

# WILLIAM WATTS

MEMOIRS OF THE  
REVOLUTION IN  
BENGAL, ANNO DOM.  
1757

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**Memoirs of the Revolution  
in Bengal, Anno Dom. 1757**

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# William Watts

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### PREFACE

The Success that has every where attended the Efforts of the *British* Arms, during the Course of this just and necessary War, will render this Period of our History resplendent, even to latest Ages. It seems, therefore, requisite to give the most accurate and distinct Accounts that can be obtained of these Successes in the remoter Parts of the Globe, that the Nature and Consequences of them may be the better understood here. The People of *Britain* are as well entitled to know, and will with equal Pleasure read, what has been effected for their Service at *Bengal*, as at *Goree*; and accept as kindly the Laurels brought them from *Asia*, as those that come from *Afric* or *America*.

In this we follow only the Custom of other Nations. The *Portuguese* and the *Dutch* have not only general Histories of their Achievements in the *Indies*, and separate Accounts of their respective Settlements, but numerous Memoirs of particular Expeditions, in which they have been exceeded by the *French*. We should therefore be wanting to ourselves, if, having performed as great Things as they, and having as authentic Vouchers, we should willfully suffer the Memory of them to be lost, and the Merits of our deserving Countrymen swallowed up in Oblivion.

The following Pages will shew, how one of our finest Settlements in the *East Indies* was suddenly sacked and subverted by the Impetuosity of a young Man, intoxicated with Sovereign Power; in what Manner it was recovered and restored; the Peril to which it was again exposed from the same Person; and the Means by which it was not only rescued from a Second Destruction, but the Causes of these Calamities removed; the *British* Interest placed on a more solid Basis than ever; with additional Advantages that were never hoped; so that Stability may be truly said to have been extracted from intestine Troubles, and Public Miseries rendered the Source of Public Safety and Public Benefits.

But as these Wonders could never have been performed but by the Assistance of his Majesty's Fleets and Forces, and as this was derived from the constant and laudable Concern of the Administration, for the Fate of *British* Subjects wherever disposed, it is but a just Tribute of Gratitude to shew how Measures so wisely taken, proved so successful in the Event, that Posterity may profit by the Example, and our Trade ever meet with the like Support, under Officers (if they are to be found) of equal Abilities.

Lastly, it will appear how far the Nation has reaped the Fruits of these signal Events. The Settlement at *Calcutta* being not only effectually restored, but, as far as the Nature of Things will admit, its future Safety as effectually secured, the Honour of the *British* Name repaired, and the Terror of her Arms diffused throughout the *East*. The Fortunes of *British* Subjects, ruined in the first Calamity, unprovided for in the first Treaty, entirely recovered by the Second; many of which being now brought over, are actually vested in the Funds or Lands of *Great Britain*.

## MEMOIRS OF THE Revolution in *BENGAL*

The late Revolution in *Bengal* is so extraordinary in its Nature, of such immediate Consequence to the *East India* Company, and may possibly be of such Importance to the Nation, that a short and perspicuous Relation of this memorable Transaction cannot but be acceptable to the Public. Such a Relation will give a distinct Idea of Things, as to which the World has hitherto had but confused Notions; dispose all Events relating thereto in their proper Places, so that their Motives and Consequences may be clearly understood; and supply those Chasms, that disturb the Order and destroy the Connection between the Narratives which have been written occasionally of particular Points of Fact. Besides, it will explain the Conduct of those who have been chiefly instrumental in bringing such an hazardous, as well as arduous Attempt as this to a happy Conclusion; will shew why it was thought necessary, and on what Account it was originally undertaken; the many, and some of them formidable, Obstacles that were in the Way; and how these were either gradually removed, or gloriously overcome. In a Word, when thoroughly and circumstantially explained, it will open as singular and surprizing a Scene to the View of the inquisitive and judicious Reader, as perhaps he will find in any History respecting our own Times, which, let me have Leave to say, are those that concern us most.

But previous to the Narrative, it will be expedient to give a concise Account of the Inhabitants, and the State of the Government in that Country, where this surprizing Political Catastrophe fell out; and without being well acquainted with which, these succinct Memoirs would not only be less intelligible, but, which is yet worse, would become also very liable to be misunderstood. The Nature of Things depends on their Properties, alike discernable by all who will examine them with equal Care, and with the same Degree of Attention. But the Nature of Facts is determined by the Circumstances that attend them; and if these be not fairly and fully represented, they must be falsely, or at least imperfectly apprehended. In Cases relative to the Alteration of States, a bare Recital of Events establishes only what Alteration they produced, and does not at all inform us to what the Change was owing; gives us no Grounds to conclude, as to the Advantages or Disadvantages flowing from such a Mutation, and does not furnish us with the Means of framing any probable Conjecture as to the Stability or Instability of the New Government.

The two great Nations, inhabiting this Part of the *Indies*, differ widely from each other in their Complexions, Language, Manners, Disposition, and Religion. The *Moguls* (*Moghuls*) who are commonly called *Moors* or *Moormen*, are a robust, stately, and, in respect to the original Natives, a fair People. They speak what the *English* in *India* commonly call the *Moors* Tongue, which is in truth the *Persian*, or at least a Dialect of the *Persian*. They are naturally vain, affect Shew and Pomp in every thing, are much addicted to Luxury, fierce, oppressive, and, for the most part, very rapacious. In respect to Religion, they are *Mohammedans*; the common Sort of the Sect of *Omar* (in which they agree with the *Turks*), but those of Superior Rank are mostly of the Sect of *Ali* (which is followed by the *Persians*), and some affect to be very devout. These have the Dominion, and are possessed of all the Offices of Trust and Power, in virtue of their Descent from the *Moguls*, whose Empire was established by *Timûr*, commonly called *Tamerlane* in this Country; but they are now a very mixed People, composed of *Tartars*, *Arabs*, and *Persians*; more especially of the last mentioned Nation; who for various Reasons have quitted their own Country, but chiefly for the Sake of that Favour and Preferment, which for many Ages they have met with at the Court of (*Dehli*) *Delly*. The *Gentooes*, or Native *Indians*, are of a swarthy Aspect, as their proper Appellation *Hindu* implies; less warlike but more active and industrious than the *Moors*. They are a mild, subtle, frugal Race of Men, exceedingly superstitious, submissive in appearance, but naturally jealous, suspicious, and perfidious; which is principally owing to that abject Slavery they are kept in by the *Moors*; and their Vices are such as innate Cunning, of which they have a great deal, suggests to counteract those of their Masters. They

are divided into several Casts or Tribes, of which the most noble is that of the *Bramins*, and there are also several Casts of these. Their Religion is *Paganism*, gross and absurd among the Vulgar, but not so amongst the wiser and better Sort. These Characters are not drawn through any Spirit of Prejudice or Partiality, but from Experience and Observation, and the Faults of both do not so much arise from any Want of Parts, or Defect in their natural Talents, as from their respective Conditions, and the barbarous Severity and perpetual Instability of their Governments.

The *Mogul*, or, as we commonly call him, the *Great Mogul*, is, according to the Constitution of *Indostan*, if Despotism can with any Propriety be stiled a Constitution, as absolute as a Monarch can be. He is the sole Possessor of Property, the single Fountain of Honour, and the supreme Oracle of Justice. The whole Country belongs to him; all Honours are Personal, are bestowed by his Bounty, and resumed at his Pleasure; his Subjects having no other Laws than the Dictates of his Will. The Omrahs, or Great Lords of his Court, who discharge the high Offices in his Household, exercise the Functions of Ministers of State, or hold superior Commands in his Armies, are all Creatures of his own, and so are the Governors of Provinces, stiled in the Language of the Country *Nabobs*, who have again lesser Governments, to which they appoint, called *Phousdaries*. Thus things actually stood under the long Reign of *Aurengzebe*, and under the short one of his Son; but since the Days of his unfortunate Grandson, *Mohammed Shah*, who was dethroned, and restored by *Thamas Kouli Khan*, the *Moguls* are no more than Shadows of what they were; and their Prerogatives become rather Sounds than Substance. Those Emirs or Nabobs, who govern great Provinces, are stiled Subahs, which imports the same as Lord-Lieutenants or Vice-Roys. These Vice-Roys have ever held their Provinces of the Mogul, by rendering him a yearly Tribute, and furnishing their Contingent of Troops, when demanded for his Service; each of them exacting the like Services from their subordinate Governments; in both the Nabobs and Phousdars were supreme, and executed a kind of Sovereign Authority, subject only to those from whom it was delegated, and by whom it might be again taken away when they thought fit. But now they affect a kind of Independence, send their Tribute to Court when they esteem it convenient, and that is but seldom: and devolve their Employments on their Heirs, who having immediate Possession of the Means, find no great Difficulty in getting themselves confirmed, by making proper Presents at *Delly*. If the Mogul attempts to depose any of them, the Person to whom he gives the Commission must raise an Army, and force a Passage to the Government bestowed upon him with his Sword. The same thing happens with regard to the Phousdars, removed by the Suba's; and hence the Confusions that ensue, whenever the Pretenders to the same Post (who are also sometimes supported, as their Interest leads them, by the different trading Nations upon the Coast) to gratify their Ambition, create implacable, ruinous, and endless civil Wars.

As to the *Gentoows*, though Multitudes of them live in the Cities and Provinces governed by the Officers of the Mogul, yet in the mountainous Countries, and in some others, there are many who still maintain their Freedom, or rather are Slaves to Princes of their own, stiled Rajahs, amongst whom the Mahah Rajah, or King of the Marattes, is the most powerful. His Subjects inhabit the Mountains to the South-East of *Goa*, and he has sometimes brought Armies of one Hundred, and sometimes of two Hundred Thousand Men into the Field, composed mostly of Horse. These, as well as the Troops of the lesser Rajahs, of whom there are many, are employed chiefly in predatory Expeditions, and by making very rapid Incursions, and no less rapid Retreats, do a great deal of Mischief in a very little time. This has induced some of the wisest amongst the Mogul Governors to consent to the Payment of an annual Tribute, stiled the Chout, amounting to a fourth Part of the Revenue of the Province, to prevent these Inroads. The Nabobs likewise frequently entertain the Troops of these Rajahs in Pay, in order to increase the Strength of their own Armies. From this concise Account of Things, it will sufficiently appear, that the Power of the Mogul is rather nominal than real; that a kind of Anarchy reigns through the Country; and that where there is any Thing that resembles ever so imperfectly a Form of Government, it has Force for its Basis, is supported by Fraud, and that in Fact there is hardly any such thing as legal Authority subsisting in any Part of the Empire; so that to measure the

Rectitude of Men's Actions in such a Country as this, and in relation to such Governors as these, by the same Rules that take Place under regular Establishments, where Laws are settled and known, and where Justice is duly administred, is not at all founded either in Reason or Equity.

The English established their Presidency at *Calcutta*, towards the Close of the last Century, in virtue of a Phirmaund (Firmân) from the famous *Aurengzebe*, who much extended the Bounds of the Empire on this Side. His Firmân was confirmed, and the Privileges of the *East India* Company much augmented by his great Grandson *Mohammed Furruksîr*. It is therefore indubitable, that having these Concessions made to them in the most ample and honourable Manner, and when the *Mogul* Empire was in its most flourishing Condition, the *English* Nation had as firm and solid a Right to their Possessions and Immunities as that Constitution could give. They were not therefore certainly to be disturbed or controuled by the Governor of the Province, while they behaved themselves peaceably and properly towards him.

The Company and the Servants of the Company had strictly observed the Terms upon which they were bestowed, and were so modest, or rather so cautious, as to keep much within the Bounds of those Concessions, and chose rather to wave some of their Rights than run the Hazard, under so unsettled a Government, of affording any Colour of Complaint. The same Spirit prevailed; the same Care was taken in all the Factories subordinate to this Presidency. When Injuries were done them, they applied to the Suba's for Relief; when the Officers of those Vice-Roys, either with or without their Knowledge, ventured upon Exactions, they proceeded by Remonstrance. If this had its Effect, they thought themselves happy; if not, they bore it with Patience, of which many Instances might be given. They knew very well that Trade was their Business, and that Disputes with the Country Government must be detrimental to their Interests; and therefore studied to avoid them. That this was really the Case, that they had no ambitious Views, that they had not the smallest Intention to perplex or to interfere with the late Suba, appears to Demonstration, from his not attempting to fix any such thing upon them; and still more so, from the Condition in which he found them.

The old Suba of the three Provinces of *Bengal*, *Bahar*, and *Orixa*, who had advanced himself, and seized that Dignity in the usual Way, by a fortunate Audacity, sticking at nothing to gratify his Thirst for Power, *Aliverdy Cawn*, died much advanced in Years, *April* the 9th, 1756, and was succeeded by his adopted Son *Suraja Dowlat* (*Sur Rajah al Dowlat*) who began his Administration with Acts of Violence, and Breach of Faith to some of his own Family; and by that time he had been a Month in Possession of the high Office he assumed, manifested his Aversion to the *English*.

On what his Resentment to the *British* Nation was founded, he was himself at a Loss to say; and the trivial, inconsistent, and in various respects ill-grounded Pretences, he afterwards suggested, as the Motives to his Conduct, evidently shew they were contrived rather to hide, than to declare the Intentions from which he really acted. It has been asserted, and very probably not without sufficient Foundation, that some who knew his violent and rapacious Disposition, made their Court to him, by representing, that the *Europeans* settled in the Provinces he possessed were immensely rich; that he might well expect considerable Sums from them to merit his Favour and Protection upon his Accession to the Government; that he had a Force much more than was adequate to the crushing them absolutely, if he so pleased; that by compelling them, under Colour of their coming as Merchants only into *Indostan*, to desist from raising any new Fortifications, he would have them always at his Mercy; and that in order to succeed effectually, and with little Trouble, he should, to prevent their making it a common Cause, break only with one Nation at a time; and first with the *British*, who could pay him best, and whose Submission would prove an effectual Precedent to the *French* and *Dutch*. It is not unlikely, that the Authors of this Advice might also undertake to negotiate a Compromise at a proper Juncture. This, however, is certain; that, before he proceeded to Hostilities, he had determined to reduce *Calcutta*, and had taken all his Measures for that Purpose, and disposed his Instruments properly with that View.

*Cassimbuzar* being situated, as it were, at his Door, was of course the first attacked. He caused the Place to be invested on the Twenty-second of *May*, by a numerous Body of Troops, and then invited Mr. *Watts*, who was Chief of the Factory, to a Conference, upon a Safe-Conduct. As the Place (in the Opinion of the best Judges) was indefensible, and if it had been defensible, was without a Garrison; as in point of Ceremony it was the usual Custom for the Chief of that Factory to compliment every new Suba on his assuming that Office, and Mr. *Watts* had all imaginable Reason to hope a good Reception, he accepted that Invitation, and went to the Suba's Camp, where, contrary to his Faith, and in Breach of those Engagements which are in that Country held sacred, he seized and detained him, till by pursuing the same Conduct, and intermixing Fraud and Force against those who had not the Means, and perhaps were doubtful whether they had any Authority to resist, he possessed himself of *Cassimbuzar*, on the fourth of *June*, and then made no farther Secret of his Design to deprive the *English* of all their Settlements, to which, according to the Constitution of the *Mogul* Empire, they had a much better Right than he had to his Dominions. Thus the Troubles of *Bengal* were begun by him in whose Ruin they ended.

This Step taken, his next Enterprize was directly against *Calcutta*; to reduce which, the Suba marched with an Army of Seventy thousand Men, and, when he became Master of it, acted with a Degree of insolent Cruelty, of which the World is too well apprized already, to need any Detail of it here. Let it suffice then to say, that the Suba wreaked his Malice, for Vengeance it could not be stiled, upon a Multitude of innocent People, who had never given him the smallest Offence. Having destroyed the Place, recalled, and then again dispersed the Inhabitants, and with the same lawless Violence extorted large Sums from the *French* and *Dutch* Factories, that he might seem to manifest a general Distaste to *Europeans*, he returned to *Muxadavad* in Triumph.

He had full five Months from this Period to recollect himself, and to consider the Effects of these bold and arbitrary Proceedings, and in which he might have concerted either the Means of restoring the Peace of the Province, or of fortifying his own Strength in such a manner as to be able to make Head against all his Enemies; for he began to find, that besides those this wanton Exercise of his Power had excited, he had several amongst such as had been subject to the Authority, and even sincerely attached to the Person of his Predecessor. But his extreme Haughtiness, and his perpetual Suspicions, joined to the natural Mutability of his Temper, and Want of Experience, being a very young Man, rendered him equally incapable of correcting past Errors, or of digesting any well-connected Plan, and supporting it with that Firmness, without which Success is not to be expected. Sometimes obstinate, mostly irresolute, he forfeited equally the Esteem of Foreigners and Neighbours; and by an unaccountable Compound of Fickleness and Severity, lost the Confidence of all, and excited the Secret Hatred of most of those who were about him.

On the Fifth of *December* Admiral *Watson* anchored with his Squadron in *Ballasore* Road, to which Place Mr. *Watts* and Mr. *Becher*, both Gentlemen of the Council, were sent to congratulate his Arrival, and to acquaint him with the Situation of their Affairs; Mr. *Watts* having been released by the Nabob in *July*. Ten Days after the Squadron arrived at *Fulta*, where, without Loss of Time, Measures were concerted for retrieving the Honour of the *English* Nation, and restoring the Affairs of the Company. The Force was not great, but it was directed by Men of determined Courage, and of distinguished Capacities. Admiral *Watson*, and the Commander in Chief of the Land Forces, Colonel *Clive*, who, after performing Wonders in other Parts of the *Indies*, came to perform still greater Wonders here, and brought with him a Reputation that abundantly supplied the Want of Numbers. On the Twenty-eighth, the Fleet proceeded up the River. On the Twenty-ninth, Colonel *Clive* landed; and the very next Day, with the Assistance of the Squadron, made himself Master of the Fort of *Busbudgia*; which, though a Place of great Strength, if it had been well defended, was taken with little Loss, and proved the happy Omen of all the mighty Things which afterwards followed.

On New-Year's-Day, 1757, some of his Majesty's Ships cannonaded the Batteries, which had been constructed by the Enemy for the Defence of *Calcutta*, where they had a considerable Force;

and this with such Success, that when the Troops debarked, they were abandoned. On the Second, the *English* re-possessed themselves of their demolished Settlement; finding in the Fort, as they had done on the Batteries, a numerous Artillery left behind, by those, who had not either Skill or Courage to use them. After this Success, it was resolved to proceed up the River to *Hughley*, a very populous Town, full of Warehouses and Magazines; and in that, as well as other respects, a Place of Consequence; and so much the safer from our Naval Force, as it could not be reached by large Ships. On the Fifth, Captain *Smith* in the *Bridgewater*, and the Sloop of War, anchored within Reach, and fired warmly upon the Town; and being seconded by all the armed Boats in the Fleet, it was very soon reduced. The better to distress the Enemy, the more to alarm the Province, and to work upon the Suba's governing Passion, Fear; Orders were given, though with much Reluctance, for burning the Houses, and for destroying, particularly, all the Magazines on both Sides of the River; which Orders were very punctually executed, and thereby speedily produced the desired Effects.

Both Vice-Admiral *Watson* and Colonel *Clive* had written, towards the Close of the preceding Year, in as civil and polite Terms to the Suba, as the Circumstances of Things would allow, with a View to bring about a Treaty. But that Prince, who had an Army about him, and whose Resentments ran as high as ever, was either not inclined, or did not care to shew an Inclination, to come to any Terms. It was this, that made the Expedition to *Hughley* requisite; and upon the Loss of that, and the Supplies he had there, his Confidence immediately abated, and he condescended to answer the Letters, affirming that he had already written, but that he had Reason to believe, those Letters had not been delivered. Yet even now, when he found it was necessary to offer a Negotiation, and to express a Willingness to reinstate the Company in their Factories, he added, as if requisite to support his Character, that if the *English* thought they could reap greater Benefits by pursuing the War, they might still proceed in their military Operations; as if, by this Appearance of Indifference, he could conceal the Terror he was under, from what had already happened. To support this Air of Intrepidity, he made, at the same Time, a Motion with his Army towards *Calcutta*.

Colonel *Clive* having communicated these Proposals to the Select Committee, entrusted with the Management of the Affairs of the Factory, they sent Messieurs *Walsh* and *Scrafton*, as Deputies, to the Camp of the Suba, who, either deceived by this into an Opinion that he was still formidable to the *English*, or desirous of imposing upon the Deputies, behaved towards them with such a Mixture of Haughtiness and Contempt, as gave little Hopes of their making any great Progress in their Business; and therefore, after some Delay, the Vice-Admiral and the Colonel were obliged to resume their former Measures, and to think of making a fresh Impression on the Suba, that might convince him, he had as much to dread from the Land-Forces as the Fleet. In order to this, it was concerted, that a Detachment of Seamen, commanded by Captain *Warwick*, should land and join the Army, and that Colonel *Clive* should then force the Nabob's Camp. The Captain accordingly debarked, upon the Fifth of *February*, about One in the Morning: At Two they came up with the Forces, which were under Arms. By Three, every Thing was in Order, and they began to move towards the Enemy; the Sailors attending the Train, which consisted of Six Field Pieces, and one Haubitzer. About Five, the Action began, and the Artillery playing on the Right and Left, Colonel *Clive* marched his Troops directly through the Camp of the Suba; though he had between Forty and Fifty thousand Men, and obliged him, with great Loss, to dislodge, and even to abandon some of the Posts that he took after his Retreat; and this, with very little Detriment to his very small Army, not above Forty Men being killed, and not so many as Seventy wounded. This brisk Attack, seconded by a Letter from Vice-Admiral *Watson*, intimating, that this was a Specimen only of what the *British* Arms, when provoked, could perform, answered the Intention perfectly. The Suba immediately desired to renew the Negotiation, which went on with such Alacrity, that it was concluded and signed upon the Ninth, by which an end was put to a War, that had subsisted about Nine Months. This Treaty was conceived in the following Terms.

I. Whatever Rights and Privileges the King has granted the *English* Company, in their Phirmaund, and the Hushulhoorums sent from *Delly*, shall not be disputed, or taken from them; and

the Immunities therein mentioned, be acknowledged and stand good. Whatever Villages are given the Company by the Phirmaund, shall likewise be granted, notwithstanding they have been denied by former Subahs. The Zemindars of those Villages not to be hurt or displaced, without Cause.

### **Signed by the Nabob, in his own Hand**

*I agree to the Terms of the Phirmaund.*

II. All Goods passing and repassing through the Country, by Land or Water, with *English* Dusticks, shall be exempt from any Tax, Fee, or Imposition whatever.

*I agree to this.*

III. All the Company's Factories, seized by the Nabob, shall be returned. All Monies, Goods, and Effects, belonging to the Company, their Servants and Tenants, and which have been seized and taken by the Nabob, shall be restored; what has been plundered and pillaged by his People, made good by the Payment of such a Sum of Money, as his Justice shall think reasonable.

*I agree to restore whatever has been seized and taken by my Orders, and accounted for in my Sincary.*

IV. That we have Permission to fortify *Calcutta*, in such Manner as we may think proper, without Interruption.

*I consent to this.*

V. That we shall have Liberty to coin Siccas, both of Gold and Silver, of equal Weight and Fineness with those of *Muxadavad*, which shall pass in the Provinces.

*I consent to the English Company's coining their own Imports of Bullion and Gold into Siccas.*

VI. That a Treaty shall be ratified, by Signing and Sealing, and swearing to abide by the Articles therein contained; not only by the Nabob, but his principal Officers and Ministers.

*I have sealed and signed the Articles, before the Presence of God.*

VII. That Admiral *Watson* and Colonel *Clive*, on the Part and Behalf of the *English* Nation, and of the Company, do agree to live in a good Understanding with the Nabob, to put an End to these Troubles, and to be in Friendship with him, while these Articles are performed and observed by the Nabob.

*I have sealed and signed the foregoing Articles, upon these Terms, that if the Governor and Council will sign and seal them, with the Company's Seal, and will swear to the Performance on their Part, I then consent and agree to them.*

In this Treaty, the intelligent Reader will see, there were Three great Points sufficiently explained, to shew the Injustice and Oppression of the Suba, in his Attack upon the *English* Settlements, even upon Reflection in his own Opinion, tho' far from being as conclusive in respect to the Remedies and Indemnifications, that, in consequence of so full a Declaration, were to be procured. The First regarded the Possessions, Immunities, and Privileges, conceded to the *East India* Company, by the Royal Phirmaund, which *Suraja Dowlat* acknowledged to have violated, promised Restitution, and undertook, in the most solemn Manner, not to invade them again. But as this was conceived only in general Terms, these Rights, and the Limits of their respective Possessions, required a thorough Discussion. The next was, as to the Fortifications of *Calcutta*; the Legality and Expediency of which he now admitted in their utmost Extent, as being plainly necessary to the Security of the Place, the *British* Inhabitants, and even of the *Mogul's* Subjects, living under its Protection; and to this was added, the Coinage of their own Imports, in Gold and Silver, to which they had always a Right, though it had not been exercised. The last was, the full and immediate Compensation, which he stipulated, for

all the Damages the Company, and those dependent upon it, had sustained; but which he contracted only to make, so far as the Produce of the Plunder should appear to have come into his Hands. It was evident, therefore, that, though in Words and in Appearance much had been obtained by the Peace, this still depended, in a great Measure, as to the most material Part, the Performance, on the proper Settling of these Articles, and the Liquidation of the Damages, in reference to which, the Sincerity of the Suba's Intention, and his Readiness to execute what he had undertaken, was almost the sole Security. In order to adjust these Points, without which the Treaty was of very little Consequence to those ruined and undone by the War, the Select Committee very properly made choice of Mr. *William Watts*, who had been their Chief at *Cassimbuzar*, who was one of the Members of that Committee, a Person well known to the Nabob, and who had been, as the Suba himself owned, the first innocent and causeless Victim to his Resentment, or rather Caprice. His Acceptance of this Commission, by which he was again to put himself into the Power of this unsteady Prince, in so critical a Conjunction, and charged with so troublesome and intricate a Negotiation, was a very full Proof of his Fidelity to, and Zeal for, the Interests of the Company; as it likewise was an evident Testimony of the good Opinion of his Associates; who, upon mature Deliberation, invested him solely with so great a Trust.

He was, indeed, in every respect, fittest for this Employment (had there been any Competitor); an Employment, by far the weightiest, and of the most Consequence, of any in *Bengal*. He had been many Years in the Country; was well acquainted with the Language, as well as accustomed to the Manners and Disposition of the Inhabitants; was much esteemed, and had many Connections with them. He understood their Politics also, at least as much as such fluctuating Politics as theirs could be understood; the true Interest of the Province, and the Constitution of *Indostan* in general, and the State of the neighbouring Governments in particular. Besides, he was personally known to all the Ministers, and had received very singular Marks of Esteem from the Suba himself. Add to all this, that the Company, in case of the Death or Resignation of Mr. *Drake*, had appointed this Gentleman to the Government of *Calcutta*, which, taken together, proves, that this Choice was not the Work of Chance or Favour, but proceeded from mature Deliberation, and a just Regard to the Consequence of that Negotiation, in which he was to be employed.

The Perplexities springing from such a Variety and Complication of Matters that were to be adjusted, the Mutability of the Suba's Nature, and his Want of Judgment and Experience, and the Difficulties naturally arising in settling the Concessions, which had been just extorted from him by Treaty, were not the only Circumstances that embarrassed this Negotiation. The *French*, perfectly well informed of every Step taken or intended, and no less skilled in the Art of Intrigue, had most effectually retained several of those whom the Suba frequently consulted, or chiefly trusted, in their Interest by gratifying them with Presents. They had still a more powerful Tie on them than this, being in Debt Thirteen Lack of Rupees, or upwards of One hundred and Sixty thousand Pounds Sterling, to *Juggut Seat*, the greatest Banker in the Empire of *Indostan*, and the Second in Power in *Bengal*; to whose Advice for many Years past the Subas paid the greatest Attention. They very well knew, that Men might be false to their Benefactors; but they rightly judged, that even the worst of Men, more especially when avaricious, would be true, where they could not possibly be false, without betraying their own Interest. Under Circumstances like these, there was no Probability, indeed there was no Possibility, of so much as attempting any Thing, but in the Mode of the Court; that is, by opposing Corruption to Corruption, making Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and getting upon even Ground with those, with whom they were obliged to contend.

But in order to understand the whole of this Matter thoroughly, we must consider the State that Affairs were then in, with respect to the two contending Nations. Advice of the breaking out of the War, between *Great Britain* and *France*, arrived in *India*, the very Day after the Treaty was concluded with the Suba; and of course opened a new Scene. From being commercial and political Rivals, we were now become open Enemies; a Circumstance which we were very sure the *French* would improve, and which therefore it was our Duty not to neglect. We had at present a Fleet and an

Army; for however small they might be, as Matters stood, they both deserved those Titles, and this gave us great Advantages. On the other Hand, the former was soon to quit the Coast, and perhaps Part of the latter, which was a great Disadvantage. The capital Point, therefore, was to avail ourselves of them, while they remained, so as to settle Things upon a stable Foundation, with regard to the *French*, as well as to the Nabob, before the Season came in which the Fleet was to return. In respect to the former, the Admiral and Colonel *Clive*, with the Assistance of the Select Committee, were to take the best Measures they could; and Mr. *Watts* was to regulate the latter; and his Success, or Want of Success, must have apparently had such an Influence upon the whole, that the Reader most certainly needs not be informed, how much depended upon his Courage, Conduct, and Capacity.

The Interest the *French* had in the Court of the Suba, and their Method of acquiring it, have been already stated. This they would have understood to be barely for their own Support and Security; but however, there were some Surmises, that it was also, and had ever been, not a little to our Prejudice. It was whispered, that the Favour shewn them, in Comparison of the *Dutch*

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