

GENERAL SIR CHARLES NAPIER, AND THE DIRECTORS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.



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COMPANY.**

INTRODUCTION.

This report of the debate on Mr. H. Bruce's motion in the House of Commons, is published to shew how true British feeling rises against foul intrigue. It is published also, with the accompanying documents and comments, to display the enmity of those men who drove Sir Charles Napier from India with scoffs and falsehoods, because he was earnestly working to give health and virtue to a decaying system of government. He was far-sighted as to coming calamities; able and energetic to forestall them with fitting remedies. His enemies and detractors were perverse. They had their way: twice they drove him from his beneficent labors; and so doing have brought upon India misery dire and dreadful—a surging sea of blood, the groans of strong men, the shrieks of women and children, tortured, murdered! With horror and gloom they have overspread the land, and the end is dark and uncertain! Yet, with this weight of hell upon their conscience, they have not scrupled again to assail the memory of the man who strived so earnestly to save England from the misery which now weighing her down, is a consequence of their perverseness.

The story of the intrigue will be told by the documents as they are arranged in this pamphlet. When an exposure was menaced by Mr. Bruce, the leading Directors of the East India Company endeavored to evade it by cajolery, pretending that nothing inimical to Sir Charles Napier was designed. That failing, they sought to thwart it by declaring that the papers moved for could not be found—making the deceit a reality, by searching for Calcutta records in the Bombay archives; and for Bombay documents in the Calcutta repository. Industrious mis-seekers Lastly, they attempted to menace, intimating that, if the motion was persisted in, counter-statements, adverse to Sir Charles Napier, would be brought forward.

When these contemptible arts failed; when Mr. Bruce with steady front rose in the House to expose and denounce the foul intrigue; the three Directors in Parliament—Mangles, Sykes, and Willoughby — Mangles the chairman, and Colonel Sykes, big talkers beforehand, slunk out of the house, leaving Willoughby alone to endure the crushing weight of Mr. Bruce's facts, the generous indignation of Sir William Codrington, the keenly home-pressed truths of Mr. Isaac Butt, and the fiery invective of Mr. Roebuck. How he sped these pages will declare, so far as words go; but how he stuttered in his reply; how he cowered-beneath Roebuck's lean pointed finger, giving mark and direction to a tongue of flame, those who were eyewitnesses may say—it was a pitiable sight!

The first document in this pamphlet is a letter from Sir Charles Napier, exposing the nature and commencement of the intrigue, as concocted by two members of the Bombay Government Council – Reid and Crawford. And to them may now be added Willoughby; because, as secretary of the Council at the time, he must have been cognizant of, and assisted to draw up their foul minute. Moreover, as will be seen, he adopted and defended the most offensive of its slanderous falsehoods.

* * * * *

Sir Charles Napier to _____

March 24th, 1846,

I won't write to you of my hatreds, my enemies, and my political aversions: it is foolish. But when a man is daily wasting the little existence he has left to do right, and to serve people, and is struck down at every step by villains, and amongst them by those he is laboring to serve, it is not easy to address one with whom he has no reserve and conceal the fire which consumes him. There is no falsehood that the Indian Press—with one exception or two—does not proclaim against me! One mass of spite, jealousy, malice, hatred, fury, is poured out upon me and all I do.

The usual truism of the wise is not wanting, upon every occasion,—' you should despise these rascals,' and such like saws, served up in fifty forms, like a mutton chop by a French cook. The answer to this is—why do you, good sir, cry out if your leg is crushed by a dung cart? Oh! that is different from newspaper abuse; nobody minds what a newspaper says.' Don't they? *The Bombay Times*¹ asserted, with details, that I was driving the people mad with excessive taxation; that I had even dared to re-establish the tax called transit duty. And these assertions were accompanied with all sorts of gross abuse, such as —'The sordid and shameless leader of Scinde;' 'The Autocrat of Scinde;' 'The Scinde Czar;' 'The unscrupulous murderer of the soldiers of the 78th and 28th Regiments;' 'The liar at the head of the Scinde Government;' and so forth.

The whole of India was thus kept ringing for several months with my infamous attempts to make up a sham revenue to the destruction of the people and the country. But as I never put a single tax on the people of Scinde, good, bad, or indifferent, never laid a mite upon anything, and took off a great number of taxes, I, of course, laughed at what I knew must in due time be found a pure invention, like the people Herschell was said to have seen in the moon. But how could I laugh when, after India had resounded

¹ The most scurrilous paper that ever disgraced even the Indian press, so notorious for scurrility; it was conducted by the Dr. Buist mentioned in the debate.

with these falsehoods, I found, by the mistake of a clerk at Calcutta², that the Bombay Government had sent a *secret note of Council* to be registered there against me,—accusing me of making up a false revenue; not only by levying taxes, but more than that, for if I recollect aright they only hinted at that: they said I was doing this by a monopoly of grain, the price of which I raised by my command of the market, and sold dear to the troops, so as to make the loss fall on the Bombay Government! In short, of an act so very infamous, that had there been one iota of truth in it, hanging would be too good for me!

Had the clerk not made this mistake, I should have had, in both the Bombay and Calcutta archives, a heinous crime registered against me by my bitter enemies, which hereafter might be brought to light and given to the world when I am no more, as an irrerragable proof of my bad conduct! And this done too, so ingeniously by the two members of Council, who are old practical merchants and accountants, that it took me a good week's hard work to prove the villainy; and that so far from trying to increase the expense of feeding the troops, if there is one thing to which I have more devoted myself than to another, for the three years I have ruled Scinde, it has been to reduce the price of grain to all by destroying monopoly, and to lighten the expense of the troops to the public revenue.

This is not all. The secret minute was recorded, and the authors of it chuckled in their sleeves at having shot their assassin bold; but not content with this, they manufactured their minute into an article for Dr. Buist's paper, the words hardly changed; and I, not knowing either its source or of the minute in Council, laughed or swore, probably the latter, at the usual attempt of Buist to make me out a scoundrel.

Well, I answered the minute, and gave it to the Council pretty tightly, disproving by document after document, every lie they told. Was this all the result of the lies of the Bombay minute about taxes. No! Enough in all conscience, but not all. I got a letter from Lord Ripon, to say he heard this, but hoped it was not true, and then giving me all reasons to prove that I ought not to put on the transit duties again—shewing that he was perfectly satisfied I had, as you say to a naughty child, I hope you have not been doing so when you know it has. Again a day was lost to answer him, and my work, real work, thrust in arrear. And what work! I had long trials to read, and to decide upon putting five men to death, all requiring calm thought and great resolution not to err! And at such a time, with my head in agony, my nerves torn, my whole mind and body on the rack to do right in the sight of God, I was to force myself down to think, and write, and dwell upon villainy and folly past all belief, and beyond my power to chastise! Fortunate that I escape from their power who are profiting by my ebbing life, and

² This clerk, either by mistake or disgust at the foulness, sent a copy of the minute concocted at Bombay, and designed to be kept secret, to Sir Charles Napier.

seeking my destruction: and all this in a climate proverbial for destroying the energy of mind and body ! and at sixty-four!

But to go on with my story. No sooner had I answered Lord Ripon, and thought I had been tormented enough by Dr. Buist's lie about the taxes, when down comes from Calcutta, a letter from the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, Lord Ripon's colleagues, to know why I had restored the transit duty which they heard I had done, from '*various sources!!*' Why, as I asked them, do they not tell me one of their various sources, that I may expose their secret informer. They won't do this; but were we in the days of Venice, and the Council of Ten, these very men would soon put me out of the way. I have now told you one of the things that happen weekly, and yet I am told – '*Don't mind newspapers!*'

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It will be noticed, that in this letter Sir Charles Napier marked the intrigue as one designed to take effect, *when he should be no more*. Reader! mark the prescience with which he wrote. He died in 1853, and in 1857, twelve years after he had disproved the foul minute of the Bombay Council, we have Willoughby, the then secretary of that Council, adopting and reiterating the refuted slanders, in the House of Commons, during a debate thus brought about.

Mr. Ewart having moved a return of land tenures in India, one was laid before the House. Short and condensed, it was arranged under different heads, bearing, in capital letters, the names of the different provinces, such as Bengal, N.W. Provinces, Punjaub, Madras, Bombay; but no heading for Scinde, that would have drawn attention. Under the head of Bombay, however, without any connection whatever with *land tenures*, was foisted in a reiteration of the foul charge against Sir Charles Napier, viz. that he had monopolized the grain to sell again at famine prices! Mr. H. Bruce, the member for Merthyr Tydvil, undertook to expose this shameless renewal of falsehood; and then occurred the following debate, so honorable to the feelings and justice of the House; so damnatory for Sir Charles Napier's slanderers.

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Mr. H. A. BRUCE. Sir, I rise for the purpose of requesting the attention of the House to a matter of considerable importance, affecting as it does, not only the character of an eminent deceased public servant, but also the character of a great public body and the trustworthiness of documents furnished by them for the information of the House. It will be in the recollection of the House that on the 18th of June last, on the motion of the Honorable Member for Dumfries, a return was made on tenures of land in India by the Directors of the East India Company, in order to illustrate the subject of the growth of cotton in India, then under the consideration of the House. The return contained much

interesting matter in a small space; but, unfortunately, instead of being confined to the subject of tenures of land, matter utterly irrelevant had been introduced into it, for the purpose, apparently, of reviving calumnies which I hoped had been forgotten, against a distinguished man whose name had been frequently mentioned in the discussion just ended – I mean the late General Sir Charles Napier.

The calumny to which I refer imputed to that gallant General, that having conquered Scinde and identified his reputation with the policy which led to that conquest, he had endeavored to enhance its value by unfair means and deceptive representations; that grain being the main revenue of Scinde, he had taken advantage of his position to sell it to a starving people at high prices; and had also supplied it to the Commissariat at exorbitant rates, and by these means given a fictitious importance to the revenues of the conquered territory. (*hear, hear.*) That was the calumny. I will now read the extract from the return of which I complain: –

In Scinde, not many years ago, the revenue throughout was collected in grain by actual division of the crop; the grain was then sold by GG reserved auction at artificially high, and sometimes even at famine prices, by the Government, as the great grain dealers of the country. The GG natural condition of the market thus directly interfered with by the Government, was yet further forced by the circumstance of the Commissariat drawing the grain required for the troops at nominal prices, from the Government grain stores. Great progress has been made in superseding this objectionable system by cash GG assessments, which have already been introduced into several districts of the Province. In the Shikarpoor collectorate generally, but in Lark Nana particularly, the advantages of a light and fairly distributed cash assessment have been most marked and beneficial. The tax-payers GG are contented, and the Government demand is GG readily responded to.

The House will observe that there is no connection whatever between the passage I have quoted, which relates exclusively to the manner of dealing with the revenue, and the subject of the return, which was the tenure of land. Then why was it introduced for the purpose, as I shall prove, of reviving a foul calumny against an obnoxious man, and of furnishing his enemies with weapons to be used in blackening his memory. Now this charge first appeared in the Bombay newspapers, and was treated with silent contempt. But (to use Sir Charles's own language) could I laugh, when after India had resounded with these falsehoods, I found, by the mistake of a Clerk in Calcutta, that the Bombay Government had sent a *secret note of Council* to be registered there against me, accusing me of making up a false revenue, not only by levying taxes, but more than that, for, if I recollect aright, they only hinted at that, they said I was doing this by a monopoly of grain, the price of which I raised by my command of the

grain, and sold dear to the troops, so as to make the loss fall on the Bombay Government! In short, of an act so infamous, that, had there been one iota of truth in it, hanging would be too good for me. I beg the special attention of the House to what follows:— Had (continues Sir Charles) the Clerk not made this mistake, I should have had in both the Bombay and Calcutta archives, a heinous crime registered against me by my bitter enemies, which might hereafter be brought to light and given to the world when I am no more, as an irrefragable proof of my bad conduct. (*hear, hear.*)

Sir Charles Napier is no more, and, as he anticipated, this miserable charge has been repeated against his memory on the authority of the Bombay archives, and has been used to justify his slander by the bitterest of his enemies. (*hear, hear.*) Well, Sir, I recently entered a notice of motion for the Dispatch of Sir Charles Napier in answer to the official charge against him, but I was assured that it could not be found. (*hear, hear.*) The answer was most full, distinct, and particular in meeting every point of the accusation against him, but, although the charge was forthcoming, the answer to it cannot be found. (*hear, hear.*) The Honorable Member for Guildford (Mr. Mangles), has informed me that this injurious paragraph was copied from a return from the Bombay Government, and that search has been made, but without success, for Sir Charles Napier's answer. I do not doubt the good faith of the India Directors nor the diligence of the search, but there is something unpleasantly suspicious in the non-appearance of this document. It was forwarded to Bombay; either it has been improperly retained there, or, if sent to this country, it has been thrown aside and lost. I will venture to say that such is not the treatment which charges made against Sir Charles Napier have received—they will all be found carefully preserved and duly ticketed, and ready for immediate reference. (*hear, hear.*)

Of the answer itself, I will pledge my word to the House that it was as full, as complete, and as satisfactory as an answer could be. In the absence of this document, let me, by the kind indulgence of the House, be permitted to bring forward some evidence on this subject, the very strongest which could be produced. Sir Charles Napier left Scinde on the 1st October, 1847, and was succeeded in the government by Mr. Pringle, a civilian. On the 31st December, 1847, Mr. Pringle made an elaborate report on the state of Scinde. With reference to Sir Charles Napier's financial policy, Mr. Pringle wrote:—

Moderation, simplicity, and equity have taken the place of rapacity, complexity, and oppression; and although there may be much room for improvement, I am inclined to think the progress hitherto would bear a very favorable comparison with that of most provinces which had been for the same time under our rule, and reflects much credit on the officers to whom it is due Mr. Pringle thus sums up his observations on Scinde:— I hope it will not be considered in excess of my province if, in concluding this report on the civil administration as I have found

it to exist, I take occasion to express the sense with which my inquiries have impressed me of the wisdom, energy, and ability with which it has been organized and directed by his Excellency the late Governor, under circumstances of considerable novelty and difficulty.

Here was direct testimony as to the character of Sir Charles Napier's financial policy. But it may be objected that this was written after only two months' experience, and that a more careful inquiry might have brought a change in Mr. Pringle's opinion. Two years afterwards, when Sir Charles Napier was appointed to the command of the Indian army, Mr. Pringle, who had no personal acquaintance with Sir Charles Napier, wrote to him as follows:—

On your fitness for the military command there is but one opinion. I speak as one who has had more than ordinary means of forming a judgment, when I say that your aid will be found not less valuable in the civil government, if your colleagues be wise enough to avail themselves of it; and I can wish nothing better for the interests of our newly-acquired provinces in the Punjab, than that they may have the benefit of the same strong and just government which was so successfully applied to the introduction of order here.

Now, let me ask, could it be credited that, if Sir Charles Napier had been guilty of the malpractices imputed to him, Mr. Pringle, who succeeded him in the government, would be found, two years after he had possessed the fullest means of acquainting him with the facts, going out of his way to express such strong opinions of the justice and energy of Sir Charles Napier's rule in Scinde (*hear, hear.*)

But the indirect evidence does not end here.

Mr. Pringle was succeeded by Mr. Frere, the present chief Commissioner of Scinde, a man whose integrity and ability are well known to many members of this House. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Frere in this country last year, and he told me that, highly as he appreciated Sir Charles Napier as a soldier, he thought his genius for civil government still more remarkable. And I was much struck with a remark of Mr. Frere, that so deeply imbued was the mind of Sir Charles Napier with the principles and practice of civil government, that he was satisfied that if he had been awakened in the middle of the night, and asked to dictate a minute on any measure of police or revenue, or any detail of civil administration, he would have done so without hesitation, in language which would not have required the slightest alteration. And Mr. Frere could hardly find words to express his sense of the tenderness, humanity, and kindness which underlay an exterior somewhat rugged, and a disposition somewhat irritable.³

³ These words seem to have been Mr. Frere's; but whether his or Mr. Bruce's they are totally at fault as to Sir Charles Napier's temper and manners. His exterior was not rugged; he was gay and kind, and cheerful, with that real politeness which springs from good feeling though too frank for mannerism: he was remarkable also for a

(hear, hear.) Sir, the facts I have brought before the House would in themselves justify the time I have occupied in refuting this official slander; but the necessity for this refutation will be still more apparent, when I read to the House an extract from a pamphlet written recently by Dr. Buist, in which he justifies all his former and present attacks on Sir Charles Napier, by quoting the very paragraph in this return of which I complain. Here are Dr. Buist's own words:—

A paper has been presented, by order of Parliament, on the Land Revenues of India, from which the following is an extract:—The parliamentary paper seems nearly a transcript of the official intimation sent formerly, and not, as asserted by mistake of the clerk, to the Governor of Scinde in 1846. It shews, that not only may we have war and conquest in India, prosecuted against all authority, but we may have cooked accounts, grain raised by monopoly to famine prices, transit duties under the most obnoxious form of taxation, without anyone having the power to punish or prevent. And then followed the extract from the return laid before the House.

The Hon. Member for Guildford informed me that a justification for this statement in the report would be found in Colonel Rathborne's evidence, as quoted by Sir George Clerk. As Colonel Rathborne had been a Collector in Scinde under Sir Charles Napier, I looked with some interest at the passage furnished me by the Hon. Gentleman. It was in these words:— The Collector was in the position of a wholesale corn-merchant, and acted precisely as me in the trade would do Of course he did, and it was Sir Charles Napier's duty as long as the revenue consisted of grain to get for it the highest market price. But that was a very different thing from forcing up prices by virtue of his position, and selling grain at fictitious prices to the Commissariat. The Commissariat accounts and the prices current of the day were still in existence, and would easily refute the latter charge. With respect to the former and more serious charge of raising unnaturally the price of grain to a starving people, it was wholly untrue. Sir Charles indeed continued the system which had long subsisted in Scinde of exacting a portion of the grain for the purposes of revenue—but he reduced the proportion—and introduced many improvements in the manner of levying it, while he encouraged the substitution of money-payments by arrangements favorable to the tax-payers.

The years succeeding the conquest were years of scarcity and suffering, for not only had agriculture been neglected during the war, but an unusual dearth produced a scanty crop, nearly all of which was devoured by a flight of locusts, which desolated Scinde in common with several other regions of Western India. But Sir Charles did his utmost to mitigate these sufferings by allowing all grain to be introduced from foreign States, such as the Punjab, Moultan and Bhawulpore, at a mere nominal duty of is. 3d. per

quaint mirthful social humor, that won upon both men and women, especially the latter, and ruggedness is certainly not what they like.

quarter, while no duty whatever was charged upon grain imported from the provinces of British India; and, as Scinde was accessible from the North by the Indus, and from the South by the sea, the neighboring province of Goojerat being the most fertile corn-growing country in India, the absurdity of supposing that he dictated prices in Scinde, while he admitted unlimited importation, is too apparent to require argument. And it is remarkable that Scinde was the only province in India in which no tax was laid upon salt. Nor would arguments be required by any of those who personally knew that great man, or had read his life, to disprove charges affecting his humanity, for if one quality more than another shone forth in his character, it was the depth and earnestness of his sympathy with the poorer classes. Yet as official authority has been given to this unjust and cruel imputation, I conceive I have only performed an act of simple justice to the memory of an illustrious public servant, when I vindicate it from charges so repugnant to his character and so destitute of truth. (*hear, hear.*)

Mr. WILLOUGHBY. - SIR, I regret very much the absence of my honorable and gallant friend, the present Chairman of the East India Board, from his place in this House during this discussion, and I also regret that I am not at this moment, but in his absence I beg to say that I think I am in a position to prove that there was nothing intentionally wrong in the report in question, the statement being taken from the Annual Report of the Bombay Government, dated December 25th, 1855. With regard to the civil government of Sir Charles Napier, I can only say he was not responsible for the system of collecting the revenue, though he might have been for the manner in which that revenue was realized. In 1854 a voluminous Blue Book on Scinde had been published; in that would be found the minute of Sir George Clerk, who had gone to Scinde to make himself acquainted with the state of that province; Sir Charles Napier was not responsible for the system which he found in force in connection with the revenue as afterwards realized. In connection with the subject, I will read an extract from the minute of Sir George Clerk, dated April 24th, 1848, in order to chew the evils that existed.

Then came the words quoted by the Honorable Member as used by Colonel Rathborne. So that it would appear that the collector managed the market for grain, over holding or letting out, as was best calculated for keeping up the prices, acting, in fact, as a wholesale corn merchant, and thereby making appear an incorrect amount of revenue. With regard to the character and conduct of the late Sir Charles Napier, I will not say that he was responsible for the abuses in the collection of the revenue, and I contend that the extracts I have quoted shew that the corn was sold out at enormous rates, thus giving a fictitious amount of revenue.

General CODRINGTON. - SIR, I cannot refrain from saying that I feel, deeply and acutely, the charges that have been heaped upon the head of Sir Charles Napier, as represented by the Honorable Member who has called the attention of the House to the subject. (*hear, hear.*) I say it is most melancholy, as well as humiliating, to the feelings of

the friends of the gallant General, who fought so long and so well on behalf of his country in almost every quarter of the globe, to have those charges against him raked up, now that he is no longer amongst us to defend himself, and when Death ought to have set a seal upon them forever. (*hear, hear.*) I contend that when such miserable charges as those now before the House were made against Sir Charles Napier, a great man, whose name was dear to every Englishman (*hear*), it was but fair to the memory of that great man, the value of whose services were never appreciated until it was too late to do so (*hear, hear*), his answer to those charges should be forthcoming. (*hear, hear.*) The House had heard the charges against Sir Charles Napier, and he would be glad to see the answer to them. (*hear, hear*). The Honorable Member who had just spoken had repeated the charges; and it was but fair to the memory of Sir Charles Napier that his answer should be produced. (*hear, hear.*) I feel satisfied that those charges could be refuted, and therefore it is melancholy to see the character and memory of so great and good a man frittered away by unsupportable charges. (*hear.*)

Mr. ROEBUCK.--SIR, I concur in every word that has fallen from the gallant General on this subject. I say with him, that it was melancholy that the character of Sir Charles Napier should be frittered away by such slanderous imputations. That character was British property, and it ought not to be so frittered away (*hear, hear*); but there were always vermin in society ready to prey upon the characters of great and good men. If there be a man who, more than another, exhibited forbearance, and gentleness, and greatness of disposition, that man was Sir Charles Napier.

He fought the battles of England in a manner that shewed his great skill and bravery, and he won for this country a renown of which she might well be proud; and when he was leaving the country, and the very people whom he had conquered, they followed him down to the river when he was going away, and shewed by their actions, their manner, and their expressions, how much they honored him, and how much they appreciated him, for the valuable services he had rendered them. (*cheers.*) They were not insensible to the evils he had on the other hand inflicted upon them in conquering them, yet, notwithstanding that, they as thoroughly were persuaded of his complete humanity; and they evinced, by their manifestations, that they regarded him not merely as a good and just governor, but as a great and distinguished soldier. (*hear, hear.*) I ask any man to read the valuable Memoir of the life of Sir Charles Napier, written by his gallant and distinguished relative, and if he would look into the last volume of it, he would see in every word he uttered the most just sentiments, and the most correct prescience of the outbreak that had lately taken place; and if the Directors of the East India Company had taken warning by what that great man had indicated to them, they might have averted those calamities. (*hear, hear.*) However, it fortunately does so happen that I hold in my hand a letter written from Colonel Rathborne to the Honorable Member for Merthyr Tydvil, upon the subject, in which that gallant officer totally repudiates the statements of Sir George Clerk. No doubt, writes Colonel Rathborne, the Honorable Member (Mr. Mangles) had the authority of Sir George Clerk

for that tissue of falsehoods called Sir George Clerk's minute; but that minute had been drawn up by the secretary of the Governor, Mr. Goldsmith, and he (Colonel Rathborne) was quite satisfied that though Sir George Clerk was made its official father, he was incapable of giving it birth, especially as regarded quoting him (Colonel Rathborne) as the authority for this charge. The note I allude to is in the following words:—

My dear Mr. BRUCE, I have just received your note, in which you inform me that Mr. Mangles intends to justify the statement as to the sale of grain to the Commissariat at fictitious prices, by the authority of Sir George Clerk, who, he says, quotes me as his authority. In reply I would merely observe that he no doubt has the authority of Sir George Clerk for the statement, because it forms one of the charges against the Scinde Government, contained in that tissue of falsehoods, called Sir George Clerk's Scinde Minute; but which, in fact, was drawn up for his signature by his then revenue secretary, Mr. Goldsmith. But though Sir George has been thus unhappily made to father official falsehoods, I am sure he is quite incapable of giving birth to any, and therefore it is impossible that he could have given me as his authority for so gross a misstatement. (*hear, hear.*)

Sir, that document speaks for itself, and the House must dispose of it according to its merits; but I must again repeat, that I quite agree with the Honorable and Gallant General, that the memory of Sir Charles Napier was the property of the British nation, and that it was the duty of the Legislature not to suffer it to be frittered away by a set of official vermin, who always lived upon the defamation of the reputations of great men. (*hear, hear.*) Sir Charles Napier had fought the battles of England against greater odds than they were ever fought against, and in worse times even than the present; and by his masterly movements in the field, and his great military skill as a General, had won a renown almost unknown amongst men. (*hear.*) More than that, he had governed the country which he conquered for England with so great equity and such extraordinary success, that he was attended down to the river where he embarked on leaving it by the men from whom he had taken that country; and homage of the highest order was thus paid to his great capacity, to his justice, to his judgment, and to his humanity. In fact, the same homage was spontaneously paid to him as was paid to a benefactor, proving that as a Civil Governor he was even a greater man than he was as a Soldier. England now knew how to appreciate his services and to bewail his loss, and therefore (*cheers*) now, when it is too late to appreciate it, we know the full value of Sir Charles Napier. I asked any man to read his life as drawn by his brother, and, looking at what had just occurred, to say whether it did not almost seem as if he possessed the gift of prophecy. (*hear.*) Every word he had told them with reference to India had been fulfilled; and had his warnings been attended to, it would not have fallen to the lot of the Chairman of the East India Company to say what had happened had come like a thunderbolt on the Government of India. (*hear, hear.*) If they had taken the warnings of this wise and farseeing man, they would have foreseen the mischief and guarded against it (*hear*). But there was that in the minds of the Home Government,—there was that in the minds of

the Government of India, — that led them to hate this great man. (*hear, hear.*) They hated him because he was a great man (*hear, hear*), for he towered above them, and shewed by the comparison their inferiority to himself; and the Government of India shewed that they hated that great man, whose memory was so foully slandered. (*loud cheers.*)

Mr. DANBY SBYMOUR.--Sir, I have but a very few words to say upon this subject. I rise merely for the purpose of correcting the statement made by his honorable friend as regarded Sir George Clerk. That gentleman, I have no hesitation in saying, is not the man to put his hand to a tissue of falsehoods; on the contrary, he had duly inquired into all the circumstances of the case. Neither was it the fact that the Governor of Bombay desired to depreciate Sir Charles Napier. I agree with all that has been said in praise of Sir Charles Napier, and I believe the paragraph which had got into the report by accident had no intention of disparaging the character of that eminent man, who stood so high in Indian history. (*hear.*)

Mr. ROEBUCS.--The words "*tissue of false hoods*" were not mine, but Colonel Rathborne's words.

Mr. DANBY SEYMOUR. - Well, be that as it may, I have only to repeat that Sir George Clerk never put his name to a document, the truth of which he did not believe, and into which he had not himself inquired. Sir George Clerk fully inquired into this subject, and it was a mistake to suppose that either he or the Bombay Government wished to depreciate the merits of Sir Charles Napier. I concur in what the honorable and learned gentleman had said as to the super-eminent merits of Sir Charles Napier. The paragraph in the return to which objection was taken had been accidentally inserted there, and I do not believe it was done with any intention of disparaging the character of the eminent man to whom it alluded. (*hear, hear.*)

MR. ISSAC BUTT.--SIR, a charge has been made against a great man in a return on the revenues of India, and Sir Charles Napier replied to that charge; but while the charge still stood, the reply was not to be found. It was on record in the life of Sir Charles Napier that he answered that charge fully, document after document, and line after line. Where was that answer 1 The charge had been reiterated, but where was the answer 1 That was not the way in which the character of a man who had served his country ought to be treated and trifled with. I therefore say that I think the House ought not to part with the subject without coming to some expression of opinion in vindication of Sir Charles Napier. (*hear, hear.*) It would appear from the discussion which has taken place upon the subject this evening that Sir Charles Napier himself, on discovering by accident the nature of the charge made against him, replied to it in words that had been published, and therefore there existed a complete documentary answer to the accusation. (*hear, hear.*) It was said this answer was lost, but as the Honorable Gentleman opposite (Mr. Willoughby) had reiterated the charge, some effort ought to be made for the production of the answer to it. I would suggest that the Honorable

Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Bruce), who said he had seen a copy of it, should send that copy to the President of the Board of Control in a private letter, desiring him to ask the Court of Directors whether it was a true copy, and that then the whole correspondence should be laid on the table of the House. I should have been content to let the matter rest on the statement of the Honorable Member near him, but the Honorable Member opposite, speaking on behalf of the East India Company, had reiterated the charge. If the charge were reiterated, the House ought to express its opinion upon it; but if it was abandoned, then I have nothing more to say. But as the Honorable Member opposite had not withdrawn the charge, and had seemed to me to reiterate it, I appeal to the President of the Board of Control to take some steps to get the document produced. I really do think that the Right Honorable Gentleman was bound to do that after what had occurred. An extract has been read from a certain "Blue Book," and commented upon the absence of the charge which was said to be lost. They had it in the life of Sir Charles Napier that he sent an answer to the Government of Bombay, refuting the charge against him; but the document which could disprove the charge was withheld. I advised my honorable friend, by whom the subject now under consideration was brought before the House, to address a communication to the Right Honorable Gentleman the President of the Board of Control, requesting him to take some steps to cause the charge against Sir Charles Napier to be produced. It was due to the defence of the memory of that maligned but gallant General that the document should be found, and orders should be sent out to India to produce it.

This terminated the discussion.

* * * * *

This debate requires few remarks; but some it does.

1. Willoughby's reassertion that the charges of monopolizing grain and selling it at famine prices, was, and is, absolutely false to the very core, and shews he was a party to the original slander. His assertion that Sir Charles Napier was not responsible for the mode of collection was also untrue. Sir. Charles Napier had despotic power, and could maintain, or abrogate, or modify the amount of taxation, and the collection of the revenue – which was paid in grain – at his pleasure. The assertion to the contrary was of a piece with the declarations that no design to vilify Sir Charles Napier existed ! to impute crime is not to vilify ! But if there was no design of that nature, how came it that the "*Homeward Mail*," an organ of the Directors, should have published about the time the return was asked for, an article expressly directed against Sir Charles Napier's government, in which, with many additional falsehoods, the very words of the Parliamentary return are used? And this was again quoted at length by Buist!

2. Colonel Sykes, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr. Mangles, speaking of the present unhappy revolt, said – Sykes that it had come like the cholera!

none knew how or where. Mangles, as noticed in the foregoing debate by Mr. Roebuck, said it had " come like a thunderbolt." Again, let Sir Charles Napier's prescience be marked and compared with these men's stolid airfrontery of declamation.

* * * * *

*Extracts from a Letter of Sir Charles Napier, 1851,
When Commander-in-Chief*

After laying down a system of military movements and defence, "*if forced to fight for life and India,*" he thus continued:—

This may seem a wild idea of danger, but it is not impossible, and we should be prepared: for if ever mischief comes to India it will "*come like a thunderbolt.*"

3. Mr. Danby Seymour's mawkish defence of his official colleague, Sir George Clerk, was in-accurate in the premises and conclusion. Sir George Clerk, he said, would never sign his name to a document he had not ascertained the truth of by inquiries, and that Sir George Clerk had not done so here.

Now, Sir George Clerk was not long enough in Scinde, nor in a state of health to ascertain personally anything about Sir Charles Napier's government accurately; nevertheless he set his name to a document drawn up by his secretary Goldsmith, a malignant partisan, and justly stigmatized by Colonel Rathborne as "*that tissue of falsehoods, called Sir George Clerk's Minute.*" Sir George Clerk has not, and as a man of honor cannot defend its foul misrepresentations.

The Directors who gave the return into which this charge of the Bombay Council was foisted, cannot find the refutation: the false charge they could find, and with stealthy foulness palmed it on the House; but the refutation they cannot find ! I can, and here give it in all integrity.

* * * * *

*Sir Charles Napier to the Governor-in-Council,
Bombay, October 21st, 1846.*

Right Honorable Sir.—I have the honor to state, that I have read a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart, dated as per margin - 19th September, 1845, No. 370—to Captain Brown, the Secretary to the Governor of Scinde. In one of the enclosures are two Minutes, by Messrs. Crawford and Reid of the Bombay Council, reflecting on my character. I therefore take the liberty of answering the letter of Lieut.-Colonel Stuart direct to your Excellency.

In the first place, the document marked A will shew that I have done all in my power to put the collectors and the commissariat into communication with each other, with a view to reduce the expense of the latter, when possible. In the next place, Captain Preedy's letter gives a clear explanation why the grain, called gram, is so dear in the Kurrachee collectorate. Had the Bombay Government waited for Captain Preedy's explanation, this correspondence, so unjustly accusing me of forcing up the price of grain, would not have taken place, and the offensive minutes' made by Messrs. Crawford and Reid would not have been made. I will first answer the minutes: they appear to have been forced upon His Honor by his Council.

Para. 1. – Answer. The grain in Scinde is sold at the market price,' which is not determined by the collectors; but—as it is everywhere else I suppose—by the relative pressure of demand and supply. Why the Honorable the Governor of Bombay in Council should suppose that any other rule governs the market in Scinde, I am at a loss to conceive. It is true that the Ameers determined the prices at which their own grain was sold; which prices were above the market price,' and as no one would voluntarily become purchasers at such exorbitant rates, the Ameers made their Kardars answerable for the money, leaving the said Kardars to sell the grain as they best could: no other grain was allowed to be sold till that of the Ameers was disposed of.

These *Kardars* were allowed to commit, and did commit every sort of atrocity upon the people, till they sold the Ameers' grain, and reimbursed themselves: this they could not always do, though they exercised torture pretty freely to effect their purpose. This system is one of the causes why Scinde was daily becoming a barren land under the rule of these tyrants. The Government of Bombay would, it seems, imagine that I am pursuing the same system, so replete with folly and villainy.

Para. 2. – Answer. This paragraph falls to the ground, having been founded on the false premises assumed in the first place, namely—that the collectors fix the price of grain in Scinde: they do not.

Para. 3. – Answer. The interests of Government are no doubt involved in all questions relative to finance. For that reason it would have been well, had the Bombay Government given a more patient consideration to the present question: it would then have seen, first, its error in supposing that the Government of Scinde, with the erroneous view of increasing the revenue, kept up 'high prices' in grain. Second, its error in supposing that the collectors 'fix the rate.' By such an Ameer-like proceeding, the Government would lose much more than it can gain in an increased revenue, as Sir George Arthur remarks; but I much doubt whether he is right in supposing that such a mad proceeding would increase the revenue at all! On the contrary, it would very soon decrease the revenue.

The Bombay Government is in error as to the principles which rule the Government of Scinde. This is not surprising. I believe they differ very much from those entertained at Bombay. I can prove that my greatest exertions have been to *lower the price of grain*; and that I have taken the only rational means in my power to effect this, namely: —

- 1 Extending cultivation by every liberal measure towards the cultivators of the land, to increase thereby the supply, and lower the price current in the market.
- 2 To take off taxes which I found existing on the importation of grain.

To enter into details of the first would be here a work of supererogation: but I have succeeded as regards cultivation, which is rapidly increasing. With regard to the second, one of my first acts of administration was, as I have before said, to take off the taxes levied by the Ameers on imported grain. These taxes were, on the wholesale merchants, three rupees thirteen annas percent to which was added a demand called Chounsee: this last was not a fixed tax, but was never under two rupees four annas percent, making the whole, when lightest, above six per cent. The retail seller paid five per cent. and also chounsee, making seven rupees four annas when lowest.

Having introduced the Bombay customs, because I thought they would suit both ports,—this introduction was approved of and sanctioned by the supreme Government—I also adopted the new Bombay tax on grain: this I did on the 25th of August last. All grain imported into Scinde from British ports enter Scinde, as far as we are concerned, duty free, being covered by a certificate, given at the port of export, that it has paid export duty. By this your Excellency will perceive, that the only enactments which tended to raise the price of grain in Scinde emanated from the Governor in Council at Bombay, unless this tax was ordered by higher authority, which I cannot easily believe⁴.

A tax on the export of grain is unusual. I confess that I do not like a tax upon grain. As far as I am capable of judging, it would be better in general that the trade in grain should be left free, in order to reduce the price. In England, we know that the importation of corn is taxed to raise the price, that the farmer may be able to pay his heavy taxes; but in Scinde the case is different. I have made the taxes on land light, labor is cheap, and my great object is, by producing abundance, to make food cheap. If food is dear the price of labor must rise; if food be cheap the price of labor will fall in Scinde, for the wages of labor are paid in grain. But the Bombay Government appears to think otherwise in regard to these matters! And here let me observe, that the tax, as it is levied at the port of export, Bombay—not at the port of import, Scinde—adds but little to the Scinde revenue, but apparently much to that of Bombay where it is levied.

⁴ It was not the tax was one of Bombay, concocted by the very men who were accusing Sir Charles Napier of laying on unjust taxes,—falsely accusing him of their own misdeeds.

Para. 4. – Answer. The Honorable the Governor of Bombay is right in saying that Scinde once exported grain. So she does now, to the amount of about a million of pounds weight annually; but this export is of red rice, which kind of grain is not required by the Commissariat, and does not enter into the present question – unless it pleases the Bombay Government to feed its Cavalry on red rice! The Ameers nearly destroyed agriculture, and I beg leave to remind the Governor in Council of Bombay that, although the soil of Scinde is naturally so fertile, it cannot yield produce without cultivation.

Now let me explain the unfortunate state of Scinde, as regards cultivation since the conquest in February 1843 – just two years and eight months.

- 1 Scinde never exported the grain called gram. The whole of lower Scinde, to use the expression of one of the collectors, does not grow gram enough to feed the Governor's troop orderlies – yet on gram the question chiefly hinges.
- 2 The Honorable the Governor of Bombay in Council must surely know that war prevents cultivation, and we had war in Scinde up to August 1843, almost too late for cultivating anything that year.
- 3 That plundering grain was rife all over the land while war lasted. People stole grain. and concealed it, especially Government grain; for the conquerors were strangers in the land and fear pervaded all hearts, none knowing what the victorious foreigners would do: – quantities of grain were therefore buried, and cultivation neglected.
- 4 That we at first had no knowledge of the proper men to employ as *Kardars* and *Umbardars*, nor did we know the amount of the collections which ought to be made; consequently the Government was robbed to an immense extent: an evil which still exists, though it gradually decreases. These *Kardars* therefore took no pains with cultivation: they were occupied with pillage.
- 5 That the canals could not be properly cleaned till the country was fairly settled; and without this clearing there could be neither health nor crops in Scinde. When we conquered Scinde the canals were choked up, for the Ameers having resolved on war everything relative to agriculture appears to have been abandoned for some time before the battle of Meeanee: – men were preparing for war.

- 6 That a plague of locusts fell upon Scinde. This was a heavy and extensive infliction: it not only consumed this country, but, I am told, ravaged whole provinces in Upper India; so that very small collections could be made there. Be that as it may, these locusts nearly destroyed the Scinde crop in 1844.
- 7 The locusts were preceded by a dreadful epidemic, which raged from the end of August 1843, to January 1844, destroying thousands, and leaving those who survived unable to work. The troops suffered less than the people of the country; yet, out of 17,000 fighting men, 13,000 were helpless in the hospitals; and of the remaining 4000, not above 2000 could have made a day's march. Cultivation was abandoned, for no man had strength to work.
- 8 To close this catalogue of ills which fell upon the cultivation and people of Scinde in 1843 and 1844, the Indus suddenly fell, while the few crops which that year had been raised, were yet on the ground, and a vast portion thus perished from want of water, for the river did not again rise.

A proof of this fearful fall of the river may be adduced from the following fact. The steamer having on board the 78th Highlanders was suddenly left high and dry off Muttaree when going to Sukkur. The men were consequently obliged to land and march up to their destination. A canal was dug to the steamer, and after some weeks she was, as it were launched into the Indus, which had altogether left her.

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It was when Sir Charles Napier, struggling amidst such difficulties and dangers, was educating order and prosperity from the chaos, that the Bombay Council concocted its minute, and made the attempt to record it secretly, as a charge to ruin his reputation after death; and it is now after death that, suppressing his refutation of the calumny, it is again sought to foist the false charge upon the House of Commons, in a return to which it had no relevancy. And with these facts to encounter, Mr. Willoughby had the front to declare that nothing intentionally injurious to Sir Charles Napier was designed! It was not bad policy to withhold this defence, pretending it was lost; no amount of effrontery could have sustained the exposure. And it is not a little curious that Dr. Buist's paper was originally employed to disseminate the slander; and now the same person has been employed to disseminate the renewal of it in a pamphlet. The refutation proceeds thus:—

After the above explanation, which was always at the service of the Bombay Government, I think it will not appear extraordinary ' that grain of all kinds should be

dear in Scinde, although the country is "so fertile"⁵. Indeed, had it not been so, such a succession of misfortunes to agriculture must have caused a famine. But there are now other causes which produced a great demand for, and consequent rise in price of grain in Scinde. One is the large force which occupies it, and which, though not above 17,000 fighting men, may be fairly calculated at above 40,000 people to be fed. The other is, that a great addition has been made to the population by an influx of settlers from surrounding countries since Scinde has been under British rule. The unwearied exertions of the officers employed in the Government has produced great confidence in our rule; and numbers flock to Scinde.

The authorities have not labored, '*like charlatans*,' to produce a dishonest revenue, and make a show in figures, as Messrs. Crawford and Reid assume to be the case: they have labored honorably and successfully to serve the East India Company, by drawing forth the national resources of this fine country, and turning a miserable, long-oppressed and cruelly-treated people, into a happy and contented population, that will not rise in rebellion against their rulers, but will stand by those rulers in time of need—for the peasants have on every occasion shewn great readiness to assist the police, and to make their attachment to this Government in every way. This great increase of population produces an increased demand, which has been met by importation, chiefly I believe from Bhawalpoor and Guzerat, the transport of grain being easy by water. The contractors of course bringing the description of grain which the Commissariat requires, and at a cheaper price than that at which the collector can sell, viz. '*the market price*.'

Para. 5. – Answer. The subject has always been one to which I gave the greatest attention that my time and small ability enabled me to apply: but to meddle with the price of food is a question of great difficulty, and I much doubt the wisdom of the Bombay Government in placing a tax on the exportation of grain. Why should grain grown in Bombay pay a tax upon being taken to Scinde, a province under the same Government. However, there may be reasons for this which are unknown to me. It increases the prices of grain in Scinde: in fact it is a corn law passed in Bombay, for the benefit of that Presidency perhaps but injurious to Scinde, by raising the price of grain in the latter province.

Sir Charles Napier was convinced that the tax was laid on purposely to injure Scinde and produce mischief to his government.

Para. 6. – Answer. I now come to the '*minutes*' made by Messrs. Reid and Crawford, which two minutes I may treat as one. The motives which have actuated these two

⁵ At this very time the same people were, through their tool Buist, proclaiming Scinde as a Golgotha, a waste of sand, to decry the value of the conquest.

gentlemen I shall not enter upon. As Governor of Scinde I have only to deal with the result—that result is want of truth.

It is not true that the military charges against Bombay are added to, '*in order that the revenue of Scinde may appear in a favorable point of view.*'

It is not true that grain is issued at higher rates '*than those which ought to prevail according to the natural state of the market.*'

I defy these two gentlemen to prove their bold and thoughtless assertions, which are utterly groundless, as I have shewn; and I take leave to say it is not a little unreasonable, that because Messrs. Crawford and Reid are ignorant of the subject on which they write, they are to pen minutes alike injurious to my character and the character of those who under my command have so zealously served the public. I may therefore be permitted to request that these two Members of Council at Bombay will not again deliberately attribute to me a dereliction of duty to the public as Governor of Scinde. If they think me culpable, let them proffer their charges.

Allow me to add, that although the contractors may have accidentally purchased grain from the collectors at the market price, the latter have sold to the general customers, who, the collectors tell me, have generally been the merchants of Scinde, altogether unconnected with the contractors

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Private Letter to the Governor-General, following the Official Memoir.

If you will compare the 'minutes,' sent to you by Sir George Arthur, Mr. Crawford and Mr. Reid, and the answers which I sent officially three days ago with the enclosed, extracted from the *Bombay Times*, you will see the style of underhand warfare made upon me. I do not accuse any of the above-named gentlemen of being '*the eminent and un-questionable authority,*' quoted by the *Bombay Times*; but when I see that the minutes and the newspaper correspond so well, and that the latter boldly asserts its high authority to be eminent and unquestionable; and when I read in a letter of Dr. Buist, the Editor, that he boasts '*how close to the sovereign authorities are his sources of information.*' When I read these things, I hope you will not think me like 'Sir Hippington Miff in the play, if I take the above to be a '*very suspicious circumstance.*' I perfectly acquit Sir George Arthur of publishing the paragraph in question, and only send it to shew how I am attacked, and how accident from time to time discovers to me the quarter, though not always the individual. I believe that Dr. Buist tells truth, which is unusual, when he says his sources of information are close to the sovereign authorities!

Will you be kind enough to let me have the enclosed extract back, because I do not take the *Bombay Times*, and cannot easily get another. I enclose a return of the prices of grain in Scinde for the last eleven years, by which you may see how erroneous is the information furnished by the eminent and unquestionable authority, on that point as on every other.

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To the Governor-General, December 15th, 1845.

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR, In answer to the extract from a letter of the Secret Committee, I have to say –

1 That transit duties were abolished in Scinde by Lord Ellenborough's orders in: 1843. I am here to obey the orders which I receive. I cannot imagine why the Secret Committee ' should suppose I disobey those orders ! The transit duties have not been reimposed upon the people of Scinde, nor any new tax.

2 There is no '*pressure of financial difficulty in Scinde*': its revenues increase, and a surplus of about £.250,000 sterling has already been placed to the credit of the Honorable Company, after defraying the cost of the Civil Government and 2400 armed and disciplined police.

3 The Supreme Government, at my recommendation, sanctioned the adoption of the Bombay Customs code, and desired me to substitute this code for the destructively severe system of the Ameers in Scinde, and I have done so gradually. Like all changes having for object to diminish the receipt of taxation, it will probably reduce the revenue in a slight degree next year, but add to it afterwards. It is well understood by, and agreeable to the merchants and people, whose present burdens will be relieved. After the 1st January, 1846, the heavy and, what is worse, the vexatious duties levied hitherto under the old system of the Ameers will cease, and be replaced by light import and export duties levied on the frontier, except on goods in transit through Scinde. In fine, the Bombay regulations are adopted.

4 I have the honor to enclose herewith a lithograph plan of the positions of the '*Chokies*,' or custom-house ports which I am establishing at the entrances to Scinde; and I have been induced to hasten the establishment of these ports, for the purpose of preventing the entrance of opium not covered by passes.

5 Though I regret that my conduct should have failed to obtain for me what I think it deserves, the confidence of the Home Authorities in a sufficient degree to overturn the baseness of secret information, which I have reason to suppose was sent from

Bombay, I have, nevertheless, the satisfaction of believing that I possess the confidence of your Excellency.

"C. J. NAPIER."

Lieut.-Colonel Rathborne to Sir William Napier.

Sept. 25th, 1857.—Since I forwarded to you the statement rebutting the infamous slander on the memory of your brother, in relation to the alleged raising the price of grain in Scinde to a famine scale, in order to swell the revenue, I have taken the trouble to analyze the returns appended in the " Blue Book " to Sir George Clerk's minute, and which gives the rates actually realized at the Government sales in the principal collectorate, that of Hyderabad.

An examination of these will shew, that there was not even a shadow of foundation for the charge. For, immediately after the conquest,—when there was necessarily some scarcity, as there is in every country under such circumstances,—the prices at which grain was invariably sold by Sir Charles Napier's Government were infinitely lower than prevail in any part of the Presidency of Bombay.

I find that in the first year, for instance, the average price obtained for wheat was only sixteen shillings the imperial quarter; in the second, eleven and eleven pence; and in the third and last year, fourteen and two pence. That in the first year the average price obtained for Badjree was twenty shillings the imperial quarter; in the second, fourteen and five pence; and in the third and last year, eleven shillings the imperial quarter.

That in the first year the average price for *Jowarree* was twenty shillings and eight pence; in the second, nine and three pence; in the third and last year, nine shillings.

That in the first year the average price for rice was ten shillings and eight pence; in the second, eight and three pence; and in the third and last year, seven shillings and a penny.

I further find, that even during the period of comparative scarcity which prevailed the first year, before the people settled down to cultivation when the war had subsided, the highest rate at which rice was ever sold was fourteen shillings the imperial quarter, which rate ruled for a very short time, as the average for that year, only ten and eight pence, shews.

Anyone who takes the return, and converts the Indian measures into English, and Indian money into English at its intrinsic value of one and ten pence farthing the rupee, will find this statement correct in every particular. You will then see, that not only is it

an infamous slander to say, that Sir Charles Napier's Government sold grain at famine prices to raise a fictitious revenue, but that, in fact, the grain was never sold by his Government at famine prices at all.

If you think that the publication of this letter can tend in any way to make the matter clearer you are at liberty to use it; though the manner in which the subject was dealt with by the House of Commons must shew that the only effect of the calumny has been to recoil upon the authors of it.

It was to the false return thus analyzed and exposed that Sir George Clerk set his name, and Mr. Danby Seymour's assertions in his defence were idle wind.

Sir Charles Napier gave all these refutations at the time to the foul calumnies secretly preferred by the Bombay Council—they were earnestly, as shewn, called for by Mr. Bruce and Mr. Butt, but the Directors could not find them in their archives! they could only find the refuted charge to lay before the House of Commons when their mean and spiteful attempt to foist the latter surreptitiously upon its records was detected and exposed ! Such are Sir Charles Napier's enemies, such their practice. I deliver them over to public opinion, hoping they may receive what they most want—Shame!

W. NAPIER, Lieut.-General.