

HOUSE OF COMMON HANSARD

Official Record of UK Parliamentary Debates (Lords and Common) on MANIPUR

HC Deb 17 April 1891 vol 352 cc786-8

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if his attention has been drawn to the statement in Thursday's Times, that all villages in Manipur which offer resistance are to be burned; if the Secretary of State for India will enjoin on Commanders of Columns that no village shall be burned for offering resistance unaccompanied by cruelty to wounded or to prisoners, or by treachery on the part of that particular village; and if it is the custom, in waging war in the Frontier States of India, to depart from the usual customs of civilized war without the personal sanction of the Empress of India?

SIR J. GORST

The Secretary of State has not received any official information as to the statement in the Times that all villages in Manipur which offer resistance are to be burned, or in regard to the operations of the troops at Manipur. He has the fullest confidence that the Government of India will in any Proclamation they may issue act with due regard to those principles of justice and mercy which have always been observed in our Indian frontier wars.

COLONEL NOLAN

May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to be a little more explicit. Is he prepared to deny that the statement gravely and officially given in the Times is founded on fact; and, if so, is he going to leave it to chance whether villages may be burned down or not, the people probably being engaged only in defending their houses? Will the Government give orders that villages are not to be burned unless there is an absolute necessity for so extreme a course under the rules of civilized warfare?

SIR J. GORST

The Secretary of State will not assume that the Government of India will act with impropriety, and, therefore, there is no necessity to direct them to act properly. He will rather assume that they will act properly, and will take no steps unless there is direct evidence that they have not done so.

COLONEL NOLAN

Will the Under Secretary explain whether a British Column will be allowed to act differently in this expedition from the way in which a German Column would act against France in a European war? Is he not of opinion that that would be improper?

SIR J. GORST

Certainly, Sir.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee)

Is it the fact that the troops put to death women and children?

SIR J. GORST

I have seen such a statement in the newspapers, but there is no official information of the kind.

THE EXPEDITION TO MANIPUR

HC Deb 20 April 1891 vol 352 c899

[MR. WEBSTER \(St. Pancras, E.\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received information as to the alleged statement that the troops employed in the Manipur expedition were at the time of the recent disaster without an adequate or suitable supply of reserve ammunition to fit their rifles; and whether, if he has no knowledge as yet on the subject, he will telegraph to India for such information?

[THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA \(Sir J. GORST, Chatham\)](#)

I presume that the hon. Gentleman cannot have received a communication which I forwarded to him this afternoon, asking him to postpone this question until I can receive information from India?

[MR. WEBSTER](#)

No, Sir; I did not receive a communication from the right hon. Gentleman, and, of course, I will defer the question.[MR. SCHWANN \(Manchester, N.\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has now obtained any official reply as to the truth or falsehood of the rumours which have appeared in the Press, that the Indian troops killed Manipuri women and children in the affair at Manipur, so that, in case the rumour be proved false, it may be categorically denied?

[SIR J. GORST](#)

The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India is in possession of official information from Manipur which denies, by implication, the statement contained in the question; but he has thought proper, under the circumstances, to address a special telegram to the Government of India on the subject, and I must ask the hon. Member to postpone his question until the answer to that inquiry has been received.

MANIPUR

HC Deb 23 April 1891 vol 352 cc1153-5

[MR. SCHWANN \(Manchester, N.\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has now obtained any official reply as to the truth or falsehood of the rumours which have appeared in the Press, that the Indian troops killed Manipuri women and children in the affair at Manipur, so that, in case the rumour be proved false, it may be categorically denied?

SIR J. GORST

In reply to the inquiry made by the Secretary of State the following telegram has been received from the Viceroy, which I will read to the House. It is dated April 21st, 1891— Foreign. Yours, yesterday. Regent asserts that several boys and women were killed at the time of the attack upon the Senapati's house. He does not say that they were related to him.' Maxwell, Deputy Commissioner, observes on this: 'The atrocities named are altogether false, as I have made careful inquiries.' Gurdon, Assistant Commissioner, reports: That women and children were killed, &c., is absolutely false.' The officer commanding at Silchar telegraphed on the 10th: ' The officers state that no cruelty of any kind was practised by us, nor was it possible. This refers to Boileau, and apparently to all other officers who retired with him to Silchar. Regent's statements will be further investigated on the spot.

[COLONEL NOLAN \(Galway, N.\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to a paragraph in the Times, of the 22nd, stating that villages had been burned at Manipur; whether this statement is correct; and, if so, how many villages have been burned; whether these villages have been burned as a punishment or from military contingencies; and, further, if as a punishment, whether as a punishment for simple resistance or for some specific act of treachery committed by the village burned; and if the villages have been burned owing to military contingencies, would he state the nature of such contingencies, giving such data as would enable a comparison to be instituted with similar unavoidable accidents in European warfare?

SIR J. GORST

In consequence of the question of the hon. and gallant Member, my noble Friend the Secretary of State has carefully perused the Times of the 22nd inst.; but he has been unable to find any confirmation of the report that villages have been burned at Manipur.

[COLONEL NOLAN](#)

The words " at Manipur" in the question should be " in Manipur." It is a misprint.

SIR J. GORST

Neither at Manipur nor in Manipur have any villages been burned.

[MR. WEBSTER \(St. Pancras, E.\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received information as to the alleged statement that the troops employed in the Manipur Expedition were at the time of the recent disaster without an adequate or suitable supply of reserve ammunition to fit their rifles; and whether, if he has no knowledge as yet on the subject, he will telegraph to India for such information?

SIR J. GORST

I find from telegrams which have been received from the Government of India that this matter is now the subject of investigation in India; and I am afraid that I cannot give a satisfactory answer to my hon. Friend until a full Report of the result of the investigation has been received.

[MR. KING \(Hull, Central\)](#)

I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the exceptional nature of the circumstances attending the Manipur disaster, care will be taken in any arrangements to be made with the Government of Manipur to secure that adequate compensation shall be exacted for the widows and relations of those who were massacred?

[THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY \(Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster\)](#)

In answer to the question of my hon. Friend, I have to tell him that the Secretary of State for India considers it premature to state at present what terms will be exacted from the Manipurese.

MANIPUR

HC Deb 01 May 1891 vol 352 cc1842-3

[MR. CREMER \(Shoreditch, Haggerston\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to letters which appeared, in the Times on the 29th inst. from Mrs. Grimwood and Lieutenant Albert Wood, concerning the way in which the massacre at Manipur commenced; if he can inform the House whether the statement in regard to the attempt to capture the Jubraj is true; and whether the agent was authorised; and, if so, by whom, to capture the Jubraj, and the reasons which prompted such attempt?

[MR. DONALD CRAWFORD \(Lanark, N.E.\)](#)

May I be allowed to put to the right hon. Gentleman a question on the same subject for which I have given him notice for Monday next, namely, whether he will lay on the Table a copy of the Instructions which were given for the expedition to Manipur?

[THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA \(Sir J. GORST,\) Chatham](#)

The information in the possession of the Secretary of State does not lead him to believe that the Government of India contemplated that the Senaputty should be invited to a Durbar with the intention of his being arrested. My noble Friend informs me that he should be much surprised if that were so. The Papers on the subject will be presented to Parliament as soon as the information is more complete than it is at the present time.

[MR. CREMER](#)

Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to inform the House whether it is true that an attempt was made to capture the Jubraj, and, if so, on whose authority the attempt was made. Had the Political

Agent received any instructions from the Indian Government, or was he acting entirely on his own responsibility?

[SIR J. GORST](#)

I am sorry that I am not able to answer the question, nor has the Secretary of State received information that will enable him to answer it. The officers who were engaged in the expedition have unhappily been killed, and probably all official records have been destroyed. Certainly at the present moment there is no information in the possession of my noble Friend the Secretary of State that would enable him to reply to the question. I may mention that Despatches are on their way, and we expect to receive them on Monday next. Immediately on receipt of the Despatches, Papers will be laid upon the Table of the House, and probably they will give all the information the hon. Member desires to have.

[MR. CREMER](#)

I beg to give notice that I will repeat the question on Monday.

THE MANIPUR EXPEDITION

HC Deb 04 May 1891 vol 353 cc49-50

[MR. CRAWFORD](#) (Lanark, N.E.)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table the instructions given to Mr. Quinton for the expedition to Manipur?

[THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA \(Sir J. GORST,\)](#) Chatham

Yes, Sir; the Despatches, when printed, will be laid upon the Table.

[MR. BRYCE](#) (Aberdeen, S.)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Papers relating to the Manipur Expedition, which he has promised to present to the House, will include, not only such instructions as may have been given to Mr. Quinton by the Government of India, but all communications which have passed between the India Office here and the Government of India upon this subject?

[SIR J. GORST](#)

Yes, Sir; the communications between the Secretary of State and the Government of India will be included in the Papers presented to the House.

[MR. BRYCE](#)

Can the right hon. Gentleman say how soon he thinks the Despatches will be laid upon the Table?

[SIR J. GORST](#)

I said last week that the Secretary of State is waiting for the Despatches, and they are now on their way from India. When I left the India Office to-day they had not arrived. They ought to arrive to-day.

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THE MANIPUR DISASTER

HC Deb 05 May 1891 vol 353 c133

[MR. CREMER \(Shoreditch, Haggerston\)](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he can now state whether an attempt was made, or intended to be made, by the Chief Commissioner to capture the Jubraj at Manipur in case he attended the Durbar to which he had been invited; and whether such attempt was the cause of the massacre which followed; whether the Chief Commissioner ordered the attempt on his own authority, or if he received his authority from the Indian Government; whether any record has been kept of the exact orders which the Chief Commissioner received; and when the Government will lay before Parliament a complete copy of such orders?

SIR J. GORST

I have been directed by my noble Friend the Secretary of State to answer the question as follows: — "The best answer I can give to the question is to say that I have just laid on the Table all the Despatches relating to Manipur, and they will be printed and circulated as speedily as possible." The Secretary of State has been waiting for a further Despatch which arrived this afternoon.

[MR. CREMER](#)

Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to state to the House that he is not in a position to express any opinion upon, or to give any answer to, the questions which I have put upon the Paper?

SIR J. GORST

I have given the reply to the question of the hon. Member which I was directed by the Secretary of State to give; and I can add nothing to that reply.

[MR. CREMER](#)

Then I will repeat the question to-morrow and every day until I get a distinct answer.

THE MANIPUR DISASTER

HC Deb 14 May 1891 vol 353 cc705-6

[MR. CREMER \(Shoreditch, Haggerston\)](#)

I wished to put a question to the Under Secretary of State for India, but as the right hon. Gentleman is prevented by illness from being in his place perhaps some other Member of the Government will reply to me. My question is whether the Government are in a position to give the House any information in regard to the Manipur disaster and, further, why the Despatches which the Under Secretary stated had been laid upon the Table on the 5th inst. have not been delivered to hon. Members. Is it usual for more than 10 days to be occupied in the printing of such Papers?

[BARON H. DE WORMS](#)

The Manipur Papers have been presented, and are now in the hands of the printers.

[MR. CREMER](#)

That is not the answer I had hoped to obtain from the Front Bench opposite. I wanted to know why the delay has taken place in the delivery of these Papers, and when the Despatches are likely to be in the hands of Members? Is it usual to take more than 10 days for the presentation of documents of a similar character?

[BARON H. DE WORMS](#)

I cannot answer a question of that character. It depends entirely upon the printers.

[MR. CREMER](#)

I am sorry to be compelled to rise again, but my question has not yet been answered. I do not know whether I am in Order, but I cannot help saying that, in my opinion, it is scarcely creditable to the Government to have a delay of this kind.

[MR. SPEAKER](#)

Order, order! The hon. Member is exceeding the bounds of a question.

[MR. CREMER](#)

It is now 10 days since I asked a question of a similar character, and I then succeeded in obtaining no information whatever. [Cries of "Order!"] I do not think it is fair that I should be put off with a statement that the Despatches have been laid upon the Table. I am endeavouring to ascertain why 10 days should have been allowed to elapse without the Papers being delivered to hon. Members.

[BARON H. DE WORMS](#)

There has been no unnecessary delay so far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned. As soon as the Despatches were received they were laid upon the Table, and as soon as they are printed they will be delivered.

[MR. CREMER](#)

What I want to know is when they will be delivered?

[MR. BRYCE](#)

I wish also to put a question in regard to these Papers. It was the intention of certain Members of this House to have raised a discussion in regard to the Manipur affairs upon the Motion for Adjournment for the holidays, but we are prevented from doing so, partly because the Motion for Adjournment will be made at the end of the business to-morrow, and partly because the Papers have not been delivered, although they were laid on the Table on the 5th instant. Perhaps, under the circumstances, I may be allowed to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, whether we are to understand that when the Papers are delivered the Government will afford an opportunity of discussing the affairs of Manipur?

[MR. GOSCHEN](#)

It would be somewhat difficult, I think, in the unfortunate absence of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India, to discuss these matters satisfactorily. I think that hon. Members opposite will agree with me that it would not be right to insist upon a discussion when the Minister who is mainly responsible in this House is prevented by illness from being present in his place. I may say that Her Majesty's Government fully recognise the importance of the question, and they have no desire to withdraw it from the full notice of the House. In the absence of my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, who is also prevented by illness from being in his place, I should not like to give a pledge as to when the discussion can be taken.

MANIPUR.

HC Deb 25 May 1891 vol 353 cc961-3

[MR. CRAWFORD](#) (Lanark, N.E.)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table Papers showing the precise political relation between Manipur and the Government of India, as fixed either by treaty or general regulations affecting the protected Native States, or otherwise?

[THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA \(Sir J. GORST,\)](#) Chatham

In reply to the question of the hon. Member I have to say that if he will move for the Papers they shall be laid upon the Table.

[MR. CRAWFORD](#)

I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government will undertake that no one shall be put to death in Manipur as a punishment, or in retaliation for the deaths of Mr. Quinton and his companions, until the circumstances of the attack upon the Manipuris has been considered by Parliament?

[SIR J. GORST](#)

No one will be put to death in Manipur in mere retaliation for the deaths of Mr. Quinton and his companions. The Secretary of State is surprised that such a question should be asked. But those who are found guilty of the murder of Mr. Quinton and Mr. Melville and their respective companions will be adequately punished without waiting until the circumstances of the affair at Manipur have been considered by Parliament.

[SIR W. HARCOURT \(Derby\)](#)

I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, when further Papers will be presented in relation to the affairs of Manipur. The House will be aware that at present we have had no expression whatever of the views of Her Majesty's Government or of the Secretary of State for India officially as to what has taken place; I, therefore, ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when further Papers, in addition to those which have already been presented, will be laid on the Table.

[THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER \(Mr. GOSCHEN,\) St. George's, Hanover Square](#)

I am not in a position at present to say when the Government will be able to place further Papers upon the Table in regard to recent events in Manipur; but, no doubt, the House is entitled to the fullest information it is possible to give on the subject. That information will be given as soon as it is received. Perhaps the right hon Gentleman may think it convenient to move for the Papers with regard to these events. Of course, if a Member in the position of the right hon. Gentleman expresses a wish to have this matter discussed, it will be the duty of the Government to find an opportunity for its discussion.

[SIR W. HARCOURT](#)

I think that the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman will be a convenient one, and in order that the House may be in possession of the state of things and the views of the Government, I will move for further Papers on the subject, and will call attention generally to what has taken place at Manipur. That will afford an opportunity for discussion of the matter, and when the further Papers are received, it will be for Members to consider whether any, and if so, what further steps shall be taken. I should hope that the right hon. Gentleman will to-day, or upon some early day, mention some date on which the discussion may be taken.

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MANIPUR

HC Deb 16 June 1891 vol 354 cc541-641

(3.45.) [SIR W. HARCOURT \(Derby\)](#)

rose to call attention to the disasters at Manipur and the causes which led to them, and to move— That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before this House further Correspondence relating to Manipur. The right hon. Gentleman said; Among the frequent criticisms which have been made in regard to the conduct of business in this House, there is one which cannot stand. It cannot be said that the House of Commons bestows too much attention on the condition of the affairs of our Indian Empire. When we consider that we are responsible for the condition and well-being of some 300,000,000 of people in India, it is, perhaps, not satisfactory that generally speaking the affairs of India occupy our attention for only a few hours, and those usually at the fag-end of the Session. I do not make this observation with the view of thinking that it would be desirable that the House of Commons should perpetually occupy itself in interfering with, and endeavoring to supervise the conduct of the Indian Government. I think that the House of Commons exercises a wise and prudent reserve in that matter, being conscious of the great difficulty and responsibility of the questions which may arise, and conscious also of its imperfect acquaintance with the conditions under which that Government is conducted. Therefore, Sir, I do not enter into this discussion, from any point of view, with the idea of laying down that the House of Commons should generally set itself up as a critic of the Indian Administration in its details as it does in respect of our domestic affairs at home. And, therefore, whenever we are called upon to discuss these questions, I am sure the Hon se of Commons will always address itself to them in a spirit of calmness, moderation, and impartiality in the treatment of them. I desire, also, in making this Motion, to disclaim any idea of bringing a general indictment against the Indian Administration. Whatever may have been the faults of the Indian Government in former times—and they were many—I think that in later days our Indian Administration has been one with which we may well be satisfied, and of which we have a right to be proud. Still less do I desire to make this Motion in any spirit of attack or hostility upon the present Viceroy of India. Every man who is acquainted with Lord Lansdowne will approach the consideration of any act of his Government with a disposition to place confidence in his high character, intelligence, capacity, and humanity. But, Sir, subject to all these considerations, I think that when events have happened such as those which have occurred in Manipur—when we have had a British force cut to pieces; when high officials of the Indian Government have been slain; when, in point of fact, a Native Government under our protection has been practically overthrown—it would be the very cynicism of indifference if the House of Commons were to treat such events as matters of no concern of ours. I think it is due to our responsibility, it is due to the people we are called upon to govern, that we should show we are not indifferent to matters which must greatly concern us and our Indian Empire. It is entirely in that spirit, Sir, that I desire to introduce this matter to the attention of the House. I think it would be a grave dereliction of duty on the part of the House of Commons, upon its responsibility as the great inquest of the nation if we did not, at all events, inquire of the responsible Government what the events have actually been, what were the causes which led to them, and how it is proposed to deal with them. There is another consideration which I think we ought to bear in view in this matter. This is a question which concerns the relations of the Indian Government with the Native States of India. Everybody knows that it is a matter of the greatest importance that we should preserve those relations upon a footing of friendliness and confidence. Manipur is a small place, and may be regarded as insignificant; but its dealings with the English

Government are regarded with serious and anxious attention by all other Native States. The great feudatories look with anxiety and even jealousy upon anything we may do in regard to a Native State, however small or insignificant. That fact naturally gives great importance to the policy we may pursue in this respect. And, Sir, there is another consideration with which we have to count, and which did not exist in former times. Owing to the fact of our influence and civilisation, there has grown up in India an Indian public opinion, and it is not only to English but to Indian public opinion that we must commend the justice and the wisdom of our rule in India. That is a matter which we cannot leave out of sight at all. Therefore I cannot think that, even at this period of the Session, the House of Commons will be wasting its time if, in the midst of our domestic controversies, we devote a few hours to the consideration of this question. I do not know that it is even necessary to make this apology for introducing the subject to the consideration of the House of Commons. I need not make the ordinary disclaimer that this Motion has nothing about it of a Party character. That fact must really appear on the face of it and in the form in which it is couched. I have designedly and advisedly adopted the old Parliamentary form of calling attention to the subject, and asking the Government for Papers. That is a method which has been adopted very frequently in reference to external affairs when it has not been desired to move any Vote of Censure upon any particular policy, but to see that the House of Commons and the country should be made acquainted with the views and the policy which the Government are about to pursue. I should like to describe this Motion as a matter of inquiry, which will enable and will call upon the Government to give further explanations in reference to this matter which do not appear on the face of the Papers at present in our possession. I think that the Government have recognised this aspect of the case. They do not regard it as a hostile Motion directed against them or against the Indian Government. It is in the interests of all Government, and especially of the Indian Government, that the views of the responsible Ministers at home should be stated, and it is all the more necessary in this case, because the Papers already published contain no statement of the view of the Home Government in reference to the transaction. When I ask for the production of Papers, I desire to refer to Papers which display and declare the views of the Secretary of State for India and the Government of this country, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that the views of the Government will be stated to-night by a Member of this House, who always addresses it—I am speaking of the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Indian Department in this House (Sir John Gorst)—with great knowledge of the subject upon which he speaks, and with great ability. I am, therefore, certain, Sir, that the views of the Indian Government will be well represented on this occasion. One part of the duty which I have to perform I shall endeavour to discharge as briefly as possible. I shall endeavour to state the facts as dispassionately as I can, and simply to raise those points which appear to me to require further explanation. I have alluded to the fact that we have here in these Papers no statement of the views of the Indian Government at home—that is to say, of the Secretary of State, with or without the advice of his Council in India. Of course, the House of Commons looks to the Secretary of State for India as responsible for important transactions such as those which have occurred in India. But the remarkable portion of the Blue Book is, that it begins with a Despatch or a telegram from the Secretary of State for India on February 19th, asking for information of the circumstances attending the expulsion and abdication of the Maharajah of Manipur, which took place five months before. That is the first point upon which I ask for an explanation. It is plain upon the face of this Blue Book that these events—that is, the deposition of the Maharajah of Manipur and the determination of the Indian Government to send an armed force to Manipur to restore the Jubraj upon the Throne—was taken without any communication from the Indian Government to the Secretary of State at home. I confess that that is a circumstance which causes me some surprise. I should have supposed that in the course of five months some communications in reference to a matter of this kind would have passed between the Government of India and the

Government of India in London. It is a remarkable fact that these events took place at the end of September last, and that, after communications backwards and forwards between the Commissioner of Assam and the Resident at Manipur and the Government at Calcutta, the final determination of the policy of the Indian Government was to send an armed expedition to Manipur, and that the massacres took place before the Secretary of State in London heard of the affair at all, or that anything had occurred at Manipur. It will be seen from the Blue Book that the second Despatch, which will be found on the first page, is dated March 4th, and it would arrive in London, I suppose, about three weeks afterwards, and must, therefore, have been received at or about the time that the disaster at Manipur occurred. That is a circumstance in regard to the relations between the Government of India and the Government in London upon which we ought to have some explanation. I observe that, curiously enough, there are hardly any communications in this Blue Book between the Secretary of State in London and the Government of India, and none until after the disaster occurred. But at page 58 of the Blue Book there occurs a telegram dated April 15th, which is very curious. It is from the Secretary of State in London to the Viceroy at Simla, and it says, "Can you not keep me informed more fully as to Manipur affairs." That is seven months after the revolution at Manipur had occurred in September; and it throws some light upon the situation and the relations which appear to have existed between the two Governments in a matter of such grave importance—the Government at Calcutta and the Government in London. No opinion seems to have been given with regard to any steps which might have been taken in the matter. Not even after the disaster had occurred was any opinion asked or given as to the punishments to be awarded or the policy to be pursued. There is not one line in this Blue Book from the Secretary of State in Loudon or from the Indian Authorities in London which shows that up to the present date they took any active steps in regard to these transactions. It seems to me impossible that that is a state of things which the House of Commons, looking to the Secretary of State as the responsible Minister-in this matter, can accept. Some time or other the Secretary of State would be bound to review the whole subject and to express the views of the responsible Government upon the whole matter. That is one of the principal Papers which I desire to have presented to the House of Commons. I will, however, go from that point to the transactions themselves and the policy which has been pursued. I do not propose to enter into more details than is absolutely necessary. I assume that the House of Commons is acquainted with the general outline of the case and knows what occurred; and therefore I will only call attention to such particular points as in my opinion seem to demand attention. It appears that on the 22nd of September an attack was made upon the reigning Maharajah of Manipur. Mr. Grimwood, the Political Agent, attributes it to the Doolairoi Hanjaba and the Zillah Sing, brothers of the Maharajah, although it would appear that the Senapatti was the prime mover in the matter, and there can be no doubt that he was the principal agent in the removal of the reigning Maharajah. The Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood, reported by telegram to Mr. Quinton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, what had occurred, and he received instructions from Mr. Quinton, which were confirmed by the Government in Calcutta, to mediate and not to assume the offensive—that is to say, that he was not to attempt to replace the Maharajah upon his Throne, but to mediate. This is important, because it bears upon the view which was subsequently taken of the persons who were afterwards described as conspirators. Nobody would mediate with conspirators. Well, that was the primary instruction given to Mr. Grimwood as to what he was to do. And what did Mr. Grimwood do? Because the action he took appears to bear very greatly upon what subsequently occurred. Mr. Grimwood went to the Senapatti. He says— I then sent word to the Palace that I would go and see the Senapatti the next morning. Mr. Grimwood had taken no part in the overthrowing of the Maharajah, but he did not find that it would be possible to re-establish him upon the Throne, and it is quite clear from the Papers in the Blue Book that from the very first Mr. Grimwood was of opinion that the retirement of the Maharajah from

the Throne was a very good tiling for Manipur. He says— When I went to the Palace the Senapatti and his brothers were evidently very pleased at the Maharajah's resolution. That is, that he would go away— and the former promised to make all the arrangements for the journey of the Maharajah and his brothers to Cachar in a proper manner. Thus we have the Political Resident agreeing with the Senapatti to make arrangements for the retirement of the Maharajah, and that was the course taken in the first instance in this matter. You will find it referred to over and over again, and the view of Mr. Grimwood is stated at page 7 of the Blue Book— The Maharajah unluckily, instead of exercising his authority over all his brothers without favouring one more than another, sided entirely with the Pucca Sena. On the other hand, while the Pucca Sena seems to have been generally disliked by the people, the Senapatti is the most popular of all his brothers, not only with the Manipuris, but with the natives of India who reside here. That is the view taken by the Political Resident and I think that in every other part of these Papers it will be found that the same view is taken. Of course, that view was reported at once to Mr. Quinton, and the date of the Despatch is very important. The date of Mr. Grimwood's Report to Mr. Quinton was the 25th of September, so that the Commissioner of Assam was in full possession of what had happened, and of the view of the Political Resident at Manipur, on September 25. That view seems to have been completely accepted at that time by Mr. Quinton, the Commissioner of Assam, and it will be found in his Despatch that he takes the same view of the subject, and that he entirely approves, as far as one can judge, of the course taken, by Mr. Grimwood. Mr. Quinton reported to the Government of India. It is difficult to follow the details clearly, because they are only to be found in enclosures, but it will be found that Mr. Grimwood reported to the Government of India on the 9th of October, and, therefore, it may be fairly said that the Government of India were fully acquainted with what had happened at Manipur up to that ditto. The point to which I wish to call the attention of the Under Secretary and the House is a most important one, namely, that either the view taken by the Political Resident at Manipur in accepting the resolution to allow the Maharajah to be dismissed, and of accepting, in point of fact, what had been done by the Senapatti was either right or wrong. If it was wrong, it was surely the duty of the Government of India, without the smallest delay, to express their disapprobation and dissent from the course which had been pursued. But although the Government were in possession of everything that had occurred on the 9th of October, there was no communication either to Mr. Grimwood or Mr. Quinton that they took a different view of the transaction for at least four months. That, in my opinion, is what really lies at the root of the whole matter. I have said that, in Mr. Grimwood's view, the deposition of the Maharajah was accepted, and that the individual who was heir to the throne had declared himself Maharajah, and had been established in that position. Indeed, he had communicated to the Indian Government that the new Maharajah had taken his seat on the throne, and that fact was communicated to the Indian Government in the middle of October, although no notice seems to have been taken of it. Mr. Grimwood was allowed to act in accordance with his own view. In his opinion, his view was accepted and approved by the Indian Government, and the new Maharajah was apparently installed with the assent of the Indian Government. There was not a word from the middle of October down to the end of December from the Indian Government. October passes, November passes, December passes, and the status quo is accepted by everybody. The next date in the matter is the 31st of December. At page 9 of the Blue Book there will be found a further letter from Mr. Quinton, Chief Commissioner of Assam, to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated December 31st. What is it that he says?— The Political Agent, as arranged, visited the Palace, when the Senapatti promised to make all arrangements for the journey of the Maharajah and his brothers to Cachar in a proper manner, and guaranteed that those who choose to stay at Manipur should not be molested. He undertook to send for the Jubaraj, then eight miles away on the Cachar road, who arrived two or three hours afterwards, and at once proclaimed himself Maharajah. The Maharajah Sur Chandra Singh

accompanied by the Pucca Sena and two other brothers and attendants—in all about 60 persons—left Manipur on the evening on the 23rd of September, under an escort of 35 rifles of the 44th Gurkha Light Infantry, who saw the party safely to Cachar, whence they proceeded to Calcutta. The Jubaraj, who so nomination by the Maharajah as his successor on his demise, had been sanctioned by the Government of India, has since carried on the Government of the country, having been recognised as Regent by the Political Agent under the orders of the Chief Commissioner. The Despatch further states— The succession of the Jubaraj, who has been recognised as heir by the Government of India, merely anticipates the ordinary course of events, and is generally acquiesced in by the people of the State. Since he assumed office the administration has been successfully and tranquilly conducted, and the Political Agent expects no opposition to it, whereas the restoration and maintenance in the Chiefship of Maharajah Sur Chandra Singh, unless effected by a strong British Force, would most probably involve repeated insurrections, such as those which have characterised the history of the Manipur State. Thus, after three months' experience on the part of Mr. Quinton and the Political Resident of the state of affairs at Manipur, they give their approval and support to the existing condition of things. What was the Government of India doing all this time? They knew perfectly well what the situation was. They knew perfectly well what the Senapatti had done. The Senapatti, practically speaking, was Governor of Manipur, yet the very first words which the Government of India uttered was on the 24th of January. They allowed this state of things to go on all through the months of October, November, December, and January, without expressing one word of disapproval of the course of things which had been taking place at Manipur. That Despatch, which is, of course, one of the most important Papers before us, is dated the 24th of January, and in it, for the first time, we have a reference to the transactions which had taken place in September. Until then there had been no expression of any opinion whatever on the part of the Government of India. But in that Despatch they demur to the course which Mr. Grim wood has adopted. They say to Mr. Quinton that— When Mr. Grimwood received your telegram directing him to mediate, and assuring him of military assistance from Kohima, the proper course for him to pursue was to have gone to the Senapatti at the Palace, to have ascertained the reason of the disturbances, and to have communicated with you. It would then, in all probability, have become apparent, before the Political Agent had committed himself to assenting to the Maharajah's flight and thereby admitted the success of the Senapatti's revolt, that the Maharajah was entirely in our hands, and that the Senapatti, a declared traitor in open mutiny, could have been dealt with by us according as circumstances demanded. But the Government of India had known for four months what the conduct of the Senapatti had been in regard to Manipur. That is one of the points on which an explanation is demanded. How is it possible that the Government of India, with full knowledge of everything that had occurred in Manipur since the middle of October, should at the end of January, for the first time, express an opinion and formulate a policy which reversed and disapproved the views taken by Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton? The Government of India is, of course, the superior authority, and had a right to judge and re-judge the acts of its subordinates; but what requires explanation is how it could have allowed his subordinates to go on from September until the end of January without a single word or hint that they dissented from the course which was being pursued? The Government of India, in their Despatch, express their view that the best thing would be to restore the old Maharajah, to remove the Senapatti, and to employ a force with sufficient strength to show that we were the masters of the situation, and to overawe the so-called conspirators. Why did they allow the position to remain without overawing the conspirators for four months? It was only after that lapse of time that they expressed an opinion—an unfortunate opinion—which was not consistent with that of those who were on the spot, and who were acquainted with all the circumstances—that a small body of troops would be enough, and that a sufficient number might be taken from Kohima. I do not lay much stress upon this point, because

the Government very properly placed upon Mr. Quinton the responsibility of taking such a force as might be necessary; but that was the view which was expressed by the Government of India for the first time at the end of January. At the time Mr. Quinton received this letter he appears to have been on board a yacht. He received it in the early part of February, and, as was extremely natural, he seems to have been filled with dismay that such a view should for the first time have been taken by the Government of India, and he addressed to the Indian Government a strong remonstrance against the policy of restoring the old Maharajah. I would call attention to the fact that neither Mr. Quinton nor Mr. Grimwood up to that time had ever suggested for a moment that the Senapatti was to be removed. You will not find a trace of such a suggestion in what Mr. Grimwood has written. On the contrary, the Senapatti had been treated as the real man, the real Governor, and it was considered a beneficial thing for Manipur that there should be a change, in which the Senapatti should be the moving spirit. On the 9th of February Mr. Quinton addressed to the Government of India, a strong remonstrance against the restoration of the old Maharajah. He says— His restoration would simply mean that the authority of the State would be wielded by Pucca Sena, for whom no one has a good word to say, and the two other brothers now with the Maharajah, instead of by the Jubaraj and the Senapatti. He goes on in the same Despatch to say— I was assured by Mr. Grimwood, who met me at Kohima last month, that there was no feeling whatever shown in favour of the return of the Maharajah, and that the present Government was universally accepted. Then, apparently under the influence of the views of the Government of India, Mr. Quinton for the first time entertains the idea that there should be an inquiry into the conduct of the Senapatti. That will be found on page 23 of the Blue Book, but there was not a word of it until February. He says— The punishment of the Senapatti is not in my mind in any way dependent on the Maharajah's restoration. An inquiry into his conduct and his punishment to the satisfaction of the Government of India can be made a condition precedent to the recognition of the Jubaraj; and unless it is intended to exclude him permanently from the succession, his recognition as Jubaraj in the event of the present Jubaraj becoming Maharajah, should be made to depend upon his obedience and good conduct. It is quite certain that at that time Mr. Quinton did not contemplate the immediate expulsion of the Jubaraj, but simply, after an inquiry into his conduct, allowing him to take his natural place as heir apparent to the throne. That was the state of things in February, and then Mr. Quinton goes to Calcutta. I should mention that up to that time the old Maharajah had been in Calcutta, constantly soliciting aid from the Indian Government. Mr. Quinton goes up to Calcutta and he has an opportunity of consulting with the Government of India. I presume that the Government of India called for his opinion in writing, and it is given in a Despatch, dated February 19th, at page 24 of the Blue Book. He there repeats his strong opinion that the old Maharajah should not be restored. There were two policies open to the Indian Government—one was not to recognise the revolution of the Senapatti, but to restore the old-Maharajah, and the other was to acknowledge the revolution. But how was it possible to acknowledge the revolution by accepting the usurper to the throne, and at the same time to treat as conspirators the men who brought about the revolution? It would be exactly the same as if we had accepted the restoration of Charles II., and ordered the execution of General Monk. In consequence, I suppose, of the remonstrance of Mr. Quinton, the Government of India abandoned their original policy, which was that of declining to accept the revolution. I should say when I call it a revolution, that this is carefully pointed out as what, in Turkey, would be called a revolution of the seraglio. It was not a political revolution; not a revolution of the people, nor a revolution against the English Raj or against British authority. It had no element of that kind at all; it was a mere quarrel in the Palace between the brothers. There was no political object in the matter and no political reason for adopting one party rather than the other. Mr. Quinton in his Report of the 19th February speaks of a remonstrance against the restoration of the old Maharajah, and he says that— The restoration of the Maharajah and his adherents means the

expulsion of the present de facto rulers who have hitherto given no cause of complaint to us, or, so far as I can ascertain, to their subjects. He goes on to say—and this is his final word on the subject— The Jubaraj is the heir apparent, and will have on his side numerous partisans, who look to his future accession, and the Senapatti—the most popular of the brothers, the present head of the Army, a man of bold and turbulent character—may be expected, when driven to desperation, if he does not openly resist, to use his utmost efforts to stir up disaffection and rebellion. That was the reason for not putting up the old Maharajah, and the Government accepted that view, and abandoned their intention of restoring the old Maharajah. But, then, what was to be done with the new Government? Were they to set up the Senapatti, who would be a formidable opponent? He is the heir apparent, and one of the reasons given by Mr. Quinton against the restoration of the old Maharajah was that the Indian Government would always be obliged to maintain a large force in order to keep him on the throne. We come then to what is, of course, the practical part of the transaction—the final determination of the Government of India that was arrived at on the 21st of February. No determination was com" to by the Government as to what they were to do between the 24th of September and the 21st of February. For six months Mr. Grimwood, the Political Resident at Manipur, was without the slightest intimation from the Government as to what course they intended to pursue, or whether they had any intention of disturbing the settlement of the Senapatti. It was certainly not until the middle of March that anything was heard. The Political Resident at Manipur was allowed to go on with his relations with the Indian Government, as they existed at Manipur, without the slightest information as to the manner in which it was intended to deal with the Senapatti. I think I am right in that opinion. The views and final opinion of the Indian Government will be found on page 25 of the Blue Book, which contains the instructions to Mr. Quinton to go to Manipur and deal with the matter. Without detaining the House by reading the whole of the Despatch, it gives instructions for the recognition of the Jubaraj and the removal of the Senapatti. There are, however, some words in the Despatch which are important. Having ordered the Senapatti to be removed from Manipur and punished for his conduct, Mr. Quinton is instructed to inform the Government of India in what way it will be best to carry out this object. The Despatch says— The Governor General in Council considers that it will be desirable that the Senapatti should be removed from Manipur and punished for his lawless conduct. I am to inquire where you would recommend that he should be interned, and what steps you consider necessary for carrying out his removal, without affording him the chance, which his position as head of the Manipur Forces might possibly give him, of making any forcible opposition. Mr. Quinton is then instructed to Take with you a sufficient force, even though opposition may not be expected, and you should report for the orders of the Government of India the conditions which you propose to attach to the recognition as Maharajah of Manipur of the present Jubaraj. Again I call attention to the fact that when he was collecting his force and considering what it should be, Mr. Grimwood had no knowledge that the Senapatti was to be removed. That is a material point. Why was not Mr. Grim wood consulted as to the force that would be requisite to carry out the policy decided upon? As to the force which was taken, and which was proved to be utterly inadequate, I propose to say nothing. I suppose that is a matter for military inquiry in India. That it was inadequate there is no doubt. Though it is not part of the civil question, it is part of the military question, and some explanation is required from the Military Authorities in India. In consequence of Mr. Grim-wood not knowing what was to be done, Mr. Quinton started with his troops on the 7th of March. It seems to me very extraordinary that all this should have taken place without any communication with the Secretary of State in England. No Despatch is sent till the 4th of March, just at the time when the whole expedition was organised and was about to start. That Despatch could not, of course, reach England for six weeks afterwards. On the 7th of March, Mr. Quinton and his force left for Manipur. The account of this will be found at page 64, in a Paper written by Lieutenant Gurdon. After the

whole expedition had started, and was on the march, Mr. Gardon was sent forward to see Mr. Grimwood at Manipur. He went by forced marches, and arrived at Manipur on the 15th of March. It is perfectly obvious from these Papers that until Mr. Gurdon saw Mr. Grimwood on the 16th of March, Mr. Grimwood never had any idea that the policy he had been pursuing for six months was disapproved or was intended to be changed by the Government. Mr. Gurdon says he then told him what was going to occur. I think there is some controversy upon this matter. It is difficult to reconcile exactly the two accounts of what Mr. Gurdon said to Mr. Grimwood on that occasion. There is a telegram at page 81, in which Mr. Gurdon says that he— Made following communications to Grimwood beforehand: First, informed him of the intention to deport Senapatti; asked him best way to arrest him without affording him an opportunity of forcibly resisting. Grim wood's reply was, Senapatti personally would resist to-the utmost. Grimwood could suggest no means of resisting Senapatti as described. Why was not this all told to the Government of India before the expedition started? Why were not the Military Authorities in possession, before the force was organised, of this view of the only person who had local knowledge of the case? I am bound to say that this account of what was told Mr. Grimwood has not been universally accepted. In India certainly statements have been made—it is said on the authority of Mrs. Grimwood, and I believe accurately—that when Mr. Gurdon saw Mr. Grimwood he did not tell him there was a resolution to deport the Senapatti, but he asked a number of questions as to what would happen in that event. It is quite obvious, I think, that there was some mistake about that, but it is said that Mr. Quinton did not really know what was to be done until a week after, when Mr. Quinton actually arrived at Manipur. There is a statement, supposed to be authorised by Mrs. Grimwood, which gives this account of the transaction— On Sunday, the 15th of March, Mr. Gurdon arrived at the Residency" at Manipur, having been sent forward by the Chief Commissioner presumably to make inquiries and to gather information. On Monday, the 16th, he closely-questioned Mr. Grimwood with regard to Manipuri affairs. Mr. Grimwood was well posted in the subject, and gave all the information sought for; but from first to last he was Studiously kept in ignorance as to what was the object of the Chief Commissioner's coming. On Tuesday, the 17th, Mr. Gurdon left to rejoin the Chief Commissioner, and on Friday, the 20th, Mr. Grimwood went out to meet him at Sengmai, returning on Saturday, the 21st, at 7.30 p.m. In the interval between Mr. Gurdon's departure from the Residency and Friday, Mr. Grimwood and Lieutenant Simpoon of the 43rd Ghorkas, who happened to be a guest at the Residency, went out on a shooting expedition, which had been organised for them by the Jubraj. It is hardly conceivable that if Mr Grimwood had received orders to depor the Senapatti he would, in the interval have gone out with him on a shooting expedition. When Mr. Grimwood met the Chief Commissioner at Sengmai, he was for the first time, and in strict confidence, told that it had been determined to arrest the Jubraj in open durbar and deport him from the country, and he was informed to his dismay that his was the hand required to execute the office. The military officers were not taken into the Chief Commissioner's confidence. Mrs. Grim-wood had been told by her husband, on his return from Sengmai, of the intended coup, but she had maintained, at his request, the strictest reserve on the subject. Mrs. Grimwood, however, as the time approached, took advantage of an opportunity to beg of the Chief Commissioner not to force upon her husband the distressing task of arresting the Jubraj, since he had always been on very friendly terms with her husband and herself, and earnestly besought him to impose that disagreeable duty upon someone else. If this account is correct, the statement to Mr. Grimwood of the actual determination to arrest the Senapatti was not made until the 22nd. In any event, until the 15th, Mr. Grimwood, the Political Agent at Manipur, was not informed of what was to be done. Well, Mr. Gurdon, having seen Mr. Grimwood at Manipur, returned on the 15th to Mr. Quinton, who was on his march. On the 18th Mr. Quinton telegraphs to the Government of India what he intends to do. He says— I propose to require the Regent and the durbar to meet me on arrival, announce the decision of

the Government, arrest Senapatti, and inform him that the length of his exile and return depend on his conduct and the tranquillity of the country, and order the Maharajah to place a gun with the escort during my stay to prevent any disturbances. That is approved by the Government of India by telegraph. Mr. Quinton arrives at Manipur. Then the determination is taken to arrest the Senapatti, and here I would observe that at that time, so far as we can judge, the existing Government in Manipur was in the most friendly disposition towards the English Government. They treated them with all the solemnities of Eastern respect; they went forth to meet them, and all the ceremonial of a friendly reception was given. Mr. Quinton met the Senapatti; what passed between them we do not know; we have no record of that. It was settled to seize the Senapatti at the durbar. The arrangement was that the orders of India were to be announced at durbar, and the Senapatti was to be told to surrender. If he refused, Colonel Skene was to arrest him at the durbar. Troops were kept in readiness around the Residency where durbar was held in case of resistance. It appears from these papers—I entirely, of course, omit to adopt the evidence given by the Jubraj and others of the natives which, no doubt, would be tainted with partiality. I do not rely upon them. At all events, the Jubraj says he was very much alarmed at seeing the Residency surrounded by troops, and it was in consequence of that the Senapatti did not attend the durbar. I speak in entire ignorance of these matters. There are gentlemen in this House of great Indian experience; they know what the character of this durbar was. They well know what would be the meaning attached to it by the natives of India; I profess to offer no opinion on the subject. I am quite incompetent to do so. Whether or not it was a proper thing, at a durbar so summoned, to seize one of the persons invited there, I do not know. It is a matter which, in my opinion, the English Government is bound to pronounce an opinion. It is a thing which, for good or for evil, must deeply affect the natives of India and our relations with the Princes of the Native States. I know there has been a great deal of prejudice on this subject. I do not wish to inflame that prejudice or to express an opinion which I am incompetent to form. I know there are durbars and durbars. There are durbars such as was held by Lord Lytton to receive the Ameer of Afghanistan. That was a great reception of a foreign prince. I do not in the least intend to attach the same signification to a durbar of this character. I was struck with the fact that when the Marquess of Ripon addressed a question to the Secretary of State for India in another place, as to the orders to arrest the Senapatti at the durbar, the answer given by the Secretary of State was— My information does not lead me to believe that the Government of India ever contemplated the summoning of the Senapatti to the durbar for the purpose of arresting him. If that had been done I should have been very much surprised. That looked rather, I should say, as if the Secretary of State for India considered that that was a thing that would not be approved of. I have read with great attention articles on this subject by a Member of this House, of great Indian experience, the hon. Member for Evesham, whose opinion is always received with great deference on this subject. Although approving generally of the policy that was pursued, upon the subject of the durbar he has expressed a very strong opinion. He says— To this durbar the family, including the Senapatti and Council of the Maharajah, was summoned. This summons was peaceful to them. They were not to be arrested. There was one exception. This summons was not peaceful for the Senapatti, as he was to be arrested, and yet he was not warned. Now, this cannot be right; no arguments as to the rights of the paramount power can make it so. It is quite plain the hon. Member for Evesham would have disapproved of that transaction. I gather from the papers that that transaction was not originally ordered by the Government of India. The Viceroy did not know the arrest was to be made in the durbar until he learned it subsequently. He did not read the telegram of the 18th March, approving what Mr. Quinton was to do in that sense. Therefore, if it had been only an error of judgment on the part of Mr. Quinton, who is now unfortunately dead, I would not lay stress upon the matter, but a very different importance is given to it by the fact that it was distinctly approved by the Viceroy. You will find that in pages 82 and 83 of the Blue

Book. First of all, referring to the outcry in England and in India as to this transaction at the durbar, he says— Imputation of treachery arises from misconception of Senapatti's position and that of Manipur State. State is subordinate to Government of India, and Senapatti must have known that his conduct in conspiring against the Maharajah, who had been recognised by us, rendered him liable to punishment. How could he have known? Why, the English Resident negotiated with him the terms of the removal of the Maharajah. The English Resident at Manipur had been in communication with him in political life and in private life; the Commissioner of Assam recognised and approved these relations of the Political Resident at Manipur; and for six months he was recognised by the Government rather as the leader of a revolution which they had accepted and approved. Therefore, I think the statement of the Viceroy is open to criticism. Well, then, we come to the question of the durbar— Until Gurdon's telegram of 7th of May reached us we had not received specific information that if Senapatti refused to submit quietly, Quinton intended to have him arrested at durbar after announcement of our orders, but we have no doubt Quinton considered open arrest in durbar, in case of such refusal, would be most straightforward and safest procedure. Knowing Senapatti's character, Quinton probably-felt that only chance of depriving him of opportunity of fomenting disturbance was to effect his deportation as promptly as possible. Had the arrest taken place at Durbar, as intended, Quinton would not have lost his life. That is a ratification, and, according to the legal maxim, ratification after the event is retro-active in effect, and is equivalent to a mandate. We must deal with this exactly as if the original order had been given by the Government of India to arrest the Senapatti at the durbar. I do not profess myself, and I do not desire myself to express, any opinion upon that matter, which must rest very much upon Indian opinion; but, in my judgment, it is a matter on which we ought to have the decision of the responsible Government in this House. It is a question which goes far beyond the question of this particular affair, and affects the relations and dealings of the Indian Government with the Native Princes of India in the future. I am afraid I have wearied the House, but it was necessary, in order that I should, in justice to all parties, give an accurate account of the matters and of the points to which I wished attention to be directed, and I could not do better than give that account in the terms of the written Papers. There are several points on which I think we ought to ask for some explanations of the Government. First of all, as I have said, we ought to be told how it was that the Secretary of State had no communication on this subject from first to last until the disaster had occurred; how it was that the change in the dynasty of Manipur could be effected by an armed force being sent to Manipur without any information being communicated to the Secretary of State. Manipur is a State of importance, because it is now the connecting link between Assam and North Burma. We know it is that all this could be done, without any information being communicated to the Secretary of State. Well, then, upon the other point of view of the treatment of the Senapatti as a conspirator, because I do not know exactly what view is to be taken of orders sent to the General, who was to inflict punishment upon the parties concerned. You are to go to Manipur, take possession of the capital, and punish, as they deserve, all who have acted as leaders or instigators of the revolt, or who have been concerned in the treacherous murder of British subjects. I do not quite understand what the "leaders or instigators of the revolt" means; whether it means the transactions of the 24th of March, or whether it refers also to the transactions of the 24th of September. That, I think, is a point which should be cleared up. If it refers to the transactions of the 24th September, all I have said as to the acceptance of that by the Government will apply. If only to the transactions of the 24th March, 1891, that will be an entirely different thing. On the question of the separate treatment of the Senapatti and the Jubraj, I wish to know the views of the Government as to the possibility of separating the cases of the Jubraj who was put upon the throne by the Senapatti, and the Senapatti himself; how it is possible to treat one as a conspirator when you accept the other as the new ruler of Manipur. The second point, of course, is the question of the durbar, to which

I have already referred. The other point is the extraordinary delay on the part of the Government of India, that is to say, from the middle of October, when they first knew all the particulars, to the 21st February, when they came to a decision determining upon their policy, and the non-communication of these circumstances to Mr. Grimwood. Now, as to matters of future policy I do not press the Government. I know the difficulties in which the Government of India is now placed by what has occurred. That the policy they adopted, right or wrong, has totally failed, nobody can deny. Here is this family of Native Princes. They acquiesce evidently in the removal of one and the setting up of another. One is deposed, the other is under the capital sentence, and consequently the whole fabric of the dynasty of Manipur seems to have been destroyed. What is to be done in order to re-construct the Government there, of course will be an anxious question for the consideration of the Government of India. Well, then, as regards the punishment to be awarded to the persons who were concerned in these terrible events, upon that I venture to offer no opinion. It is a grave responsibility both for the Government in India and the Government at home, and they will determine these matters upon their responsibility and upon their judgment. In the midst of these circumstances which, I think, are to be deplored—whether there is any fault to be found with them or not—at all events there are some bright spots. There is the courage and fortitude of young Grant; there is the self-devotion of Mrs. Grimwood, which have been duly recognised by the Fountain of Honour and by the English nation. I hope I have discharged the duty I have undertaken in the spirit which I have professed. I have endeavoured to state the case as impartially as I knew how. I think the Government and the House will take the view that these matters are worthy of the attention of the English Parliament. Transactions of this kind cannot occur; disasters of this kind cannot be sustained without this House—which, after all, is the final resort—and the Government of this immense Empire showing that they are cognisant of them, that they sympathise with them, and that they desire to arrive at a fair and true judgment upon them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before this House further Correspondence relating to Manipur."—(Sir W. Harcourt.)

(4.58.) [THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA \(Sir J. GORST,\)](#) [Chatham](#)

Of course to the Motion submitted to the House the Government offer no opposition whatever. The Government have endeavoured to lay before the House ample information respecting the unfortunate disaster at Manipur, and as further information is coming in by almost every mail, and as the inquiries which are now going on in Manipur are almost daily throwing fresh light on the transactions, Her Majesty's Government would, of course, think it their duty, in obedience to the Resolution which the right hon. Gentleman has moved, to give from time to time every information which may be useful and necessary to this House. But the right hon. Gentleman not only moved the Motion. He accompanied it by a speech, in which he has asked for information upon certain points connected with the transactions on which he thinks the Government ought now to pronounce some opinion. I will do my best in the remarks I make to gratify the right hon. Gentleman as far as I can. The time for a full and complete expression of opinion has not yet arrived. Inquiries, as I mentioned just now, are still going on, especially into the military transactions; and not only are inquiries being made into these transactions, but the conduct of the civil officers, so far as it is possible now to obtain information, is also being made the subject of inquiry. It would clearly be improper for the Secretary of State to have written any despatch in which the final conclusion of Her Majesty's Government in these matters was expressed until all reasonable means of obtaining any further elucidation of the facts have been exhausted. The right hon. Gentleman, after a

perusal of the Papers, seems to have been unable himself to find anybody whom he would take the responsibility of censuring, and rather asks me to assist him in the task, and invites me to find some person whom the right hon. Gentleman would be justified in censuring. I am afraid if that was his idea—I see the right hon. Gentleman shakes his head—I could not have assisted him, because I am as unable as he is to fix anything like culpable blame upon any person connected with these transactions. Now, the first two suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman are suggestions which I feel myself very much in accord with. He asks, why were these transactions carried to the point of a military expedition against Manipur without any previous consultation with the Secretary of State in London? The only answer to that is that it has been the universal practice of the Government of India in all except what they consider very important cases to take upon themselves the responsibility of dealing with the Native States, and of not seeking the previous sanction or approval of the Secretary of State. And if the Secretary of State's sanction was not asked to this proceeding at Manipur, it was because the Government of India, and everybody connected with this matter, regarded it at the outset as a matter of very little importance; and if there had been no military disaster, if the Senapatti had been quietly arrested at Manipur and deported to some other part of India, very likely nothing would ever have been heard of the transaction in this House. It is because subsequent events have given an extraordinary significance to everything that previously took place that this matter is made the subject of discussion in the House of Commons; but I myself confess that it does seem to me that, looking at the subject by the light of subsequent experience, the question whether a revolution in Manipur should be recognised or not, or whether an important person in the Manipur State should be deported or not, is one of these important questions connected with the administration of Native States about which the Secretary of State should have been informed, and about which, if time had permitted, he should have been previously consulted. The second complaint of the right hon. Gentleman is that there was a very unfortunate and regrettable delay in these transactions. As to this, I should like, in the first place, to point out that if the Secretary of State had been consulted the delay would have been considerably increased, because the Government of India could not have consulted the Secretary of State until all the information necessary to enable them to form their opinion had been obtained, and, therefore, a consultation with the Secretary of State would have added to the five months' during which the Government of India was coming to a decision by two or three months additional delay. But this delay, although regrettable, is not altogether inexplicable. The Government was at Simla when the transaction of September 25, 1890, took place, and it takes 14 days for papers to travel from Manipur to Simla. The Government of India was also then on the point of moving from Simla to Calcutta, and I am afraid the migration between Simla and Calcutta causes a good deal of delay in the transaction of public business; and, finally, on the 14th November a fact took place to which the right hon. Gentleman has not called the attention of the House. On the 14th November, the ex-Maharajah addressed a solemn protest to the Government of India, in which he made some very grave accusations against Mr. Grimwood, and this protest had to be sent to Manipur for Mr. Grimwood's observations on it before it could be taken into consideration by the Government of India. Mr. Grimwood wrote his answer to the Maharajah's protest on December 4th, and it was only on December 31 that Mr. Quinton forwarded to the Government of India Mr. Grimwood's explanation, accompanied by his observations and recommendations on the subject. And as Mr. Quinton was on the point of coming to Calcutta a further delay took place in order that he might personally confer with the Viceroy on the matter. I admit that these delays were unfortunate and regrettable, but I think anybody would say that a delay of five months in coming to a conclusion on an important matter of this kind in a place which is not accessible by railroads, and which is remote from the centre of political life in India, although regrettable, is at least to be explained. To come to the next point in the right hon. Gentleman's speech, he has rather suggested that the Government of India are to

blame in the policy of removing the Senapatti from Manipur, which gave rise to this disaster. That policy was, of course, the policy of the Government of India, and undoubtedly they are responsible for it. But I do not think that either the right hon. Gentleman himself or the people who have criticised this policy have quite appreciated that the removal of the Senapatti was entirely a political act. I am aware that the Government of India in their Despatches make use of expressions like "treachery" and "rebellion," and accuse the Senapatti of moral offences for which they declare an intention of punishing him; but that is only the way in which the Anglo-Saxon race always is accustomed to ascribe criminal misconduct to political opponents. We are not unaccustomed to it in this country. The right hon. Gentleman himself frequently speaks to large public bodies of the criminal practices and misconduct of the First Lord of the Treasury and others who sit on this Treasury Bench; and he speaks of their expulsion from that Bench, which would be a purely political act, as an act of punishment. But, given the right of the Government of India to expel the Senapatti from Manipur or not, the immediate question is whether it was expedient that they should exercise that right. Just let the House consider who the Senapatti was. He was the man of the greatest ability and the greatest force of character among the ruling family of Manipur. He was a man who was extremely popular among the people, who had a reputation of having impoverished himself by generosity, which is one of the greatest virtues to which an Oriental can aspire. He was not a man of very nice moral character—I do not know that you can expect the same standard of morality from an Oriental that you can expect from an Englishman—but a man who beat two of his slaves to death for stealing a polo pony is rather worse than the average of Oriental despots. And there was this most important characteristic of the Senapatti. He was a man of very independent character, who presumed to make revolutions without consulting the paramount power, and who set a Maharajah upon the throne of Manipur without first asking the leave of the British Resident. A man of that sort must be dealt with in two ways. First, he can be removed from the State altogether: or, secondly, he can be used as an instrument for governing the people of the State. It is quite evident that Mr. Grimwood desired to adopt the latter course, and thought he could make use of the Senapatti as an instrument through which the Manipur people could be governed. Well, that is a very generous policy, and one which everybody is disposed to sympathise with, but it is a rather risky policy. It is a policy the success of which depends upon the Resident obtaining the ascendancy over the Senapatti, and not the Senapatti over the Resident. And between the two powers there is the great difference that the one is temporary and the other is permanent, and that while Mr. Grimwood would remain only a few years at Manipur the Senapatti would remain there altogether, and might, when Mr. Grimwood had gone, possibly obtain an ascendancy over Mr. Grimwood's successor which he could not obtain over Mr. Grimwood himself. For that and other reasons, Governments, Indian and other, have in such cases never encouraged a policy of this kind being adopted. Governments have always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and they have always loved and promoted docile and unpretending mediocrity. This is not a new policy. It is as old as Tarquinius Superbus; and although in these modern times we do not lop or cut off the heads of the tall poppies, we take other and more merciful means of reducing any person of dangerous preeminence to a harmless condition. Why, in my own life, I have known numbers of cases of this kind. I remember 30 years ago how the British Government spent their blood and treasure in the Colony of New Zealand for the purpose of destroying the power of the Maori King, instead of governing the natives of New Zealand through his instrumentality. I remember how, a few years later, a British Government destroyed the power of Cetewayo in South Africa as soon as he ceased to be necessary as a counterpoise to the Transvaal. But I can give you examples of the same policy much more recent. Why did you expel Arabi from Egypt? Because he was thought to be politically dangerous to the peace of the country. I can give you even a closer parallel, taken from the conduct of that Government of which the right hon. Gentleman

was so distinguished a member. Why did you arrest Zebehr and intern him in Gibraltar? There was a man of great authority in a country over which you had no power, but, acting from a political necessity, you would not permit him to exercise his influence in the Soudan, although General Gordon, your agent in the Soudan, asked to have him there. The Government of India, in refusing Mr. Grimwood the assistance of the Senapatti, acted in the same way as you did in refusing Zebehr to General Gordon to enable him to manage the Soudan. I am not saying this for the purpose of applying anything like a *to quoque* argument to the right hon. Gentleman. I say it because it is the fruit of our experience; and it is a mortifying thing to have to confess, but I think Governments are very likely to be right in following this tradition. It is, perhaps, better that great ability and independence should be a disqualification for State service; it is perhaps better and more for the peace and safety of the world that you should depend on mediocrities. At any rate, it would be unreasonable for the House to censure the Government of India because, under the circumstances of the case, they determined to remove the Senapatti from Manipur. His political character affords ample justification for the act; and they followed the traditional policy of Governments from time immemorial. Now, there is another branch of the subject which has to be considered, and that is, granting that the policy of removing the Senapatti was right, was it properly carried out? I hope the House will not believe that I would adopt a course so mean and cowardly as to try and shuffle off responsibility upon those who are dead in order that the living may escape blame, but it is necessary to call attention to the position of Mr. Quinton. He was not a subaltern or subordinate officer. He was the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and Manipur was a subordinate Native State in the Province he administered. Now, all who are acquainted with our policy in India know that the Provincial Governments have a considerable amount of independence and even, in some cases, legislation of their own. It is true Assam is one of the least advanced of the Indian Provinces, but even there, such is the position of the Chief Commissioner, that the Government of India would have been wrong in interfering with Mr. Quinton's discretion in carrying out this policy, and I have no doubt that if Mr. Quinton were alive he would be the first to assert that the responsibility belonged to him and was his. Now, it is very difficult in this House to discuss even to the limited extent to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has discussed it, the conduct of any of the actors in the Manipur affair, because all the chief actors have unhappily perished, and cannot explain any points in their conduct that may seem to us obscure. Some things were done at Manipur which, I suppose, can never be explained, but which, if Mr. Quinton were alive, he possibly might explain to our entire satisfaction. But, as I have said, an inquiry on the spot is now proceeding, and it is therefore the more difficult for me to say a word on these transactions, for fear a word of mine might do less than justice to those unhappy men who cannot speak for themselves. But I cannot let the occasion pass without saying one or two things on behalf of the actors in the Manipur disaster, to one of which I am invited by the reference of the right hon. Gentleman himself. Now, first of all, Mr. Quinton has been blamed for planning the arrest at the durbar, and I think that some indignation was evoked in this country about this arrest at the durbar, which was due in a great degree to misapprehension as to what this durbar was. People forgot it was not a ceremonial meeting between equals, such as the ceremonial meetings between the Viceroy and the great rulers of Native States; it was a kind of Court held by the Chief Commissioner, to which the Manipur authorities were summoned in order to hear the determination of the paramount Power, and they would be required to give their obedience to that determination, and if either the Regent or the Senapatti had refused to attend the durbar, they were liable to be punished for contumacy as not obeying when summoned by the paramount Power. No doubt it is a question worth considering whether the attempt to effect the arrest at the durbar was expedient, or not? We have a high authority in the person of the hon. Baronet the Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple), who, no doubt, will be listened to with the respect his opinion deserves should he give it the House; but Indian Authorities are not all agreed

on this matter. A few days ago I had a visit from a gentleman who, perhaps, more than anyone else, is entitled to speak upon Indian frontier policy—Sir Robert Sandeman. He has surpassed all Indian officers in the success with which he has dealt with frontier tribes, **tribes very different to the Manipuris, of a really warlike, independent race, formidable** and dangerous. Sir Robert Sandeman told me the other day that he had repeatedly arrested recalcitrant Chiefs at the durbar, and the last illustration he gave me was from his experience only a few months ago, a short time before he left India. It was a Chief in Beloochistan, who made himself obnoxious to British authority. This Chief was summoned to the durbar, and thereupon he was given into custody and removed, a precisely parallel case to this at Manipur, or as it would have been had Mr. Quinton's intention been carried out. But while I am perfectly ready to admit that the question of arrests at the durbar is one which deserves very attentive consideration, and upon which, after due and deliberate consideration, the Secretary of State will probably have to express an opinion, I wish to repudiate with the strongest indignation of which I am capable the suggestion made in some quarters that Mr. Quinton attempted to carry out, or was capable of carrying out, anything like an act of treachery. Although the accusation was freely bruited about at one time, subsequent information has deprived the charge of all foundation, for it is almost certain that the fact that the Senapatti was going to be arrested was known for days before Mr. Quinton arrived. It is so stated in the evidence given at the trials at Manipur. It was known for days in advance that Mr. Quinton was coming, and that the Senapatti would be arrested. The Senapatti met Mr. Quinton four miles from Manipur with a very small escort, and sat talking with him for some considerable time. Now, does that not show that the Senapatti had no suspicion that Mr. Quinton contemplated any act of treachery?

SIR W. HARCOURT

Or perhaps of arrest.

SIR J. GORST

If the British Commissioner intended a treacherous arrest, there was his opportunity to effect the arrest four miles from Manipur. The Senapatti knew perfectly well that a durbar was called for the purpose of declaring his removal from Manipur and arresting him there. It is apparent, therefore, there was no treachery, and that everything was honourable between the parties. The Senapatti, knowing that he would be arrested at the durbar, refused to go to the durbar at all. I do not believe that anybody acquainted with the facts can entertain the idea that Mr. Quinton contemplated any underhand and treacherous conduct, of which, indeed, he was incapable. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has called attention to the fact that Mr. Quinton's conduct in intending the arrest at the durbar was with the approbation of the Indian Government, and as to this, I think there is no doubt whatever that had they known of Mr. Quinton's intention they would have left him to carry out their policy in the manner adopted by Sir R. Sandeman and other officers on the frontier. Then the right hon. Gentleman said something of the insufficiency of the force, and rather hinted that the force was insufficient, because Mr. Quinton was not fully informed of the resistance which might be anticipated. But I think the right hon. Gentleman must have overlooked the Despatch of February 19th from Mr. Quinton to the Government of India. In that Despatch, speaking of the probability of resistance, Mr. Quinton said that the Senapatti was a man of ability and of turbulent character, who, when driven to desperation, might be expected, if not to openly resist, to use his utmost efforts to stir up disaffection.

SIR W. HARCOURT

I read that Despatch.

SIR J. GORST

That shows that Mr. Quinton had all the necessary information in reference to the resistance to be expected before he determined on the number of his escort. It is easy for us to be wise after the event, but I doubt whether anybody before these Manipur transactions could have doubted that 500 Sepoys, the force Mr. Quinton had at his disposal, would not have been sufficient to account for the whole of the Manipur force. I do not think that anyone, even Mr. Grimwood, had any idea of the tiger-like ferocity with which the Senapatti defended himself. Those who are acquainted with Indian affairs, and have followed Indian history, know that the British power there has not depended upon overwhelming force; boldness and audacity are qualities by which our Empire in India has been acquired and preserved. There was no reason to suppose that the force which Mr. Quinton thought sufficient for carrying out his task was inadequate, for do we not find that the next event in the history is that Lieutenant Grant set out with a force of 80 men to relieve the force at Manipur, that he penetrated to within 12 miles of the town, that he attacked and captured a fort defended by 1,000 men, that he drove back the entire Manipur Army flushed with its victory over the Residency, and when relieved by the prudence of the superior officer, that relief was received by the little force with vexation rather than satisfaction. More than this, on the military question I would not venture to state to the House, as it might do some injustice to men whose previous public service entitle them to consideration, and whose mouths are closed in death. If they committed any error of judgment they have paid for it. I believe this Manipur affair must always remain a dark page of Indian history. It is, as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out, relieved by two bright examples of conspicuous bravery of a man and of a woman; the splendid audacity of Lieutenant Grant and the patient and heroic endurance of Mrs. Grimwood. I respectfully submit to this House that no proceedings in this House could either mend or mar the record, and to criticise the conduct of the men who have perished in the service of their country, and, therefore, can neither explain nor defend their conduct may be unjust, must be ungenerous, and can serve no political end whatever.

(5.31.) MR. CURZON (Southport)

With the defence of the Indian Government by the Under Secretary I find myself in total disagreement, and I therefore feel tempted to ask the indulgence of the House while I attempt to feebly defend the Government of India and the officers concerned. I purpose to limit myself chiefly to those parts of the case which touch the honour of the Indian Government and the officers concerned, a point about which we are more sensitive in this House than any other. Having done my best to master all the evidence at my disposal, and having considered and read the Blue Books most carefully, and also having made myself acquainted with what is the opinion of the Indian as well as the home newspapers, I have confidence in saying that a more painful line of defence than that adopted by the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the Indian Government and the officers who unhappily have paid the penalty with their lives I never heard. Whatever errors of judgment they committed—and it cannot be denied that in some respects they were deplorable—neither the Government of India nor the officers concerned deserve the reprobation or censure of the House of Commons. The first point I take is the resolution of the Indian Government to send out Mr. Quinton to Manipur to restore the Jubaraj, and to arrest the Senapatti. I noticed the right hon. Gentleman spoke in more moderate language than some of the newspapers, but the inference to be drawn was the same, namely, that the Act of the British Government in proposing to forcibly arrest the

Senapatti was an act of gratuitous interference on the part of the Government. I am quite ready to admit, that whether it was politic to forcibly arrest the Senapatti at that particular moment, is a question capable of argument. It is quite true a good deal can be said for the Senapatti, and has been already said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby; it is true he was admitted to have been popular with the bulk of his people; that he was on familiar terms with Mr. Grimwood; that since September, 1890, he had not been accused of any overt act of hostility against the Government, and, therefore, there was no pressing need for this violent and powerful step. But this does not even touch the fringe of the question. The point that can be advanced and sustained is this: that both on constitutional and political grounds the Indian Government were absolutely right in the step they took. First, Sir, as regards the constitutional aspect of the question. Manipur is not an independent State; it is a protected State, subordinate to the British Crown. Treaties and negotiations entered into between the two Governments for the space of over 60 years have shown that. During that time the Government have not only saved the Manipur State from absorption by its neighbour on the South, the Burma, but they have saved the ruling dynasty of Manipur from being upset at times by popular out-break, and at times by intrigue. I do not think, therefore, it will be doubted that Manipur was in no respect an independent State. I am amazed in that respect to have heard the language adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and the Under Secretary of State for India. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby represented the Senapatti as on the whole a respectable gentleman.

SIR W. HARCOURT

I expressed no opinion on that point at all. I have not undertaken the defence of the Senapatti. What I desired to point out was this: that the Indian Government accepted the Senapatti as the Commander-in-Chief under the old Maharajah, and practically as Prime Minister of the new Maharajah, and accepted him for several years, and, in spite of the allegations of the Indian Government, they made no objection since 1888—more than two years—to his remaining as Commander-in-Chief under the old Maharajah.

MR. CURZON

That may be true, but the right hon. Gentleman was careful to eliminate from his speech anything derogatory to the Senapatti, and that is a most important point in the case. He was a well-known and notorious man, and I may say a man of even infamous character—["no, no!"]—of even infamous character. He had once been banished from the State of Manipur for acts of criminal violence, and on one occasion threatened with deportation. I am quite prepared to meet the point and argue that for his actions in the month of September of last year he stood in the position of a guilty man, calling for punishment at the hands of the Indian Government. The Under Secretary for India said that the charges of treachery brought against the Senapatti were the mere inventions of political feeling against a political opponent.

SIR J. GORST

I did not say that. What I said was that the whole action of the Government was political—that the removal of the Senapatti was a political act.

MR. CURZON

I beg pardon if I misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman I understood him to say the Senapatti was a political opponent, that the charges of treachery were similar to those we are familiar with in England, and which, whether there is foundation for them or not, are levelled against a political opponent. It appears to me that is a most unfair way of putting the case with regard to the Senapatti. In the act of last September it cannot be denied that he rebelled against the Ruler of the State who had been restored. I look upon that act of rebellion as an act of rebellion against the paramount Power, which is that of the British Crown. That was the opinion of the Indian Government. They looked upon the Senapatti, from the result, as a man guilty of rebellion against the State, guilty of high treason, and calling for punishment at the hands of the Indian Government.

SIR W. HARCOURT

Will the hon. Member excuse me? If the Indian Government so regarded the Senapatti they must have looked upon the Jubaraj in a similar light.

MR. CURZON

I am most happy to meet that point also, because I conceive it is one absolutely valueless. The right hon. Gentleman leads us to understand there ought to be similarity of intention on the part of the Indian Government with the Senapatti and with the Jubaraj. What is the similarity? It is admitted the Jubaraj was not responsible for the rebellion of 1890, but at the time was eight miles away, and he was not accused by either party of complicity in the proceedings, and the right hon. Gentleman wishes to put on the same level with him this notorious Senapatti, who was admitted to be at the head of the conspiracy, and who became the chief officer of the Ruler of the State. The right hon. Gentleman is fertile in resources, but I should like to know what he would have done had he been in the position of the Indian Government at the moment. They might have restored the Maharajah, but it was admitted he was too weak. The Indian Government had at first some disposition towards restoring that Prince, but so strong was the dissenting voice of Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton that the idea had to be abandoned. How could they have ousted the Jubaraj? He had taken the most becoming step; his elder brother having voluntarily abdicated and disappeared, he stepped forward and proclaimed himself the Ruler of Manipur. Having taken that step, the English Government acknowledged him and admitted him to the State. And yet this is the man—this blameless, although weak, individual—that the right hon. Gentleman places on a level with this scoundrel, the Senapatti, and proposes that the Indian Government should treat him in a similar fashion. It appears to me that, the two courses of which I have spoken, that of restoring the original Maharajah and that of ousting the Jubaraj being impossible, there re-remained nothing whatever for the Indian Government to do but to punish the Senapatti. This was the position when, on 21 February of the present year, Mr. Quinton left Calcutta and went to Manipur to carry out the instructions of the Government. And now I come to the second question, and perhaps the most important question, the arrest at the durbar. The responsibility must rest with one of these parties, either with the Indian Government or with Mr. Quinton, or possibly with both. I think the right hon. Gentleman in his speech acquitted the Indian Government of responsibility for the order, and, indeed, by following the evidence in the Blue Books, it is perfectly capable of demonstration that the Indian Government knew nothing whatever of the proposed arrest at this durbar. I will prove what I say. In the first place, take the Instruction of 21st February to Mr. Quinton. Where will you find there any mention whatever of the durbar, or of the arrest at the durbar? Next, I take Mr. Quinton's telegram of 18th March, in which he said, and this is the first intimation of arrest, that he

proposed to arrest the Senapatti, but he does not say that he proposed to arrest him at the durbar. Nor was that the legitimate inference. Then there is the evidence of Lieutenant Gurdon, and the terms of the arrangement are actually given on page 8 by Lieutenant Gurdon. The arrangement was that the orders of the Government of India were to be announced at the durbar, and the Senapatti was to be told to surrender. If he refused—I think a relevant and important condition—Colonel Skene was to arrest him at the durbar. And, finally, we have the word of the Viceroy of India himself, that it was not until 7th May that the Indian Government knew anything of the intention to arrest him at the durbar. Therefore, I think it is clear from this evidence that the Indian Government must be held absolutely quit of any responsibility for the proposed arrest at the durbar. The act, therefore, was the act of Mr. Quinton. It was not a rash or impulsive act. It was a decision arrived at by Mr. Quinton in conference with Colonel Skene and Mr. Grimwood, and, although there is reason to believe that Mr. Grimwood dissented from the policy, and we do not know whether he was overruled or whether he yielded to the authority of his superior officers, that decision was the decision of the civil and military authorities combined. I happen to notice in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he repeated this charge in a far more curtailed form than has been common in the organs of the Press. If the right hon. Gentleman observed a wise and studied moderation of language, that could not be said of some of the organs of the Press that have spoken on the matter. I take these words, which express the charge, from the columns of the Star newspaper. I admit that the Star is not an authority to which any great weight is to be given, but, at the same time, it expresses the character and the rancour of the charge that is made. It was there stated in reference to this question of the durbar that it was deliberately intended to seize the Senapatti before he had time to resist. "This is the blackest spot in all this base and bloody business," a vocabulary which we at once recognised as the normal vocabulary of the Star. I pass over the curious suggestion contained in this paragraph: that before you arrest a criminal you are bound to give him notice, in order that he may have time to resist. I ask the question, was there any ruse in this matter? Was there any trap set? Was the Senapatti lured to this durbar under a sense of false security? The whole matter turns upon what is the character of a durbar. There is nothing precisely analogous to a durbar in this country. It is not a levee; it is not a public entertainment; it is not even a council or conference; but a durbar is an open Court convened by the paramount power, presided over by the officer representing the paramount power, that is, on this occasion, by Mr. Quinton, representing the Viceroy of the Queen. It was on this occasion a Court to which the Jubraj and his brothers were called as feudatories of the British Crown, and in that capacity they were bound to attend. Not only has the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India provided us with a precise analogy in Hindostan, but an analogy will occur to us in European history. It is almost a precise analogy of the great Feudal Courts in the middle ages; and a friend has suggested to me hypothetically what seemed to be an absolute analogy. He suggested the case in which Louis XI of France might, if he had had courage, have desired to arrest his turbulent vassal Charles the Bold of Burgundy. Had he been forced to carry that out it might very well have been at a Feudal Court corresponding to this durbar; and had such a step been taken, I venture to say that no one, even in these days of flabby nineteenth century sentiment, would have discovered for one moment that there was any deviation from the strictest code of honour. Was the Senapatti taken by surprise? The whole evidence goes to prove that the Senapatti was a long-sighted individual and knew very well what he was up to all the time. He assumed illness, and went, or rather did not go, to bed. This convenient illness lasted over two days, during which time he was collecting his troops, issuing ammunition and arms, and planting the guns. For two whole days this innocent dupe of Mr. Quinton was actually himself preparing the snare into which Mr. Quinton was to fall. It appears to me that Mr. Quinton took what was both the most open and the most merciful course in this matter—the most open because there was no doubt as to the meaning of his act, and the Senapatti

understood it from the first; and the most merciful because, knowing this man to be a desperate character, popular with his army, the one thing that a man in his responsible position had to do was to escape resistance and avoid the risk of bloodshed. He took the one step by which there was no chance of bloodshed, and by which resistance, if attempted, would be of no avail. I admit that he was guilty of an error of judgment and mistook the man he was dealing with, but it is untrue to say that he exceeded his instructions or belied his honour. I happen to have been a good deal in the East, perhaps as much as any Member of this House who has not had official or business connection with those parts; and I think the House will believe me that I have framed as high and critical a standard of the rules which ought to regulate the conduct of British officials towards subject States as anyone. I do not shelter myself behind the plea that we are dealing with a half civilised and barbarian people. That would be an unworthy and despicable argument. But we are dealing with an Oriental people who knew just as well the meaning of the word "darbar" as any peasant in this country knows the meaning of a Magistrates' Court or a Judge and jury. It appears to me that had this order for arrest in the darbar been transmitted by telegram from Simla, emanating from the Governor in Council, it would not have been anything that needed defence in the House of Commons, but the act was the act of Mr. Quinton, and whatever you may think of the judgment he showed in the matter, I think you will see that it is an act, the morality of which he would not have been called on to defend if he had lived, and which, now that he is dead, ought not to be cast at his memory as a reproach. I will not presume to trespass longer upon the patience of the House. The point which I have tried to bring forward is this—that nothing whatever has been done—whatever the mistakes, or whatever the blunders—that need make an Englishman feel ashamed. There are many things upon which we can hardly form a judgment, and which the grave has closed for us. We shall never know why it was—the Senapati being admittedly a desperate man, and it being known that ammunition was being dealt out to these men, and that they possessed these guns—that in face of this alarming array of events and circumstances, Colonel Skene actually thought fit, with a body of only 250 men, to attack this force. We shall never know why this unequal contest was not sooner abandoned, and why the Residency instead of being evacuated in circumstances of disaster and horror at 2 o'clock in the morning of the 25th, was not evacuated under conditions of order at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th. We shall never know why it was that extraordinary colloquy was agreed upon, or why, it having been agreed upon, all the superior officers were allowed to go out and fall into the trap. These are matters in which it is easy to be wise in the light of quiet knowledge. These are matters which rest with those who have paid the penalty of their lives; but whatever be our opinion upon these points, let us in respect to their memory, and out of regard to the honour which they did nothing whatever to sully, refrain from accusing them of misdeeds of which they stood innocent, or suspecting them of intentions of which the most delicate conscience need not be ashamed.

(6.0). **MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN&c.** (Stirling),

The two speeches we have listened to from the other side of the House, although they differ, and differ widely, in so far as concerns the opinions which they convey, and, above all, the tone by which they are characterised, yet they agree in this one important fact—this one characteristic they possess in common—that they were neither of them addressed to the speech of my right hon. Friend or to any of the inquiries that he had made, but were, I presume, prepared to answer other inquiries and other complaints that have been made through the public Press. The hon. Member opposite, who has just sat down, has, with a naïveté for which I did not credit him before, quoted the charges made by the Star newspaper, and his whole speech was prepared with the purpose of shielding the memories of Mr. Quinton and the other

unfortunate participators in these events from certain calumnies which had appeared in that and other newspapers. My right hon. Friend brought no complaint and no accusation against Mr. Quinton. Not a breath of dishonour will pass on any of their memories in consequence of anything my right hon. Friend has said. My right hon. Friend requested—as he was entitled and bound to do—that the views of Her Majesty's Government upon some of these points should be stated, and those views we have not yet obtained.

MR. CURZON

May I say, in justification on this point, that I did not say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby himself made those accusations, but that these reports were circulated not only in the newspaper referred to, but in other newspapers, both in this country and in India, and those newspapers contained attacks upon the Government of India, and it did seem to me that, whatever one particular organ might say, I was bound to get up and defend the honour of these men.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN

I have not the least intention of taking part in the quarrel between the hon. Gentleman and the Star newspaper. With the speech of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State, I am bound to say, I was greatly disappointed. If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say so, I am a sincere admirer of his, in public as well as in private life; but I regret to see, as many have regretted to see, a certain cynical tone pervading in recent days everything he says in this House, and I suppose it must arise from some domestic circumstance, or other internal motive with which here we have no concern. At all events, I do not hesitate to say that the right hon. Gentleman's speech on this occasion was nothing more than a prolonged satire on the defence of the Indian Government. A tone and spirit of irony pervaded it from beginning to end; and if the right hon. Gentleman had desired to show how ludicrous the defence of the Indian Government could be made to appear, I do not think he could have succeeded better than he did. The right hon. Gentleman gives us, as I have said, no answer to the demand of my right hon. Friend that we should know what the Secretary of State for India thinks of the policy pursued by the Indian Government in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman said, in reference to the charge of unnecessary delay that has been made against both the authorities in India and the authorities at home, there were a great number of reasons for delay in India, owing to the moving of the seat of government from Calcutta to Simla, and so forth; but he omitted to observe this fact, that if the Government of India had kept the Government at home fully informed of what was going on, those delays would not have been tolerated for a moment. The Government at home was absolutely and entirely in ignorance that all these transactions were proceeding for five months after the main events occurred, during which time there were delays in India. I do not believe for a moment that the Government at home, had it known what was going on, would not have been all that time pressing for some solution or other of the position of affairs—of the problem presented at Manipur. Now, the great point in this case is the determination of the Government of India to acknowledge a new Maharajah, and at the same time to punish and deport from his country the principal author of the revolution, which placed the new Maharajah on his throne. And if hon. Members will take the trouble, as we have done, to place the Despatches in some sort of chronological order under the names of the different persons concerned, they would be still more puzzled by the contemplation of what was disclosed. We have in India, connected with this subject, three authorities. We have Mr. Grimwood, Mr. Quinton, and the Secretary to the Government of India, representing, of course, his superiors. Well, each of these authorities has a mind of his own on the subject.

I am not disposed to inquire or pronounce a strong opinion as to the degree of independence which would be accorded to officers in the position of Mr. Grim-wood and Mr. Quinton. My own tendency would have been towards treating the opinion of such a man as Mr. Grim-wood, who was resident at the place, and who had resided on the spot and had more personal acquaintance with all the circumstances than anyone else—my disposition would be towards treating him with the greatest confidence, and, unless a very strong case was made out to the contrary, acting on his advice. He was on the spot, and was conversant with all the affairs. Nothing in Mr. Grimwood's Despatches implies that the Senapatti was, in his opinion, worthy of any punishment whatever. Mr. Quinton, in his first Dispatch of the 31st December, gives us an unbiassed opinion, and after hearing all Mr. Grimwood had to say he also recommended that the Jubraj should be acknowledged, but says nothing whatever about proceeding against the Senapatti. It is the Government of India, on the other hand, who apparently volunteer an opinion to the contrary. They say, on January 29, that we should intervene in strength in order to punish the authors of this conspiracy. They say that Mr. Quinton should visit Manipur to "overawe the conspirators"—this, as my right hon. Friend pointed out, was many months after the conspiracy had taken place—that the Maharajah should be reinstated, and that the Senapatti should be removed. Afterwards Mr. Quinton goes to Calcutta, and then he repeats his opinion even in stronger terms. There is one remarkable passage, which I think has not been quoted, in which he is arguing against the restoration of the old Maharajah, and he says that the restoration of the old Maharajah meant the expulsion of the present de facto rulers of Manipur, who had hitherto given no cause of complaint to us. And then he proceeds to say how strong, and how popular, and of how strong a will the Senapatti is. And what the Government of India apparently did was, they abandoned their intention of restoring the old Maharajah, but they continued the policy of expelling the Senapatti which was a part of the original policy. What was the good of expelling the Senapatti? I regard many of the arguments now used in favour of removing the Senapatti as ex post facto arguments framed in order to account for this extraordinary policy. The removal of the Senapatti was part of the original policy of the Indian Government, which was to restore the old Maharajah and to expel the Senapatti. The restoration of the old Maharajah, in fact, involved the expulsion of the Senapatti, for, as it is somewhere observed in these Despatches, so long as so many Princes were living in the country there could be no peace. After Mr. Quinton's visit to Calcutta, and when he had been talked over in regard to this point, it seems to me that the worst of all the conclusions was arrived at, namely, a compromise which carried out neither one policy nor the other. There was the policy of maintaining and reinstating the old Maharajah and expelling those who had rebelled against him, and there was the policy of acknowledging the new Maharajah and using him, and those who placed him on the throne, for the Government of the country. The Government of India, in order to bring into apparent accord those rival opinions, appear to have formed a new policy, which they unfortunately attempted to carry out, and which was to acknowledge the new Maharajah, and, at the same time, expel the Senapatti. Well, Sir, what my right hon. Friend has asked is—and surely we are entitled to an answer—does the Secretary of State for India approve of the new policy of the Indian Government? My right hon. Friend distinctly repudiated the idea that he was called upon to express an opinion either as to the amount of force employed or as to the question of the particular circumstances of the arrest of the Senapatti. The main point, of which, I think, the House would do well not to lose sight, and from which we ought not to be diverted from by these subordinate issues, is this—was the whole policy of this expedition a good one, was it right to continue the new Maharajah, and, at the same time, to remove the Senapatti? The hon. Gentleman opposite, who found fault with the Star newspaper for using strong language, did not spare his own strong language in speaking of the Senapatti. All we know of the Senapatti from these Papers, and that is all the information we can get on the subject, is that he was a strong, powerful, and popular man, and also there is a story of his having

beaten two slaves. It is not true that he beat two slaves to death, as was stated. Well, I am bound to say, although I have not the personal experience such as the hon. Member has of the East, that I do not imagine that an incident like that, deplorable as it is, would forever debar a potentate of that order from succeeding to the throne. But, if it did debar him, then it ought to have been acted upon before, but he was continued under the old Maharajah in his office of Senapatti. And even during the months of the Regency, while we were waiting for the final settlement of this question, the Senapatti ought not even then to have been allowed to assume the still more important position of Jubraj, not, at all events, without protest, if his character was so bad as it is now painted. There was no protest, and he accepted the position, and he occupied it. No evil occurred in the country until the arrival of Mr. Quinton. The people were contented; the Government was going on prosperously and peaceably; and we have, therefore, from the circumstances disclosed in these Papers, no reason whatever to attribute to the Senapatti all those evil points of character which the hon. Member opposite seemed so ready to attribute to him. What we expected was that the Government would have been able to complete this series of Papers by producing a Despatch from the Government at home, giving its judgment on this question. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India says it is not yet time to come to a final conclusion on the matter. It may be that he is right in saying that we could not form a final conclusion on the recent events, but surely a decision might be arrived at, and some opinion expressed by this House, in regard to the main policy which Mr. Quinton was directed to carry out. And here I would call the attention of the House to one of the Despatches of Mr. Quinton, in which he himself protests against his own mission, because in that Despatch he says— I am making arrangements for a visit to Manipur next month, in view of the Government of India determining that the question of the return of the Maharajah should be reopened; but if I am right in supposing that the point is one on which I am asked to form an opinion, I would strongly advise against it. The question is one, as I said before, in which the people of the State have little interest, and is, after all, a mere family dispute; and a visit from the Chief Commissioner, and inquiries such as those suggested, must have the effect of unsettling men's minds and disturbing the tranquillity which now prevails without affording any better grounds than we now have for coming to a conclusion in the matter to be inquired into. Therefore, I think we must assume that Mr. Grimwood at Manipur, and Mr. Quinton at Assam, were, after all, the best judges of what was best to be done under all the circumstances; but upon every point they seem to have been over-ruled, except upon the one point of the recognition of the new Maharajah. Well, Sir, I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India, speaking on behalf of the Government, has not given us any opinion on these matters on behalf of the Secretary of State. The hon. Member for Southport (Mr. G. Curzon) has given his opinion very strongly, and with great force and knowledge, upon the subject, but, after all, it is only his individual opinion. He has defended the Indian Government as if he were entitled to speak on their behalf, and he has spoken with much energy. He has defended the Indian Government with much ability, but it was from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India that we expected to hear a speech which would either defend or modify, or mitigate the idea which has been formed in regard to the policy of the Indian Government on this important question.

(6.14.) [SIR R. TEMPLE \(Worcester, Evesham\)](#)

The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has complained that the preceding speakers on this side of the House have not sufficiently followed up the able and argumentative speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. I will, with the permission of the House, endeavour to some extent to supply that omission, but I must preface what I am about to mention in regard to this important

question by saying that I quite acknowledge and fully appreciate the very calm, and temperate, and statesmanlike, and also the comprehensive manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has treated this subject, although I am bound to add that in regard to certain particulars when the right hon. Gentleman elaborately criticised the delay of certain months which took place in the autumn, and discussed the grave question as to why Mr. Grimwood did not know certain facts and did not do certain things by a certain date, and in regard to certain other minutiae, the right hon. Gentleman reminded me very much of an elephant picking up pins. I will, with the permission of the House, endeavour to select certain points in the undoubtedly excellent speech of the right hon. Gentleman which, in my opinion, call for special notice on this side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the effect which these transactions were likely to have on the Native States of India, and I apprehend that he might be understood to imply that the effect will not be favourable. I think that those who, like myself, have had experience with regard to these Native States, will be of opinion that the effect will be good, because the Native States will have observed the manner in which for years we have conducted our supremacy over this little State of Manipur, that we gave shelter to the Maharajah when he was deposed, that we endeavoured to establish his brother on the Throne, and to remove, even by force, all who were disposed to rebel against him. All this, I contend, will be recognised as our good evidence in respect of our Government, and that it will have a favourable influence on opinion in the Native States of India. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby paid a very just and eloquent tribute to the gallantry and endurance of both the men and the women who were engaged in these transactions, but I should like to point out to him and to the House that in that eulogy there was one very notable omission. He omitted to mention the fidelity, the loyalty, and the endurance of the native soldiers, particularly the Ghoorkas, who are among the good soldiers, not only of Asia, but of the world, and but for whom, on the night of our retirement from Manipur, not only the ladies and English officers, but every one associated with them, must have perished of thirst in the wilderness. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will excuse me endeavouring to supply what I am certain was only an accidental omission on his part. The right hon. Gentleman did me the honour of quoting an opinion of mine with regard to the question of the justice of the intended arrest of the Senapatti in durbar, and, notwithstanding all that has been said in the animated and generous attempt of my hon. Friend the Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon), I must adhere to what I have publicly stated. It certainly does appear to me that under all the circumstances of the case in relation to this particular durbar it was not justifiable on the part of the authorities to summon the Senapatti to that durbar without a previous warning that it was intended to arrest him when he got there, assuming that that was the intention with which he was summoned. I do not hesitate to say that if it was intended that he should be arrested that arrest ought to have been carried out in the ordinary way. What, I ask, would have been easier, at the moment of the arrival of the British escort at Manipur, than to have sent a force of Ghoorkas to arrest the Senaputti at his own house? That is a thing which might have been done, and would have been done, no doubt, swiftly, suddenly and effectually; but instead of doing this the authorities give him time to prepare for resistance by summoning him to a peaceable durbar—a summons which he undoubtedly saw through, because it must have been perfectly transparent, and we now well know the result. I quite agree with the remark made by my hon. Friend the Member for Southport, that it is very hard to criticise effectually the unfulfilled intentions of a dead man; but when such a question as this is being brought forward in the House of Commons, I should not like it to be supposed that Indian Authorities of the first rank would say that arrests of this kind were things to be allowed. On the contrary, I am sure that these authorities would say that such a procedure as this constituted a very dangerous precedent. My right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India has, in the course of his speech in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, quoted authorities as to certain arrests that have been

made on previous occasions, but I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman and to this House that there are durbars and durbars. There are certain durbars which are durbars only in name. They are simply Courts of Justice to which certain persons are summoned. They have to go there under direct orders, and if they disobey they know that they may be arrested and compelled to appear to obey the summons, and to take their chance of what they get on arriving there. If a man thus summoned attends such a durbar, knowing what is likely to happen, he cannot complain of any sharp practice or unfair proceeding, if he be arrested in the durbar itself. But a durbar of this sort is not to be confused for such a durbar as that which has been referred to in connection with what took place at Manipur. That was a solemn affair—a State ceremonial—under the roof of the British Residency. The Regent of Manipur was himself to be present with other Princes of the blood, and the affair was to be conducted with a considerable amount of ceremony, and with some warlike display. What it was that Mr. Quinton intended when this durbar was summoned we shall never know exactly, but of this I am quite sure: that he never intended to do anything of a treacherous or dishonourable character. Yet, as far as I can gather, there was an intention of arresting the Senapati in the durbar, without notice, a durbar which was peaceful to all others, save to him. If so, this intention was not properly justifiable, and it will do no good, either for the honour of England or its influence in British India, to attempt a justification. I have thought it necessary, out of deference to the great Service to which I have had the honour to belong, to make this frank and explicit statement. In my opinion, arrests ought never to be made at durbars of this kind in India. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has very properly asked whether the Government of India justifies such a procedure. That Government indeed, incensed at the extreme comments made by a portion of the English Press, have offered some defence by telegraph, but I trust that the Government of India, upon a full review of the whole of the circumstances of the case as has now been laid before this House, will say nothing different from that I have already asserted. Surely the British Government will never sanction such a procedure for the future. If it be thought otherwise for the moment, that is owing to some misapprehension of the language which was used in the telegram addressed to them which they have answered, perhaps, without that amount of circumspection which the gravity of the case demands. Of course, I am unable further to explain the attempt at justification, but I cannot think that it will be seriously persevered in, especially as the Government of India never ordered the arrest, and are not answerable for any intention that may have existed. I know that the hon. Member for Southport has spoken of some mediæval examples which go the other way. And I must here thank him for the generosity with which he has come forward to defend Indian officers when attacked in their absence with an amount of chivalry which is often a desideratum in this age and generation. Is there not a famous case—that of the arrest of Count Egmont at Brussels. The Count, as the House will recollect, was summoned by the Spanish General to a conference with regard to the fortifications of the city, and at that conference he was suddenly arrested. Has that not always been regarded in the history of the civilised world as an unjustifiable act on the part of the Spanish Governor? What occurred at Manipur was, undoubtedly, a small act in comparison with that. I hope that no evil example of this kind, and that no precedent will ever be allowed to tarnish that British honour which in India has been hitherto untarnished. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has spoken of the smallness of the force employed in the Manipur expedition. I must say, in justice to the Government of India, that according to their arrangements a larger force was to be employed, and it was only Mr. Quinton's fault in not waiting for the extra relief force, which was close at hand, that the expedition was so restricted in numbers. But the disaster was not due to the mere fact of the force being insufficient in numbers. The Ghoorkas are a fine infantry force, and 500 of them would no doubt be well able to stand against 5,000 Manipuris in an open field. But the unfortunate fact is that they were cooped up in the British Residency, which was close to an un-fordable moat, and right underneath the fortified walls of the

palace upon which guns of British manufacture had been mounted. And, in addition to that, the Residency had a thatched roof of inflammable material. It was this unwonted "location," as the Americans would call it, that caused the disaster. Then as to the 40 rounds of ammunition. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby very properly did not touch upon that, beyond saying it was a point which required explanation, and possibly I may be able to afford him the explanation he wants. It appears that the force possessed two kinds of rifles, namely, Snider and Martini-Henry, and for both kinds there was a large supply of ammunition in the Residency. The fault was that it was not fully used. And now I come to deal briefly "with the main point. The right hon. Member for Derby, while condemning the mode of arrest, asked is it possible to justify the policy of the Government of India? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling also adverted to that point, and spoke of it as the most interesting question of all before the House. I agree that the real question is, Was the Viceroy justified for acting in the manner he did? I contend that he was. Might I ask the House just for a few moments to consider this question. It appears to be the inconvenient custom with the Royal House of Manipur that the succession goes not from father to son, but from brother to brother; and as there are several brothers, all near the Throne, doubtless, too, by different mothers, quarrels are constantly arising. It is this unfortunate custom which has led to the present disaster. What was the case as it presented itself to the Government of India? Here we had the Maharajah, whom we had supported on the Throne by formal recognition for many years, and who had rendered us great service, especially in our wars with the hill tribes, and more particularly in the last Burma War. I could show hon. Members a long list of military expeditions in which his troops have taken part. He was suddenly driven from the Throne by one of his brothers. This had to be recognised for the moment by Mr. Grimwood, the officer on the spot, who had of necessity to await the orders of the Government of India regarding the de facto administration. The Maharajah, being exiled, comes to British India. When he gets there he petitions the Government of India to send him back again. This gave rise to a certain amount of complication, which required the patient consideration of the Government. And that accounts for the delay of which the right hon. Gentleman complained. Had they hastily decided the matter, he would have been one of the first to complain that they had not taken sufficient time to consider whether the self-exiled Maharajah was a possible Sovereign for Manipur, or whether it would be better that his next brother should succeed him. In due course the Government of India ascertained that the author of the expulsion of the Maharajah was not his next brother, but his next brother but one, the now notorious Senapatti. They came to the conclusion that the Maharajah proper was an impossible person, but that it was advisable to recognise the next brother as the Sovereign of Manipur, who, in fact, had in the meantime been accepted de facto as the Regent. They also decided that they would not allow the Senapatti to remain any longer in Manipur, because they knew he was the one who had exiled his lawful Sovereign, and they had information that he was treating the Regent as a puppet. They believed him to be not only a dangerous, but a cruel man. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling to throw a kind of veil over the misdeeds of this man. It is very kind of the right hon. Gentleman to take so lenient a view of Oriental misconduct; but it was the opinion of the Government of India that the Senapatti was a dangerous person. Therefore, when the Government had determined to recognise the de facto Regent and to remove the Senapatti, I hold they took a very proper course. Remember they did not propose to imprison or to transport the Senapatti. They only desired that he should leave the country to be comfortably "interned" at State expense in some pleasant or convenient place in India; and his possible return to Manipur was to depend solely on his own conduct. Of course, it is possible in all matters human that different persons should arrive at different conclusions. It may be that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby would, if he had been Viceroy, have done something else, or that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling, if he had been senior Member of the Council, would have

given different advice. No two men would act precisely alike under such circumstances. I take it that it is a waste of time for us in this House to discuss whether or not, under such circumstances, the Viceroy acted absolutely for the best, or to urge that he might have done something different. He took as good a course as any that could have been taken; I think he took the very best. There still is the question, had the Government of India a right to interfere? I think I can establish in a very few moments that they had such a right. What is the political history of Manipur? In the last century it was a little petty State, and it is now so small that I hesitate to give statistics, unless the House should burst into laughter at their insignificance.

SIR W. HARCOURT

I did not dispute the right to interfere.

SIR R. TEMPLE

I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He did not, but, unless I misunderstood him, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling did.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN

Oh, no.

SIR R. TEMPLE

Then what in the world was all his speech about?

MR. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN

I said nothing about the right to interfere in Manipur, but I said something to the effect that I thought that in most cases such as this a greater degree of consideration would have been given than appeared to have been given in this case to the advice and opinion of our officers on the spot.

SIR R. TEMPLE

The Government of India is answerable. The Viceroy is responsible for the actions of his Agents on the spot. Surely it is a now doctrine that the Viceroy is to be impugned before the House of Commons, because he has not seen fit to adopt the advice of his Political Agent. What is the Viceroy there for but to form his own judgment? I think that I have shown that the interference was of a right kind, and I am now endeavouring to prove that we had a right of interference. Early last century this little State, so statistically insignificant, was about to be eaten up by a neighbouring and aggressive Power. That Power was Burma, the then Kingdom of Ava, or as it was then called the Empire of Alompra. In his extremity the Maharajah of the day threw himself upon British protection. It was granted to him for the time, and the State of Manipur was saved until the beginning of the present century. Then came the first war between us and Burma, in which the State again fell into danger, so much so that when we made our first Treaty with Burma we stipulated specifically for the freedom and safety of Manipur. And if the House will look at the history of our political transactions with Manipur, it will find that we had negotiations with them about roadways, that we had to give them ammunition and other stores, as to the disposal of which the Maharajah actually consented to give a minute Report. Then there came some territorial adjustment of

the Eastern frontier of the Kingdom of Upper Burma, and we actually had to arrange for a small transfer of territory from Manipur to Burma in consideration of which the Maharajah was glad to receive a small sum per annum in rupees. This brings the history of Manipur up to the year 1830 or thereabouts. Then, again, came more troubles about the succession—internecine among brethren. The Queen mother and her infant son had to take refuge in British territory. The son remained there until he became of age, and then he went back under British auspices to assert his rights, and they having been established, he reigned under British protection for a lengthened period. Afterwards there arose again the old story of a fight among the relatives, with the result that we had to send an Agent to explain that we could not allow this sort of family dissension, and that the Sovereign whom we had recognised was to be obeyed. And so it went on until very recently, when the Maharajah was again compelled to seek protection in British territory, and it was afforded him in consideration of his long services. We knew perfectly well that the Maharajah was expelled by his brother the Senappatti, who had set up the Regent as his puppet. This puppet he would soon have driven out. Therefore, if we did not remove the Senapatti there would soon have been another revolution and another exiled Sovereign. I maintain that we were bound to interfere in a very effective manner, and that the Government of India, from among the many possible modes of interference, chose the best. Before I resume my seat, I would like to point out that it is a great pity that we should be occupying the time of this Imperial Parliament in discussing details of this nature. If we desire to discuss Manipur at all, surely we could find far worthier matters in connection with it to form the subject of our Debates. Let me remind the House that Manipur holds a very important position, for it is the half-way house between Assam and Upper Burma. It is essentially a point—strategically and politically—on our Eastern Indian frontier which must be traversed by all expeditions of a political and military character between Bengal and Burma; therefore, its geography is of the highest importance. There are projected, in connection with it, railway schemes and other means of communication which, if carried to a successful issue, would do much to solve great political problems which may, if they remain unsolved, cause us trouble hereafter. It is proposed, for instance, to construct a railway beginning in the fertile valley of Assam, passing through the hills of Eastern Bengal, then traversing the deltaic region of the Megua till it reaches Chittagong the seaport. From this line a branch could easily be made right on to the plateau of Manipur. When communication has been established between Manipur and India a similar communication could be easily established between Manipur and Upper Burma. The drainage of the Manipur plateau is towards the Irawaddy. Its streams are affluents of that river, consequently a natural engineering line is thus afforded in the direction of Ava. These are important matters which greatly affect the future of our domination in Upper Burma, and also in Bengal, and which would enable us, with greater force, to defend our Empire in the East in the event of attack from a Foreign Power. I hope that this question will receive much more attention from this House than it has had in the past.

(6.50.) [MR. MACLEAN \(Oldham\)](#)

I submit that no question relating to India could be more interesting or more worthy of discussion in this House than the character of the Indian Government itself, which is the real issue at stake in this Debate. We have just heard two speeches in defence of the Indian Government—one the cool, unhesitating speech of the Under Secretary of State for India, and the other the warm-hearted, generous, and thorough-going speech of the Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon). I should think it a great calamity if the policy advocated by the hon. Member for Southport were adopted by the Government, for I am sure if that line were taken it would have a deplorable effect in India. The speech of the hon. Baronet who has last spoken (Sir Richard Temple) was of a different character. He has with equal hand delicately

apportioned praise and blame to the Indian Government. I think, after what he has said about the arrest or attempt to arrest the Senapatti, that there really remains nothing more to be said. I think that that statement made by one of his great authority—an authority highly respected in this House and in India—is perfectly conclusive on that point. The hon. Baronet, however, defended the policy of the Government in the main. He said the Government were perfectly right in resolving to deal as they did with the Senapatti. He told us what the history was of the State of Manipur, and he pointed out what is obvious from the Blue Book—namely, that this revolution which took place was simply a family affair; that it was so many brothers fighting for the succession to the Throne. Now, does not that often occur, not only in Manipur, but in Afghanistan and Nepal? And when it occurs in Nepal, what is the policy of the Government towards that State? It allows brothers to fight out their quarrels among themselves so long as they do no harm to the British Empire, and it recognises the strongest man among them as the ruler of the country. Why should a different policy be pursued towards Manipur and towards the Senapatti? I am not going to say a word about the Senapatti's personal character. I think it is sufficient for us that Mr. Grimwood vouches for him that he was a popular man; that he governed the State well, and Mr. Grimwood, I remember, in one passage expressly says that he was the only one of the princely brothers who had remained poor through his own generosity. I consider it a very shabby proceeding indeed on the part of the Government of India to rake up old charges, and the discussion of criminal offences of years back, and to put them in at the end of the Blue Book for the purpose of creating a prejudice against this man in the minds of the British public. If he had faced us in fair fight, if he had fought with us openly, and treated those of our people whom he had taken prisoners honourably and as hostages, I should, for my part, have had nothing but admiration for him; but not one word can I say after the events that have occurred. But we are now simply discussing the policy of the Government of India towards this State of Manipur. My right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India says that the Government of Lord Lansdowne simply took the course which all Governments take in dealing with a bold and independent man of a strong character; and he gave us illustrations from his own personal experience of the way in which men had been treated who had shown independence of character. But the obvious difference between the cases he mentioned, such as those of Cetewayo and Arabi Pacha, and the case of the Senapatti, is that in those cases the men who were removed were opposed to the British Government, and had been acting against them; whereas in this case you have the Government of India accepting the very policy carried out by the Senapatti, and then determining to remove the man who carried it out. That is the gravamen of the charge brought against the Government of India, and it is very difficult for anyone who reads the Despatches to understand how it was that the Government of India came to the conclusion to remove this man. It was proved that he was no enemy to the British Government. He was very well disposed towards us, and yet the Government of India summoned Mr. Quinten to Calcutta, and Lord Lansdowne and his Foreign Secretary there compelled him to adopt a policy entirely at variance with his own opinions and with those of his colleague (Mr. Grimwood). That is a matter upon which it is necessary that the Secretary of State for India, and, in default of the Secretary of State for India, the British House of Commons, should express a very strong opinion as to whether it was a wise and just policy or not. I think, for my part, it was a very indiscreet and uncalled-for policy. Let me deal very shortly with the means by which it was proposed to carry out that policy. I do not suppose that any of us will stand up to accuse Mr. Quinten of deliberate treachery towards this man—of intentional treachery; and now that he is dead, it is impossible to clear up what was really the meaning of his conduct. I think it may be said absolutely that the Government of India is responsible for everything Mr. Quinten did. They assumed that responsibility in their telegram of the 9th May to this country; and I am greatly surprised that there is no Despatch produced this evening from the Government of India, repeating more fully the language of that telegraphic

Despatch, because evidently the Viceroy had considered the whole matter very fully, and he completely took upon himself the responsibility for all that had been done by Mr. Quinton. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby quoted some words of this Despatch, and perhaps the House will allow me to repeat them— Until Gurdon's telegram of the 7th May reached us we had not received specific information that if Senapatti refused to submit quietly Quinton intended to have him arrested at durbar, after announcement of our orders; but we have no doubt Quinton considered open arrest in durbar in case of such refusal would be most straightforward and safest procedure. Knowing Senapatti's character, Quinton probably felt that only chance of depriving him of opportunity of fomenting disturbance was to effect his deportation as promptly as possible. As a matter of fact, when Senapatti failed to comply with Quinton's orders, and letter of warning was sent to Regent, Senapatti awaited arrest, and prepared resistance, which led to massacre. I think it can hardly be contended that this is not an acceptance of the policy carried out by Mr. Quinton in attempting to arrest the Senapatti; and Mr. Quinton really thought his scheme received the direct sanction of the Government, because in a telegram of the 18th March he says— I propose to require the Regent and the durbar to meet me on arrival, announce the decision of the Government, arrest Senapatti, and inform him that the length of his exile and return depend on his conduct and the tranquillity of the country. Then we have the telegram the next day from the Foreign Secretary stating that "your proposals are approved." How can it be contended that the Government of India did not understand that Mr. Quinton proposed to get this man into a place where he could arrest him without fear of his being able to defend himself or call any forces in aid? It does not seem to me to be of much consequence what kind of a durbar it was to which he was summoned. Mr. Quinton met him on the way to Manipur. The Senapatti came out four miles from the city to greet him, and they talked together in a friendly manner for an hour in a tent and Mr. Quinton gave him no warning of what he intended. Was it consistent with honour and good faith, when he had been treated in this way, that he should be summoned to a friendly meeting with the intention of arresting him? The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India quoted what was done by Sir Robert Sandeman on the frontier. Everybody who knows him has the highest respect for Sir Robert Sandeman. We all know what excellent work he has done, but he is the Lord Warden of the most unruly district on the whole frontier; he is a dictator. The whole of his district is constantly in a state of siege, and the action of Sir Robert Sandeman is not a guide as to what ought to be the conduct of the Representative of the Government of India in the more settled and more regularly governed parts of the country. Having studied what opinions have been expressed in India on this question, I consider it is the duty of the Secretary of State, as representing the Imperial Parliament, to let the people of India know that in future conduct of that kind on the part of the Representatives of the Government of India will not be approved, because if it is sanctioned it will be a very difficult matter indeed to induce any Native Prince, with whom we have the slightest difference of opinion, ever again to enter a durbar held by a Representative of the British Crown. Something has been said in this Debate about the House of Commons not interesting itself in discussions of this kind, but I say the interposition of the House of Commons on this occasion is fully justified by the prolonged reticence of the Secretary of State for India. The Under Secretary said the time had not arrived when a complete opinion could be given by the Secretary of State on the whole of these transactions. Of course not. There are the Reports to be received upon all the transactions that have taken place relating to the disaster, but the Secretary of State has long had before him what is the judgment of the Viceroy upon the two most important questions of the policy pursued towards Manipur—in the first instance, as to the proceedings before the disaster occurred; and, in the second case, as to the proceedings of Mr. Quinton in trying to arrest the Senapatti. These are questions on which it has long been competent for the Secretary of State to pronounce an opinion. Is it improper that this House of Commons should be

called upon to discuss so important and delicate a question? What was the object of the great change in the Government of India that was made during the time of the Indian Mutiny? The complaint, then, was that India was not sufficiently under the direct and immediate control of Parliament and popular opinion in this country, and the representative of the Secretary of State was made the Chief Governor of India. No doubt, as a rule, we do not wish to interfere with details of the administration of India, but on great questions of policy it is always an advantage for the opinion of the House of Commons to be known. We deny to the people of India any right of representation; they have no power of expressing their own opinions upon any question that arises. Criticism is free enough in the Press of India. I saw that the other day Lord Cross, speaking at a dinner, said he was very glad the Press of India was free, because it was a safety-valve for the grievances of the people. That is a familiar image, and I dare say it is accurate enough. But it is not very flattering to the Indian Press, for it seems to imply that Indian newspapers may blow off any amount of steam without ever ruffling' the complacency of the official mind. Anyone who has tried to create public opinion in India must often have felt discouraged and disheartened at finding he was simply beating the air. But in India the people have an immense respect and veneration for the House of Commons. It is to this House they look for a redress of their grievances, and to see that the country is governed well. A great French orator once said, in the darkest days of the French Empire, he crossed the Channel occasionally in order that he might have a bath of freedom. The members of the Indian Civil Service are not so brilliant as they used to be. They have not the same opportunities of coping with emergencies as they used to have, and it may be difficult to find amongst them a daring pilot in extremity. But they are upright, honourable, safe men, who do their duty to the best of their ability, but still they have all the defects of a close service; they are apt to think too much of themselves and too little of outside opinion, and it must do them immense good to have their minds brought into contact occasionally with the fresh and invigorating breezes of an enlightened public opinion in this country. Here public opinion is not merely a safety-valve; it is the motive power which controls and sets in action all the administrative machinery of the State, and it is to that opinion that we must look on all occasions to discern what the true policy is that we ought to pursue in difficult circumstances in India. I say public opinion has pronounced a judgment on this question which is perfectly consistent with fair play to the Government of India, and which, at the same time, will maintain unshaken and unstained that character for good faith which has always been the mainstay of our rule in India.

(7.10.) **SIR G. CAMPBELL&c.** (Kirkcaldy),

I think the House is to be congratulated on the tone of this Debate, and that we are all indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) for bringing it forward in a very moderate and not in a Party or polemical spirit. There has been a great disaster; but the Under Secretary of State for India was right in saying that, after all, in India, we have to risk much to gain much. It is by daring and boldness we have achieved great things in India, and we must not judge people too hardly by results. Great things have often been done by rashness, and we applaud the result. On the other hand, when things are attempted with apparently inadequate means, and failure results, I am afraid we are apt to be a little too hard upon those engaged in the operation. I am inclined to think that considerable blunders, both civil and military, took place at Manipur, but the principal actors sacrificed their lives, and it is very inexpedient that we should be too hard upon them. The failure, to a great extent, was a military one; but I am bound to accept the view taken by the Under Secretary that 500 native troops might reasonably have been expected to cope with any difficulties which might arise in this petty Native State. As to the civil difficulty, the discussion must be of an academic character. The Senapatti was not arrested in the durbar,

and, therefore, we need not discuss whether or not, under the circumstances, we should have been justified in arresting him. As to the general policy, I have considerable sympathy with the view that considerable weight ought to have been given to the opinion of the local authorities. There is an Institution in India called the Foreign Office, and there is too great a disposition on the part of that office to centralise control and not to pay sufficient attention to the opinions of the local authorities. I think that whatever was done in this matter should have been done quickly: delay was most unfortunate. I gather that the old Maharajah, having been expelled, was free to go. He wished to devote the remainder of his life to religious meditation. When he got to Calcutta he fell into the hands of Calcutta lawyers and intriguers. At their investigation he made out a case: that the Government of India thought it necessary to press it on the attention of the Foreign Office with out consulting the opinions of the local officers was unfortunate. With regard to the delay which took place, I think the fact of the matter is, that the Government of India were too much occupied in unfortunate little wars in the other extremities of India. They treated this petty Manipur business as of little importance; they let it drift, and eventually there was a conflict of opinion between the Government of India and the local officers. As regards the question of the acknowledgment or non-acknowledgment of the revolutionary Government, I differ from the view suggested by the Under Secretary, namely, that it is better to refuse to acknowledge a strong man and put in a mediocrity, who may be a puppet of your Government. No doubt, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has said, the interest of the Native Princes has to be considered, but the honour of India has to be considered also. While we must maintain the utmost faith and justice in our dealings with the Native Princes, we must let it be thoroughly understood that they have obligations, and that we must see that those obligations are fulfilled. If we have a case of this kind in which there has been not so much rebellion against the Queen, but an atrocious murder of British officers, I hope the Government will feel they have a duty, both in the sight of the people of India and of the Native Princes, and that is to let it be known that these things must not be done with impunity, and that if they are done there will be a fair and just deliverance.

(7.20.) [SIR L. PELLY \(Hackney, N.\)](#)

This case is one that is very similar to many other cases which have happened in India. The facts, broadly, are somewhat as follows: A crisis happens in a native State; the local officer looks into it, and reports it to his superior—in this instance to the Chief Commissioner, who in turn reports to the Supreme Government. In this case the Government instructed the Resident to hold his hand, to avoid the offensive, to watch affairs, and if he saw an opportunity to mediate and try to arrange thorn. That opportunity, in the sequel, did not arrive, but, at all events, things went on quietly for a time, and certain persons were summoned to Calcutta. The old Maharajah went to Calcutta, where he made his complaints. The Chief Commissioner was called to Calcutta, and the Government took it into their consideration what they should do. Meantime any proceedings of subordinate authorities could not be considered otherwise than as temporary and provisional pending the final decision of the Supreme Government. After long discussion, and after personal communication with the Chief Commissioner, and after receiving his views and those of the local officers, the Government of India determined that they would not altogether accept the opinions of the local officers, but would, in deference to the opinion of Mr. Quinton, so far modify their own intentions as to refrain from restoring the old Maharajah. Government further announced their willingness to accept the Regent as a Maharajah, under certain conditions, as he had refrained from intervening in the rebellion. But Government declined to allow the Senapatti to remain in Manipur, as they held him to be the real instigator of the rebellion. That the Government of India came to consider the matter was more important than they at first supposed is evident from this, that they instructed the

Chief Commissioner to go himself to Manipur. In giving those instructions they probably, as they always do under similar circumstances, gave only a general instruction to carry out a certain policy, and did not specify the details of the manner in which this was to be done; and from that moment the carrying out of the order really rested with the local authority. It was open to the Chief Commissioner either to write to the Regent and inform him what the instructions were, or to go in person and at once to Manipur, and there settle with the Regent the means for carrying the order out. Seeing that the Senapatti was not the Chief of the State, but subordinate to the Regent, the better course would have been to have summoned a durbar, and explained to the head of the State what the instructions were and to have requested him to see them carried out. But the Regent being really impotent, and in the hands of the Senapatti, would have said "I dare not do it, and I cannot do it," in which case it would have been for the Chief Commissioner to write to the Government for fresh instructions, or to have told the Regent that as he could not enforce the obedience of his own subjects the Supreme Government would have to issue fresh orders. I think it was inexpedient to go into the enclosure at the Palace without artillery. The Chief Commissioner, under all the circumstances of the situation, should have applied to Government for fresh instructions, and have submitted that if force were to be used artillery would be required. That was not done, and the only difference between this and many other Native crises is this, that the course taken by the Chief Commissioner may perhaps have been open to comment as erroneous. Disaster ensued, and a consequent appeal to this House. Nevertheless, and on the whole, I think the best course is to leave the Government of India to act for themselves, believing they will do the best in difficult circumstances as they arise. We cannot ascertain all the details of the difficulties that arose after the arrival of the Chief Commissioner at Manipur, and the best thing is to let the past be past and say as little as possible about the matter.

(7.26.) [MR. BRYCE \(Aberdeen, S.\)](#)

I think that the House has no reason to regret the time that has been spent on the subject to-night, because we have all felt that a good deal has been cleared up, and that the question has assumed a much sharper form in our minds than it had before. But at the same time I do not feel we have received from the Government all the light we had the right to expect, and some of the light we have received is rather of a mischievous and dangerous character. I have heard with regret the remarks of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India To this we agree: and we shall wait for a further Despatch expressing the deliberate judgment of the India Office. My right hon. Friend pointed out there were many things upon which inquiry was still pending, and which it would be unfair to expect the Secretary of State now to pass a definite opinion upon. But the Under Secretary said some things that seem liable to misapprehension. In the first place, I think he will feel that he has not entirely disposed of the question regarding the durbar. There is, doubt less, some force in the view that such a durbar may be regarded as a Court, and great appositeness in the statement he gave from Sir Robert Sandeman; but, on the other hand, we have the hon. Member for Evesham (Sir It. Temple), and also the opinions known to have been expressed by some eminent retired Indian officials, and I feel, therefore, it would be desirable that we should have this question of the durbar thoroughly reviewed, and the deliberate judgment of the Government of India expressed on it. I have been rejoiced to observe that there is an unbroken concurrence of opinion in acquitting Mr. Quinton from anything like blame for treacherous or unfair conduct. Though I did not know him intimately, I know enough of him and about him to say there was no man in the North-West Provinces more universally respected and trusted, and there are none amongst those who had watched his career who could believe he was guilty of any treacherous act. But the right

hon. Gentleman made use of an expression which I hope he will disavow. He spoke of the desirability of not having a strong man, such as the Senapatti, as ruler of a Native State. I believe that to be a bad doctrine, condemned by experience. On the contrary, it is much to the interest both of Native States and of the Indian Government to have as Sovereigns or ruling Ministers men of vigorous character. To take the most conspicuous example, the House will remember that in Afghanistan, after having twice overthrown the Native Government, we were twice compelled to set up strong rulers, men approved because of their strength—I mean Dost Mahommed—after the first great Afghan War, and after the second Afghan War, Abdur Rahman, the present Ameer. I could give many minor instances in which it has been found that the best possible way of bringing about good administration in Native States, and of maintaining peaceful relations with the British Government, is to support a man of strong character and popular with the native people. In this particular case it should be noticed that the Senapatti had not been offensive to the native subjects of the State or to the British Government. It is not alleged—I do not find it in the Despatches—that the Senapatti used his power to govern badly. He was popular; he had not shown himself in any way antagonistic to the British Government, and he remained on good terms, perhaps on too good terms, with Mr. Grimwood himself. Therefore we, the paramount power, had no motive in deposing him. I do not extenuate the actions of which he is said to have been guilty, but we have to consider them in connection with Oriental practice. However, assuming him to have been a violent man, he had not shown himself dangerous to his native subjects or to the British Government. For this reason, I cannot help feeling some regret that if the Indian Government did require these five or six months to make up its mind as to the course of policy it should pursue, it should not sooner have communicated its decision to Mr. Grimwood. This point was strongly put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, and no answer has been made by the Under Secretary or any speaker since. It may have been true that the Government required time to consider the representations of the ex-Maharajah and to submit them to Mr. Grimwood for his criticism; but surely the Government ought to have taken pains to ascertain what was going on in Manipur meantime. Meantime, Mr. Grimwood remained on intimate terms with the Senapatti, and even up to the last week accompanied him on a hunting party. He appeared not to have known the view of the Government of India, or, if he did, he did not guide his own conduct by it. There was nothing to indicate to the Senapatti, or to the inhabitants of Manipur, that the Government of India was displeased at the revolution, and was going to take steps to punish those concerned in it. The term revolution is too strong to use. As Mr. Quinton says, in one of his Despatches, it was a mere family dispute, a dispute not even between the reigning dynasty and another dynasty or family, but a dispute among the members of the reigning family, of whom the nominal head was nothing more than the first among equals, *primus inter pares*, as Mr. Grimwood put it. It was, perhaps, too serious a view of this dispute to decide that it required the intervention of the paramount Power; but, assuming that it was right to remove the Senapatti, it was surely a dangerous course to leave him practically enjoying the full confidence of Sir. Grimwood until the moment for his deposition came. On the question of delay, there is one observation I desire to make which has not yet been made. The Foreign Policy of the Government of India, I understand, including in the term by Foreign Policy the relations of the Indian Government with such protected or semi-independent States as Manipur, is not in the hands of any responsible Minister or Member of the Council. There is a military Member of the Council, the Commander-in-Chief, a Member who is responsible for Public Works, and other Departments, such as the legal, have representatives, but there is no Member representing Foreign Affairs. The explanation is that the Viceroy himself is his own Foreign Minister, and it is to this I wish to call attention. It seems to me that matters so important deserve the attention, not only of the Viceroy himself, who, of course, as head of the Government, is the ultimate referee on all Indian questions of administration, but of some other high

official also. Overwhelmed, as the Viceroy is, with an enormous mass of grave and responsible work, of which we can scarcely form a conception, it is not fair to him that he should also have the sole control of and responsibility for Foreign Policy. He ought to have the advantage of a Minister with the position of Foreign Minister while being Member of the Council, in the same sense as we have a Minister for Foreign Affairs in this country. It is true there is an official called the Foreign Secretary; but his position in the Government of India is much lower than that of Foreign Secretary here. He is merely a Secretary, and not able to deal with foreign affairs in the same way as the Commander-in-Chief can deal with military affairs, and more than once in the history of Indian Government cases have arisen in which the want of such a member of Council has been greatly felt, and has indeed resulted in serious evil to the State. During the time when the Manipur affair was under discussion, the Foreign Secretary was absent, his place being filled by a junior official. I do not say that this accident had any effect on the transactions, but it is well to consider-whether in this respect the Government of India does not require some reform. There is another point upon which no answer has been given to the criticisms of my right hon. Friend. What were the grounds for rejecting the advice given by the authorities on the spot? Hon. Members have said the Government of India must in the last resort decide. Quite true; but when the Government of India decides against the advice of its local officers, and when the disregard of that advice ends in disaster, surely the Government of India is bound to show that its action was right, and the advice of its local officers wrong. That has not been done either by the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary or the hon. Member for Southport. I think it will be admitted that it was a mistake to send Mr. Quinton to Manipur. The suggestion that so important an official as the Chief Commissioner should go up to Manipur did not come from Mr. Quinton himself; it came from the Government of India, although Mr. Quinton very properly accepted without demur the suggestion that he should go. The misfortunes that occurred assumed a more serious character from the death of Mr. Quinton, and his presence probably somewhat restricted the effective action of the military-officers in command, who might have acted more promptly and more energetically but for the presence of so high an official. I will not attempt to discuss the military action, or to allot the blame among the various persons concerned. We must all feel there was no want of courage, but that there was some want of skill. If we ask what is the general moral to be drawn from the whole matter, we may feel that it is this: That the conduct of the Indian Government in its foreign relations requires to be watched somewhat more carefully and closely than it seems to be watched by the Home Government. No one would be less willing than I to suggest a policy of interference on the part of the office in London, still less of Parliament; but when we hear of so many frontier wars, and when we see from the perusal of these Papers that the Government of India is in the habit of taking important decisions with regard to frontier affairs without communicating with home, I cannot help thinking that it would be better if there was more communication of intentions, at least on the part of the Government of India. I was impressed by what the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy said as to these frontier wars on the North-West of India. There has lately been a good deal of activity, perhaps too much, on the North-West frontier, and we ought to be better informed of what is going on there, and ought to have some assurance that the forward movement we have reason to believe is in progress there is watched more closely, and scrutinised more carefully by the India Office, than these occurrences at Manipur would lead us to believe. I hope, after what has been said to-night, that the Government will carefully consider the future fate of Manipur. It would be a pity that Native Princes, who are sensitive in these matters, should be left to the belief that there is a tendency on our part to interfere for the extinction of that qualified independence which has been left to them. Without expressing an opinion as to the future Government of Manipur, I hope the Government will hesitate before they attempt a permanent attention in the condition of that State. I quite

agree with the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Temple) as to the strategic importance of Manipur as to the route to Assam from Burma; but I should regret a policy of annexation.

(7.45.) [SIR R. LETHBRIDGE \(Kensington, N.\)](#)

There can be no doubt whatever as to the immense political and strategical importance of the geographical position of Manipur. That State is rightly regarded as the key of the communications between Assam and Burma; and not only so, but it is also the key to the communications between the Continent of India itself and Burma, and the communications with the South-West States of China. The House will at once, therefore, recognise the immense importance of any discussion that bears on the future condition of that State, and our future relations with it. But at the same time, I must confess, that differing from the hon. Member for Aberdeen, I do think there has been something like a waste of time on the part of this House in discussing the particular phases of the question that have been brought before the House this evening. I quite admit that the speech with which the right hon. Member for Derby opened the discussion was a most temperate, moderate, and statesmanlike speech—a speech which it was a pleasure for any old Indian to listen to. The right hon. Gentleman did full justice to the Indian Services; and as an old member of these Services, I am obliged to him for the expressions that he used; but when he states that he is bringing forward this Motion as dealing with certain important questions of Indian Policy, I must venture to remark that the main body of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, and of the speeches of most hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who have addressed the House this evening, has been concerned rather with minute criticisms on minor matters of detail. Even where the policy of the Government of India has been attacked or defended, it seems to me that it has been on comparatively small points of administrative detail, which are better left to the discretion of the Government of India itself. The Government of India, as the right hon. Member for Derby well told us, consists of men who have, to a large extent, spent the best parts of their lives in studying Indian questions on the spot, and surely to them may be left questions affecting smaller matters of detail, such as the occasion when the Senapatti should be arrested, or when he should not be arrested. Things of that sort might surely be left to the discretion of the Government of India, and the points that are brought up here for discussion should be simply and solely large points of general policy. The first point that has been dealt with very largely to-night is the question of arresting the Senapatti at the durbar. The authority of the Member for Evesham is very great on such a question as that, perhaps as great as any man living; yet I feel myself unable to agree with the conclusion he arrived at on the question of the durbar. I would venture to base my objection to his conclusion even upon his own speech, and the words which he used to explain to this House most correctly the real meaning of the word durbar. I observed that the hon. Member for Aberdeen complained that no full and clear explanation had been given of what was understood in India by a durbar, but I would venture to state to the hon. Gentleman that my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham did point out that there are durbars and durbars. There are many forms of durbars. There are durbars little more than a mere levee. There is a durbar which is more like the meeting on the Field of the Cloth of Gold where there is a meeting of potentates on equal terms, such as when the Viceroy of India met the Ameer of Afghanistan. But there is also, as the hon. Member for Evesham pointed out to the House, a durbar which by universal admission, is a tribunal of justice, a durbar to which the durbarees are summoned. They are ordered to attend, and at that durbar a declaration of policy or of the intentions of the Government may be made, and undoubtedly arrests may be made at such a durbar without any imputation of treachery. The Under Secretary of State quoted instances of such a durbar on the Beloochistan frontier, in which Sir Robert Sandeman carried out some such proceedings as that of

arresting prisoners. The reply was made by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean) that the Beloochistan frontier was a particularly wild one; and he also said that such rules could not be applied to a more settled and more civilised part of the Empire. I meet that in two ways. First of all, I say that Manipur is as wild and as unsettled as any part of the Beloochistan frontier, even although the inhabitants of Manipur are not of such a warlike quality as the Beloochis; and, secondly, what is an honourable act in Beloochistan cannot become a treacherous or a dishonourable act in Manipur. Therefore, I venture to point out that the very description given by my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham of this particular form of durbar, which is also a tribunal of justice, does prove most incontestably that Mr. Quinton and the Government of India, if they intended to order the attendance of the Senapatti at this durbar, and if they intended to arrest him, were justified by Oriental usages. There is not only the instance of the arrests by Sir Robert Sandeman, but arrests at durbars have come from the remotest ages in the East. I do not wish to say anything on the subject that might seem to be an attempt to raise a smile, but I would point out that even in the earliest times the arrest of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego took place at a durbar convened by Nebuchadnezzar, when he called together all the captains and nobles, and he arrested Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego on the testimony that was then given. Similar proceedings, we have learned to-night, have been adopted by Sir Robert Sandeman. The same kind of durbar must take place in Oriental countries frequently, because that particular form of durbar is by no means an uncommon one. The right hon. Member for Derby, with great modesty, disclaimed any right to speak authoritatively on the point, but said that this question with regard to the durbar would have to be settled by Indian opinion, and not apparently by English opinion. Well, I am not quite sure that I agree entirely with the right hon. Gentleman there. I think that the Government of India in future, at any rate, after observing the imputations that have been placed upon them, somewhat unjustly, I would say, in this country with regard to the proposed arrest of the Senapatti, will regard English sentiment on this point. I think that in India we cannot be too careful to have the highest possible standard on these points; and I should be glad to see the Government of India look in future to English rather than to Oriental opinion upon all such matters. But if regard be had to Oriental opinion and to Oriental custom—immemorial custom—then I will venture to say that no blame can rightly attach to the proposals that had been made either by the Government of India or by Mr. Quinton. The hon. Member for Aberdeen said that it was not advisable that the Viceroy should be in charge of the portfolio of the Foreign Department in India. The hon. Member based that opinion on his view that the duties of the Foreign Office are of the highest and most difficult character. That is quite right, but it is really the very reason why the portfolio of the Foreign Department was, by the arrangement come to when the Council of the Governor General was established, entrusted to the Viceroy himself. I had the honour of being attached to the Simla and Calcutta Foreign Office, and, therefore, I am aware of what took place. The view taken was this: that the communications coming under the purview of the Member of Council for the Foreign Department were of such an important and confidential character, that they required to be dealt with with so much strength and ability to carry them through that it was best, if the Viceroy had any portfolio at all to hold, for him to hold that particular portfolio. We have seen recently in this country that a similar policy has been productive of the best results, where the Prime Minister has also been Foreign Secretary. I see the hon. Member shakes his head. Perhaps he means that the Foreign Office in this country is not quite the same as the Foreign Office in India; but there is this ground of similarity between them: that both are concerned with matters of the highest importance and delicacy. There is one other point in the speech of the hon. Member for Aberdeen on which I should wish to say one or two words before I sit down. He criticised somewhat severely the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India—confirmed also, I may say, by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy—that there is some objection to the paramount Power leaving

in positions of the highest power and influence in Native States men of strong wills and violent tempers. That, perhaps, is not exactly what the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) said. As nearly as possible, he said, I think, that the Government objected to the policy of employing strong men in high positions. But I would draw the hon. Member's attention to the fact that there are strong men, men of strong wills, but of honest integrity of purpose, who have done most admirable service to the Empire in many of the Native States of India. I need only mention the names of the late Sir Madhava Rao and the late Sir Salar Jung. We have such men in many of the Native States at present who are of that character, who do most valuable service in that character. The Secretary of State and my right hon. Friend do not object to such strong men. What we object to is not the employment of strong men in those positions, but the employment of men with strong wills and violent tempers—aye, and of violent actions, as it has been shown, by quotations from the judgments of this very Senapatti, he has himself been guilty of. He has been guilty of the most shameless actions, of the most shameless cruelties, cruelties which are regarded with as much horror in India as in England. I hope the hon. Member for Aberdeen will regard that as a fair criticism on his remarks about men of strong will. It is not the strong men of India—it is not at all because they are strong men, or because they are popular, that we object to them; but it is on account of the subjects of those Native States, who would have to suffer from their oppression if we allowed them to be under the charge of such rulers, that we, who know the circumstances of India, object most strongly to the employment in such positions of men of strong wills, combined with violent tempers and actions. I trust, Sir, that that will be regarded as a justification of the policy of the Government of India in decreeing the deportation of the Senapatti. After most carefully reading the whole of the evidence presented to us, I do feel that it would have been suicidal for the paramount Power to have left such a cruel and violent man, such an avowed enemy to British authority, in power among the Manipuris. I think, therefore, that that justifies the general policy of the Government; and, for my own part, in all the broad outlines of that policy, I entirely agree with it. It may be that on some of the minor details of its execution there are things which we all deplore; but those details, Mr. Speaker, I do maintain should be left to the discretion of the Government of India.

Sir W. HARCOURT

rose to address some remarks to the House, but

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH,) Strand, Westminster

Interposing said: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will postpone for a little what he has to say. The Secretary of State for War will reply on the whole Debate. My right hon. Friend will consent to the Papers being granted; but the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) and the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) deserve some reply from the Government.

(8.4.) **MR. MAC NEILL** (Donegal, S.)

I venture to intervene in this Debate for a very brief time, because my views on Indian questions are different from the views of the vast majority of both sides of this House. As long as I have been in the House I have always thought it was an imperative duty on Irish Members closely to investigate Indian matters, because we have more sympathy with States which, like Ireland, are under the British Flag, but outside the pale of the privileges of the British Constitution. Now, Mr. Speaker, the course of the Debate all during; the night has more than justified my action when I yesterday appealed to the First Lord of the

Treasury not to throw over the Bill brought in by the Government themselves, having for its object the better administration of the Indian Government. Let us consider now with reference to that question, first of all, what is admitted in the course of this Debate. It is notorious that the subject States of India—Manipur is one—comprise no fewer than 60,000,000 of human beings. A revolution of great import has occurred in Manipur. That revolution was suppressed, or put down, or taken into consideration, not by the Home Government of India, not by Lord Cross, or by the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India, or by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanhope), who is at present on the Treasury Bench, and who has administered Indian affairs with very great success, and with his accustomed ability—it was simply taken into consideration by Lord Lansdowne and his Indian Council. The Indian Government, or those portions of the Imperial Government which have a cognisance of Indian matters, have no official record, and no official information of anything that went on at Manipur. I think that is a very shameful and a very disgraceful state of affairs. It appears not to be within the knowledge of the British public that the India Office at home is a very elaborate office. There is an Under Secretary, my right hon. Friend [Sir J. Gorst at this moment entered, and took his seat on the Treasury Bench]—I see that the right hon. Gentleman has taken his seat, and I may inform him that I was simply commenting on the fact that it was a very shameful and a very disgraceful state of affairs that a revolution should take place in a State like Manipur, and that the Government at home should be without official information of it; and that, further, it should be simply taken into consideration by the Indian Government in Calcutta, the Government of the Viceroy and his Council. Lord Cross had nothing to say to it, and gave no advice. The matter, so far as the documents go to show, was taken into consideration by the extraordinary Council of 15, the 15 members of the Indian Council, which is a kind of Cabinet for Indian administration. Having regard to the fact that no fewer than 60,000,000 of people are affected, and having regard to the fact that the Government at home knew nothing of this transaction, I think it will be granted that such a state of things is a scandal to our administration. I can well remember—indeed, when the right hon. Gentleman was making his very able speech I was forcibly reminded of a splendidly written article of his on Indian matters, published before he assumed the responsibility of high office, in which he said there were many facts connected with the Indian Government which had not been brought before the public. I say that the treatment of Manipur by the Home Government is one of those cases. Let us see how the right hon. Gentleman stands in reference to Indian matters. The Member for Stockport assumed, I think, rather an ambitious office; he tried to make the Indian administration purer, and better, and more virtuous than did the right hon. Gentleman who is the exponent of Indian administration in this House. The right hon. Gentleman did not say that this deposed Prince, this Senapatti, this Commander-in-Chief, who is now under sentence of death, was, as did the hon. Member for Stockport, a scoundrel. He said nothing of the kind. He admitted that he was an able man, a popular administrator, who gathered round him the great enthusiasm of all his people. All this the right hon. Gentleman said; yet, with a cynicism which has never been equalled even by the Chief Secretary, he said that because the Senapatti was an able man, and because he was a vigorous administrator, he was as such an object of jealousy to the Indian Government. That, inasmuch as he was popular among his people, the Indian Government regarded him with a jealous eye. The right hon. Gentleman added that the deposition of the Senapatti was not a moral but apolitical act; it was not done on the ground of morality. Really I think I must commend the right hon. Gentleman for that confession. He at the same time said that when a man, an Indian subject, becomes an object of danger or jealousy to the Indian Government on account of his abilities, on account of his originality of character, the first thing the English Government must do is to blacken his character and to set a picket on him, in fact—

SIR J. GORST

No.

MR. MAC NEILL

Well, I do not wish to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman. These charges and allegations date so far back as 1881, and, though they should have been forgotten, they have been raked up against this man when it became convenient for the Indian Government to put him down with a view to annexing the whole Province of Manipur. This was the real object of these transactions and proceedings. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman was very happy in his comparison with reference to the field of poppies, in which the heads of the topmost poppies, which in a degree stood above the others, were knocked off, with a further suggestion that so might be managed obstreperous politicians. If it is mentioned in every bazaar, in every gathering of English officers, and every gathering of Indian natives, that the English Government in India is not for the benefit of the people of India, that it is not to promote the welfare of the people, that it is not to advance the best men to the highest places, and that it is not to endeavour through native agency to bring home to the people of India government in its best possible form, then we shall dissolve English rule in India by dispelling the confidence which ought to exist. I never thought that an English Minister would stand up here—a responsible Minister of the English Crown, representing the English Government in the Empire of India—and avow that the subject races are held by us simply for our own benefit, and that our officials may ride rough-shod over them. The right hon. Gentleman drew a comparison in reference to the present dangers to the State. Reference was made to the New Zealanders, who it was said constituted a danger to the colonists there, and who, therefore, ought to be destroyed. I am sorry that such cases which have been referred to have existed; but, at the same time, I should wish it to be known that the English Democracy have never to this date been responsible for the crimes and atrocities that have from time to time been perpetrated by the Governments by which they have been ruled. From the time of these remote occurrences down to the date of the Pigott conspiracy—[Cries of "Oh!"]—I am quite sure the Speaker will call me to order if I say anything which in his opinion may be wrong. Of course, it is absolutely essential that the Government of India should be free from all blame on account of the atrocities and forgeries upon which our Indian Empire was founded. I am glad to say that the hon. Baronet the Member for Evesham (Sir Richard Temple), who combines with great experience of the Indian Service high ability and high honour, has emancipated himself from the trammels of Indian officialism in that most able article, in which he vigorously denounced the impropriety and dishonour of asking any one whom you intend to manacle into your garden or your house. This case, in point of fact, is the old case of the spider and the fly, and that is not the way in which English administration in India ought to be carried on. I, for one, shall never have the great honour and privilege of sitting on the Treasury Front Bench—at any rate, in this Parliament; and, therefore, I do not feel bound in my intelligence by any of the trammels of officialism. Consequently, I do not hesitate to say that the person who is really responsible for all these troubles is not Mr. Quinten, who is dead, and, therefore, unable to speak on his own account, but Her Majesty's Viceroy of India, Lord Lansdowne. This, I think, I shall be able to prove to the House up to the very hilt in the Blue Book containing the correspondence which has been issued on this very painful subject. Let me ask the House to consider for a moment how things have been going on in the State of Manipur. It is a small State, and hitherto appears to have been fairly well managed. Mr. Grimwood, who has lost his life, would appear to have so conducted himself in the office he filled at Manipur as to be enabled to bring the natives there very much in accordance with his own views, and I am quite sure that anyone who will read the Despatches dealing with the action of that gentleman during the two years he

was at Manipur will agree with me in saying that he did his best to promote not only the interests of his own Government, but also the peace, tranquillity, and welfare of the community in the district in which he was placed. I think I shall be enabled to prove to this House from the Despatches contained in this Blue Book, first of all, that Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton approved of the supplanting of a feeble and incompetent Maharajah by a capable one. There was no idea of treachery or want of loyalty to the British Crown on his part, and the best proof of that is to be found in the fact that Mr. Grimwood, when the revolution occurred, was at the British Residency at Manipur, and went over and had a durbar, which was an honourable durbar, at which he conversed with the present Maharajah of Manipur, and likewise with the Senapatti, who is now under sentence of death, and who would have been to happy and independent Prince administering the affairs of the State of Manipur to the welfare of the community over which he would have been ruling had it not been for the action of the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne. Mr. Grimwood says, on page 6 of the Report— The Maharajah then wrote a letter to the Senapatti to tell him his determination to leave and resign the 'gaddi' to the Jubaraj, and when I went to the Palace the Senapatti and his brothers were evidently very pleased at the Maharajah's resolution, and the former promised to make all the arrangements for the journey of the Maharajah and his brothers to Cachar in a proper manner, and that those who chose to stay in Manipur would not be molested. He also said he would send for the Jubaraj who it appears, was about eight miles away on the Cachar Road. The Jubaraj arrived two or three hours after, and at once proclaimed himself Maharajah. As soon as the Maharajah's intention of leaving the country was known numbers of Manipuris flocked to the Residency to see him, most of them bringing various sums of money to present to him. To judge from the way the people wept, one would say the Maharajah was popular, and everyone seemed sorry at his departure. On page 3 of the Despatch Mr. Grimwood says— I have no doubt that the departure of the Maharajah and three of his brothers will be, at any rate for a time, beneficial to the country. A Maharajah and seven brothers over whom he had little real authority were too many for a small country like this, and their reduction being half will be a relief in more ways than one. The Maharajah personally was popular, but he was a weak ruler, paid little attention to public business, and spent hours every day in worshipping in the Temple. He was not at all the person to keep order amongst his brothers, and he is a man who will be much happier, I imagine, as an ascetic than as a ruler. The Jubaraj, who, I hope, will be allowed to succeed to the "gaddi," has the reputation of being much more active and business-like. The Senapatti has more than once incurred the censure of the Government; but, as I have mentioned above, he is popular amongst all classes; he is the only Prince who is said to be poor owing to his generosity. He is also on good terms with the Jubaraj; and if the latter is allowed to succeed to the "gaddi," the Senapatti, as Jubaraj, would assist in making his rule strong and popular. At the time of writing, everything is profoundly quiet and going on as usual. The postal services have not been interrupted at all. In all these things we have the experience and testimony of Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton, who are best able to judge as to the conduct and character of the Senapatti. I have here further testimony as to what the Political Agent at Manipur considers to have been the effects of this revolution. At the time it occurred he expressed a hope that the result would be beneficial, and, after four months' experience, he says that as far as he can tell the feeling of the bulk of the people is one of perfect contentment under their new ruler, and there is no reason why this should not be the case. And yet this ruler is the man whom the hon. Member for Stockport spoke of as a scoundrel in his Debating Society speech earlier in the evening. As I read these Records, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask hon. Members who are listening to me, to bring to their recollection the fact that an hon. Friend stood up in his place on the eve of the Whitsuntide holidays and asked for the cause of the delay in producing these Papers. Is the reason to be found that the British people quickly forget circumstances in the sequence of events, and it was deemed desirable, therefore, to delay the Papers until the freshness of what had

occurred had passed off? I never saw State documents which so deeply convicted an Administration. I come now to a Despatch by Lord Lansdowne, or by one of his agents in Calcutta. It is dated the 24th January, and is as follows:— The opinion which the Governor General in Council has formed from a perusal of the Papers in this case is, that we should intervene with a sufficient show of strength to make it understood that we intend to be the masters of the situation. Why should they, I ask, be masters of the situation? Why should not the Manipuris be masters of the situation and govern in their own country, so long as they are doing no hurt to the British Administration, which, after all, is only there for the protection of the Manipuris? Then the Despatch goes on— The differences between the Maharajah's brothers must be settled on principles of justice. The fact is, the Indian Government was simply trying to grab this State, although both Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton had declared it to be a good Government in Manipur. Again, the Despatch says— Whatever arrangement is come to must have our full sanction. The sanction of people in Calcutta who know nothing whatever about the Manipuris. Then comes an instruction to visit Manipur, and the Despatch continues— In the opinion of the Governor General, if you find that the Maharajah would receive a reasonable amount of support from the people of Manipur, he might be reinstated and promised assistance in consideration of his implicitly following our instructions. The consideration, I beg the House to mark, is not in consideration of his good government, or of services rendered, but of his implicitly following the instructions of people in Calcutta. Again, the Despatch shows the official knowledge of the incompetence of the Maharajah, for it says— It will probably be desirable that the Senapatti should in any case be removed, for even if the Maharajah proves hopelessly incompetent and the Jubaraj is recognised, it would be necessary to remove his disreputable adherents from the State and to punish the Senapatti for his violent and lawless conduct. I must say that after this night's Debate I do not think that the man now under sentence of death is likely to be executed. It appears to me from these Papers that the object of the Indian Government was to disturb the tranquillity of this little State in spite of the entreaty of Mr. Grimwood and in defiance of Mr. Quinton's matured opinion. The object was to "grab" this little county. Talk of Irish land grabbers, why they are only miniatures of the Indian land grabbers! I am sorry that Mr. Quinton lost his life. He made an error of judgment; he ought to have put his foot down when Lord Lansdowne sent him the instructions which led up to this disaster. He began life in a humble position in an obscure Irish parish, by his own efforts he raised himself to a high post, and he ought to have told Lord Lansdowne that he valued his honour too highly to carry out such instructions. I am not particularly concerned for the honour of Lord Lansdowne, or of the Indian Government, but I am concerned for the memory of my countryman, Mr. Quinton, who had a splendid career in India. An attempt has been made, no doubt a kindly one, in an admirable article by the hon. Baronet to show that the plan of inviting the Senapatti to the durbar, then to arrest him, was the idea of Mr. Quinton. But the documents conclusively prove the reverse. A telegram in the Blue Book, on page 27, shows that Quinton, in the earlier part of February, when this matter was brought to his notice, wrote strongly to the Viceroy objecting to it. But his Excellency the Governor and the Council were determined to destroy the little State, so Mr. Quinton was brought up to Calcutta, and had an interview with the Viceroy on February 21st of the present year. He had to be closeted with his Excellency, as Resident Magistrates in Ireland are closeted with the Chief Secretary, in order to bring him up to the scratch. Then he was despatched on the road, and on the 18th March he telegraphed that he intends to arrest the Senapatti at the durbar. He says— Your letter 21st ult. Expect to reach Manipur on Sunday with escort described in my demi-official letter of the 22nd idem. Have communicated with the Political Agent through Lieutenant Gurdon, whom I sent in advance. I propose to require the Regent and durbar to meet me on arrival, announce the decision of the Government, and arrest Senapatti.

[SIR W. HARCOURT](#)

I may point out that the durbar there referred to is not the durbar called by Mr. Quinton; it was really the entourage of the Regent.

MR. MAC NEILL

I must acknowledge my error; I think the right hon. Gentleman is right. But if the right hon. Gentleman will look at page 80 of this Blue Book he will see a telegram dated 30th April, from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State, as to the arrest of Senapatti. He will find it there stated: "Arrangement was, orders of India were to be announced at durbar." That is the durbar of the British Residency, and not the durbar of Senapatti, and Senapatti was to be told to surrender at the durbar of the Residency, the durbar which was to be surrounded by military in three or four quarters. And then came the words—" If he refused, Colonel Skene was to arrest him at durbar."

[SIR W. HARCOURT](#)

Those were not the orders of the Viceroy.

MR. MAC NEILL

He ratified them afterwards, and I am certain the whole of this arrangement was carried out between Mr. Quinton and his party and the Viceroy. The telegram goes on to say—" Troops were kept in readiness round Residency, where durbar was held, in case of resistance." A greater violation of the laws of honour and hospitality has scarcely ever been heard of, even in Indian politics. Talk about straightforward English gentlemen or about honour after this! It is a ghastly story, and a shameful story. Now, Sir, I think we have proved that there was an arrangement of Quinton's which, at all events, was sanctioned by our highest authorities, to arrest this man; and how did Quinton behave on the morning of that day? He came into Manipur on the morning of Sunday, the 22nd March. The man whom he intended to arrest met him four miles out of the town. Quinton dismounted, and had a parley and a conversation with him, and that afternoon the plan was arranged, and he was invited to attend this durbar to be arrested. He was invited there contrary to the expressed opinion and entreaty of Mr. Grimwood, and contrary to his (Mr. Quinton's) own better judgment in fact. What I have said, and always say, in Indian matters I say from a sense of great responsibility. These people have got no representative, and it is necessary that questions affecting Indian administration should be closely watched. How long is this kind of administration to last? Could you not have gone straightforwardly to these people and have said, "We have come to arrest you," and have taken a proper force and carried a strong arm? That might have been an unjustifiable, but it would have been a manly, course; and why should tricks and treachery be resorted to? This Senapatti was never asked to go to the durbar with the knowledge that he would be arrested the instant he went in. I am sorry to think that Indian administration, which of all the administrations of the British Empire should be the purest from its past antecedents, should still maintain the character that attached to it in the past.

(9.17.) [THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR \(Mr. E. STANHOPE,\)](#) Lincolnshire, Horncastle

I am very sorry the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down differed in two respects from the general character of the Debate; in the first place, because he has drawn, not upon the Blue Book, but upon his own imagination, for the facts he has laid before the House; and, secondly, because the general tone of his speech has been in direct contradiction to the general tone of the speeches that preceded it. I am glad to recognise from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who opened this Debate, and from the

speeches of almost all hon. Members who succeeded him, that there has been a general desire to inform the country of the facts of this unfortunate incident without endeavouring to create any Party prejudice either on the one side or the other, or to direct public attention in condemnation of any official. Among the speeches delivered on the other side of the House there has been one rather general complaint, and that complaint has been that Her Majesty's Government have not hitherto presented their final judgment upon all the facts of the case, and the right hon. Gentleman asks that any Despatch the Secretary of State might be ready to write to the Government of India upon the whole of this case should be at once presented to this House. Now, Sir, I am bound to say the difficulties in the way of any general view at this moment are very great. In the first place, there is more than one inquiry going on. We know perfectly well, from what the Viceroy has told us, that he has instituted inquiries into the various aspects of this case, and he has not hitherto communicated to us, nor has he yet received, the results of those inquiries. But as regards the other aspects of the case, there is a very great difference of opinion among the various authorities who have to deal with it. Unfortunately many of those who might have contributed valuable testimony on one side or the other are dead, and in deference to that calamity which has fallen upon them there is a general reluctance on the part of the right hon. Gentleman who opened the Debate, and on the part of everyone who has followed, towards speaking of them or making anything like an attack upon those who are not in a position to answer for themselves. We therefore approach this subject under circumstances of very considerable difficulty, but we recognise fully the responsibility which rests upon the Government of the day in England to express an opinion on the action of the Government in India. The general rule, we know perfectly well, is this: The Government of India has to act upon its own responsibility. There have been exceptions—unfortunate exceptions—where Governments in this country have ordered the Government in India to carry out a particular policy in India without either consulting them or allowing due weight to the opinions put forward. I regret any such case, because I believe in the main it is best to throw the responsibility entirely upon the action of the Government of India, the Government of this country to remain a Court of Review, which when it has received all the facts and circumstances connected with any case can write out to India and express from this country the deliberate opinion of the Secretary of State for India in Council upon the action which the Government of India has taken. The Government in this country and the Government of India in Council do not shrink from that responsibility. So soon as the facts are fully before them they are fully prepared, and indeed determined, to write out to India a general review of all the circumstances of the case, expressing their opinion and asking such questions as they think the circumstances of the case may demand. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), who spoke in the course of the Debate, alleged that the questions that had been put by the right hon. Member for Derby had not been answered by the Under Secretary of State. Well, I took a very careful note of those questions, and though, of course, I am not able to say whether the answers were altogether satisfactory or not to hon. Gentlemen opposite, this at least I will say—that there was no question which the right hon. Gentleman put forward in his speech which the Under Secretary did not attempt to approach in the course of his speech. I beg pardon, I think there was one. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of this Debate, spoke of this affair as one in which a British force had been cut up. I should like to say to the House one thing of which they are probably unaware. We have heard of this affair altogether in terms of the grossest exaggeration, and it may be a surprise to many hon. Members to learn that after all the result of the unfortunate affair which took place in Manipur was this: that only 25 men of our forces in India were either killed or were missing. The total loss in the affair at Manipur—with the exception, of course, of the unfortunate massacre of some English officers taken prisoners afterwards—amounted to only 25 killed and missing. I should like, and I am sure I desire, to approach this subject from the point of view of the points which are admitted

and the points which are disputed, and it is very desirable indeed that we should all entirely appreciate what facts are admitted and what facts still remain in substantial dispute between us. First of all, it is substantially admitted that the Government of India had the right to interfere in the affairs of Manipur. That has not been disputed by any speaker who has taken part in the Debate, and it is undoubtedly the right of the Government, not only in consequence of their special arrangements with the State of Manipur, but also because of their paramount power in India, to interfere when they think it necessary in the affairs of a State situated as Manipur is. It is very satisfactory, therefore, to be able to stand on firm ground so far. The Government of India, whether right or wrong in what they did, had a right to interfere, at any rate, in the affairs of Manipur. Secondly, I think it is admitted on all hands, that for the mode of carrying out their policy, the Government of India cannot be held to be responsible. I do not think any speaker to-night has substantially disputed that proposition. There was one idea put forward, I rather think by the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce), that it was quite wrong on the part of the Government of India to send Mr. Quinton at all to Manipur, and that what had been done at Manipur might very well have been carried out by Mr. Grimwood, who was a man of considerable experience, and might have carried out all the arrangements without the interference of Mr. Quinton. Well, I want to know how it is possible for any hon. Gentleman opposite to argue any such point as that, because, on the one hand they tell us that it is an affair so small that Mr. Grimwood might very well have carried it out without Mr. Quinton's interference, and, on the other hand, they tell us that it was so important that it ought to have been referred to England for settlement by the Government in England. These two contentions are utterly contradictory. I believe the facts of the case really to be this: As a rule, it is very desirable if you can deal with the matter on the spot. It is also desirable when a matter comes before the Government in India that the Government of India should be trusted to carry out that policy. The number of instances in which reference ought to be made on matters affecting a Feudatory State in India—before action is taken—to the Government of this country is exceedingly small. That being so, with that exception, I have not heard any objection taken to the proposition I have laid down as to the mode of carrying out the policy adopted, and which the Government of India is not responsible for. I do not think I am called upon, nor am I ready, to defend the military arrangements that took place. I am not dealing in particular with the number of troops or with the question of ammunition, because I think a great deal might be said on both these subjects in very great contradiction of many of the criticisms passed in this country upon the action of the authorities in India. But upon the general disposition of the military forces, and the general action taken in that respect in the expedition to Manipur, I cannot help feeling that there is a great deal that requires explanation, and there is a great deal that with any explanation it will be exceedingly difficult to defend—Now I come to the second point, in which an attack has been made upon the mode in which the policy of the Government of India has been carried out—I allude to the arrest, or the proposed arrest, in durbar. Anybody who has read what has passed, and anybody who has listened to the Debate to-night, must be perfectly aware that on this subject there is a very great difference of opinion among the highest Indian authorities. We have had very high Indian authorities passing judgment either on the one side or the other. I heard with very great interest, for instance, my hon. Friend the Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon), who had evidently studied the Indian authorities, and who spoke, not as expressing his own opinions, but as from his study of the Indian authorities which he had obtained at the time. I had his outspoken and frank approval of the course adopted in this respect by the Indian Government. I heard also with very great respect the opinion of my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple), than whom none are entitled to speak with greater authority in this House on Indian questions. He expressed the contrary opinion. Well, that only shows the very great difficulty that anybody, in this country at any rate, must have in arriving at a satisfactory conclusion on a matter so greatly disputed between one high

authority and another. At the same time, I cannot help thinking that every body ought to remember that a Durbar Court is not necessarily a Ceremonial Court. I believe myself that there is a great deal in the opinion of those authorities who point out that there are various descriptions of durbars. There are durbars that are purely ceremonial, where nobody would dream for a moment of attempting anything like what is suggested in this case. There are durbars that are not ceremonial, but are practically Courts held for the purpose of announcing the orders of the Government of India. That was the kind of Court to which the Senapatti and other officials were summoned—a Court to hear the orders of the Government of India. Take, for example, the illustration of a Court of Justice. Suppose a man is ordered to appear and does not appear, you then issue a warrant for his arrest. In this case, the men were summoned to hear the orders of the Government of India; and if they do not attend, steps must be taken to ensure their attendance—

SIR W. HARCOURT

I beg pardon, but that was not the point. The point is that they were summoned in order to be arrested.

MR. E. STANHOPE

If the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me, I think he will allow me to proceed with my argument in my own way. I am dealing with the point of the summons to the durbar. The summons to the durbar was for the purpose of hearing the orders of the Government of India; and, so far as I am concerned, I believe the summons to the durbar for that purpose was certainly not without precedent, and might almost be described as not wholly unusual in the history of the Government of India. That being so, if any officer had attended for the purpose of hearing the orders of the Government of India, the question arises, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite says, whether the officers who summoned the durbar would not have the right to arrest them if they attended that durbar. That, again, is a point on which there is great difference of opinion.

SIR W. HARCOURT

None at all.

MR. E. STANHOPE

Oh, yes, there is this difference—I think the right hon. Gentleman must allow that there must be some difference of opinion if there are precedents in favour of one particular course, namely, that of arrest in such circumstances. There are precedents which the right hon. Gentleman cannot dispute on this matter; and that being so, he cannot for a moment say that this is not a matter capable of argument both on the one side and the other. Now, I venture to say with the greatest respect, having no personal experience in the matter, that, on the whole, although the Government of this country are inclined to agree with the Government of India as to the possible legality of the course that was pursued—and precedents prove that it was a legal course in certain circumstances—they also prove that the particular case in which it is exercised must depend upon the particular circumstances surrounding it. There is nothing certainly in what has taken place that reflects the smallest stain either upon the Government of India or upon the officer who took this course without reference to or sanction of the Government of India. What the Government of India have done is that they have approved of the case in the circumstances to which it was applicable; and in that opinion we concur. Whether that was the course that would have recommended itself to the Government of this country if they had been applied to is a matter which I can

answer in this way: Supposing my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State having, as he now has, the facts before him, had been asked whether or not it was a course it was desirable to adopt, he would have replied, It is not the course which, in his opinion, ought to have been adopted. Now I pass to the further question which is really in dispute between us, the question of the wisdom of the policy itself. What grounds are there for saying that the policy adopted was not a wise one? I should say it would be somewhat presumptuous on the part of any individual in this House, who could have but little knowledge indeed—

SIR W. HARCOURT

We have the Blue Book.

MR. E. STANHOPE

Of the precise circumstances prevailing in Manipur, to say that the Government of India, who had at its disposal the best information on the subject, and were able to decide on the spot, with full knowledge of all the circumstances, was wrong in adopting the particular course it did adopt. I believe we will do wisely to place the responsibility on the Government of India, and to admit that, with very imperfect knowledge, to control the action of the Government of India in such a case as this would be wrong; but, of course, the argument is a perfectly fair one; that if the policy of the Government of India was wise, why was it not adopted at once? Why did they not at once propose to get rid of the usurpers at Manipur and replace the Maharajah? Well, of course, I think we are all agreed in this House that if it was possible for the Government of India to have proceeded at once in the matter it would have been much better. But I would point out to the House two considerations: First of all, that the approval of the Government by the Regent and the Senapatti was purely and entirely provisional. They were distinctly told that they were allowed to retain the government which they had assumed solely until the further orders of the Government of India were received, and although the interval was a long one before the orders were given, still they had the fullest warning that they had to abide by the orders of the Government of India. The second consideration is this: Any delay that occurred at Calcutta was caused entirely by the desire of the Viceroy, first of all, to do justice to the ex-Maharajah. He wished to hear everything which he had to say. He gave him the fullest opportunity of making int hecompanla had to make against the course the Government were taking. The Viceroy also desired to hear, in the fullest manner, the views of Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton as to the policy to be adopted. What the Viceroy and his Council desired, in the first instance, was to replace the ex-Maharajah. Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton said that was not the policy they were inclined to support, and they wished that it should not be adopted. It took a considerable time to argue the question. Everybody knows very well that the complaints had to be referred to the various parties, and the whole had to be fully considered at Calcutta, and after the fullest consideration the Viceroy decided to give up his own opinion and adopt the opinion thrust upon him by Mr. Quinton and Mr. Grimwood. Then, when the Government of India is charged with not forming an opinion on the spot, I should like to know what a Government could do more than confess itself convinced upon the whole by the arguments which its agents put forward, abandoning the idea of putting up the Maharajah, and accepting the course proposed by their own agents. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) said that that was all very well, but the Government of India should have withdrawn the proposal to withdraw the Senapatti. But that meant this: that the Government of India ought to allow the revolt at Manipur to remain successful and untouched and the authority of the Senapatti unassailed. That

was an absolutely impossible course. It was absolutely essential to mark the sense of the authority of the Government of India as the paramount Power. Nobody doubts that the Senapatti was the author of the revolt. I shall quote the authority of General Johnston and General Gurdon-, resident at Manipur, both of whom are agreed in their views on that subject. The Government of India must have felt that there could be no peace in Manipur if they left the Jubraj reigning with the Senapatti at his side. They knew the Senapatti was a kingmaker, and that he would have afterwards made himself king. The result would have been that no Native Chief could have relied on the promises of the Government of India to sustain him in the position in which they placed him if the Government had allowed this revolt to pass unnoticed. I do not think, therefore, there was any alternative if the Government of India desired to prevent the necessity of leaving the Senapatti to be a public danger to the interests of the State in Manipur. I beg pardon—there is possibly one alternative, and that is the alternative suggested by Mr. Quinton. Mr. Quinton suggested that there should be an inquiry beforehand. Now, let anybody consider that for a moment. Here is a man in a position of paramount authority in Manipur, with the power of life and death over all the people, and we are told that the Agent of the Government of India is to go to Manipur and hold an inquiry into his conduct. How could you hold such an inquiry, and, if you did, how could you get witnesses to tell the truth on one side or the other? Certainly, the only course that could be taken, if an inquiry was held, was the course which would be taken in any other case. If you inquire into the conduct of any officer, you begin by suspending him from his duties, and that would have been the only course to adopt in the Senapatti's case. Therefore, it seems to me that, although the policy under the circumstances of the case was exceedingly difficult to decide upon, and still more difficult for us at this distance, and not understanding all the circumstances of the case, to pronounce upon, yet we are able to say with confidence that the course adopted was alike honourable to the Government and honourable to this country. It was a policy which asserted the right of the Government of India, and, as I think the hon. Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple) said, it was one likely to give confidence in the various Native States in India. The general effect, therefore, of that policy was good, and we see no reason whatever to question or disapprove of it. The hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) in his speech, raised two very important points. I am sorry to say I was not present when he made his speech, but, from what I hear, it must have been an exceedingly valuable contribution to this Debate. He suggested that instead of the existing Foreign Secretary, there should be a man in a high position and a member of the Council, who should act as adviser to the Viceroy on foreign questions. I think there is a great deal to be said for that suggestion. It is not one on which any action can now be taken, but it is deserving of consideration, and the hon. Member's reference to it makes it a subject which I think the Viceroy in Council ought carefully to consider. Then the hon. Member proposed that the policy of the Indian Government, in relation to the various dependent States, should be more carefully watched in this country. I very much doubt the wisdom of that policy. We have in this House so little knowledge of the relations of India with the various dependent States that I think that, except in exceptional cases, we should leave the Government of India to deal with them, and not interfere with it unnecessarily. I say, therefore, in conclusion, that, as far as we can understand all the circumstances of this case, whilst we are aware that we cannot defend in every respect and on all details the conduct of every actor in this matter, we do not, on the other hand, desire at this moment to apportion any blame. We propose, at a later period, to issue a general review of the opinion entertained in this country of the policy adopted by the Government of India, and we undoubtedly propose also in that general review to address certain inquiries to India as to certain points on which further light may be necessary. But, taking it as a whole, we say the policy of the Viceroy, and the action founded upon that policy, deserve our confidence. We are prepared to give the Viceroy that confidence, and we have every reason to believe that his answer to our inquiries, based upon the further attention he

will be able to give to all the facts of the case, will clear up a good many points which at present are obscured, and will prove that his policy, although unfortunate, and ending in a disaster which I do not for a moment attempt to depreciate, has been devised and carried out for the best interests of the Empire over which he rules.

(9.55.) [SIR W. HARCOURT](#)

I have trespassed so long already on the indulgence of the House that I shall be very brief in what I have to say. To a great degree the object of this Motion has been attained. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has stated that the Government in England, represented by the Secretary of State and the Cabinet, will review the whole of these transactions and pronounce their judgment upon them. That, I think, is a matter of the very first importance. I am very little solicitous to go into any controversial points now. I am thinking a great deal more of the effect which this discussion is to have in India, than of the effect, the temporary effect perhaps, on opinion here in England. This discussion, and the principles which have been enunciated in it, will have a permanent effect in India. I have, therefore, looked with great anxiety to the language and to the principles asserted from the Government Bench upon this subject. I was a little anxious at first when I heard the Secretary for War speaking on the subject of durbar. I regard that as a matter of enormous importance to our relations to the Native Princes of India. I do not know what the precedents are to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, but I have had the opportunity, since this question has been before the English mind, of conversing with a great many persons of the highest experience. I have not met one who has not expressed their regret at, and condemnation of, these transactions, or rather intended transactions. There have been mentioned to-night similar instances on the rough and rude frontier superintended by Sir Robert Sandeman. Those are the only instances of such transactions that I have ever heard of. Though I cannot agree with the Secretary for War that the Viceroy's telegram, while assailing the legality generally, disapproved of its application in this instance. I am perfectly satisfied with the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman, that if the thing had been submitted to the Secretary of State in England, it would have been disapproved and discouraged, and I hope that will be a sentence which will prevent a recurrence of such a transaction in India for ever hereafter. So much as to the question of the durbar, which after all, is only a subsidiary one. Though I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman as to the policy adopted in regard to the Senapatti, I confess it seems to me an erroneous policy. I can quite conceive that there should be a great difference of opinion on the subject. I quite agree that you ought not to condemn a person in the situation of the Governor General of India on doubtful questions of policy upon which differences of opinion may be entertained; but there is a far graver matter which has taken place to-night, which makes it more essential than ever that the opinion of the English Government in its most solemn form should be expressed. That is, I am sorry to say, the necessity for condemning and repudiating the grounds upon which the Under Secretary has stated that the Senapatti should be removed. If these grounds are to be admitted, if they are to be acknowledged and adopted by the English Government, I see nothing but misfortune in the near future. The Member for North Kensington said that it was not because he was an able man, but because he was a man of violent temper that he was condemned. That was not, unfortunately, the language that was held by the Under Secretary. Unfortunately, the words used by the Under Secretary are already in print, and to-morrow they will be known in every part of India. I could have understood the ground taken up, and, I suppose, was intended to be taken up, by the Government of India, although I call it an unfortunate ground—that the Senapatti's former character was bad. That was a ground on which I was sorry to hear my hon. Friend the

Member for Southport speaking in the heated language which he used. That the Senapatti, tried according to the standard of English opinion, was not a man of admirable character, I am ready to admit; but the Government of India had for years permitted that man to occupy the highest position in the Government of Manipur. It was not the unauthorised act of Mr. Grimwood, or of Mr. Quinton, to acknowledge the Senapatti. The Government of India had deliberately acknowledged him as Senapatti, that is, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Manipur, for years under the late Maharajah; and it is all too late in order to justify a policy of this kind to produce acts of former years, which they have condoned. But I pass to the reason given by the Under Secretary for India, in a tone which I confess I regret, for these imputations which fill up the latter part of the Blue Book, namely, that they had only been advanced by the Government of India, because it was only language like that used in political conflicts. The Government of India ought not regard itself as entering upon a political conflict with a man in the position of the Senapatti, and still less to launch at him, in these circumstances, charges founded in such a spirit. But a far graver thing was the language in which the Under Secretary justified the removal of the Senapatti. It was not because he was a violent man; it was not because he was a cruel man; it was because he was an able and an independent man.

SIR J. GORST

I do not think the right hon. Gentleman would wish to misrepresent me. I have already interrupted a speaker on this point, to say that the ground for the Senapatti's removal was, as I stated, that he was a man of a character dangerous to the peace of the Manipur State.

SIR W. HARCOURT

Yes, I agree; but what was the nature of the danger? The nature of the danger was the evidence of his ability and the independence of his character. What was that reference to the only safe principle which can be adopted in the Government of India? I do not know that he would want it to be applied to the Government of England also. But what was this panegyric upon mediocrity if it was not a censure, if it was not a satire, if it was not a sarcasm—yes, a sarcasm against ability and against independence. If the statement enunciated by the right hon. Gentleman is to go forth as the views of the English Government with reference to the administration of India, I think it is capable of and will result in most disastrous consequences. I spoke of the public opinion which is growing in India. It is growing under your civilisation, it is growing under that education which you have given to the Native races; and when you state in the seat of authority in England that a disability for that administration in India is to be found in the ability of the Native races, is to be found in their independence, and that the Government of India is to be likened to the policy of Tarquinius Superbus, it is high time that the Cabinet should consider their review of the transactions that they are about to make. The Government of India have found three defenders to-night. First of all there was the Under Secretary, and he compares them to Tarquinius Superbus. He was followed by the Member for Southport, and he likened the English Durbar to the policy of the Court of Louis XL of France; and then, as if these illustrations were not complete, there rises the Member for North Kensington, and says that the policy of Lord Lansdowne in India was that of Nebuchadnezzar towards Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Well may the Viceroy of India "Defend me from my friends." If you should have a joint defence offered from these Benches—

SIR R. LETHBRIDGE

I am very unwilling to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I should like to say that I really never compared Lord Lansdowne's policy to that of Nebuchadnezzar. I simply used as an illustration of the kind of durbar which I understand was to have been held at Manipur, the famous durbar of Nebuchadnezzar, who called together his captains and generals and bands of music, and arrested Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

SIR W. HARCOURT

Precisely what I understood. In order to defend the policy of the durbar, the hon. Member for North Kensington, with his profound acquaintance with Indian customs, said that these were the Eastern habits and practices, and were exemplified in the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar in summoning Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to his durbar, and without notice seizing them. Now, that is the sort of line which was taken up. I think it unfortunate; and I desire that in this Debate there should go very different language to India. It is not by raking up precedents of ancient times, which no man approves, that we wish to see the British rule defended and sustained in Indian opinion. I hope that these views will not be adopted. I hope on the contrary we shall lead the Indian races to believe that we value ability, that we value independence in them. I do not myself see why, if the Senapatti was an able and an independent man when these revolutions took place, he should not have properly succeeded himself to the Throne. It has been explained by the Secretary for War that the Senapatti was removed as a danger and a cause of disturbance in Manipur; and he has said that you ought to rely upon the opinion of the people on the spot in judging of these matters. I am entirely in favour of relying upon the judgment of the people on the spot, but Mr. Grim-wood and Mr. Quinton said most distinctly that the Senapatti was a great security for the peace upon the spot. It is said, in the most express terms, in a passage which I have already quoted, but to which I will again refer—The Senapatti is his youngest brother. The present Government has now been in existence for nearly six months, and is conducted with tranquillity. It has shown itself in various ways amenable to the advice of the Political Agent, and has, as already reported, met the views of the Government of India with regard to the Manipur levy. That does not bear out the assertion of the Member for North Kensington that the Senapatti was an enemy of the British Government. He was nothing of the kind. He was ready to act in the most perfect accord in support of the English power; and you have the testimony of men of experience on the spot that his rule and influence in Manipur had contributed to the strength of English authority and to the peace of the State of Manipur. Therefore, if it is to be put upon this ground that this man was a danger, except, perhaps, as Pretender to the Throne—which I do not deny—to the peace of the State in respect of his being adverse to English authority or creating disturbances in Manipur, that is absolutely contrary to all the evidence upon the face of it. Of course, if that danger is to be accepted, you will have in the native States no man of any ability, no man of independence. If their heads, according to the illustration of the Under Secretary, are to be cut off like the poppies of Tarquinius, then I say that that is a policy unworthy of the English nation, which will be ultimately fatal to the British rule. In my opinion you ought to take a policy exactly the opposite. If you find men of ability and independence who are ready to act with you, who are ready to support your power, you should gladly welcome and embrace them, instead of laying down what I will call a cowardly principle, a principle which has no reliance and no support in that which is best and most worthy in the peoples you govern. If you accept a principle of that kind you never can govern these great populations growing every day in intelligence and power, and you will weaken your policy in your Indian Empire. It is in my own

opinion in embracing principles entirely the opposite that you must look forward to the strengthening and continuing of that Empire which is the chief glory of the British rule.

(10.15.) [SIR J. GORST](#)

I hope the House will allow me a few words by way of personal explanation in consequence of what I consider the very unfair interpretation put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby upon some general observations in the course of my speech. If the matter concerned only myself, undoubtedly I would be content to leave it to the judgment of those who may read what I said, to see whether the words I used could fairly bear the construction put upon them by the right hon. Gentleman; but, inasmuch as I have been speaking here as the Under Secretary of State for India, and inasmuch as the interpretation the right hon. Gentleman thought fit to put upon my words might do mischief in India—and I think the right hon. Gentleman himself said he thought it would do so—I should like expressly to deny that I ever asserted such a doctrine as that the Government of India, in dealing with the Native States, should act on the principle of suppressing ability and independence. What I said was, that the reason which justified the Government of India in removing the Senapatti, and which would justify the Government of India in removing any Native Prince, magnate, or official from any of the protected Native States, was not that the Senapatti was able and independent, but that he was a man who was prepared to act, and who did act, in defiance of the paramount Power. I particularly called attention to the fact that he effected a revolution without the leave of the paramount Power, that he put a Maharajah on the throne without consultation with the paramount Power, and I said, using almost the language of the Despatch from the Government of India, that such a state of things could not be endured, that it was necessary to show we were masters, and it was for that reason, and that reason only, that the expulsion of the Senapatti from Manipur was justified.

(10.16.) [MR. CREMER, \(Shoreditch, Haggerston\)](#)

I have not the slightest desire to prolong the Debate which, on the whole, I think will be productive of excellent results, but I must say that the impression which the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary produced upon me was exactly of the character described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. I have, however, only risen to make an appeal to the Government to exercise the power and authority with which they are clothed, and to act in a spirit of clemency towards the Senapatti. He has been condemned to death by a tribunal concerning the composition of which I will not venture to express an opinion, but there are very grave doubts in the minds of many of our countrymen as to his guilt, or complicity in guilt. It is quite clear from the Debate—and the admissions by those who have defended the Government of India—that a series of grave blunders was committed by somebody; it is also clear, from a perusal of these Despatches, that the Senapatti was and had been anxious to act in a spirit of harmony with the British Government; besides, it is open to doubt whether actual hostilities were commenced by the troops under his command or by the British force. It is also manifest that the Senapatti knew of the intention to arrest and punish him, and that he naturally resisted. I am not much acquainted with the rules of warfare, and have no desire for such knowledge lent; but I think the Senapatti was perfectly justified by such rules in offering resistance to the attempt to capture him. It is admitted that there was an intention to capture him at the durbar in a treacherous manner, though I know that is not the view entertained by hon. Members opposite. There is, however, no proof that the Senapatti is a villain of the character depicted by the hon. Member for Southport; and as he acted practically in self-defence by resisting capture, I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government to exercise their clemency,

and to spare the life of the Senapatti, at least until a full inquiry has been instituted into all the circumstances of the case.

(10.20.) Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved— That an humble Address he presented to Her Majesty praying that she will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before this House further correspondence relating to Manipur.

Back to [PUBLIC HEALTH \(SCOTLAND\) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.](#)

Forward to [ORDERS OF THE DAY.](#)

MANIPUR.

HL Deb 22 June 1891 vol 354 cc985-1053

[THE MARQUESS OF RIPON](#)

in rising to call attention to the Papers relating to the affairs of Manipur lately laid before the House, and to move for further Papers, said: My Lords, in accordance with the notice which I have placed upon your Lordships' Table, I rise to call attention to the Papers which have lately been laid before us in relation to the affairs of Manipur. I believe your Lordships will not think that I am wrong in taking this course in a case in which such said occurrences have taken place as those which have happened in the State of which I am about to speak. Several valuable lives of civil and military servants of the Government have been sacrificed, and a force of our Indian troops has received a repulse. Under these circumstances, it is, I think, only right that in this, as in the other House of Parliament, the questions connected with these affairs should be discussed and considered. And, indeed, my Lords, in this House, apart from the fact that we have here many noble Lords especially qualified to speak upon Indian questions, we have an advantage which is not possessed by the other House of Parliament at the present moment, for we have amongst us the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, who can give with an authority, to which none else can pretend, an explanation of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon this question. And, my Lords, if this was the view which I took of the matter when I first placed this notice upon the Paper, I am more convinced than ever now, after some strange declarations that have been made in another place, of the necessity of entering upon the consideration of these questions in the House of Lords. I am perfectly aware how very easy it is to be wise after the event, and it is with a constant recollection of that fact that I hope to address myself to the consideration of these proceedings; and, of course, having filled the office that I have filled in India, I know well the many difficulties which beset questions of this kind and the complications in which they are involved. The State, the affairs of which we have to discuss to-night, is one of those which are called in the common Indian parlance, though the term is not perhaps historically accurate, Feudatory States. It is a small State, probably until these events took place very little known to your Lordships, unless, indeed, some of you may have heard of it as the birthplace of the game of Polo; but it is a protected State, which has been under our protection for a considerable time, and where we have had for long a Political Agent to represent us. In the year 1851 the Government of India took a step, in guaranteeing the then Maharajah—or the Rajah, as I think he was called—in the possession of his State, which made somewhat closer our connection with that State than it had been before. There is little

remarkable in the condition of Manipur except in one respect, that succession to the Gaddi, as it is called in India, or the Throne, is based upon a peculiar system. When there are a series of brothers they succeed one after the other—not the son of the Maharajah, but his brother succeeds him, and so the succession goes on until the last of the brothers is exhausted, and then it is his son and not the son of the elder brother who succeeds to the Throne. I need not point out to your Lordships what a complicated succession this is, and how very likely it is to raise difficulties and troubles; and so it has done on many occasions in Manipur. Disputes have sprung up, domestic quarrels have taken place, Palace revolutions have occurred, and it is out of one of these Palace revolutions that the present difficulty has arisen. As those who have read the Papers are well aware, on the night of the 22nd September last an attack was made upon the then Maharajah by some of his brothers; shots were fired in the Palace; the Maharajah was seized with great alarm, and fled to the protection of the British Political Agent, Mr. Grimwood. His alarm was such that it appears that his first thought was to quit the country. Mr. Grimwood supposed that he intended to abdicate, and that he had actually abdicated. The Maharajah now contests that matter, but there seems, at all events, to be no doubt that he did intend to retire from Manipur, and he immediately took steps to do so; and, with the consent of those who had overthrown his authority and rebelled against him, he upon the following day left the city of Manipur and proceeded to British territory. This occurrence was at once reported by telegraph to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Your Lordships will understand that the Political Agent of Manipur is under the orders of the Chief Commissioner of Assam. He is generally one of the officers of the Assam Commission, and he serves under that Chief Commissioner, whose authority is to a certain extent, as it were, interposed between him and the Government of India. Mr. Grimwood immediately reported these occurrences to his Chief, who forwarded information of them by telegraph to the Government of India. Upon the 25th of September—that is to say, three days after the events of which I have been speaking—Mr. Grimwood sent a full account of what had taken place, together with his views upon the subject, to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, who did not, however, transmit that Paper in full, so far as we officially know, to the Government of India until after the lapse of a long period. There is nothing in the Papers to show what was the cause of that delay. Mr. Quinton's letter is dated the 31st December, and the delay, of course, was considerable. There is nothing to show whether the Government of India communicated, by telegraph or otherwise, with Mr. Quinton during that period, except one single telegram at the commencement. We have, therefore, to conjecture as best we can what may have been the cause of this delay. But Mr. Quinton did take one step during that period, as I understand, which was a step of very considerable importance as bearing upon the ultimate decision to be arrived at. Mr. Quinton reports to the Government of India (and the words are important)—The Jubraj—that is, the Regent, as he became afterwards, the elder brother of the Maharajah—whose nomination by the Maharajah as his successor on his demise had been sanctioned by the Government of India, has since carried on the Government of the country, having been recognised as Regent by the Political Agent under the orders of the Chief Commissioner. Now, my Lords, there is clear proof that the person whom we have since been in the habit of calling the Regent was acknowledged as Regent by order of the Chief Commissioner shortly after the Palace revolution took place. There is nothing in Mr. Quinton's words about a preliminary acknowledgment pending the decision of the Government of India. That is stated in a subsequent letter, but it appears to me to be a gloss which was put upon Mr. Quinton's statement. That statement is broad and unmistakeable. The Regent was recognised as Regent by the Political Agent under the orders of the Chief Commissioner.' These matters came under the consideration of the Government of India, and they took, no doubt, a considerable time—a, long time, I think—to come to a decision about them. I am not at all inclined to say that matters of this kind should be decided hastily. No doubt the Government of India were quite right to seek the views of their local officers, and not to

come to a hasty decision upon a question of importance. But, on the other hand, a delay of four months is a very considerable delay, and it had in this case, as I think I shall be able to show your Lordships, one effect of importance, namely, that it rendered it extremely difficult to adopt one of the alternatives which might have been adopted by the Government of India if they had determined to act upon it immediately or shortly after the receipt of the intelligence of the revolution. They wrote upon the 24th January, and then proposed an inquiry by Mr. Quinton upon the spot, and appeared to point towards the restoration of the old Maharajah. Mr. Quinton and Mr. Grimwood had both previously expressed their opinion against the restoration of the old Maharajah. They held him to be a weak man, incompetent to rule the country, and they had also said that he could not be put back except by force. Their conclusion was distinctly and clearly that the true course to take was to recognise the Palace revolution, to acknowledge the status quo, and to leave things in the condition in which they were after that revolution was carried out. In accordance with that view, the Government of India hesitated to restore the old Maharajah, and they ultimately determined to take a course, upon which I shall have more to say in a few moments. Mr. Quinton, in the meantime, had got to Calcutta. He entered, no doubt, into communications, of which there is, naturally, no record, with the Government of India and the Foreign Office, and although he acquiesced in the course which the Government ultimately determined to take, there is nothing in these Papers to show that either Mr. Grimwood or Mr. Quinton did change their opinions, or did really give their approval (and I venture to say that I distinctly believe neither of them did give his approval) to a portion, at all events, of the policy which the Government of India ultimately adopted. Now, my Lords, with respect to one question I think there can be no doubt. I have no doubt whatever that the Government of India had a right to interfere in this matter. The State of Manipur was, as I have said, a protected State. We had been in the habit for a considerable time of acknowledging the successors, the heirs to the Government of the country, and the right of the Government to deal with a question of this kind is, to my mind, complete. I go beyond that; I say it was their duty to deal with this question, because they were appealed to by both parties. They were appealed to by the old Maharajah and by the Regent who had taken his place, and they were, therefore, bound to give a decision upon the matter. But, my Lords, it seems to me that they might have taken one of two courses; they might either have determined to restore the old Maharajah, or they might have determined to acknowledge the Regent and acquiesce in the Palace revolution. There is a good deal to be said for both these courses. For the restoration of the old Maharajah there is the strong and powerful argument that it would have been a step tending to maintain the authority of a Native Chief, whom we had ourselves acknowledged as ruler of the country. But it was objected to, and strongly objected to, by the local officers—both by Mr. Quinton and by Mr. Grimwood—and it would, as it appears, undoubtedly have involved a resort to force in order to carry it out. For the other step, in a case of this kind, in which the interests of the British Government were very little directly concerned, there were all the arguments which may be adduced for an acknowledgment of the accomplished facts; and there was the great advantage that, according to the view of the local officers, that policy could have been pursued quietly, and would have involved no use of force at all. Therefore, my Lords, although strong arguments might have been adduced in favour of restoring the old Maharajah, nevertheless, I am not at all inclined to blame, or even to criticise, the Government of India for having, upon the recommendation of their local officers, determined against that course. But I do think it is much to be regretted that they did not take one or other of these two courses—that instead of that they adopted a third course, which was neither one nor the other. I quite admit that after a delay of five months it would have been very difficult to restore the old Maharajah, and to upset the state of things which had grown up with the acquiescence and acknowledgment of Mr. Grimwood, who remained our political agent there. But if that is true, then the proper course was to acknowledge that state of things. Instead of

doing that, the Government of India, as it seems to me, tried to adopt a compromise between these two policies. They acknowledged the revolution, and they endeavoured to punish its authors. Well, I cannot say that that course seems to me to have been a very logical one; and I certainly think, though, as I said before, it is easy enough to judge after the event no doubt, still I certainly think it has proved not to have been a wise course. It involved really all the objections to both the courses. It involved the refusal to maintain the right of the old Maharajah, and it also involved the necessity for employing force. It had the objections to both courses, and I think it had the advantages of neither. Therefore, I cannot but express regret that that course should have been adopted. But this also I will say. If it was going to be adopted, if the intention was only partially to accept the change which had taken place in Manipur, to proceed against the Senapatti as a person who had been guilty of offences that deserved punishment in regard to that revolution, then the action ought to have been speedy. There ought not to have been this delay of five months during which the Government was being carried on at Manipur by the Regent and the Senapatti, but steps ought to have been taken without delay. However, my Lords, assuming that this was the course to be taken, I cannot but think that it is to be regretted that the policy thus adopted was carried out in the manner which was pursued. It seems to me that it would have been far better—I think it is always better in dealing with Indian questions, with Native Chiefs, and rulers in India—for the Government to state at once distinctly and plainly what was the policy intended to pursue. As soon as they had made up their minds, they should have authorised our representative at Manipur to declare to the Regent what was the policy of the Government, and to call upon him to conform to it. If that had been done, the Regent would have been informed that the Government were prepared to acknowledge him as Maharajah upon certain conditions; that they did not think it necessary to restore the old Maharajah; but that they would acknowledge the new one if he conformed to the conditions which they thought fit to lay down. Then those conditions might have been communicated to him, and he would have been told: "It is for you to remove the Senapatti. It is for you to call upon him to retire; and, if he refuses to retire, to take steps to remove him. If you are not strong enough to carry out our wishes in that respect, we will help you." But the first responsibility of acting upon that policy ought to have been cast, in my opinion, upon the new Maharajah, openly and clearly, by a declaration from Mr. Grimwood. That might have avoided—I am not sure that it would not have avoided—the necessity for employing force at all; but, if force had been necessary ultimately, you would then have employed it in defence of a policy that had been fairly declared to the parties, and about which they would have had their option whether to accede to it or to resist it. Whereas it is quite evident from these purposes that the main purpose—at all events the main purpose as Mr. Quinton understood it—was the purpose of deporting or getting rid of the Senapatti. If you look at these Papers, your Lordships will see at once that Mr. Quinton set out evidently understanding that that was his main business, and that accounts for the secrecy of his proceedings, of which we have heard a good deal. That accounts for his not having communicated the orders of the Government of India earlier than he did to our representative at Manipur. That accounts for the mode in which he conducted himself up to the last day or two of those proceedings. His main object evidently, as he understood it, was to lay his hand upon the Senapatti, and I myself, I confess, trace to that mistake, as I regard it, a good many of the difficulties and the evils that have arisen since. Mr. Quinton arrived at Manipur on the 22nd of March last, and then occurred that series of acts which culminated, as we all know, in the unhappy massacre by which Mr. Quinton's life, as well as the lives of Mr. Grimwood, Colonel Skene, and others were sacrificed. I do not propose to review this part of the proceedings in detail, for this very good reason, that we have no accurate information about it. The men who were concerned in them are dead; their lives have been sacrificed; they have fallen in the service of their country, and it would be unjust and ungenerous to criticise upon imperfect information the acts in which they have been engaged. But there is one point

connected with this matter which I cannot help alluding to, because it has been so much brought before the public, and that is the question which has been raised in regard to Mr. Quinton's intention, as it is supposed, of arresting the Senapatti at a durbar. Now, I quite admit, as I think everybody connected with India will admit, that there are durbars of different kinds. There are ceremonial durbars, and there are durbars at which the policy of the Government, or intentions of the Government, are declared to those who are present at them, and I see it has been stated that my friend Sir Robert Sandeman says that he has often arrested Native Chiefs at durbars. I have not the least doubt that that is so. Sir Robert Sandeman had to deal with a turbulent set of Chiefs in Beloochistan, and I have no doubt, as he says so particularly, that he has often taken that step in the manner described. There is a great difference of opinion upon this point. I have sought counsel about it of many of those whom I knew in India, and who are now in England; and I have found great differences of opinion exist about it. But on the whole, I am bound to say that I think the attempt to arrest any person at a durbar, except under some very exceptional circumstances, is an attempt to be regretted, and a thing to be avoided, and I hope that the noble Viscount opposite will be able to tell us to-day what are his views upon that subject; and whether he will give any general directions in respect of it when he communicates those views to the Government of India. Of one thing, my Lords, I am perfectly convinced, and that is that Mr. Quinton was absolutely incapable of treacherous or unworthy conduct. I knew Mr. Quinton very well. I have a very great respect for him. He was a most upright and high-minded man, and I am quite sure that any idea unworthy of a servant of the British Government never once crossed his mind. But he had got hold, as I say, of that idea, so unfortunate as I think in the conduct of this business, that his main object was to secure the Senapatti, and it was because of that that he took the course which he did, practising secrecy with regard to his intentions, and bringing himself into a position so liable to be misrepresented as that in which he appears to have stood. Your Lordships know very well what were the results of this attempt. The Senapatti did not come to the durbar. The durbar did not take place, and then an attempt was made on the 24th of March to arrest the Senapatti by force in his palace. You know what happened; you know the fatal results; you know how our officers were seized, and how they died. As I have said, I will not enter into any discussion of the details in this matter, either in their civil aspect, or still less in their military aspect, because, perhaps, I am not the best person to speak upon those matters from a military point of view. But I must say this, all that I have overheard of the late Colonel Skene leads me to believe that he was an able officer, that he was a man whom the Government of India were right to trust, and who deserved their confidence. I will not touch upon the question of ammunition, because the facts about it appear to be very obscure. We were distinctly told that the force which went out with Mr. Quinton had only 40 rounds per man. If that was so, and if they had nothing else to rely upon, sending them out with such a small amount of ammunition was a great mistake. I think there can be no doubt about that matter. Forty rounds a man is about what is carried, I believe, by the troops who go out to guard and protect the Viceroy's camp in a quiet district, and it would be quite inadequate for a purpose of that kind; but there seems to be doubt as to whether there was a larger supply at Manipur or supposed to be there, and I will not press that matter further. I hope the noble Viscount will give us any further information that he may possess on that point. But, my Lords, I cannot help saying, if it is not wrong in a civilian to say it, that I greatly regret that the force was not accompanied by any guns. There are mountain guns in Assam. I believe at present each of the Ghoorka regiments has two mountain guns; a mountain gun can go wherever a mule can go. It was known that the Manipuris had at least four guns; some of the accounts represent them as having had more. I do think it is to be regretted that with the force that accompanied Mr. Quinton a few of these very useful mountain guns were not sent. I believe if they had been sent the evils might have been avoided. My Lords, put very briefly, and compressed as much as it has been in my power to compress it, that is the view which a perusal of these

Papers has led me to take of the course pursued in regard to these transactions. Your Lordships will see that the points upon which I have made some criticism are, undoubtedly, points upon which opinions may differ, and I shall wait with very great interest, as I am sure all your Lordships will, to hear from the noble Viscount opposite an explanation of his views upon the matter, and anything that he may have to say on behalf of the Government of India. But, my Lords, I am quite sure that whatever else the noble Viscount may say, there is one line of defence, if defence it can be called, which he will not adopt and against which I feel bound to enter my strongest protest. We have been told that the true explanation of the conduct of the Government of India, the real reason why they made it the principal point of their policy, as they seem to have done, to remove the Senapatti from Manipur, was because the Senapatti was a man of great ability and force of character; he was considered by them dangerous because he was able. It has been said also that when the Government of India spoke of the offences which the Senapatti had committed and of criminal acts which they attributed to him, they did not mean anything by those charges; they were only said in the sort of way in which politicians in this country are perhaps too often apt to bring charges against their political opponents. It is said that they meant nothing serious, but that what they really did mean was that the Senapatti was able, therefore he was dangerous, and that view resulted from the fact that Governments have always discouraged independent and original talent, and have always promoted mediocrity. It is said that that is the true construction of the course pursued towards the Senapatti. Now, with respect to that very extraordinary statement, I have some observations to make. In the first place I must say that I think it is a great exaggeration to describe the Senapatti as a man of great ability and force of character. He was a man of more force of character than some of his brothers, who seem to have been singularly weak, but there is nothing in these Papers that I can see to show that he was a man of extraordinary ability. He had a certain amount of vigour, and he had a certain amount of popularity, the result apparently of lavish expenditure, but that he was a man of whom the Government of India would ever dream of being afraid appears to me to be an exaggeration of the grossest kind. Then, my Lords, to say that the Government of India, in their official communications, brought forward charges against a native of India, a member of a native princely family, in which there was no reality, which were, in fact, sham charges, is to my mind, I confess, an insult to my noble Friend, Lord Lansdowne, and to his colleagues; and I should think they would resent it and repudiate it as strongly as possible. And lastly, my Lords, I assert that the notion that the Government of India in former days, or now, have systematically discouraged talent, and countenanced only mediocrity, is a libel upon the Governments of India, and is altogether unsupported by facts. Events have occurred in the course of our Indian rule of which we cannot approve. Acts have been done which we are bound to condemn; but to my mind it is untrue, and it is unfounded, to say that the great fabric of our Indian Empire, the most wonderful, perhaps, in some respects, of any of which we read in the history of the world, has been founded upon, and has been built up by the adoption of a mean and trivial policy like this. Against this, my Lords, I protest. It is easy enough to produce proofs of the injustice of this accusation. I will not trouble your Lordships with more than two, and two of a somewhat recent date. When my noble Friend, the Earl of Northbrook, was Viceroy of India, and at the time when a Gaekwar of Baroda had been removed from his Government for misrule, my noble Friend had to seek out for a now native administrator of the State of Baroda. What did he do? Did he try to find out some wretched mediocrity who would be nothing but a tool in the hands of the British Resident? Not at all. He sought for the ablest statesman to be found in India itself; he selected the late Sir Madhava Rao, and selected him to be Dewan of Baroda. Again, take the case of the late Sir Salar Jung. The Government of India had differences of opinion with Sir Salar Jung, and they expressed their opinions very frankly, but when Sir Salar Jung died (I was in India at the time myself), what was the feeling of the Government of India? Was it a feeling that an able man had been taken away who was dangerous to us,

and that it was a very good thing that we had got rid of him? Exactly the reverse. We felt, and we knew, that Sir Salar Jung had rendered great services to the people and to the State of Hyderabad, and to the Nizam, and we felt that we had lost in him a man of whom India might be proud, and that we should find it exceedingly difficult, as we did find it exceedingly difficult—nay, my Lords, we found it impossible—to get anybody who was really fit to take his place. And then, my Lords, we are to be told forsooth that this policy, this love of mediocrity, this attempt to cast down everything in the nature of intelligence or talent, is the policy of the Government of India. But, my Lords, there are some persons who have been giving a very startling explanation of the utterances to which I am alluding. They have said that the speaker was not thinking at all of Governments in India, either past or present, but was thinking of Governments nearer home. There have even been men who have had the audacity to say that the true Tarquinius Superbus sits on the Bench before me. My Lords, I will not attempt to pronounce upon these delicate questions, but of this I am sure, that the Princes and the people of India will not give credence to that explanation. They do not understand the ways of public life in this country, and the queer things that are sometimes done in it. They will never be persuaded to look for the Roman tyrant on the Treasury Bench. They will be sure to expect to find him enthroned on the heights of Simla. That is the mischief of these rash and cynical declarations, and a very grievous mischief it is. They will be repeated in every native newspaper in India; they will be discussed in every bazaar; they will be commented upon with pain and anxiety by our friends, and with secret triumph by our enemies; they will alarm every Native Prince in India, and will fill with disgust, aye, and indignation, the minds of many able men fired with a just and natural ambition who are to be found now largely in that country. I am afraid, my Lords, that it will be impossible altogether to get rid of the mischief effected in India of declarations of this kind made, if not with the authority, at least on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, but there is only one way in which the mischief can be stopped, that is by a clear and distinct declaration from the noble Viscount opposite, which I am sure, I hope and trust, he will give us to-night in repudiation of these doctrines. It will not be a very pleasant thing for my noble Friend to have to do, and I am very sorry to invite him to do it, but in the interests of our rule in India, aye, and I will go further, I will say for the vindication of our fair fame it is essential that the noble Lord should repudiate these doctrines, and that they should be repudiated by him to-night in clear, decisive, and unmistakeable terms. Now, my Lords, before I pass on to some questions connected with the future administration of Manipur, I wish to say one word upon a matter which does not arise directly out of these Papers, but which has been alluded to in another place, and upon which I should like, with your Lordships' permission, to express my opinion. It has been suggested that it would be an improvement in our system of Indian administration if a new Member were added to the Council of the Governor General, who should be specially charged with the management of foreign affairs. I deprecate any such change in the present system. The Viceroy is now, and has been for a very long time, at all events, in direct and personal charge of the Foreign Department, and according to my view of the matter it is right that he should continue to be so, because I hold it to be very necessary indeed that the head of the Government should have a distinct hold and a clear knowledge of all the details of our dealings with Native States. In a question of this kind (and this Manipur story seems almost to show it) it is very easy for mistakes to arise from small beginnings. What is done in one State is closely watched by all the other States, and you may give a great deal of offence to the Native Chiefs generally, without perhaps even thinking of it, unless you have it constantly before your minds. The Viceroy is a man sent out from England, trained in English public life, and acquainted with English feelings. He is, or at all events he ought to be, in the closest and most confidential communication with Her Majesty's Government. He knows their views not only upon Indian foreign matters, but upon other foreign matters which are connected with Indian questions. He is in possession of information of a most secret and confidential character, and I venture to say that he, and

he alone, is really fit to deal with the management of Native States. If he is only to deal with questions when they have been got into a difficulty, or when matters of particular importance arise, he will not have, he cannot have, that close and daily knowledge and interest in those questions which he ought to have, and I am quite certain that the arrangement will not work better, but rather that it will work considerably worse than the present arrangement. And, again, I am very certain that this change, if it were made, would be highly distasteful to the Native Princes of India. They set great store by dealing directly with the Viceroy. They are very sensitive, and would be highly offended if anybody was to be interposed between them and the head of the Indian Government. I should not, my Lords, have perhaps touched upon this matter if it had not been that some words fell from the Secretary of State for War in another place which seemed to give some encouragement to this idea. They did not, however, pledge the Government at all, and I hope we shall hear from my noble Friend opposite that having had some few days to consider it he is not inclined to make this change. If there was anything wrong, any mismanagement in the Foreign Office in regard to these affairs at Manipur, I venture to say that it arose from this single fact, that the Foreign Secretary, a very able Foreign Secretary he is, my friend, Sir Mortimer Durand, was absent from India on sick leave during the whole of this time. But that may happen under any system, and it is no reason for changing your system that it may have led in this particular case (I do not say it was so) to results which were lamentable. Now, I hope your Lordships will allow me to say a few words about the future course to be pursued in regard to the State of Manipur. In the first place, I would say one word about the trials that have been going on in that country. It is light, nay, it is necessary, that condign punishment should be awarded to those who have had any hand in the massacre of our officers. Upon that point I entertain no doubt whatever, but I see it to-day stated in the newspapers—and the only information available to us upon the point is from the newspapers—that the Regent has been acquitted of any complicity in the murder of Mr. Quinton and his companions, but that he has been found guilty of what is in reality the crime of high treason, and that he has been condemned to death. Well, my Lords, I fully hope and believe that the noble Viscount will tell us to-night, or, if he cannot do that, that he will come speedily to the conclusion that it will not be right to carry out that death sentence in this case. The circumstances are very different from those of the men who were engaged in any way in the massacre. I think to carry out that death sentence in this case would weaken the effect of the example of the punishment of the men who were concerned in the murders, and I venture to express the hope that the noble Viscount will be able to draw a distinction between this case and the others, and to admit the plea of mercy to a certain extent in regard to those who were not, in fact, engaged in the massacre. My Lords, the point that I am most particularly anxious about in respect to the whole of this question is to obtain, if possible, from the noble Viscount opposite a declaration as to the principle upon which he proposes to deal with Manipur in the future. I do not ask him—of course it would be quite unreasonable—to give us any details. I do not ask him to say what member of the family he is going to put upon the Gaddi. There is the old Maharajah, who never sinned against us at all events, and who never was accused of cruelty or oppression towards his people. There is his son; there may be others for aught I know, who may be available for the purpose. I ask for no information, and I express no opinion as to the detailed manner in which the principle is to be carried out. But I do most earnestly hope that Her Majesty's Government will be able to say that they do not favour the idea of annexation. There is a party in India who are always anxious for annexation, who are ready to cry out for annexation whenever opportunity offers, and they are following their usual course upon this occasion. There is nothing whatever, I am happy to say, to show that that policy is favoured either by the Government in India or by the Government at home. I do, therefore, very earnestly hope that we shall have it disavowed to-night. The Native Princes of India watch with the most singular closeness—perhaps it is not singular, but with the most minute closeness—every step which is taken with

regard to every Native State in India whatsoever. I could give you, if I had the time, many curious instances of that kind. They are always on the watch. They study what is said in Parliament; they get our Blue Books read and described to them, and they know exactly the principles which we have professed and the acts which we have done; and I can assure you that the annexation of Manipur would give a great shake to the confidence of the Native Princes of India. They rely upon the Proclamation of the Queen, in which Her Majesty was advised, most wisely and justly, distinctly to disavow any desire for an increase of territory. They rely upon that, and any deviation from that policy would shake their confidence and would be very mischievous. Therefore, I do earnestly beg the noble Viscount opposite to give us a statement upon that matter to-day, and I hope that he will be able to tell us that in spite of all the complications and difficulties with which this question of Manipur is surrounded—and I do not at all desire to underrate them—Her Majesty's Government will do nothing to impair the confidence or excite the fears of the Native Princes and Chiefs of India, who believe that their rights now rest firmly on the gracious pledges of the Royal Proclamation, and that they may dwell in peace and in security under the protection of the British Crown. I beg, my Lords, to move that further Papers be laid before the House. Moved, "That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for further correspondence relating to Manipur."—(The Marquess of Ripon.)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS)

My Lords, I am quite sure I have nothing whatever to complain of in the way in which the noble Marquess has brought forward his case upon this matter. It was undoubtedly quite right that the question should be submitted to your Lordships for inquiry, and no one is more glad than myself to be able to state from my place in this House to your Lordships my views of the conduct of the Government of India in this question. I think it is only right for the Government of India itself that those views should be stated, and I am one of those who regret very much that I have not had an earlier opportunity of making a statement on behalf of the Viceroy than I have to-night. Probably, before I enter into the whole question of Manipur, I might be allowed to deal with those one or two points which the noble Marquess raised just before he sat down. First of all, as to the question of annexation, I think your Lordships will agree with me when I state that before I could make any definite statement to your Lordships upon that point I must wait till I hear the opinion of the Government of India and the views which they may have to present to me for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but I have no hesitation in stating, as a broad principle, that I individually have not, and I am sure the Viceroy has not, the smallest wish to add to those territories in British India which we already possess, and it would only be under the most absolute necessity of annexation that we would adopt that course. For think, my Lords, what it really means. It would mean, in the first place, probably the punishment of a great number of people who had committed no offences against us at all. It would probably throw upon us the direct responsibility for the behaviour of the savage tribes in the neighbourhood of that country. It would involve the application of the cumbrous machinery of our British law to that State at, I think, considerable expense and considerable trouble. It would involve a very large expenditure in any case, and it would probably give rise to discontent amongst the inhabitants of that country where the collections of revenue have been very carelessly carried out, and where, if they were properly carried out, discontent would be quite certain to arise. And it might give rise among the other Native Chiefs to a mistaken idea of the policy we want to adopt towards them. But supposing that the state of facts were such as to make it an absolute necessity that we should annex Manipur, I think that even those Native Princes would see that the circumstances of the case were very peculiar, and could not be of general application. All I can say at the present moment, as at present advised, is that I am decidedly

against annexation—against any annexation—but I can give no opinion at all upon the annexation of this particular Province until I hear the opinion of the Viceroy and the reasons he may have to give. And I will say the same with regard to the trials. I quite admit that there is a great distinction between those persons who are found guilty of murder, or even of abetting murder, and those who are found guilty of waging war, although the latter, by the Indian Code, as the noble Marquess knows perfectly well, are liable to be punished by death. I am quite certain that your Lordships may trust to the mercy as well as to the justice of Lord Lansdowne in any recommendations that he makes in matters of this kind. His views are not likely to reach me for some little time. I understand that the Senapatti, who has been condemned to death, has made an appeal to the Viceroy to be allowed to petition in his favour, and that some three weeks have been granted to him to draw up his Petition. I presume the same course will be adopted in the case of Jubraj. Therefore, sometime must necessarily elapse before we know the result of his deliberations. There is only one other point that the noble Marquess has mentioned which I should like to mention before treating with the general subject, and that is the suggestion that was made in the other House the other night about a Foreign Member of the Council. That suggestion, I think, was made by someone who sat on the Opposition side of the House—Mr. Bryce. There is no doubt that the Secretary of State for War—very naturally—said that the suggestion was one that required consideration. I have considered that question in the short time that has elapsed since that Debate, and the more I look upon it I must say the more I dislike it. I think that what the noble Marquess has said is perfectly true, and that great evils might arise. At the same time, I am very happy to state that we have taken steps already to strengthen the Foreign Department by the appointment of an Assistant Secretary at an increased salary, so that that Department may practically be stronger for the future than it hitherto has been. Now, my Lords, I have answered the main points of the noble Marquess outside the case itself. With regard to the case of Manipur itself, I should like to put my views as shortly as I can before your Lordships, and also the views of the Viceroy himself. I would make this first proposition to your Lordships, which I do not think anyone will dispute, namely, that it is the right and the duty of the British Government to settle the successions in all the dependent States, that every succession may be recognised by the British Government, and that no succession is valid until it has been so recognised. I believe that is a principle thoroughly understood throughout the whole of India, and one of universal application. It is a principle which is of very vital importance when we come to discuss the case a little later on. But if the principle is true in general, it is more especially applicable to the State of Manipur. **Your Lordships are perfectly aware of the quarrels that took place between them. In 1826 we first recognised as a ruling Sovereign the Rajah of Manipur. We have always interfered with the internal affairs of Manipur from that day to this. In 1833 we made a Treaty with them, and by that Treaty we were to have very great advantages, and to be enabled to call upon them for support and assistance in many ways; not only for making roads, but also in case of war, and in cases of disturbance and other matters. In 1834 we went so far in interfering with the State of Manipur that we ordered them to give up one of the valleys which they had taken and hand it back to the Burmese on receiving from them a payment of something like 500 rupees a month. In 1835, when that Rajah died, we recognised the infant son, and we said that he should be the Rajah under his uncle, who was the Regent. Some little time afterwards the Queen-mother attempted to murder this uncle, and fled away with the infant Prince.** We then stepped in, and we recognised the uncle as Rajah. We set aside the succession altogether and recognised the uncle. He lived and ruled till the year 1850. We then brought back the infant who had grown up and who had been guilty of no offence in former times, and we placed him upon the Throne, so that we have interfered continually. In 1888, when the Rajah was ill, we recognised his next successor as the next in order, and during the lifetime of the last Rajah, who has just run away, we again recognised the Jubraj as his successor. Nothing can be clearer than the letters

themselves, both of the Maharajah, who has gone, and of the man who is sitting there temporarily, whom we have just acknowledged, In the letters of both of them they acknowledge as absolutely as men can the actual supremacy of our power, and request its assistance and public recognition by it. That, my Lords, is the second point which I wanted to place before you—I wanted to show that when the Rajah had been recognised by us, especially in Manipur, we had always found it our duty to support him against all comers. We did that especially in 1847, when the refugee Prince, after the Queen-mother and he had run away, attempted to invade that country. We told them that if they stirred towards the borders of Manipur and made any disturbance in that territory they must be immediately removed to Bengal. **We interfered again in 1850, in 1851, and 1852; and then it was that took place that occurrence to which** the noble Marquess has already alluded. We formally undertook to support the Rajah against all comers, and not to allow him to be attacked in his seat, or to allow any attempt to disturb him from his Throne. **We did so again in 1862, in 1864, and in 1866.** So that, historically speaking, from the very first, in Manipur, we have felt that it was thrown upon us to interfere whenever it was necessary with the internal affairs of that State, and the State has always acknowledged our suzerainty and our sovereignty, **and the Government have interfered always to protect the Ruler of that State against those who rose up against him, and against the paramount Power.** I feel that those three propositions which I have just placed before your Lordships are of great importance, when we come to consider the rest of this case. Now, my Lords, I come to the rising which took place in September of last year. That rising against the Maharajah in September, I venture to say, was an unlawful revolt, if ever there was one. It was an unlawful revolt against the man who was reigning there, who was recognised by us, and it was a revolt which the paramount Power could not allow to succeed. We should have been perfectly justified then in marching straight into Manipur to the assistance of the Maharajah if there had been time and opportunity to do so. What was the first thing that Mr. Quinton did? Mr. Grimwood telegraphed to Mr. Quinton the moment this disturbance had taken place. That was on the 22nd September. He telegraphed to him on the 22nd September, and told him what had taken place, and the answer of Mr. Quinton at once was— You can apply for troops at Kohima. You can have your troops in support of the Maharajah,"— (that is the policy we have always pursued in this State of Manipur) and if the Maharajah of Manipur is threatened by his subjects and this revolt, there are the troops for you to support him, just as we supported the former Maharajah. And there can be little doubt that if the Maharajah had remained where he was those troops would have gone, and he would have been replaced on the Throne, and there can be no doubt, at the same time, if that had taken place the Senapatti would have been banished as a man who was dangerous to the peace of the State. I do not think your Lordships can imagine for a moment that there would be the smallest doubt that that would have been the result if it had not been for one particular circumstance, and that was that the Maharajah was so frightened with what had gone on in the Palace, he was so much in fear of the Senapatti, his brother, that he ran away. **What was the origin of this revolt?** As Mr. Grim wood tells us, it was the quarrel between two of these brothers—Pucca Sena and the Senapatti. They seem to have been the most powerful of the family. It was, no doubt, a great misfortune in a State like Manipur that there should have been seven brothers living together in such a small country. Quarrels naturally occurred, and of the seven brothers some took one side and some the other; Pucca Sena had a certain following, and the Senapatti had another, and the Maharajah was not strong enough to keep the peace between them. That was the primary cause of the outrage that took place. The immediate cause was a very trifling matter. It arose from a slight which had been supposed to be given to two of the younger brothers. They were the people who first started the firing in the Palace, but the moment it began the Senapatti came to the front, and there was no doubt whatever that he was the leader of the revolt. That is admitted on all sides, and as I have told your Lordships, if the old Maharajah had remained in Manipur, undoubtedly our troops would

have gone from Kohima and replaced him, and undoubtedly at that time the Senapatti would have been removed from the State, not because he was an able man, not because he was an independent man, but because, whether he was or was not able or independent, he used such powers as he had to the mischief of the State and to the disturbance of the happiness and peace of the country. The notion that a man is to be removed from the State simply because he is an able man or an independent man is a notion, to my mind, so utterly repugnant to all common-sense, to all our practice either in India or elsewhere, that I really cannot imagine that such a statement could have been made. I am quite sure, if any words of mine have any weight with the Princes of India, they need have no fear whatever, so far as the Viceroy and the British Government are concerned, as to their removing any man because he is able or independent. They would thankfully welcome him and wish there were more such men. The difficulty is not to remove them; the difficulty is to find them. We can find work for all the able men and all the independent men from one end of India to the other. My Lords, the Maharajah runs away, and then what is to be done? The Jubraj had taken no part whatever in the revolt. The moment it had begun he went some eight miles away from Manipur; not wishing to take part either of one side or the other. But when the old Maharajah left, then the Jubraj came back and took possession of the Gaddi. **He wrote to the Viceroy and told him that he had done so, and asked specially that he might be recognised.** Mr. Grimwood knew at all events, and Mr. Grimwood also knew, that the Jubraj was perfectly aware of the fact, that until his being there had been recognised by the British Government his reign practically was illegal. When the Maharajah had got away and had once got across the borders, and felt that he was safe, he changed his mind and denied, in fact, that he had ever tendered his abdication. I think if your Lordships will look at the Papers, you will see that Mr. Grimwood's account is quite substantial. That this man was so frightened that undoubtedly he did tender his abdication. I think there cannot be a doubt about that. However, his own story is that when he got to the border and opened his passport, or whatever it was, and found he was stated in that to have abdicated, he immediately denied that any such abdication had taken place. What he did was at once to telegraph to Mr. Quinton to say that he was going to submit a representation to the Government of India, in order to be restored, and he hoped that that would receive a favourable consideration at the hands of the Government. Mr. Quinton very properly said that any representation that he made should have the proper attention of the Government of India. So it would have had—so it had. Then there is a matter which has a very important bearing upon one point which the noble Marquess raised, and which Mr. Quinton distinctly stated to Mr. Grimwood in the first instance in his first telegram, which I think the noble Marquess had overlooked. It seems to me one of the most important questions in the whole matter. It appears quite in the early part of the book, and I think the noble Marquess must have turned over the page without seeing it. What are Mr. Quinton's instructions to Mr. Grimwood? On the 23rd September he says, "Yours of yesterday. The Jubraj may be acknowledged as Regent"—now, mark the words that come afterwards—"till sanction of Government has been obtained." That is the whole starting-point of the thing. To say that that man has been reigning there for six months, believing that he was acknowledged by the Government of India, in face of these words which were used by Mr. Grimwood on the 23rd September, is, it seems to me, an impossible suggestion. When Mr. Quinton writes to the Government of India on the 9th October, almost immediately after the telegram that he has received from the Maharajah, what does he say? The officiating Secretary says— It will be observed that the Chief Commissioner has expressed his readiness to give his best consideration to any representation which the Maharajah may submit and pending its receipt (the hon. Marquess seems to have missed this too)— Mr. Quinton would suggest that it might be well to defer passing any orders in regard to the succession of the Jubraj, so that Mr. Quinton tells the Government of India at once that this representation is coming, and he says, "Please hold your hands till you have got it, and do not pass any orders about the succession of

the Jubraj until you have received this representation which the Maharajah is going to send." Surely nothing can be clearer than that this man could not for a moment fancy that he was there with the sanction of the Government after the communication I have just read from Mr. Quinton and the letter which was telegraphed to Mr. Grimwood. Now, the noble Marquess refers to the delay, and there is no doubt that a considerable time was taken up before the final orders of the Government of India were made. But a great part of that delay is due to the consideration that had to be given, I do not like to trouble your Lordships with dates, but the matter is so important that, with your Lordships' permission, I will just mention a few of them. It is necessary that you should follow what happened. On the 9th October Mr. Quinton informed the Government of India that a representation might be expected from the Maharajah. The representation was sent by the Maharajah on the 14th November. It reached Mr. Quinton on the 19th. On the 22nd November Mr. Quinton very properly forwarded that representation to Mr. Grimwood for his observations. It takes some 10 or 11 days to get from Assam to Manipur, and that letter from Mr. Quinton only reached Mr. Grimwood about 11 days after it was sent. On the 4th December Mr. Grimwood writes to Mr. Quinton and makes a report on the case. That Report is received by Mr. Quinton on the 15th December. On the 31st December Mr. Quinton writes to the Viceroy a letter which the Viceroy receives on the 8th of January. Therefore, if there has been any delay up to that time it has not been any delay on the part of the Government of India. It has been because the Maharajah took some little time in drawing up his Report: then that had first of all to go to Mr. Quinton, and then to Mr. Grimwood, and then back again to the Government of India afterwards. On the 24th the Government of India replied that they wished to restore the Maharajah. There is no wonder that they should do so. The Maharajah, as the noble Marquess has said, had never offended the Government of India in any way. He may not have been a very strong ruler, he may not have been able to keep his brothers in order, but still, so far as we are concerned, we had no cause of complaint against him. Quite the contrary. He had on more than one occasion rendered us very valuable assistance. He had offered to send troops to Kohima. He had also rendered considerable assistance in the Burma expedition, and also in the Mahratta war, and had shown that he was our sincere friend. Therefore, there was every reason why the Viceroy should wish not to let this man go. And it is clear that the Viceroy was so strongly impressed with that, that, although he had got Mr. Quinton's and Mr. Grimwood's views to the contrary, he thought it wise to write a strong remonstrance to Mr. Quinton about it, which he did on the 24th January. On the 9th February comes a direct appeal from the Maharajah to the Viceroy and Mr. Quinton's answers to the Viceroy's objections to his former letter arrives on the same day. Now, Mr. Quinton was going to Calcutta on the 11th or 12th. Therefore the Viceroy thought it was quite necessary to stay till he came and had communications with him personally. After that, Mr. Quinton had evidently been asked to consider the effect of all those conversations and to put down in writing his final views. This he does on returning to Assam on the 19th February, and on the 21st February the Viceroy gives his final orders. Now, your Lordships will see, I think, that the whole desire and wish of the Viceroy has been, up to that moment to support the old Maharajah, if it had been possible for him to do so. I am quite sure that that is a desire which would commend itself to all the Native Chiefs from one end of India to the other. Here had been a terrible revolt, and in consequence of the revolt the Maharajah had had to run away from his throne. It must be a matter of satisfaction to all the other Indian Chiefs to know that under these circumstances if there is a revolt of this kind the Government of India will stand by the Ruler, and will go against those who revolt against him; but I should like to read to your Lordships one sentence—I will not trouble you with many of these quotations—one sentence in which the Viceroy communicates his reasons for, at all events, yielding. It will be found on the 26th page of the Blue Book, paragraphs 5 and 6— It was not, however, so clear whether the Jubraj should be placed in the Gaddi, or whether the Maharajah should be restored. You do

not hesitate to recommend the former. The Maharajah is described as a miserably weak man, and you recall his vacillation in 1888, when he disregarded the advice which was given to him, and failed to punish the Senapatti, thereby, as his Highness acknowledges in his letter of 9th February, bringing upon himself his present misfortunes. You anticipate that the Maharajah's restoration would involve the necessity of strengthening the garrison at Manipur, and give rise to frequent occasions for interference in support of the Ruler, as well as in the internal affairs of the State. It has already been intimated to you that in the opinion of the Governor General in Council, whatever arrangement is come to in the affairs of the Manipur State, must be brought about with the full sanction of the British Government, His Excellency in Council accepts your opinion that it will be to the advantage of Manipur, and to the furtherance of British interests, to recognise the Jubraj rather than restore the Maharajah. That is the close of the chapter so far as that part of the case is concerned. But now let us go on. The noble Marquess says there were two courses open. There was the course either to support the old Maharajah, and there was the course to support the person who was in authority at the moment. Those were the only two practicable courses. But the noble Marquess goes on to say that the Viceroy had a compromise. I think anything further from a compromise that he made could not possibly be imagined. What compromise was there? What remained really for the Viceroy to consider was this. There had been a revolt by which the Maharajah had been dismissed from his throne. There had been a revolt against his Chief. There had been a revolt against the wishes of the paramount Power. That revolt was not to go unpunished. What would have been thought of the case of Manipur by the other Indian Native Princes, if it had been said that we put this man on the throne, and that the man who has caused the revolt, and who is driving away the old Maharajah is to remain in power unpunished and no notice is to be taken of it? I think there was no other course for the Viceroy to take than to say that this man had to go. He had to go, not because he was able, not because he was independent; but he had to go for the reasons which the Viceroy himself urged, and which your Lordships will find on the 20th page of the Blue Book, and for those reasons alone. In the 7th paragraph it says— The Senapatti has more than once incurred the displeasure of the Government of India on account of the violence of his conduct, and if the Maharajah, in 1888, had not been afraid of his turbulent brother, he would have been banished from the State. The Maharajah whom we have recognised as the Ruler of Manipur, has now been ousted by a cabal in his own family led by this man, and if the British Government acquiesce in the present state of affairs, and recognise the Jubraj as Ruler of Manipur, the Senapatti will wield the real power in the State. The Government of India cannot regard occurrences, of this kind with indifference. Now, my Lords, of course they cannot. Mention has been made of two instances in which this man's character had shown itself before. One in 1881 and one in 1888. In another place those were treated rather as slight matters. One took place, by the bye, when the noble Marquess opposite was Viceroy. The Rajah had punished his brother; the Political Agent asked the noble Marquess to say that that punishment was not enough, and to interfere, and to have a Court of Inquiry. The noble Marquess very properly said— He has been punished by the proper authority. I am not going to interfere. That is all quite right. But when it came before the Government of India, in 1888, it was a very different story. The Government of India write in this sense to the Maharajah about the punishment of his brother. This is the deliberate judgment of the Government of India at that time— This is not the first instance in which the inhuman conduct of the Senapatti has been brought to the notice of the Government of India, and although ordinarily the Governor General in Council would not interfere if the brother of a Native Chief illtreated a subject of the State, the circumstances of the present offence are such as to justify a departure from our usual policy. I am, therefore, to state that the Governor General in Council approves of your addressing a letter to the Maharajah, and advising the banishment of this man from the Manipur State for a year. You may tell the Maharajah that His Excellency the Viceroy (that is Lord

Dufferin) has seen the correspondence; that he much regrets to hear of such cruelty having been practised by the Maharajah's brother, and that as this is not the first offence of the kind which has been brought home to him, His Excellency thinks that he should be severely punished. Now, there are grounds for thinking that this was a bad man; there are grounds for thinking that this man was a turbulent character, and that his presence in the State was undoubtedly mischievous. The last word of the Government of India, when they finally say that he is to be removed, is to this effect. It is to be found on pages 25 and 26— It is evident that the Jubraj owes his present position rather to the successful issue of his brother's insurrection than to the authority of the British Government, and that, while the Senapatti remains in Manipur unpunished for his treachery against his eldest brother, the Maharajah, the real power in the State, will be in the Senapatti's hands. This is not a state of affairs which the Government of India can view with indifference, nor would it be to the credit of the British power any more than to the interests of the people of Manipur itself that the Governor General in Council should acquiesce in such a settlement of the case. As I have already, in my letter above cited, informed you, the Governor General in Council considers that it will be desirable that the Senapatti should be removed from Manipur and punished for his lawless conduct. My Lords, I think I have shown this, that in the opinion of the Government of India, and as I think rightly, this man was a dangerous man to the peace of the State of Manipur. This man had been the leader of the revolt. He had practically made himself a sort of chief of the Praetorian Guard, and there was no sense of security, and there could not be while that man was in Manipur. He was the leader of the revolt, and as the leader of the revolt the Governor General came, in my opinion, to the wise determination that he ought to be removed from the State. Then the Viceroy writes to Mr. Quinton— In the opinion of the Government of India it is desirable that you should visit Manipur and make known on the spot the decision which the Governor General in Council desires you to enforce. You should take with you a sufficient force, even though opposition may not be expected, and you should report for the orders of the Government of India the conditions which you propose to attach to the recognition as Maharajah of Manipur of the present Jubraj. Upon that Mr. Quinton makes his preparations, and he sends that telegram which has been already alluded to, in which he tells the Viceroy what he proposes to do. Those propositions which Mr. Quinton so telegraphed to the Viceroy received the Viceroy's approval. Now, there is an end of the Viceroy's action in this matter. There is nothing in the subsequent proceedings which touches the Viceroy himself or the Government of India. And I ask your Lordships whether the Viceroy was not right in the course he adopted. It was his duty to settle the disputed succession in this State of Manipur. He had striven hard to continue, if he could have done so, the old Maharajah in Manipur. He yielded at last, and with great difficulty, to the opinions of Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton, but he stipulated that this man who had been the leader of the revolt should not go unpunished; and I venture to say that the judgment to which the Viceroy came would commend itself to the Chief of every native State in India, because he had done his best to maintain the man in power, and he had done his best to show that anyone who revolted against his own Chief and against the paramount Power should not be allowed to remain in the State. Now, my Lords, having dealt with everything I have to deal with, I think, so far as the Viceroy of India is concerned, I must say one word about what took place afterwards. I, no more than the noble Marquess opposite, want to say more than I can possibly help with regard to any of those unfortunate officers who lost their lives upon this occasion. There is a strict inquiry going on at the present moment by the Viceroy to find out everything he can with regard to what actually did take place. Until the Report of that inquiry comes, no word of mine shall throw blame either on one person or on another. The noble Marquess asked me about the force and the ammunition. I would only say that the orders of the Viceroy were to take a sufficient force. It was not for him to say what force was sufficient and what was not. Colonel Johnstone, who wrote to the Times some time ago, said that 200 or 300 men

would have been quite sufficient. With regard to the ammunition, they did take 40 rounds. I understand that General Collett first told them that they were to take a considerable quantity more; but no doubt the roads were very bad, and transport was very difficult (although, I think, that might have been overcome if it had been necessary), and they left with only 40 rounds. But after they had left, General Collett had some doubts about it (and I do not wonder), and he telegraphed to Mr. Quinton to say that they would find at Kohima some more ammunition if they chose to take it—that it was entirely at their service. Unfortunately, they did not take that ammunition, and they apparently had been relying upon some 13,500 rounds of ammunition, which were at Manipur, and which they found there, and which were actually used. Still, I am disposed to think that the quantity taken was not enough, but that will be investigated when the time comes. No doubt there was a series of blunders, it may be of civil, it may be of military people; there are a great many things it is impossible to understand. It is impossible to understand how the troops got placed as they were; it is impossible to understand how it came to pass that, after the Manipur is had been victorious, our officers should have attempted to treat with the enemy; it is quite impossible to understand these things. I confess I cannot do so. But there are one or two things in respect to Mr. Quinton about which I want to say a word or two—in his favour. I think I am only bound to do so. The noble Marquess has talked about the secrecy with which he moved. There is no doubt that Mr. Quinton did mean to keep this secret. The misfortune was (and it is a misfortune which I hope will never happen again, because it has been remedied) that there is no cypher in Manipur with which Mr. Quinton could communicate to the Resident. He dare not telegraph en clair, and there was no cypher that he could use. Therefore, until he got somehow into communication with Mr. Grimwood, he could not tell him what really was going to happen. His assistant Commissioner, Mr. Gurdon, went to Manipur, and there he explained what Mr. Quinton was going to do. Oddly enough, Mr. Grimwood thought, and so I understand it was given out in Manipur, that when the troops were coming, they were to bring back the old Maharajah. That was the view that Mr. Quinton himself had, and that was the view we are told that was popularly put about in Manipur itself. There is no doubt Mr. Grimwood objected altogether to the proposal, and he objected altogether to the Senapatti being deported; but he eventually came to the following compromise with Mr. Gurdon: If the orders for the deportation of the Senapatti provided that in the event of his good behaviour he should be allowed to return after a certain period—the length of such period depending entirely on his conduct—then Mr. Grimwood was prepared to give a reluctant assent. Therefore, you will find in that telegram which was sent by Mr. Quinton to the Viceroy those words—that it was to be seen how he behaved, and if he behaved well he was to be allowed to come back. I only want to defend Mr. Quinton from any undue secrecy, which I think the noble Marquess rather cast in his teeth. Now, my Lords, there is one other matter, and that is about the treachery. I agree with the noble Marquess that Mr. Quinton was a man incapable of treachery; and I also agree that no treachery was ever contemplated by anybody in this case, of that I feel absolutely certain. There is no doubt that there are durbars and durbars. You may have a durbar which is a mere Court ceremony, and if you were to ask a man to come there and then put him in prison, that would be a breach of faith, undoubtedly of the grossest character. But this was a durbar which was held as a Court, and everybody knew it was a Court, and everybody knew that the decision of the Government was going to be pronounced in that Court; nobody had any other notion than that. I mean the Senapatti was not allured into this place, he was not induced to come there under false pretences—in fact, he never came at all. If any treachery had ever been intended it was carried out in such a clumsy way that the bird was effectually frightened from coming into the net. But I am only now concerned to defend Mr. Quinton against the notion that there was ever any treachery thought of in this case. Now, as to the durbar itself. Was it right or was it not right under any circumstances to arrest a man in the durbar? Well, I have made every inquiry

which I can from those who are most conversant with Indian affairs in this country, and, with the exception of those precedents which were quoted in the other House, and have been alluded to to-night, of Sir Robert Sandeman, I can hear of no precedent where a man was summoned to durbar even as a Court where he was arrested. And the Secretary of State for War the other night, with my fall assent, after a conversation with him, stated in the other House what I state in this House frankly and fairly, that it is a practice which I individually should entirely discourage. I do not think it is a proper thing to do, and I should be very sorry to see this case taken as a precedent. It was stated, I think, in the other House that the Viceroy was responsible for this. Nothing could possibly be further from the fact. This arrest in durbar was never thought of until the 21st March. On the 21st March Mr. Quinton, Colonel Skene, Mr. Grimwood, and one or two others met at Sengmai, four miles from Manipur, and there the matter was fully discussed. I have the whole Paper here, and everything that was said about it; it is a paper which will be laid before Parliament as soon as it can be printed. Then you will see that the whole question was discussed for the very first time, and the Viceroy had no more notion that the Senapatti was going to be arrested in durbar than I had myself. If your Lordships will look at the Papers you will see that it was not until the 7th of May that the Viceroy heard, practically, that this attempt at arrest in durbar had been made. Therefore, I think, you will see that not a word can be said against the Viceroy so far as the durbar is concerned. I know it was stated elsewhere that after it had been done the Viceroy in a long telegram, which you will find in the Blue Book, gave a qualified sanction to it. Granted; but it is one thing to order a thing; it is another to excuse an act which is done by your subordinate. They seem to me to stand on totally different grounds; and I maintain most strongly and stoutly that that was never contemplated by the Viceroy from the first, and that he never knew anything at all about it until a long time after it had taken place. My Lords, I have, I am afraid, detained you a considerable time. I hope I have put the case of the Viceroy, at all events, before your Lordships in a plain and in eligible way. I cannot sit down without bearing my testimony, if it is wanted, to the gallant conduct of Major Grant. He has shown what a few troops can do. I should also like to bear my testimony to the courage and the physical endurance and patience of Mrs. Grimwood. The gravest responsibilities rest upon our Viceroys and upon our Governor Generals in the Dependencies and Colonies of all the distant parts of this great Empire. If they fail in their duty, it is, no doubt, within the competence of Parliament, and it is one of the highest and at the same time one of the most painful duties of the Government of the day, either to censure or to recall them. But if you have no fault to find—and I would say that the actions of persons placed in those difficult positions are to be discussed in no carping or critical spirit—they are entitled to that which I am quite sure they ought to and will receive always in this country—to an ungrudging and a generous support. In the case of the present Viceroy of India, I should like to bear my humble testimony to the zeal and efficiency and ability with which he has discharged the high duties of his office. He has maintained untarnished the honour of the British name. He has cultivated the most cordial relations with all the Native States of India. He has greatly added to the strength of the defences of the Empire. And, above all, he has done much to improve both the social and the moral condition of all the various races and peoples committed to his charge. I trust your Lordships will agree with me and with Her Majesty's Government in thinking that Lord Lansdowne is deserving of the unabated confidence of his Sovereign, of Parliament, and of his country.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL

My Lords, I hope that the able, clear, and most judicial speech which we have just heard from my noble Friend opposite will set at rest in the public mind any doubts which may have arisen, either as to the policy or the moral straightforwardness of the conduct of the Government of India. When I saw upon the Paper a notice by my noble Friend the noble Marquess behind me, I felt quite sure that from his own personal character and from the recent date at which he had filled the highest office in India, he would present this subject to the House with judgment and in the most temperate language. But I am bound to say that, although the expectation was entirely fulfilled, he did present to this House a narrative of affairs which materially differed in its impression from that which I have derived from a perusal of these Papers. My noble Friend opposite, the noble Marquess, has pointed out two or three mistakes which the noble Marquess made in the few adverse observations which he made bearing upon the policy of the Government of India. In the first place, my noble Friend distinctly misunderstood the facts, as I think, when he said that there was an immediate recognition of the present Regent, and that any subsequent conduct in derogation of that recognition was a second thought on the part of the Government of India. The noble Marquess, as far as I can see, was entirely wrong in that supposition, because on page 5 of the Blue-Book to which the noble Viscount has referred, I see that the Government of India say,— Jubaraj may be acknowledged as Regent till sanction of the Government is received; and that was immediately after the outbreak in September, and upon that footing it remained during the whole of the six months before the Government of India came to its final decision. I have no doubt that my noble Friend the noble Marquess had not observed the telegram, because he went on for many weeks and months, and quoted a few words which seem to imply that there had been a fall recognition from the very beginning, and that the Government of India had retracted its policy in consequence of the advice of its local officers. Now, again, the noble Viscount opposite has, I think, effectually answered an opinion which has been shadowed forth by the noble Marquess, and that is that the Government of India may never consider the proverbial three courses in a policy. I do not understand what my noble friend meant. A great statesman in this country was accused of always saying that there were three courses in everything; but there are in human affairs almost always at least three courses to be taken, and I am sure my noble Friend would not issue an order to the Government of India that they are always to say "Yes" or "No" to two extreme propositions, and never to consider the circumstances which may recommend a middle course. I hold, on the contrary, that in the peculiar circumstances of this case a middle course was clearly the best that could be taken. What were the two courses? The first was to recognise the Jubaraj as Regent, as the result of an atrocious conspiracy on the part of his own brother, in defiance of the recognition of the Government of India, and its refusal to sanction his right to the throne. My noble Friend will hardly say that that was an alternative the Government of India ought to have said "Yes" to. What was the other alternative? **It was that the Maharajah, who had distinctly fled from the Gaddi, should be restored to the throne of Manipur.** Well, have your Lordships read the evidence that this Blue Book contains as to the character of that Prince? Why, he seems to have been one of the poorest creatures that ever sat even upon an Indian throne. The account that is given by Mr. Grimwood of, his conduct on the night on which his place was invaded represents a man who had no nerve at all, who was utterly shattered by a few shots being fired in his palace, and who was utterly incapable of withstanding the more powerful character of his brother. Is that the other alternative that my noble friend would have had the Government to adopt? Surely not. Then what was the middle course? The middle course was recommended by Mr. Quinton, and I think also by Mr. Grimwood, that the Jubaraj, the existing Regent, should be acknowledged, but that the author of the revolution should be deported from the State, Now, my Lords, was there really any other proposition

before the Government of India which could be taken with equal advantage? It is quite clear that if the Regent had been continued without the removal of the Senapatti, the Senappatti would have been considered, and would have been, the real governor of the State. My noble Friend has stated that the Senapatti's talent and ability had been much exaggerated. I do not know much about his character for ability, but I do know a good deal from these papers of his moral character and of his fitness to rule, and be the real and virtual ruler of any State. The Government of India do not hesitate to say that he was a man of infamous character; he was a man who was personally cruel; he was convicted of the most atrocious cruelty, carrying us back to the most savage times of the most savage governors of India. Would my noble Friend have admitted that the Government of India should have recognised a sovereign—a nominal sovereign—who was a mere catspaw to a man of this character? I contend that the Government of India had no other course to adopt but that which they did adopt—that what my noble Friend calls the middle course was the right course, and, under the circumstances, almost the only course which they could adopt. My noble Friend has used more than once, I think, the expression, "this unhappy massacre." He used no other expression about it. For a long time I could not quite understand what the object of my noble Friend was in using those words, because, after all, his blame of the Government of India was very mild; and all that it amounts to really is that, if he had been a member of the Council of India, he might possibly have given other advice. Well, that is not much to the purpose. We do not govern India from the House of Lords, or from this country, in these matters of detail. We leave them to the Government of India. But then came the part of his speech which it was evident excited my noble Friend most, and that was an answer to a speech by Sir John Gorst in the House of Commons. I am under the unhappy disadvantage of not having read Sir John Gorst's speech, and I can quite understand that anything said by a man in his position, however almost of the character of a joke, may have a bad effect in India, and so far my noble Friend may have been justified in the severe comments which he passed upon it. Certainly, if my noble Friend thinks that the Government of India, or the Government opposite, as representing the superior Government of the Empire, adopts the policy of removing from all Native States every able man they can find, out of mere spite or jealousy, he is well entitled to bring the subject before this House; but I do not think my noble Friend can really believe that any such policy is in the mind of anybody. But I must remind my noble Friend of this, that, if we are to consider the effect in India of speeches made in either House of Parliament, the defects of speech may be as serious as excesses of speech—such, certainly, as those that are attributed to Sir John Gorst. Now, I must say I do regret that my noble Friend has not said one word of severity against the conduct of the Government of Manipur. Of course, I do not mean to say that my noble Friend meant to speak lightly or to think lightly of the transactions that took place there, but remember, my Lords, this is a transaction almost unprecedented in the history of India. We are not dealing with mere savages in the native States of India. They are not so civilised as we are, of course; they stand on a lower plane of civilisation; but they are very far from being mere savages. Many of them are represented and governed by enlightened men. They know the usages of civilised life; and I do think that if a speech is to be made in this House on the whole of the Manipur business, some expression should be given of our horror at the atrocious treachery and the abominable cruelty of the massacre of our officers in Manipur. I am not at all sure that the total abstinence of any such censure in my noble Friend's speech, and in other speeches which have been made in Parliament, may not almost have a worse effect in fact than any of the absurd sentiments ascribed, rightly or wrongly, to Sir John Gorst. Now I come to the point which is of real importance in this matter. As far as I can understand, nobody really blames the Government of India as respects its policy in this case. What is thought is that there was some trickery or treachery in the mode in which the orders of the Government of India were executed by its officers. My noble Friend has entirely acquitted the Government of India, and especially Mr. Quinton, from any

suspicion of treachery. When that is said, all is said that can be said upon the subject. The question becomes one of the mere mode in which the Senapatti was to be deported, and the sentences of the Government of India to be recorded against him. The noble Viscount opposite has said that he has consulted many authorities in England, as many as he could, upon the meaning of the word durbar. Of course, my noble Friend has access to authorities to which most of us have not access in the India Office. He is surrounded by very able and very competent men, no man more able or more competent than the Chairman of the Foreign Committee, my distinguished Friend, Sir Henry Rawlinson; he must have means of knowing what the word durbar means. But we have no need to go farther than this Blue Book to see the variety of the senses in which the word durbar is used. It is used at least in three senses in these very Papers. It is used in the sense of a place—a place where an assembly is held—again, it is used for a company of men—for the prince and his cabinet. My noble Friends opposite are the durbar in that sense. The noble Marquess and his colleagues would be called a durbar in India, and they are so called in this Blue Book. Then it means also a ceremonial assembly, and that is the meaning most familiar in this country. The people of England think of the accounts which they had had of splendid durbars given by my noble Friend the noble Marquess or the noble Earl behind me (Lord Northbrook) in which the princes of India have been received with splendid ceremonial by the Viceroy, and the idea of arresting a Native Prince when he comes to a ceremonial of that sort, probably at the invitation of the Indian Government, is abhorrent to the moral sentiments of the people of England—very naturally, and that is what they think has happened in this case. My Lords, it has nothing to do with it. There is a note at the foot of page 27 which will explain exactly how this matter stands as to the meaning of the word durbar. I think it is quite clear from this note that the Government of India did know that Mr. Quinton intended to summon the Regent with his ministers and his brothers to meet him at a certain place, and at that meeting announce the decision of the Government, and, if necessary, enforce it. But that was not what the English people understand as a durbar. These are the words of Mr. Quinton on the 18th of March: I propose to require the Regent and durbar"— that is to say, I propose to require the Regent and his ministers— to meet me on arrival. The word durbar is used as the people who are to come. It is not used of the place, or of the assembly, or of the nature of the occasion. Mr. Quinton says— I propose to require the Regent and durbar to meet me on arrival, announce the decision of Government, arrest Senapatti, and inform him that the length of his exile and return depends on his conduct and the tranquility of the country. To that the Government of India answer— Your telegram, 18th. Subject to reconsideration, if necessary, of the amount of the Maharajah's allowance, proposals are approved. That shows clearly that the Government of India did approve of the proposal of Mr. Quinton to summon a durbar—that is to say, to summon an assembly or a Court, as the noble Viscount opposite called it, at which Court he was to announce the decision of the Government and to enforce it; but it was not a durbar in the ceremonial sense or in any of those other mixed senses of the word in which men are invited to come for ceremonial purposes, and at which an arrest on the part of the superior power would savour undoubtedly of treachery or of something of an unusual kind. My Lords, this being so, I see nothing that remains to be discussed except the unfortunate military miscalculation which the local authorities made, and into which inquiries are now being conducted as to the sufficiency of the force which might, under certain circumstances, be required. But I do not think it is very difficult to understand how that miscalculation arose. The Manipuris are essentially a feeble folk. **They have a very small military power, and almost no military prowess.** Look at the flight and rout to which they were put by a mere handful of our men under that gallant fellow, Lieutenant Grant. My Lords, an accident will happen even with the tamest animals. In India it is not unfrequent that many men are injured from the sudden going wild of a tame elephant. Here you had to deal with a violent and treacherous man, a man whom the Government of India knew to be violent and

treacherous, but they had no idea of the extent of the atrocity of his character. That is the whole explanation of the case. I confess that I see no difficulty in understanding it, although some of the details, as my noble Friend says, are very difficult to understand. The disposal of the force, the method of attack, the small amount of ammunition carried by the men—all these are points of detail upon which we cannot form any judgment until we have heard the evidence which may be brought before the Government of India. Now, the noble Marquess behind me went on to speak of other matters as regards the future, upon which I desire to express no opinion. I should be very unwilling to balance my opinion against that of my noble Friend. He knows better than I do the working of the Council in India, and I think the objection which he has stated to certain proposals which were lately made, and which objections seem to be, I think, approved by the noble Viscount (Cross) opposite, are probably sound objections. At all events, I should say that this is a very trivial case indeed to found upon for any great or considerable or organic change in the Government of India. It is a mere accident—a deplorable accident—an accident owing mainly to the villainy of one man, and I do not see that it throws any doubt upon the ordinary transaction of business between the central Government and its feudatories. Before I pass from this question of the mode in which the orders of the Government were issued, I cannot help saying that I have heard—I do not know whether it is on good authority—that even at durbars of a more serious and ceremonial character it is not without precedent that the Government of India should make very grave intimations as to its intentions with regard to those who attend them. I have been informed by a friend of mine that on a celebrated occasion—a great occasion—in a no less important city than Cabul, at a great ceremonial meeting there, certain chiefs of Afghanistan were touched on the shoulder as they went out of the durbar, and were told that their loyalty to the Government of England was doubted, and that their detention had been determined upon by the military authorities. So that, after all, whatever may be the general rule of the Government of India—and I cannot doubt that the general rule is very much what has been stated by the noble Viscount opposite, with the assent, I think, of my noble Friend beside me (Lord Northbrook), who cheered what he said—there is a certain pliability in the practice of the Government of India depending on the circumstances of each particular case. Now the noble Marquess behind me went on to speak of the sentence on the Regent, and he expressed a hope virtually that the punishment of death would not be inflicted upon him. Well, my Lords, individually we are always naturally in favour of mercy, and I certainly should be so myself on this particular occasion. But I think much depends upon the evidence which has been brought forward, not as to the Regent having made war against the Government of India, because I entirely agree with my noble Friend that, under the circumstances of the case, infliction of capital punishment for that offence would be an extreme course, and, as I understand, the sentence has been passed upon that ground; but if the Regent has been found guilty of taking part in the abominable treachery of inveigling our officers within his palace, then having them decapitated by the public executioner one by one, that would entirely alter the case. My noble Friend went on to refer to the question of annexation. I should be very reluctant to give any opinion upon the point at all; but there is one thing that I should like to say, and that is that these general assurances against what is called the policy of annexation are assurances against a policy which as a deliberate policy has never been pursued by the Government of India. We have never set before ourselves annexation as a policy. Sometimes we have suffered severely through not having annexed. You remember the two Sikh wars. You remember the conquest that was achieved over the Sikhs in the first war. You will remember the determination of the Government of India at that time not to annex. You will remember the deplorable results which followed—the second Sikh war, during which for a moment there was a time when England held her breath lest the Empire of India should slip from out her hands. My Lords, these questions of annexation come upon us by the force of circumstances, by the necessities of the case, and not by a deliberate policy

on the part of the Central Government, and assurances of this kind in truth of very little value. Before I sit down I cannot help saying this, that discussions on details about the Government of India and the administration of her affairs ought to be very rare indeed in the two Houses of Parliament. We ought to remember how that Empire has been acquired, and how it is still governed. It has not been acquired by the House of Commons, nor by the House of Lords, nor by the Crown in its Imperial capacity in this country. It has been acquired by great Englishmen, great Scotsmen, and great Irishmen sent out to India, and acting largely on their own discretion and their own responsibility. That is the way in which the British Empire in India has been acquired beyond all question and all doubt, and if that Empire had been under the daily government or the yearly government of the English Parliament it never would have been acquired, or it would have been lost long ago. Under those circumstances, I say, I am not at all sure that the electric telegraph has not made a serious and injurious inroad upon the discretion of the authorities in India. We attempt to interfere where we ought not to interfere. For after all, when we come to balance nice considerations, one course with another course, and a middle course, as my noble Friend did to-night, what means have we of judging here compared with those who are charged with the great responsibility of the government of India. My Lords, we have none. And if there is one-Department of the Government of India-more than another in which we should trust that Government to the utmost extent, and be most chary of interfering with it, it is its relations with the native States. They know the Imperial traditions under which we act. They know the duty of good faith. They know the general desire of the English people that mere passion for dominion should not lead to unprincipled annexation. They know all that, and yet, in spite of their knowing that, look what has happened. From the days of Clive and Warren Hastings to the days of Canning, of Dalhousie, and Hardinge, and last, not least, Lord Dufferin, immense provinces have been added to the Indian Empire. It seems to me that at present we have arrived pretty nearly at the geographical limits which Nature has imposed upon that vast dominion. But there is another thing that I think we ought to remember—not merely how that Empire has been acquired but how it has been governed; how smoothly that immense machine is working. Why, my Lords, from month to month, and from year to-year, except for an occasional war on the frontier, we hear little or nothing of the government of India. It is like a vast mechanism which moves automatically. And yet it is a government over various tribes and races animated with fierce fanatical passions and opposite religions, and we govern it more easily, more peacefully, more successfully than we do the neighbouring country of Ireland. Surely, my Lords, that is a ground for placing confidence in the Government of India. I cannot understand anyone being disposed to make carping objections even to details in regard to accidents, which may now and then happen in the working of that great machine. I rejoice, nevertheless, on the whole that my noble Friend has brought forward this Motion to-night. It has enabled the noble Viscount to defend with most complete success the Government of India, and I trust the people of this country will now clearly understand not only that the policy was right, but that it was carried out in a manner perfectly consistent with the traditional maxims of honour upon which the Government of India stands.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY

My Lords, I entirely agree with the noble Duke in what he has said as to the statement of the noble Viscount opposite. Though I may not agree in every point of detail, yet I recognise with the greatest pleasure the fairness and the calmness with which he spoke; and also that he, on more than one point, responding to the appeal made to him by my noble Friend, repudiated doctrines which I think were unsound and accepted others which we all desire to see observed. My noble Friend who has just sat down

has made what I may call a somewhat militant speech. He found fault with my noble Friend behind me for his observations upon a speech which my noble Friend had not read—I mean the speech of Sir John Gorst—and concerning which, therefore, I must say that I think his judgment is worth nothing. But he was not satisfied with that. To my great astonishment he discovered a gap in my noble Friend's speech, one which I hardly think any one would have sought for, and to which I think it was perhaps rather ungenerous to allude. He imagined that my noble Friend the noble Marquess actually did not feel the greatest abhorrence at the cruel massacre at Manipur.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL

Oh, no.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY

I beg the noble Lord's pardon. I really would appeal to my noble Friend whether he could for one moment have supposed that the noble Marquess had any less feeling of abhorrence of that abominable massacre than the noble Duke himself or any other member of this House.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL

Certainly not.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY

Then why make that attack upon him. I regret it. I think it might have been very well omitted. I do not wish to allude further to Sir John Gorst's speech, except to say that I was extremely glad to hear what the noble Viscount said upon that subject. I do not want at all to attribute any extraordinary weight to that speech. The noble Duke seemed to think that it was of very little consequence, indeed, but I would point out to your Lordship that Sir John Gorst did not speak as a private member of Parliament; it is only because he spoke on behalf of the Department charged with Indian affairs that importance attaches naturally to what he said, and I think the noble Marquis was perfectly right in pointing out that in India probably more importance would be attached to the declaration than we should attach to it here, not on account of any want of ability on the part of Sir John Gorst, but because he is not a member of the Cabinet, and, therefore, did not speak with all the authority with which the noble Viscount speaks. I will not allude to that any further. With regard to what the noble Duke said at the conclusion of his speech, I entirely concur in his general principle, namely, that it is most undesirable, as a rule, that the details of Indian government should be discussed in Parliament. No one who has had any connection with Indian affairs will not feel that the continued success of our Government in India depends essentially upon our appointing able men whom we trust to govern that country, and trusting and supporting them here. At the same time, there are occasions when it is necessary, I think, that Parliament should take notice of what takes place in India, and although I do not wish to exaggerate the importance of this event as a political event—except as regards the murders, which were very horrible—still I think that when such events have taken place in India as these unfortunate and unhappy events at Manipur, it is proper that Parliament should take some notice of them—should take notice of them, as I think notice has been taken of them, in a judicial and temperate spirit. We may not entirely agree with the noble Viscount opposite in the complete approval which he bestowed upon the Government of India. I do not think that serious blame can be attached to the Government of India in the matter, though we may differ in some matters as to whether it acted in the wisest manner. Above all—I think my noble Friend justly said it is extremely easy to be wise after the

event—but I still think that some observations which were made by noble Friend behind me had a little more weight than, perhaps, the noble Duke who has just spoken attached to them. My Friend's criticism of the Government of India depended, I think, principally on two points, namely, that there had been an unnecessary and unfortunate delay in coming to a decision, and that there was in the decision itself something in the nature of a compromise which was unfortunate and had unpleasant effects. With regard to the delay, looking at the usual course of the Government of India, the delay certainly does not surprise me, but I think that we have a right to observe that the peculiar circumstances of the case ought to have led the Government of India to see that it was necessary to deal with unusual promptitude with this particular matter. The reason I say that is this: The noble Viscount found fault with my noble Friend for having supposed that the Jubaraj had been recognised as Regent. That he was actually recognised as Regent I think was shown by the noble Viscount not to be the fact, but he was recognised undoubtedly as the temporary Governor of Manipur, and dealt with by our officers as the temporary governor for no less than five or six months. Now, during the whole of the time you will observe that the Senapatti was as much virtually governor as he would have been supposing the Jubaraj had been permanently recognised. He was there upon the spot, and all the objections which existed to his wielding power existed at that time. I think that the Government of India ought to have seen that if the Senapatti was to be removed—they knew the character of the Senapatti from the first, and they knew also that the Senapatti was the author of the revolt from the first—then it was very unfortunate and likely to lead to much misconstruction, to leave the Jubaraj supported by his brother, whom they knew to be paramount, for about five months in peaceful relations with our Resident and with the Chief Commissioner. I observe that in one of the Chief Commissioner's letters which the noble Viscount did not refer to, the letter of 9th of February, he says, speaking of the Government of the Jubaraj, "The present Government has now been in existence for nearly six months, and is conducted with tranquility." Now, although the Jubaraj was not formally recognised as Maharajah, it is in vain to say that his Government was not recognised when it is spoken of in that way. It was recognised, subject to the decision as to whether it should be permanently recognised. Then my noble Friend pointed out that there were two courses which might have been taken, or indeed three—to restore the Maharajah, to adopt the state of things which existed in Manipur, or to take the course which the Government of India finally did determine upon. Notwithstanding the observations that have been made, I think the course taken by the Government of India is open to very obvious criticism. I daresay they were quite right in not restoring the Maharajah. They say he is a very weak man, but upon that I am not competent to express an opinion, as I know nothing except what I see in the papers. But the course pursued seems to me to have been, as my noble Friend pointed out, exactly that which involved all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of either of the other two courses. If they had taken the advice of Mr. Grimwood, and Mr. Quinton's first advice also—though he modified it afterwards when he had been to Calcutta—they would have acknowledged the Jubaraj, and left the Senapatti untouched. That would have been a course which, at all events, had something to recommend it. But to set up the Jubaraj, and get rid of the Senapatti, who himself had set up the Jubaraj, seems to me to have been taking the most singular course that could be conceived. Here is a man obviously, and it is admitted on all hands, the mere tool of the younger brother. The younger brother makes a revolt, and sets up this man on the throne. Then what is to happen? You are to confirm on the throne the man who has been set up by a revolt and in defiance of your authority, and you are to punish the man who set him up. I must say that that is a policy which seems to me to have very little to recommend it. The impression left upon my mind is that it arose from this:—Mr. Quinton and Mr. Grimwood had one opinion, the Government of India had another opinion; but the Government of India wished to send back the Maharajah; Mr. Grimwood and Mr. Quinton were equally strong the other way. As very often happens,

unfortunately, when there are two opinions expressed, a middle course was determined; and I believe in this case that middle course was injudicious. The event has certainly proved it to be so. But more than that I do not think you can say, in criticising the judgment of the Government of India. It is undoubtedly a matter upon which judgments might differ, and as to any severe blame being attached to the Marquess of Lansdowne in the matter, I entirely repudiate that suggestion. No doubt we are entitled to express our opinion, and to criticise what was done, but to say that it was a very serious error of judgment I think would be to assume, on our part, a greater knowledge of all the difficulties, and a greater power of determining them here, than really belongs to us. I have only one or two other observations to make—because really the matter lies very much in a nutshell. One word with regard to the durbar. I do not profess myself to have any opinion worth stating upon the question of the durbar derived from any peculiar knowledge of my own, and I entirely agree with those who do not ascribe any notion of deliberate treachery to Mr. Quinton. That I believe to be perfectly out of the question. But I confess I think that to arrest the Senapatti at a durbar to which he was summoned without any notice of what was going to be done—I mean, without any notice that there was going to be a judgment passed upon him at this durbar—was not that plain, ordinary, straightforward course which is better in all these matters. The more straightforward we are in dealing with Asiatics I am quite certain the better it will be for our rule. The one great mistake we could fall into would be to adopt anything like Oriental methods, and the only criticism I have to make is that I think that this idea of arresting the man at a durbar, after having received him in a friendly manner when he came out to meet Mr. Quinton, and after he had been for five or six months no doubt virtually governing the State, savoured a little too much of Oriental finesse, and I am very glad to hear that the noble Viscount opposite does not think that this course, whether or not it has been practised before, should be continued in future. Now I have only one word more to say, and that is on a point to which, in common with the noble Marquess, I attach the greatest importance; I mean as to the policy which is to be pursued in regard to Manipur in the future. My noble Friend behind me (the Duke of Argyll) I confess stated some doctrines with which I am quite unable to agree. He said that our policy in India had not been a policy of annexation. I quite agree that we never professed a policy of annexation, but facts are stronger than theories, and we have annexed State after State in India until, as we all know, we have this immense Empire. Neither do I agree with the noble Duke in saying that assurances given upon this subject are of no value, and should be lightly spoken of. The assurance to which my noble Friend referred was the assurance of the Sovereign herself—the assurance after the Mutiny, given in the most solemn manner; and although I do not pretend to say that such an assurance as that would prevent the Government of India from an annexation which might be absolutely unavoidable and necessary, yet I do say that after that assurance no annexation should be sanctioned without the gravest and most paramount necessity. I myself had some experience on the subject at the time of the annexation of Burma. That is not a parallel case, **because Burmah is not an Indian State, and it was annexed after a war and for reasons which could in no way arise as regards any native Indian State properly so called; but,** nevertheless, I was exceedingly struck with the wide-spread jealousy in India on the part of the native princes in that Empire at the annexation of Burma, and at the strong opinion which was expressed to me by all those who had the greatest knowledge of Indian affairs, that there was no portion of our policy in which we ought to be more cautious, and nothing in which we ought to be more firm and consistent than in adhering in all circumstances, except those, as I have said, of paramount necessity, to the declarations made by the Queen, and which, I believe, have had the most important and admirable effects in pacifying and reconciling the native princes of that country and making them truly loyal subjects of Her Majesty. I therefore welcome what the noble Viscount said upon this subject. Of course he very properly, not having the opinion of the Government of India, would not pledge himself absolutely to the particular policy which

is to be pursued, but I gathered from him—I think I am not going too far in saying—that he shares the opinion of myself and my noble Friend, and of many others who have more experience than I have upon this subject, which is against annexation unless, as I have said, it be from some paramount and overbearing necessity. My Lords, I will not detain you any further. I think it is on every account a matter which must give satisfaction to the House that the subject has been brought before us, and especially because, I am most happy to say, we have had the opportunity of hearing so clear and satisfactory a statement from the noble Viscount opposite.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK

My Lords, I was very glad to hear the speech of the noble Viscount, the Secretary of State for India, because he appeared to me to give a fair and accurate account of the whole of the circumstances connected with this unfortunate catastrophe at Manipur, and because I entirely agree with the conclusion at which he has arrived, namely, giving the approval of Her Majesty's Government to the course taken by the Viceroy in respect of these events. The speech of the noble Marquess, who brought forward this motion, was, like all his speeches, both temperate and fair, but I think my noble Friend must have been convinced by the noble Viscount opposite that he had not given that careful attention to the Papers in the case which he would have done supposing he had been either in India or at the India Office. I myself have felt it to be my duty to pay the most careful attention to all the Papers that have been laid before Parliament, and I am quite satisfied that the answer given by the Secretary of State to the criticism of my noble Friend in respect to the alleged delay on the part of the Viceroy in dealing with this matter was a complete, a substantial, and an accurate answer. I am quite surprised at my noble Friend, the Earl of Kimberley, trying to defend the noble Marquess in respect to that matter. Just let us put the other case. My noble Friend says that the affair ought to have been dealt with unusual promptitude. Now if the Viceroy had dealt with this case with unusual promptitude, what would have happened? **The Maharajah of Manipur, a good friend of the English Government**, who, when Mr. Dament and 40 men were killed on the frontier and Kohima was assailed by the Nagas, led 2,000 of the troops of Manipur with Colonel Johnstone to the defence of Kohima, and who has supported the Government on many subsequent occasions—this Maharajah petitions the Viceroy to have his case inquired into, and the unusual promptitude which my noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley recommends would have involved neglecting the appeal to the Viceroy of an old friend and supporter of the Government simply because there was a gentleman called the Senapatti, who appears to have got on the brain of both my noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley, and my noble Friend who brought forward this Motion. I should like to know what native opinion would have been if this unusual promptitude had been shown. I should like to know what Native Princes would have thought if the claims of an old friend had been set aside because the Government of India was afraid of a man who is described by one who was seven years Resident there as a man of most infamous character, who had already committed some murders.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY

If the noble Lord will excuse me, I never said that the claim of the old Maharajah should be put aside. What I said was that it was not necessary to take five months to consider it.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK

I must ask my noble Friend to follow me a little further. Would my noble Friend have accepted the representations of the ex-Maharajah without any inquiry from Mr. Grimwood? Would he have taken the ex-Maharajah at his word without obtaining the opinion of Mr. Grimwood? Would he have said, "Oh! yes, you shall go back." Would he not have thought it necessary to ask Mr. Grimwood to report upon the matter? If my noble Friend concedes that, his whole case is gone. It would be necessary to consult Mr. Quinton, and to consult Mr. Grimwood, and to have Mr. Grimwood's reply; and I say that the unusual promptitude recommended by my noble Friend, and rather by implication by the noble Marquess, would have been neglect of the fair consideration to be given to the claims of an old friend, and would have been considered as an injustice by all the Native Princes in India. Therefore, I think that the attack made upon my noble Friend the Marquess of Lansdowne, for the delay in the matter, must fail to convince anyone who has carefully gone into the circumstances of the case, and who knows the duty which devolves upon the Viceroy in India of considering fairly and dispassionately the claims which are brought before him, and especially the claims of Native Princes. That is my answer to the main criticism made by my noble Friend upon the reply given by the Secretary of State to the same criticisms made by the noble Marquess who brought forward the Motion. Now, my Lords, no doubt the case that was presented to the Government of India was a difficult one. Undoubtedly, in ordinary cases, the Government of India are quite right to accept this kind of revolution happening in Native States; and so long as the person who assumes power is loyal to the British Government, and likely to govern his State decently well, to accept the circumstances, and to deal with the person who succeeds. **But this State of Manipur is a very exceptional State.** I must confess that I myself, on first reading the Papers, thought that, upon the whole, it would have been better to have let the matter go and dealt with the Government de facto after the Revolution. I must admit that I never, until these difficulties arose, gave the same attention to this small State of Manipur that I have done since. **In fact, I never heard when I was in India of the State of Manipur, except in connection with a team of polo players who came down and beat the Calcutta Polo Club in Calcutta.** But I took every pains I could to read the history of this State, which is contained in an elaborate memorandum written by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who is now the Chief Commissioner of British Burma, and who was at one time Secretary to the Government of Bengal. I saw that it differed entirely from an ordinary case. We had set up this small State of Manipur entirely ourselves. We were obliged, because of the quarrels among the different members of the Rajah's family, to give our sanction and authority to the reigning Rajah, and to interfere to prevent any conspiracy against him. I found that this very Rajah, against whom the conspiracy took place, had been twice supported and kept on the throne by British arms, and I saw at once that the revolt against him, organised as it was by this Senapatti, must have been made with the full knowledge by the Senapatti that he was acting against the authority of the Government of India. In those circumstances I saw that the case was very different to an ordinary case, and, in my opinion, the Government of India were justified in interfering. And, having to interfere, I believe that in the circumstances of the case, and even with what we know upon the Papers, the Government of India took the right course. I should like to ask my noble Friends who have criticised the Government of India upon this matter, just to think for a moment in what position the State of Manipur would have been if their advice had been followed. They proposed that this Senapatti was to be made practically the ruler of Manipur. Does it not occur to my noble Friends that the very catastrophe which has happened shows how dangerous it would have been to leave that man as the ruler of Manipur? Just conceive a man the de facto ruler of a petty State like that, who had so absurd a notion of his position as to think that he could set himself up against the Government of India. That is what this man has done. I think the very facts have

shown that the Government of India were right in not conceding to the Senapatti the control of Manipur. That is the conclusion I have arrived at after very careful consideration of the papers, and I hope the considerations I have suggested may induce my noble Friends to reconsider their position, to read the papers very carefully along with Sir Alexander Mackenzie's memorandum, and I hope that having done that they will be satisfied that the Government of India has acted in the circumstances of the case in the manner most for the interests of the people of Manipur and of the Government. Because your Lordship must recollect that in recognising this Rajah of Manipur, and defending him against all comers as we have done, the Government of India, assumed a considerable responsibility. They assumed the responsibility of taking care that no great oppression was committed in the State of Manipur. My noble Friends would have put a man as principal ruler of the State, who, on two occasions, was guilty of such oppression that on one he was banished by his own Sovereign, and on the other the Government of India required him to go away from the State for a year to expiate his offence. I think that this part of the question has been threshed out sufficiently, and that that is the conclusion that any impartial person would come to, is, that on the whole the Government did what was right under very difficult circumstances. Your Lordships must remember that in discussing the conduct of the Government of India everything does not appear in the papers that are laid before Parliament. It is impossible to lay before Parliament, or even to send home, the mass of documents which come to the Indian Foreign Office, and which are no doubt consulted by the Viceroy before he forms an opinion, and, moreover, the Viceroy had an opportunity of conferring personally with Mr. Quinton before he decided this matter. I do not think, my Lords, there has been any other point made at all adverse to the conduct of the Viceroy in this case. I wish, however, to allude to two other matters. One is the question which has been raised as to the nature of a durbar, and whether the idea of arresting the Senapatti at a durbar is one which is altogether to be commended or the reverse. There is no doubt, as the noble Duke observed, that in the telegram from Mr. Quinton to the Viceroy, the word "durbar" was used for "persons," and not for "ceremony" or "place." Mr. Quinton said that he proposed to summon the Regent and the durbar to meet him; that meant the Regent and all his entourage—his brothers and everybody connected with the State. Then when those people met him it was at a "durbar," and in the further telegram towards the end of the book, your Lordships will see that it was proposed to arrest the Senapatti "at a durbar," because the Government say in a late telegram that they were not aware of that intention till the 7th of May. Therefore, it is clear that it was intended to arrest the Senapatti at a durbar. I agree with what has fallen from the Secretary of State for India upon this matter. It seems to me, even if there should be found any precedent for taking that course, it is not a desirable course to take. It might possibly occasion disturbances, collision, and bloodshed at these solemn assemblies, which should be carried on with all the state which ceremonies in the East require. I think it would be very undesirable that this should be considered a precedent for any such course to be taken in the future. I entirely agree with all the noble Lords who have spoken, that Mr. Quinton was perfectly incapable of any idea of treachery; all those concerned were perfectly incapable of such a thing; but, nevertheless, the durbar was not, in my opinion, the proper place to make the arrest. If I were to describe the manner in which I think the decision of the Government of India should have been communicated, I agree with what fell from the noble Duke, that it would have been quite right that an intimation should have been given in the most solemn manner possible of the decision at which the Governor General in Council had arrived; and having given that intimation, I should say that the right course would have been to have placed it upon the ruler of that State to carry out the decision of the Government of India. If the Regent had been told at the durbar that he would not be recognised unless he himself removed the Senapatti for a limited time under such conditions as might have been considered right, in all probability the difficulty would not have arisen. The only other point, at this late hour of the evening,

upon which I would venture to make a very few remarks is the question whether it would be desirable or not that this little State should be annexed to the territories of Her Majesty in India. I agree with all that has fallen from those who have addressed your lordships in deprecation of the annexation of native States. In regard to this particular case, I would say that the offence, grave as it has been—and none can be greater than the treacherous murder of English officers—has been committed, not by the ruler of the State, but by those who revolted against the ruler of the State. **The ruler of the State now is the ex-Maharajah who is at Calcutta, because the Jubaraj, as they call him, had not been recognized by the Government of India as the ruler of the State.** I would say also, to come to the question of expediency, that it would be very undesirable to take over the government of a small hill State like Manipur. The State is in a very limited state of civilisation, totally unfit for our laws and regulations. It has been very fairly managed under the influence of British Residents, and it is a State the annexation of which might bring us into collision with some of the neighbouring tribes, and, as any of your Lordships who have paid attention to the matter know, these tribes on the north-east frontier of India have given very considerable trouble at different times. That was my own impression, and it has been confirmed by the opinion expressed by Sir James Johnstone, who was for seven years Resident in Manipur. Sir James Johnstone's opinion upon a matter of this sort is one of great value. He is one of those excellent Indian officers who have devoted themselves towards the civilisation of the hill tribes in India. He was employed for many years among some of the hill tribes in a different part of Bengal, and he was for seven years, I think, Resident at Manipur. His opinion is, that if we were to annex this little State we should be brought into collision with other tribes: we should probably be involved in several small expeditions, and we should be also losing a source of strength which we now possess in this native State. He says—and I think quite rightly—that if this State had been annexed we might very likely have lost the frontier station of Kohima, because there would not have been any force of 2,000 men ready to defend Kohima from the Nagas in 1879, and similar incidents might well take place. I do not know that I can add anything to what has fallen from other noble Lords with regard to the feelings of the rulers of different native States in respect to annexation. One-third part of the whole of British India consists of these native States. Their armies now number something like 300,000 men, and there is no doubt that they watch most carefully any case in which they think the assurances given in 1858 may not be carried out by the Government of India. Fortunately, I do not think since 1858 there is any case in which they have a right to say that those assurances have not been strictly followed by the British Government. I was very glad to hear from the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India, with all the due reservation with which he naturally spoke previously to having received the opinion of the Government of India upon the subject, that his own individual opinion was very much in accordance with the views which I have ventured to put before your Lordships upon this matter. I was glad to hear what fell from the noble Duke (Argyll) in regard to the manner in which the officers who are serving their Queen and country in India should be treated both in Parliament and by the Government, and I will add that when I had the honour of serving under the noble Duke his dealings with me were entirely in accordance with the opinions which he has expressed in your Lordships' House.

LORD REAY

At this late hour of the evening I do not intend to detain your Lordships very long, but as I have only recently returned from India I am anxious to corroborate what has been said with regard to the principles which at present inspire the action of the Government of India in their relations with the Native States. A great deal of misconception seems to exist on that point, and, if possible, I should like to remove it. The motive of our interference in Native States is the benefit of the people by securing to them law and order,

peace and justice. Such interference does not weaken, but strengthens the hold the Chiefs have over their subjects, who are cordially attached to them. One of the best instances that can be given of this process is that which the noble Earl Lord Northbrook gave when he interfered in Baroda. What did we do in Baroda? We did not look for an incapable man, but we looked for a promising young man, to whom we gave the best tutor we could find, and we made of him one of the best rulers who is now at the head of a Native State. The result, therefore, of our interference was to strengthen the Government of Baroda, to establish better relations between it and the people, and to accelerate the assimilation of Baroda administration with that of a British district. Now, this is only one instance, and many others could be given. We are constantly lending Native British officials to Native Chiefs with the deliberate object of improving their States. We do not interfere, as a rule, against the wishes, and certainly not against the interests, of either the Chiefs or their subjects. Perhaps, my Lords, the best illustration that I could give is what happened to me personally when the brother of a Native Chief came to me and asked me to take up his grievance against his brother. He said—"You have taken away from us the summary means which we had when our States were governed in a less civilised manner; therefore, it becomes your duty to interfere so that we may obtain justice in accordance with your notions of procedure." Therefore, the interference in the affairs of a Native State is for purposes of good Government—for the general security of our own Empire, and for the benefit of the people in those States. Now, the only question, my Lords, which seems to me to be of importance is whether the interference of the Government of India in the affairs of Manipur, for which the Government of Assam was primarily responsible, was conducted in accordance with those principles which have hitherto prevailed. I think the question cannot be answered otherwise than in the affirmative. You could not restore the ex-Maharaja to whom the ex-Maharaja had resigned the "gaddi" without, as we have seen, causing bloodshed in the State of Manipur. You could not, it seems to me, allow the Jubraj and the Senapatti to wield a kind of dual power, and when you, therefore, accepted the Jubraj as the lawful heir it was natural to remove the cause of former disturbances. It is impossible to agree with what the Political Agent seems to have thought that the Senapatti "would assist in making the Jubraj's rule strong and popular." It seems to me undoubted that after a certain time the Senapatti would have dealt with the second brother as he dealt with the elder brother. It is unfortunate that the Senapatti was not removed at an earlier date. The slowness of the Indian Administration might undoubtedly in times of real trial become a source of danger, and decentralisation must be carried further. In this case the letters were answered by the Foreign Office at Calcutta with promptitude; in fact, the Archives of Bombay would not produce many instances in which letters on a subject not declared by the Local Government emergent had been answered so quickly as were those of the Chief Commissioner of Assam by the Government of India. Why the Chief Commissioner did not see the desirability of arriving at an early and definite solution of the difficulty does not appear from the Papers, and, in the absence of such an explanation, criticism must be silent on this as on several other inexplicable points. In India no Provisional Government ought to last longer than is absolutely necessary. In the Mutiny there was a Senapatti of the Mahrattas. The news reached Poonah that this Senapatti was collecting men and was dangerous. A squadron of Cavalry was sent at night from Poona to Sattara, and the Senapatti was there and then arrested and, tried, and in that way Sir Robert Phayre averted the danger. That is the result of enforcing local responsibility in troublous times. The slowness of the mechanism of the administration of the Government of India in normal times there is a great deal of excuse, and I am sure that no one will regret more that prompt action was not taken by the Local Authorities than the Viceroy. In fact, that is evident from paragraph 6 of the letter of January 24 to Mr. Quinton. The Viceroy's policy with regard to the Senapatti's removal was, I think, in accordance with precedent, and such as will commend itself to the ablest men in Native durbars, the Native statesmen who exercise such great influence in feudal India, and

whose diplomatic skill would surprise many a European diplomatist. I was very glad, my Lords, to hear what was stated by the noble Viscount that the Secretariat at the Foreign Office had been strengthened, as I was going to make a suggestion to that effect. I am not in favour of the idea of depriving the Viceroy of complete control of political affairs, which I think it extremely desirable that he should exercise. One other point I wish to allude to, namely, the organisation of the political service. I would urge that the organisation of the political service should be passed under review, and that if it is found that at present causes operate which do not induce the ablest men—either from the Civil or the Military Service—to enter upon a political career, those causes should be removed. I think it will also be found that very often after men have entered the Political Department they get disheartened by slow promotion, at any rate as compared with promotion in other Departments of the Public Service, and naturally do not continue to serve as Politicals, but rejoin the Revenue or Judicial Department. I hope that this state of things will speedily be altered. Then, my Lords, I wish to say a few words upon the durbar question. I believe that a friendly durbar in the circumstances under which this durbar was held was a perfect impossibility; a friendly durbar could not be held by a Commissioner accompanied by such a numerous escort; the Manipuris must have realised what the object was of the Chief Commissioner's visit; therefore, the whole notion of treachery seems to me to be absolutely out of the question. The durbar would have been held as a Court, and all I can say is that so far from there being treachery my impression from these Papers is the reverse; my impression is that the procedure was adopted as an alternative to one less objectionable, which Mr. Gurdon suggested to the Political Agent, namely, arrest by the Regent. If a police officer were to invite a man whom he was going to arrest to meet him in a Police Court, such action would not be treacherous, but it would probably deserve another name. At all events, anyone who has known Mr. Quinton is well aware that he was quite incapable of doing anything which would be a dishonour to the English name. At the same time, I agree with the remarks which have been made that arrests should not be made in durbar. In Bombay I am sure it would never have occurred to us. With regard to the question whether Manipur should be annexed or not, I think that such a step should only be taken in the last resort. At present, when we find it necessary to depose Chiefs—and, unfortunately, I found it necessary to depose two Chiefs—our strength lies in the fact that the people and the members of the Chief's family know that we only establish an interregnum, and that either the Chief himself is restored to his legitimate rights, if he improves, or his lawful heir. Such an interregnum is of the greatest benefit to the Ruler as well as to the people, because all branches of the Administration are improved. Therefore, I hope that if annexation can be avoided it will be avoided. Before I sit down I may, perhaps, be allowed to say that I was very glad to hear the tribute which was paid by the Government to the merits of the noble Marquess who presides over the destinies of our great Indian Empire. I am the only one of your Lordships who has had the honour of being associated with him in the task which he performs so well, and I was able to witness the great ability, the great conscientiousness, with which he fulfils the arduous duties which have devolved upon him, and which have earned for him the respect of his countrymen and of the natives of India. With reference to the horror of the massacre, not to incur the censure of the noble Duke, I shall only say that I fully share in what must be the prevailing feeling in your Lordships' House with regard to that terrible catastrophe.

THE EARL OF DERBY

My Lords, this question has been so thoroughly threshed out, it has been spoken to by so many noble Lords who have had practical experience of Indian administration, and I will add, that notwithstanding

differences upon specific points, there has been so general an agreement among us on the main principles involved, that I almost hesitate to trouble you at all, and I shall only do so to the extent of a few words. In this business of Manipur there are three distinct and separate questions. There is the question of the policy pursued by the Government of India towards the State of Manipur. There is the question of the execution of that policy and the disaster to which it led. And, lastly, there is the far more important question, what are we to do with that State in the future? One of those questions may be very easily disposed of. The misfortune which led to the loss of valuable lives is one as to which it can serve no useful purpose here to endeavour to apportion whatever blame there may be. To say nothing of the natural feeling towards those who cannot defend themselves, we cannot do it in justice, because those who are mainly concerned have their mouths closed; if they made mistakes, they have far more than expiated them; and if there was on their part no error, they are doubly unfortunate in being unable to repudiate unjust attacks. There are only, I think, one or two remarks which need be made upon that part of the case. In the first place, popular information and report has enormously exaggerated the extent of the disaster. We heard at first of the sacrifice of 400 lives. Now it turns out, as I understand (I hope I am right), that the total loss does not exceed some 25 dead or missing. Well, everything goes by comparison, and however we may regret such a misadventure, it is not one on a great scale relatively to the armies of India, and to the work which those armies have to do. Scarcely a year passes in which much larger losses are not incurred in frontier expeditions, which excite very little interest here, and sometimes in actions of which nobody ever hears. In the next place, the military honour of the troops is safe. Acts of signal courage were performed, and the alleged causes of failure do not in any way touch the courage or the discipline of the soldiers engaged. And, lastly, let me suggest that we ought to be very slow to blame Indian officials, whether in the Civil or Military Service, for acts which may seem to us rash and imprudent. If our officers in either Service had been always prudent, if they had not often run risks which might have been avoided without dishonour, we might have escaped a few mishaps, but our position in India would not be what it is. I have no doubt that such inquiry as is now possible is being made by the competent authorities, and in their hands, I think, we had better leave it, probably altogether, at any rate for the present. The question of policy is far more difficult, and naturally leads to more difference of opinion. What I gather from all that has been written upon the subject, and from the speeches that I have heard here, points to the conclusion that in general there has been no desire to interfere unduly in the internal affairs of Manipur. That is the view of other noble Lords whose authority goes far to decide the question, and the best proof that they are right is that we were at one moment—I speak on the authority of the then Governor General—about to withdraw our Resident altogether from the State of Manipur when the late Rajah desired that he should be allowed to remain. That does not look like a policy of undue interference on our part. My Lords, I will not waste time in proving what is not disputed, but looking at the position which we have assumed in India, I do not think that our right to interfere when this revolution broke out can be denied. We had recognised the deposed Rajah; we were not bound in any way to acquiesce in his disposition. No native would have thought that, in using our discretion to give or withhold the sanction of the paramount Power, we were going beyond our proper and legitimate sphere of action. And there is in such a case as this no question of ignoring or resisting the wish of the people, because the revolution was one of an entirely Oriental kind; it was a revolution of the Palace, made simply by force. The Governor General might accept the results of that revolution or he might repudiate them; but he could not reasonably say, and no one could say for him or of him, that it was a matter with which he had nothing to do. He is responsible for the peace of India, and peace may always be endangered by a change of rulers in a Native State. But the question of right is one thing, the question of policy is another; and if I ventured to express, or even to form, an opinion of my own upon a matter so doubtful, and about which we really know so little, I should

have doubted whether it would not have been wiser to discard at once the ruler who, though we might have no cause of quarrel with him, had run away from his country in a fright with very little cause, and who was evidently unfit for his position, and in that case to have accepted unconditionally the ruler who had replaced him and his advisers, and to influence and control the country through them. No doubt the new ruler would not have been a nominee of ours, he would not have owed his throne to us; but I do not know that that makes very much difference in the long run. There is a very memorable instance in Indian history. We all remember what happened in Afghanistan fifty years ago. We tried to put Shah Soojah on the throne, and we failed. He was replaced by the very man whom we had unsuccessfully tried to dethrone, and whom we were compelled to recognise again—Dost Mahomed. Dost Mahomed was an able man, and saw that it was not his interest to bear malice, and he reigned for many years in perfectly good understanding with us. I do not say that the cases are precisely parallel, because, of course, Manipur is a dependent State, but I do not see why, on a smaller scale, the same results should not have followed in the present case. And I will own frankly, though with no wish to criticise, that I do not quite understand the policy recommended by my noble Friend the Secretary of State. As I understand the speech of my noble Friend, he puts it in this way—that it was quite right and judicious to recognise a new ruler, but that he had been placed on the throne by an unlawful revolt, and that, therefore, though he was to remain, the people who had put him there ought to be punished. That is a new doctrine in politics. I do not understand accepting the results of a resolution, and then proceeding to imprison or banish the people by whom it has been made.

VISCOUNT CROSS

I would like to say that it was specially stated that the Jubraj took no part whatever in the revolution; he had disappeared from Manipur for eight miles—it was only after his brother had gone away that he came back.

THE EARL OF DERBY

The revolution was made in his interest, if not made by him. However, I do not want to argue that point because what I was going to say, and I say it quite unaffectedly, is that I shall entirely distrust my own judgment in a matter of this kind. It is a question which depends so much upon details, upon the character of the men, upon the feeling of the people, and upon the circumstances of the country that I do not believe anyone here, and I hardly believe even my noble Friend the Secretary of State is capable of pronouncing dogmatically. It is essentially a question for the Government of India. We give our Viceroy immense powers; we surround him with able assistants, and it is not wise, I think, to take such decisions out of his hands. He is better able to judge in such matters than we are; and, what is perhaps still more important, he is not exposed to those disturbing and distracting influences which prevail at home. As a matter of fact, questions of this kind are, I imagine, commonly left to him, and it must be remembered that but for the military mishap which has caused all this discussion, nothing would have been heard of the affair here, and it would have passed absolutely un-noticed. There is one point with regard to which I listened—to the explanation of the Secretary of State—with much satisfaction. I confess that in reading the Papers I did not understand the long delay of the Government of India in coming to a decision. I think even now that that delay was unfortunate, because silence and forbearance give a sore of consent, and we might have been supposed to acquiesce in what we did not immediately resent. But I am bound to say that I think the Secretary of State has given sufficient reasons. In formation had to be waited for; there was no distinct agreement among the authorities concerned, and no doubt other important business

intervened. I still think the delay that occurred was a misfortune, but I do not think after what we have heard that it can be treated as a clause of censure. My Lords, I do not think that it is worth while, after all that has been said, to go into that story of the durbar and the charge which has been made outside this House, but which has not been made here, of treachery and foul play against the Viceroy or his subordinates. The Governor General, I apprehend, is entirely out of the question. He could not have taken it upon himself to have arranged a detail of this kind; and as to the others, a durbar, as I take it, is merely a public audience of a formal kind. It may be held for all sorts of purposes; it has no sacred character about it. The real question is: Was anybody invited there—called upon to attend there—under an implied promise of safety, and was that promise violated? For my own part, I do not believe that to be likely, or even to be possible. On that point, which is really the important part of the question, the officers concerned have been completely exculpated, not only by the Government, but by others who speak independently. If it is only a question of etiquette, especially if it is determined that to avoid misunderstanding no such proceeding shall take place in the future, I do not think that matter is worth discussing. But, my Lords, the question still remains, and it is really that upon which I rose to speak—what is to be done with Manipur? Upon that I wish to join my humble and earnest representations to those of my noble Friends, and to say, whatever you do, do not annex. I do not think we could possibly ask from the Secretary of State a more formal and binding pledge than that which he has given. He could not speak in a definitive manner without reference to the Government of India; but though I rather agree with the noble Duke who has left the House that Parliament had better not interfere habitually in Indian affairs, I think there are exceptions to that rule, and that this is one of them. As we all know, there exists in India, always has existed, and probably always will, both among soldiers and among civilians, and for a reason which we can very easily understand, strong feeling in favour of annexation: and what I wish is, not that we should interfere with the discretion of Lord Lansdowne, but that we should give him such support as is in our power to help him to resist that feeling. It is not merely that annexation of a very poor State surrounded by wild tribes would be a source of increased military expense, though it certainly would be, and that is rather serious, because, as we all know, finance is the one weak point of our Indian administration; but we have to look, as several noble Lords have said before me, to the effect produced over the whole of India. Everybody who remembers the year 1857, and the events which followed, knows how widespread was the feeling of insecurity and distrust prevailing at that time among the Native Princes. They had seen many of their Kingdoms swept away, and no one knew whether his turn might not come next. When the company's power ceased, in 1858, opportunity was taken to give solemn assurances that the policy of annexation (for so I must call it) was at an end. Those assurances produced a complete change of feeling. For the last 33 years the Native Princes have been our best friends, and they would stand by us in case of need, because their interests are ours. We protect them, we respect their position, and a good many of them know that if the day of our expulsion from India were ever to arrive their Thrones would be, to say the least, very insecure. But though they trust us, and though they act cordially with us, it is not possible that they should entirely forget the past, and I believe that one Native State annexed within the limits of India, whatever might be the cause, whatever might be the justification, would create a feeling of alarm from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. I do not know that any benefit could be conferred upon us or upon Manipur itself by annexing that State, but certainly no such benefit could be worth the risk of mischief done elsewhere; and I am quite sure, from what he has said, that the Secretary of State for India and the Government, who know the recent history of India as well as I do, if they think it necessary to practise a certain amount of reticence, agree with me in what I have said. That is really the one important and the one practical part of this whole discussion. The rest relates to the past—to matters which are disposed of and cannot be altered. But we must have no more of the Dalhousie policy. We must have no

more annexation. The Native Princes trust us now. This is an occasion to show that we deserve their confidence, and I hope and believe that we shall avail ourselves of it.

[THE MARQUESS OF RIPON](#)

I do not propose to detain your Lordships more than a moment or two. I am very well content to rest upon what has fallen from my noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley and from the noble Earl who has just sat down, and who has expressed his views with so much force and authority. But one matter fell from the noble Viscount upon which I want to say a single word. He spoke of me as having complained of the secrecy of some of Mr. Quinton's proceedings. I beg the noble Viscount to understand that when I spoke of the secrecy of those proceedings I did not use the expression in the smallest degree in a disparaging sense to Mr. Quinton. I regretted that the intentions of the Government were not earlier and more openly declared, but I never had it in my mind for a moment to think that Mr. Quinton pursued a secret course in any dishonourable or unworthy manner. I am anxious to make that statement, because Mr. Quinton has been, as I think, so unjustly attacked that I should be exceedingly sorry if I could be supposed to have said anything disparaging to him in any way.

[VISCOUNT CROSS](#)

I am sure the noble Marquess will not think that I have said one word in disparagement of Mr. Quinton.

[THE MARQUESS OF RIPON](#)

Quite so. On Question, agreed to.

Back to [FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS BILL.](#)

Forward to [MAIL SHIPS BILL.—\(No. 124.\)](#)