

L^d Cornwallis
Calcutta - 1789.

Lord Cornwallis
Nov^r 30th 1789.

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Calcutta Nov^r 30th 1789

I have been honored with your Royal Highness's letter dated the 5th of April, which was delivered to me by M^r Burroughs, and it will most assuredly secure to him every civility and attention in my power, I must however mention that his professional situation gives him but little connexion with the Government of the Country, and his success in it must depend here as well as in England almost entirely on his own abilities.

I desired Lord Southampton to state to your Royal Highness in the strongest terms the very great concern that I felt at M^r Colebrooke's having been advised to come to this Country, on a supposition that I could even in the most moderate degree provide for him, and to express my apprehension lest it should be supposed possible that there could be a backwardness on my

part to obey your commands.

I discovered when I first came to this Country that there were many modes by which a Governor General could lavish away the Company's money to those whom he wished to oblige, and who had no connexion with the service, without much risk of a dangerous responsibility; Amongst others the Salt department alone furnished a most ample field, in which persons who could never be supposed to deal in that commodity, and who indeed were precluded by law from carrying on any traffic in it, received orders on the Salt Agents in the names of their Native servants, for large quantities of Salt at low prices, which they could immediately dispose of at a profit of from twelve to twenty per Cent.

These and all similar means of patronage I have thought it my duty to abolish, and I have done it in such a manner as to render it very dangerous for my successors to revert to them.

I cannot but lament in the particular case of Mr Colebrooke, for whom your Royal Highness appears

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to be warmly interested, that my hands are so strictly
tied; Yet when I seriously consider how impossible it
is that our affairs in this Country could prosper, if the
practice which so long prevailed was to be again revived,
of sending persons of ruined fortune to be provided for in
India, I feel it incumbent upon me during the remainder
of my stay to persevere in the principles that I have hitherto
followed, and to endeavour by that means to establish
strong and obvious checks upon the abuse of patronage
in the Governor General.

I am sensible that men who speak from what they have
formerly seen, may say in the hearing of your Royal Highness
that Lord Cornwallis might have served M^t Colebrooke,
and that if he had been in earnest he would have
found out some method of doing it, but I feel perfectly
confident that such insinuations can have no effect
upon your Royal Highness's mind, and that even if my
regulations were represented in such a light as to appear
too rigid, you would approve of a zeal which can have
no other object than the well being of a Country, in the
prosperity of which your Royal Highness is infinitely

more deeply interested than myself.

Reports have occasionally prevailed of Tippoo's hostile intentions towards us from the time of his making peace with the Marattas and Nizam Ali Khan in the beginning of the year 1787, and this year he has assembled a large body of troops with a considerable train of Artillery at Coimbatore, from whence it has been supposed that he meant either to make an irruption into the southern Provinces of the Carnatic, or the territories of our ally the Rajah of Travancore; But he disclaims any design of that nature, and professes to desire to live on friendly terms with us, and considering the formidable force which we have now in India, the connexion which subsists between us and the other principal native Powers, and the late measure adopted by the French of withdrawing their troops from this Continent, I cannot bring myself to believe that he will be mad enough to commence a war, which altho' it would be attended with a temporary inconvenience to our finances, must in all probability terminate in his

after destruction. 38517

We shall persevere in the conduct which we have hitherto observed towards him, by being careful to give him no provocation or just cause of complaint, and by convincing him that we are equally determined not to suffer any insult or encroachment to pass with impunity.

In all other quarters appearances are perfectly pacific, and your Royal Highness will be glad to hear that our credit has risen beyond our most sanguine hopes, that the Company's Bonds and Certificates all bear a premium, and that we have been enabled to cover the interest on a part of the public debt of this Government.

I am Your Royal Highness's

most Faithful

and most Devoted Servant

Cornwallis

