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 aff. Bt
 Gov. Gen
 of India

Mr Macpherson

This being the first meeting of
 the Board, since the change which has taken
 place in the Government, I beg leave to offer to
 my noble and very Illustrious Successor my most
 sincere Congratulations upon the Occasion. It
 is not in the common and formal Language of
 Compliment used upon similar Occasions, that
 I tender these Congratulations to Earl Cornwallis
 His Lordship will feel in the Principles on
 which he has undertaken his present Office
 from his Country the best explanation of my
 Sentiments. The Cheerfulness of my future
 Cooperation in the Station which I still
 occupy in the Administration will convince
 the India Company that the Compliment
 which I have addressed to my Successor is
 the Language of my real Feelings.

It

It has been my peculiar
Fortune to have served as a Member of the
Administration of Bengal, and to have
risen from the Junior to the highest Seat
in the Supreme Council, during a Period of
extraordinary Service and great ^{or} Public
Difficulty. To compare the Situation of the
British Possessions in India on the present
day with the Position of Public Affairs in
August 1757, and to reflect upon the Part
which I endeavoured to act in the inter-
mediate most eventful Period is to me
enough; nor until I had the Power of making
the Comparison conclusively and of enjoying
the Satisfaction arising from it, could I
have conceived the Happiness which may
be found in the Duties of the Public Service
To this Happiness is added that of seeing
my Plans for the Relief and Improvement
of the Company's Affairs in India committed
to

to the Protection of a Ruler, who possesses the Powers as well as the Disposition to render them permanently useful to India and to Great Britain.

I will not on the present Occasion enter on any laboured detail of the measures, which were adopted by this Government while I presided in Council. I know that Earl Cornwallis is fully informed upon the Subject in all its parts and that he has perused our dispatches to the India Company to the latest Period.

In these Dispatches every Care has been taken to give the most faithful and minute detail of Public Affairs in their various Branches our Political Situation with the native Powers and the Governments of European Nations has been amply and progressively explained. The various Orders of the Company received during the late Administration

Administration have been fully kept in
View and the Point to which they have been
executed is Likewise stated. The Regulations
that were adopted for ascertaining checking
and retrenching the Expenditures of this
Government are kept in a Separate
Department entitled that of Secret Inspec-
tion and Reform, and the Letters to the
Company in that Department, with Official
Statements exhibit all that has been yet
Performed in this Line. The Administration
of the Public Revenue has been unusual,
Successful, and the Improvements which
have been adopted, in that Important
Branch, are the more interesting as they have
anticipated the wishes of the Company. This
will appear from a Perusal of the Last
General Letters to the Company in the
Revenue Department.

On

On the Subject of the Commercial Department, that which comprehends the Chief value of these Colonies to the Parent State, it will be found that much has been Performed in favor of the Company by the late Administration. The first and of course the most difficult Steps have been taken to provide Goods by sealed Proposals, at the lowest Prices, and according to fixed Specimens of Quality: much is still to be done, and in this Branch, as well as in that of the Revenue, I trust the Progress which has been made in surmounting Local and original Embarrassments has opened the Road to the greatest Public Benefits: The Labours of the late Administration to reduce and regulate the Military Expences of this Government, and to adopt plain and uniform Regulations in the Military Department appear with much Credit on record. The absence of
the

the Honble Member, who took the Lead in
these Labours, affords me an Opportunity of
paying a just Tribute to his merits: of
General Sloper I can truly say that I never
met with a more chearful or a more active
associate in Public Business and I am
certain his noble Successor in the Mili-
tary Command, will find many Testi-
monies of his Professional Abilities in
the method of the General Arrangements
and the Precision of the Details which
he recommended. In regard to my other
associates in the Administration I may
justly observe that a difference with them
in any Public Opinion was not a dimi-
nution of Private Regard, or any Interrup-
tion to that mutual good will without
which the Operations of Government are
frustrated, if its Members differ in Dispo-
sition to each other as they must sometimes
in

in Opinions on Public Business.

We have all and mutually
the Satisfaction of having Received unani-
-mous approbation from our Employers for
our Exertions in their Service, an approbation
which cannot but bind our future unanimity in
supporting the New Administration.

Tho' I might with Justice
claim extensive Credit to the combined &
Efforts of the late Administration from their
unwearied Endeavours to ascertain with
accuracy the State of the Company's Debts, &
Incumbrances in all their Presidencies &
from their Efforts to lessen the Public Expence
and apply the existing Resources to the
most necessary Purposes with an Impar-
-tiality that has removed Distress from the
other Presidencies and raised the Credit of the
Bengal Treasury: Tho' the Goods that have
been

been provided for the Company's Markets
in Europe without any Extra Drafts on their
Credit at home cannot but meet their ap-
probation; and tho' all the Proceedings of this
Government in external and internal Ma-
nagement have been remarkably fortunate
for these Nineteen Months past Still I
must confess that only the great Lines are
adopted of that General System which
promises Happiness and Security to our
Possessions in India with a Suitable
return of advantage to Great Britain. The
administration at home has made great
Exertions and I observe with infinite Satisfac-
tion that they have felt and answered our
Call upon them to co-operate in the Public
Service# Many and very important Objects of
that Service remain yet to be regulated and
improved from home and upon the Spot I mean
particularly a mode of funding or providing
for

#See Revenue
Letter 12^{to} April
Paragraph

for the Company's Debts, a General comprehensive Plan for making their Expences in all their Settlements subordinate to their Regular Resources, and Regulations to make the movements of their Troops less expensive and more rapid.

The completion of a System connected in all its parts, and firm on the Principle of reducing the Expences of all the Presidencies and Establishments of India within the Limits of our Income is a most arduous undertaking and constantly subject to new Obstacles and successive Interruptions, yet until India is administered within the Line of this System (while the Profits of its Commerce are secured to the Parent State) India cannot be said to be well regulated or firmly held. And one of the cruel Discouragements which I have always felt, while at the head of the Company's affairs, will press continually against my Successor. I mean the
indefinite

indefinite Demands of the subordinate Presi-
dencies and the Delay and Irregularity which
are experienced in the Transmission of the
Accounts of their Expenditure as well as of those
Services for which they make general demands.

The Present Governor of Fort St. George will
execute, I am confident all that Zeal and
Ability can arrange in his Government.

Relative to Bombay it is sufficient to observe
that notwithstanding the continuance of
their Representations of their distresses and
of fresh applications for Supplies the
Account of the Amount of the Military Arrears
of their Army for the Service of the late War
has not been hitherto transmitted to Bengal,
tho' the Funds for discharging those Arrears
have been amply furnished without the
Introduction of a rigid System Limiting the
Expences of the other Presidencies within fixed
Bounds and these formed in some Proportion
to

to their Resources, the Labours of the Bengal Administration to lessen the Expences of the Bengal Government and to improve its Resources, are insufficient to the great Object of maintaining India on the footing of a great, general and Secure Government. I am equally apprehensive that there is an Error at home in Limiting our Expectations of aid from the Provinces of Oude, while the Diminution of our Demands does not lessen the Severity with which the Revenues will ever be collected from the Subjects of the Vizier's Government.

After these General Observations I have only to add that I will, with Pleasure, communicate to our Governor General the great Points of View in which the Interests of Great Britain in India have occasionally struck me, as they appeared to Check and to influence the Designs of Rival and other Nations

Nations in Europe. Upon this Subject my
Hopes and my wishes for the Prosperity of
the British Empire may have made me
Sanguine and perhaps speculative yet the
more I have examined the Subject the more
I am convinced that a firm hold of our
Possessions in India must operate in the
end to produce a good understanding with
the New Powers that have arisen in the
Western World, and that the Union of France
of Spain, and of Holland is to be chiefly
counteracted and dissolved in and from
India.

The Detailed and more minute
Information which I have endeavoured to
acquire and arrange - In the Revenue the
Poudary or Native Magistracy the Invest-
ment the Arrangement of Offices and the
Intelligence of the Native Courts I shall
communicate to the Governor General

Progressively

Progressively and as his time will admit
of Discussion and Explanation on each differ-
ent Head. I am happy to remark that he
will find the Public Business completely
brought up in every Department, except that
of the appeals in the Sudder Dewanny Adaw-
lat, where there are about sixty principal
Causes to be decided Measures have been
taken for ordering the different Vaqueels
to attend and it will be found, I believe,
Necessary to change one part of the Adawlat
Regulations, that which encourages Parties
to appeal and of which they avail themselves
merely to delay the Decision of Justice.

I had proposed to record upon
this occasion a Solemn Declaration relative
to the Principles upon which I had endeavored
to discharge my Duty as a Member of this
Government from the time I took my

Seat

Seat in the Council and especially while I
held the office of Governor General another
time will be more proper for such a Declara-
tion, I mean that in which I can make it
fully and conclusively.

Signed John Macpherson

(Ed. M)

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Mr. Macpherson's Minute
on the Change of Government
Cons. 12 September