission Jayasedana, according to the Dutch records, spoke English well

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en Wetenschappen (deel lxiv. aflevering I), which not only gave an account of the embassy, but printed in full, from the unpublished records at the Hague, the very document for which I had been searching. It appears that the Sultan, after the return of the mission, delivered to his Dutch allies at Batavia all the papers brought from London, and the Council there caused the aforesaid narrative to be translated into Dutch and entered in their *Daghregister*. This enabled me to rewrite my account, adding many details from the new material thus acquired, and it is only right to record my indebtedness to Mevrouw W. Fruin-Mees, the author of the article in the *Tydschrift*, for her kindness in placing a copy at my disposal.

The day following that on which the vessel arrived at Erith was a Sunday, when nothing could be done; but on the Monday (May 1) a visit of welcome was paid to the ambassadors by two of the Committees, Sir Jeremy Sambrooke and Mr William Sedgwick, accompanied by Robert Marshall (who had been a factor at Bantam) and Thomas Lewis, one of the Company's home officials. In accordance with custom, the expense of housing the embassy fell upon the Company, and at a court meeting held on May 3 a committee was appointed to hire and fit up a suitable dwelling. At the same meeting Sir Charles Cotterel, Master of the Ceremonies, and Mr. Cooley, secretary to the Lord High Chamberlain, attended and settled with the Company's representatives the details of the official reception. Evidently the leading part on the side of the Company was entrusted to Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, for on May 12 orders were given to the accountant to pay from time to time such sums on account of the mission as that gentleman should direct.

The two ambassadors remained on board ship for

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several days, awaiting the completion of the arrangements. In the meantime they received many visits from persons curious to make their acquaintance, and they made one excursion on shore, when they were entertained by "a certain Mr. van Nacka"—in whom we may perhaps recognize Mr. Nicholas Vanacker, the brother-in-law of Sir Jeremy Sambrooke. On May 6 Sir Charles Cotterel, accompanied by Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, Sir Henry Dacres (who had been Chief at Bantam), and Mr. Marshall, conducted the envoys with due ceremony in the royal barge to Greenwich, where they were lodged (probably in the palace) until the 9th, the day which had been fixed for their entry into London. Of their reception in the metropolis the *London Gazette* of May 9 gives the following account. "This day the ambassador from the King of Bantam in the East Indies made his publick entry, having been received and complimented at Greenwich by the Right Honourable the Lord Mordaunt¹ and Sir Charles Cotterel, Master of the Ceremonies, and brought from thence by water in His Majesties barge to Tower-Hill, where at his landing he was saluted with the great guns, and from thence was conducted in His Majesties coach, followed with a numerous train of coaches with six horses apiece (in some of which were his attendants, being in all about 35 persons), to the house prepared for him at Charing Cross, where he was again complimented in Their Majesties name, and is attended by His Majesties servants." The narrative already mentioned adds a number of details. From it we learn that the procession was headed by Sir John Wetwang (who was in charge), next came a carriage with a couple of the ambassadors' attendants, carrying

¹ Charles, Viscount Mordaunt, afterwards (as Earl of Peterborough famous for his campaign in Spain

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two white state umbrellas, folded, the King's coach followed, in which rode Nayawipraya (with the Sultan's letter), Lord Mordaunt, Sir Charles Cotterel, and Sir Henry Dacres while a third carriage was occupied by Jayasedana, Lord Darcy, Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, and Mr Marshall. Watched by a crowd of spectators, the cavalcade proceeded along Aldgate to Leadenhall Street, where a halt was made at the East India House to allow the Governor of the Company (Sir Josia Child), with the Earl of Berkeley and other Committees, to greet the ambassadors. Passing by the Royal Exchange and along Cheapside, St Paul's, Ludgate, Fleet Street, and the Strand, the procession at length reached the house at Charing Cross which had been provided for the envoys—a building which had been occupied a short time before by an embassy from Russia. It had been richly furnished, and in the principal apartment a canopy of state had been erected for the ambassadors to sit under when giving audience. Directly after their arrival they were waited upon by Humphrey Edwin (one of the Committees) and William Mainstone (formerly a factor at Bantam), to offer compliments on behalf of the Company, and with these came the City Music, which played during the banquet served in the afternoon, when toasts to the health of the Sultan, King Charles, the ambassadors, and the Governor of the Company, were duly honoured. It may be added that one of Henry Muddiman's newsletters, reprinted in the *Times* of April 3, 1923, gives a short account of the day's proceedings, without providing any fresh information, and that a comment by an onlooker is supplied in an undated letter reproduced in the *Historical MSS Commissioners' Seventh Report* (p. 381). "The Bantam ambassador made his entry on Tuesday, with all the foppery of his

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country, as we thought, and was received with as much of ours, as he thought it "

The day after their installation the envoys were visited by a deputation from court, to greet them on behalf of King Charles and his consort, and on May 13, at eight o'clock in the morning, they set out in the royal carriages for Windsor, where they were to be received in audience on the following day. A halt was made at Hounslow for refreshments, and Windsor was reached towards evening. There the ambassadors were lodged in a house belonging to a Mr Lytton. The next day (Sunday, May 14) Sir Charles Cotterel appeared with the King's coach to convey them to the Castle. Accompanied by the Earl of Berkeley, Sir Henry Dacres (who acted as interpreter), Sir Jeremy Sambrooke, and other representatives of the Company, the envoys were ushered into the presence of Their Majesties, who were seated side by side under a canopy of state. They presented the Sultan's letter in an embroidered wrapper, together with three small boxes of diamonds,¹ and made a brief harangue. At the close of the audience they were taken to another apartment, where a magnificent banquet (costing, it was said, £200) was served, to the accompaniment of music from the King's band. Later, Sir Charles Cotterel conducted them round the Castle, showing them its principal features, and then, after an interview with Prince Rupert, they were taken back to their lodgings. Next morning the return journey to London was commenced about eight o'clock. Some time was spent on the way in viewing Hampton Court and in taking a meal there, while in the afternoon a further stay

¹ "On the 15th the rough diamonds presented by the ambassador of Bantam were valued by a French jeweller in His Majesty's presence, who gave the estimate of them to be £1600" (*Historical MSS Commissioners' Seventh Report*, p. 404)

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was made at Ham, where the Duke of Lauderdale showed them over his magnificent dwelling. From thence the ambassadors went by water to Westminster, leaving most of their attendants to follow by land

The account given in the *London Gazette* (May '16) of the reception at Windsor is as follows "On Sunday, after morning chappel, the ambassador from the King of Bantam (who came from London the day before) was brought from the house where he had lodged, in His Majesties coach, followed with several other coaches with six horses apiece, to the Castle (where the guards were drawn out), and was conducted by the Right Honourable the Earl of Berkley and Sir Charles Cotterel, Master of the Ceremonies, to his audience of Their Majesties in the Kings presence chamber, several of his retinue carrying launces and two of them umbrella's, besides two of his masters servants, who also carried two umbrella's over his letter of credence and his presents, such as use to be carried, by the same persons, over the King himself, which they look upon as a great piece of state Being come with the chief of his attendants into the presence (the ordinary servants, with their launces, remaining in the guard chamber, and they that carried the two great umbrella's having leave to come and stand within the presence door), they made their obeisance, as they approached His Majesties throne, by bowing of their heads. And the ambassador having delivered his letter and a present of diamonds from the King of Bantam to His Majesty, they sat down after the manner of their country at His Majesties feet (being with them the most respectful posture) and made a short speech to His Majesty, declaring the high esteem the King of Bantam has of His Majesty and how desirous he is of His Majesties friendship, to which His Majesty having

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been pleased to return a very obliging answer, the ambassador retired, and was carried to the Dukes side,¹ where a very splendid dinner was provided for him. In the evening he visited His Highness Prince Rupert, to whom he presented the two great umbrella's, and the next day he returned to London, having seen Hampton-Court and the Duke of Lauderdaills house at Ham on his way "

The prominence of Lord Berkeley on this occasion was doubtless due to his close connexion with the directorate of the East India Company (see a note on p 95 of *The East India House*), but the following quotation from Lady Newdigate-Newdegate's *Cavalier and Puritan* (p 165) shows that some jealousy was thereby excited in diplomatic circles. "We learn from the newsletters that, when the Bantam ambassador had been introduced to the King's presence by a nobleman of the rank of an Earl, one of the European ambassadors sent a message to say that he must in consequence be presented by a peer of higher degree. Charles II got out of the difficulty with his usual adroitness, and sent back word to the complainant that, though he must be introduced by an Earl, it should be by one who had the Garter "

Writing to Madras on May 26, the Company mentioned the reception at Court and also a subsequent visit paid to the East India House by the ambassadors. They said : " We have with us an ambassador from the King of Bantam, who had audience from His Majesty at Windsor the 14th instant. The 17th he made his first visit to the Governor and the Court. We did procure him a splendid reception and as much honour to be done him by His Majesty as if he came from the greatest prince on earth, because we would shew him as well the civility of our nation as the greatnes

¹ The apartments occupied by the Duke of York

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and grandeur of this kingdom, that he may divulge in the eastern parts of the world (where we are little known) what kind of country and people we are. When the ceremony is over, we shall have His Majesties commission to proceed to a treaty with him, and from it we hope to draw some advantages." In the latter respect, however, the Company was disappointed, for it was quickly discovered that the envoys were mere messengers and had no power to negotiate or pledge their sovereign to anything.

On returning to their lodgings at Charing Cross, the ambassadors found that their cook had died during their absence, from a fever induced by over-indulgence in brandy and other strong liquors on the occasion of the banquet provided at their installation. From Lady Newdigate-Newdegate's book already cited, we learn that it was proposed to inter the corpse at Hyde Park Corner, but the parish authorities objected, and only yielded after a warrant had been obtained from Mr Secretary Jenkins. The Company's narrative states that the cook was buried at midnight on May 16, "in a certain place in St James's Park, over against Hyde Park, where his grave was made after the manner of their religion."

The afternoon of May 17 was devoted to the visit to the East India House of which mention has already been made. The ambassadors went in state from their lodgings to Leadenhall Street, and on their arrival were received by the Deputy Governor (Robert Thomson) and Sir Matthew Andrews and were conducted to the Court Room, where the Governor and Committees awaited them. They then presented in due form a letter from the Sultan, with others from his two principal ministers. With the aid of Mainstone as interpreter, complimentary speeches were exchanged, and then, as the premises offered no

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facilities for banqueting, tea and other light refreshments were served, to the accompaniment of the strains of the City Music. After an hour spent in this manner, the envoys returned with the same pomp as they had come. Their visit was returned three days later by the Governor, Deputy, and the rest of the Court.

The ambassadors now embarked upon a round of sight-seeing. On the 20th they were entertained by Sir Robert Dacres at his house in Clerkenwell, on the 24th they went to Cheapside to see the funeral procession of Sir Thomas Bendworth, on the 30th they paid a second visit (their first was on the 18th) to the Duke's Theatre,¹ when *The Tempest* was performed, and on June 7 they were shown over the Guildhall, Bethlehem Hospital, and the two Exchanges. The next day they proceeded to Sir Josia Child's house at Wanstead, where they were entertained with great magnificence. Child's second daughter, Rebecca, had been married three days before, to Charles, Lord Herbert, the eldest son of the Marquess of Worcester², and the bride and bridegroom were among the distinguished company assembled to meet the representatives of the Sultan of Bantam. The day was spent pleasantly in feasting, listening to music and other entertainments, and in wandering about the

¹ The Duke's Theatre, so named after the Duke of York, was opened in 1671. The site was on the south side of the present Salisbury Court, or Dorset Court, in Whitefriars, and is now covered by the City of London School. A tablet has recently been placed to indicate its position.

² Lysons is wrong in stating (*Environs of London*, vol. iv p. 242) that the ambassadors were present at the wedding.

According to Evelyn, the bride's portion was £50,000. The youthful bridegroom, we may note, became Marquess of Worcester in the following December, upon his father being created Duke of Beaufort, and in April, 1683, by the influence of his father-in-law, he was elected a Committee of the East India Company, a post he retained for eight years. He died in July, 1698, a little before his father, and his son (Child's grandson) became the second Duke.

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delightful grounds (now a public park), and at nightfall Child escorted his visitors to their coaches

On June 9 a visit was paid to the Monument, the ambassadors being taken to the top and shown the view over the city. From thence they went to the Tower, where they inspected the crown jewels, the armoury, and the royal menagerie. The following day was spent in viewing Westminster Hall, the Houses of Parliament, and the Abbey, while on the 12th they were at "the famous riding school of Monsieur Thoubert," when an exhibition of horsemanship was given by the pupils. In the afternoon of June 14 the envoys visited the King's Printing Office at Blackfriars, the site of which is now occupied by the *Times* office. There they saw their names set up in type, and were much interested in the various processes shown. Afterwards they proceeded to Basinghall Street, to call upon Sir Jeremy Sambrooke and thank him for the trouble he had taken on their behalf. Sambrooke had invited a numerous company to meet them, and had prepared a sumptuous banquet, which was much enjoyed. A visit of compliment was next paid (June 15) to H R H the Duke of York at St James's Palace. The ambassadors were received by the Duke and Duchess, accompanied by their daughter Anne (the future queen), and were treated with much distinction. In the evening, as a relaxation, they went to Hyde Park to see the nobility driving round in their carriages. Five days later an expedition was made by river to Mortlake, where Mr Humphrey Edwin, already mentioned as being one of the Committees of the Company, entertained them all day in a very handsome fashion; while before returning, a call was made at the house of a Mr Ducane. During the next fortnight the ambassadors managed to attend the Duke's Theatre on no less than

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three occasions, and in the intervals continued their sight-seeing. The Earl of Berkeley gave them an entertainment at his house in Clerkenwell on June 22, and on the same afternoon on the Artillery Ground, Alderman Sir James Edwards, Colonel of the City Trained Band, put his warriors through their paces for the benefit of the visitors. The latter were taken two days later to see bears and bulls fight—a spectacle they probably enjoyed much more than their excursion to Temple Mills on the following day, when, conducted by Sir Henry Dacres, they saw the “new invention of iron shot”

The time of their departure approaching, visits of ceremony were paid to the Earl of Arlington, Lord Hyde, and one of the Lords of the Treasury, and in the evening of July 5 the ambassadors had their farewell audience of His Majesty at Whitehall. Introduced by Lord Arlington (the Lord Chamberlain), they thanked the King for the reception accorded to them, and received from his hands a letter for the Sultan. After taking leave, they repaired to the Duke of York, who assured them of his friendship and wished them a happy return to their own country. The interview with King Charles is thus described in an extract from Muddiman's newsletters printed in the *Times* of April 3, 1923: “On the 5th of July in the afternoon the ambassador from the King of Bantam had his audience of congé of His Majesty at Whitehall, in which he acknowledged the great favours shown to him, which, as he must put to his master's account, so he should give him a perfect knowledge of them. His Majesty gave him a letter, in a purse of cloth of gold, to be delivered to his master, to whom he also sent a present of 500 barrels of powder, and signified his willingness to maintain a good correspondence with him, promising a fair and civil respect to any that

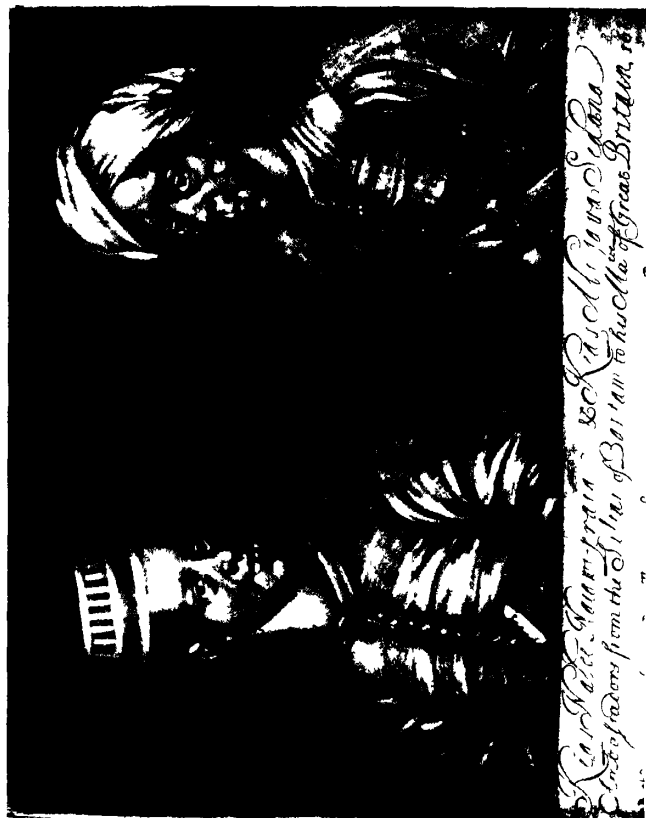
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should come from their country, and doubted not but that his master would see that his own subjects should be well entreated by his master's subjects trading with them."

The article goes on to say that on the 7th the King went to Windsor, "having first knighted the Bantam ambassador and his associate, to both of whom he gave the swords with belts, to the ambassador a silver and gold hilted sword, with a belt of like embroidery, to his associate a silver hilted sword and belt suitable" Finally it states that the envoys left on the 12th, "much pleased with their swords and with the remission of the customs dues for the pepper they brought"

The date on which the ambassadors were knighted is variously given Muddiman implies that it was on or before July 7, but a letter from Sir Charles Lyttleton to Lord Hatton, written on July 8 (*Correspondence of the Hatton Family* Camden Society, New Series, vol xxiii p 17), says "The two Bantam embas[sadors] desired it and were knighted *to-day*, and had each the sword which did the deed They were but ordinary swords", while Shaw's *Knights* (vol ii p 258) gives July 13 as the date From an entry in the *Batavia Dagbregister* (January 22, 1683), it appears that Nayawipraya chose to be named Sir Abdul, and his colleague Sir Ahmad

The interest excited by these strange visitors is shown by the number of engraved portraits of them issued at the time. Of these the Print Department of the British Museum possesses the following (1) A half-length by Robert White of Nayawipraya in an oval frame, with a smaller similar portrait of his colleague below (2) A re-issue of the same engraving, with corrections in the name of the ambassadors. (3) Half-lengths of both envoys,



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placed side by side, a pair of mezzotints, "both drawn from the life at the Dukes Theatre by Edward Luttrell" This, as being probably the most true to life, has been chosen for reproduction in the present volume (4) A mezzotint by Robert Prick, representing Nayawipraya, with an attendant holding an umbrella over him. (5) A line engraving (full-length) of the same, "exactly drawn after the life by John Oliver." (6) A half-length portrait of the same, engraved by Nicholas Yeates and John Collins from a drawing by Henry Peart The prominence given in these engravings to Nayawipraya shows the difficulty felt by the popular mind in grasping the fact that the two were on an equal footing At the same time it seems to indicate that Nayawipraya actually took the lead on most occasions

As a supplement to these portraits we may quote the pen-pictures given by John Evelyn in his *Diary* (ed 1818, vol 1 p 510) Under date of June 19, he says "The Bantam or East India ambassadors (at this time we had in London the Russian, Moroccan, and Indian ambassadors) being invited to dine at Lord George Berkley's (now Earl), I went to the entertainment to contemplate the exotic guests. They were both very hard-favour'd and much resembling in countenance some sort of monkeys We ate at two tables, the ambassadors and interpreter by themselves. Their garments were rich Indian silks, flower'd with gold, viz, a close wastcoate to their knees, drawers, naked legs, and on their heads capps made like fruit-baskets. They wore poison'd daggers at their bosoms, the hafts carv'd with some ugly serpents or devils heads, exceeding keene, and of Damasco metal They wore no sword. The second ambassador (sent, it seemes, to succeed in case the first should die by the way in so tedious a

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journey), having ben at Mecca, wore a Turkish or Arab shash [*i e* turban], a little part of the linnen hanging downe behinde his neck, with some other difference of habite, and was halfe a negro, bare legg'd and naked feete, and deem'd a very holy man. They sate cross-legg'd like Turks, and sometimes in the posture of apes and monkeys Their nailes and teeth black as jet and shining, which, being the effect (as to their teeth) of perpetually chewing betel to preserve them from the toothache (much raging in their country), is esteem'd beautifull. The first ambassador was of an olive hue, a flat face, narrow eyes, squat nose, and Moorish lips; no haire appear'd. They wore several rings of silver, gold, and copper on their fingers, which was a token of knighthood or nobility They were of Java Major, whose princes having turn'd Mahometans not above 50 yeares since, the inhabitants are still pagans and idolators. They seem'd of a dull and heavy constitution, not wondering at any thing they saw, but exceedingly astonish'd how our law gave us propriety in our estates, and so thinking we were all kings, for they could not be made to comprehend how subjects could possess any thing but at the pleasure of their prince, they being all slaves, they were pleas'd with the notion, and admir'd our happinesse They were very sober, and I believe subtle in their way Their meate was cook'd, carried up, and they attended by several fat slaves, who had no covering save drawers, which appear'd very disagreeable. They ate their pilaw and other spoone-meate without spoones, taking up their pottage in the hollow of their fingers, and very dextrously flung it into their mouthes without spilling a drop "

Evelyn was not the only observer who was unfavourably impressed by the looks of the ambassadors. John Dryden,

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in the poem he addressed to his friend Sir Godfrey Kneller, wrote

- “ Thus, in a stupid military state,
The pen and pencil find an equal fate
Flat faces, such as would disgrace a screen,
Such as in Bantam’s embassy were seen,
Unraised, unrounded, were the rude delight
Of brutal nations only born to fight ”

Such were the impressions formed by contemporary Englishmen. What, on the other hand, did the strangers think of our country and its inhabitants ? This we have no means of knowing, though years after Addison, in one of his contributions to the *Spectator* (June 18-21, 1714), undertook, in his pleasant way, to tell us. His article was on the subject of speaking the truth, and in the course of it he introduced a letter supposed to have been written by one of the ambassadors to his Sovereign soon after his arrival in England, wherein he is made to complain that Englishmen were in the habit of saying things which they did not intend to be taken literally. “ They call thee and thy subjects barbarians, because we speak what we mean, and account themselves a civilized people, because they speak one thing and mean another. Truth they call barbarity and falsehood politeness.” Addison, by the way, was a boy of ten in 1682, but he had not yet left his native Wiltshire and could not, therefore, have seen anything of the embassy.

The ambassadors departed in the *Kemphorne*, which the Company was sending to Bantam in the usual course. For their passage they were charged 200 dollars, payable on arrival. The 300 bahars of pepper which they had brought for sale were purchased by the Company for a net sum (after allowing for a small counterclaim) of £1035, 17s. ; while presents were made to them in broadcloth

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and other articles of about £100 in value. In addition, the Company furnished them with a bill of exchange on the English factors at Bantam for 1000 dollars paid for customs on the ambassadors' pepper, but ordered by the Lords of the Treasury to be refunded. Owing to official delays, the money had not been returned at the time of the envoys' departure, and so the Company advanced the amount in this way.

An account of the departure of the mission is given in the *London Gazette* for July 13 "The ambassadors from the King of Bantam having taken their leave of His Majesty (who gave them his letter to their master with his own hand) did both of them receive the honour of knighthood and each of them the sword wherewith it was conferred, and embroidered belts, which were buckled about them in His Majesties presence. The next day they were conducted to Greenwich, where they went aboard the *Cleveland* yacht, which carries them to Chatham to see the navy royal, and from thence on board the *Kemphorne*, an East-India-man of above 700 tun, wherein they are to make their voyage home "

Writing on July 15 to the factors at Bantam, the Company made the following reference to the mission "We have been at very many charges which we have not putt either to the ambassadours or the Kings accompt Our King, we presume, will speedily after these ambassadours departure send an envoy to the King of Bantam with articles of peace and commerce to be established between the Company and the said King, which we have already discoursed with the ambassadors By that envoy we shall make such returne of presents as we can, after we have cast up the disbursements and find what wilbe left of the 700 baharrs of pepper the King sent us ; which we suppose

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wilbe very little. Our King likewise intends then to send his owne present. . . . These ambassadors had no power to treat of any matters, much less to conclude, and therefore we could onely discourse with them of the 500 dollars forced from you, but the envoy shall come empowered to demand them of the King . . . We have agreed with the owners of the *Kemphorne* that 200 dollars shalbe paid by the Sultan for passage of the ambassadors and their retinue, they having laid in their owne provisions . . . We herewith send you a copy of the letter His Majesty hath written to the young Sultan, and a narrative of the magnificent reception given to the two ambassadors, on whome at their departure hence His Majesty was pleased to conferr the honour of knighthood. With this also you will receive copies of our letter to the young Sultan, both in English and Mallay, in the fifth paragraph whereof mention is made that His Majesty would, by the envoy that is shortly to come from hence, make a return to the Sultans present brought him by the ambassadors, but upon second thoughts His Majesty hath been pleased to send it on this shipp *Kemphorne*, being 500 barrells of gunpowder, which you are to deliver to the young Sultan from His Majesty." A subsequent letter of September 20, 1682, announced that the English embassy had been deferred until the receipt of further advices, and as a matter of fact it was never despatched.

A copy of the letter from King Charles to the young Sultan, dated June 4, will be found at p 47 of vol. vii of the Java Records at the India Office. Therein His Majesty praised the behaviour of the two envoys, expressed his thanks for the present of diamonds; and announced his gift of gunpowder in return. He further intimated that the Governor of the East India Company had been directed

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to send the Sultan a good mastiff and to supply him with cannon and other military stores at reasonable prices. The King's intention of sending an envoy to Bantam was announced, a promise was given that the complaint made by the Sultan against the English Agent should be investigated, and a reminder was added that the murderers of a former Agent had not yet been punished.

The Company also wrote to the young Sultan (June 7), and sent him (in a separate paper) the account already mentioned of the ambassadors' reception. The letter said that the cannon, etc., desired by the Sultan would take some time to manufacture, but should be forwarded as speedily as possible. Regret was expressed that the envoys had not been furnished with powers to conclude a treaty of "alliance, peace, and commerce", but the matter had been discussed with them, and it was hoped that the Sultan would be ready to make an agreement with the ambassador about to be sent from England. The Company declared that it had been losing for years on its trade with Bantam, and had only continued it in order to prevent the Dutch "from ingrossing all the South Sea trade", and a warning was given that if the Sultan allowed the Dutch to persuade him to drive away the English, he would soon find himself in as great a bondage to them as were the kings of Macassar and other neighbouring states. Finally, a list of grievances was presented which it was hoped he would remedy.

Our story should perhaps end with the departure of the mission, but it has a dramatic epilogue which it seems well to narrate. The *Kemphorne* was met off Bantam with the unexpected news that the English factors had withdrawn to Batavia, to which place she thereupon proceeded. A strange story was then unfolded. Early in 1682 the young Sultan, dissatisfied with his position, pre-

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sented an ultimatum to his father. The latter rejected his son's demands, and both parties resorted to arms. The majority of the chiefs and people favoured the cause of the old Sultan, and the young one sought refuge, with about five hundred adherents, in his fort, where he was beleaguered by his father's troops. Finding his position desperate, he appealed to the Dutch at Batavia for assistance, offering them a monopoly of the pepper trade in return. The opportunity was willingly embraced and a military force was sent, which, in spite of a strenuous resistance from the Javanese, landed and captured the town, driving the old Sultan's troops into the country behind. The young prince, now supreme, duly carried out his promise to his allies by expelling the English. He accused them of assisting his father in the war, and would not listen to their plea that the Englishmen who had fought against him were deserters, and that the supplies furnished by the factors had been yielded only under compulsion. Finding their representations unavailing, the factors embarked on April 12, 1682, and proceeded to Batavia, where the Governor-General permitted them to take up their quarters temporarily.

Upon the *Kemphorne* reaching Batavia, the ambassadors quitted her and set out for Bantam. The present of gunpowder the English factors refused to give up, and obtained leave from the Governor-General to store it for the time being in a magazine at Batavia, to await the arrival of the envoy expected from England. They wished to send one of their number to Bantam to acquaint the young Sultan with the arrival of the present but this the Dutch would not permit. Later the Governor-General informed them that the prince declined to receive the powder, and he pressed them to remove it, alleging that the magazine was wanted for other purposes. Seeing no alternative, they

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put it once more on board the *Kemphorne*, which was about to sail for Surat. About the same time the Dutch discovered that the English had been buying cloves secretly, and ordered them to quit Batavia; whereupon they embarked for Surat in August, 1683.¹ Thus closed the connexion of the English with Java, after a continuance of eighty years, until they appeared again, this time as conquerors, in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The news of the expulsion of the English created a sensation in London, and energetic remonstrances were addressed to the Hague concerning the Dutch share in the proceedings. A resolution was taken to send a naval force to Bantam, with instructions to reinstate the old Sultan, but, upon the Dutch Government professing a willingness to meet the demands of the English, these operations were countermanded. Further negotiations with Holland followed, but without any favourable result, and gradually the idea of forcing a resettlement was abandoned. The Sultan of Bantam was still nominally independent, and to extort concessions from him was not likely to prove an easy task, even if the Dutch were willing to stand aside. Moreover, the English had found fresh, and in some respects more advantageous, headquarters for their pepper trade at Bencoolen, on the west coast of Sumatra, where they had built Fort York, afterwards renamed Fort Marlborough. So Bantam remained under the influence of the Dutch, though the Sultan was allowed by them to retain the appearance of power. This lasted until 1843, when the last native ruler was banished to another part of Java, and his country was reduced to the status of a Dutch province.

¹ *Original Correspondence and Java Records*, vol. vii, also a pamphlet published in 1683, entitled *The Civil Wars of Bantam*, consisting of letters from S G or E G—probably a double error for G G (i.e. George Gosfright). The article by Mevrouw Fruin-Mees should also be consulted.

VII

SOME ROYAL STOCKHOLDERS

NO reason appears to exist why a modern Sovereign should not, if he so desires, hold shares in a commercial concern, and more than one European monarch is believed to have derived considerable profit from such speculations. Three centuries ago, however, it was a very different matter, and one is not surprised to learn that when, in 1624, King James I proposed to become an adventurer in the East India Company, the suggestion caused grave embarrassment to the Governor and Committees.

The circumstances have already been described on p 41. News had been received that, in spite of the partnership which had existed in the Far East between the two nations since the agreement of 1619, the Dutch had put to death, after "hellish torments," ten Englishmen at Amboina, on a charge of having conspired to seize the castle there. The East India Company, in great indignation, prepared a petition to the King, stating their belief that this was only the first step in a design to drive them entirely from the East Indies, and declaring that, unless the partnership were dissolved and they were assured of effective protection against Dutch aggression, they must abandon the trade. This document was presented by the Governor (Morris Abbot) and other representatives to the King at Wanstead

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on Sunday, July 11, 1624, when James, who received them in the royal bedchamber, was loud in his assurances of a determination to secure for the Company full redress and adequate protection. A few days later the Governór and some of his colleagues attended His Majesty at Theobalds and had a long conversation with him regarding the continuance of the trade. Evidently much doubt was felt whether any really vigorous steps would be taken by the pacific monarch to vindicate English rights, and, unless this were done, the prospects of raising money for further ventures appeared to be gloomy. The King was anxious to allay these suspicions, and the idea seems to have struck him that much encouragement would be afforded if he himself became a shareholder. As recorded in the *Court Minutes* (July 16). "His Majestie demaunded further of them if they wanted stock, whereto they answered that the Company held out hitherto and shalbe able to doe so still, if the busines be once sett right. Att last it pleased His Majestie to demaund what they would say to it, if himself would come in as an adventurer. Mr Governour humbly prayed time to consider with the gennerallity uppon that motion, because himself and those few with him had not power to resolve His Majestie in a matter of that importance. His Majestie demaunded how soone this could be done. Mr Governour made answeare it would aske some time to assemble them. His Majestie willed it should be done so soone as it might conveniently. Mr. Governour desired that something might be sett downe in writing, expressing His Majesties offer, that the same might be shoven to the Company. . . The resolution was that Mr Governour make knowen His Majesties pleasure in one kind or other, after he shall receive the writings whereby he shalbe directed, and retourne the answeare."

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Accordingly a written answer was returned by the Privy Council to the Company's petition, assuring them that their trade should be protected and repeating the King's offer to become a shareholder and to allow their ships to sail under the royal flag. The reply was read by the Governor to his colleagues at a meeting held on July 28, when the matter was debated at some length. A few were favourable to the proposition, but the majority, though loth to offend His Majesty, evidently feared that it would prove dangerous for the jackal to go hunting with the lion.

"It was mooved to knowe what adventure the King desired. To that Mr Governour replied that the presente question is not what the King wilbe pleased to adventure, for every private adventurer may buy in adventures as he please without limitation, the question now doth rise from a gratiois offer by His Majestie to come in or not come in, as the Companie shall find it most for their benefitt . . . One of the Committees said it wilbe daungerous dealeing with the Kinges monney, for that accompt will never be att ann end, and if this Courte should give consent, the Gennerall Courte will never do it, but rather receive discouragement then encouragement by such a partnership. It was said that, howsoever this Courte may be (and is) perfectly satisfied of His Majesties gratiois intentions yet it is to be doubted it will not be possible to quench feares in many whoe, though they speake them not, yet certeynely will forbear att anoather underwriting. Much was spoken concerning the same, with all the reverence and respect that could be, and it was propounded whether they will end the question here, and resolve uppon their answere, or referr it to the generallity. And it was remembred that, howsoever it had pleased His Majestie to be contented it should be pro-

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pounded att a gennerall Courte whether they would thinck it a benefitt that he come in as an adventurer, yet it was said by a great person neere aboute the King that it would be a dishonour to His Majestie to be propounded and refused. Uppon this and other considerations it was by unanimous consent of all that were present . . . resolved to make a faire and humble answeere to His Majestie, with all due expression of their duties and due acknowledgmennt of the honnour done unto the Companie by His Majesties offer to adventure amongst them, but they cannot conceive how with his honnour it may be done, the condition of partnorshipp in trade beeing a thing too farr under the dignity and majestie of a King ”

An answer in this sense was therefore returned But James was not altogether pleased with the reluctance shown to accept him as a partner, and on September 1 Mr. Secretary Conway wrote that the King was still awaiting a positive reply to his gracious offer This caused further consideration , but there was no weakening in the opposition, and on the 17th the Governor and several of the Committees attended His Majesty at Whitehall and presented in writing the Company's views on the situation, including the reasons why they desired to be excused from “ his partnership with the Company.” On this point no comment seems to have been made. It would scarcely have been consonant with the royal dignity to have pressed the proposal further, and so it was quietly dropped.

The cold reception given by the Company to the suggestion made by King James did not prevent the idea being revived by his successor. This happened in November 1625, when the Company's representatives were pressing King Charles to give them effective protection against the aggressions of the Dutch, declaring that otherwise the

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trade must be abandoned. At a meeting of the Court of Committees held on the ninth of that month the Deputy Governor (Sir Christopher Clitherow) related to his colleagues that “ by the favour of my Lord Chamberlaine [*i.e.* the Earl of Pembroke], Mr Governour [Sir Morris Abbot], himselfe, Mr Bell, and Mr Abdy had accesse to His Majestie in his withdraweing chamber at Hampton Court on Sunday last in the afternoone,” and presented a petition from the Company on the subject The King read the document and gave in reply a general assurance of protection. “ Heereuppon Mr. Abdy intimated that the Hollanders are soe stronge in the Indies by reason they are countenanced and backed by the States, who uppon all occasions doe supplie them with shipping, ordinance, and other necessaries, and unles His Majestie shall be pleased to countenance and protect this Companie in some such like manner, they are not able to continue the trade To which His Majestie gave this answeare that the Companie hath his countenance and shall have his protection, but if they feare the Hollanders forces, his advise is that they goe forth stronglie provided, but they are not to expect his shipps to protecte them in the Indies Whereuppon my Lord Privie Seale [the Earl of Worcester] made answeare that the Company feared not the Hollander by sea, but at land, in the Indies Thus much concerning the premisses haveing passed, and His Majestie observing the instance made how the States protect the Hollanders East India Company, and findeing this Companie to insist uppon obtayning His Majesties like protection for them, fell uppon the busines heeretofore propounded by his late Majestie, which was to be admitted an adventurer in this Companies stocke; alleadging that his father had desired it, but was refused; that if they would have him interressed in their

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cause, this was the way. Mr. Governour made this answeare · that this Company consisted of persons of divers qualitties, as the nobillitie, gentry, etc , amongst whom some are lawyers, who, when they were made acquainted with his late Majesties desire in this kinde, deliverred their opinions that it could not be allowed, being contrary to the lawe, for that noe partnership can be held with the King, and being admitted an adventurer, the whole stocke is presentlie in His Majesties power to dispose of , which was the reason of the said refusall And althoughe His Majestie and the Lords assented to this opinion in the matter of partnership, yet were they not satisfied in point of an adventurer , for His Majestie replied . I desire not to adventure in myne owne name, but in others, which is noe more then you doe yourselves, and may bee done without prejudice , and if soe, then that objection is taken away. Mr Governour besought His Majestie to pardon him, in that he was not able at this tyme to give His Majestie a satisfactory answeare heerein , that this concerned the generallitie, whereof himselfe and the Committees now present ware but parte and therefore cannot determine the same , but he would make them acquainted at their next meeting together what His Majestie had propounded. His Majestie and the Lords perceaveing noe inclination to admitt this motion, my Lord Chamberlaine tould Mr Governour that this matter is not prest uppon the Companie, but left to their considerration , yet because they desire protection from His Majestie, which he is content to give them, but cannot doe soe properly without interesting himselfe in the cause as an adventurer, therefore they prest this the more , but yet noe otherwise then as an answeare to that objection. In conclusion Mr. Governour desireing His

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Majesties pardon in giving him leave to speake that the Companie might well alleadge that if your Majestie can protect us, being an adventurer, you may be pleased to doe as much without."

With this home-thrust—a striking example of the sturdy independence of the London merchant of that day—discussion on the point ceased, nor was the question raised again by the King. On the Company's side also, silence was preserved. Evidently the rest of the governing body approved the attitude taken up by its representatives and thought it best to let the matter rest, for although, at a general meeting of the adventurers held on November 30, the Governor related at some length the course of the negotiations, he said nothing about the proposal which had been made by His Majesty.

It may seem strange that King Charles, when arguing the matter with his obstinate vassals, did not point out to them that seven years earlier, when Prince of Wales, he had not only been admitted to the freedom of the Company, but had been given full permission to invest in its stock. This appears from the following entries in the *Court Minutes*, June 30, 1618. "Mr Governor made knowne that the Prince spake unto him at court, desireing his freedome of this Company and to be admitted an adventurer. that thereuppon he had admitted hym, which the Companie were verie satisfied withall and must not deny to graunt His Highnes an adventure, although some doubted that it was a matter prest by some of his followers, who will seeke to drawe the benefitt thereof unto themselves. But haveing resolv'd to graunt his request, they could not conclude of any somme untill His Highnes had signified his desire by writeing, which he purposed to send unto Mr. Governor."

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July 23, 1619: "The Prince His Highnes desiring to become an adventurer with the Companie for the somm of [£]6,000, purposing to pay in so much presentlie as is due, and the rest hereafter at the dayes of payment, according to order, it was very willingly yeilded unto by erection of hands."

Since, however, the matter is not alluded to further, we must conclude that the Prince did not after all pay in his money; and, this being so, Charles may not have cared on the present occasion to draw attention to his previous failure to keep his promise. His auditors doubtless had the fact in mind, and it may have helped to stiffen their resolution to avoid, if possible, a repetition of the failure.

The subject cropped up again, however, in the summer of 1628—this time as the result of a proposal made by a private member of the Company, by name Thomas Smithwick. This egregious individual had been selected seven years earlier for a post at Bantam, but the appointment had been quickly revoked in disgust at "his pride and overweening of himself." The Committees had soon cause to regret that they had not allowed him to go to the other side of the world, for until his death twenty years later he was constantly troubling them with his proposals and criticisms. On the present occasion he had evolved a scheme by which one-fifth of the Company's stock was to be made over to the King in return for his favour and protection; and this project he seems to have submitted to His Majesty, together with arguments to show that there could be no objection to the holding of shares by the latter. At the same time he presented a petition, making a series of charges against the Governor and Committees and praying for a commission of inquiry into their malpractices. Both actions were naturally resented by the

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governing body , and at a court of election held on July 2, 1628, Abbot, after complaining bitterly of the accusations made by Smithwick and others, declared that he would not accept re-election as Governor Notwithstanding entreaties to stay, he left the meeting in anger, and thereupon the chair was taken by the Deputy (Clitherow)

“One of the Committees stood upp . . and made knowne to the Court that by some false brother of the Company a project (besides the former petition) had bin delivered upp to the King to entitle His Majesty to a fifth parte of their stock as a recompence for his royall protection to be given to the Company , concerning which poynte hee put the Court in mind that in the time of King James, after the troubles betweene the English and Dutch were on foote, His Majesty then made offer to bee a partener and adventurer with the Company, the better to countenance and protect their proceedings , but the Companies learned Councell, being asked their opinions heerein, declared that if the King were admitted to bee a partener, the whole right of the Companies stock wold divolve to His Majesty, for there can be noe partnershippe held with the King The Court heereupon required this Committee to nominate the man that had delivered upp this project , but he excusing himselfe and promising to performe it at the next court, one of the generallity challenged him that, by virtue of his oath, if hee knewe any that intended any hurt or prejudice to the Company, he ought to reveale them . And whilest hee laboured to excuse it till another time, Mr Smithwick, being conscious to himselfe of what hee had done, stood upp and . . . acknowledged (without being taxed) himselfe to bee the party that had exhibited this project , which was occasioned (as hee said) by having conference with some noblemen, and for that

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hee conceived it was a good and noe ill service to the Company But the Court exceedingly condemned this practise of his, being cryed downe by some to bee an unworthy member of the Company and fitt to bee thrust out of the Court."

The members then proceeded to re-elect Abbot as Governor, and Clitherow as Deputy, thus demonstrating their determination to support them against the attacks made by Smithwick. He, however, was not easily disposed of, for an appeal to his friends at court procured the intervention of the King on his behalf. At a meeting of the Committees on July 9, "Sir William Beecher made knowne that the King had sent him to signifie his pleasure concerning some propositions hee had received from one Smithwick, wherein because Smithwick had indeavoured to doe His Majesty service and was likely to receive disgrace from the Company for the same, therefore His Majesty had thought meete to lett the Company knowe that hee expects that they shold deale fairely and favourably with him, His Majesties intention being ever to incourage those that shall present any project to doe him service, bee it good or bad. To this Mr Governour (breifely recapitulating Mr. Smithwicks misbehaviours) in answere to His Majesties gracious message replied that the Court of Committees, for so much as concerned them, were ready to submitt to His Majesties pleasure and comaund, resolving never to putt him by or prejudice him in his employment, but seing Mr Smithwicks proceedings had in parte given a blowe to the Company, insomuch that the courses which have bin propounded for raysing a new stock have hitherto proved fruyteles, yet the Court resolved to try one generall meeting more, and if the action succeeded not, then the Company wilbe inforced to make knowne his misdemeanours and will petition to the Lords of His Majesties Privy

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Councill. And in addition to this, one of the Committees observed that that which Smithwick had done, and is by His Majesty conceived to bee a service, is a very great disservice, for it discourageth the adventurers, and thereby hinders the employment of His Majesties subjects and their shipping and lessens His Majesties customes, if the trade faile , and consequently this pretended service is prejudiciall to the King and his kingdome All which notwithstanding, the Company doe humbly submitt to His Majesties comaund, and will not seeke to bee righted against him for this particuler, unles his other evill carriages inforce the Company to complaine , and then they will petition first before they take any course against him ”

It is unnecessary to follow any further such a side issue as Smithwick's controversies with the directorate , but we may perhaps note that, early in the following year, he brought a series of charges against the latter, which were investigated by the Privy Council and found to be baseless , whereupon he was forced to apologize in writing and to promise better behaviour in future With this we return to the main story Although King Charles did not become a shareholder in the East India Company itself, he held a substantial stake in a rival body, though in circumstances that did him little honour The history of this body, generally called Courteen's Association, which was started in 1635 to trade in the East despite the Company's charter, is well known , and it is sufficient for our present purpose to note that, in return for his protection, the King accepted a gift of stock to the amount of £10,000, it being stipulated that interest and insurance should be deducted from any profits that might accrue to him therefrom The enterprise, however, proved a failure, and Charles reaped no benefit from his participation

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A further advance was made in the reign of Charles II, when the King's brother, the Duke of York, became a full shareholder in the East India Company, which was no longer a struggling body, paying meagre dividends, but a rich corporation, whose stock was constantly advancing in value and was reckoned one of the most lucrative investments available. The Duke, not being a member, was unable to hold shares in his own name, and he therefore purchased some in that of Sir Benjamin Bathurst. This method, however, had its drawbacks, and in the spring of 1684 the Duke resolved to have his holding placed in his own name. Accordingly we find the following entry on the *Minutes* of April 30 in that year: "Sir Benjamin Bathurst acquainting the Court that he is to transferr two thousand pound credit in the Generall Joint Stock to His Royal Highness the Duke of York, for which summ his name was onely used in trust, it is ordered that this Court doe present His Royal Highness with the freedom of this Company, and that the Accomptant Generall doe attend His Royal Highness with the book of transports for His Royal Highness's acceptance of the said adventure. And the said Sir Benjamin Bathurst is desired to present the humble duty and service of this Company unto His Royal Highness and to know whether he will please to be attended by the whole Court or by the Governor [Sir Joseph Ashe] and some of the Committees for their tendring the said freedom."

There is no record of the actual presentation of the freedom, but we find that six months later (October 15) the Duke availed himself of his new privileges to purchase stock to the extent of another £1000, making up his holding to £3000.

Three years later the Duke, now His Majesty King

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James II, became possessed of a further £7000 of stock. This came about in a curious manner, for an explanation of which we must go back to 1681. When, in the spring of that year, King Charles dismissed his last parliament, owing to its persistent efforts to exclude his brother from the succession, he quickly found himself in a state of financial embarrassment, the ordinary revenues of the crown being quite insufficient to meet the expenditure without the aid of parliamentary grants. Among other expedients for raising money the idea of borrowing from the East India Company seems to have presented itself. That body was at the time much in need of royal support against its many enemies, especially the interlopers who, attracted by the high profits to be made, were setting out ships for the East Indies in defiance of its chartered rights, but at the same time it was unwilling to lend so large a sum as seems to have been expected. In lieu, at a General Court held on October 5, 1681, it was resolved to make His Majesty a present of 10,000 guineas (£10,750). The following year saw no diminution in the financial pressure and, probably in consequence of a hint from Whitehall, a present of a similar amount was voted at a General Court held on September 13. It seems now to have been taken for granted that the subvention would be continued, for in August 1683 the Earl of Rochester wrote asking that the yearly present of 10,000 guineas should be made at once, in view of the urgency of the King's needs. Thereupon the Court of Committees paid the money, without troubling to obtain the sanction of the general body of shareholders, and the same course was followed in the succeeding year.

The accession of James II brought no relief, for in August 1685, and again a year later, similar payments were

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made to him ¹ At last, in 1687 the Company changed its methods, possibly judging it dangerous to continue its support in this fashion of so unpopular a monarch On November 30, as we learn from the *Court Minutes*, "The Court [of Committees], being desirous to ease the General Stock of the constant charge of 10,000 guinies per annum which has been paid to His Majesty as a present since the interloping times, did humbly beseech His Majesty to accept of a present of £7000 stock or credit, in lieu and final discharge of that annual payment "

The King, recognizing perhaps that stock was a certainty while an annual present was not, accepted the proposal, whereupon a sum of £13,583 7s 6d was spent in the purchase of the necessary amount of stock, and this was duly transferred to the name of His Majesty Since the Company was regularly paying dividends of 25 per cent, the benefit was greater than would appear at first sight

At the end of the following year came the Revolution King James, pausing at Rochester in his flight from the realm, bethought himself of his shares in the East India and Royal African Companies Colonel James Grahme, his faithful Keeper of the Privy Purse, had accompanied him thither, and had lent him £6000, in return the King resolved to make over to him those shares He wrote hasty letters to Sir William Turner and to Sir Benjamin Bathurst, begging them to assist Grahme in securing the shares, and from St Germain he sent him, in the following January, formal transfers of both the original £3000 and the subsequent £7000 of East India stock, and of £3000 in

¹ All these sums and, from the time of his accession, the dividends on James's £3000 stock, were brought into the Exchequer accounts, not treated as the King's private property (see the returns printed in Scott's *Joint Stock Companies to 1720*, vol iii pp 534-7)

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the other Company¹ The former body made no difficulty about transferring to Grahme the original £3000, which, as we have seen, had been bought by James in a private capacity On March 1, 1689, Grahme was admitted to the freedom (*gratis*) and the transfer was duly registered He had already sold £1200 of the stock, and in the following month he disposed of £1300 more, what became of the remainder has not been traced, but possibly he retained it The £7000 stock which had been given to James as King was, however, a different matter This the Company refused to part with until the question of title should be determined Grahme brought an action, and the dispute was not settled until the autumn of 1691, when the Court of Exchequer issued a decree that the £7000 should be transferred to the names of King William and Queen Mary This was accordingly done (*Court Minutes*, October 2, 1691), and at the same time a sum of £7000, due for accumulated dividends, was ordered to be paid into the Exchequer.

Six years later the nominal value of the holding was slightly increased On September 24, 1697, the Court of Committees informed the shareholders that about £37,600 of stock—apparently the remnant of a quantity bought some time before, possibly for the purpose of steadying the market—was standing in the books in the name of the secretary, and proposed that this should be distributed *pro rata* to the existing stockholders The suggestion was adopted, and accordingly each adventurer's holding was increased by $2\frac{1}{8}$ per cent Thus the stock held by "the King's Most Excellent Majesty" became £7166 5s., at which figure it appears in the list for April, 1699

On the death of King William his stock devolved, of

¹ *Hist MSS Commission, Tenth Report*, Appendix iv pp 329, 330, Plumptre's *Life of Bishop Ken*, vol ii p 160

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course, upon Queen Anne By this time the rivalry between the older body and the new Company founded in 1698 had become acute and an amalgamation had been decided upon The resulting financial arrangements were certain to be complicated, and it was probably felt to be undesirable that the crown should continue to hold the stock On the *Court Minutes* of January 29, 1703, we find the following entry: "The Court, being informed that Her Majestie has passed a writ of privy seal for transferring the stock standing in this Companies bookes on His Late Majesties name, ordered that the accomptant do cause a transfer to be made pursuant thereunto, when demanded, and that he keep the said writ of privy seal for the Companies and his own justification in allowing the said transfer "

Accordingly the Queen's name disappears after 1702 from the annual list of stockholders (made up each April) , and thus ended the concern of the crown in the shares of the old East India Company There remained a nominal holding in the stock of the New Company , for when, in 1698, the subscription lists were opened for the loan of two millions that was the condition of the establishment of that body, the Commissioners of the Treasury, to encourage others, had headed the list with a subscription of £10,000 "for His Majestie" King William III In this case, however, the sovereign's name was only used as a formality, and the transaction was really between the Treasury and the Company We therefore need not pursue the matter further.

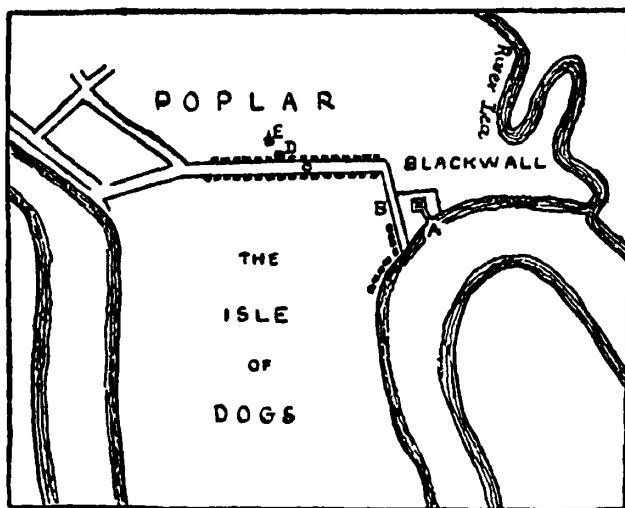
VIII

THE COMPANY'S DOCKYARD AT BLACKWALL

FOR the benefit of any one unfamiliar with the locality, it may be well to begin by saying that Blackwall is the local name for the district situated between Poplar proper on the west and the Lea on the east, with the Thames forming its southern boundary. At the time when my story begins, that is, early in the seventeenth century, all this was low-lying ground, known as the East Marsh, protected from the tide by the ancient banks which lined the Lea and the Thames. The name seems to have been derived from the bank on the side of the Thames, which was composed of darker earth than the rest, and hence was known to sailors as the Black Wall. So, at least, says Norden, and the explanation appears more probable than the alternative one, which gives the name as Bleak Wall, from its exposed position. The district, at the time of which I am writing, was practically uninhabited, for there was little to tempt any one to build a house in such a dangerous spot, which was liable to be flooded, should an exceptionally high tide cause a breach in the banks. The only traffic that came that way was due to the existence of Blackwall Stairs, at the river end of what is now Brunswick Street. By taking boat at those stairs, a traveller whose errand was down the river could avoid the long bend round the Isle of Dogs, while those coming upstream found it

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equally time-saving to land at this point and make straight for the City. Hence that route was well patronized. To meet its needs, a causeway had been constructed from the eastern end of Poplar High Street, running down to the stairs. This causeway is now Brunswick Street, and the extent to which it was elevated above the surrounding level may still be seen on its western side. In the above



sketch, which is based upon Jonas Moore's map of the Thames (1662), the causeway is marked B, and the High Street C, A is the dockyard, of which the history is given in the following pages, while D and E indicate the sites of the Almshouse and Chapel, which form the subjects of the two succeeding chapters

The connexion of the East India Company with Blackwall began in the year 1614. At that time, and for thirty

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years longer, the Company had a dockyard at Deptford for building and repairing its ships. This, however, had its drawbacks, for vessels had sometimes a difficulty in getting so far up the river; moreover, the lease was a short one, and the Company were averse from building storehouses, etc., on land which might have to be given up before long. William Burrell, the Ratcliff shipbuilder, was largely employed by the Company at this time and was a member of its governing body, and it was he who, in April 1614, suggested the advisability of buying some land at Blackwall for a dockyard, which would have the double advantage of being lower down the river and of being on the northern bank, thus facilitating communication with the Company's offices. The idea was approved, and negotiations were opened up with a Mr. Roger Jones, of Limehouse, gentleman, for the purchase of his interest in some land lying in the angle between Blackwall Causeway and the Thames. This land was in three portions—a main patch of about six and a half acres described as being in "Babland" in the East March of Poplar, another patch of three acres, and a third consisting of a piece of the river wall, "with a hoppett or parcell of land to the said wall adjoyninge," containing about an acre (*Chancery Proceedings* in Public Record Office, Chas I, c 8, 43/75). A reference in the Company's records to marsh land having been bought at the same time from a Mr. Mouse¹ suggests that this was done to join up the scattered portions of Jones's holding, and in any case Mouse's portion must have been small, for the Company's ground was reckoned in after years at ten acres in all. Terms were easily arranged with Mr. Jones, but then difficulties presented themselves. It was found that the

¹ Joan Mouse, presumably his daughter, married in 1627 Captain John Prowd, of the Royal Navy (*Stepney Memorials*, by Hill and Frere, p. 203).

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land, which was copyhold, forming part of the manor of Stepney (then belonging to the Wentworth family), could not be had in fee simple, at least for the time being, so the Committees were forced to accept it on these terms. A more disturbing discovery was that the title was vested, not only in Mr. Jones, but also in his wife Antonina and their heirs. However, after consulting counsel, it was held that a surrender by Mr and Mrs Jones would hold good. The agreement seems to have been concluded on May 14, 1614, and the land was made over about ten days later, the occasion being celebrated by a dinner. The amount paid for the property does not appear, but evidently Mr Jones thought it none too large, for he suggested that the Company ought, in addition, to make his wife a present for giving her consent. The Committees were not of that opinion, they retorted that they had already paid more than the land was worth and that, if any present was due to Mrs. Jones, her husband ought to make it himself. In addition to the ground, a house belonging to Mr Jones was first rented (at £5 a year) and then purchased outright.

The task of digging a dock was at once commenced. On taking possession of the ground, it was discovered that the tenants of the surrounding property had taken advantage of the change of ownership to enlarge their own holdings by moving their fences surreptitiously outwards. The Company, however, were not going to stand this, and the trespassers were unceremoniously evicted. As regards the dock itself, the construction of an entrance meant breaking the river wall. Consequently, in addition to any excavations, fresh banks had to be constructed on both sides of the entrance channel and round the dock itself. The latter was quite small, and was dug so quickly

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that in August, 1614, it was able to receive the *Dragon*. This vessel had been Sir James Lancaster's flagship in the Company's first voyage to the East, and it was an appropriate coincidence that she should have been the first to use the new dock. The latter was still in a makeshift condition, for in the previous month Burrell, who was in charge of the work, had reported that, although clay had been rammed on the floor and sides, the springs of which the surrounding land was full had broken through. He had tried a plan of laying down tarpaulins and then ramming clay on them, but the Committees decided that this could not prove permanently effective, and that it would be better to dig a deep ditch on the land side of the dock to intercept the flow of water.

Work upon the dock went on for a considerable time. In July, 1615, it was determined that sufficient space should be provided to accommodate three ships at once. Apparently the dock was then in two portions—an upper and a lower one, the former being a dry dock. A good deal of filling up outside the dock was done, and it is interesting to note that in 1619 the gravel needed for this purpose cost the Company a halfpenny a load, apart from the expense of cartage. Gradually storehouses and other buildings, including accommodation for officials, were added. In May, 1618, a brick wall was ordered to be built along the side of the causeway, while two months later it was resolved to rebuild the entrance, which was on that side. The new gate was to have rooms on each side of it, and a turret over it, while above the gateway was to be placed the Company's coat of arms, carved in stone. In the Poplar Free Library, near the entrance, may still be seen a block of stone, somewhat mutilated, bearing the arms of the Company. Where this came from I have been unable to

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learn, but I strongly suspect that this is the original stone, saved by some discerning person when the gate-house was pulled down in the 'seventies of the last century.

By July, 1618, the number of workmen employed in the yard was two hundred and thirty-two, and the control of this large body gave the Committees much trouble. To prevent the loss of time caused by the men going out to meals, a tap-house was provided, while later on a shed was put up near by, with tables and seats, in order to induce the labourers to take their breakfasts and dinners there. The tapster, by the way, was looked after sharply, as is shown by the fact that in April, 1625, on complaint being made that his beer was too strong, he was forbidden to draw any that cost more than 6s. a barrel. Another regulation is amusing enough to deserve quotation. Since accidents were not infrequent, the Company had stationed a surgeon in the yard, whose functions, in accordance with the practice then prevalent, included those of the present-day barber. It was found that "idle fellowes, under a pretence to be trimmed, come into the chirurgiens house and there loyter, three or four at a time, an hower together, one staying till another be trimmed." The Committees therefore ordained that no haircutting should be done except at meal-times or in the evening. More serious abuses were also discovered. There were charges against the officials of under-measurement of timber, of changing the Company's good masts for old ones, and of permitting wood and iron to be embezzled. The inhabitants of Poplar had been allowed to come into the yard for old food stores distributed as charity and for chips for use as firewood, but the practice of giving away such things on the spot had to be stopped, as the

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opportunity was being taken to steal bolts and spikes, or any other portable articles that were lying about

The safe custody of the yard at night was also a cause of anxiety to the Committees. In March, 1619, Burrell was instructed to employ watchmen and, if he saw fit, to buy some mastiffs, which were to be turned loose each evening. Seven months later, to ensure that the watchmen performed their duties vigilantly, they were directed to toll a bell at fixed intervals during the night, and for this purpose the yard bell, which was broken, was ordered to be recast. In an interesting work, entitled *The Chronicles of Blackwall Yard*, Part I, by Henry Green and Robert Wigram, issued privately in 1881, particulars are given of what appears to have been this identical bell, which was extant when that work was written but had disappeared at the time of my visit in 1907.

Burrell's services in making the dock were rewarded in October, 1617, by a gift of £200. A year later he informed the Committees that he had bought the whole of the causeway for £100, and he offered them the eastern half of it for £50. The Committees pressed him to let them have the whole, but to this he strongly demurred, and so the matter rested until March, 1619, when he intimated his willingness to let the Company have the whole causeway at a reasonable profit. Nothing, however, was done for some time longer, the delay being due, apparently, to the fact that the Company wished, if possible, to acquire the freehold. In September, 1621, it was reported that this could not be managed, on account of legal difficulties, and that the only course was to take a lease. Accordingly, on January 30, 1622 (not 1621, as stated in the *Chronicles*), Burrell granted a lease to four feoffees named by the Company, the term being 463 years

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and the annual rent half a crown For this lease he was paid, it appears, £200.

In June, 1619, a request was made which vividly illustrates the state of the neighbourhood at that period. Robert Salmon, one of the Committees, represented to his colleagues "that hee, by reason of his place in the Companies service, is inforced to be fourth late, both in the winter and sommer, and coming from the water side to the howse wherein hee now dwelleth, hee goes in the darke, the way being long and dirtye, and himself some times in daunger to be robbed" He suggested, therefore, that a site should be granted him on the Company's ground at Blackwall, whereon to build a house for himself A fortnight later he made his proposal more definite The plot he desired was 141 feet by 97 feet, *i e* well over a quarter of an acre, and the rent he offered was 4s per annum The upshot was that his request was refused

Another incident that may be mentioned was an application from some of the labourers in the dockyard for lodging money, to save them from the necessity of returning to their homes in London every night and to enable them to start work earlier in the morning The allowance they asked for was only a penny a night, and this outlay the Committees graciously agreed to sanction.

We find from an entry in the *Court Minutes* for September, 1624, that it had been decided to lengthen the dock, in order that larger ships should be accommodated In the *Chancery Proceedings* of 1633 (soon to be mentioned), there is a statement by the Company that they had constructed two separate great docks

When the yard was acquired in 1614, the title was vested in four feoffees, as trustees for the Company, for

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although by its charter the Company was authorized to buy and hold land, there was a danger that, if the charter were withdrawn, the property might be claimed by the Crown. The last survivor of these feoffees, Geoffrey Kirby by name, died in 1632, and it became necessary to secure the admission of fresh nominees. Three years earlier, we may note, the Company had made another effort to enfranchise the land, but had been unable to obtain the consent of the Earl of Cleveland, who was then the lord of the manor. In May, 1633, six new feoffees were presented at the Stepney Manor court and were admitted without demur, but when £4, 15s 8d was tendered for the customary fine, the steward refused to accept so small a sum, intimating that Lord Cleveland had fixed the amount to be paid at £3000. The Committees remonstrated with His Lordship and, finding him obdurate, appealed to the Court of Chancery (*Chancery Proceedings*, in Public Record Office Charles I, c 8, 43/75, and c. 2, E 33/116), pleading that the fine was by custom fixed at sixteenpence per acre, with additional payments for buildings and for every feoffee beyond the first. In reply, Lord Cleveland maintained that he had the power to increase the fine at his discretion, and on the case coming to trial, the Company's counsel was obliged to admit this contention. All that now remained to be done was to decide what figure would be equitable. The Earl's witnesses estimated the annual value of the property at from £500 to £800, while those produced by the Company put it at from £140 to £200. In view of this conflict of opinion, the Lord Keeper appointed three commissioners to make an assessment, and these reported that in their opinion the correct figure was £372. Thereupon (in July, 1635) the Lord Keeper decreed that the six feoffees were to

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be changed to one ¹ and that the fine should be £500, this to be no precedent for future payments. It is, by the way, to these Chancery proceedings that we are indebted for some of the facts already given concerning the acquisition of the property by the Company.

The Committees were already concerned at the great expense of the dockyard, and this verdict, with its attendant outlay on legal and other costs (which included £12 paid for a dinner at Blackwall for the commissioners) intensified the feeling. In November, 1634, we find the treasurer complaining that most weeks he had to find £200 or more for the upkeep of the yard, and urging measures of economy. Six months later the salaries of the principal officers were severely reduced, much to their annoyance. The Company's trade was by no means flourishing at this period, while the appearance in 1635 of a rival body (known as Courteen's Association), under the patronage of the King himself, seemed to threaten disaster. In July, 1636, it was decided that, when the pinnacle under construction was launched, the workmen were to be discharged and the yard closed down until a ship should need repairing. A still more drastic resolution was reached in May, 1637, when it was determined to sell or let the yard, but, although some of the higher officials were discharged, this intention was not carried out. The doom of the dockyards was, however, drawing near. In 1639 the Company began to freight vessels instead of building them, and the success of this plan, which gradually became the rule, sealed the fate of both of the Company's

¹ William Garway, Junior, was chosen by the Company. In January, 1636, Lord Cleveland nominated him reeve of the manor, much to his annoyance. He refused to serve, and was fined £10, but the Company encouraged him to withhold payment, guaranteeing to indemnify him against any consequences.

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yards. It was decided in June, 1643, to sell the one at Deptford, and this was done in the following May. The Blackwall Yard was still maintained, but only on a reduced footing, for the Civil War was putting a heavy drag on all commercial operations and the Company's trade was suffering with the rest.

Further expenditure had become necessary in May, 1641, when the Company was called upon to pay its share towards the repair of the sluice that drained the East Marsh, the area of which is noted as being 48 acres. A payment of £300 on account was made by the Company; but no further outlay has been traced.

It was now a time for even small economies, and in June, 1643, we find the Company endeavouring to make a profit from their rights as owners of the causeway, which, leading as it did to the river bank, had (as already mentioned) a considerable amount of traffic. It was ordered that a gate should be erected at the High Street end and a charge made of twopence for every cart that passed through. For the convenience of foot passengers, who had doubtless a right of way, a stile was to be placed near the gate.

In August, 1648, sanction was given to the purchase of a horse for labour in the yard. This was possibly the animal mentioned by Strype, in his edition of Stow's *Survey*, as having worked there for thirty-four years. "Old Hob," as he was called, became, we are told, so knowing that, when the bell rang for the workmen to cease their labours he would remain obstinately fixed to the spot where he happened to be, until released from his cart. His popularity among the men—perhaps partly on this account—was such that a public-house in the vicinity was named after him.

The proposal to get rid of Blackwall Yard was revived

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in April, 1645, but, although orders were given to make a plan of the ground and an inventory of the stores, action was still deferred. Thus matters remained until June, 1650, when it was decided to put the yard up for sale, but first, if possible, to get some additional lives inserted in the lease, in order to make the title more lasting and thus obtain a better price. This was not effected until September, 1651, when Lady Weld, to whom the Stepney property had been mortgaged by Lord Cleveland, was paid £300 for the admission of four more feoffees. Two months later the price to be asked for the yard was fixed at £6000. In December the Committees who had charge of the negotiations reported that Benjamin Worsley had agreed to purchase the property for £5600. In the following March, however, he applied to be released from his bargain, offering to rent the yard instead, but to this alternative the Committees declined to consent. Another purchaser was hard to find in the unsettled state of public affairs and the general decay of trade, and in September, 1652, it was resolved to put the property up to auction, if a buyer did not present himself soon. Meanwhile, part of the yard was rented by the Victuallers of the Navy, though negotiations for their taking a lease fell through. Then, at the beginning of December, 1652, the Committees in charge of the matter reported that they had let the remainder of the premises to Henry Johnson, shipwright, of Deptford, for twenty-one years at £200 per annum—a figure which seems later to have been reduced to £188. By this time the Company's trade was going from bad to worse, and its total relinquishment seemed to be a possibility of the near future. In February, 1655, it was decided to get rid of the yard entirely, and, as the result of the negotiations that followed, it was announced

THE COMPANY'S DOCKYARD AT BLACKWALL

in the following June that Johnson had agreed to buy the property for £4350. The transaction appears to have been concluded by September, 1656, when the Company's solicitor was ordered to make over to Johnson the title-deeds. Thus ended the direct connexion of the East India Company with Blackwall Yard, which, be it noted, was the first dockyard (at least of any importance) to be constructed on the northern banks of the Thames.

The subsequent history of the yard does not closely concern us here, and may be told mainly on the authority of the *Chronicles of Blackwall Yard* already mentioned. The map of the Thames by Jonas Moore (1662) shows roughly the state of the yard at the time when it passed into the hands of Johnson, but that production is mainly a map of the river, and the land details should not be taken too literally.

The new owner of the dockyard came of an Aldeburgh family, while his mother was a daughter of Peter Pett, the famous shipwright. This accounts for the adoption of that trade by Johnson, who was apprenticed in 1639 to his cousin, Phineas Pett. When exactly Johnson removed from Deptford to Blackwall we are not told, but apparently it was in 1652. His enterprise in purchasing, while still under thirty years of age, so large an establishment as the Company's dockyard was well rewarded, for the development of trade that followed the Restoration created a great demand for shipping. From an entry in Pepys's *Diary*, under date of January 15, 1661, we learn that a new wet dock had been constructed, presumably in the yard, though the reference may possibly be to the "upper dock" which was dug on some land acquired by Johnson on the western side of the causeway. Pepys has other references to the worthy ship-builder, notably one under date of September 22, 1665,

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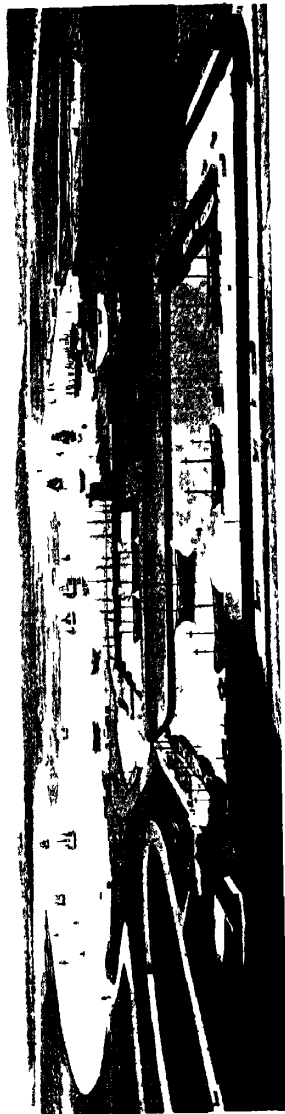
when the diarist went to Blackwall to see about the storage there of the goods taken out of two Dutch prizes "That being done," he says, "we into Johnson's house, and were much made of, eating and drinking" His host discoursed to him at some length about the fossil trees found 12 feet underground in excavating the new dock. Pepys's editor, Dr. Wheatley, notes that a similar discovery was made when the Brunswick Dock was dug in 1789

The house in which Pepys was entertained on this occasion must have been the one erected by the Company in 1618 at the entrance to the yard In 1678 Johnson rebuilt this, recording the fact on a stone tablet, bearing his monogram, which was placed on the inner side of the gateway, while the Company's arms were apparently left in position on the outer side. Johnson's tablet has fortunately been preserved, and may still be seen in Messrs Green's yard, built into the wall over the porter's lodge, with another inscription beneath, recording its history On the tablet the date of the original building is wrongly given as 1612.

Johnson's rebuilt and enlarged dwelling appears to have been sumptuously decorated According to the *Chronicles* the principal rooms were wainscoted with oak, richly carved, and adorned with panels on which were depicted naval engagements, mainly with the Dutch There were also pictures of the *Royal Prince* and the *Sovereign of the Seas*—two famous vessels constructed for the Royal Navy by the Petts In 1680 King Charles II visited the house and, before leaving, knighted his host

Johnson died in November, 1683, at the age of sixty, and was interred in the burial ground of Poplar Chapel. He was a liberal benefactor of the poor and a promoter of good works—an example worthily followed by successive

THE EAST INDIA DOCKS



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owners of the yard, especially Richard Perry and George Green. Johnson's son, also named Henry, succeeded to the business, and he was in turn knighted in 1685. The building and repairing of East Indiamen and ships of war went on steadily at Blackwall, with the result that money flowed continuously into the pockets of the proprietor; and when in September, 1711, Johnson's only child, Anne, married Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, she carried to him, according to Swift (*Journal to Stella*), a fortune of £60,000, "besides the rest at her father's death." The family was already connected with the aristocracy, for her father had married, as his second wife, Martha, Baroness Wentworth.

By the time the second Johnson died (1719), the property had grown to a little over twenty acres¹. In the absence of a son to carry on the business, the yard passed into other hands. A Captain John Kirby, with three associates, purchased it for £2800, and leased it to Philip Perry, who had been Johnson's manager, and who now started in business as Perry & Co. In 1742 Perry's yard had a wet dock and three dry ones, besides several building slips.

In 1789-90 the then head of the firm, John Perry, constructed a large basin to the eastward of the original one. This was known as the Brunswick Basin or Perry's Dock, and was intended chiefly for East Indiamen. It was sold in 1806 to the East India Dock Company, which had been formed to acquire this and to construct an East India Import Dock. The Brunswick Basin became henceforth known as the East India Export Dock. Both these basins still exist. They are well shown, together with the older dock, in the engraving by William Daniell (published in 1808), herewith reproduced. The sheet of water in the foreground is the Import Basin, while the smaller one, above,

¹ Its general plan is shown in Gascoyne's map of Stepney (1703)

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is the Export Basin. The older dock, with a separate entrance from the river, appears to the west of the latter. On the western side of the Export Basin may be seen the mast-house, built by Perry to facilitate the removal or insertion of the masts of ships. This erection was pulled down between 1859 and 1864, the employment of floating derricks having rendered it obsolete.

Meanwhile (about 1797) George Green, who had married Perry's second daughter, had been admitted to the firm, which thereupon became Perry, Sons & Green. After various changes the property was purchased in 1819 by Messrs Wigram & Green. In 1843 it was divided, Wigram taking the old yard, including Johnson's former mansion, while Richard and Henry Green occupied the rest, which is now represented by Messrs Green's yard. Wigram's portion was sold in the 'seventies to the Midland Railway Company, and the site is now covered by the goods depôt established there. The East India Company's original dock had apparently been filled in some time before, and the house which the Johnsons and their successors had inhabited was now pulled down. The only relics that survive are the tablet in Messrs Green's yard, and the stone with the Company's arms in the Poplar Public Library.

IX

THE COMPANY'S HOSPITAL AT POPLAR

ONE of the most familiar figures in the streets of seventeenth-century London was the seaman-beggar, maimed or past work, who appealed to the charity of the passer-by to save him from starvation. Of all callings that of the sailor presented the least chance of providing for old age—the life was hard, the wages scanty, the chances of wounds or serious injuries very great. Doubtless there was a general spirit of recklessness which made him neglectful of the future, and inclined to snatch at fleeting joys to make up for the hardships inseparable from life at sea, but, if arraigned for thriftlessness, Jack could at least make a reasonable defence. The odds were heavily against his living to be an old man, money was hard to get and harder still to keep in safety, and at the worst, well, the parish must maintain him. Thus he argued, and his actions were in accordance, wages were spent as fast as received, and the number of impotent sailormen soliciting “Your Honour’s charity” grew ever larger and larger.

This evil could not escape the notice of a body of God-fearing merchants such as the East India Company, and from time to time schemes were mooted for making provision for the maimed and aged among the sailors who had served in their fleets. Thus we read in the *Court Minutes*

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of August 26, 1617, that "Sir William Russell put this Court in mynd of an observacion made by him at Catham [Chatham], which he hould[s] worthie this Companies imitacion, by a chest, wherunto all men that serve the King in his Navye, both officers and ordinary persons, do pay 4d. per month out of their wages, which is employed for the releif of such as are maymed in His Majesties service, and is contributed according to the necessity of ech person by the veiwe of certaine master officers therunto appointed, who do veiwe and consider their maymes and delyver their opinions for releif of them, to some more, to some lesse The matter being found smale to ech particuler person, the end charitable, and the miserye of persons very great, which encreaseth more and more, wherby the Companie shall have occacion to extend their charitie manye waies, they concluded to have the like course put in execucion with all that shalbe entertayned into their voiajes hereafter, to acquaint them with the Companies resolucion and take their consent at the entertaynement to have it acknowledged under their handes that they are willing to have iijd. per month defalked and stayed out of their wages "

This scheme, however, fell through, possibly owing to some unwillingness on the part of the mariners to consent to any deduction from their wages for a fund from which they might never derive any benefit The administration of the Chatham Chest was deservedly suspect, and Jack probably thought the Company's proposal was merely a dodge of the landsmen to cheat him out of part of his earnings. And so the idea of helping him in his old age might have remained a mere aspiration had not a decisive impulse been given by the bequest of a sum of money for this purpose by a certain Hugh Greet, who had been sent to the East as a factor in 1610, had been brought home a

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prisoner in 1618, charged with defrauding the Company in the purchase of diamonds, and had died towards the close of that year Greet had by no means a clean record, his colleagues found him hard to get on with—"a wicked, prattling fool," one of them called him, affirming moreover that he "hath such humours, neither dog nor cat can live by him, much less the poor country people"—and the Company said sweepingly that he had "carried himselfe mutinouslie, riotously, debaushly, and unfaithfullie", but he redeemed all his faults by the generosity of his last will and testament. It is true that his motives may have been mixed. The Company had seized all that he had brought home—some £700 in value—and would probably do their best to retain it in satisfaction of their claims against him, and it may have seemed the only way to save at least part of it from their clutches to bequeath it for charitable uses. He therefore named two persons of integrity and influence, Sir Thomas Smythe and Sir William Russell, as his executors, and directed them to apply all his estate, after the payment of his debts and certain legacies, for founding a hospital or school. Whatever the impulse that moved him to the deed, it had a right worthy consequence, and Hugh Greet deserves to be remembered as the efficient cause of the foundation of Poplar Hospital.

The matter was brought up at a Court held on August 26, 1619, when it was decided to acquiesce in this disposal of the residue of Greet's estate, "to be joyned with some other remaynders of ould accompts to build an hospitall or almeshouse for maymed men or releif of orphans or widowes, whose parents and husbands dyed in the Companies service." Four months later the subject came up again, in connexion with an offer from Sir Thomas Roe (then just returned from his embassy to the Great Mogul) to give £400 towards the

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building of the Hospital, "so it may be speedily put in execution." The Court again approved the idea and appointed several of its members to inquire about "a great brick house at Blackwall, which may be had very cheape, fit to be employed for such an use of an almshouse or hospitall", but nothing seems to have come of this, or of further efforts made in 1623 and 1625 to get the scheme advanced, and so Roe's donation was lost to the fund

Some endeavour had been made to accumulate money for charitable purposes by placing a box in the paymaster's office On December 23, 1625, however, one of the Committees drew the attention of the Court to the fact that very little was being obtained by this means, and suggested that a compulsory deduction should be made from the wages paid to the sailors and others As a result, on January 18, 1626, it was ordered that twopence in the pound should be levied upon all wages and salaries paid by the Company, for the purpose of raising a fund to maintain and relieve poor seafaring men who had been employed by them

At last in 1627 the decisive step was taken At a meeting held on April 4 "Mr [Thomas] Stiles put the Court in minde that, in regard the Companie hath in their hands monyes assigned for the building of an hospitall for the releife of such as have or shall be maimed or decayed by the Companies service, and being informed that at this time there may be a very large and convenient bricke house with some three acres of ground thereunto belonging, lyeing in Blackwall, bought at a reasonable rate for this purpose, did therefore advise the Court to appoint some of the Committees or other to treat and conclude for the same The Court, being willing to imploy the money assigned for soe good a worke, desired Mr. Stiles to have speech with the

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owner of the said house and land, and, if it may be had at a reasonable rate, to bargain and conclude for the same ”

On May 2 Mr. Style reported that Mr Dalton, the owner, was willing to accept £360, which he thought a very good bargain, in regard to the size and strength of the house, and the extent of the grounds, and after some discussion the Court decided to make the purchase, subject to the title being pronounced a good one A week later the same indefatigable promoter of the good work presented a report on the repairs and alterations necessary,¹ and added that “ behind the house there is a faire field and a dainty rowe of elmes, and a private garden wherein a chapple may be built of ninety foote in length and thirty two foote in breadth ” In July it was announced that the house contained rooms enough for twenty poor men, and the Court resolved to fix that number as a maximum, to be worked up to gradually as funds were available About the same time the residue of Greet's estate, viz £446, 10s 1d, was formally transferred to the Hospital Fund Sir William Russell, the surviving executor, made an attempt to secure the recognition of Greet as a benefactor to the new institution by the setting-up of some memorial to him, but the Company were still sore over his behaviour and resolutely refused to attribute any share in the good work to him They claimed that the money he left was really theirs, and they placed on record that the Hospital was “ to be reputed the worke of the Companie and not of Greete ”

The first two pensioners installed were John Fern and Tristram Hughson, who were admitted on March 5, 1628, with an allowance of sixpence a day for providing themselves with food I regret to have to add that they both proved

¹ A sum of £350 was expended (*Court Minutes*, April 10, 1679).

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themselves unworthy objects of the Company's charity Hughson was reported to be often drunk, and when in that condition to rail bitterly upon Their Worships and other persons of quality, but his humble promises of amendment, and the fact that he had lost a leg in the Company's service, saved him from expulsion. Fern was a still worse sinner. He had been warned on admission that he must not take his wife "to cohabite with him there", so he took another man's wife instead, had one or two children by her, and finally married her, though her husband was still alive. The Court did not discover this until June, 1634, and then they were of course much horrified, Fern was sent to Bridewell to receive due correction, and his banishment from the Hospital was solemnly decreed

By March, 1631, the number of almsmen had increased to six, and it was decided to allow them every alternate Michaelmas a new gown, bearing the Company's cognizance. In June a great Bible was bought, and one of the almsmen was ordered to read prayers every morning and evening. At the same time an order was issued that any of the pensioners working in the Company's dockyard should have sixpence a day in addition to the regular allowance of half a crown a week. We also find that at each Christmas a chaldron of sea-coal and a sum of twenty shillings were divided amongst them.

In May, 1633, the Governor made known the great desire of the inhabitants of Blackwall to have the Company build a chapel to their Hospital, but it was conceived "more proper and fitt to endow the Hospitall with a competency of lands to maintaine the poore before they expend more mony in building." An effort was to be made to provide an endowment of £60 or 100 marks per annum,

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“and that being done, then to thinck of building a chappell, but not before.”

The practice of deducting twopence in the pound from wages was dropped in October, 1633. It seems that the Rev Josias Shute, preaching before the Company at Great St Helen's, Bishopsgate, urged that the practice was a great burden upon poor mariners, and that the onus of maintaining the fund ought rather to fall upon the Committees and the shareholders. As a consequence the levy was ordered to be discontinued. At the conclusion of each particular stock a proposal was to be made to the General Court to vote £500 or so for endowment purposes—a plan which would be much better and more honourable (said the Court) than taking money from the mariners.

A curious entry occurs soon after. A letter from Surat to the Company at the close of 1634 advised the consignment of a parcel of drugs, costing about £50, to be sold for the benefit of the Hospital. The money thus invested, the letter explained, had arisen from fines levied for small offences, offerings at Communion, and gifts to the poor-box on the arrival or departure of factors. How much was thus added to the funds is not recorded.

Evidently the practical organization of the Hospital was defective, in that there was no one in authority on the spot to control the pensioners. At the beginning of the year 1635 the attention of the Court was called to “the disorder and ill government of their almesmen at Poplar, and their great neglect in the daily reading of prayers, there being now not any man that either doth or can performe that service.” Thereupon it was decided to set up in the Hospital orders and regulations to be observed by the pensioners, and also to appoint some one at a yearly salary to read prayers daily. One of the pensioners, named

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Charles Deane, was detailed for this duty ; but if there was any consequent improvement it was not permanent, for ten years later the Court, "being informed that their almesmen neglect to say prayers as usuall, gave order that they should read the psalmes and chapters appointed for the day twice every day, with one of the prayers at the end of the bible" In 1647 an amateur chaplain of some education was found, who was willing to act without salary on condition of being provided with rooms and allowed to keep a school On June 11 of that year "a petition of Edward Howes¹ was this day presented to the Court, wherein hee desired that they would bee pleased to give him liberty to keepe a schoole in their almeshouse at Poppler, there being 2 voide roomes, vizt the hall, which would bee fitt for a schoole, and a roome over that which would serve for a library,² and that hee would read prayers twice a day to the almesmen, and teach children, and seamen the marriners' art, &c The Court liked of his request, but, they not being now a full Court, resolved to resume the same at some other tyme when they are a fuller Court, yett they told him they thought they should graunt part of his request, as that hee should have the hall and the closet adjoyning to it, and that they would consider of graunting him the large upper roome hereafter "

The use of these two rooms was granted to Howes on July 2, 1647 A year later we find him petitioning for four

¹ In all probability this was the Edward Howes who in 1644 was a master in the Ratchiff Free School He was an intimate friend and frequent correspondent of Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts His name is attached to a tract on the circumference of the earth, published in 1623, and to *A Short Arithmetic*, issued in 1659, at which time the author was Rector of Goldanger in Essex

² On June 26, 1674, the Court ordered a dictionary and a *Book of Martyrs* to be bought for the school, and the same "to be affixed with chains to a desk, as is usual in other publick schools"

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or five more, but the decision is not recorded. However, in December, 1649, the Company was informed that Mr Howes had left his rooms, whereupon they were allotted to Mr Benjamin Spencer, minister, "hee exercising such offices of piety to the almesmen as is requisite" He continued for some years to preach in the almshouse to the pensioners and to such outsiders as cared to come, and it may be that he also kept on the school which Howes had started. A few years later, however, the erection of a separate chapel and the appointment of a regular chaplain put an end to Spencer's ministrations. On January 14, 1657, he petitioned the Company for some recompense, alleging that, though the inhabitants had promised to provide him with £20 a year, they had not paid more than a third part for a long time. In response he was given a gratuity of £25.

In the spring of 1658 Noah Kett was appointed schoolmaster, but his tenure of the post did not last long. A quarrel in the following year with the chaplain led to his resignation and the appointment of a Mr Doughty. The latter was to be provided with rooms and a salary of £20, in return for which he was to teach twenty-five children gratis (presumably he might add others who paid fees). Doughty did not stay long, for in July, 1660, the post of schoolmaster was held by Edward Peers, and he in turn gave way a month later to Thomas Hopkinson, who had for some time kept a school in the neighbourhood.

An entry on the *Minutes* for May 30, 1645, shows that there was then a deplorable lack of discipline at the Hospital. "The Court being informed that John White, whome they had ordred to bee expelled their almeshouse for felony [stealing cordage, etc, from the shipyard] was with his wife and children still there, it was now againe ordred that

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Mr. Fotherby should have notice to turne him out, and all those women which usually are there with their husbands in the night ” The question of how to deal with the wives of the pensioners was indeed a difficult one. It seemed hard that they should be prevented from coming in the daytime to minister to their husbands' comfort, and hard also to turn them out at night, if they had nowhere else to go After a time they seem to have been tacitly allowed to share their husbands' apartments and allowances On May 1, 1667, we find an order given for the admission of William Jay as a pensioner, on condition that a bond should be given that his wife would leave the almshouse on his death and be in no way chargeable to the Company Fourteen years earlier a woman who had lost two husbands in the Company's service had been admitted to the almshouse, but it had been expressly laid down that this was not to form a precedent for the admission of other women

In July, 1651, George Forbes, “ the onely surviving wittnes of the sadd and fatall tragedy by the Dutch committed against the English at Amboyna,” was admitted to the Hospital and allowed two rooms and 5s a week, on condition that he should read prayers daily and see order preserved

Meanwhile the Hospital Fund was steadily growing In 1645 William Fremlen, formerly President of Surat, bequeathed £500, and Thomas Kerridge, another ex-President, left £100 fourteen years after By March, 1650, the Fund stood at £1894, 3s 2d, and a little later it had reached £2000 It was then proposed (September, 1652) to invest the money in the purchase from the Parliamentary Commissioners of Craven House (in Leadenhall Street), at that time the Company's headquarters, but fears as to the security of the title in case of a Royalist re-

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action, and disputes as to which stock was responsible for the Hospital Fund, caused the abandonment of the scheme. Out of the principal the General Court had recently voted £200 towards the building of a chapel, as will be shown in a later article. Notwithstanding this, at the close of the Fourth Joint Stock in 1658 the amount was £2350. According to the report of a Special Committee appointed in 1679 the stock was then £3650, while the expenses were £110 or £120 per annum. The persons on the establishment at that date were a minister, a schoolmaster (appointed, it would seem, in 1674), eleven almsmen, and one woman attendant, besides two out-pensioners. The old people received half a crown a week (except one who had five shillings),¹ a gown every two years and coals at Christmas. There were, besides, twenty-five boys in the school. The Committee recommended that three more pensioners be appointed, that one of the almsmen be allowed an extra shilling a week for ringing the bell for prayers, and that in nominations for the school a preference should be given to the sons of servants of the Company. They proposed a set of rules, which are so quaint that we give them in full.

“Orders and Rules established for the good government of the Pensioners and Scholars that are or shalbe admitted into the East India Companies Almshouse at Poplar, to be observed by them

“First That the schoolmaster doe constantly every day read some part of the Holy Scriptures and pray in the schoolroom, and all the pensioners and scholars to be present (if not sick) carefully and seasonably to attend the

¹ This was Nicholas Bix, who had been a merchant in the Company's service, and had at one time held the responsible post of Chief at Masulipatam. Being old (seventy-four) and without means, he was admitted to the Hospital on April 7, 1671, and was given double the usual allowance.

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same, in the morning at seaven of the clock and in the evening at five of the clock, from Lady Day to Michaelmas, and at eight of the clock in the morning and four in the afternoon from Michaelmas to Lady Day And for the more certain observance hereof, the bell shalbe constantly rung morning and evening at the houres aforesaid by one of the almsmen, that due notice may be taken thereof.

“Secondly That every Lordsday all the said pensioners shall orderly resort to the church in their gowns, as also the scholars, solemnly and reverently to attend the publick worship of God, forenoon and afternoon, and that the scholars doe sit together in the gallery, and there decently and soberly demean themselves, and the schoolmaster is constantly to sit with them, the better to inspect and observe their behaviour, and which of them may be absent

“Thirdly That the minister and schoolmaster doe on every Monday morning take an accompt of all the pensioners and scholars of their being at church the preceding Lordsday, and what they have learned or profited thereby, spending one hour in catechizing and instructing them in the principles of the Protestant Religion, and where any are found faulty, to give immediate notice thereof to the pay-master, or on the Saturday following

“Fourthly That the youths admitted into the school be taught to read and write English and be instructed in the knowledge of arithmetick, and that they be admitted by order of the Committees for Shipping for the time being, such being first to be preferred whose parents have been in the Companies service and are poor and necessitous, and none to be admitted under the age of seaven years, unless such as can read English competently well Nor shall they

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absent themselves from school above the space of one week at any one time without leave from the schoolmaster, and if longer absent (except in case of sickness) to be expelled the said school

“Fifthly That the pensioners shall religiously, honestly, and quietly behave themselves at all times, especially one towards another, without any brawlings, contentions or frequenting of alehouses, and shall be ready to help one another, as is fitting for persons that live in the fear of God and receive relief from the charity of others And that the woman, in consideration of the pension allowed her, be helpful and assistant to any of the pensioners in time of sickness, or as occasion shall require

“Sixthly That each pensioner be obliged to keep his chamber and closet clean swept, and shall not offer to empty any chamber-pot or any other annoyance in the square court, but shall keep it sweet and clean, as also the back court entry and stayres, everyone taking their turns to make clean the same And that none of them have any shavings or chips in their rooms to endanger firing the house, nor permit any dunghil to be layd in the Church-yard

“Seaventhly That each pensioner shall resort into his chamber, or come into the house, before nine of the clock at night in the summer time, and by seaven in winter And that one of the fittest and ablest of them, who rings the bell, have the charge of the keys, and lock up and make fast the doors at the said hours, and then immediately to deliver the keys to the minister. And that noe person or persons whatsoever, either stranger or others, shalbe entertained or suffered to lodge in any of the chambers of the said almshouse or any part of the house, other than such as are by the Companies order admitted thereunto.

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“Eightly That all the pensioners every Saturday in the afternoon come into the schoolroom in their gowns to receive their weekly allowance from C[aptain] John Prowd or Mr Thomas Lewes, or such as shalbe appointed to pay them And that these rules be punctually observed until others be established by the Company And the Committees for Shipping are to have a weekly account from the pay-master how the said pensioners and scholars behave themselves and comply with these rules, that the Court of Committees may be satisfied at all times in the good government of the said almshouse, that in case any person or persons misbehave themselves contrary herto, they may be suspended from their allowance or expelled the house, as the nature of the offence may deserve ”

The Court approved generally these proposals At the same time they ordered that the minister and schoolmaster should be paid out of the Hospital Fund instead of out of the general revenues of the Company, and they recorded their opinion that the benefits of the foundation might be extended to factors and others at the discretion of the Court Some years later the Committees resolved to widen still further the operation of the Fund by giving small outpensions to widows

Of the general appearance of the Almshouse at this time we can gather a faint idea from the minute representation of its plan in Gascoyne's map of Stepney (1703) It is there shown as occupying the site of the present Vicarage-house of St Matthias, and fronting directly on Poplar High Street. The main building (marked 2) is grouped round the “square court” already mentioned, and there is a subsidiary erection on the side nearest the street. The semi-rural aspect of the neighbourhood is indicated by the

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fields stretching behind the long gardens attached to the houses that fringe the High Street.

In January, 1714, a widow, "aged and very poor," applied for admission to the Hospital on the ground that she had lost four brothers and *four husbands* in the Company's service¹

A special report on the state of the Hospital was presented to the Court in October, 1715, when several recommendations were made for providing increased funds. None of these was carried out, but in May, 1718, it was decided to levy a special duty of sixpence per gallon on all arrack allowed to be imported, and to devote the proceeds to the Charity. A little earlier Sir William Langhorn had bequeathed a thousand pounds to the Hospital. No doubt it was as a consequence of the augmented funds obtained from these two sources that in June, 1721, we find ten women and two men admitted at once as out-pensioners. Four years later Sir Matthew Decker, the Chairman, proposed to his colleagues to establish a Directors' subscription list for the benefit of the Poplar Fund and for the relief of poor ex-Directors. The subscriptions, it appears, were not to be payable until after the subscriber's death and were to be applied to the purposes specified at the discretion of the Court. This was approved, and several of the Directors signed the proposed undertaking, and it was also resolved to allow 4 per cent per annum on the principal of the Poplar Fund, which then amounted to upwards of £3800. A large proportion of the interest thus allowed, however, was swallowed up by a pension of £100 awarded to a former Director, Robert Brisco by name. This unhappy individual, having been ruined by the South Sea disaster, applied in January, 1724, for the post of Warehouse-keeper. His appointment was impossible, owing to his infirmity and his

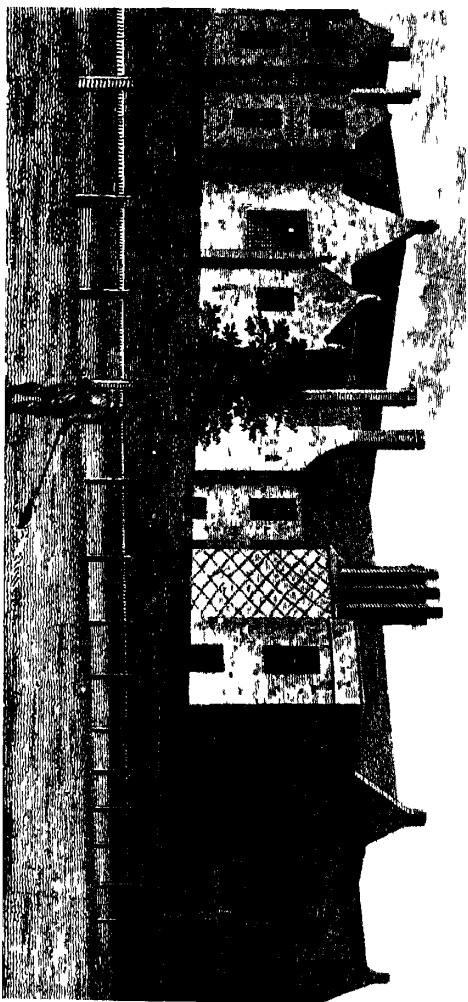
JOHN COMPANY

want of experience, but the Directors, touched with compassion at the sight of his misery, agreed to contribute four guineas each out of their fees for the year and thus make him up an income of £100. By September, 1725, however, they had grown tired of this obligation, and, as already mentioned, decided to shift the burden on to the Hospital Fund. The pension was afterwards continued to Brisco's widow. Four years later (July, 1729) another £100 per annum was allowed to John Russell, ex-President of Fort William in Bengal, to be charged in like manner to the Fund.

In January, 1730, the charity benefited by a sum of £2000 bequeathed by Mr Edward Owen. By the end of the year the Fund stood at £13,293, 12s 7d and was charged with annuities amounting to £420. Soon after, the school appears to have been discontinued, for the schoolhouse and apartments belonging to it were in 1732 ordered to be converted into eight lodgings for the widows of the Company's seamen¹. In Lysons' *Environs* occurs a note that the last schoolmaster was Sir Skeffington Hudson, Bart, who died in 1760.

We have lingered too long on the earlier (and least known) portion of the Hospital's career, and must therefore rest content with a very brief sketch of its later history. Upon the establishment of the Board of Control in 1784 the Company was called upon for details of its home expenditure, and the Secretary forwarded in reply (April 28, 1785) a number of papers, one of which dealt with the then condition of the "Poplar Fund". The Fund

¹ In Strype's edition (1720) of Stow's *Survey* it is stated that the school had twenty-four scholars, and that the Company provided the master with a house and £20 per annum. It is also mentioned that the Directors at their Christmas visit distributed each year £100 among the widows and orphans of sailors who had been in their service.



POLLACK HOSPITAL (1760)

THE COMPANY'S HOSPITAL AT POPLAR

was stated to be "supported by subscriptions of gentlemen on their being elected Directors, by some few other voluntary subscriptions, by a duty of sixpence a gallon upon arrack, 2s per ton upon ships taken into the service, 1½ per cent. poundage on the amount of the wages of the commanders, officers, and others employed on board them, exceedings of purserage, fines for the breach of charter-parties, and various other mulcts" The amount of the income was not given, but the expenditure was £3666 per annum, including £100 to the chaplain, £30 to Mrs Ridley, widow of his predecessor, and two pensions of £100 each to Sir George Colebrooke, Bart, and Mr Richard Bosanquet, two ex-Directors ¹

By 1802 the old tenements were in so bad a state that it was decided to rebuild them The new almshouses were erected in the form of a quadrangle, and they accommodated thirty-eight pensioners, who were to be either petty officers or seamen or their widows These were as before on the south side of the Chapel On the north side, where is now the Poplar Recreation Ground, a new group of twelve better-class houses was built for commanders or mates or their widows These were in 1808 increased to eighteen The pensions allowed varied from £4, 16s for sailors to £100 for commanders, with coals and an extra month's pension at Christmas (Lysons' *Environs*, 1811, Supplement, p 294)

Fifty years later, the doom of extinction fell upon the East India Company, and its property and liabilities were transferred to the Secretary of State for India in Council The Almshouses were maintained until 1866, and then the occupants were pensioned off and the buildings pulled down

¹ Both these gentlemen appear also in the "List of Pensioners exclusive of those on Poplar Fund," for £100 apiece

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The land was sold for £12,000 to the Poplar District Board of Works, who erected public offices on a small portion and made the rest into a recreation ground (*History of Poplar*, by Alfred Simmons, 1870) Thus ends the story of “Poplar Hospital.”

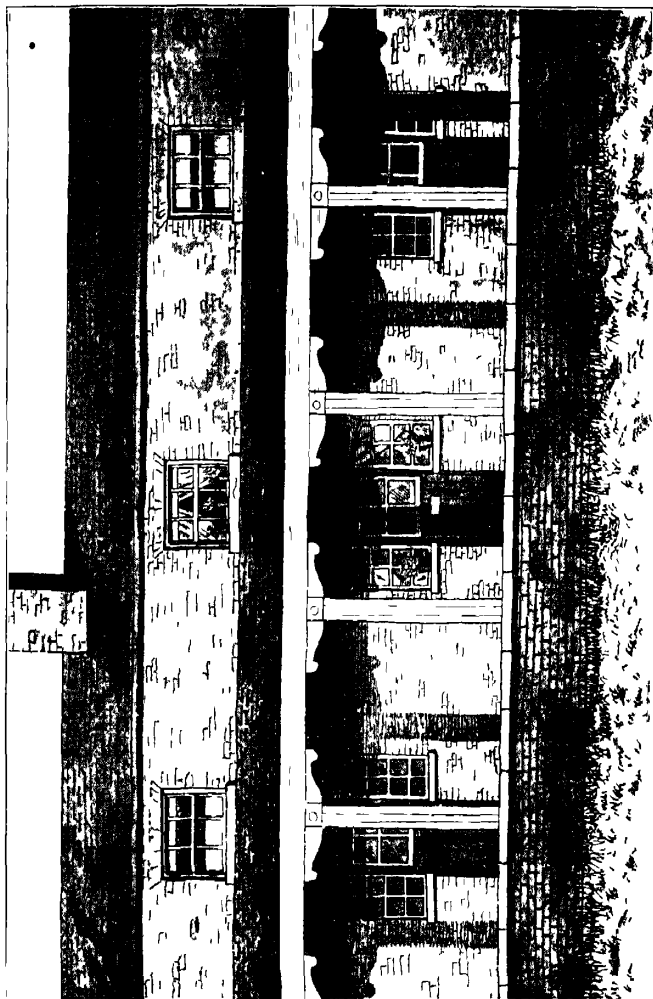


TABLE OF THE TABLET BUILDINGS

X

POPLAR CHAPEL

THE history of what was formerly called the East India Company's Chapel at Poplar—happily still standing, though much altered, both externally and internally—runs parallel with that of the Hospital, from which it took its rise. We have seen (p. 158) that from the earliest date the idea of erecting such a building in the grounds of the Hospital had been present in the minds of the "Committees," but they had sensibly concluded that it was of more importance to employ the money available in extending the charity than in providing a special erection for ecclesiastical purposes. As, however, the neighbourhood became more densely populated, largely with persons dependent in some way or other on the Company's trade, the claims for spiritual assistance grew more urgent. The parish church of Stepney was distant, and hard to reach in foul weather, especially for the old and infirm, and so a movement began for erecting a Chapel in the immediate neighbourhood of the Hospital which should provide for the needs alike of the Company's pensioners and of the people of Poplar in general.

On May 4, 1642, "The inhabitants of Poplar and Blackwall by petition this day to the Court desired that they would bee pleased to bestowe on them ground for a church

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and churchyard and a dwelling-house for a minister in that hamlett The Court seemed very inclineable to further soe good and pious a worke , yet they were very unwilling to doe it before they had acquainted the Gennerall Court herewith , to which end they were pleased to order their Beadle to summon a Generall Court against Friday morning next, and then they should receive the Courts answere And in the meane time ordred Mr Bowen to goe to the Companies Hospitall at Blackwall and veiwe the ground behinde the house, which is desired to bee laid out for the purpose aforesaid ” A General Court was accordingly held on May 8, when “ Mr Governour [Sir Henry Garway] acquainted the Court that the cause of their meeting together at this time is onely to give their consents to bestowe half an acre of ground on the backside of their Hospitall at Popler to build a church on, and for a churchyard for the inhabitants of Popler and Blackwall The worke of itselfe is soe pious as in respect of the reasonablenes and charitablenes thereof it will speake for itselfe and needes noe incouragement , besides, it cost the Companie nothing, for what it is endowed withall is out of the charity of those that have byn employed into the East Indies, who have willingly contributed towards the same upon their returne 2d. per pound out of their wages The Court was very willing to condescend to such a charitable worke, and to that end did intreate Sir John Gayre and Captain Styles to take the paines as to repaire to Blackwall to-morrowe and to sett out such a peice of ground as is desired , as also the Court was content to bestowe upon the said hamlett the 60 load of stones which are behinde the Hospitall, towards the foundation of the said church.”

Thus a site had been provided, as well as part of the building material , but money was wanted, and money,

POPLAR CHAPEL

it would seem, was hard to get. Probably the outbreak of the Civil War had something to do with the postponement of the scheme in troublous times, when no man's property is secure, purses are apt to remain tightly closed.

Still, some progress seems to have been made, for Lysons tells us (*Environs of London*, 1811, vol II p 703), on the authority of the Lambeth MSS, that the foundations of the Chapel had been laid by 1650, when a Committee appointed to inquire into the state of ecclesiastical benefices proposed the division of Stepney into four parishes. The proposal came to nothing, but it seems to have stimulated the movement for completing the building

On April 7, 1652, at a General Court, "Mr Governour [William Cokayne] declared to the Gennerallity that the inhabitants of Blackwall and Popler had the last Friday presented a petition to the Court of Committees, the which hee now comaunded to bee read, wherein they declared that by reason of the great distance from Stepny Church, that in could and wett weather most of the petitioneis can seldome come to heare, and in the summer tyme there is noe roome, soe that most of them are deprived of the meanes of grace for their precious soules They therefore humbly desired that the Company would bee pleased, seeing they have laid a good foundation for a chappell by their almes house at Popler, that they would lend their helpe and assistance to the building and perfecting of the same chappell The which petition being read, Mr. Governour further declared that when the Court of Committees had taken consideration of the request of the inhabitants, they held it to bee a pious and charitable worke, and they were of opinion (soe that it might bee confirmed and allowed by the Gennerallity) to contribute £200 towards the finishing of the said chappell out of the mony which

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lyes at interest for the maintenance of their Hospitall, there being above £2000 in banck at interest for that particular use, and the said Court of Committees were likewise of opinion that £100 of the said £200 should bee paid when the walls of the chappell are erected to the rooffe and the other £100 when the rooffe is laid Upon which relation of Mr Governours, Mr Deputy [William Methwold] was pleased to inferre that the busines may bee done with much facility without any prejudice or charge to the Company, for that the £2000 mentioned formerly by Mr Governour is mony long since gathered by 2d in the pound from marriners and seamen The Court hereupon seemed very willing to further soe good a worke as this [and] desired Mr Governour to putt it to the question whither this Court would bee pleased to confirme the opinion and resolution of the Court of Committees or not, and by erection of hands the Court unanimously confirmed the resolution and opinion of the Court of Committees, to give towards the building of the said chappell £200 in the manner proposed, but withall this Court ordered that there should bee a place on purpose reserved in the said chappell for the almesmen to sitt in constantly to heare Gods word preached ”

The erection of the building must have been pushed on with zeal, for in June, 1652, the first £100 was ordered to be paid to Mr John Tanner, the builder employed in the work In the following February, the Committees of the Second General Voyage voted £50 to the building fund, and further grants were made in September and November, 1656

These contributions went only part of the way towards providing the necessary funds, for the total cost is said to have exceeded £2000 Liberal gifts were made by Henry

POPLAR CHAPEL

Johnson, Gilbert Dethick, Edmund Steevens, Thomas Tomlins, and Maurice Thompson, a wealthy merchant and an intimate friend of the Protector "At the preaching of the first sermon" on the completion of the Chapel (1654), Mr Thompson is said to have given "an uncommon instance of his great humility and piety, in that he condescended to go into the clerk's desk and there named and set the first psalm that was sung in this chapel" (Strype's *Stow*, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 102)

The first chaplain is stated to have been Thomas Walton, nominated by William Greenhill, the Nonconformist Vicar of Stepney (Lysons, *loc. cit.*, referring to MSS. at Lambeth), but this seems to have been only a temporary arrangement, for at the beginning of 1656 certain inhabitants of Poplar besought the Company to take upon itself the patronage of the new Chapel. Nothing seems to have been done that year, but on the *Court Minutes* of January 7, 1657, we find the following entry "Upon reading the petition of the inhabitants of Poplar, wherein they desired the Companyes approbation and assistance in admitinge and settling such an honest, able, orthodox divine in the chappell, as their chaplaine, as should be presented by them, and that he might have the use of such part of the almes-house as is void, and Mr Marriott being the man pitched upon by them it was thought fitt hee should preach a sermon at this parish church [*i.e.* St Andrew Undershaft] on Sabboth day morning next, in the audience of soe many of this Court as please, to the end they may the better judge of his fittnes for the same And the inhabitants (for some reasons made knowne) delivered up the key of the chappell to remaine here untill a fitt tyme for the returne of it againe."

The trial sermon appears to have given complete satisfac-

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tion, and on the 14th of the same month, " It was ordered that Mr Thomas Marriott, Minister, hath leave to inhabite in a part of the almeshouse at Poplar, and have the use of the garden there, to preach and performe other religious duties in the chappell to the almespeople and such others as shall come to heare him, during the pleasure of the Company "

At a later meeting a special Committee, which had been appointed to make any arrangements that might be necessary, reported that they had allotted "the three ground roomes at the upper end of the yard on the right hand, and the three chambers over them, for the use of Mr Thomas Marriott, their chaplaine, and that hee should have use of the garden, not excludinge others The old chappell for a schoole, and the kitchin adjoyninge to it, with the chamber over it, for accommodation of the schoolemaister The great roome to remayne to the use and for the entertainment of any of the Company, when any occasion should require their repaire to Poplar, and it was directed to provide a table, carpett, and six Turkey chaires for the furnishing of the same They were also pleased to allott the ground to the chappell for a buriall place, to be from their garden wall to the chappell and as farre beyond the chappell, reserving a passage into the field behind the chappell of the same breadth that the passage is of at the entrance or gate which is on the west side, and the like passage from the almeshouse into the said field at the east end of the chappell "

Marriott was given a gratuity of £10 in December, 1658, and a year later one of £20 Thenceforward it became the practice to vote a gratuity of £20 yearly In January, 1674, a petition was then presented to the Court, asking them to make that a permanent contribution, with a view to the



POPLAR CHAPEL

district being constituted a separate parish. The Committees promised their assistance towards the realization of the latter plan, but referred the petitioners to the General Court for their other request. The result was that nothing further was done in the matter.

The plague in 1665 seems to have frightened Marriott into quitting his post without notice. The Rev John Peachie came forward to supply the vacancy, and on January 5, 1666, the inhabitants besought the Company to appoint him to be the regular chaplain. This was granted, and Peachie remained at Poplar until his death in 1669. He was succeeded by the Rev Samuel Peck, who was appointed on Lady Day, 1670.

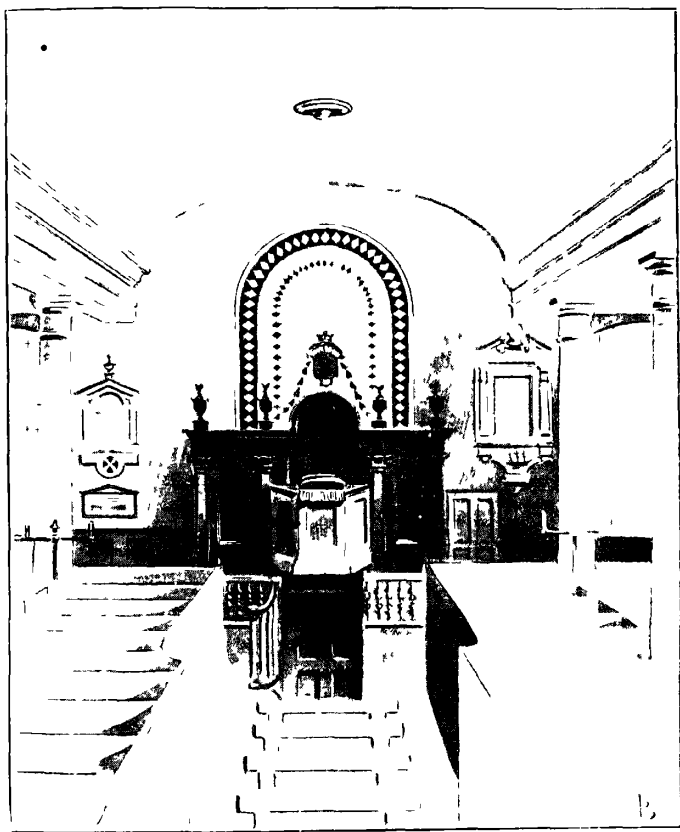
It is stated that neither the Chapel nor the burying-ground was ever consecrated. The question does not seem to have been raised until nearly the end of the year 1685, when certain of the inhabitants addressed a petition to the Bishop of London, asking that the building might be solemnly dedicated to public worship. His Lordship thereupon communicated with the Company and, as some settled maintenance for a minister was a necessary preliminary, a proposal was made to purchase, out of the funds of the Hospital, sufficient land to provide an income of £5 per annum, but for some reason not recorded the scheme was dropped.

On December 19, 1690, the Rev Joshua Woodward was appointed minister at Poplar on £20 per annum, with rooms in the Hospital and the use of the garden. On September 1, 1709, he addressed a letter to the Company, from which the following extract is taken.

“The present minister of Poplar is the fourth in succession that hath officiated in the said chappell, being chosen by the inhabitants of their hamlet, and by them presented

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to the Honourable Committee of the East India Company, and by them confirmed in the title to the chappell, with their usuall allowances Their chappell, which is very large, was for the most part uncoverd by the violent storm 1703, and the repairs amount to above one hundred pounds In order to discharge their great expence the hamblet petitiond the contribution of the Honourable Company, as had been usuall, they say, in such extraordinary cases , but having received no favourable answer to their petition, they have for above three years past appropriated the mony paid for burials in the chappell yard towards defraying the said expence, to the injury of the minister, who always had that perquisite before and never paid to the repairs of the chappell The floor and the glass of the chappell are also much out of repair at this time, to a great scandall , but the hamblet is indeed very poor, impoverishd very much by this long warr The chappell hath never been consecrated , of which the Lord Bishop of London hath very often spoken to me with great emotion, telling me once that the grief of it disturbed his rest in the night So that he wrote to the Honourable Committee about it some time since, desiring them to endow it, that it might be consecrated , declaring very solemnly that it shall be no prejudice to the Companys right, and offering to give it under his hand And he hath often asked me why the answer to his letter was so long delayd It is also further to be considerd that the Colledge of Braze Nose in Oxford hath lately purchased the perpetuall advowson of the vicaridge of Stepney, in which parish the hamblet of Poplar is , and the Fellows of that Colledge have stipulated among themselves, by an engrossed writing now in the hands of trustees in London, to procure an Act of Parliament for the dividing the parish of Stepney into four parishes, of which Poplar to be one



TOTTAL CHAUX - INTERIOR (1899)

POPLAR CHAPEL

So that this Honourable Company will assuredly loose their right, and the people of Poplar will always be provided with a minister by the next senior fellow of the Colledge continually, except the Company pleases to be before the Colledge in application to the Parliament to make a parish out of the hamblett of Poplar and Blackwall, or put it into the power of the hamblett or of some other to get such a parliamentary establishment, concerning which the hamblett humbly prays the Companys speedy determination, it being of great moment, in which a little delay may be of irreparable detriment to them ”

This appeal had no effect upon the Directors, who evidently were not disposed to pledge themselves to anything in the nature of an endowment Their attitude seems to have excited some resentment in the district , and when Woodward died, in the late summer of 1711, an attempt was made to assert a right to appoint a fresh minister without the previous approval of the Company On September 7, the Rev John Wight, Rector of Stepney, presented to the Court a paper signed by several of the inhabitants, intimating that they had chosen Dr John Landon to succeed Dr Woodward This disregard of the Company's privilege was met with a determined resistance, and the result was that the nomination was withdrawn , whereupon the Court proceeded to ballot for five candidates, Dr Landon among them He secured most votes and was therefore elected, to the satisfaction of all parties

The Act passed in 1710 by the pious efforts of Queen Anne for the erection of fifty additional churches in London and neighbourhood reopened the question almost immediately The Lords Commissioners sent a representative to inquire whether the Company would agree to the formation of a new parish of Poplar, with the Chapel for

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its ecclesiastical centre, but apparently the project again fell through, owing to the unwillingness of the Company to treat the salary it paid to the chaplain as a permanent endowment. Ten years later the question of the right of presentation came up afresh. A petition was presented urging the Court to repair and whitewash the building, but the Directors resolved not to do anything of the kind until the people of Poplar abandoned their claims. Thereupon the principal inhabitants signed a paper (August 17, 1721), admitting that "the right to the chappell and nomination of a minister" lay in the Company, and the necessary repairs were then put in hand.

In August, 1724, came a change of policy. A proposal had been made to the Board of Commissioners for Building Churches that Poplar and Blackwall should be incorporated in the new parish of Limehouse. Against this idea the Company protested to the Board, representing that such a procedure would not only be inconvenient to the people of Poplar but would also render the Company's Chapel useless. They added that they would concur with the inhabitants in praying that the Chapel should be converted into a parish church, but for the fact that Brazenose College claimed that, by virtue of a private Act (9 Anne, c. 16), the nomination of the first minister would fall to the College, and this would be injurious both to the Company and to their present chaplain. They therefore urged that no change be made until the next meeting of Parliament, when it was the intention of the Company to apply for relief in that respect. Should they fail in this, they would then be willing to part with their rights in the Chapel upon any reasonable terms. Subsequently (September 23) the Directors modified the last clause by determining to leave the fixing of these terms to the decision of the Com-

POPLAR CHAPEL

missioners Negotiations ensued with the Board and with the authorities of Brazenose College, and it was agreed that the Company should be allowed, in return for the surrender of their rights in the Chapel, to nominate the first minister of the new parish, the College presenting to the succeeding two vacancies, then the Company to the next one, and so forth in turn. A bill for the amendment of the 1710 Act was now before the House of Commons, and on March 24, 1725, the Company presented a petition that the said agreement should be confirmed by a clause in the bill. The latter, however, did not get beyond the Committee stage, and so the agreement came to nothing. Reference is made in the Company's records to further negotiations with the College authorities in January, 1727, but the result is not stated. In March, 1728, two of the Directors were requested to represent to the Commissioners that "in regard the Company have generously made a present of the Chappel of Poplar to the publick, they may reasonably hope the said Commissioners will make such provision for the incumbent out of the fund appropriated for the endowment of the new chuiches as may render his income in some measure answerable to the rest of the ministers of the intended new parishes", but here again the records are exasperatingly incomplete. Evidently, however, the whole scheme fell through. The building continued to be "the Company's Chapel," and the nomination of the Minister remained in their hands. Poplar did not become a separate parish until 1817, and then a special church (All Saints) was built for the needs of the new district.

Perhaps the most prominent of all the Poplar chaplains was Dr. Gloster Ridley, whose quaint Christian name was due to his having been born on the *Gloucester* East Indiaman

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in 1702 He was a poet, dramatist, and controversial writer, and in addition produced a biography of the famous Bishop Ridley, of whom he was a collateral descendant He succeeded Dr Landon on September 25, 1728 During his tenure of the chaplaincy he revived the charity school for Poplar and Limehouse, which had been discontinued for some years, and he also secured the carrying out of the charitable wishes of Sir Henry Johnson (died 1683),¹ whose remains, like Ridley's own, are lying in the churchyard of St Matthias His eldest son, the Rev James Ridley, born at Poplar in 1736, was the author of the once popular *Tales of the Genii*, modelled on *The Arabian Nights*

In Ridley's time the salary of the chaplain was raised to £50 Later (Michaelmas, 1776) it was increased to £100, and finally to £500, in addition to which the chaplain received something from pew rents and fees A new house for him (the present vicarage) was built by the Company in 1802

On the death of Dr Ridley (1774) the post was given to Dr John Wheeler, who held it until he became Prebendary of Westminster in 1803 He was succeeded by the Rev Samuel Hoole, son of John Hoole, the Company's Auditor, who is still faintly remembered as a friend of Dr Johnson and the translator of Tasso and Ariosto

Extensive repairs to the building were put in hand at the close of 1775, and on March 11 in the following year the Company ordered the chapel yard to be enlarged by taking in a piece (34 feet deep) from the adjoining field This enlargement was apparently required for burials In 1803 the Chapel was thoroughly renovated (probably the wooden turret was then erected) and Mr John Perry

¹ *London Riverside Churches*, by A E Daniell (1897), and *Dictionary of National Biography*, s v



THE COMPANY — ARMS — TOLL — CHARGE

POPLAR CHAPEL

presented an organ. Twenty years later, on the completion of the new Parish church, Hoole was made the first Rector of Poplar, and the Rev Henry Higginson became chaplain. He died in 1848, and during the eighteen years that remained there were three incumbents (Messrs Hamilton, Boswell, and Jay). In 1866—eight years after the transfer of the Company's property to the Crown—it was decided to close the almshouses, and to transfer the Chapel to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who thereupon constituted a new parish of St Matthias, the patronage being vested in the Bishop of London. The exterior of the building was cased in stone and the interior modernized; while a further change was made in 1875 by the addition of a chancel. The church thereby lost much of its individuality, but it still preserves sufficient of the old features to make it exceedingly interesting. The chief relic of the old times is the boldly carved boss in the centre of the ceiling of the nave, containing the arms of the old East India Company,¹ painted in their proper colours. These were in all probability placed there at the time of the erection of the Chapel. The round columns that divide the nave from the aisles are of oak, and the local tradition (obviously false) was that they were masts taken out of the vessels of the Spanish Armada. Then there are a number of interesting monuments. On the south wall is one to Robert Ainsworth, the author of a Latin dictionary familiar to several generations of schoolboys. Near the organ an inscription records the burial of Susannah Hoole, "widow

¹ By a curious blunder the carver has reversed the positions of the lions and the fleurs-de-lis. The same mistake occurs on the stone bearing the Company's arms which now stands in the Poplar Free Library. If my conjecture (p. 141) is right that this stone is the one which the Company placed over the entrance to Blackwall Yard, it may be inferred that the arms in the Chapel were copied from that representation of them.

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of John Hoole, Esq., Auditor of the East India Company's Accounts and known in the literary circle as the translator of Tasso and Ariosto " There is an imposing monument to Philip Worth, a captain in the Company's service, who died in 1743 , and a bas-relief ¹ by Flaxman to the memory of George Steevens, the well-known Shakespearean commentator, whose father was commander of an East Indiaman and afterwards a Director

Among the tombs in the churchyard the most prominent is that of Captain Samuel Jones, of the Royal Navy. Another one, to the memory of William Curtis, a commander in the Company's service, who died in 1669, is said to have borne the following quaint doggerel

" William Curtis, of this parish,
gentleman, warns you to repentance

Who in this life fifty years did stand
And to East India some time did bear command,
Who in his life-time kept not fast his door,
And afterwards provided for the poor
Sixty pounds per annum for ever "

With the mention of this worthy commander, whose name occurs frequently in the Company's records, we may fitly close our rambling sketch

¹ Reproduced in Lysons' *Environs*

XI

AN OLD MARINE INSURANCE POLICY

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD, in his report (1878) on the miscellaneous records of the India Office, then unbound, described one bundle among the series known as the "Damaged Papers" as containing "fragments of miscellaneous documents on trade policies of insurance, customs' lists, and all sorts of odds and ends of correspondence", and he noted that among them "the packet marked 'Policies and Insurance' contains *inter alia* the following entries under date February 16, 1656-57, insurance of goods shipped on the *Three Brothers*, homeward bound from Macassar, Bantam, etc." This passage attracted no attention at the time, nor even when, in 1891, the report was reprinted for general circulation, and meanwhile the documents themselves had been reclassified and bound. In 1920, however, Mr Edward R. Hardy of New York, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Insurance Institute of America, came across the report and, noticing the reference to insurance policies, wrote to the India Office, inquiring whether these could be traced. Search was accordingly made, with the result that the policy referred to was found in a volume of the Java section of the Factory Records. Mr Hardy was, at his request, supplied with photographs of the document, and upon his making the discovery known, considerable interest

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was manifested by insurance circles in New York, Liverpool, and London. As a result, the editor of *Lloyd's List* published (July 2, 1921) a special supplement giving a facsimile of the document, accompanied by an article declaring it to be the earliest marine insurance policy known to be in existence. This contention, however, cannot be sustained, for Mr R G Marsden, in his *Select Pleas in the Court of Admiralty*, vol 11 (1897), pp lxviii. 45-54, gives several examples of sixteenth century policies preserved at the Public Record Office, dating as far back as 1547 and 1548¹. Still, the policy now in the India Office, if it cannot claim to be the earliest extant, is of considerable antiquity and is, moreover, of great interest as showing the form used in England about the middle of the seventeenth century.

The practice of marine insurance is said to date from at least the beginning of the fourteenth century, and to have been introduced into England from Italy by way of the Netherlands. Although, as we have seen, it was certainly in use in the middle of the sixteenth century, the practice was by no means general, and we find no hint of its employment by the East India Company during the first thirty years of the existence of that body. The earliest instance that has been discovered was in the season of 1629-30, when the cargoes of four ships bound for the East Indies were insured for £60,000, outwards and homewards, and Mr George Prior, of the Assurance Office (where all such policies had to be registered), was paid £20 for drawing up the necessary documents (*Court Minutes*, January 22, 1634). A little later (November, 1636), when the finances of the Third Joint Stock were in a parlous

¹ There is also a document of 1613 among the Tanner MSS in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, but this, according to the article in *Lloyd's List*, contains no names of insurers or amounts insured, and is "presumably a transcript of a portion of an original policy."

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condition, it was resolved to make out a policy, insuring that £100,000 (over and above charges) should be returned from the East within two years. This was also drawn by Prior, who was paid £20 as before. Early in 1640 a similar course was taken, an insurance for the same figure being effected, and a year later the process was repeated. In the autumn of 1640 a policy of £20,000 was obtained upon the cargo of the *Jewel*, expected from Bantam, in this case the premium was 6 per cent. In July, 1641, another was ordered to be drawn up to cover any debt resulting from a proposed dividend, while in October, 1642, we find the Company insuring some pepper which was being sent to Italy. Two policies were made out in the following spring, one insuring goods sent to Surat, the other a general one on goods to be returned from the East over a period of eighteen months. In the latter case the premium was fixed at 2½ per cent and in the former at 3½. During the next few years, the seas being unsafe owing to the Civil War, we find numerous insurances effected upon goods to and from Italy (at varying rates), also some on cargoes sent to or expected from Bantam or Surat (at 5 per cent). All these policies were drawn by Prior, and how large the amount of business was is shown by the fact that in 1644 he was paid for ten policies, in 1645 for twelve (amounting to £160,000), in 1647 for two (£53,000), in 1648 for seven (£189,000), in 1650 for five, and in 1652 for nine. His fees for all these came to £125. In March, 1648, an attempt was made to insure the cargoes of the homeward bound ships for £100,000, at 5 per cent, only £90,000 was underwritten, but with this the Company seems to have been content. In January, 1650, the ladings of two ships bound for Madras were insured at 30s per cent for the first month, and 20s for each succeeding month.

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until notice of cessation should be given. In the case of cargoes from Surat and Bantam, on which policies were issued in the following June, 6 per cent was the rate allowed, and the same premium was given in April, 1651. Then came the war with Holland (1652-54). An attempt made in June, 1652 (when hostilities were about to commence), to insure five homeward-bound cargoes for £40,000 at 5 per cent failed, only £15,000 being underwritten, and on February 21, 1653, the Court of Committees decided to make no insurance in future, but to leave each shareholder to insure his own proportion privately, if he saw fit to do so.

One interesting feature of this chapter in the Company's history is that the insurance policies were to a large extent underwritten by its own members. At that time underwriting was not confined to a particular group of merchants, and any one whose credit was sound might indulge in the practice as a sideline to his regular business. We find repeated instances of the opportunity of underwriting being offered to the members of the Company—generally with a reservation that no one should subscribe for more than a fixed sum—before recourse was had to outsiders. In some cases the underwriting had to be done at the East India House, in all the amount offered was submitted to the Committees for approval before it was accepted. In this practice there was an obvious advantage for the Company, since the underwriter's stock could be held as security for due payment in the event of loss, while the members doubtless desired to have at least an opportunity of subscribing, in order to obtain the premium and thus make a double profit in the event of all going well. One shareholder, whose offer had been declined, complained bitterly of the action of the Committees; but possibly his grievance was chiefly due to the slur thus cast

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upon his ability to make good his subscription if called upon.

We now proceed to transcribe this interesting document. The central portion, which is in the hand of a scrivener, was evidently common form, and indeed it closely resembles the wording of a present-day policy. This has been distinguished by being printed in roman type. The remainder, which was filled in for the special purpose of the insurance, is printed in italics. The document is much stained and in places torn, causing gaps which have been indicated by square brackets. Any words placed within those brackets are, of course, conjectural only.

*[IN TH]E NAME OF GOD, AMEN, Samuell Sambro[oke and
Michaell Dunkine, merc]hants, doe make assurance and cause
themselve[s] [] lost or not lost, Macassar, Bantam,
and any ports [] London, upon any kind of goods
and merchandizes laden or to be [laden aboard the ship] called
the Three Brothers of London, 250 tuns or thereabouts, [whereof
is commander] in this voyage Bence Parker, or whosoever elce
shall goe for master [] whatsoever other name or
names the same shipp or the master [] is called
The said goods and merchandizes, for soe much as con[cerns
the said merchants, to] be rated and valued at the summe of
fower hundred pounds [of lawful money] to be given for the
same, beginning the adventure upon the sa[id goods upon the]
lading thereof aboard the said shipp at Macassar, Bantam,
and [any other port] in the East Indyees, and soe shall continue
and endure untill the [said shipp, with its] goods and mer-
chandizes, shall be arrived at London and the sa[id goods []
there [] and laid on land in good safety. And it
shall and may be lawful to and f[or the ship] in this voyage to
proceed and saile to any ports and places betweene the [East*

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Indyes and] London, as well beyond the Cape of Good Hope as on this side, and there to stop [], without prejudice to this assurance

Touching the adventures and perills which wee, the assurers, are contented to bear and doe take upon us in this voiage, are of the seas, men of warr, fire, enemies, pirates, rovers, theeves, jettezons, letters of marte and counter-marte, surprizalls and takeing at sea, arrests, restraint[s] and detainments of all Kings, Princes, and people of what nation, condition, or quality soever, barratry of the master and marriners, and of all other perills, losses, and misfortunes [that] have or shall come to the hurte, detriment, or damage of the said *goods and merchandizes*, or any parte thereof And that in case of any misfortunes, it shalbee lawful to the assureds, *their* factors, servants, and assignes to sue, labour, and travell for, in and aboute the defence, savegaurd, and recovery of the said *goods and merchan[dizes]* or any parte thereof, without prejudice to this assurance, to the cha[rge and cost] whereof wee, the assurers, will contribute, each one according to the rate and [amount] of his summe herein assured This wryteing and assurance being made and reg[istered] according to order and appointment, shallbee of as much force and effect as the sur[est] pollicy or wryteing of assurance heretofore made in Lumbard Street or now within the Royall Exchange And soe wee, the assurers, are contented and doe hereby promis[e] and binde ourselves, each one for his own parte, our heires, executors, and goods to the assureds, *their* executors, administrators, and assignes, for the true performance of the premisses, confessing ourselves paid the consideration due unto us for [this] assurance by *the said Mr Michaell Dunkine* after the rate of *five poundes* per cent *In witnes whereof*

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wee, the assurers, have subscribed [our] names and summes assured Geoven (i.e. given) in th'Office of Assurance in London the sixte[enth] of February, 1656 (i.e. 1657)

£100. I, John Niclaes, am content with this assurance [which] God [preserve] for one hundred poundes, this 18 Februaire[y], [1656]

£100 I, Thomas Rowse, am content with this assurance [which God preserve] for one hundred poundes, this 19th February, 1656

£100 I, Francis Fowke, am content with this assurance, [which God preserve,] for one hundred pounds, this 19th Feb, 1656

£100 I, John Bligh, am content with this assurance, [which God preserve,] for one hundred pounds, 1[]

Registered and examined the 24th Feb [1656]

The above occupies the whole of the front page of the policy, and the name of the person who registered it appears to have been torn or cut away. On the back of the document are the following receipts for the payment of the premiums, which, it will be noted, were not paid until after the policy had been voided by the safe arrival of the vessel, notwithstanding the statement in the document itself that the "consideration" had been received at the date of signature.

[Received] the 31 July, 1657, the sum of five pound in full [] which sum is for the use of my master, [John] Bligh Received per me, John Giffard

[Received] this 4th of August, 1657, the some of five [pounds in] full for one hundred pounds assured upon this pollicy, I say, received for the use of my master, John Niclaes. £5 per John Godsalue

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*Received the 2 September, 1657, the summe of five pounds,
I say, received for the use of my master, Thomas Rouse. £5.
per Nicholas Hern .*

*Received the 13th October, 1657, the summe of five pounds
for use of my master, Francis Fowke £5.
per Robert Leigh.*

Finally, on the back of the double sheet is the following endorsement “16 February, 1656 Samuell Sambrooke and Michaell Dunkine, from Macassar, Bantam, etc , in the East Indyes, to London upon goods in the Three Brothers, of London, 250 tons, master Bence Parker, valued at £400 sterling , to touch betweene. At [blank] per cent for the whole voyage.
per Michaell Dunkine.”

In another hand is added below “*Received for charges, xiijs, per Wm Mawdesley,*” this being perhaps the payment for drawing up the policy

We have already seen that, four years before this policy was drawn up, the Company had dropped the practice of insuring its goods , and indeed an examination of the document itself shows that it was not taken out by or on behalf of the Company Its preservation amongst the records of that body is therefore due to accident, not design. At the time (December, 1654) when the *Three Brothers* was chartered by the Committees for a voyage to the East, the position of the Company was exceedingly precarious Heavy losses had rendered its financial position serious , and now that its charter had lost all validity (for no one regarded a royal grant of that character as binding the Commonwealth government), the eastern trade was virtually open to all who chose to despatch ships to those parts It was true that application had been made to the Protector to grant a fresh exclusive charter ; but hitherto

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all efforts to obtain this boon had remained fruitless. In these circumstances the policy of the Committees was mainly directed to drawing home the stock of goods accumulated in the East Indies, and they forbore to send out fresh capital until the position should become clearer. The object, therefore, of despatching the *Three Brothers* was chiefly to bring back such goods as were awaiting shipment, and she took out no merchandize, but merely a small stock of money to help in securing a full cargo. Two merchants, William Curtis and John Chambers, were placed in charge as supercargoes, and their instructions were to go first to the Coromandel Coast and there procure a lading for Macassar, the proceeds of the cargo were to be exchanged at that port for cloves and other suitable goods, and the ship was then to return to England. Instructions were at the same time sent out to the Company's servants on the Coast to dissolve all factories except those at Madras and Masulipatam, to sell off everything available, and to invest the proceeds in goods which were to form part of the cargo of the *Three Brothers* for Macassar.

Considerable latitude was at that time allowed to (or at least assumed by) the Company's servants in the matter of private trade, and the fact that the vessel was going out almost empty naturally induced some of them to put goods of their own on board of her, entrusting the disposal of them, presumably, to the supercargoes. Thus it came about that Samuel Sambrooke, who held the post of Keeper of the Calico Warehouse (with the additional duty of drafting the Company's letters to its servants in the East), and Michael Dunkin, the Cashier-General, embarked in partnership a private venture which they apparently estimated would yield a return of £400, and it was in respect of this speculation that the present policy was taken out. This

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was not done immediately, but in February, 1657, when the vessel was overdue, but was supposed to be still on her homeward voyage. The insurance applied, therefore, only to the return cargo. As a matter of fact, the *Three Brothers* reached Plymouth towards the end of May, 1657, and so the policy was only in force for about four months.

The course of the voyage was as follows. After considerable delay, due to the discovery of a leak, the ship left the English Channel late in March, 1655, and reached Madras in the middle of September. From thence she proceeded to Masulipatam and back, and then, having collected at the two ports, from the effects available and by the use of the money brought out, a sufficient cargo of piece-goods, etc., she started at the end of the year for Bantam, where she arrived on February 7, 1656. Leaving part of her lading there for sale, she went on to Macassar, which was reached on March 23. At that place the remainder of the cargo was sold, but, goods being scarce and trade bad, the supercargoes were forced to bring away the proceeds in gold and a parcel of inferior tortoise-shells. Returning with this lading to Bantam on June 23, they there took in a further stock resulting from the sale of the Coromandel goods left for that purpose. A dispute then occurred with the Agent, Frederick Skinner, over the goods brought from Macassar. These were particularly suitable for disposal on the Coromandel Coast, and Skinner insisted that they ought to be sent thither in the *Marigold*, which was about to proceed to Madras, while the *Three Brothers* should go home direct, as intended by the Company. Curtis and Chambers, however, suspected that Skinner's anxiety to have the goods disposed of in this manner arose from interested motives, and moreover, the freight demanded by the captain of the *Marigold* (an inter-

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loper) appeared to be excessive. They therefore declared, much to Skinner's annoyance, that they would themselves carry them to the Coast for disposal, on their way home. The exasperated Agent tried the expedient of sending an order to the captain to proceed direct to London, but this proved of no effect, for he declined to take instructions from any one but the supercargoes. Accordingly the *Three Brothers* returned to Masulipatam and Madras, arriving at the latter place on August 22, 1656. She sailed again on November 22 and, as already stated, reached England six months later.

The policy having thus expired, the only reason that can be suggested for its longer preservation was that it bore the receipts for the aforesaid premiums. Probably Dunkin, who had managed the whole transaction, put it away among his papers in the Company's treasury and forgot all about it. Evidently he was in the habit of keeping such documents at the East India House, for in the *Court Minutes* of May 16, 1673, there is a significant order that he is to remove all private moneys and papers from the treasury, and that for the future no cash is to be paid or received there except on account of the Company. By this time Dunkin's connexion with his employers was loosening. Already Robert Hubbold had been appointed (September 18, 1672) Cashier-General (at £150 per annum), and Dunkin had been made Supervisor of the Company's Cash instead (also at £150). At the next election of officers (April 20, 1673) his name appears in the same capacity, but on August 12 following it was reported to the Court that he owed the Company a considerable sum of money, and it was thereupon resolved to send Sambrooke to him at his house at Plaistow to demand either immediate payment or at least bonds for the due discharge of the

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debt On March 16, 1674, Hubbold resigned, and Humphrey Edwin was then made Cashier-General at £300 a year, while at the next election of officers (April 29) Dunkin's name was not submitted, though the *Minutes* fail to record whether he had died or whether he had simply been discarded. Apparently he had not complied with the orders to remove his private papers (or else these had been impounded, on the discovery of his indebtedness). So the policy remained at the East India House, and somehow it escaped the destruction that was the fate of many much more important documents

XII

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ON the walls of the principal rooms of the India Office at Westminster hang a goodly number of pictures, transferred thither, for the most part, from Leadenhall Street, when the doom of dissolution fell upon the Honourable East India Company. Some of these depict historical scenes, such as the battle of Kirki, the naval engagement off Pulo Aor, and the grant of the *diwan* of Bengal to Lord Clive on behalf of the Company. Others again are delineations of Indian towns and temples or of the principal settlements of the Company. But the majority are portraits. In the Council Room, from behind the seat of the Secretary of State, Warren Hastings watches with a quiet smile the deliberations of the Council of India. On the opposite wall are seen Sir Eyre Coote, his able but troublesome subordinate, and Cornwallis, his aristocratic successor, while smaller portraits commemorate the Marquess Wellesley and General Stringer Lawrence. In other rooms we find the likenesses of various Asiatic notabilities, as well as of the Duke of Wellington, Napoleon Bonaparte, and a number of minor celebrities.

Amongst these men of rank and station—these generals and administrators whose names are household words—looks out a figure which, by its very contrast, at once arouses

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curiosity It is that of a man, evidently of the lower classes, dressed in a coarse grey coat, blue sleeved waistcoat, red neckcloth, and corduroy breeches, his blue and white shirt is secured at the wrists by metal studs, while under his arm he carries his beaver and walking-stick His black hair is closely cropped over a broad forehead, and from under well-marked eyebrows dark eyes look out with a keen and vigilant expression His right hand holds a letter, the superscription of which appears to run "To the Captain of [] or any other to whose hands there may come these "

A label affixed to the frame informs us that the portrait is that of "John Dean, of the East India Company's ship *Sussex*, wrecked 1738 " But who was he, and why this lasting memorial of him in such distinguished company ? The answer to these questions is supplied by Dean's own narrative (preserved in MS in the India Office Library), and by various entries in contemporary records It is an interesting story, which may be summarized thus On March 9, 1738, the ship *Sussex*, homeward bound from Canton with a cargo composed mainly of china, found itself, in company with the *Winchester*, a little to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope That evening they met with a hard gale of wind, which so sorely buffeted the former vessel that by midnight both the main and the mizen masts had been cut away and ten feet of water had been reported in the well Next day, however, the weather moderated, the water was pumped down to a manageable quantity, and a new foresail was bent, which enabled the ship to keep company with her consort. The crew doubtless expected that an effort would be made to repair damages, and either continue the voyage or else seek the shelter of some harbour, but their officers had

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come to a different conclusion. The captain, Francis Gostlin, called the sailors together and told them that it had been determined to abandon the ship and go on board the *Winchester*, with such effects as they could save. This decision by no means met with general approval, for "John Dean, with about thirty more, told the captain that they would stand by the ship at all hazards, to carry her safe to some port, for it was a shame to leave such a ship." Their arguments, however, made no impression upon the officers, and on March 11 the work of transference began, with the help of the boats of the *Winchester*. The captain and supercargoes, as Dean grimly notes, were the first to leave the ship; the majority of the crew (including many who had in the first instance promised to stay) soon followed them, and at last only sixteen men (all ordinary seamen) were left on the doomed vessel. And these had the further aggravation to see that not only were no pains taken to assist them, and thus give them a chance of saving their own lives and their masters' ship, but that on the contrary the deserters made no secret of their hope that the gallant enterprise would fail, and did everything in their power to hasten the catastrophe. Before leaving, the captain committed the dastardly outrage of stoving in the long-boat; the chief mate, to whom they appealed to give them their longitude, refused to do so, the departing sailors plundered right and left, and were joined in this by the crews of the *Winchester's* boats, and finally some men started to cut down the foresail with a view to carrying it off. This was more than flesh and blood could stand, so John Dean and two more "did go up the foreshrouds with sponge-staves and threatned to knock them all off the yard"; whereupon they prudently desisted.

It must have been with some sinking of the heart that

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the sixteen brave men saw the *Winchester* bear away, and found themselves left tossing on the waters in a ship heavily laden and almost totally disabled. However, they at once set to work to organize themselves and to do what they could to repair damages. James Holland and Andrew White took command, and it was agreed to run for Madagascar as the nearest available shelter. Two guns were hove from the starboard side to ease the ship and cure her of her list, an additional sail was bent on the remaining mast, and soon the *Sussex* was speeding along at a fair rate. Four days after the *Winchester* had left them, they sighted Madagascar, and three days later they anchored in St Augustine's Bay (on the south-west side of the island, in latitude $23^{\circ} 28' S$). A week was spent in putting the vessel to rights, and then communication was opened up with the natives. The "captain" went up to the "King of Barbar"¹ at Tullear, and was affably received. Two days after his return, the monarch made his appearance on board, bringing with him a Frenchman and a Portuguese, who were anxious to return to Christendom. The King, who had prudently been told that the crew numbered thirty, soon noticed the discrepancy, but in answer to his inquiries he was informed that the rest were down below sick. Part of the china on board was bartered for provisions, and six slaves (who were set to work during the day, and chained up at night) were purchased for three barrels of gunpowder. Three weeks thus passed. The ship had been got into a fairly serviceable state, and, as the natives were beginning to discover the smallness of the crew and were growing proportionately bold and trouble-

¹ Evidently the "King Baubau" of the letter of 1759 quoted in Oliver's edition of Robert Drury's journal (p. 14). The town of Tullear (or Toha) is about twenty miles north of the St Augustine River.

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some, it was resolved to make for Mozambique. A letter, detailing their plans, was left in the hands of the King, to be given to the first European ship that might call; and then, after turning ashore the Portuguese—"he often having quarrells with the Frenchman"—they trusted themselves once more to the deep.

For a time the weather favoured them and all went well. But on the second day "in the evening it was overcast, and about ten o'clock that night the ship unfortunately struck, and lost her rudder the second stroke. So she stuck fast. Finding the ship fast aground, and seeing no possibility of saving her, they cleared the long-boat, in order to hoist her out, but she, being stove before, wanted repair, and, having but few hands and the sea breaking much, could not venture. So they then hoisted the pinnace off the booms and left her hang all night in the takles alongside. They then got the Waggoner,¹ and found they was on the Bassas de India"—that fatal shoal which had been the dread of voyagers ever since the Portuguese first ventured into these waters. A few necessaries were hastily got together, and at six next morning nine of the crew (the rest preferring to take their chances with the vessel) got into the pinnace and began to lower her, but at the critical moment the after-tackle refused to part and she was left hanging at the mercy of the waves, until the forepart broke away. Dean himself got his left hand jammed between the boat and the ship, with the result that he lost permanently the use of the middle finger. One man clambered back into the ship, the rest were washed out of the pinnace, and three of them were drowned. The remaining five (Dean amongst them)

¹ Sailing directions or charts, so called from the nautical compilations of Lucas Wagenaer, of Amsterdam

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after some time found themselves swept into shallow water, and presently their feet touched bottom. A little later the wreck of the pinnacle came drifting by, and they swam out and got upon it, "altho John Dean, before this his misfortune, could never swim." A few boards that were floating near were caught and lashed across their wooden perch, while a passing bottle was also secured, which proved to be half full of arrack. "About noon they saw the ship part, and at night they drove into shallow water," and landed on what seems to have been a barren, sandy islet. With the usual handiness of sailors they secured some further fragments of the wreck and were thus able to patch a new stern on to the damaged pinnacle. A piece of pork was found, together with a butt partly full of fresh water. Thus equipped, they launched their boat and shaped their course for the firm land. Seventeen days passed, during which they suffered hardships of which Dean says little. At last the welcome land appeared in sight, and with thankful hearts they beached their boat and stood once more on solid earth.

Into their adventures in Madagascar we cannot enter at any length. They seem to have wandered from place to place, making gradually southwards, in hopes to reach again St Augustine's Bay. Many hardships were endured owing to the scarcity of food, and once the party nearly perished from thirst. Their clothing was worn to rags, their feet blistered by the rough walking, and they were in a pitiable condition when at last they found a friend in a compassionate chief, who gave them food and shelter, and ordered his wives to tend them. Holland and Wicks had long been suffering from fever, and first the one and then the other died. Eadnall and Dean (the two survivors, for the Frenchman, who had escaped with them, had

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shifted for himself and died a little later at Mahabo) remained, for five months or so, prostrated by sickness, with which the rude skill of their native friends could not cope. Suddenly came tidings that some European vessels had reached Youngowl¹, and the two exiles resolved to struggle down to that place. The effort proved too much for Eadnell, who died upon the road. Dean succeeded in reaching Mahabo, the residence of the "King of Rambour," in whose district Youngowl was situated. This chief's main diversion, we learn, was "making of small clay bulls and then hitting them together"—a sport in which the Englishman was graciously permitted to assist. Leave to proceed to Youngowl, however, he could not obtain, and once, when he attempted to reach that place without permission, he was pursued and brought back. After considerable delay, matters took a more favourable turn. Dean had managed to secure an interview with the officers of one of the ships (a French vessel), when they came up to Mahabo to arrange terms for trade, and although they did not care at that time to espouse his cause, yet a hint given later, that the French captain took it ill that a European should be detained against his will, induced the King to say that Dean (who was fortunately present) could go when he chose. After hasty farewells to his Malagasy friends, he at once set out for Youngowl. Arriving there, he found to his great joy that an English ship was in the road—the East Indiaman *Prince William*, bound for Bombay. He was still, however, under some restraint from the natives, and the French, thinking that they would be required to ransom him, refused to interest themselves in his release. Dean managed at last to slip away from his

¹ A port at the mouth of the river Youle (now known as the Manarivo) Mahabo was about thirty miles to the north-east of it

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custodians and reach the French factory, where he found the captain of the English ship, Thomas Langworth, who had already sent in search for him. The captain offered to arrange for Dean to stay on shore with him until the vessel departed, but the exile was haunted by the fear that the natives would contrive to "carry him again up into the country, if they could privately hustle him away," and Langworth good-humouredly allowed him to go at once on board the *Prince William*. This, as we learn from the ship's log, was on July 19, 1739.

The vessel reached Bombay on December 2. Dean was put on shore, and duly reported himself to the Governor. Three of the members of the Council were told off to examine him, with the result that on the 11th they reported that "they could find nothing more materiall than what was contained in a narrative drawn out on board the *Prince William*, which they have accordingly sworn him to", and this document (which is the one from which we have been quoting) was thereupon ordered to be transmitted to the Company (Bombay Public Proceedings). It was evidently deemed desirable that Dean should proceed to England as soon as possible, and so a passage was found for him in the *Haeslingfield*, which sailed on January 21, 1740. The voyage proved, however, a very protracted one, and Dean's narrative, which had been sent home by another channel, arrived long before he did.

We must now look back to the beginning of our story and follow the *Winchester*, which was carrying home the officers and men of the deserted *Sussex*. St Helena was reached on April 18, 1738, and there part of the crew of the *Sussex* was landed to await a later ship. On June 22 following, a letter from the supercargoes, written at St Helena, gave the Directors the first intimation of the

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abandonment of the vessel On July 5 Captain Gostlin and the supercargoes presented themselves "to pay their respects to the Court," and were sharply questioned as to their reasons for quitting the ship Evidently their replies were not considered satisfactory, for on July 12 and August 16 other persons were interrogated On August 18 the Court resolved that neither the captains, officers nor seamen of the *Winchester* and *Sussex* should be again employed by the Company, except upon a special report from the Committee of Shipping that the applicant had done his duty upon the occasion of quitting the latter vessel, and seven months later both of the captains were excluded permanently from the Company's service

Meanwhile nothing had been heard regarding the fate of the abandoned vessel News travelled slowly in those days, even in ordinary circumstances, and it was not until October, 1739, that any information came to hand On the 17th of that month a letter from a Mr Harrison was read to the Directors, stating that he had heard that "the *Sussex*, with a few men on board, was run ashore upon the head of Madagascar, about latitude 25, and a great deal of the china saved" A week later a letter from Lisbon was communicated to the Court, giving substantially the same account The Bombay Government must of course have sent to England authentic intelligence soon after Dean's arrival in December, 1739, but few letters of this period are to be found among the India Office records, and we can only say that a detailed account had reached the Directors by September 17, 1740 On that day Dean's "narrative and examination, dated at Bombay, December 5, 1739" was read to the assembled Court.¹ The effect was

¹ The interest taken in the matter is shown by the fact that the narrative was at once printed in two sixpenny pamphlets One, entitled *A Genuine*

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seen in an order made two days later that a bill should be filed in Chancery against the captain of the *Sussex*. On November 28 it was resolved that the *Onslow* should be sent to Madagascar to search the Bassas da India for the remains of the wreck, and to procure, if possible, any letter left with the "King of Babar." The intention was evidently to procure confirmation of Dean's assertions.

By the end of April, 1741, news had arrived that the *Haeslingfield*, in which Dean was returning, had reached the Cape of Good Hope in the previous December, and a letter was sent by the Directors to the Admiralty asking that he should be protected from impressment,¹ as his evidence was of great importance to the Company, "and his welfare and personal appearance before them they have greatly at heart." At last, on September 2, 1741, as recorded in the *Court Minutes*, "Mr John Deane, the only survivor of the sixteen brave men who remained in the ship *Sussex* after the captain, officers, etc, had quitted her, being come home on the ship *Haeslingfield*, now presented himself to the Court, and the Chairman welcomed him on his safe arrival in England. The said Deane then deliver'd in a letter, dated the 11th April [], signed by Mr. James Hollon (who took upon him the command of said ship after Capt Gostlin had quitted her), which was left with the King of Barbar, and on the said Mr Deane's return to Madagascar in the *Haeslingfield* he procured back from the said King. The Court then asked some questions relating to the *Sussex's* procedure to Madagascar, their usage

Account of the Ship S——x, was issued by T. Cooper, the other, *A True and Genuine Narrative*, was published by C. Corbett. Copies of both are in the British Museum.

¹ It was war-time, and the Company's sailors were often taken from their homecoming ships to supply the needs of the Royal Navy.

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there, and the unhappy loss of the ship afterwards, to all which he gave satisfactory answers, and then withdrew”

The action brought by the Company against Capt Gostlin was tried at the Guildhall, before Lord Chief Justice Lee, on November 1, 1742, Dean being doubtless a principal witness. The proceedings lasted all day and until five the next morning, when the jury returned a verdict against Gostlin, awarding damages amounting to £30,202. The captain's lawyers, however, raised technical objections, with the result that on May 13, 1743, the Court of King's Bench set aside the verdict and ordered a fresh trial. This took place on July 12 following, and resulted in another victory for the Company, with damages of £25,000 against Gostlin¹. Whether any money was ever recovered from him has not been ascertained, but it seems more probable that, the sum (including legal expenses) being so enormous, the only result was to make the captain bankrupt. The Company, of course, had gained its end in punishing him, as a warning to other commanders.

It now remained for the Directors to reward the brave sailor for his devotion to duty, and this they did with their wonted generosity. On November 16, 1743, it was resolved “that a pension of one hundred pounds a year be settled on John Dean during his life, to commence from Christmas next, and that fifty pounds a year be paid to his present wife, in case she survive him, and that a warrant be made out to John Dean for fifty guineas for his present support.” It was also decided to commemorate in a permanent form the action of Dean and his comrades, and thus to hold up their adherence to duty as an example

¹ For these trials see the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xii p. 601, and vol. xiii pp. 273, 388, also the *London Evening Post*, July 12-14, 1743

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to other servants of the Company. So Willem Verelst, one of a distinguished family of painters, Dutch in origin but English by adoption, was paid fifty guineas to paint "two originals and a copy" of a portrait of the survivor.¹ One of the originals, it would seem, was presented to Dean himself, the other, with the copy, was hung upon the walls of the East India House, whence in due time they passed to the office of the Secretary of State for India. In 1893 one of these portraits was transferred on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, where it has the distinction of being the only representation of an ordinary sailor in that collection.

As a further reward for his services, Dean was appointed on February 13, 1745, an "Elder Porter" (foreman) in the Company's Drug Warehouse. With his pension and salary his pecuniary position must have been a comfortable one, but he did not enjoy it long, for he died on December 17, 1747. His demise is recorded both in the *Morning Advertiser* for December 16-18 of that year and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (vol. xvii. p. 592), the latter probably copying from the former. Both announcements declare that Dean died in the Company's almshouse at Poplar, but the statement is difficult to believe. No trace has been found in the Company's records of his admission to the almshouse, and it is hard to see why he, a comparatively young man, in comfortable circumstances, should have been so admitted. Moreover, that he had not lost either his post or his pension is shown by the facts that his successor was expressly appointed (December 24) "in the room of John Dean, deceased," and that his widow

¹ An earlier (1741) portrait by the same painter is known only from a scarce mezzotint of it by John Faber, Junior. It represented Dean, half naked, leaning upon a rock, with a lance in his hand, in the distance the *Sussex* is seen labouring in a heavy sea.



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(Catherine) was paid the last quarter of his pension. A search in the registers of Stepney Church (where the burials at Poplar were recorded) failed to disclose his name, and this again militates against our acceptance of the statement. A possible explanation is that the newspaper confounded him with another John Dean, who had been twice President at Fort William in Bengal, and who, falling upon evil times, had been granted in March, 1747, a pension of £100 from the Poplar Fund.

Such is the story of a brave sailor who went through strange vicissitudes in fulfilment of what he deemed to be his duty to the Company. He tells us in his narrative that he came from Scarborough, and his name must therefore be added to the long list of Yorkshire worthies, while so long as his likeness remains in the National Portrait Gallery (to say nothing of the copy at the India Office) his memory will be kept green in London, where his later years were spent.

XIII

WARREN HASTINGS, WRITER FOR BENGAL ,

THE development of "the Honourable Company's Civil Service"—known by that title some time before Government employees in England ever thought of calling themselves "the Civil Service"—was gradual and somewhat haphazard. In the early days, when the East India trade was carried on by means of terminable "Stocks" which ran for a few years and were then wound up, it was natural to take short views. Factors were engaged mainly on their previous experience, and, so long as they were active and in good health, the question of age was seldom considered. Some, indeed, were men well advanced in years. Joseph Salbank, for example, wrote poetically from India to his employers in 1616 that "the almond tre hath displayed his white blossoms upon my head ever since I was admitted into your service" (which was nine years earlier), and he was still in active employment when he was drowned in 1623. Forty-two years after the latter date George Foxcroft was sent to Madras as Agent (having never before been to the East) at the age, apparently, of sixty-four, and he must have been over seventy when he gave up his post and returned to England. Such cases, however, were exceptional, and as a rule the men sent out were either quite young or in the prime of life.

As early as 1606 we find factors engaged on a five years'

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contract, and this became the normal period of the initial appointment, but usually a factor remained after his covenanted time had expired, or, if he then returned, was re-engaged and sent out afresh. Gradually, therefore, the service became a regular profession, and its members spent the best part of their lives in the Indies. A natural consequence was the introduction of a system of grading. There was in every settlement a considerable amount of routine work—copying letters, making out bills of lading, and so forth—which the senior men objected to undertake. Thus arose a class of “assistants” or “writers” (the latter term appears first in 1645), which, when juniors from England were not available, was recruited at times from young men taken on shore from the Company’s ships. A still junior class was established soon after the Restoration, when the home authorities commenced to send out boys (chiefly from Christ’s Hospital, which, unlike most public schools, provided a commercial training) as “apprentices,” finding them board and lodging, with a small allowance for clothes. Men of mature age were still being appointed as factors, and were often given precedence, both in rank and salary, over those already in the country. This, however, produced so much discontent among the latter that in 1669 the directorate declared an intention for the future “to have persons raised up by degrees, according to their deservings, from one place to another there [*i.e.* in India], and only to send out from hence young men or youths, to be trained up in our busines.” Thus was the principle established of recruitment at an early age, with subsequent promotion by seniority. The next step was to establish regular grades, with appropriate salaries, and in December, 1675, it was decided that “apprentices,” when their period of service was completed, should become “writers”,

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“writers” were to be promoted after a time to be “factors”, “factors” might hope to become “merchants”, and these were to blossom in due course into “senior merchants.” The engagement of “apprentices” appears to have ceased in 1694, youths being thenceforth appointed direct to the “writer” grade. The remaining four classes lingered on until 1839—five years after the Company had ceased to be a trading body.

In the seventeenth century the initial appointment was of course made by the “Court of Committees,” and later by its successor, the “Court of Directors.” For long each application was considered on its merits, and the first attempt to impose any rule in the matter seems to have been made in 1682, when (October 27) it was decided that none should in future be admitted as writers “but such as have learned the method of keeping merchants’ accounts throughout.” Thirty-two years later (October 15, 1714), when employment in the East was being increasingly sought for, it was “resolved that for the future no petition be received from any person for any employment whatever in this Companyes service, unless the petitioner be recommended by one or more members of this Court, and that his or their names who do so recommend be mentioned in the Minutes of the Court.” This rule was again laid down on November 10, 1731, when it was “orderd that in future all petitions for employments in the Company’s service, either at home or abroad, be presented by some of the gentlemen in the Direction, and that they speak to the same.” The practice of confining all appointments to the nominees of the Directors passed naturally into the stage when nominations were made in rotation by the individual members of the Court. The method of distribution varied from time to time; but from 1806 the

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arrangement seems to have been that the Chairman and Deputy should each make annually two nominations, and an ordinary Director one, the President of the Board of Control being also allowed, as a matter of courtesy, to make two nominations (*Memorials of Old Haileybury College*, p 10). Limits of age had been fixed by this time In July, 1784, it was decided that candidates for writerships must be between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, but subsequently (by the Act of 1793) the maximum age was raised to twenty-two Such in general was the system that prevailed down to the end, nominations to Haileybury taking the place, after the establishment of that college, of direct appointment to the service.

How the system was worked in the middle of the eighteenth century may be exemplified by the case of Warren Hastings, and there is the more reason for going into the particulars of his appointment in that the account ordinarily given is not only incomplete, but in some respects erroneous. For this the Rev G. R Gleig, the writer of what may be termed the authorized biography, is largely responsible, though the circumstances in which he produced his work afford some excuse From his preface it appears that the task of writing the life of Hastings had been entrusted at first to Robert Southey That distinguished man of letters knew little of India, but he was always ready to turn his hand to any work of a remunerative character, and he accepted the task, probably without realizing its magnitude However, after retaining the materials for a long time, he abandoned the undertaking, explaining that he had found it too extensive and complicated The next choice of the family was "Mr Impey,"¹ who laboured at

¹ This must have been Archibald Elijah Impey (the barrister son of the famous judge), who died in July, 1831 The better known Elijah Barwell

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the papers until his death, but without making any substantial progress. Then in 1835 the materials were placed in the hands of Mr. Gleig, who was perhaps chosen because he had already produced, among other works, a biography of Sir Thomas Munro and a *History of the British Empire in India*. By this time Hastings himself had been dead seventeen years. His sister (his only immediate relative) had predeceased him. His widow, it is true, was still alive when Gleig began his task, but was very old, and neither she nor the Imhoffs (who gave what help they could) would be likely to know much about Hastings' early years, for he himself was very reticent upon the point. "Even in conversation," Gleig tells us, "he appeared reluctant to enter upon the subject, and when questioned respecting it, his answers were always brief and general." His biographer, therefore, had little to go upon beyond what he could find in the confused mass of papers handed over to him, and evidently he was content to make what he could out of them and leave it at that.

The main outlines of his story are familiar. He told of the death of the boy's mother immediately after his birth, the disappearance of his father, leaving him to the charge of his grandfather, the Rev. Penyston Hastings, his education at the village school, his transfer in 1740 to the care of Howard Hastings, his father's brother, who held a post in the London Custom House, his consequent removal to the metropolis, where he was sent, first to a boarding-school at Newington Butts, and then to Westminster School. Gleig goes on to relate the death of Howard Hastings, leaving the orphan lad to the care of "a Mr. Chiswick, on whom he had by relationship slender claims

Impey, the impassioned defender of his father's memory, did not die until 1849, while his brother Edward survived until 1858.

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and who does not seem to have overrated their importance " This gentleman, we are told, being "in the Direction of the East India Company," was able to procure a nomination to a writership, and accordingly the lad was withdrawn from Westminster and placed "under the tuition of Mr Smith, the teacher of writing and accounts at Christ's Hospital," in order to qualify for the appointment

Macaulay, whose well-known "essay" was written as a review of Gleig's book, put his own interpretation on the facts as stated therein Mr Chiswick, he tells us, "though he did not absolutely refuse the charge, was desirous to rid himself of it as soon as possible . He thought the years which had already been wasted on hexameters and pentameters quite sufficient He had it in his power to obtain for the lad a writership in the service of the East India Company Whether the young adventurer, when once shipped off, made a fortune or died of a liver complaint, he equally ceased to be a burden to anybody", and he was despatched to Bengal accordingly The story, thus impressively sponsored, passed unchallenged for many years Even Sir Charles Lawson, in his *Private Life of Warren Hastings* (1895), though he had discovered that the executor of Howard Hastings' will was a certain Joseph Creswicke, still accepted as a fact that the boy's "guardian and distant kinsman, Mr Chiswick, a Director of the East India Company, resolved to send him to India," and accordingly removed him from Westminster, despite the remonstrances of the headmaster At last in 1905 Miss Gregg ("Sydney C Grier"), on examining the Hastings MSS in the British Museum, found that all the references to the so-called "Chiswick" were really to Creswicke (*Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife*, p. 446), and thus dismissed that mythical personage from the story. It

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seems strange that the error was not detected earlier, for, once it was established that Creswicke was the executor of Howard Hastings' will (which included a bequest of £40 a year for the maintenance and education of Warren, besides contingent benefits), the inference that he was really the boy's guardian was irresistible.

Of Creswicke little had hitherto been known, except that he died in 1772, but as the result of the examination of family wills at Somerset House, and with the kind assistance of the Rev. Spencer Jones, Rector of Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, a fair amount of information is now available. Le Neve's *Knights* (p 175) shows the family as established at Hanham Abbots (near Bristol) in the seventeenth century, but they had already moved to Moreton-in-Marsh (where, though the family has long since died out, their abode, known as the Manor House, is still standing) when Penyston Hastings (great-grandfather of Warren) married Elizabeth, daughter of Samuel Creswicke, and took her to live at Daylesford, which is five or six miles distant. The Joseph with whom we are concerned (whose relationship to Samuel has not been ascertained) was the son of Henry Creswicke, and was baptized at Moreton-in-Marsh on January 19, 1702. He had at least two brothers, Samuel and Francis, of whom the former entered the Church and became Dean of Wells. Joseph did not remain in the west country but migrated to London, where apparently he prospered. Finding from the *Court Minutes* that he and John Creswicke (doubtless a relative) became securities for Warren on the latter's appointment, and that they were then described as "both of the Customhouse, London, gentlemen," I addressed an inquiry on the subject to Mr B. R. Leftwich, the Librarian of that department. He replied that the estab-

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lishment lists for the period had perished in the fire which occurred at the Custom House in 1814, but from other sources he was able to tell me that John Creswicke was Examiner of the Outport Books in 1743 and was still at the Custom House in 1761, though in what capacity could not be determined, while the only mention traceable of Joseph Creswicke showed that in August, 1766, he was "in the Receiver-General's office, examining Prisage Accounts from the outports" The fact that Joseph was at the last-mentioned date a Director of the East India Company suggests that his post in the Custom House was only one of his activities, possibly the duties were ordinarily performed by a deputy At the same time we have here an explanation of his association with Howard Hastings, who, in addition to being a distant relative, was also, as we have seen, employed in the Custom House Presumably the latter obtained his friend's consent before nominating him as one of his executors, and the fact that Creswicke took up that office, upon the other executors declining it, seems to imply that the relations between them were fairly close At all events Gleig's assumption that Howard Hastings thrust the care of his nephew upon a comparative stranger is obviously unfounded It is quite possible that Creswicke was already acquainted with the lad from seeing him at his uncle's house, and whether this was the case or not, he certainly treated him with great kindness and did his best for him Warren was evidently sensible of the obligation, as is shown by the letters he wrote from India to his late guardian He was also grateful to Mrs Creswicke, to whom he alludes as his "benefactress" and as his good and kind friend, and it was in her honour that his daughter by his first wife was named Elizabeth (*Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife*, p 458)

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We may equally acquit Creswicke of the charge of having sent his young ward to India in order to get rid of him. In point of fact it was Warren himself who originated the project. This appears from a letter of his, written in 1799, and published for the first time in 1920 (*Bengal Past and Present*, vol. xx p. 19). The occasion of his writing this letter was as follows. He had been asked to pay (with interest) a sum of £200 which his uncle Howard was alleged to have borrowed in 1748, and the application was backed by a suggestion that the money had been used to send Warren to India. In reply the ex-Governor-General protested that this assumption was certainly erroneous. "My uncle," he said, "never had the most distant intention of such a destination. It originated with myself after my uncle's death, and Mr. Creswicke, who was a Director of the East India Company, gave me his appointment of a writer at my request, so suddenly made that it was proposed and passed almost instantaneously, all the other nominations having been previously made. I have reason to believe that Mr. Creswicke himself disbursed the expense of fitting me out to India. I have an indistinct recollection of an answer of his to a demand made by me of an account of his administration, in which he peevishly declared that he had paid more than he had received from the assets of the estate."

It will be seen that Hastings himself, writing long after the event, fell into the same error as his subsequent biographers in asserting that Creswicke was a Director of the East India Company at the time when his nomination was procured. The India Office records show that he was not elected to that office until 1765 (remaining a Director until 1768), and he must therefore have been indebted to some friend for the appointment of his ward. That

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Hastings himself was not altogether clear on the matter appears from the fact that, in the autobiographical fragment mentioned below, after writing that the appointment had been procured "by the nomination of my guardian, Mr Creswicke," he inserted, as an afterthought, the words "or interest" after "nomination" Who the friend was who actually nominated Hastings has not been discovered

In his will, made in March, 1771, Creswicke describes himself as of Moreton-in-Marsh, and from this we may infer that, after leaving the Directorate, he retired to his native place The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1772 records the death on June 11 of "Joseph Creswicke, Esq, in the Commission [of Peace] for Gloucestershire," but does not say where it occurred The Rector of Moreton-in-Marsh has informed me that the date of burial as recorded in the church register, was July 18, and this suggests that the *Gentleman's Magazine* was wrong as regards the month, but that the death really occurred in June is supported by the fact that Creswicke's will was proved in London on July 17, and perhaps we may get over the apparent discrepancy by supposing that he died at a considerable distance from his home, and that his body was taken to Moreton-in-Marsh for burial

And now let us turn again to Warren Hastings himself Sir Charles Lawson has already quoted (*op cit* p 30) a few lines from an autobiographical fragment which was shewn to him by Miss Marian Winter This document is now in the British Museum (Add MSS, No 39,903, ff. 14-16), but it contains nothing further that is useful for our present purpose With it, however (f 19), is a rough draft, much of which Hastings, on reconsideration, omitted, and from this I will now quote the whole of

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the passage relating to his early years (two entries, which were afterthoughts noted for incorporation later, have been inserted within square brackets) "I was born at Churchill in Oxfordshire, in the latter end of the month of December in the year 1732 [My mother, whose maiden name was Warren, died in childbed, and my father left me when I was about nine months old, to take possession of a living in Barbadoes, where he died about twelve years after. From his departure my uncle took charge of myself and my sister] The first seven or eight years of my life were spent at that place and at Dailsford, where my grandfather held a living. At five I had the smallpox In the year 1740 I was carried to town and, after a short stay with my uncle, was sent to a school at Newington Butts, the master's name Pardoe Stayed there about two years In the year 1742 I left that school and went to Westminster, and after five years' stay was elected into the Colledge In the year 1749 at Whitsontide left Westminster on account of my uncle's death [patronized by Mr Creswicke] and boarded with Mons Deprez till December. Spent the Christmass with Mrs Creswicke In January, 1750, in the 18 year of my age, left England in the *London* Arrived in Calcutta in the month of October "

On this memorandum a few notes may be added from other sources Mr. G F Russell Barker has kindly informed me that Hastings "was admitted to Westminster School in May, 1743, aged ten, and was placed in the first form. Gibson's was his house " The date of his election as a King's scholar, viz May 27, 1747, has already been given by Sir Charles Lawson His uncle's house, at which the boy spent his holidays, was in the parish of St James, Westminster, at least at the time (June, 1747) when Howard Hastings made his will It is a large and straggling parish,

(1) *Seem. then the Court of Directors of the
United East India Company*

*The Gentle Relation of these m. & stamps
and taken there & here and*

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*Statute of the Court of Directors
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Warren Hastings

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the centre of which is the well-known church looking into Piccadilly. By the courtesy of Sir John Hunt, O B E, the Town Clerk, I was permitted to search the Westminster rate books for 1747, but I was unable to discover from them where the house was situated. The records of burials for the parish of St James were next examined, and from these I gleaned that "Howard Hastings, Esq," was buried on February 7, 1749. His bones rest, therefore, somewhere in that square enclosure surrounding the church. Warren's affection for his uncle is shown in the autobiographical fragment published by Sir Charles Lawson, in which he alludes to him as the person "to whom I was indebted for my education and for every other care of me which good principle, unimpelled by natural affection, could dictate." Howard's widow, to whom Warren later extended a helping hand, lived on until 1786 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1786, p 713). Joseph Creswicke's residence, which was the other London home of the young Hastings, appears to have been somewhere in Streatham (G W. Hastings' *Vindication of Warren Hastings*, p. 196 n).

This brings us to his appointment to a Bengal writership. For that purpose it was necessary for him, after making sure of a nomination, to submit to the Court of Directors, a petition, in his own handwriting, for the desired post. The document is still preserved in the India Office archives, and a facsimile of it is here given. With it were furnished, as required by the regulations, evidence of age (in the shape of a certificate from the then rector of Churchill, attested by the churchwardens, that he had been baptized there on December 15, 1732) and a certificate from Thomas Smith, the master at Christ's Hospital already mentioned, that he had "gone through a regular course of merchants' accounts." Facsimiles of

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both these documents are given by Sir Charles Lawson (pp 18, 31). It is interesting to notice how closely the pupil's handwriting resembles that of his master

We have already noted Hastings' own statement that his application was the latest handed in at the East India House. The petition itself, which is undated, was written, according to Gleig, on November 14, 1749, while the certificate from Smith bears the same date, and the certificate of baptism was written only two days earlier. The documents were evidently sent in just in time, for it was on November 15 that thirty petitions (including that of Hastings) were laid before the Court of Directors and referred as usual to the Committee of Correspondence. As regards, however, Hastings' statement that his request to Creswicke was "so suddenly made that it was proposed and passed almost instantaneously," we can only conclude that his recollection of these faraway events was untrustworthy. All the authorities agree that he was taken from Westminster and placed at Christ's Hospital (as a private pupil, apparently, of Smith's) in order to prepare himself for the India post, and certainly the "course of merchants' accounts" must have taken some time. What probably happened was that Creswicke had not expected to procure a nomination so speedily, but an opportunity occurred at the last moment and so the application was rushed in, when the list was nearly closed.

The report of the Committee of Correspondence was read to the Court upon November 29, 1749, and thereupon fifteen of the petitioners (Hastings among them) were elected by ballot. A week later the successful candidates were assigned to their stations, Hastings being one of those chosen for Bengal. On December 8 his securities, who (as we have seen) were the two Creswicks, were approved,

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and leave was given to him to take out £100 "on the usual terms" Little time was allowed for preparation, for he was allotted a passage in the *London*, which sailed from Gravesend on January 27, 1750, and from the Downs on March 2. The vessel went straight to Fort St. David, on the Coromandel Coast, arriving there on August 25. She sailed again September 7 and reached Madras the next evening. Departing on September 12, she anchored at Kalpi on October 9, and the captain at once went up to Calcutta, presumably accompanied by his passengers. Thus commenced the long and memorable connexion of Warren Hastings with the country of which he was to become the first Governor-General.

XIV

AN ANGLO-INDIAN BOARDING-SCHOOL

ONE of the best-known exhibits in the woodwork section of the Victoria and Albert Museum is the "Bromley Room," with its panelled walls, its fine chimneypiece (surmounted by an oak overmantel in which the arms of James I are carved in high relief), and its elaborate plaster ceiling, in the centre of which those arms again appear. The official handbook tells us that this room was removed from a house which formerly stood in St Leonard's Street,¹ Bromley-by-Bow, and was locally known as the "Old Palace." This was erected in 1606, possibly by the famous architect, John Thorpe, and is traditionally associated with James I, who is supposed to have founded a settlement in Bromley of persons chiefly of Scottish nationality and at the same time to have built this house as a residence or a hunting lodge. It was altered and partly refitted in the reign of Charles II, and again more extensively about 1750, when it was divided into two dwellings, probably for city merchants. Continuing its downward career, for about a century the building was occupied by a school which assumed the title of Palace House School. Afterwards (from 1874) part was used as a club, and part as a lodging-

¹ More exactly, it stood at the corner of the High Street and St Leonard's Street, fronting the churchyard



THE FRONT TOWN

AN ANGLO-INDIAN BOARDING-SCHOOL

house, the remainder being in the occupation of a firm of colour-workers. Finally, in 1893 the property was acquired by the London School Board, in order to erect a school, the house was then pulled down, and only the portion referred to above was saved—largely as the result of a public agitation.

Thus far the official account, which is avowedly based upon two works published by the Committee for the Survey of the Memorials of Greater London, viz *The Old Palace of Bromley-by-Bow*, written by Mr E Godman, and *The Parish of Bromley-by-Bow*, by Mr C R. Ashbee. The former does not deal with the history of the building, but the latter goes rather fully into that subject. He clearly believes in the story connecting the house with the first Stuart. If I may say so, however, the evidence produced is flimsy, and Mr Ashbee candidly admits that there is no mention of the edifice in the accounts of the paymaster of the works on the royal castles and residences during 1605-07—a period which covers the date of its erection. It is noteworthy, too, that the local historian, Dunstan, writing in 1862, goes out of his way to discredit the story, which rests, he says, on the use of the royal arms in the decoration of the building. As regards this, he cites several instances of houses ¹ in which such a feature appears,

¹ He might have added Charlton House, near Greenwich, which was built about the same time as the Bromley house, and by Thorpe. This has the arms of James I and the feathers of the Prince of Wales in the ceiling of the principal apartment, yet it was never a royal residence. Charlton House, by the way, has a special interest for Anglo-Indians, having been purchased (with the manor) in 1680 by Sir William Langhorn, who had been Governor of Fort St George, Madras, from 1672 to 1678. In 1707 he added to his possessions the manor of Hampstead, but continued to reside at Charlton House until his death eight years later. His monument is still to be seen in Charlton Church. He left no children, and his estates passed to his nephews and afterwards, through the female line, to the Maryon-Wilson family. It was from Sir John Maryon-Wilson that his manorial rights over

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evidently intended as a mark of loyalty ; and he concludes that there is no justification whatever for using the epithet of palace in the present case. In this view I entirely agree. The story that the first Stuart had any connexion with the building appears to be of late origin, and lacks therefore such authority as might be derived from a tradition of long standing. In the large-scale map of Stepney by Gascoyne (1703) the house is not even shewn, though the manor house near by duly appears, Lysons, in his *Environs of London* (1795), deals with the antiquities of the parish, yet makes no mention of any palace there and Dunstan says that it was only "of late years" that the boarding-school had assumed the title of Palace House School. Moreover, apart from the lack of evidence of royal ownership or occupation, it seems antecedently improbable that James should have had any wish to live in Bromley. The situation—close to the Lea marshes—was not an attractive one, the alleged Scottish settlement in the parish appears to be a myth, and there is no reason to suppose that, if such a colony existed, the King would desire to dwell in its midst, while, as for a hunting-box, His Majesty possessed Wanstead House (from 1607) and a little later Theobalds, both of them much nearer to Epping Forest.

On inquiry at the offices of the London County Council (the heirs of the School Board) I was told that there were no title deeds of the property which would throw light on the mystery. The question for whom the house was built remains therefore unsolved. My own guess is that it may have been erected for Abraham Jacob, a rich London merchant, whose son, Sir John Jacob, afterwards bought

Hampstead Heath were acquired for the public in 1868, while about twenty years later his son sold in like manner his interest in Parliament Hill Fields. Charlton House and its grounds have recently been purchased for the public

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the upper manor of Bromley. The father was buried in the church,¹ and had been a resident in the parish, yet no connexion has been discovered between him and any of the other large houses in the district. He was one of the Farmers of the Customs, and this (also perhaps the resemblance of his name to the Latinized form of James) may explain the prominent use of the royal arms in the decoration of the building.

Another name I should be glad to connect with the old house—but, alas, there is not a shred of evidence¹—is that of Sir Thomas Chamber, for some time the East India Company's Agent at Fort St George, Madras. He came back to England in the year of the Great Plague, with a fortune that marked him out as a fit recipient of the honour of knighthood, and when this was conferred (in March, 1666) he was described as "of Bromley, Middlesex." Clearly he was at that time resident in the parish, but where has not been ascertained. He is noteworthy as an early specimen of the "Nabobs" whose advent excited, a century later, so much indignation among the propertied and titled classes. Such was not the case, however, in the reign of Charles II, for when in 1670 Chamber purchased the manor of Hanworth, on the other side of London, and made that his residence, he was quickly admitted into "high society." He himself had gone to the East in the humble capacity of a purser's mate, while his wife, whom

¹ Though the burial is not recorded in the parish register, we find from his will (*P C C 44 Ridley*) that he gave directions for his interment in the chapel at the east end of the church, and the fine monument afterwards erected therein by his son is an indication that his desire was carried out. The will gives ample evidence of the testator's connexion with Bromley. He leaves £20 for coals for the poor of that parish, together with £10 to be distributed to them at his funeral; provides that cloth be given to the minister for a mourning gown; and bequeaths furniture, etc., to his wife from his dwelling-house in the parish, then occupied by his son John.

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he had married in India, was apparently of Portuguese, if not of Indo-Portuguese, origin. Yet their only child, Thomas, was judged to be a fitting husband for Mary, daughter of the second Earl of Berkeley, and of the two girls resulting from that union, one, Mary, married Lord Vere Beauclerk (afterwards Baron Vere of Hanworth), the grandson of Charles II and Nell Gwynn, while her sister, Anna, became the wife of Richard Grenville, Earl Temple, the friend and brother-in-law of the elder Pitt. Lady Temple, by the way, was a shining light among the coterie of literary ladies conspicuous in the pages of Horace Walpole, who printed a volume of her poems at the Strawberry Hill Press.

It is time, however, to leave these speculations and to turn to our real subject, namely, the use of the Bromley House in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a boarding and day school, and our interest in this subject is that there seems to be good reason to think that the school in question was no other than the establishment at Bromley which was for long a favourite place for educating the sons of Anglo-Indians¹. So much, at least, I infer from the following passage in Sir John Kaye's *Life of Lord Metcalfe* (p. 7).

"At an early age Charles Metcalfe was sent to school at Bromley, in Middlesex. The establishment was kept by a Mr. Tait. How it was obtained I do not know, but this gentleman had a considerable 'Indian connexion', and among his pupils were divers Pattles, and Plowdens, and others bearing names with which *East-Indian Registers* have long been familiar. It was partly on this account, and partly, perhaps, because some members of Mrs. Metcalfe's

¹ Using this term in the old sense of Englishmen who are residing, or have resided, in India.

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family resided in the neighbourhood of Bromley,¹ that Mr Tait's academy was fixed upon as the first training-house for the young Metcalfes. Its recommendations were, I believe, chiefly of an extrinsic character. Scholastically, perhaps, there was not very much to be said in its favor.

"To this period of Charles Metcalfe's early career there are but few allusions in his letters and journals. In 1841 . . . being then Governor of an important Crown colony, he wrote to a near relative, in answer to some family inquiries 'I remember, at Bromley, a fine-looking old gentleman, of the name of Debonnaire, who, with his family, occupied the pew in church next to that of our school, and whose broad shoulders and peculiar coat of remarkable pattern are impressed on my memory. I quitted Bromley in September, 1795. I also remember Aunt Winch, as she was called, who used to board and lodge in Tait's house, and had my brother Theophilus and myself sometimes in her room. I paid her and the school at Bromley a farewell visit on my departure from England for India, on which occasion she gave me £2, encumbered with a laudable injunction to purchase *The Whole Duty of Man*. I have a faint impression that the Lefevres, whom I then understood to be relatives of the Debonnaires, had been the occupants of the house then in Tait's possession, which had some old ceilings of carved wood that we boys used to think very fine.'

"From Charles Metcalfe's own recorded impressions little more can be gathered regarding his sojourn at the Bromley school. His surviving schoolfellows are not many; but I am told that he was a boy of a reserved and retiring

¹ Mrs Metcalfe was originally Susannah Debonnaire. Major Metcalfe was her second husband.

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nature, and that the more showy qualities of his elder brother entirely shone him down. It is remembered that Mrs. Metcalfe would pay occasional visits to the school, and it was well known even to the boys that Theophilus was the mother's favourite. Among the most memorable incidents of that period of Charles Metcalfe's life was the preparation of a dramatic entertainment, which caused great excitement for many weeks in the school. The play was *Julius Cæsar*, and there was a great show of people to witness the performance. Theophilus Metcalfe played Mark Antony. To Charles were assigned the two humble parts of Flavius and Friend to Brutus."

The reader will notice the allusion to the "old ceilings of carved wood" (plaster he should have said, but the slip of memory was natural). No other house in Bromley is known to have possessed this feature; and there is accordingly some reason for identifying Tait's establishment with the school which we know was being carried on in the so-called Palace at the time.

Kaye's statement that Tait's school was specially favoured by Anglo-Indian parents is probably based upon the names in the printed play-bill (of the performance mentioned above) which he found amongst Lord Metcalfe's papers, but it is borne out by an examination of the educational certificates preserved among the "Writers' Petitions" at the India Office. There we discover Thomas Tait vouching for the attainments of William Deane in 1795, of Richard Chicheley Plowden in 1798, of Isaac Henry Townley Roberdeau in 1799, and of Trevor John Chicheley Plowden in 1801. In none of these documents, unfortunately, does Tait give any more definite indication of the position of his "Academy" than that it was at Bromley-by-Bow.

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An interesting fact about Tait's school is that among its pupils were many half-caste children sent home from India. The Roberdeau mentioned above, who died at Mymensingh in 1808, wrote an account of Bengal which has recently been published (*Bengal Past and Present*, vol. xxix. p. 110). In this, alluding to the fact that many of his compatriots provided themselves with Indian consorts and had children by them, he says: "I know now that many of my schoolfellows at Tait's were of this description." The boys resulting from such alliances were often sent home for education, and possibly some difficulty was found in obtaining their admission to the higher grade public schools.

In the hope of procuring more definite information about the location of Tait's school, I wrote to the Poplar District Council, inquiring whether the Bromley rate-books for the period were in existence. The Town Clerk replied in the negative, but he enclosed a note from Mr. W. B. Thorne, the head of the Bromley Public Library, in which it was stated that no information about the early history of the school in the "Old Palace" was available. The note went on to say that "Richard Whiteing, the novelist, was sent there as a boy in 1848, when the master was a Rev. Mr. Stammers, who had bought the school from a Mr. Safe, the latter being buried in Bromley churchyard. In a scrapbook of local cuttings there are advertisements of 'Bromley School' dated 1756, 1775, and 1788, the proprietors' names being respectively Mr. Huet, John Sharpe, and Richard Bland¹. It is not clear if this was the school

¹ With regard to two of these masters, I find from the "Writers' Petitions" that Sharpe was certifying candidates for the Company's service from 1770 to 1776, and Bland from 1775 to 1795. Though there is a slight overlapping, it seems probable that both were predecessors of Tait, who, as we have seen, signed such certificates from 1795 to 1801.

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conducted in the Old Palace, though such was probably the case, as one advertisement stated that it had 'many acres of pleasure ground' Another statement was that its pupils were 'educated for different departments in India.' . . . Mr. Whiteing states that the boys from the Old Palace School attended Bromley Church" The reader will recollect that Metcalfe mentions that in his time Tait's school had a pew at the parish church.

There, I fear, we must leave the matter It cannot be pretended that definite proof has been obtained that Mr. Tait's school academy occupied the same premises as the later Palace House School Still, what evidence there is seems to point strongly in that direction, and for myself, until evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, I shall continue to believe that it was at the ceiling now in the South Kensington Museum that the future Lord Metcalfe and his schoolfellows gazed with so much reverence

XV

THE COMPANY'S HISTORIOGRAPHER

IT has often been asserted that Richard Hakluyt was appointed Historiographer to the East India Company at its very start, but this has been shown (p 4) to be a mistake. It is, however, a fact that two centuries later the Company had in its employment an official with that title, in the person of Mr John Bruce, F R.S., to whose interesting career the next few pages are devoted

Of his early life we know but little. He was born in 1745, and was the heir male of the ancient family of Bruce of Earlshall, though the ancestral estates had passed by marriage into another family, and all that he inherited from his father was the small property of Grangehill, near Kinghorn in Fifeshire. Young Bruce was sent to Edinburgh University, where he distinguished himself so greatly that in 1774 he was made Professor of Logic. His lectures in that capacity attracted much attention, and he repeated this success when he took at short notice the place of Adam Fergusson as Professor of Moral Philosophy.¹ On the double series of lectures thus delivered were based his earliest published works, namely, one on the principles of

¹ Among his pupils was Walter Scott, who writes in his fragment of autobiography "I made some progress in Ethics under Professor John Bruce, and was selected, as one of his students whose progress he approved, to read an essay before Principal Robertson."

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philosophy, which went through three editions in five years, and *The Elements of the Science of Ethics*, issued in 1786.

Bruce appears to have been first brought into contact with his patron, Henry Dundas (to whom, by the way, he was distantly related), by becoming tutor to that statesman's only son Robert (a future President of the India Board). His services in this respect were rewarded by the grant, to him and another jointly, of the reversion of the post of King's Printer and Stationer in Scotland—an office which, however, did not fall in for about fifteen years. Soon there occurred an opportunity of making himself useful to Dundas in a fresh capacity. The time was approaching when the Government must decide whether or not to propose the renewal of the exclusive privileges of the East India Company, and both the supporters and the opponents of that body had already taken the field. Dundas, though he was not yet formally President, was by far the most influential member of the India Board, and it was to him that Pitt looked for guidance in the matter. The duty now (1790) entrusted to Bruce¹ was to prepare for Dundas's use a detailed digest of the various proposals which had been made for the future regulation of Indian affairs, and to provide him with any further information he might require on the subject, in short, he was to "devil" for Dundas in the Indian controversy. The task was one well suited to Bruce's capacity, and he entered upon it with his usual energy. He seems to have planned an extensive report upon the subject, which was to be divided into three sections. The first was to sketch

¹ A John Bruce was in February, 1789, appointed précis writer at the India Board, with a salary of £200, but did not hold the post for long. It is not certain that he was the subject of the present sketch, but the probability is that this was so.

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the general history of India down to the time of writing, the second to give a special account of the operations of the East India Company from its inception to the year 1790, and the third was to analyse the various plans suggested for the future administration of the dependency. It was a heavy piece of work to undertake in addition to other labours, and it is not surprising to find that the first section was only partially completed, while the second had to be left for later treatment. The third, as being most urgent, received the greatest amount of attention, and it was completed and printed in 1793 (by order of the India Board) under the title of *Historical View of Plans for the Government of British India*. The author's name was not given, and as late as 1810 James Mill, writing in the *Edinburgh Review*, either was, or pretended to be, in doubt whether the work was not written by Dundas himself.

It was probably in connexion with these researches that Bruce's attention was drawn to the unsatisfactory state of the State Paper Office at Whitehall. The post of Keeper had been held from 1773 by an ex-diplomatist, Sir Stanier Porten (uncle of Edward Gibbon), but he seems to have treated it as a sinecure, and, although three commissioners had been appointed in 1764 to arrange and digest certain classes of records, little real progress had been made. Porten had died in June, 1789, and his post was now vacant. A letter among the Dropmore MSS.¹ shows that Dundas was on the look-out for some suitable appointment for his protégé, and it was possibly on his prompting that Bruce, in October, 1792, submitted a series of suggestions for rendering the office more efficient and for calendaring certain series of documents, including those relating to the East Indies and to other dependencies of the Crown. The

¹ *Fourteenth Report of the Hist MSS Commission*, Appendix, part v p 306

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result was seen in Bruce's appointment to be Keeper of the State Papers, with effect from July 5, 1792. The post was one of honour rather than of emolument, for the salary remained at £160 per annum (the figure fixed in 1661), and was subject to deductions for taxes, fees, etc., amounting to over £27 yearly, while no provision was made for any clerical assistance. Bruce, however, did not rest until matters were put upon a more satisfactory footing. He drew up a series of regulations and a scheme for a more suitable establishment, and pressed these upon the ministry. After considerable delay—Pitt himself mislaid the royal warrant at Walmer and a fresh one had to be prepared—these were sanctioned by a warrant of March 4, 1800, and they remained in force until 1854, when the State Papers were transferred to the Public Record Office. By the new arrangement Bruce's salary was raised to £500 per annum and he was provided with a deputy and the necessary clerks. His post had already been confirmed to him for life, by letters patent of September 23, 1799, possibly as some compensation for his having refused the post of Consul at Hamburg, which had been offered to him by Grenville in the previous year and was worth £600 a year ¹

It was the aim of the new Keeper to utilize the archives under his charge in bringing the experience of the past to bear upon the problems of the present, and he succeeded rather too well for his own comfort. Pitt and Dundas had discovered his merits as a digesting machine, with the

¹ The particulars here given of Bruce's connexion with the State Paper Office are taken from Mr W. N. Sainsbury's account of that office, printed as an appendix to the *Thirtieth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Records* (1869). It may be added that Bruce was in no way related to another John Bruce (1802-69), who had much to do with the public records as author of several calendars of the Domestic State Papers, and Treasurer and Director of the Camden Society.

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result that, whenever a subject at once complicated and important came before them, Bruce was applied to as a matter of course. Thus the capture of the Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon and other Dutch settlements in the East (1795) raised the question whether these possessions should be governed directly by the Crown or through the East India Company, whereupon Bruce prepared under instructions two reports on the history of the Cape and the Dutch Islands—a task which, as he said, necessitated his “wading through heavy Dutch authors and still heavier Dutch papers,” and occupied him for a considerable part of the years 1796–97. At the same period he produced a *Review of the Events and Treaties which established the Balance of Power in Europe and the Balance of Trade in favour of Great Britain*, which was printed in 1796. About two years later, when the country took alarm at French threats of invasion, he reported on the arrangements made for the defence of the kingdom at the time of the Spanish Armada,¹ while in 1801 he submitted a further report on the precautions adopted at the time of previous French schemes of invasion. The projected union of Ireland with Great Britain led to a fresh call upon his energies, inasmuch as ministers desired a full account of the measures taken at the time of the union of Scotland and England. And all this was in addition to the labours he had undertaken for the East India Company, his connexion with which we must now examine.

This takes us back to the middle of 1793, when Bruce's *Historical View* had just been printed, and the Company's exclusive privileges, thanks to Dundas, were on the point of being extended for another twenty years. The minister

¹ On this work Pitt is said to have grounded some of his measures of defence

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may well have thought that some small return was due to him, especially if it took the form of a provision for Bruce, who had already worked hard in the Company's interests. As we have seen, Bruce's post at the State Paper Office brought him at this time only £160 a year, and was terminable at His Majesty's pleasure, and this was but a poor substitute for the life professorship at Edinburgh which he had surrendered at Dundas's suggestion. Moreover, it is evident from the letter already mentioned (p 235) that as early as August, 1792, the latter had in mind the possibility of employing Bruce to investigate the records lying at the East India House. Accordingly he now proposed to the Directors that they should create for Bruce the post of Historiographer to the Company—an employment familiar enough to a Scotsman, for there was then (and still is) an official Historiographer at Edinburgh. The motion, however, proved unpalatable to the Directors, and they countered it in a very ingenious manner. They represented that practically the post already existed and was filled by a distinguished writer, since for over twenty years they had been paying £400 per annum to Robert Orme, the author of *The Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan*, to enable him to continue his historical studies. However, Dundas was not easily moved when once he had made up his mind, and so a compromise was reached, by which Bruce was given the reversion of the post, with £100 a year meanwhile. The actual date of this arrangement was July 10, 1793. In the establishment lists of the time Orme and Bruce are bracketed together as joint Historiographers.

Though his salary from the Company was little more than nominal and he had plenty of other demands upon his time, Bruce set to work at once to justify his appointment

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He had still at heart the completion of the general history of Indian affairs he had already sketched out, and his letter book (now at the India Office) shows how indefatigable he was in applying to every one (especially to officials in India) who could afford him assistance in procuring materials. It was while waiting to see the result of his first appeal that he compiled and presented to the Company a detailed history of the recent negotiations on the renewal of the charter—a work which was printed in 1811, when the period for which the Company's privileges had been extended was approaching its termination. He also prepared for Dundas an elaborate report upon the various plans proposed for the organization of the military forces in India.

The response to Bruce's appeal for assistance from India was on the whole disappointing. Certain individual officers forwarded him valuable reports on matters within their cognizance, while in the Bombay Presidency, thanks to the interest shown by Governor Duncan, a committee was appointed which provided him with a quantity of useful materials. But, although Bruce persuaded the Company to send out (May, 1797) official instructions on the point, in other parts of India his demands were practically ignored. Further discouragement was afforded by the death in November, 1796, of his brother, Colonel Robert Bruce, of the Bengal Artillery, who had lent most zealous assistance to his projects. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that he turned his attention for some time to other matters.

The death of Orme in January, 1801, left Bruce sole Historiographer, and raised his salary to £400 per annum. He was now about fifty-five years of age, and probably he had begun to recognize that, considering his duties at the

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State Paper Office, it would be wise to concentrate his attention upon that section of his proposed work which was to deal with the history of the Company, full materials for which were now at his disposal. After some delay the Directors were induced (May, 1803) to allow him the use of certain rooms at the East India House and to sanction the engagement of a clerk to make extracts for him from their records. Four years later, Robert Lemon, Bruce's indefatigable assistant at the State Paper Office, was employed by the Company for the same purpose (in addition to his official duties), and in August, 1810, another clerk was added to the staff.

On the heavy task he had thus set himself, Bruce laboured resolutely until 1810. His work was done in his own house at Knightsbridge (No. 9 Brompton Grove, now replaced by Ovington Square), and there he and Lemon worked diligently evening after evening, sometimes until eleven o'clock, occasionally devoting Sunday to the same task. At a later date Bruce declared that the work entailed the perusal and abstracting of more than thirty thousand documents, besides printed works, but probably he included in the total the letters which were examined by his India House staff but not epitomized for his use. An examination of the references given in the work shows that, as regards the Company's records, he confined himself almost entirely to the letters received from the East and the Company's replies, and that he made little use of the valuable series of *Court Minutes*. On the other hand, the documents at the State Paper Office bearing upon India seem to have been fully utilized.

As already mentioned, the original intention had been to carry the history down to the year 1790, but the desire to have at least a part published in time for the renewed

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negotiations on the charter led Bruce to pause when he had reached the union of the two rival Companies in 1709. In June, 1810, he announced its completion to this point, and in the same year the work was published in three volumes at the Company's expense under the title of *Annals of the Honourable East India Company*. The copyrights of this and of his account of the charter negotiations of 1793 were made over to the Directors, who seem also to have received the sale proceeds. They were not ungrateful, for, in August, 1812, they voted Bruce an honorarium of £1000.

The *Annals* became at once the standard work upon its subject, and it is still far from obsolete. That it has defects cannot be denied. For these the form adopted was partly responsible. When Lord Hailes's *Annals of Scotland* appeared, Dr. Johnson wrote to Boswell "It is in our language, I think, a new mode of history, which tells all that is wanted and, I suppose, all that is known, without laboured splendour of language or affected subtlety of conjecture." Bruce would probably have been glad to hear the same remark applied to his work, and indeed it describes very fairly what we may suppose to have been his idea in adopting the same form. However, most readers prefer a lively narrative to a dry enumeration, year by year, of what the historian judges to be the leading facts he finds in the materials before him. No doubt Bruce provides us with a painstaking analysis of the abstracts made for him by his clerks, but the result is too obviously a mere summary of events in which (one suspects) he really felt little interest and which he deemed of no very special importance to his own generation. Nor does he make any pretence at impartiality. It goes without saying that in a work produced under such auspices he is a thorough-

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going advocate of the Company, and condemns all who came into conflict with that body, while in his preface he hints an expectation that this survey of the past will induce Parliament to continue unchanged the exclusive privileges of the Company, instead of giving way to "exploded, or to specious, but hazardous, theories of commerce" In this result, at all events, he was disappointed

The compilation of the *Annals* was not the only work undertaken for the Company at this period About 1805 Bruce began an elaborate *Review of the Political and Military Annals of the Honourable East India Company*, which was to extend from the year 1744 to the renewal of the charter in 1793 Apparently this did not get beyond 1761, and it was never printed, but Bruce's own copy, extending to 1320 pages, is now among the India Office records (*Home Miscellaneous*, vol. xc1 1).

On the title-page of the *Annals*, Bruce was able to append to his name not only F R S, but also M P He had been elected for the small Cornish borough of Mitchell in February, 1809, and he retained his seat until the summer of 1814, when he retired on the ground of ill-health. The chief events of his Parliamentary career were his brief tenure of office as Secretary to the Board of Control (March–August, 1812) and his speech in Committee on the India Bill This was printed in 1813 According to an obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (vol xcvi part ii p 87), he held also the appointment of Latin Secretary to the Privy Council He certainly prepared Latin versions of letters sent to the Emperor of China in 1804, 1810 and 1811, and also of a royal letter addressed to the King of Abyssinia in 1808 These will be found in the letter book already mentioned.

As we have seen, the *Annals* had been brought to a

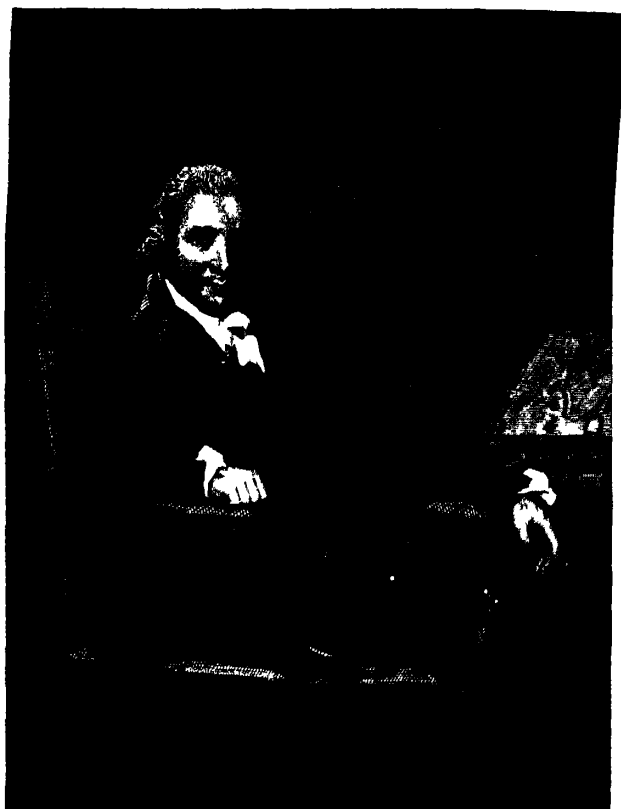
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close earlier than had been intended After the publication of the three volumes, Bruce set to work on a further instalment, which was to extend to 1748, or possibly to 1763 He did not, however, get very far Age was beginning to tell upon him, and first a dislocated leg and then rheumatism laid him up for some time Meanwhile the Company, smarting under the partial loss of its privileges, had inaugurated a campaign of retrenchment at the East India House, and in the spring of 1816 the Committee of Accounts and Warehouses turned its attention to the Historiographer's department Bruce had then been absent for fifteen months, and Lemon had to undertake the defence, in the course of which he admitted that the other two clerks, whose hours were only from ten till three, were practically uncontrolled, as he himself was unable, owing to his duties at the State Paper Office, to do more than look in two or three times a week He seems, however, to have satisfied the Committee, for the only change then made was that his two colleagues were required to attend from nine till four, in consideration of which their salaries (and his) were raised to £2 per week In the following year the matter came up again, this time before the Committee of Correspondence, and at the end of March, 1817, it was rather summarily decided to abolish the department of the Historiographer and transfer the work to the Librarian's department Bruce, who was at Bath and had not then received a letter announcing what was proposed, wrote at once in great indignation to protest against the "unmerited degradation" of being placed in subordination to the Librarian The Directors, however, were inexorable, and he therefore addressed a memorial to them, applying to be pensioned, and asking at the same time for a declaration that his literary work had met with their approval.

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Both requests were granted he was given a retiring allowance of two-thirds of his salary, while "his zealous and faithful services" were acknowledged in handsome terms. Even this did not pacify him, and he made an attempt to induce the Board of Control to interfere, but in vain. A further source of annoyance was that the Directors had induced his assistant, Lemon, to resign his post at the State Paper Office in order to give his whole time to the India House records, in this case, however, Bruce had the victory, for he succeeded in persuading Lord Sidmouth to offer Lemon an increased salary, whereupon the latter withdrew his resignation.

Having so efficient a deputy at the State Paper Office, and being now well over seventy, Bruce seems to have withdrawn from all literary work. He retired to his estates in Scotland, where he spent his time in making improvements, including the repairing of the remains of the old palace of Falkland. In such congenial pursuits the years sped rapidly away, and he died tranquilly at his seat of Nuthill on April 16, 1826, being then in his eighty-second year. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, in an anonymous obituary from which we have already drawn, gives a pleasant, if somewhat high-flown, eulogy of his attainments and character, and with a citation of this we take our leave of him. "Mr Bruce's intellectual powers were of the very highest order. He was equally distinguished as an accurate historian and an elegant scholar. The extent, the variety, and the correctness of his general information was astonishing. . . In the more vigorous period of his life he was eminently distinguished by that qualification which is so rarely to be met with, in which great knowledge is combined with a shrewdness and pleasing urbanity of manners which rendered his communications agreeable to



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every one His conversational powers were captivating in the extreme, and his sallies of innocent humour and flashes of wit were irresistibly entertaining ”

A portrait of Bruce was painted in 1794 by Henry Raeburn, whose charge was the moderate sum of thirty guineas The painting was engraved by E Mitchell, and it is from this print that the accompanying illustration has been prepared. The original portrait has recently been presented by Mrs Hamilton Bruce to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery , while the University of Edinburgh possesses a copy given by Mrs Tyndal Bruce

XVI

THE INDIA BOARD

THE Right Honourable Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India—generally known as the India Board, or the Board of Control—had an existence of practically three-quarters of a century, namely, from the last year of the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings to the assumption in 1858 by the Crown of the direct administration of India. That this long period was filled with important events in the history of both England and India no one will need to be reminded, and a study of the part played by the Board would be of great interest. Obviously, however, the subject is far too big to be dealt with in the space here available, so I have thought it best to limit myself to what may be termed the domestic side of the Board's history—its constitution, its methods of working, its personnel, the various buildings it occupied, and so forth, using for this purpose chiefly the Board's own records, now preserved among the archives of its successor, the present India Office.

As a preliminary, a few words may be said regarding the inception of the Board. From the time when the victory of Plassey and its immediate developments laid Bengal at the feet of the English, it was recognized as inevitable that the King's Government should in some form or other assume the ultimate responsibility for the

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administration of the East India Company's territorial possessions, but only by slow degrees and with much hesitation was action taken. As early as 1759 Clive wrote from Calcutta to the elder Pitt, urging that the Crown should intervene; and as years went on, marked by scandals in India and blunders in Leadenhall Street, the demand, both in and out of Parliament, for the institution of some form of control became more and more insistent. In 1773 the Ministry attempted to meet the situation by passing the Regulating Act, but this, while making important changes in India, left matters at home much as they were, except that the Company was required to send to one of the Secretaries of State a copy of every despatch received from India on other than commercial topics. Eight years later a further step was taken, by the Act of 1781, granting the Company an extension of its monopoly for a further period, it was enacted that copies of all despatches sent to India on administrative matters should be communicated to the Government, and that the Company should obey any directions received from the latter relating to peace and war or to transactions with other Powers. It was soon felt, however, that this arrangement was ineffective, and that something more must be done. Accordingly in 1783 Fox introduced two Bills—subsequently merged into one—which included provisions for taking the entire territorial government of its Indian possessions out of the hands of the Company and vesting it in seven Commissioners or Directors, to be appointed in the first instance by Parliament, and afterwards by the King, while the management of commercial affairs was to be entrusted to nine Assistant Directors, chosen by the Legislature from among the holders of not less than £2000 of India Stock, and performing their duties under the super-

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vision of the seven Commissioners. No provision was made for the responsibility of the new directorate to Parliament, except that its members were to be removable on address from either House, and herein lay the most striking weakness of the plan, which met at once with a storm of criticism. The opposition of the Company was natural enough, and it was reinforced by a large body of outside opinion, which dreaded lest the effect of the measure would be to place the patronage of India in the hands of party nominees, who would use it for party purposes. In spite of the outcry, the Government succeeded in carrying the Bill through the Commons by a large majority, but the King saw in its unpopularity a means of getting rid of a Ministry repugnant to himself, and an unsparing use of the royal influence led to the Bill being thrown out on the second reading in the House of Lords.

The dismissal of the Ministers was followed by the appointment of the youthful William Pitt as First Lord of the Treasury, and five months later a general election gave him a triumphant majority over his opponents. A fresh measure for the management of Indian affairs was promptly introduced and passed through all its stages, becoming law on August 13, 1784. In this Pitt skilfully avoided the defects which had proved fatal to his rival's scheme. The constitution of the Court of Directors was not interfered with, except by the requirement that three of its number should be appointed a Secret Committee with special functions. A new Board of Commissioners was to be appointed by the Crown, consisting of not more than six Privy Councillors (including the Chancellor of the Exchequer and one of the Secretaries of State), drawing no salaries and holding office only during the King's pleasure

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—an arrangement which secured the responsibility of the Ministry of the day for the actions of the Board. The latter was to have access to all the Company's papers, and no despatch was to issue (on other than commercial business) without its previous approval. Further, the Commissioners might require the Company to prepare drafts on prescribed subjects, and might, in cases of default or urgency, transmit their own drafts to the Secret Committee, to be signed and sent out to India in the name of the Company. In the event of a dispute between the two bodies as to the powers of the Board, the question was to be submitted to the decision of the King in Council. The appointment and dismissal of their servants was left entirely to the Court of Directors, whose hands were strengthened by a proviso that any resolution of theirs approved by the Board was not to be rescinded or altered by the General Court of Proprietors.

It may seem a strange idea to entrust duties of this nature to half a dozen Privy Councillors, selected mainly for political reasons, but, after all, it was in accordance with British constitutional practice, which does not ask for expert knowledge from those entrusted with the nation's naval, military, or financial business, or even from those sent out to the colonies and dependencies as Viceroys or Governors. Moreover, the business of detail—in which such knowledge was of special importance—remained in the hands of the East India Company and its trained advisers, while before long the Board's own officials acquired a very fair acquaintance with Indian problems. Again, the first person chosen for the important post of Chief Secretary to the Board was Mr Charles William Boughton Rouse, M.P. for Evesham (1780-90), who had

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had considerable Indian experience¹ It is also to be remembered that later on the Board included members with first-hand knowledge of Indian administration Lord Teignmouth, who (as Sir John Shore) had been Governor-General from 1793 to 1798, was a Commissioner from 1807 to 1828, the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who was President from 1812 to 1816, had previously (as Lord Hobart) been Governor of Madras, Lord Ellenborough was four times President, and between the third and fourth periods filled the post of Governor-General, Sir James Mackintosh, some years after his return from Bombay, became a member of the Board and held office till his death, and Holt Mackenzie, an expert on Indian land settlement, was a

¹ He was appointed to the Bengal Civil Service in 1765, and served until about 1779 He presided at Calcutta over the celebrated suit which formed the basis of the charge of forgery on which Nandkumar was afterwards hanged, and from about 1775 he was Chief at Dacca Rouse was also a Persian scholar, and translated parts of the *Ain-i-Akbari* for his friend Major Rennell, who in return dedicated to him one of the maps in the *Bengal Atlas* He gave assistance of a similar character to Robert Orme, the historian In the year of his retirement from the India Board, Rouse published a *Dissertation concerning the Landed Property of Bengal*, dedicated to Henry Dundas As a reward for his services, he was created a baronet in July, 1791, and in February, 1794, on the death of his brother, he succeeded to the family baronetcy of Boughton of Lawford, whereupon he changed his surname to Boughton He sat in the House of Commons as member for Bramber, 1796-99, and died in February, 1821

In the report of the Select Committee of 1832 reference is made to a suggestion (by Sir John Malcolm) that one or two of the Commissioners should always be persons who had been employed in the Company's civil or military service abroad Questioned on this point, the Board's Assistant Secretary pointed out that it was already open to the Government to appoint members with those qualifications, while to go further, and lay down such a requirement by law, might imply that special attention was to be given to the views of such a member He added that soon after the establishment of the Board there was a secretary who had had Indian experience (Rouse is evidently meant), and that "the President found himself frequently annoyed by the obtrusion of opinions to which perhaps the party offering them was inclined to attach more weight and importance than properly belonged to them, from the mere circumstance of his having been in India"

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Commissioner from 1832 to 1834. On the other hand, the Board served at times as a training ground for Indian administrators. Lord Mornington was a Commissioner from 1793 to 1797, before going to Bengal as Governor-General. In 1806 Lord Minto resigned the office of President in order to take up the Governor-Generalship, and Lord Ellenborough did the same thirty-five years later. George Canning, another President, had the offer of the same post in 1822, but declined. Macaulay was first a member of the Board and then its Secretary, before proceeding to Calcutta as Legal Member of Council, and James Wilson, the first Indian Finance Minister, had previously served for nearly four years as one of the Board's secretaries.

From the point of view of the Company, the arrangement made by Pitt was one which was at least acceptable. The Directors possessed still the power of appointing and dismissing their own officials, the undisturbed control of commercial matters, and a very large share in other business, while the responsibility of justifying to Parliament the management of Indian affairs was shifted from their shoulders to those of the Ministry of the day. Pitt's proposals received, therefore, the ready assent of Leadenhall Street, and, when once the measure had passed into law, the Directors did their best to co-operate with the new Board. It must have been irksome to them at times not only to be overruled, but also to have to sign despatches with which they were not in agreement, yet in most cases they were content to remonstrate and require reconsideration (a right formally conceded to them in the Act of 1793). The position in this respect was rather a strange one, for while the Board could, if it desired, make the Company praise an official whose conduct was in reality disapproved,

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it could not save him from dismissal by his irate masters. A witness before the Parliamentary Committee of 1832 gave a rather highly coloured account of a case in which the Company submitted to the Board a despatch denouncing the conduct of a certain official and ending with his recall from his post, this despatch, it was stated, was altered at Westminster into one of commendation, but with the sentence of dismissal unreversed, that being beyond the powers of the Board. The story, which related to the removal of Lord William Bentinck from the Governorship of Madras, was, however, put into its true proportions by a later witness, and it then appeared that all that the Board had done was to tone down in some degree the terms of the Company's censure.

It would be tedious to examine all the cases in which the Court and the Board disagreed over the question of their respective powers, but we may note in passing that Mr Jones, the Assistant Secretary of the Board, declared before the Committee of 1832 that such cases were "very few indeed," and that, on the whole, "a very extraordinary degree of harmony has prevailed." Naturally these collisions occurred principally in the early years of the Board's existence, and perhaps the most important of all was the dispute in 1788 over the charging to Indian revenues of the cost of the royal regiments sent to India by Dundas without the concurrence of the Company—a dispute which was settled by an Act in the same year. So far as I am aware, only on two occasions was the resistance of the Directors pushed to its extreme limits. The first was over the case of a certain Major Hart, whose claims, on account of rice supplied to the army before Seringapatam, the Board wished to settle on terms which the Court considered exorbitant. The controversy, which involved

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the question of the right of the Board to interfere in such matters, dragged on from 1808 to 1816, when, the Privy Council having decided against them and a mandamus having been obtained from the Court of King's Bench, the Directors gave in and signed the despatch as altered by the Commissioners. The second instance was a dispute that occurred in 1832 over a despatch regarding the claims of the house of Palmer & Co against the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Board altered the draft in a manner which the Directors disapproved, whereupon the latter, as an after-thought, declared the matter to be one outside the Board's scope, and claimed the right to withdraw the draft. The case was carried to the Court of King's Bench, where the judges decided that the Directors, by submitting the draft in the first place, had virtually admitted the competency of the Board to deal with it, and were not entitled to annul it at a later stage. A writ of mandamus was issued accordingly, and the despatch was then signed and sent in the amended form.

As already stated, it is no part of my present plan to deal at any length with the history of the Board. The first Commissioners were appointed by a warrant under the Great Seal dated August 31, 1784, and they held their inaugural meeting on the third of the following month, with Lord Sydney (the Foreign Secretary) in the chair. Under the terms of the Act, the Secretary of State was always to preside, if present, while in his absence, and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the chair was to be taken by the senior of the Commissioners attending. As a matter of fact, from the beginning of the Board the duty of presiding fell generally to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, the Treasurer of the Navy (afterwards Lord Melville). For instance, out of thirty-four meetings held during the

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first half of 1785, he took the chair at all but one—an occasion when Lord Sydney happened to be present. Thus Dundas was virtually President from the commencement, not merely from 1793, when he was formally appointed to the post. Pitt himself, however, took an active interest in the work of the Board, and he actually presided at the meetings held during the first seven months of 1787, and also from April 1788 to March 1789. This he did, of course, in virtue of his position as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and doubtless he still left to Dundas the superintendence of the regular work of the Board.

Almost the first step taken by the Commissioners was to settle their staff of assistants. As already mentioned the post of Secretary was given to Mr Boughton Rouse. That of Under Secretary (an appointment abolished in 1797) went to the Hon William Brodrick, M.P. Three clerks, a solicitor, an assistant solicitor, two messengers, an office-keeper, and a "necessary woman" completed the establishment, quarters for which were found in the range of buildings then occupied by the Treasury in Whitehall. As it is mentioned later that the Board's office was adjacent to No. 3 Downing Street, it must have been at the southern end of the Treasury block. These premises were provided and kept up at the public cost, while all the other expenses of the Board, including the salaries of the staff (none of the Commissioners was as yet paid) were at this time defrayed from the same source.

Rouse's tenure of office as Chief Secretary lasted until May, 1791, when he was succeeded by another Member of Parliament, Henry Beaufoy.¹ On the death of the latter

¹ In his *Administration of the East India Company* (p. 129), Sir John Kaye prints a letter written by Beaufoy, in which he says that in the hands of his predecessors (*sic*) the office of Chief Secretary had been practically a

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four years later, the vacancy was filled by the promotion of the Under Secretary, the Hon William Brodrick, M P. He held it till November, 1803, when he was made one of the Commissioners of the Treasury. His successor at the India Board was Mr (afterwards Sir) Benjamin Hobhouse, M P, father of John Cam Hobhouse (Lord Broughton), the future President. It may be noted that the post of Chief Secretary was always held by a member of the Legislature, and that after a time it became the practice for him to go out of office with his party.

On the establishment of the Board, Dundas was sanguine enough to imagine that the King would desire to keep himself acquainted with all the proceedings of the Commissioners. He proposed, therefore, to send regularly to His Majesty copies of all drafts submitted by the Company, of the alterations made by the Board, of any correspondence resulting therefrom, and of all minutes of the Court of Directors. According to an endorsement on the document, this plan was actually carried out for about two years, after which it was discontinued, "the papers being found too voluminous."

As soon as the Board got seriously to work a practical difficulty arose. By the terms of the Act, any draft submitted by the Company had to be returned within fourteen days of its receipt. Doubtless, when the Bill was drafted, it was thought that such a period would allow sufficient time for discussion of the dispatch, while the limitation would prevent any delay in its issue. It was quickly found, however, that when a number of long and important drafts had to be considered about the same time by a body of men with other pressing duties, the period allowed was

sinicure, as papers were usually signed in circulation and the Board seldom met. The latter statement is certainly erroneous.

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altogether insufficient, while the further requirement that any alteration made by the Board must be explained by a formal letter, signed by at least three of its members, added to the difficulty. The former obstacle was surmounted in the following ingenious fashion. When the Company's officials had framed their draft, and had secured its approval by the Chairman of the Directors, it was sent unofficially to the Board, accompanied by the necessary "collection" of documents in support.¹ There it was examined at leisure by the appropriate officials and submitted to the President, or some other Commissioner designated by him, and was then returned to the East India House with amendments or suggestions. Up to this point the "Previous Communication" (as it was termed) was entirely unofficial. It now entered upon its official stage. After submission again to the Chairman, who decided whether the alterations suggested at Westminster should be adopted or not, it was moulded into a "draft," which, when approved by the appropriate Committee and by the Court, was formally submitted to the Board. The latter, having already examined the document in its earlier form, could now deal rapidly with it. Of course, in cases where their previous recommendations had not been adopted, the Commissioners had to decide whether or not to insist upon these, and in the former alternative their reasons had to be stated in writing, but all this could be managed within the period allowed by law. As a matter of fact, according to the evidence given by the Company's

¹ These "collections" (consisting mainly of copies of consultations referred to in the letter under reply) were often of enormous size. It was stated to the Commons Committee of 1832 that one draft was accompanied by 20,000 pages of consultations, while very commonly these numbered from 2000 to 5000 pages. In 1830 Lord Ellenborough arranged that, to save time, the copies should be made in India and sent home with the letters

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Secretary before the Select Committee of 1852, more than half the "Previous Communications" came back unaltered, while a large proportion of the changes in the rest were little more than verbal, of "Drafts" officially submitted, not more than 5 per cent were altered¹ So convenient did this system of "Previous Communications" prove that it was continued even when the limit of time was extended to two months by the Act of 1813, and it lasted, indeed, until the dissolution of the Board As early as 1793 the labours of the Commissioners were relieved by a proviso in the Act of that year, permitting the Board's orders and explanations to be notified under the hand of the Secretary Twenty years later the Assistant Secretary was likewise authorized to sign such notifications

It is to be regretted that most of the "Previous Communications," which had an interest of their own as showing the parts played by the Company and the Board respectively in shaping the official drafts, have been destroyed, apparently in 1867, when the India Office moved to its present quarters

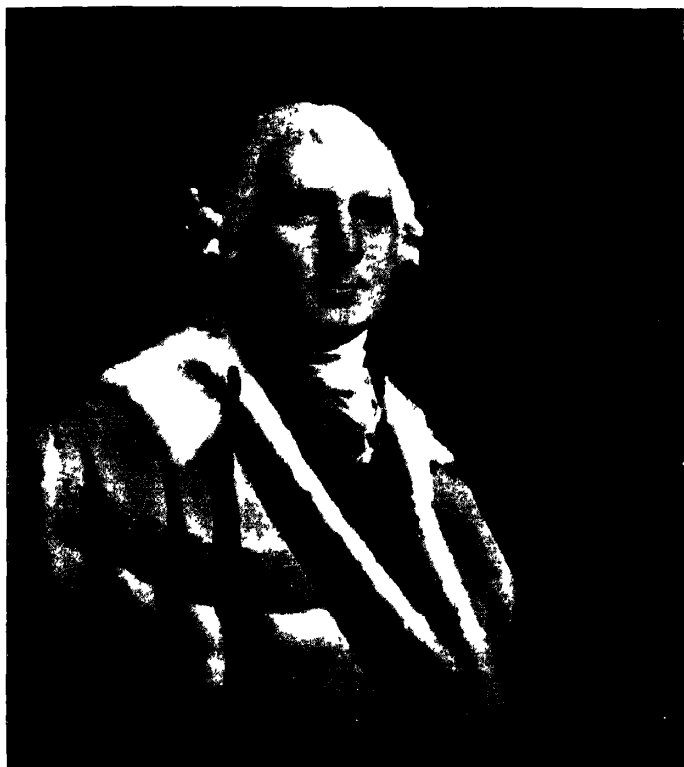
Allusion has been made to the India Act of 1793 (33 Geo III, c 52) This measure, while extending for twenty years the term of the Company's monopoly, made certain changes in the constitution of the India Board The limitation in number was abolished The Commissioners were in future to be such members of the Privy Council (always including the two principal Secretaries of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer) as the King might please to appoint, together with two others not of

¹ We may note in passing that the alterations made by the Board in the Company's drafts were always written in red ink This was doubtless the origin of the present India Office convention by which the Secretary of State uses red ink in making comments or corrections on the documents placed before him

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that body. The person named first in the royal warrant was to be President, his place being taken, in his absence, by the senior of the members present. A sum of £5000 a year was assigned for salaries to the Commissioners, to be apportioned by royal warrant, together with a further sum of £11,000 for the salaries of the staff and other expenses, and in future both these amounts were to be paid out of Indian revenues. Further, the controlling powers of the Board were increased in various directions which need not be specified.

In the first royal commission issued in consequence of this Act, the name of the Right Hon Henry Dundas (then Home Secretary) stood at the head of the list, and he thereupon became formally what he had really been from the beginning—the chief member of the Board. By another royal warrant the £5000 provided for salaries was divided in the proportion of £2000 to the President and £1500 each to the two junior members of the Board, the others remaining unpaid and presumably doing little or nothing. With each change in personnel, a new warrant had to be procured, but the salaries remained at the same figures until 1811, when by Act 51 Geo III, c 75, the amount to be provided yearly by the Company for the expenses of the Board was raised to £22,000, no restriction being placed upon the allotment of this sum. Thereupon the Prince Regent issued a warrant fixing the salary of the President at £5000, while two other Commissioners were to be paid £1500 each, as before. In 1813 (53 Geo III, c 155) the sum allotted to the Board was increased to £26,000, and provision was made for superannuating its officials, while in 1825 (6 Geo. IV, c 90) the King was authorized to grant pensions to the President and the Secretary. Six years later the salary of the President was reduced by a Treasury minute



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to £3500, and those of the other two paid Commissioners to £1200. The Act of 1833 (3 & 4 William IV, c 85) made further changes. The Lord President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the First Lord of the Treasury, the principal Secretaries of State, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were henceforth to be *ex officio* members of the Board, in addition to those named in each royal commission. No Commissioner was to be paid except the President, and the number required for a quorum was reduced to two, while in future there were to be two Secretaries, each with the same powers as the existing Secretary. The salary of the President remained at £3500 until 1853, when the India Act of that year (16 & 17 Vict, c 95) provided that his remuneration should not be less than that of a Secretary of State, viz £5000 a year. This alteration, it may be mentioned, was not in the original Bill, but was accepted by the Government on the motion of Mr Vernon Smith.

Dundas remained President until 1801, when he quitted office on the resignation of Pitt. He had thus held the post formally for nearly eight years, and really for nearly seventeen—a period which was to prove by far the longest tenure in the history of the department. The East India Company evinced their gratitude for the help he had afforded in continuing their monopoly by giving him a pension of £2000 per annum, and further, after his death, they voted his executors a sum of £20,000 towards the liquidation of his debts. At the time of his retirement a special mark of their regard was in preparation. In August, 1800, Dundas had written to the Chairman to say that the quarters of the India Board had always been inadequate, and were now, owing to the increase of business, intolerably cramped. "The room where the Board meet is small, noisy, and uncomfortable, and in fact I have not a room to

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myself in the whole office " He suggested therefore that the Company should buy two commodious houses which then closed in the western end of Downing Street , one of these would make excellent premises for the Board, while the other might be allotted as an official residence for the President This was rather a cool proposal, seeing that the Company had never been expected to find quarters for the Board, much less to provide a house for its chief , but the Directors made no objection To further the scheme, Pitt himself wrote to the Chairman, assuring him that the Crown would prolong the lease on the existing terms, providing that the houses were still appropriated to public purposes Thereupon (November 26) the Directors authorized the purchase of the two houses, at a cost of £6650 for the one on the northern side, belonging to Mr James Martin,¹ and £6300 for its neighbour, which was the property of Mr Eliot By the end of March, 1801, Martin's house had been bought and was being fitted up for Dundas's use , but the situation was suddenly changed by his retirement from the post of President, and he announced that he did not wish the proposal pressed The matter was debated at a General Court held early in April Some suggested that the house and furniture should be placed at Dundas's disposal for the rest of his life , others thought that it should be made available for the new President , in the end the consideration of the matter was postponed *sine die* About £4700 had already been spent, including the cost of adding part of Eliot's premises to the other house The purchase of the former building had not been completed, and it was now left upon Eliot's hands, with compensation for the part taken away Dundas

¹ The conveyance was not signed until June 8, 1803 (see *Home Counties Magazine*, vol ii p 220, where a history of the house is given)

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had some thoughts of buying the other house from the Company for his own use, but in the end it remained in their possession until April, 1804, when it was bought by the Treasury for £9433, including fixtures. In August, 1807, Dundas's son, Robert, who was then President of the India Board, applied to the Treasury to make over the house (which was at that time in the occupation of Sir Charles Morgan) to him as his official residence. From a Treasury minute of May, 1809, it appears that he was thereupon permitted to occupy the premises, though without any formal assignment of them, but in July, 1809, mention is made of the impending transfer of the house to one of the public departments—probably the Colonial Office, which occupied both that and its southern neighbour for many years. The site of Dundas's house is now covered by the Whips' Office.

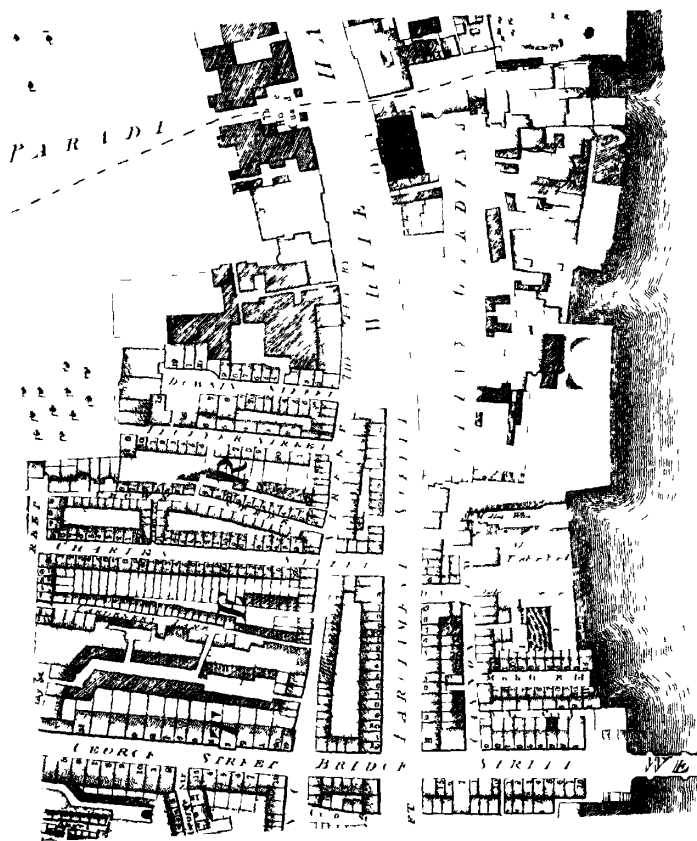
Meanwhile the Board's staff, which was steadily increasing with the growth of business, was finding its quarters at the Treasury far too small. In August, 1804, John Meheux, the Chief Clerk, in a letter to the President, mentioned that two plans had been prepared for remedying this—one by adding a new storey, the other by rebuilding the office on the same site, both, however, had been set aside for want of funds. As the pressure was becoming intolerable, Meheux directed attention to two houses in the Privy (now Whitchall) Gardens. One of them, which had been occupied by a Miss Pelham, was in the market, the other, which adjoined it, belonged to the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, who, it was thought, might be willing to exchange it for the Board's existing quarters. Nothing came of the scheme, and matters remained as they were for another two years, when the question was raised afresh by a proposal to purchase a

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couple of newly-built houses on the eastern side of Whitehall, opposite to the Pay Office. That plan also fell through, and then Meheux obtained permission from the President to buy No 3 Downing Street, which adjoined the existing office of the Board. This house had been for some time unoccupied, and its acquisition cost the Treasury (September, 1806) only about £250.

Before long there was fresh trouble. In 1808, when the house next door to No 3 was repaired, the party wall between the two was found to be in such a rotten state that its rebuilding was imperative. The front wall was in almost as bad condition, and the cost of the whole operation was estimated at about £550. As the expenditure was unavoidable, the Treasury agreed to the outlay, but after a while the work was stopped by a new development. Towards the close of 1808 it was learnt that the premises were intended to be given to the Home Department, whose office was wanted by the Treasury, and that the India Board was to be accommodated in Dorset House, Whitehall. The Secretary was thereupon directed to write to My Lords for particulars and to ask for a voice in the new arrangements. In May, 1809, rooms were being fitted up for the Board in Dorset House, and the transfer appears to have taken place about a year later. No 3 Downing Street was made over to the Privy Council. Its demolition was not long deferred, and its site was absorbed into the remodelled Treasury buildings.

Dorset House stood on the western side of Whitehall just to the south of Dover House, to-day its site is covered by the northern part of the Treasury buildings in that street. The premises, which belonged to the Dorset family, were purchased by the Crown under an agreement made in 1808, though the transfer was not concluded until



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two years later (Sheppard's *Royal Palace at Whitehall*, p 162) Evidently the India Board became the first public tenants. Practically the only subsequent reference to the premises in the Board's records occurs in May, 1815, when the Board of Works was asked to make a vault under the paved yard for the storage of firewood, and also to substitute an open iron gate for a closed door at the back-way to the Office from the Treasury Passage

The records are equally silent about the next (and final) move. We learn, however, from the second report of the Select Committee of 1830, that in 1817 the India Board removed to a separate office in Cannon Row. This was a building erected in the previous year for the Transport Office, on the site of the office of the Ordnance Board¹. It stood on the eastern side of the street, and was designed by William Pilkington, in the Classical style, with a stone front graced by a large Ionic portico at the top of a sweep of steps. At the back the grounds ran down to the river, and the best rooms were on this side, the President occupying a large apartment in the centre, with offices for the secretaries on either side (see a plan in sessional volume No 41 of 1857). It is to be noted that this building also was provided and maintained by the Government, not by the East India Company.

As a supplement to this account of the various buildings occupied by the Board, something may now be said concerning the staff that inhabited them. In September, 1807,

¹ There had evidently been some idea of moving the Foreign Office thither, for the *Times* of February 29, 1816, states that "the new building now erecting in Cannon Row, Parliament Street, which was intended for the Transport Office, is, in consequence of the abolition of that department, to be used as the Secretary of State's office for Foreign Affairs, which will be removed from Downing Street, the lease of the premises at present occupied having nearly expired."

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the President (Robert Dundas)—at the instance, it would seem, of Mr. G P Holford, the Secretary—introduced an important change in the organization of the office. Ten years earlier his father had divided the clerks into three departments, to deal respectively with matters relating to Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. This geographical arrangement was now abandoned, and the work was distributed into four branches, namely, (1) Secret and Political, (2) Revenue and Judicial, (3) Military, (4) Public and Commercial¹. These branches, each of which was under the charge of a senior clerk, were practically parts of one general correspondence department, at the head of which stood the Assistant Secretary. Elaborate rules were laid down at the same time for the making of abstracts, the compilation of arrears lists, and the due preservation of the Board's records. Next the President turned his attention to another matter vitally affecting the staff. For years the clerks had been complaining that the fixed salaries allotted to them by royal warrant had become inadequate, owing to the increased cost of living, at the same time they urged that their work was growing both in bulk and in importance, and that their remuneration contrasted unfavourably with that given in other public departments. An attempt had been made to remedy the grievances by giving allowances, drawn from the contingent fund of the office, but here again a difficulty had arisen, inasmuch as the establishment was a growing one, while the total sum available was strictly limited by law. The question of applying to Parliament to increase the allowance had been considered by successive Presidents but always postponed.

¹ The Revenue branch was separated from the Judicial in 1826, and by 1838 there was a fresh branch for financial business, under the Accountant. Legislative business was transacted by the Judicial branch, Marine and Ecclesiastical by the Public.

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Now, however, Dundas found it possible, by effecting certain economies, to institute a fresh scale of salaries, and this staved off Parliamentary action until the Act of 1811, already mentioned, placed another £6000 a year at the disposal of the Board. A new scale was then introduced, under which the junior clerks received from £150 to £400 per annum, the seniors £400 to £600, the Chief Clerk £600 to £800, the Assistant Secretary £900 to £1200 and the Secretary £1500. A Librarian was also appointed, at £200 a year, to act in addition as Keeper of the Records. The extra sum provided by the Act of 1813 led to a general improvement, including the raising of the pay of the Secretary to £1800. In June, 1816, Meheux resigned the post of Assistant Secretary and retired, he was succeeded by John Wright, then Chief Clerk, and the latter office was then abolished. At the end of September, 1818, the Board increased the Secretary's salary to £2000, at the same time recommending that in future the scale for that post should be £1800 to £2500. By 1822, however, the financial situation was so bad that not only were all increments suspended, but temporary abatements had to be made. The paid members of the Board agreed to a reduction of their salaries by one-tenth, and a similar decrease was ordered in the pay of the Secretary. The alterations made nine years later in the salaries of the Board enabled matters to be adjusted, and thereupon the suspensions were removed and the arrears were paid. Henceforward we hear of no further complaints on this score.

Interesting allusions to office matters occur from time to time in the records of the Board. Apparently the bonds of discipline were slack in the early days. Mention is made in June, 1800, of the fact that one of the clerks, who had enjoyed "almost constant leave of absence for some years"

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(presumably without pay), desired to rejoin, he was permitted to do so, but evidently his holiday-making propensities again asserted themselves, for in the following February he was dismissed on the ground that he had absented himself without leave for many months past. Soon after we learn that a clerk who had been "deprived of his eyesight by the visitation of God" was allowed by the Board to draw his full salary as a sort of pension, there being as yet no retiring allowances. In July, 1821, attention was drawn by the Secretary to certain irregularities in the attendance of the staff, particularly as regards the summer holiday, and thereupon the Board laid down its views on the matter. The three months August, September, and October were to be looked upon as the recess period. During this time the heads of various departments were to "give themselves such relaxation as they may find necessary," taking care to maintain sufficient staff to carry on routine duties, the clerks in general were to be allowed six weeks each; and the juniors were warned to be more punctual in their attendance for the future. In August, 1839, the President noted that he had received complaints of bad writing in documents sent out, wherefore he directed that in future these should be written "carefully, in a large and plain hand." It was not until 1855 that any educational test was applied to candidates for employment. In that year it was decided that for the future any such candidate should furnish particulars of his education, and should be examined by the Assistant Secretary in the "elementary rules of arithmetic and ordinary composition of letters." All appointments were to be probationary for the first year.

It is rather surprising to find a native of India acting as a clerk in the office of the Board. This happened in

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1835-38, and is part of an interesting story. Many years before, an Englishman in the Company's service, while attending a religious festival at Hardwar, found a little Indian boy wandering about forlorn and destitute, his parents having either died or lost him in the crowd. Taking pity on the child, he carried him down to Calcutta, and, being himself on his way to England, asked Ram Mohun Roy, the celebrated Bengali religious reformer, to take charge of him temporarily. However, the good Samaritan died at sea, and the boy grew up under the care of Ram Mohun Roy, who treated him as a son, though he did not formally adopt him. When in 1830 Ram Mohun Roy, now dignified with the title of Raja, embarked for England to claim certain lands from the Company on behalf of the Great Mogul, he took with him Rajaram Roy, as the youth was named. Ram Mohun Roy, though his mission proved unsuccessful, was much lionized in England and France, largely on account of his enlightened views on religious matters, and much regret was expressed when he died at Bristol in the autumn of 1833. Rajaram Roy, thus left alone in a strange land, was doubtless befriended for a while by the admirers of the deceased Raja, but in time he found himself obliged to look around for means of support. In August, 1835, he was appointed by Sir John Hobhouse¹ (then President) an "extra clerk" in the office of the India Board for one year at a salary of £100, on the plea that he desired to obtain some insight into the system of transacting

¹ In his diary (under date of March 18, 1837) Hobhouse mentions giving a dinner party at which the youth was present. "The Rajah," he says, "is really a very superior young fellow. He gave us a very entertaining account of a walking tour in Scotland. On one occasion he went up to an old woman who was working in a field and asked his way, the woman raised her head suddenly, and exclaiming 'The de'il! the de'il!' ran away" (*Recollections of a Long Life*, vol. v p. 68).

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public business before returning to his own country His engagement was continued until the spring of 1838, when, as he was about to embark for India, the Board resolved to pay him up to the following August and to give him a gratuity of £100 His subsequent history has not been traced

By this time the Commissioners had long ceased to be a Board in any practical sense Meetings of all the Commissioners had not been held within the memory of the officials, and even those of the President and his two paid colleagues had now ceased When, early in 1816, Lord Buckinghamshire died as the result of a riding accident, there was a prolonged vacancy in the post of President The other Commissioners met as usual, down to June 24, 1816, on which occasion Lord Sidmouth (the Home Secretary) presided Then suddenly, without a word of explanation, the minutes of meetings cease The change was evidently due to the new President, the Right Hon George Canning, but his reasons can only be surmised Probably he thought it a waste of time to hold formal assemblies, when documents could be either signed in circulation or disposed of after discussion between himself and the two paid Commissioners while, if either of the latter was unavailable, it was easy to obtain the signature of some other member

On March 14, 1822, an interesting debate in the House on the duties of the India Board was initiated by the well-known Thomas Creevey. He had himself been Secretary to the Board in 1806-7, and, drawing upon his recollections of that period, he declared that the employment of a President and two paid Commissioners was far in excess of what was necessary "I remember," he said, "that the three Commissioners

sat in one room and I sat in

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another, sometimes reading the newspapers, at others looking out of my window I believe that the President, or First Commissioner, sometimes did come down to the office, in order to look over the dispatches that were to go to India. . The other Commissioners, I take it, scarcely ever came, except to receive their salaries” He ended by moving that a Select Committee be appointed to examine and report upon the duties discharged by the Commissioners Creevey was answered in a long speech by Mr Courtenay, the Secretary of the Board, who declared that, whatever might have been the case in 1806, there was certainly no longer any lack of work for all three Commissioners The change in organization made in 1807 had led to a great increase in efficiency and in the attention paid bestowed upon the measures taken by the East India Company, and in this connexion he paid a handsome tribute to Mr James Cumming, the head of the revenue and judicial branch. He added that, apart from the natural increase of work, fresh and onerous duties had been cast upon the Board by the Act of 1813 Courtenay was followed by the Right Hon George Tierney, who had been President at the time when Creevey was Secretary He was chiefly concerned to vindicate himself from the suspicion of having been as idle as the latter had confessed himself to have been, but he expressed a doubt whether three members were really needed, and he even went so far as to suggest that the whole department might be absorbed in that of the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department The next speaker was the Right Hon George Canning, the late President (1816-21) of the Board He observed sarcastically that, as regards the mover and his supporter, it appeared that, “both from their own respective statements and from the notoriety

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of the facts, it was established that one of them had been a most efficient, and the other a most inefficient, officer of the Board." From his own experience he could declare that the work had increased 20 per cent within the last five or six years, and that the President could not possibly get through it properly without the assistance of his two colleagues. After a few more speeches, the debate was wound up by Creevey, who was evidently much stung by the comments that had been made upon his maladroit confession, but could think of no better reply than to abuse Canning. On a division, his motion was rejected by a majority of 185. And this was not the last he heard of the matter, for Theodore Hook, who was taking every opportunity of castigating the Whigs, thereupon wrote a ballad called "The Idle Apprentice turned Informer" (*Humorous Works*, p 170), in which Creevey was made to say :

"If I stay'd at the office, oh then, oh then,
If I stay'd at the office, oh then,
I damn'd all the Hindoos,
Look'd out of the windows,
And sometimes I mended a pen,—pen,
And sometimes I mended a pen

Such toil made me sulky, and then, and then,
Such toil made me sulky, and then,
If I ask'd for old Wright,
He came in in a fright,
As if to a bear in his den,—den,
As if to a bear in his den "

As we have seen, the Act of 1833 abolished the two paid Commissioners and made only one signature necessary in addition to the President's. The royal warrant of July, 1837, nominated, apart from the President and the *ex officio* members, only one Commissioner—the Right Hon John Sullivan, who had been a member of the Board for twenty-

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five years ; and when Sullivan died, at the age of ninety, on November 1, 1839, the President (Sir John Hobhouse) carried on the administration unaided. The next commission (September, 1841) named only one person, the President (Lord Ellenborough), and henceforward this became the regular practice. Nevertheless, right down to the end, the signature of an *ex officio* member was still obtained, in addition to the President's, for every document of importance, thus making up the quorum required by the Act. The late Sir Henry Waterfield once told me that, as a junior clerk at the Board, it was a part of his duties to obtain this second signature, and that he usually went for the purpose to the Lord Privy Seal.

Space will not permit of my dwelling upon the many eminent men who filled the office of President, and this is the less necessary, in that their careers are part of the political history of the time. Nor is it possible to go *seriatim* through the list of Secretaries¹. In one case—that of Mr Robert Vernon Smith, son of “Bobus” Smith, and afterwards Lord Lyveden—the tenure of the secretaryship was followed some years later by appointment to the post of President, and many other Secretaries were young politicians who in due course filled more important offices. Such were the Hon Sidney Herbert (afterwards Lord Herbert of Lea), Lord Sandon (afterwards Earl of Harrowby), and Robert Lowe (who became Viscount Sherbrooke). Several, too, were men who made something of a mark in literature. Thomas Peregrine Courtenay, who

¹ The names of the various Presidents will be found in the *India Office List* (prior to 1920) and other works of reference. A full list of the Commissioners is given at p. 367 of the Thirty-first Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records (1870), but it starts only from 1790. Another list (omitting *ex officio* members) is contained in Haydn's *Book of Dignities*, together with a chronological list of the Secretaries.

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held the post from 1812 to 1828, and was then an unpaid Commissioner for two years longer, published commentaries on Shakespeare and a biography of Sir William Temple. His predecessor had been John Bruce, author of the well-known *Annals of the East India Company*. The poet, Praed, was the Secretary in 1834-35, while James Emerson Tennent, traveller and writer on Ceylon, held the post in 1841-45, and was succeeded by Viscount Mahon, the future Earl Stanhope, the historian Sir George Cornwall Lewis, Secretary in 1847-48, is remembered both as a politician and as a man of letters.

Best known of all was Thomas Babington Macaulay, who, after being a Commissioner for about six months, accepted, in December, 1832, the post of Secretary, left vacant by the death of his friend Thomas Hyde Villiers. This appointment Macaulay held until after the passing (which he did so much to promote) of the India Act of 1833, when, as is well known, he proceeded to India as the first holder of the post of Legal Member of the Governor-General's Council. Several amusing letters to his sisters give us glimpses of his life at the Board. He at once plunged into an active study of Indian politics, and wrote that he was "in fair training to be as great a bore" as if he had himself been in India. A few weeks later he says that he has "the Rajah of Travancore to be kept in order, and the bad money, which the Emperor of the Burmese has had the impudence to send us by way of tribute, to be exchanged for better." In June, 1833, he sends some rhymes about the welcome approach of the quarterly pay-day, and in the following month he describes himself as sitting in his "parlour" at the office in Cannon Row, "looking out on the Thames," with his attention divided between writing to his sisters and "a bundle of papers

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about Hydrabad ” It is unnecessary to quote his allusions to the progress of the India Bill, and later to his appointment as Legal Member. Nearly twenty years after, he had the opportunity of becoming President of the Board. He writes in his diary, under date of January 31, 1852 “ I see that Lord Broughton retires, and that Maule goes to the India Board I might have had that place, I believe the pleasantest in the Government and the best suited to me , but I judged far better for my reputation and peace of mind ”

The Act of 1833, by destroying finally the commercial character of the East India Company, placed practically the whole of its transactions under the control of the Board. The importance of the latter body was, in fact, continually increasing. From the beginning the furnishing and presentation of all returns required by Parliament, as also all negotiations with the War Office, Admiralty, or other Government departments, had been in the hands of the Board ; and with each fresh Act affecting India its functions were strengthened and added to. When, therefore, the duty of revising the legislation of 1833 came up automatically in 1852, the question uppermost in many minds was whether there was any reason to continue the Company's share in the administration of India, or whether the time had not arrived to entrust the entire business to the Board, either as then constituted or with a Secretary of State at its head.¹ Lord Ellenborough, in his evidence before one

¹ It is interesting to note that Mr B S Jones, Assistant Secretary to the Board, when giving evidence before the Select Committee of 1832, mentioned that at the time of the renewal of the Company's charter in 1813 he had suggested to the then President the expediency of creating the post of Secretary of State for India (to include the charge of the Cape, Ceylon, and Mauritius) He, however, was not the first to make such a proposal. During the debate on Fox's India Bill (December 1, 1783), Henry Dundas said that “ he commended the appointment of a new Secretary of State for India as a far preferable measure ”

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of the Select Committees appointed to report upon the subject, strongly advised the direct government of India by the Crown, and suggested that the President of the Board should be assisted by an advisory council of twelve members with Indian experience. The witnesses on the Company's behalf were, of course, opposed to any drastic alteration of the existing situation. John Mill, in particular, declared that to place the administration in the hands of a Secretary of State for India would create "the most complete despotism that could possibly exist in a country like this," owing to the absence of any effective check on the part of Parliament or the country in general. However, the Government was too weak and too much absorbed in other questions to take a strong line on the subject of India, and a makeshift measure was passed in August, 1853, which practically continued the existing system, though not for any specified period. One alteration was significant. The Court of Directors was reduced from twenty-four to eighteen members, six of whom were to be appointed by the Crown from among persons who had served in India for at least ten years, while of the remaining twelve (elected by the Company) half were to possess a like qualification. From this it was an easy transition, five years later, to the Council of India, which was composed in the first instance of eight members appointed by the Crown and seven elected by the Directors.

As regards the India Board, practically the only changes made by the Act of 1853 were the increase (already mentioned) in the salary of the President, and the stipulation that for the future only one of the Secretaries should be a member of the Legislature. This meant that one Secretary was to be a permanent head of the department, while the other would change with the Ministry. As a

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matter of fact, the arrangement only perpetuated the state of things then existing, for since January, 1853, one of the secretaryships had been held by Sir Thomas Redington, K C.B., who, although he had been M P for Dundalk from 1837 to 1846, had then resigned his seat on his appointment as Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. As he had not sought re-election, and was willing to abstain from active connexion with his party, he was now declared to be the Permanent Secretary contemplated by the Act, his colleague, Mr Robert Lowe, being regarded as the Parliamentary Secretary. Redington resigned in March 1856, on his appointment to a post in Ireland, and he was succeeded by Sir George Russell Clerk, K C B., an old servant of the Company, who had held the offices of Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and of Governor of Bombay (a post to which he returned in 1860)

The end was now rapidly approaching—an end inevitable in any case, but hastened by the sensation created in Great Britain by the mutinies of 1857. It is unnecessary to detail the history of the three India Bills produced in succession during 1858 by the Governments of Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby, or to explain at length the provisions of the last (Lord Stanley's), which received the royal assent on August 2 of that year. Every one knows that it put an end to the Company's share in the government of India, and placed the home administration in the hands of a Secretary of State for India, assisted by a Council. The change was actually made on September 2, 1858, when Lord Stanley, the President of the Board, became the new Secretary of State, while the two Secretaries, Mr H J Baillie, M P, and Sir George Clerk, were appointed respectively the Parliamentary and the Permanent Under

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Secretaries of State The post of Assistant Under Secretary of State and Financial Secretary was given to Mr J C Melvill, the Deputy Secretary of the Company ; and the establishments of the Board and the Company (relieved by a number of retirements from each office) were amalgamated to form the staff of the new India Office

Another building was obviously necessary, since the premises of the India Board were far too small for the enlarged establishment, while those of the Company were unsuitable by reason of their distance from Westminster ¹ For the present, however, it was decided to utilize the East India House, and there the new department remained until, in 1860, pending the erection of the present India Office, it found temporary quarters in the newly completed Westminster Palace Hotel The building in Cannon Row was used for a time to house the India Office library and part of the records, and when no longer needed for this purpose, was made over to the Civil Service Commissioners Within the memory of many of us it was pulled down, and its site is now covered by the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police

¹ When the Bill of 1853 was under consideration, Mr Bright unsuccessfully moved a clause enacting that the business of both Board and Company should be transacted in one building, and empowering the Directors to sell the Leadenhall Street house to provide funds for a new office

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