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## **Official correspondence between Lewis Pelly and the Political Department, Bombay concerning Pelly's visit to Riyadh.**

|                               |                                                          |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Holding Institution</b>    | British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers |
| <b>Reference</b>              | Mss Eur F126/55                                          |
| <b>Date(s)</b>                | Dec 1864-Mar 1866 (CE, Gregorian)                        |
| <b>Written in</b>             | English in Latin                                         |
| <b>Extent and Format</b>      | 1 file, 9 items (28 folios)                              |
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### **About this record**

Official correspondence between Lewis Pelly and the Secretary to Government in the Political Department Bombay, some of which is in draft form regarding reports by Lewis Pelly on his trip to Riyadh, and his opinions on the ongoing dispute between the Sultans of Muscat and the Wahhabi.

The correspondence from Lewis Pelly gives accounts of the journey to Riyadh; the challenges of collecting specimens and readings owing to the constant supervision of their travelling companions; and his opinions on both the differences between the Sultans of Muscat and the Wahhabi and the ongoing dispute between the two peoples.

The correspondence from the Government of Bombay comprises requests for information, both on the Muscat-Wahhabi dispute, and also forwarding requests from the Government of India for a full account of Pelly's time in Riyadh which had been requested from him but had not been received.

MSS Eur F126/55

(1)

Sir  
As proposed in my letter No. 1  
I visited the Wahakee country  
in his Capital, Ripekth.

I have the honor to append as  
sketch map ~~showing the line of march~~  
from the port of Kowat to the capital & thence  
back to the seashore at again, near the  
Island of Wahakee, -

The positions of the principal towns  
& of the points at which the character of the  
country changed have been determined by stellar  
or lunar observation. But as these changes are  
very marked & were met with easily some rough  
to the capital two series of points were ~~determined~~  
which thus fix the general direction of the plains  
& high some ranges over considerable areas.

~~Direction of the~~ Direction of the march  
of the line of march of marked natural objects or distant  
points were taken daily throughout. From these  
sources & from information as to rivers & distances  
gathered locally I have been enabled to fix the  
positions of some points & unmarked points  
with what I believe to be sufficient accuracy. -

Specimens of the rocks & flora  
observed have also been collected in so far as this  
could be done without attracting attention

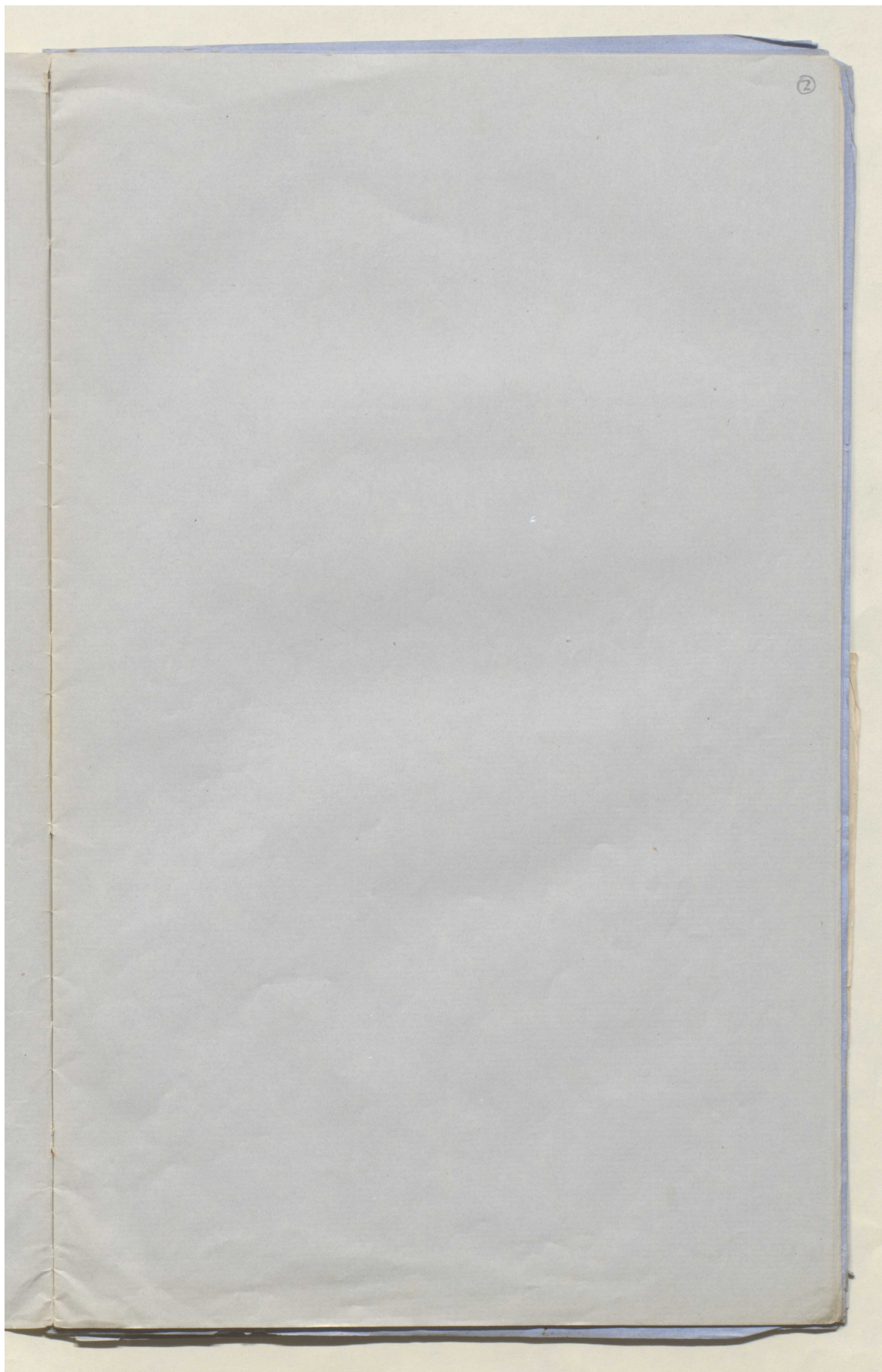


Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[front-i] (2/24)

The capital itself was the only  
point where it was found practicable to  
determine the longitude of solar observation.  
The mean of five observations, taken from the  
roof of the house in which we were lodged gives  
the long: of Perath like . The latitude  
of observation of the Polar Star is —

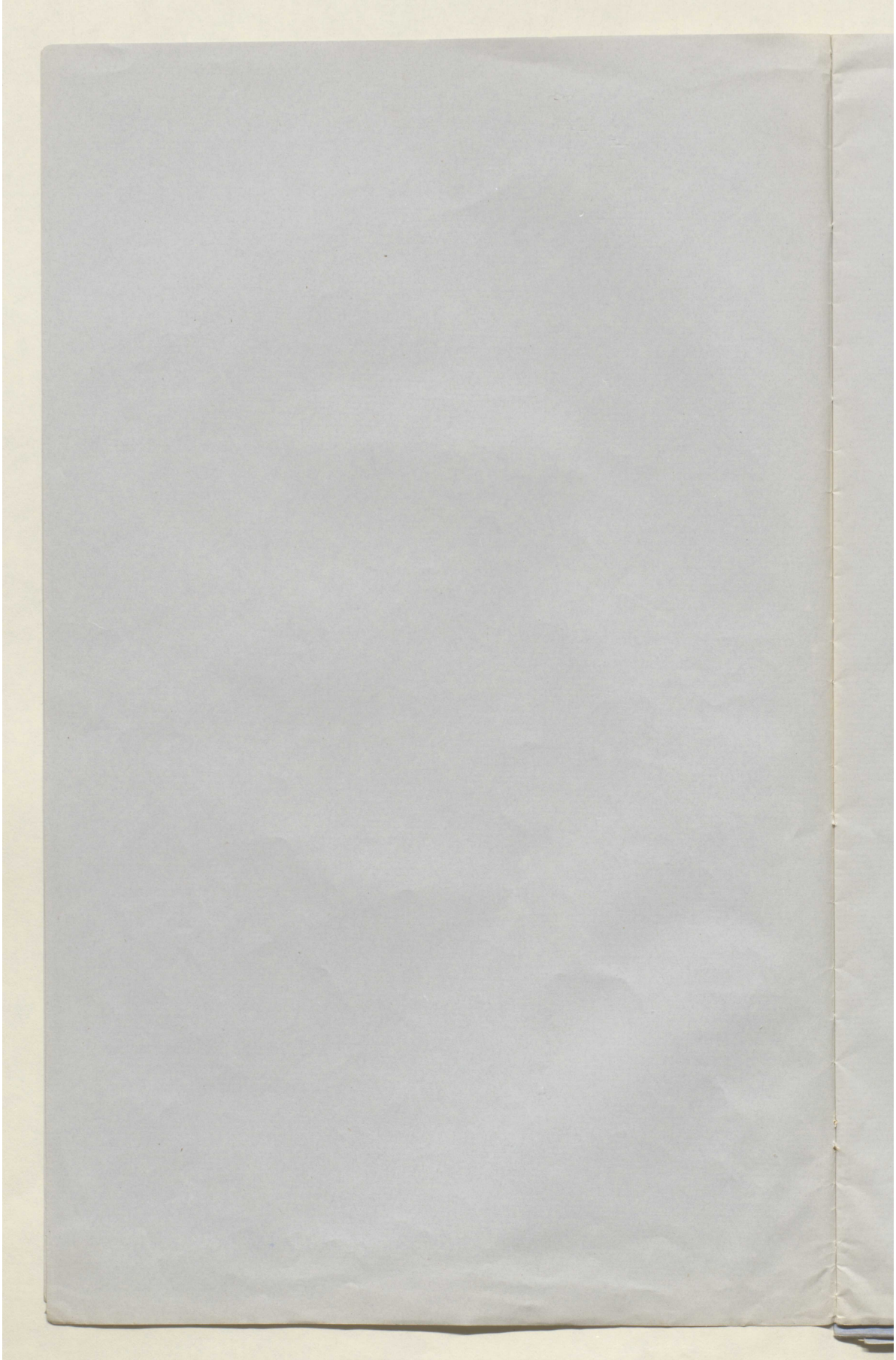
I think it probable that the  
appended copy of extracts from my private  
Journal written at the close of each day  
may be the hope that <sup>it</sup> may be of  
some use in the geography of Alaska  
may find it of some value as a commentary  
or illustration of the sketch maps. —

**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[2r] (3/24)**



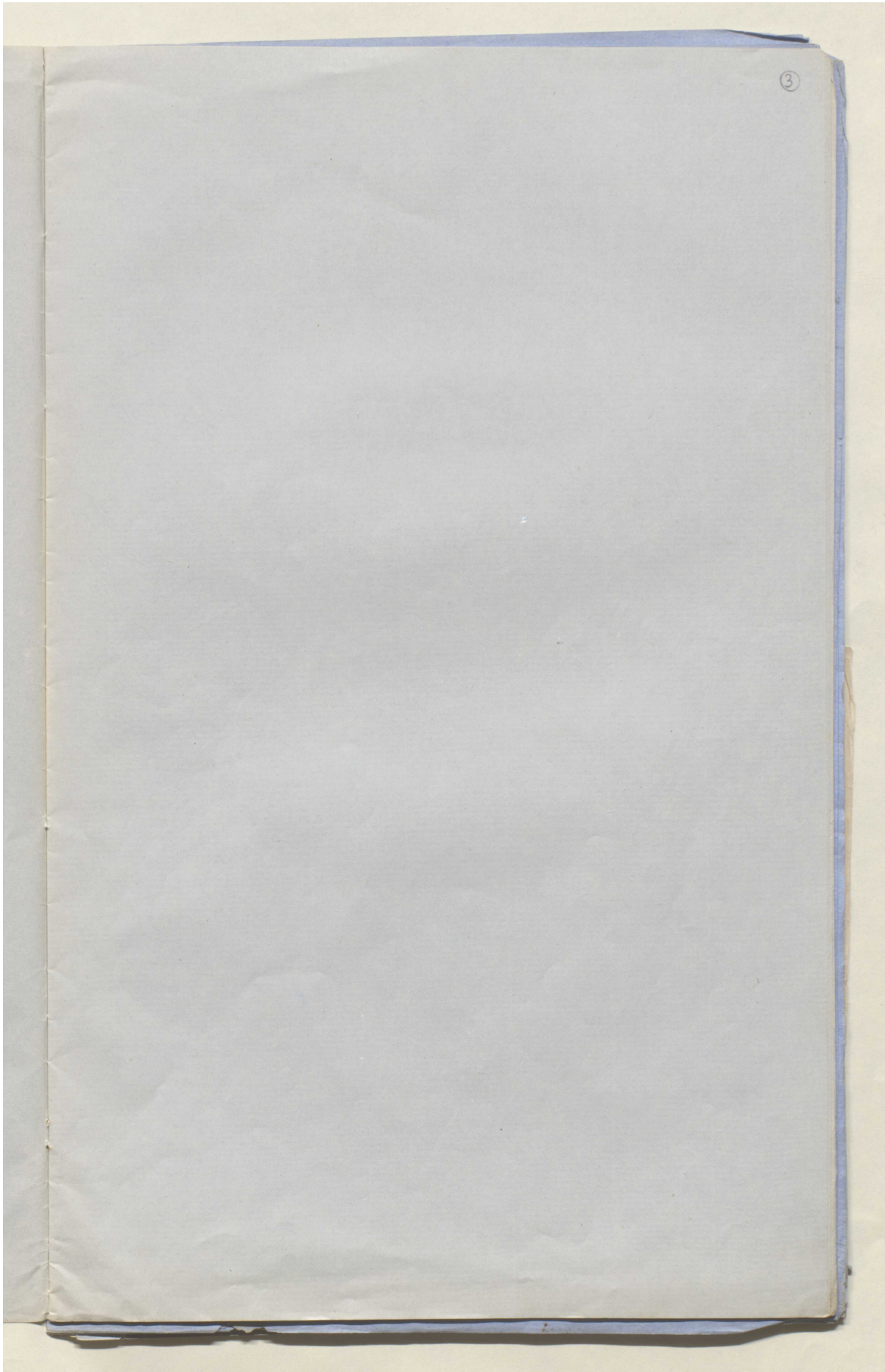


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[2v] (4/24)**

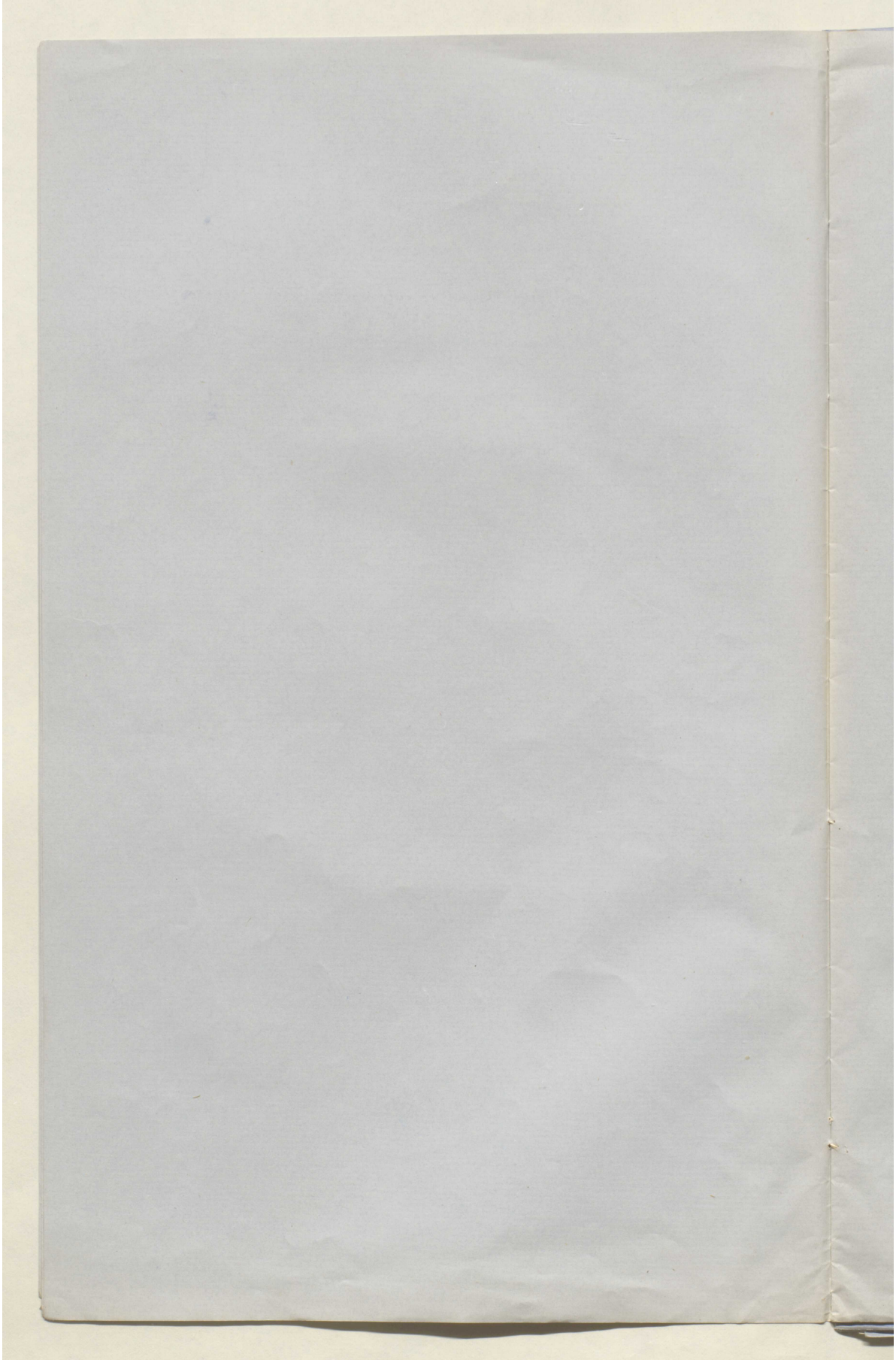




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[3r] (5/24)**

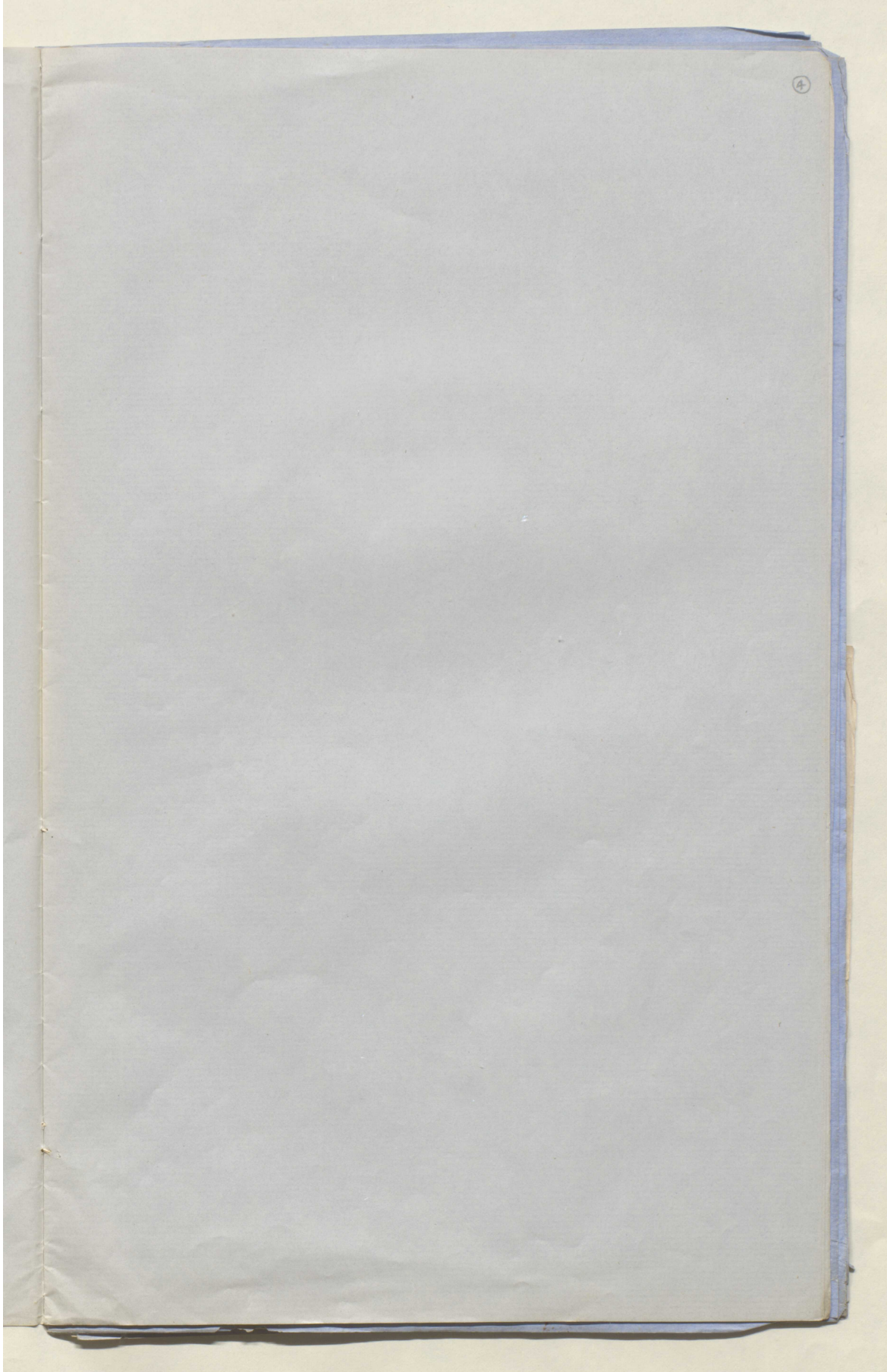


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[3v] (6/24)**

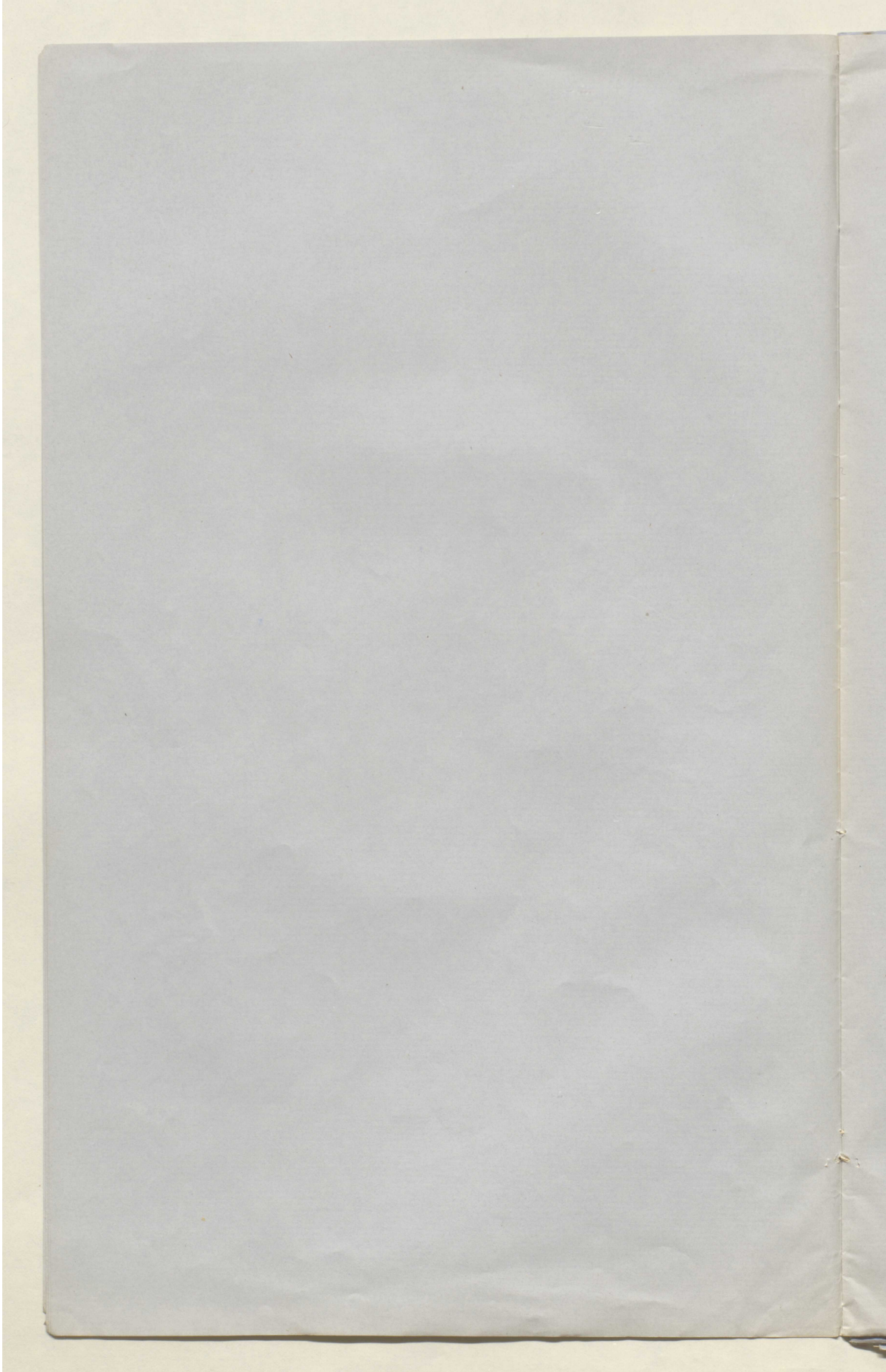




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[4r] (7/24)**

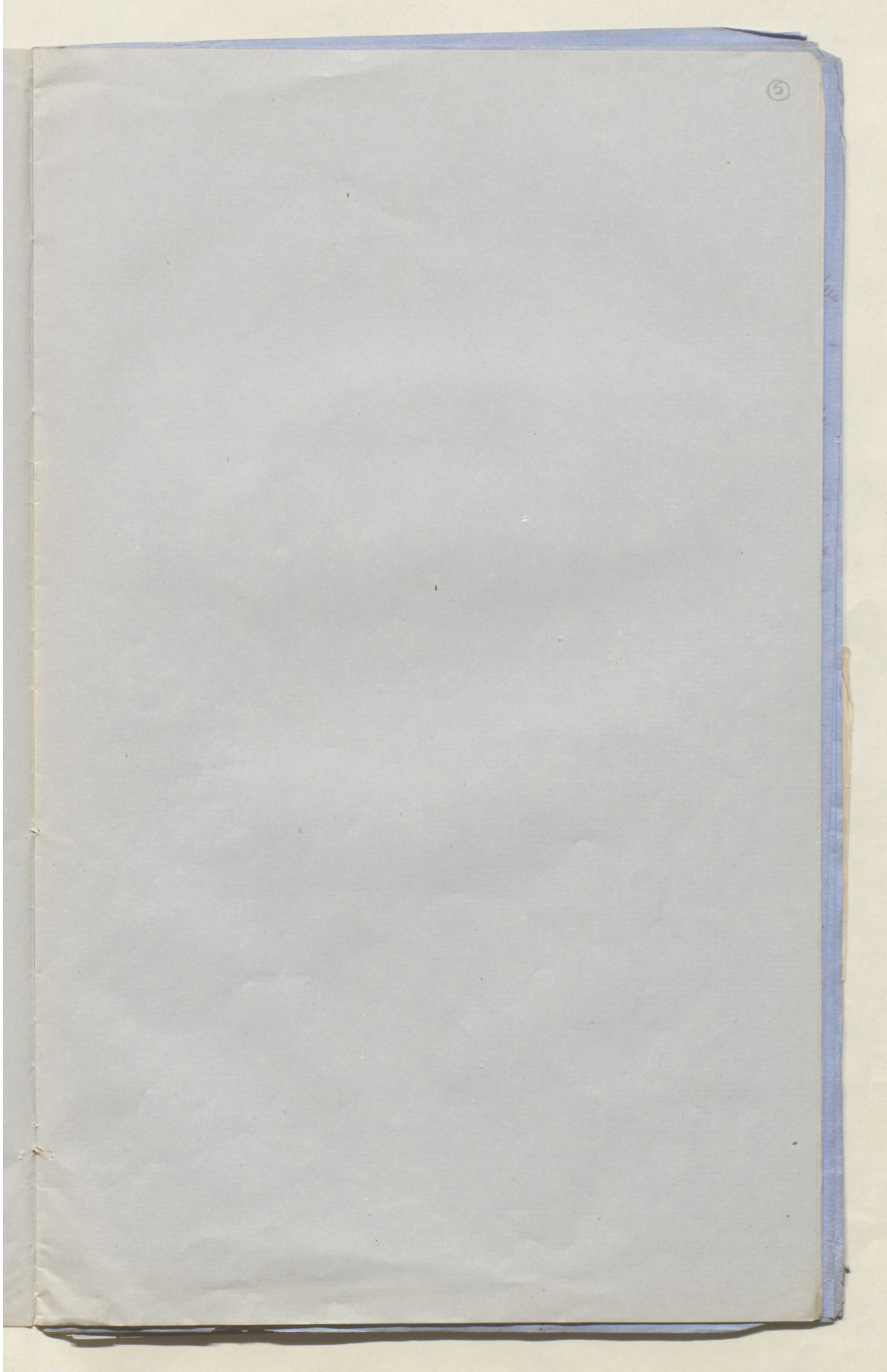


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[4v] (8/24)**

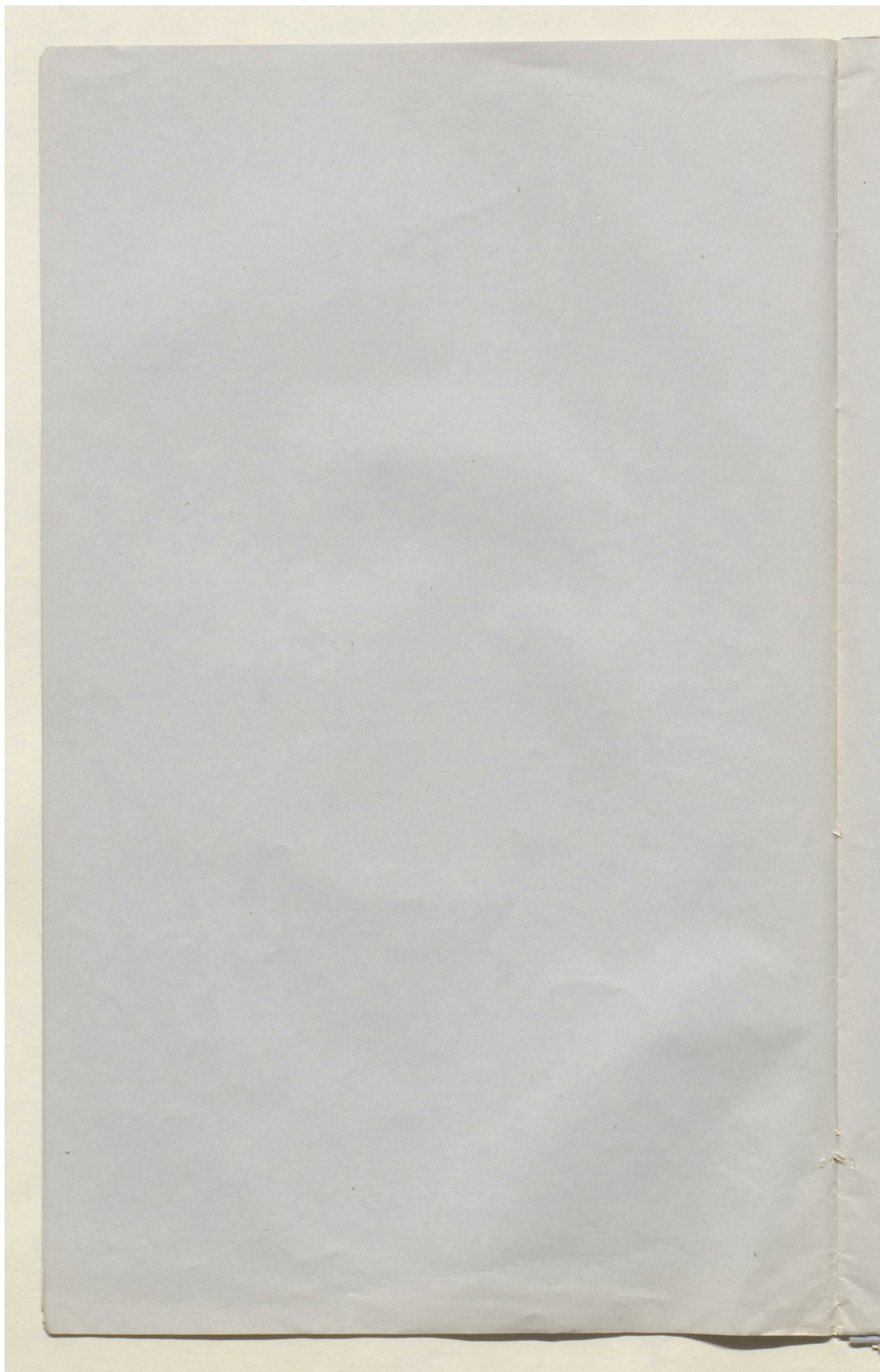




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[5r] (9/24)**

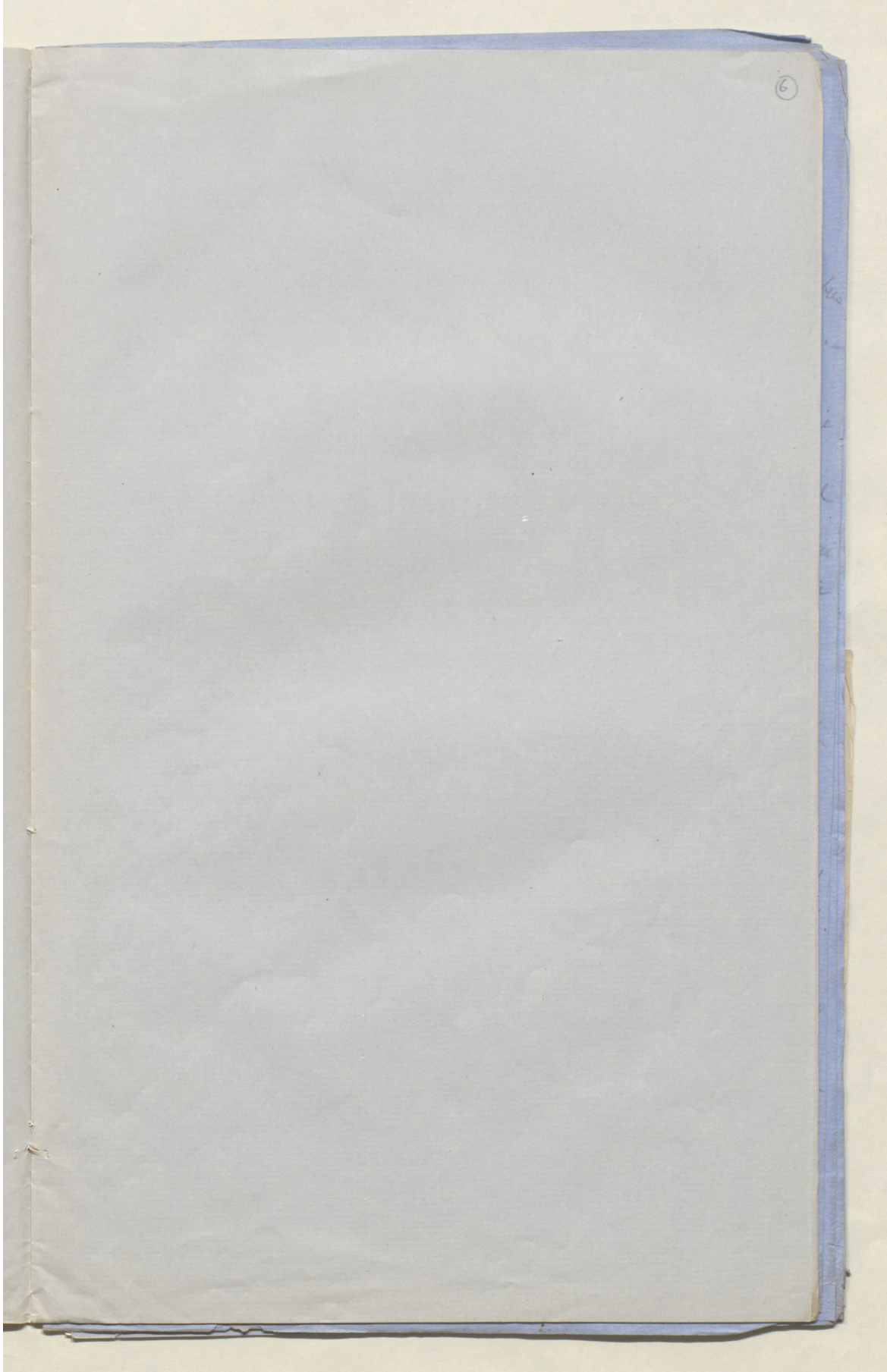


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[5v] (10/24)**

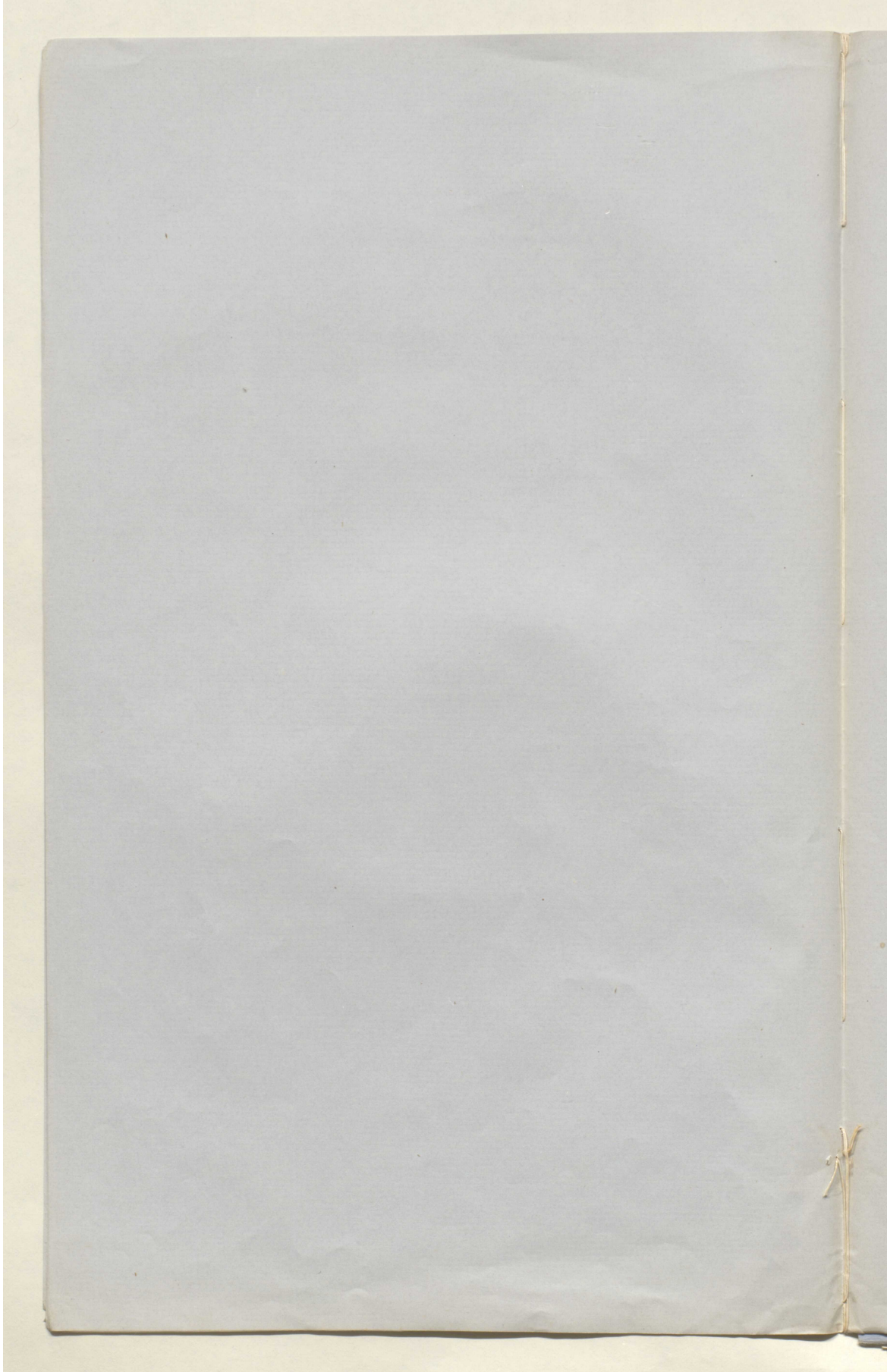




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[6r] (11/24)**

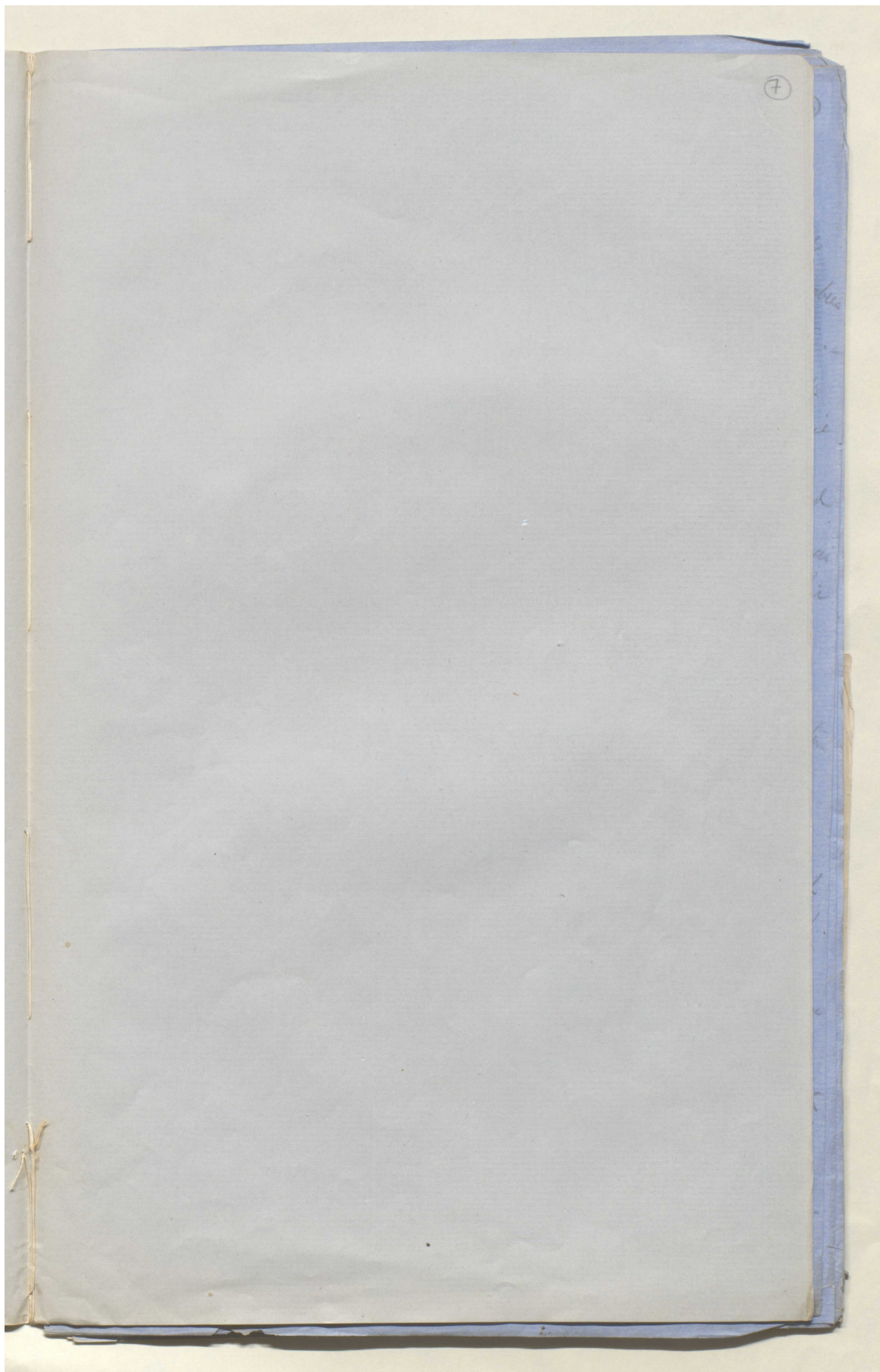


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[6v] (12/24)**

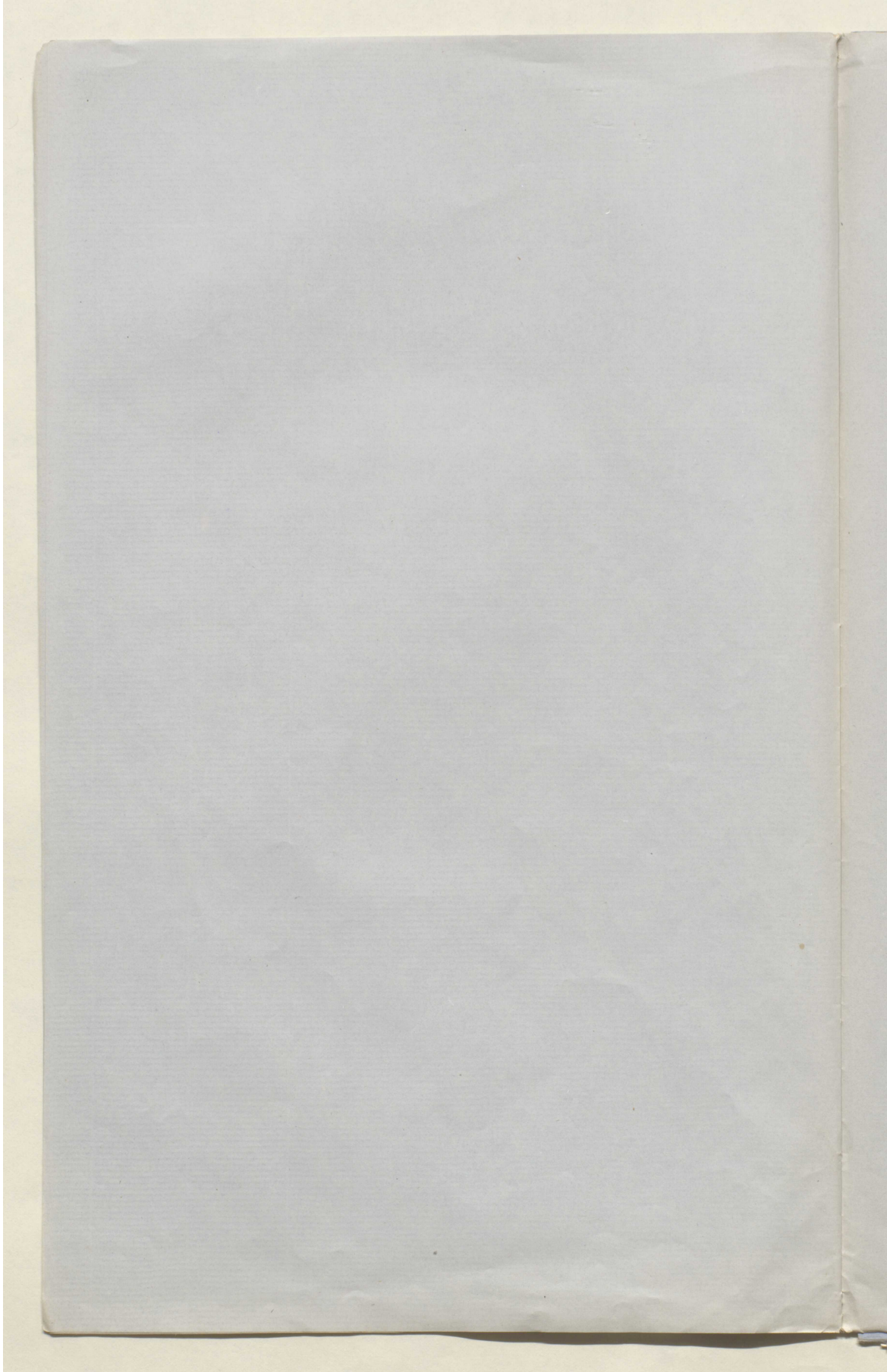




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[7r] (13/24)**

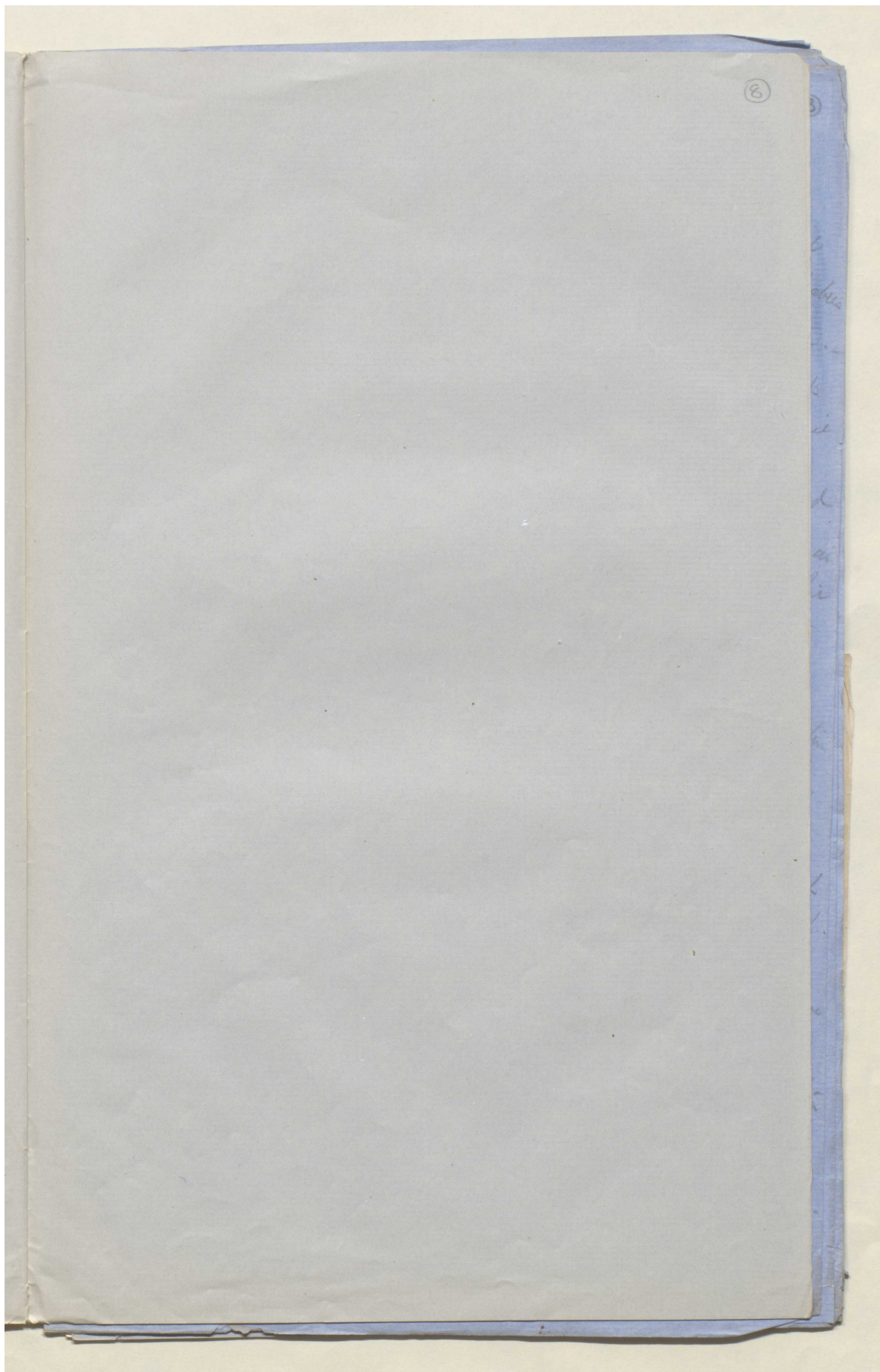


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[7v] (14/24)**

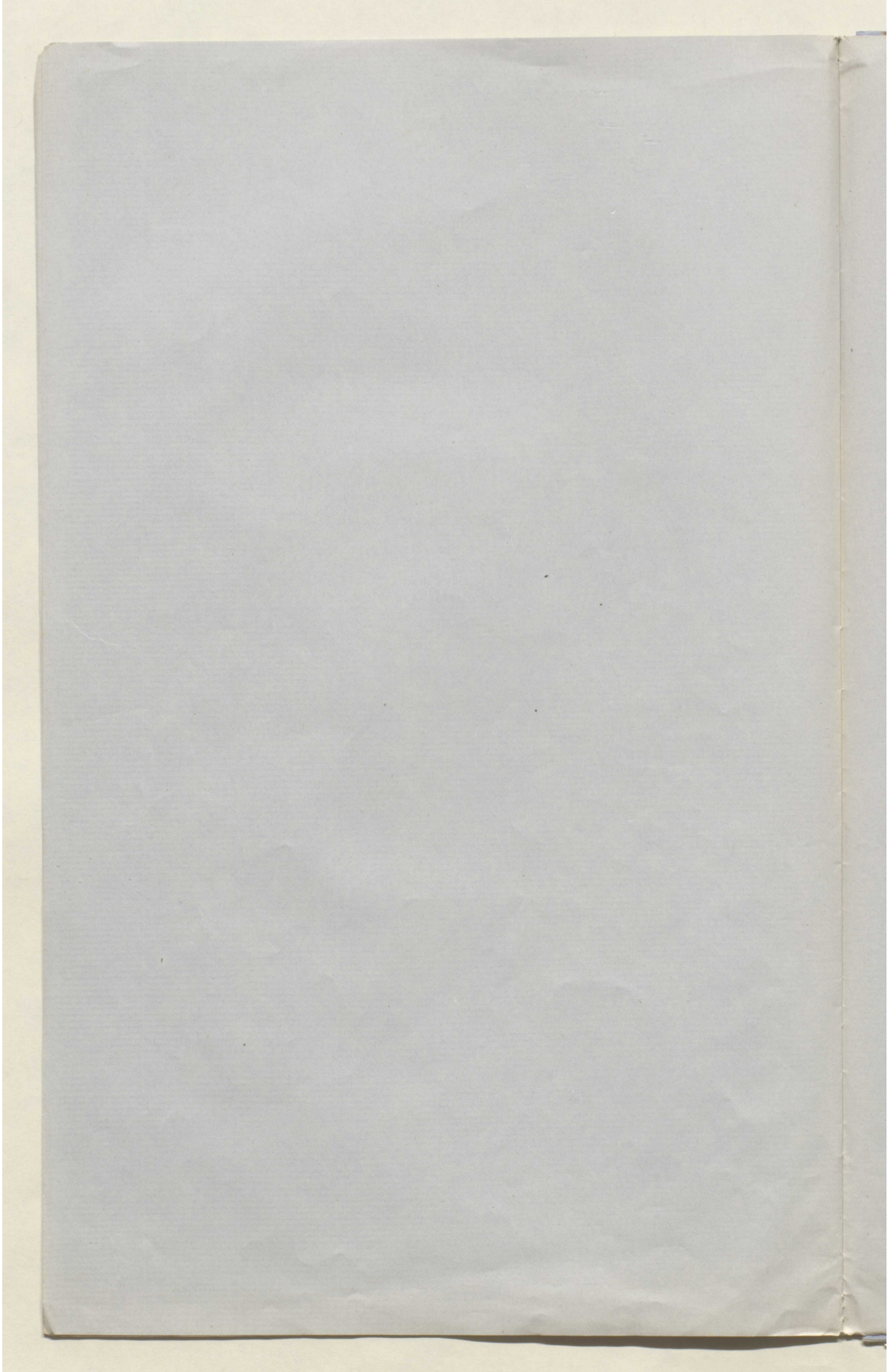




**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[8r] (15/24)**

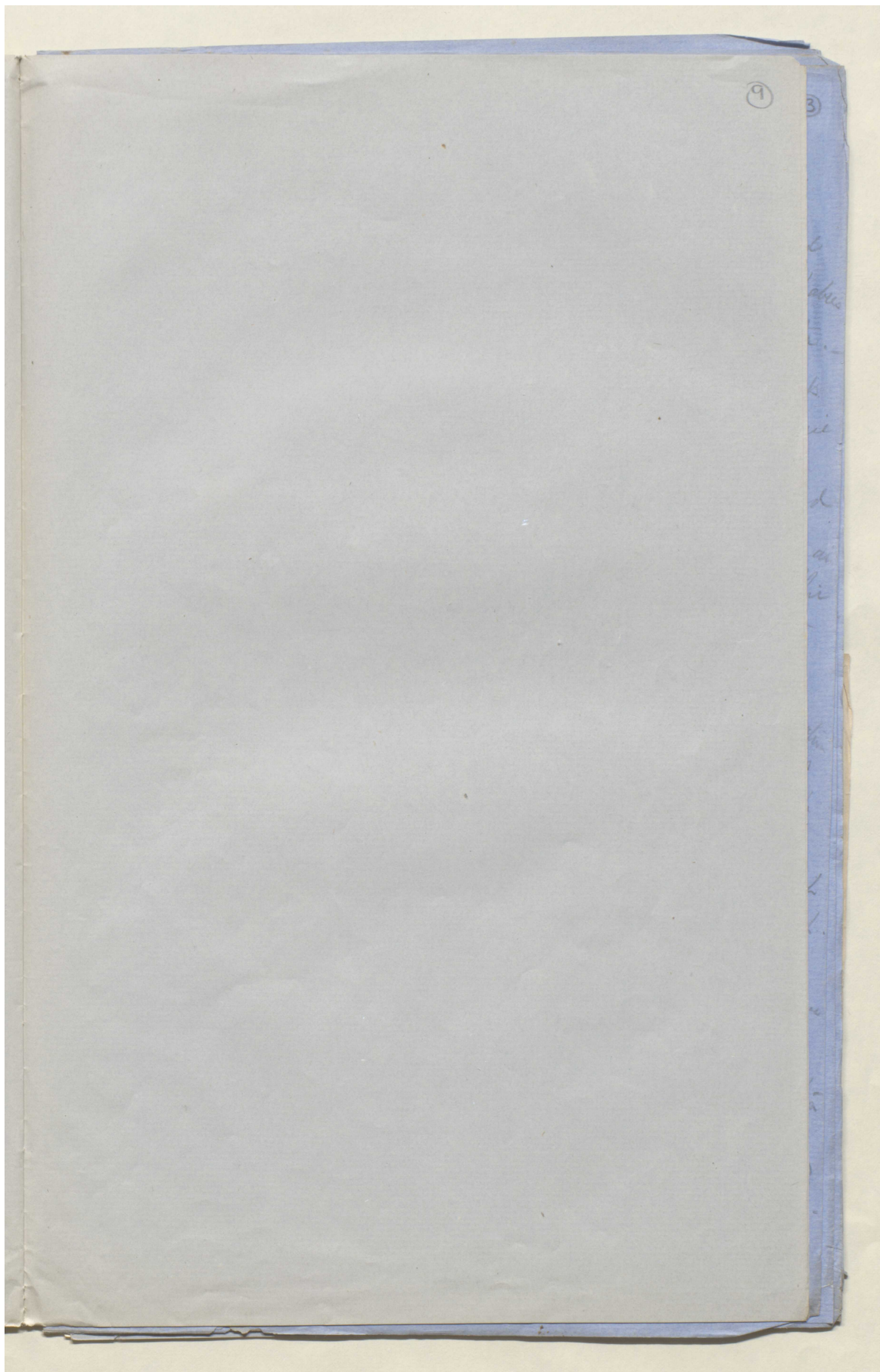


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[8v] (16/24)**

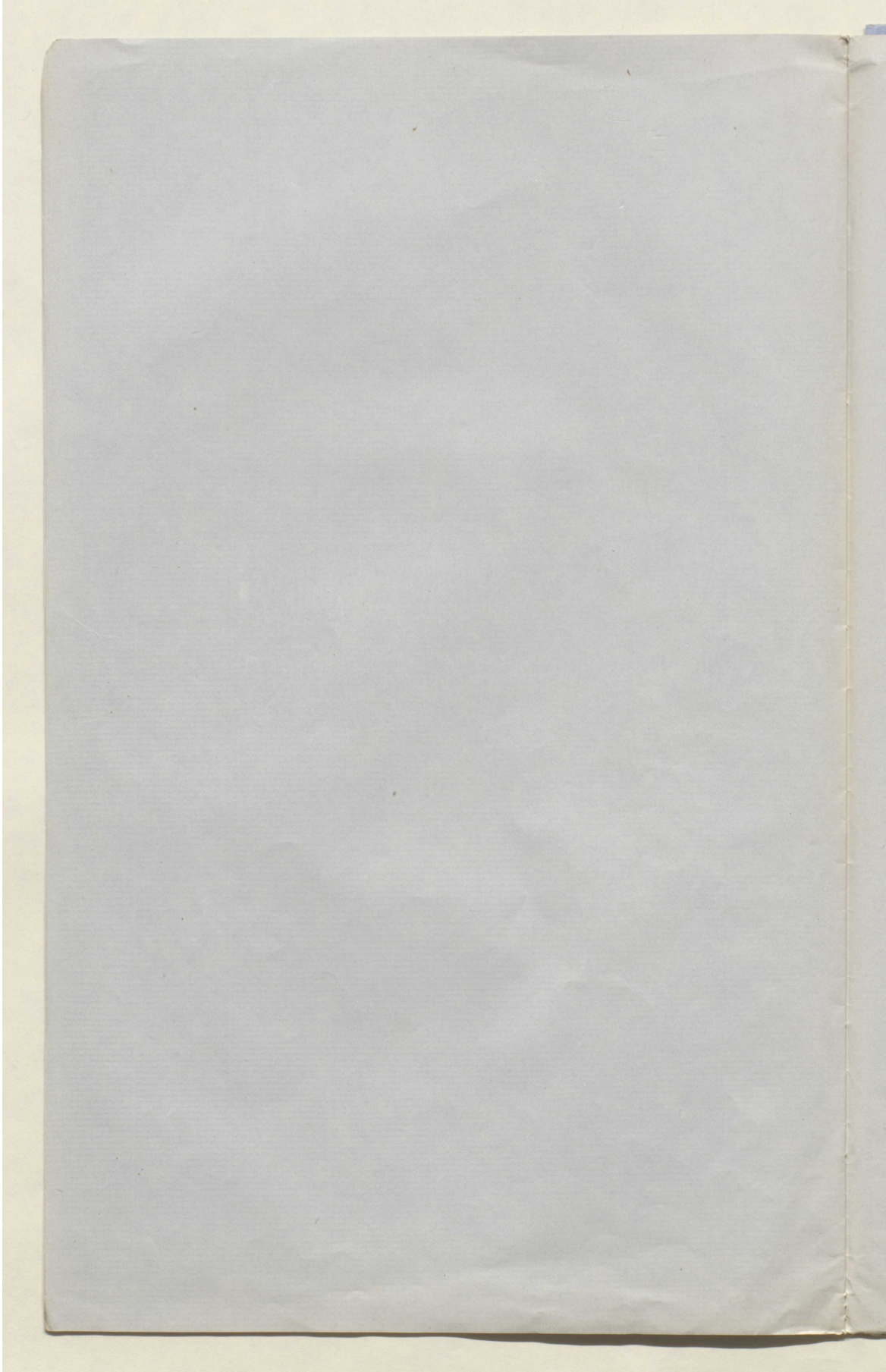




Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[9r] (17/24)

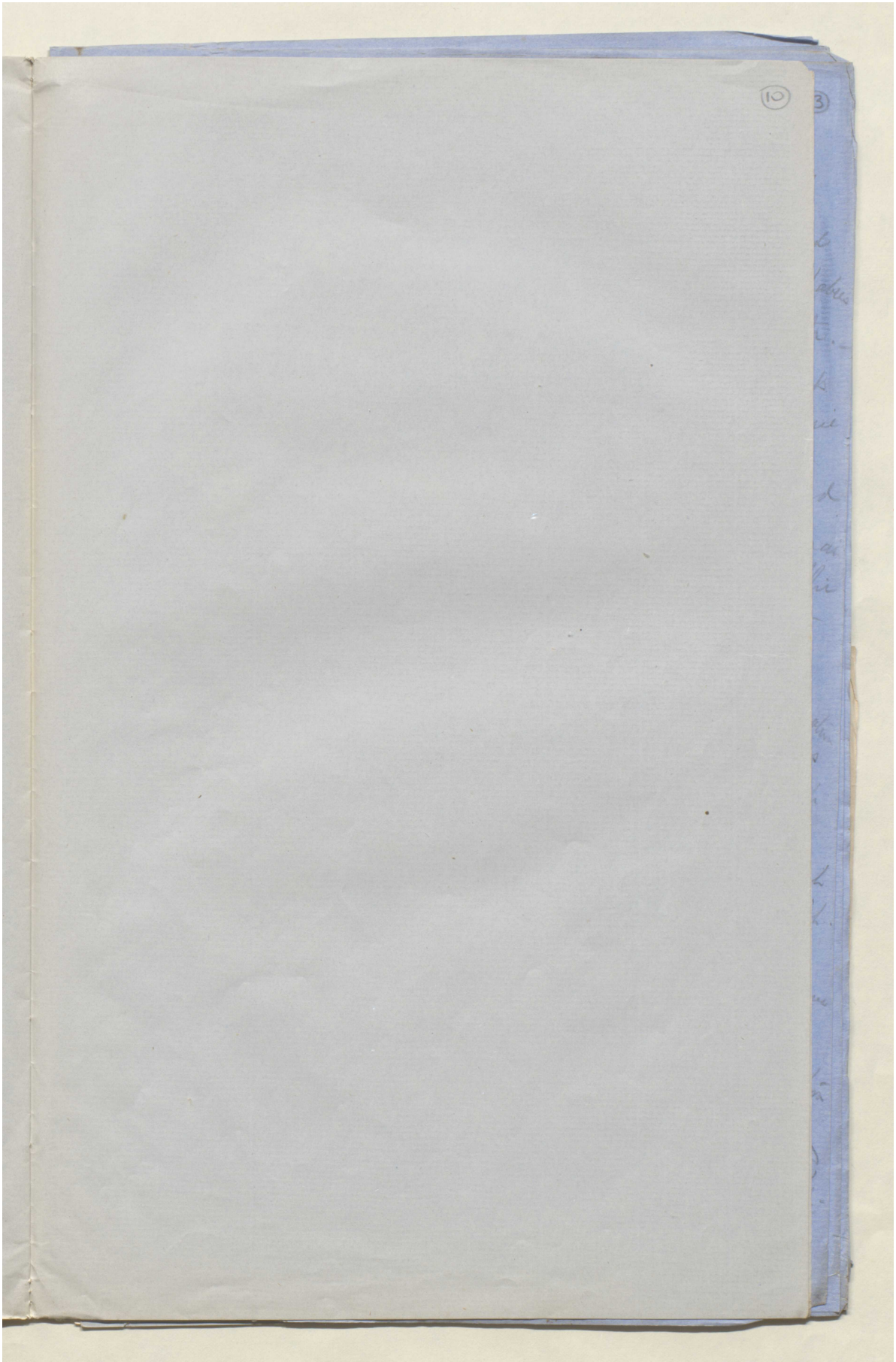


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[9v] (18/24)**

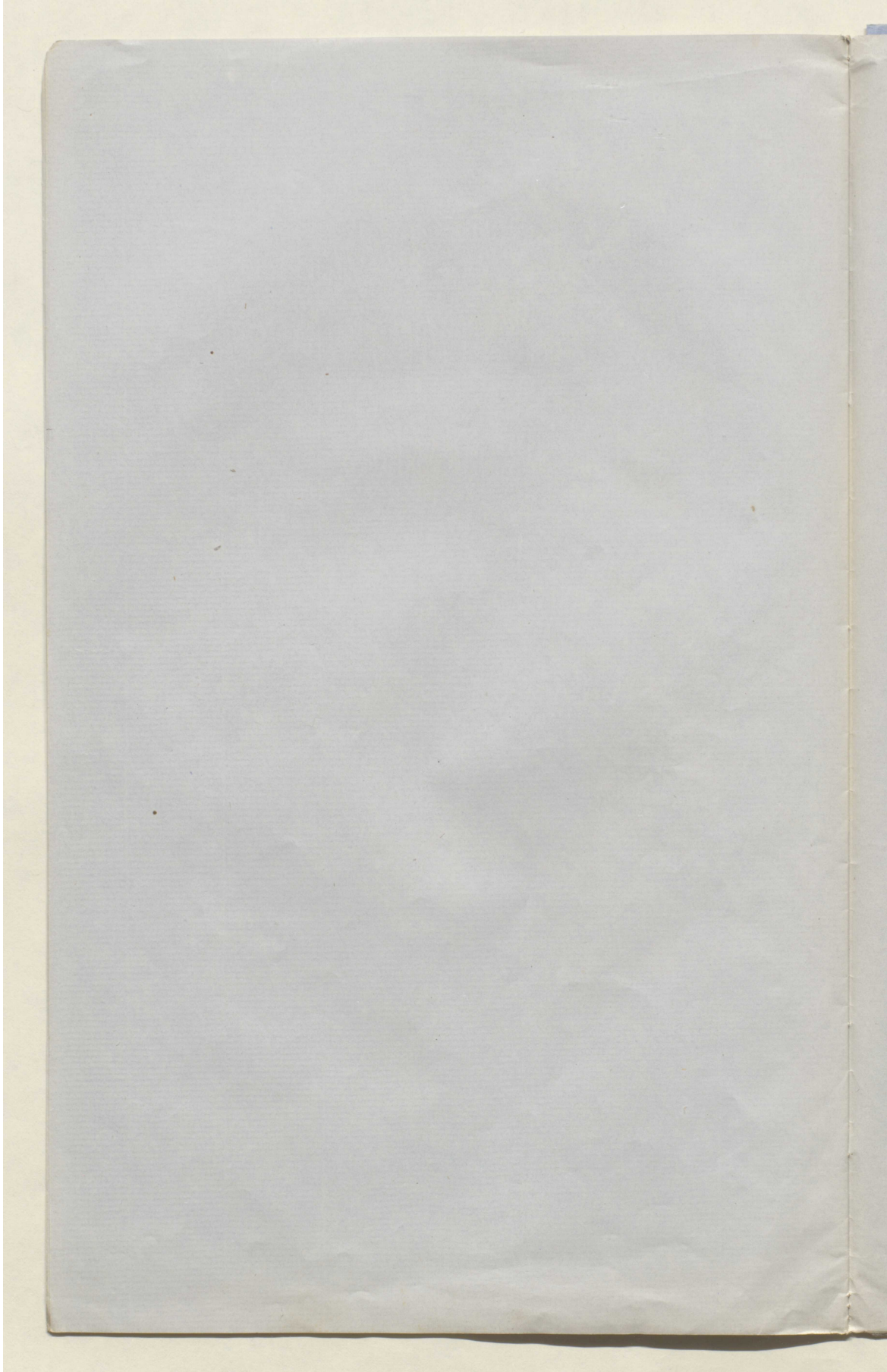




Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[10r] (19/24)

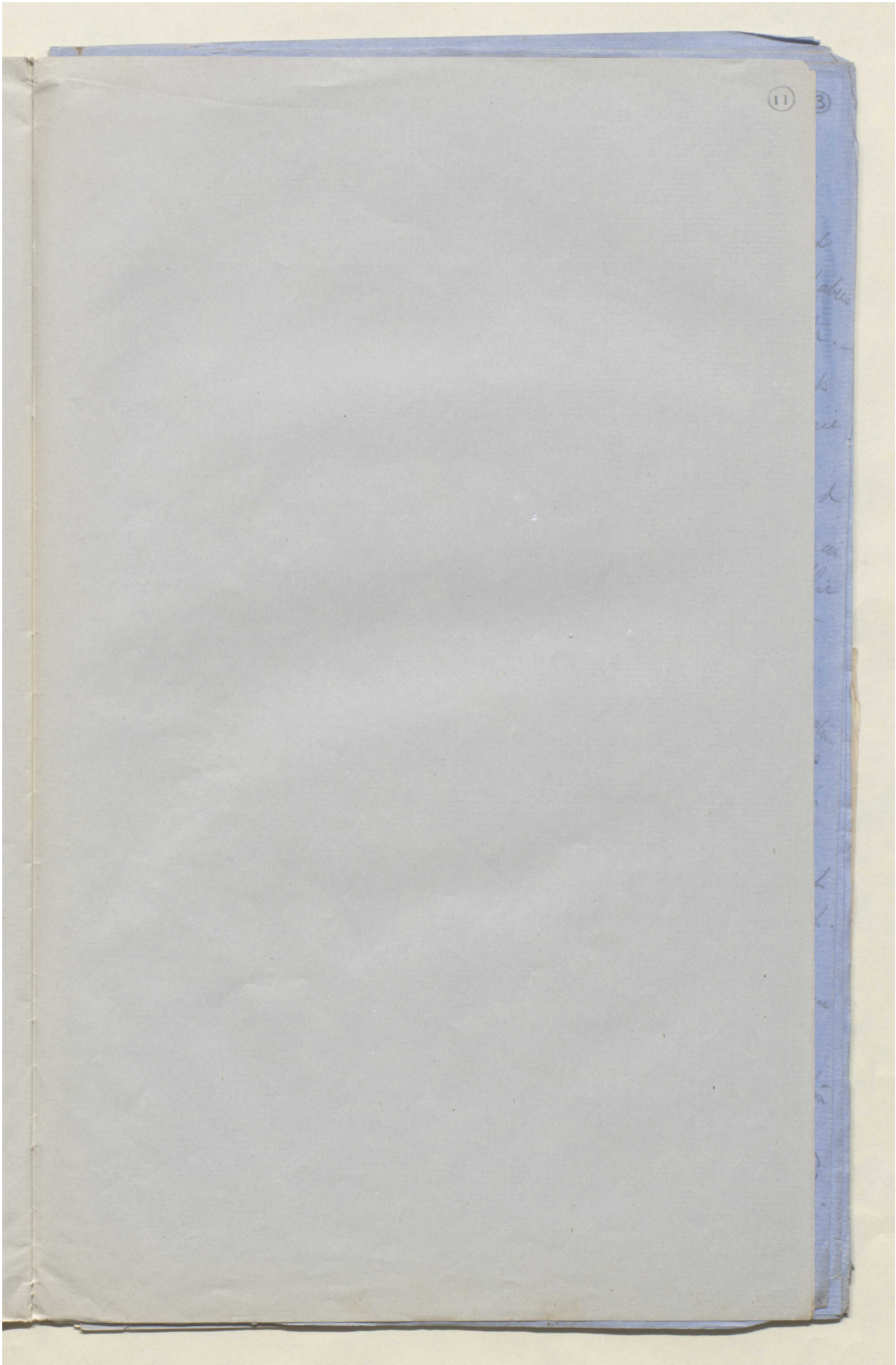


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[10v] (20/24)**

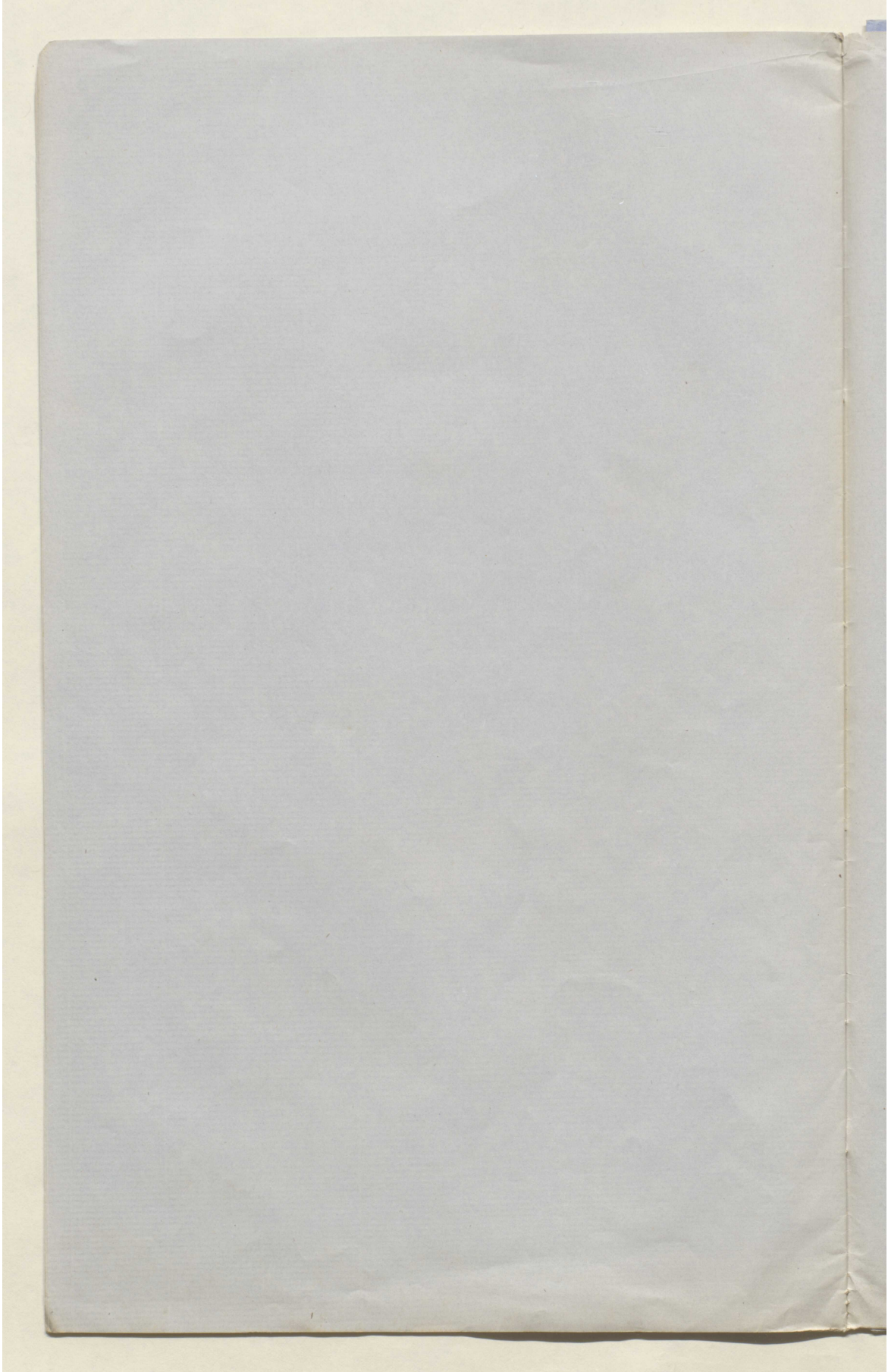




Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[11r] (21/24)

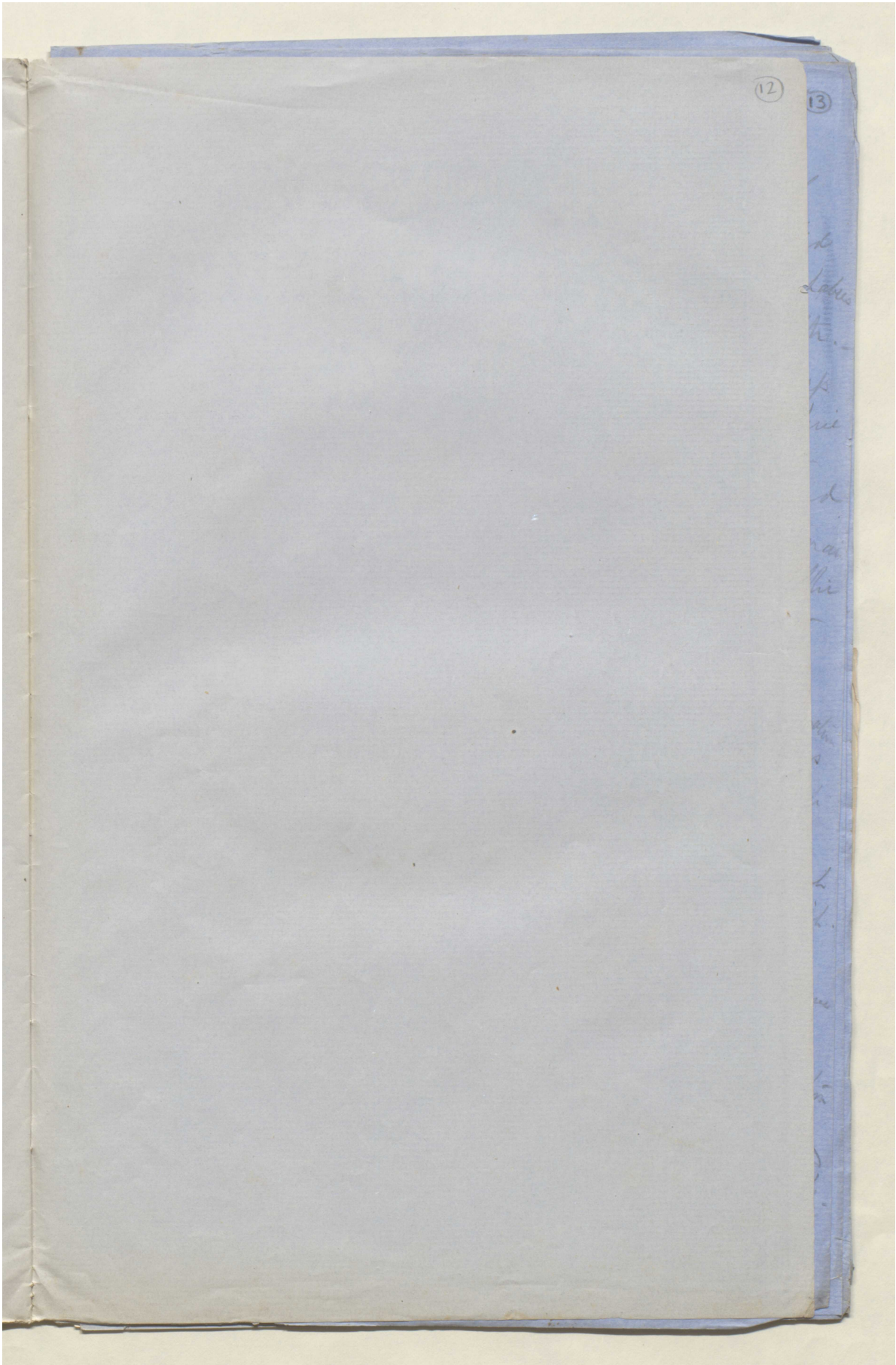


**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[11v] (22/24)**

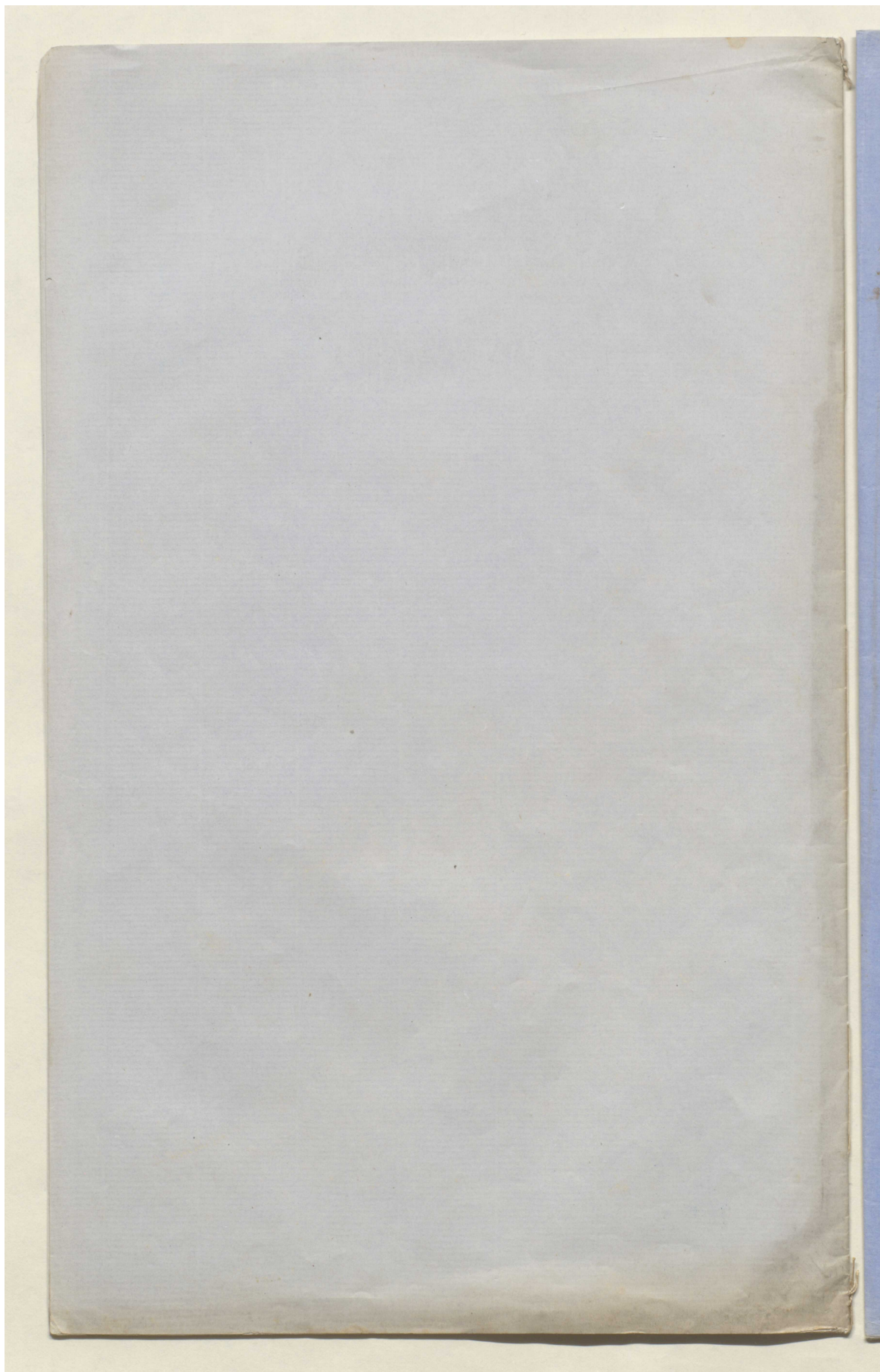




Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[12r] (23/24)



**Draft letter from Lewis Pelly, most likely to the Political Department Bombay  
[12v] (24/24)**









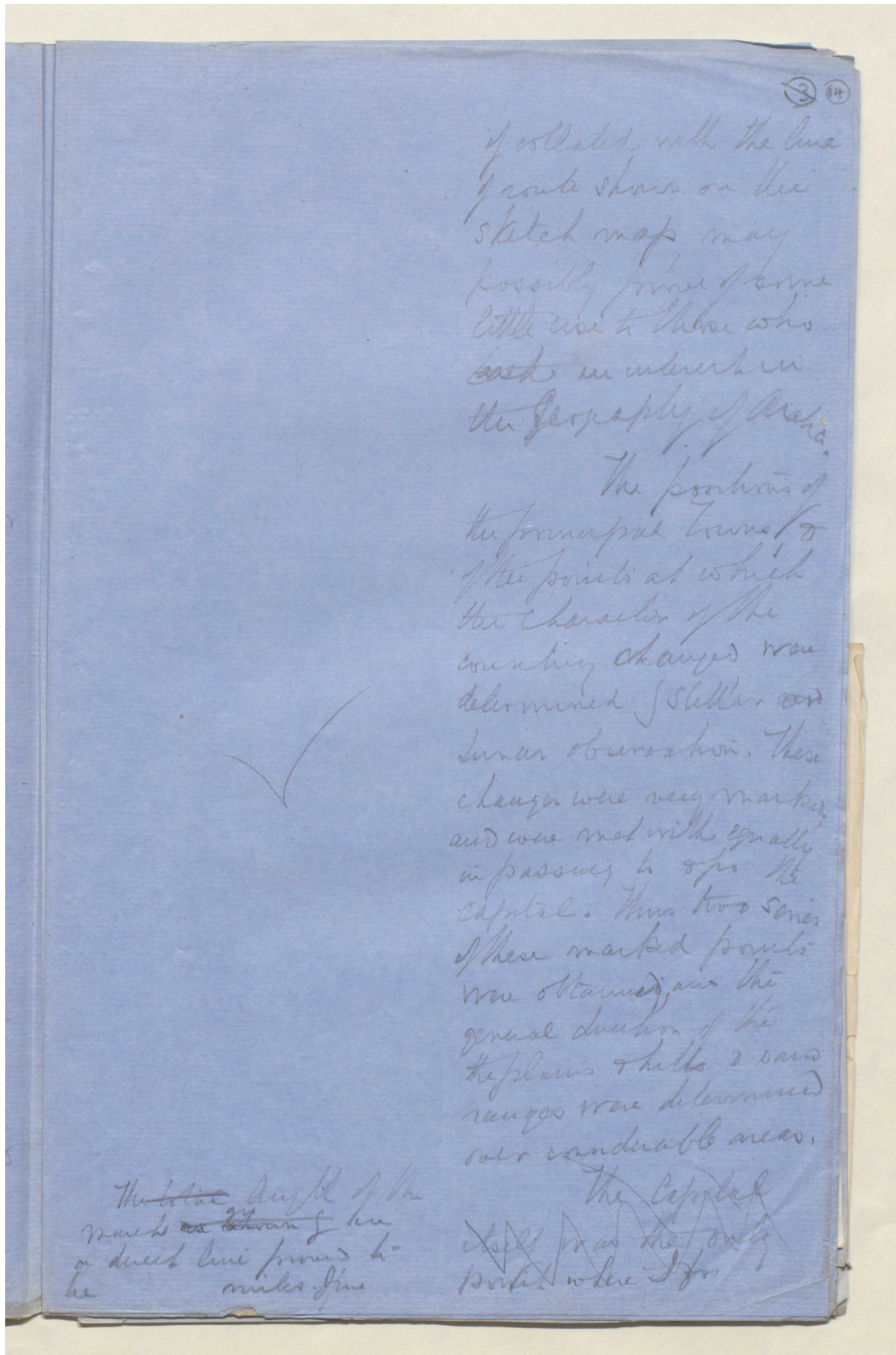
Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[13v] (2/12)

Specimens of  
the rocks & flora  
observed en route  
have also been collected.  
The collection is probably  
very incomplete as my  
first care was to avoid  
~~attracting attention~~  
~~attracting attention~~  
before the conclusion of the  
journey I found it  
prudent to forbid all  
collecting. —

It should best be  
remembered in occupying  
the time of rest over a  
detailed description of  
the country traversed.  
I append extracts from  
my private Journal  
which in any case prove  
of some little use to  
those interested in the  
geography of Arabia.  
This Journal was written  
up at the close of each  
day's march & if

Such information seems  
to be more conveniently  
in an Appendix containing







Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[14v] (4/12)

~~During the march  
we were either in the  
open or sheltered in  
huts. The~~

X  
We found our  
shelter in huts or houses  
during the entire march.  
our lodgings were in  
in a small row of huts. These  
were constantly exposed to  
observation, & positions could  
be determined only by night.  
The Capital itself from  
the whole except from the  
rule. Then we were lodged  
in a house just outside  
the town & set apart from  
Tartars, Impedels & others  
who smoke tobacco. The  
long: given of the means  
of fine solar observations  
taken from the roof  
of this house was  
the latitude of



(14) (15)

Before the Lat.  
The Lat. which  
was determined from the  
same obs. Both the fore-  
two nights your Logarithms  
were correct. & before the  
third night space in  
the form of guards became  
so numerous & irregular  
that I became at first  
to forbid further use of  
our instruments. The Latitude  
was afterwards determined  
Somewhere two hours in  
a North of East direction  
out of the Capital. & then  
halted to take the Altitude  
Star. The Latitude of Rangoon  
is fixed - and allowing  
four miles North during  
the march - is

On returning to  
the Rindang Steamer  
the Chronometer was found  
Gagner & St James found  
that the Chronometer  
had varied only 15 miles

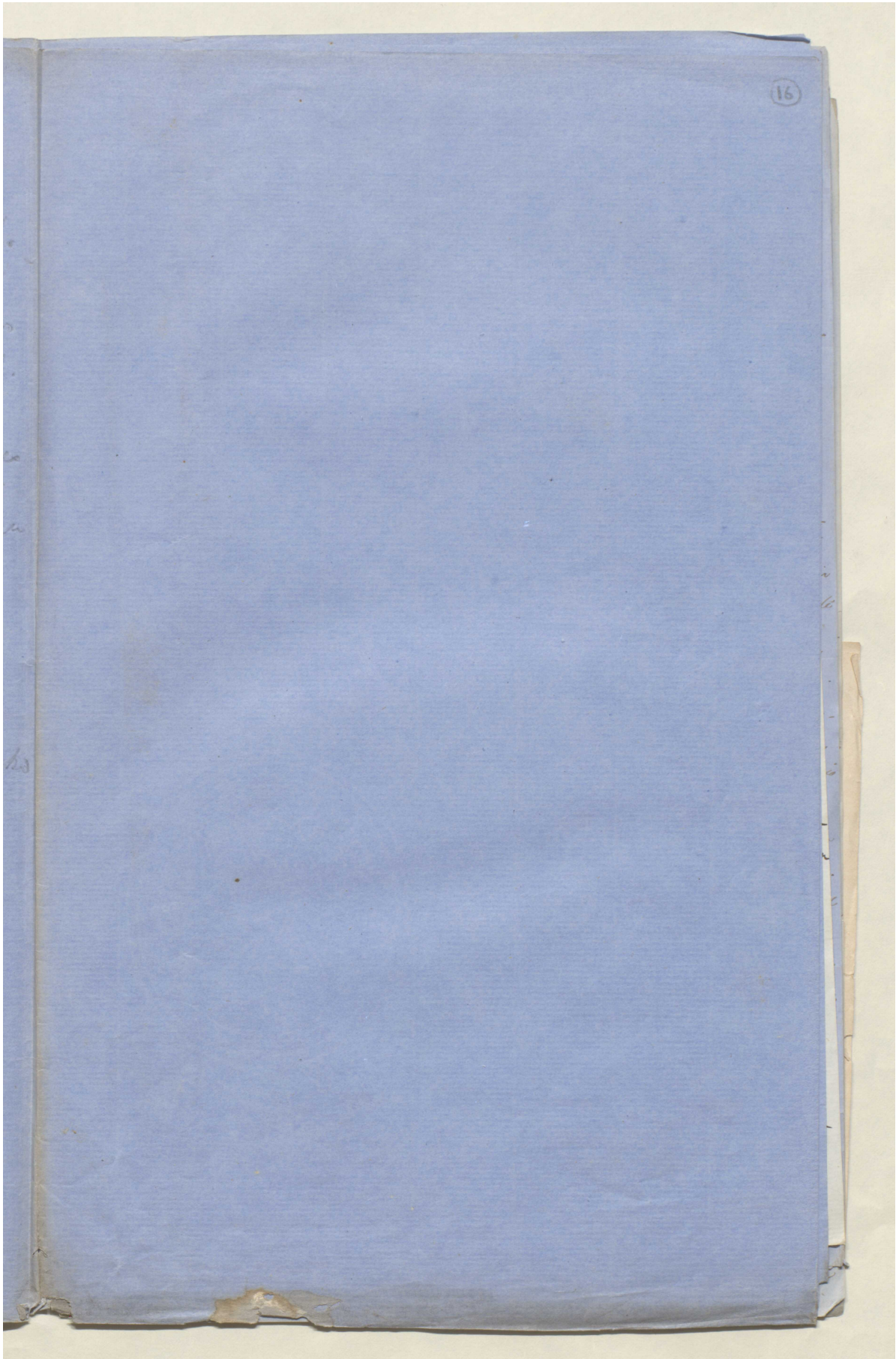


Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[15v] (6/12)

from the date of its  
last rating before  
starting from Kaimi.  
The this chronometer  
had travelled from 8 to 9  
miles on a baggage camel.  
and the thing was so  
even that two of my boxes  
were shaken to pieces & had  
to be left on the road. I then  
it gave to the maker of  
the instrument to give  
his name. And I thought  
that the appended detail  
of the manner in which  
the chronometer was packed  
may prove of use to  
future travellers -

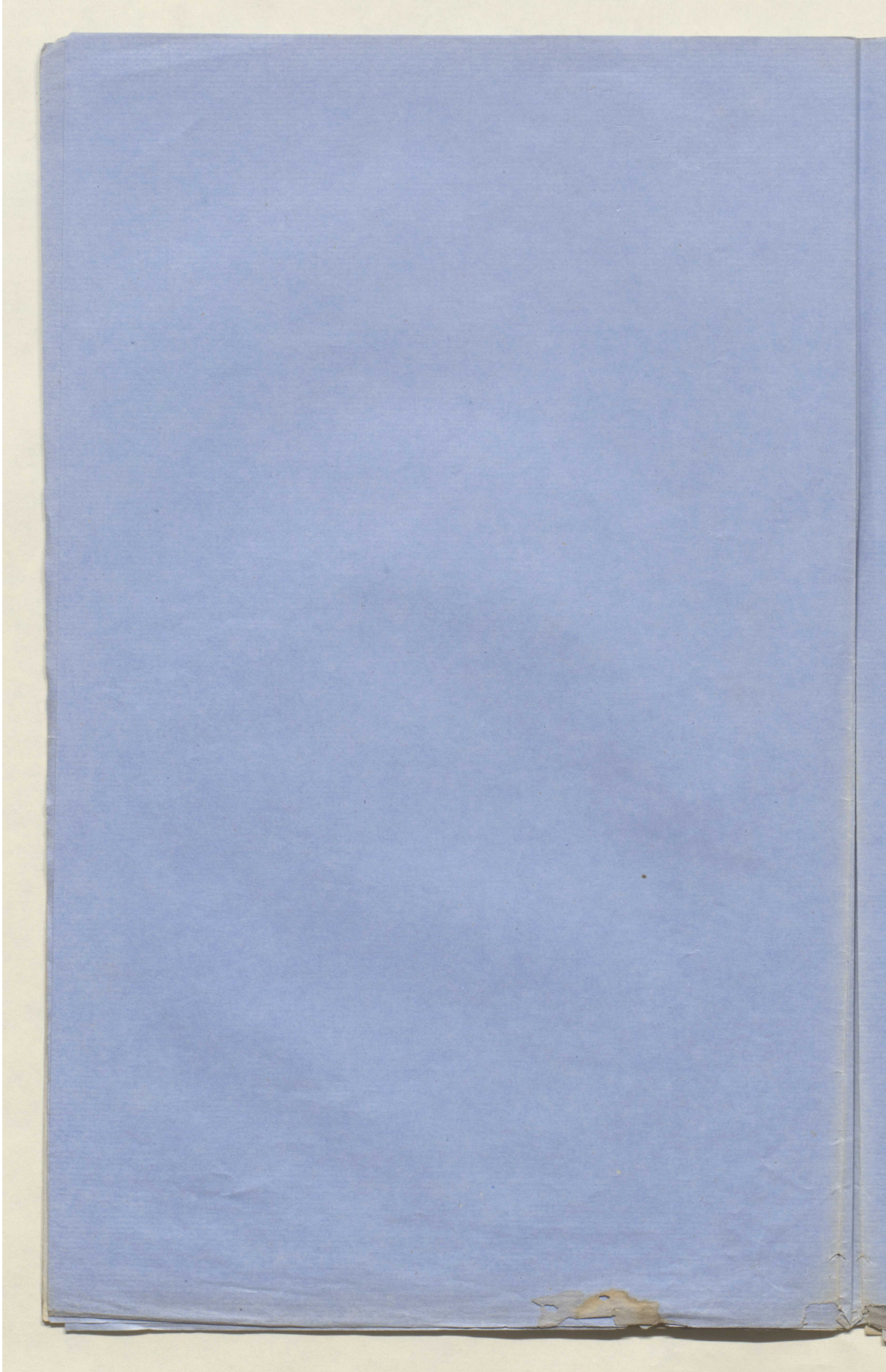


**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[16r] (7/12)**



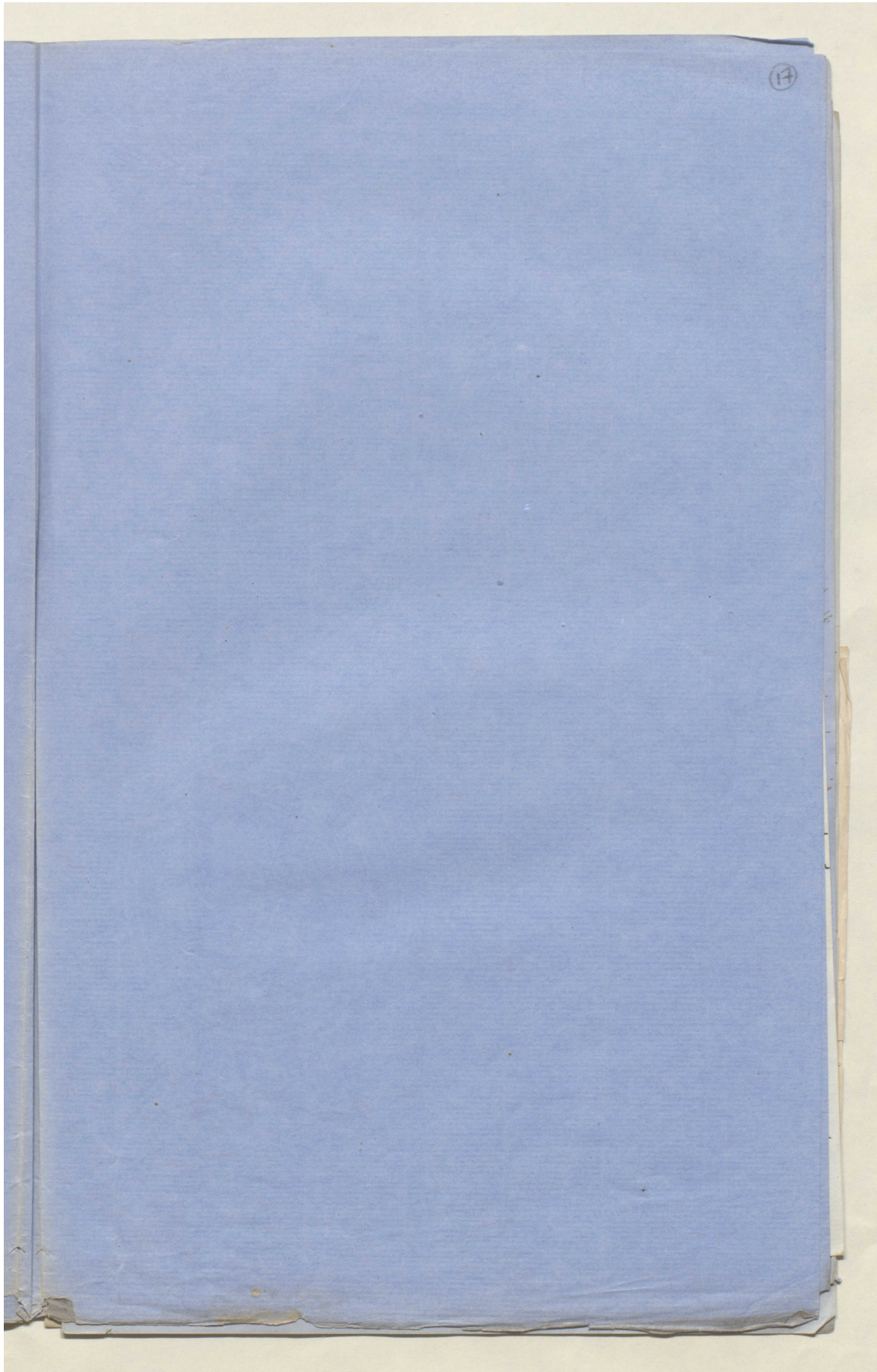


**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[16v] (8/12)**





**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[17r] (9/12)**



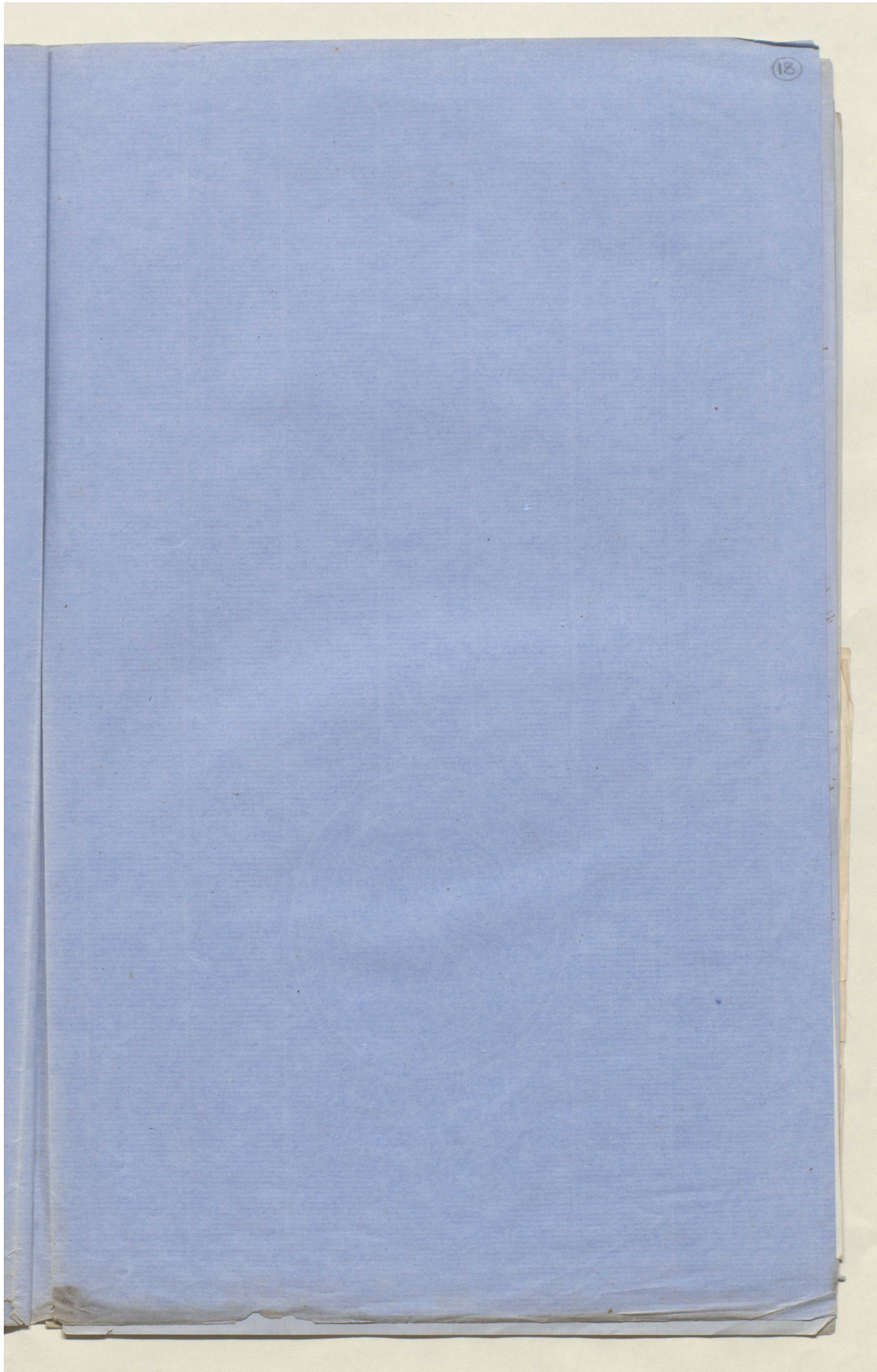


**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[17v] (10/12)**



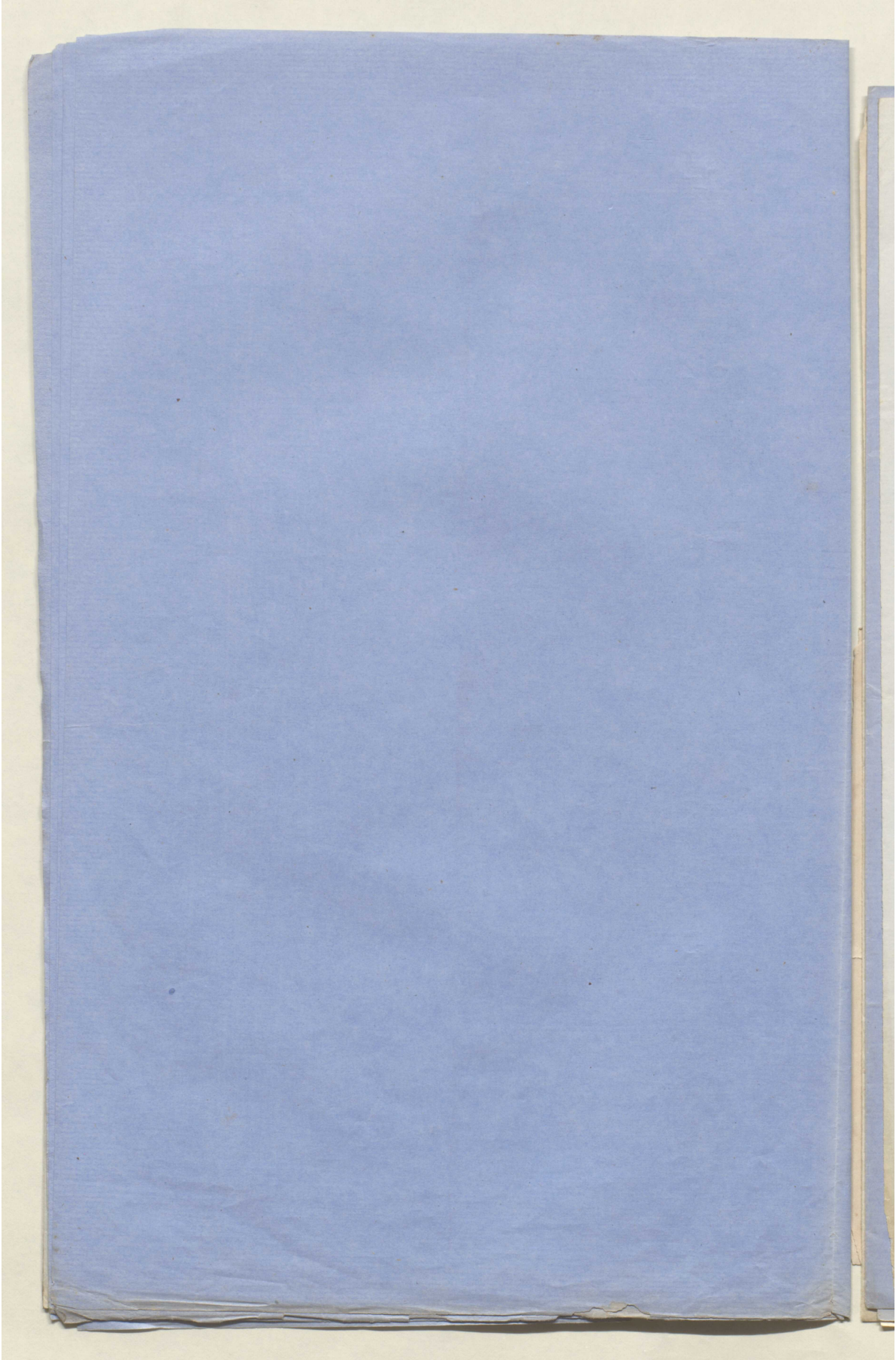


**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[18r] (11/12)**



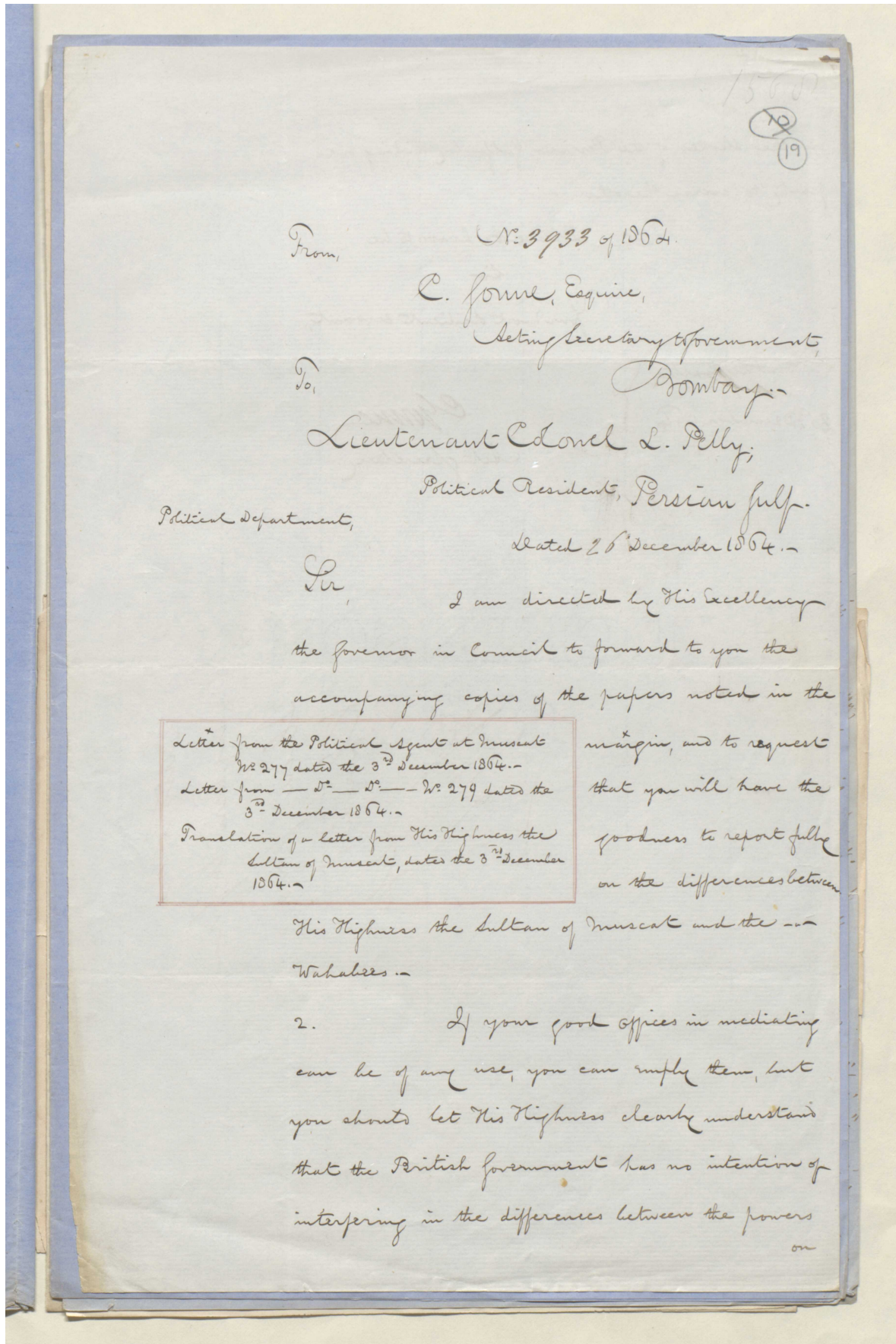


**Draft of a letter from Lewis Pelly, possibly to the Political Department Bombay  
[18v] (12/12)**





Letter No.3933 of 1864 from Charles Gonne, Acting Secretary to Government,  
Bombay to Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf  
[19r] (1/2)



Letter No.3933 of 1864 from Charles Gonne, Acting Secretary to Government,  
Bombay to Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf  
[19v] (2/2)

on the shores of the Persian Gulf, by aiding one  
party to coerce the other. -

I have the honor to be  
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Bombay Castle,  
26<sup>th</sup> December 1864.

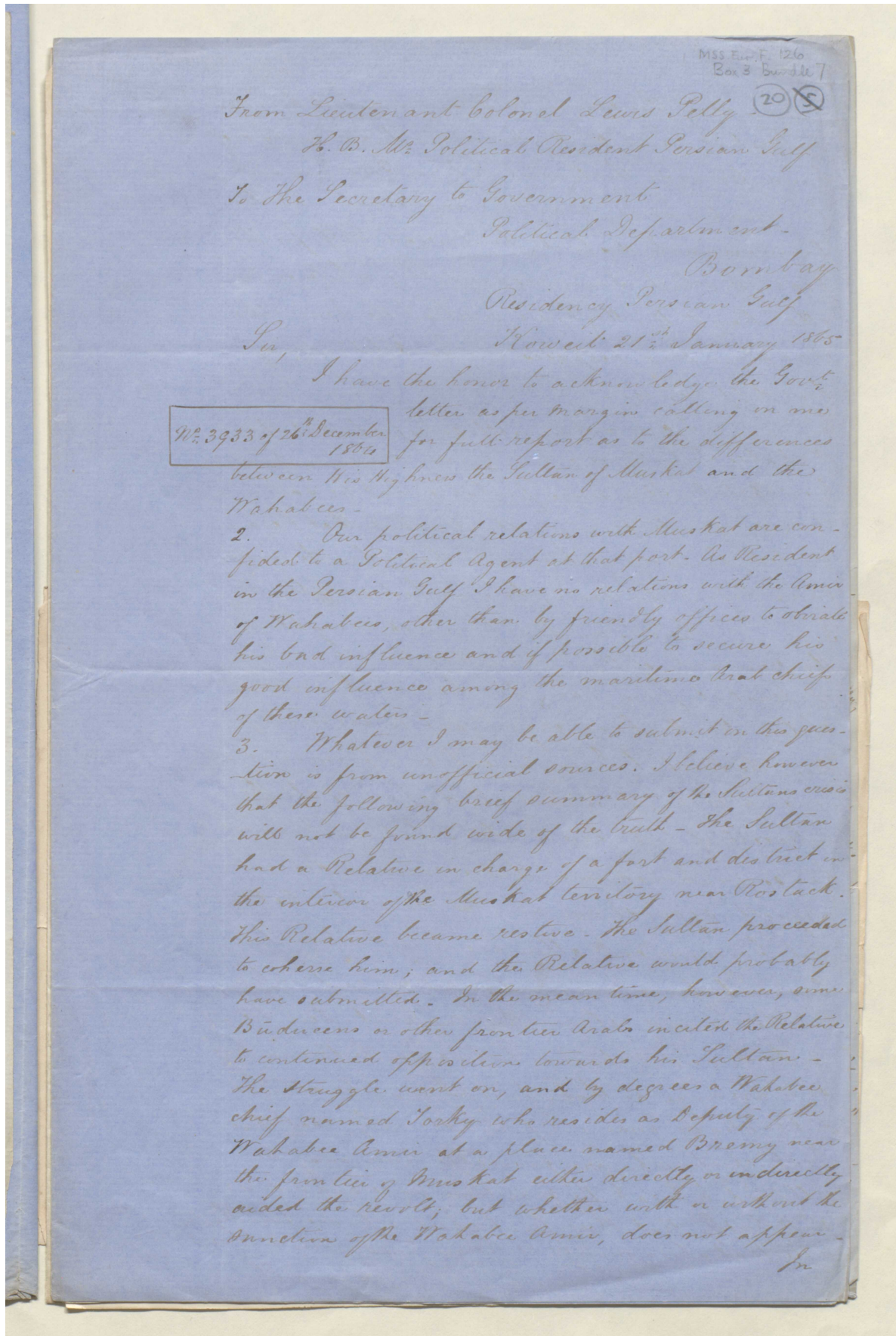
Ch Gonne  
Acting Secretary. -

Just to me  
again before  
leave for  
England  
11/1/65

W. Pelly



Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [20r] (1/4)





Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [20v] (2/4)

In any case this exterior aid embarrased the Sultan of Muskat; and His Highness now turns on the one hand towards the British Indian Government for assistance, warlike material, and permission to disturb the Persian Gulf for the peace of which I am responsible; while on the other hand His Highness writes to the Amir of the Wahabees and proposes me as Arbitrator of their differences -

4. I am not myself satisfied that the Wahabee Deputy is acting under direction from his capital. It is more probable that he saw a chance of interfering with Muskat that he availed himself of this; and that when the matter came before the Amir, he watched events -

5. There is no doubt, much weight in the remark of the Sultan that the separation of Muskat from Zanzibar has weakened his State. His Highness' argument is virtually this. the British Government on a former occasion took upon itself to dispose of all the interests of both these States. That Arbitrament has so weakened me, that I cannot defend myself against my neighbours unless the British Government allows me to indent on their Arsenal for ammunition of War and unless in the second place they instruct their Resident and Representative in the Persian Gulf so to arrange as that. first, I may be allowed to blockade some of its ports. secondly, that those Arab chiefs who are favourable to me may be allowed to break the maritime truce and aid me. and thirdly that those Arab chiefs who are friendly to the Wahabees may be restrained from breaking the truce.



Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [21r] (3/4)

(21) X

The Sultan as a maritime State no doubt feels it embarrassing that while in the general interests of peace and commerce we are opposed to his disturbing the peace at sea, we decline to interfere in his behalf by land.

6. Such briefly are the conditions of the case. Had the Sultan of Muskat consulted me before he acted I would have advised him - first, to avoid, if practicable, a struggle with the Wahabee power - and secondly, to postpone using my name as arbitrator until after I should communicate with the Wahabee Amir. His using my name is intended as a compliment, but in practice cannot but induce in the mind of the Wahabee Amir a presumption that my arbitration may lean towards Muskat.

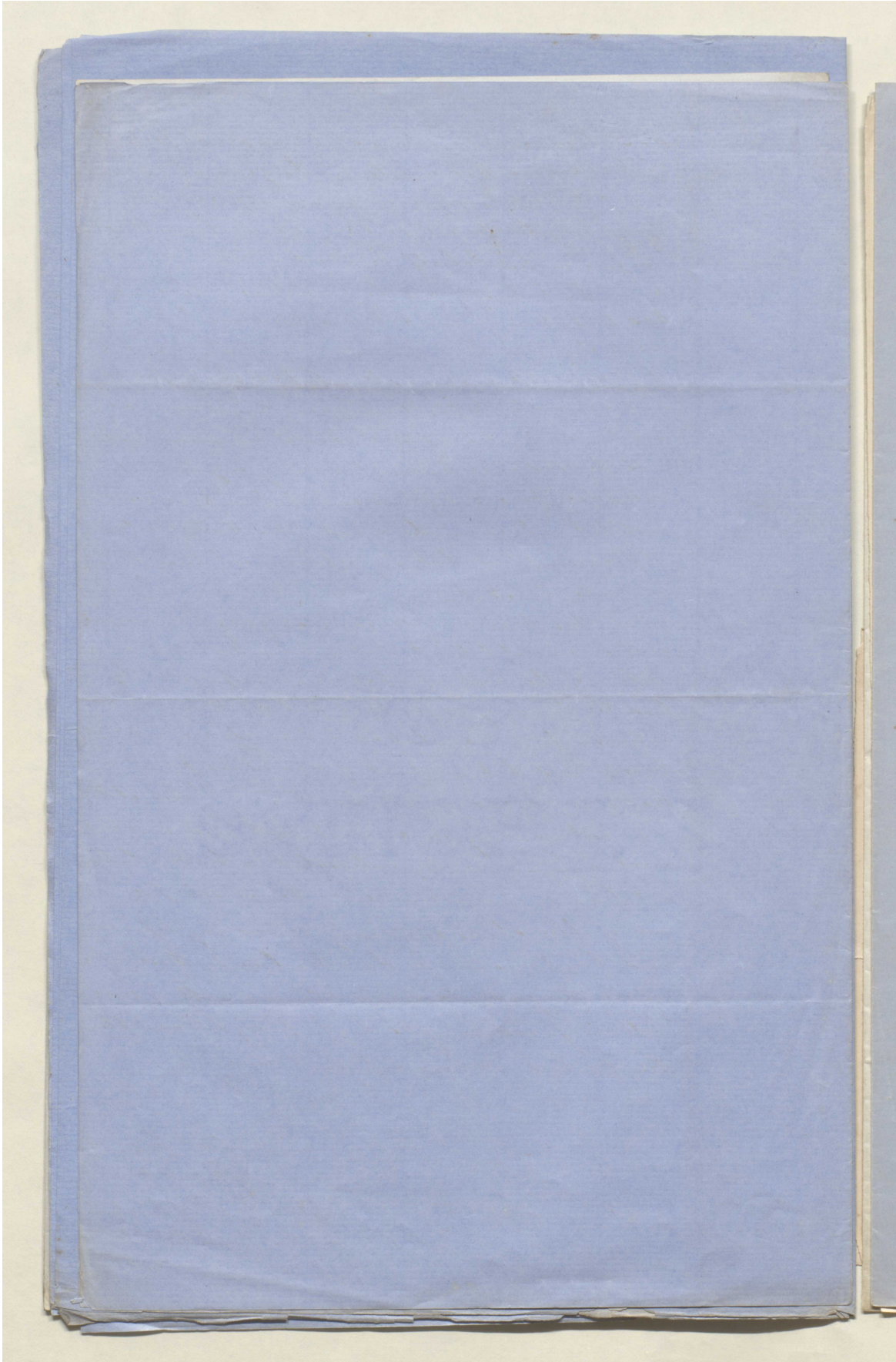
7. The bearing of the general question now under notice cannot I think but impress Govt. with a conviction of the truth of what I have so frequently had the honor of submitting that all these Arab interests from Ras-eh Had to Bussrah are interlaced and that a spark of war at one point is liable to spread in all directions. I am at this moment writing in an Arab port and I do not meet a man really interested in trade who does not lean on our presence as the one sole preventive of these shores suddenly returning to piracy and barbarism. On the other hand, those who regret the good old times tell me with a marvellous freedom of the high freights and plunder of which we have deprived them.

I have the honor to be  
Sir  
Your most obedt. Servant

at Holand  
H.B. Mr. Political Resident  
Persian Gulf



**Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [21v] (4/4)**





Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [22r] (1/4)

(22) 7

From Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pelly -  
H. B. M.'s Political Resident Persian Gulf -  
To The Secretary to Government -  
Political Department -  
Bombay -

Sir,

I have the honor to continue the subject of my letter as per margin, relative to the differences between the Sultan of Muskat, and the Wahabees. -

2. Information, subsequently collected, tends to confirm the facts of the case, as then submitted. It appears, however, that for the moment, the Sultan of Muskat has obtained peace, by ~~directly or indirectly~~ buying off the interference of the Wahabee Deputy at Beraining. But to purchase the ~~forbearance of~~ thus purchased ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~on the part of any State, a confession of weakness, and may encourage the plaudits~~ <sup>weakness, and no more than a temporary expedient.</sup> ~~in the H. M. power, to partition the~~ <sup>tribes in H. M. power, to partition the</sup> ~~to do so, when the enemy to be dealt with is composed of tribes, who look to war for plunder, is, in my opinion, very dangerous.~~

3. Government instruct me to let His Highness "clearly understand, that the British Government has no intention of interfering in the differences between the powers on the shores of the Persian Gulf, by aiding one party to coerce the other." Before representing this instruction to His Highness, I would, respectfully, submit to Government, whether His Highness might not consider



**Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [22v] (2/4)**

consider it to deviate, in some degree, from the terms <sup>spirit</sup> of the second article of the Muskat Treaty, which declares, that the friend of the one Government, is to be the friend of the other, and in the same way, the enemy of this, is to be the enemy of that. -

4. If Government should hold that Treaty to be inconvenient, it would be possible, at the present moment, to abrogate it on the ground of the inability of the Sultan to fulfil his obligations under it, for Government may recollect, that in Article VII. of the agreement entered into by His Highness, in my presence, in November last, allusion is made to our Treaty of 1798, and this allusion was understood to have special reference to the seventh Article in the Treaty, which assumes Bunder Abbas to be a possession of Muskat, and provides for our establishing a fort and factory there, provisions, which His Highness would probably be unable to fulfil, and failing the fulfilment of which, it would be in the option of Government, to ignore Article II.,

vide my letter  
submitting Article.

and in fact to declare the Treaty null and void. - The Sultan  
5. It might be possible to arrange that treaty as the Sultan  
question, however, whether Government or probably  
would wish to follow this course towards a State he would  
which has ~~confided~~ <sup>been</sup> in a former faithful ally, ~~and~~ <sup>whose</sup>  
whose power ~~we~~ <sup>they</sup> have essentially weakened by  
dividing it into two separate States, under an  
arbitrament, which they voluntarily dictated. -  
6. There is another course which might

6. There is another course which might be adopted, ~~is as far as the Wababe power is concerned in relation to Mustat.~~ The Wababe power is tributary to the Porte, a letter, based on

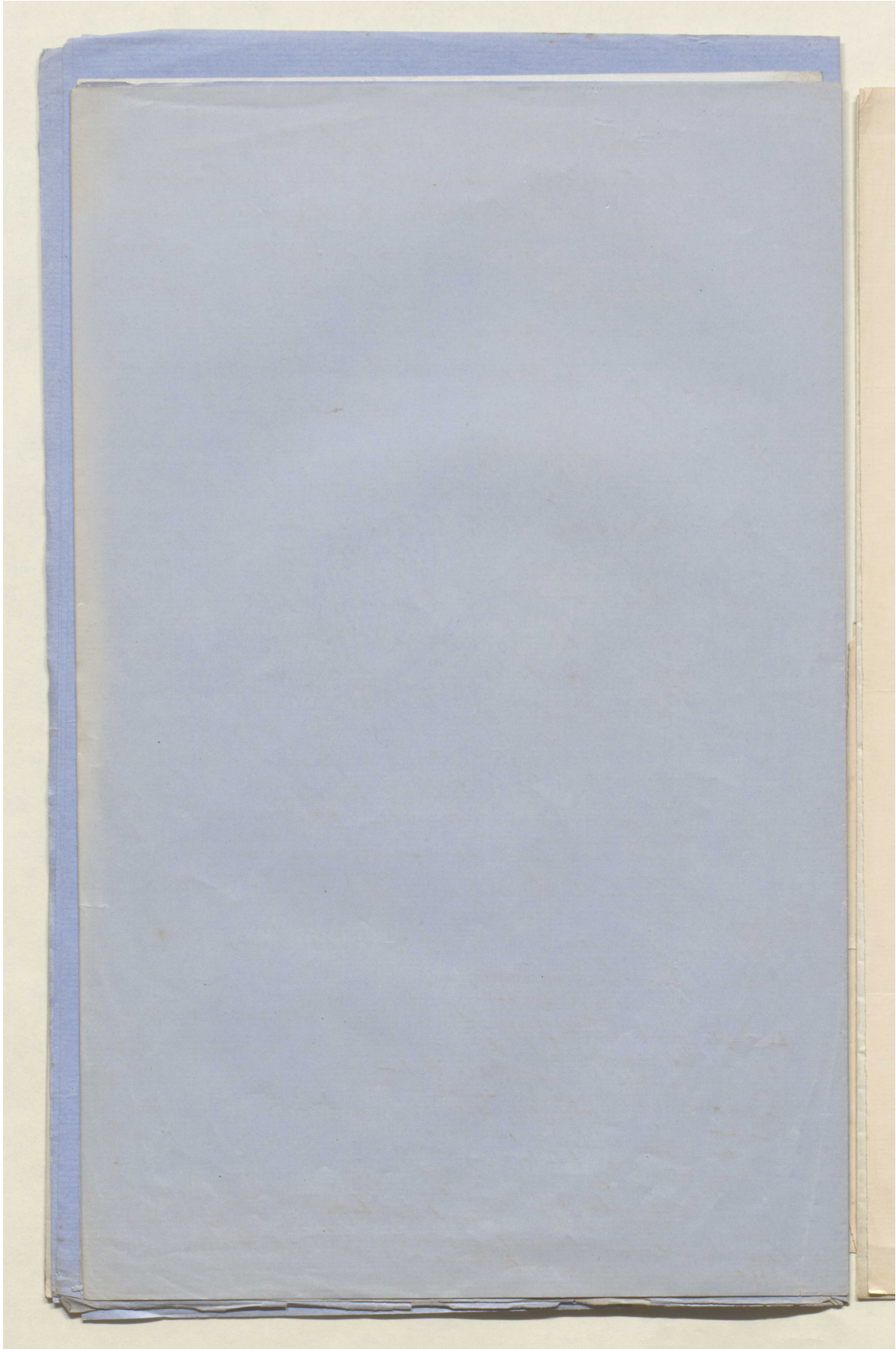


On the whole, as  
So Peace has been  
restored for the time being,  
between Muscat & the Wahabees,  
perhaps I <sup>may</sup> prefer to  
allow the matter to lie dormant  
for the moment. It is possible that in my  
next visit to the Wahabee capital may lead  
to some lessening of the present  
negotiations of the Arabian States  
and so to conclude any peace or  
affair yet may deem fit to afford on  
any future complaint of the Sultan. After  
returning from the Wahabee country, I shall take it upon me  
to continue for a friendly conversation with the Sultan & his  
officers, in accordance with the general spirit of the first instructions.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant  
St. Colonel  
Persian Gulf

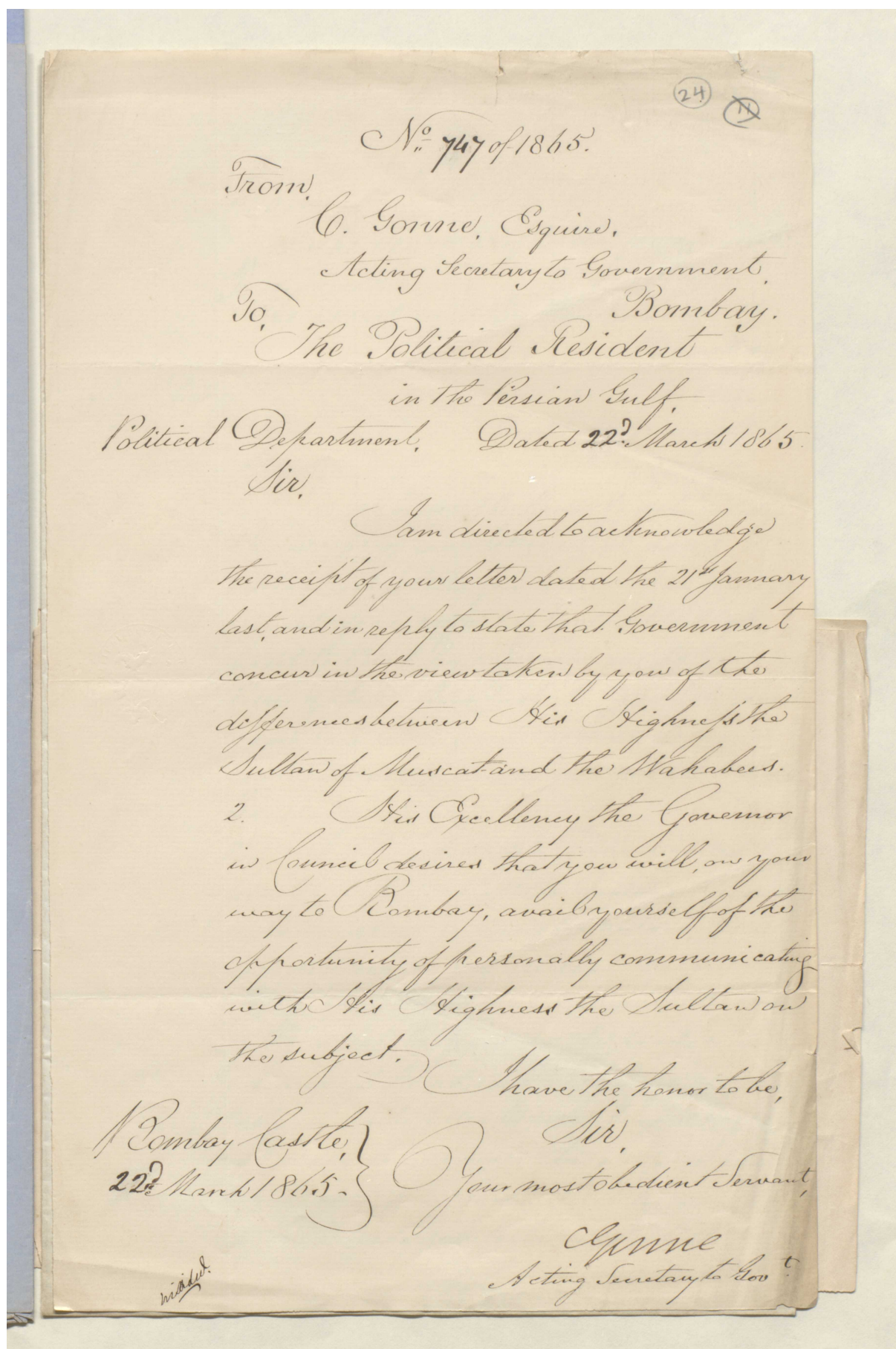


**Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pelly, HBM's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, at Koweit [Kuwait], to The Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay [23v] (4/4)**

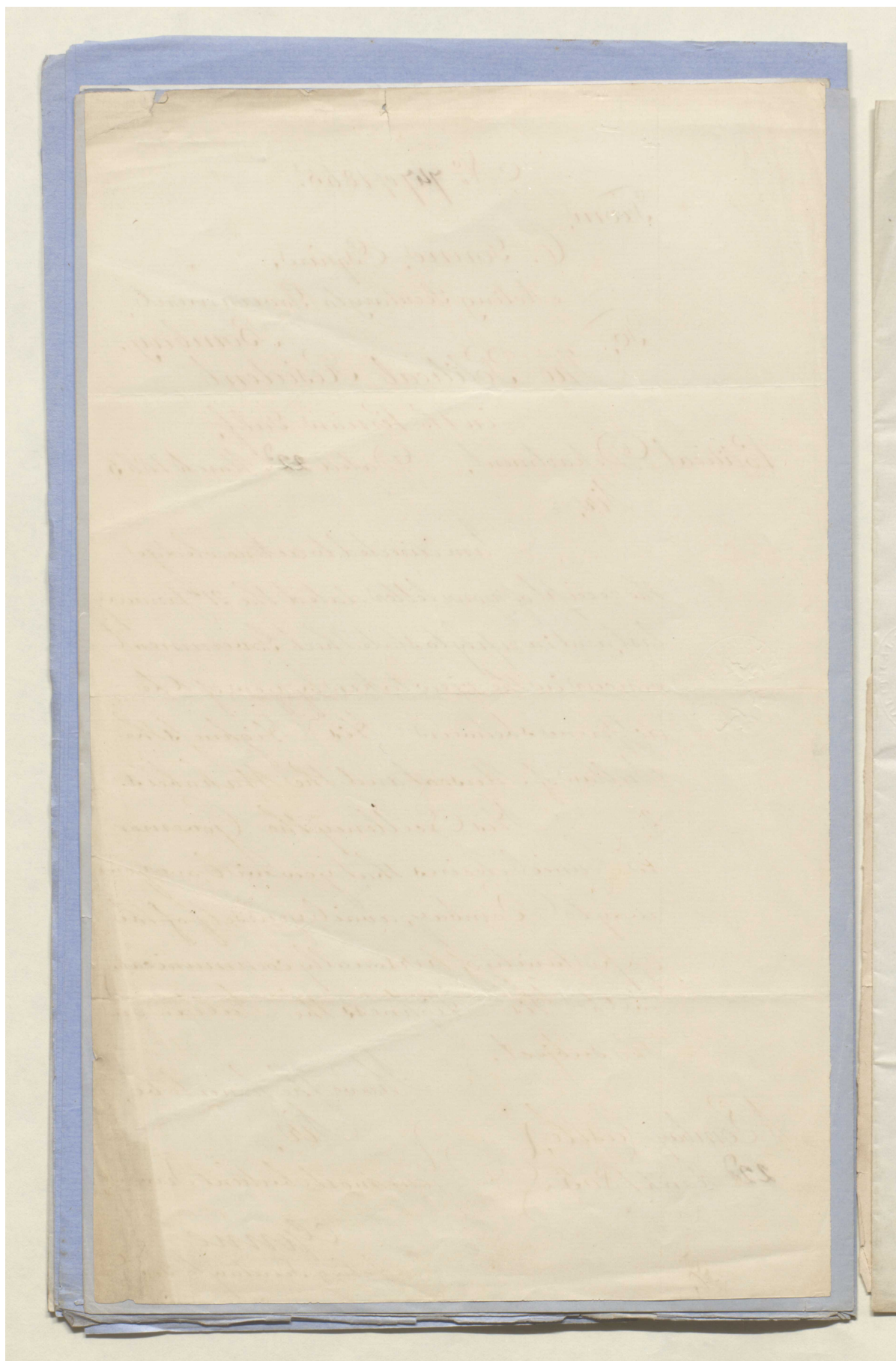




Letter from Charles Gonne Acting Secretary to Government, Bombay, Political  
Department to The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf [24r] (1/2)

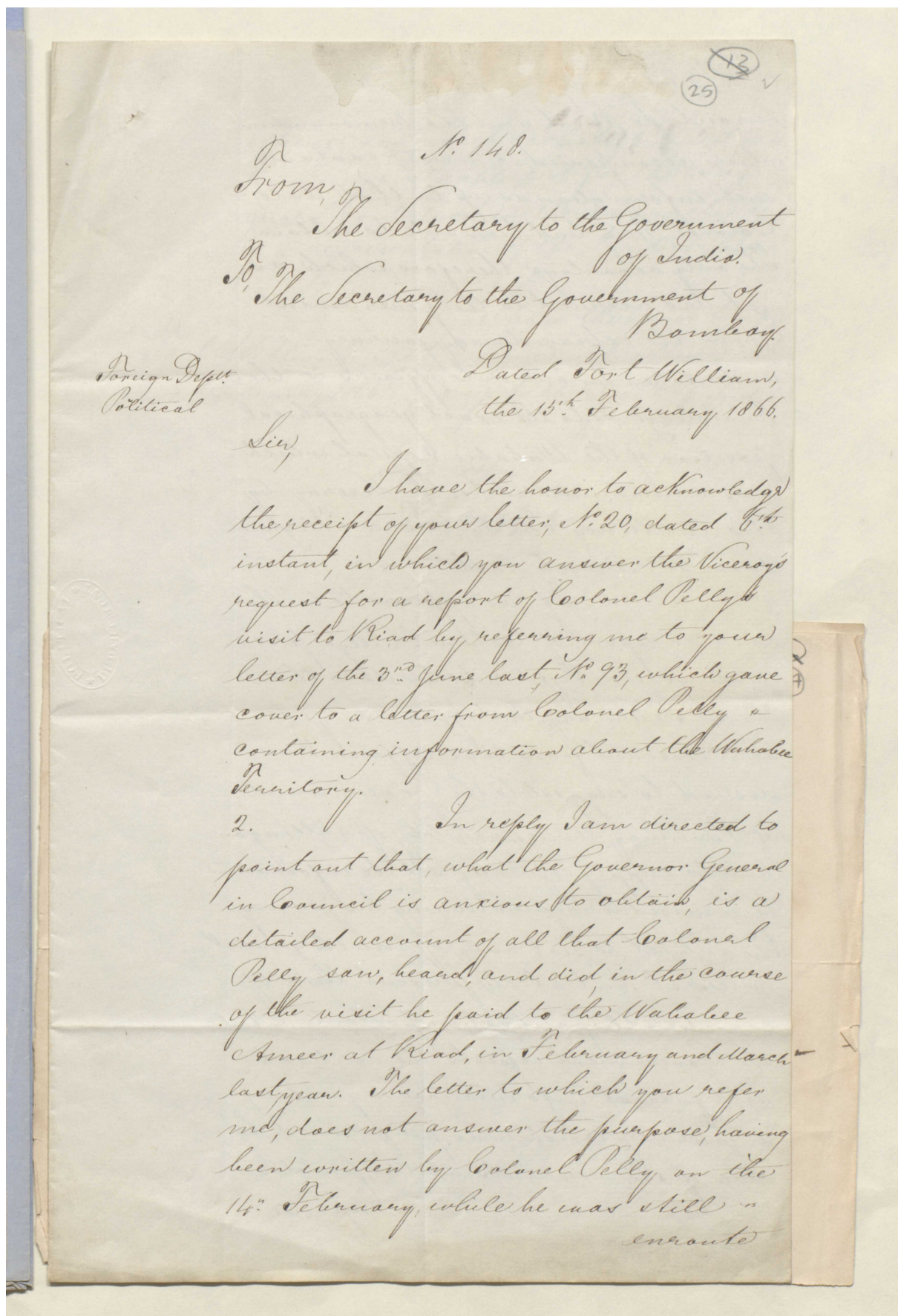


Letter from Charles Gonne Acting Secretary to Government, Bombay, Political  
Department to The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf [24v] (2/2)





Letter No. 148 from William Muir, The Secretary to the Government of India,  
Foreign Department, Fort William to Charles Gonne, The Secretary to the  
Government of Bombay [25r] (1/4)





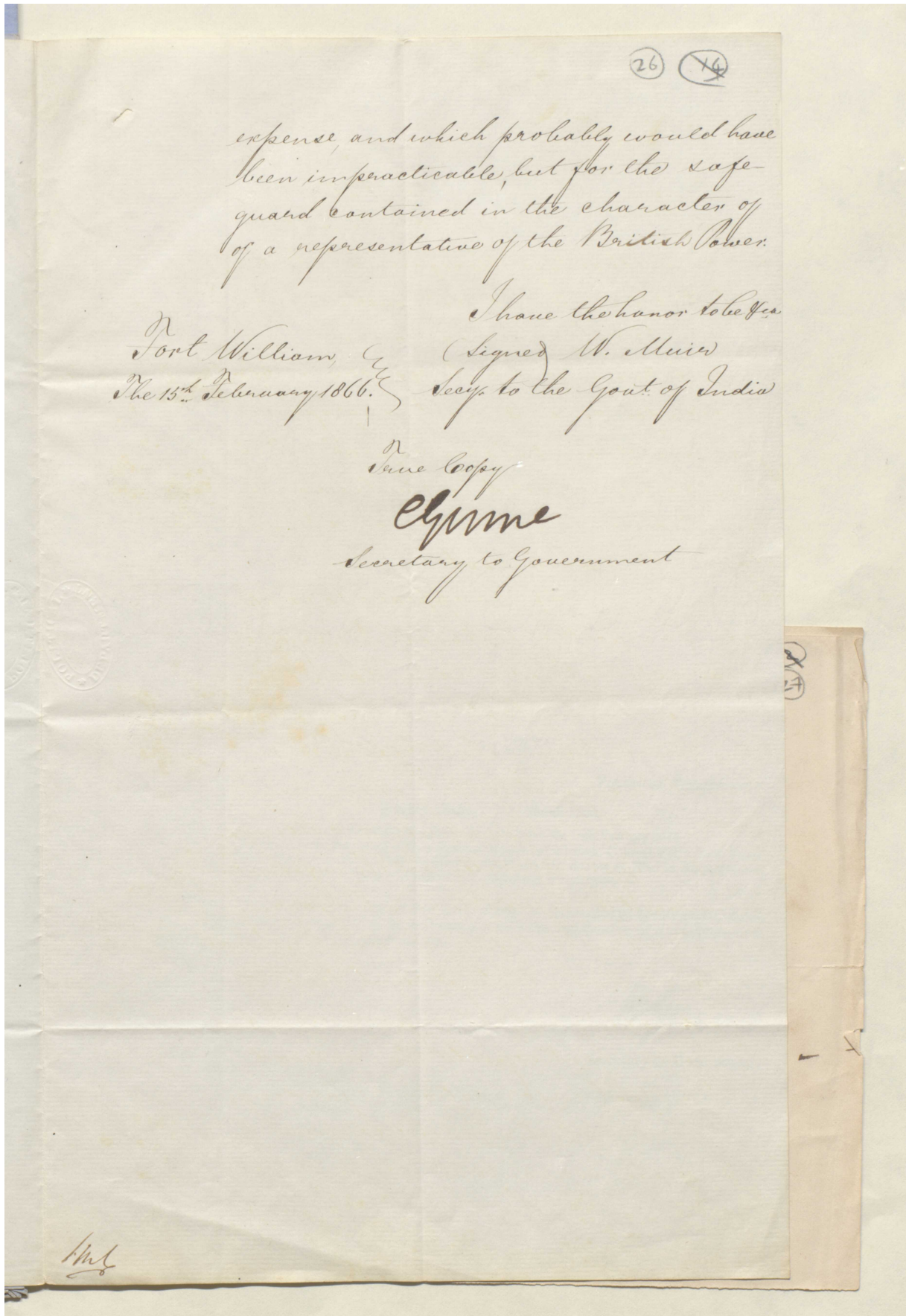
Letter No. 148 from William Muir, The Secretary to the Government of India,  
Foreign Department, Fort William to Charles Gonne, The Secretary to the  
Government of Bombay [25v] (2/4)

surrounding ~~the~~ and the Memorandum  
which accompanied it merely contains  
such information as, up to that date,  
Colonel Pelly had been able to obtain.  
The only advantage, therefore, which as  
yet has accrued to the Government  
from the extraordinary journey  
undertaken by one of its officers, is the  
knowledge as to the exact geographical  
position of the Wahabee Capital which  
was communicated to the Viceroy by  
His Excellency Sir B. Fraser's Telegram  
dated 28<sup>th</sup> March last.

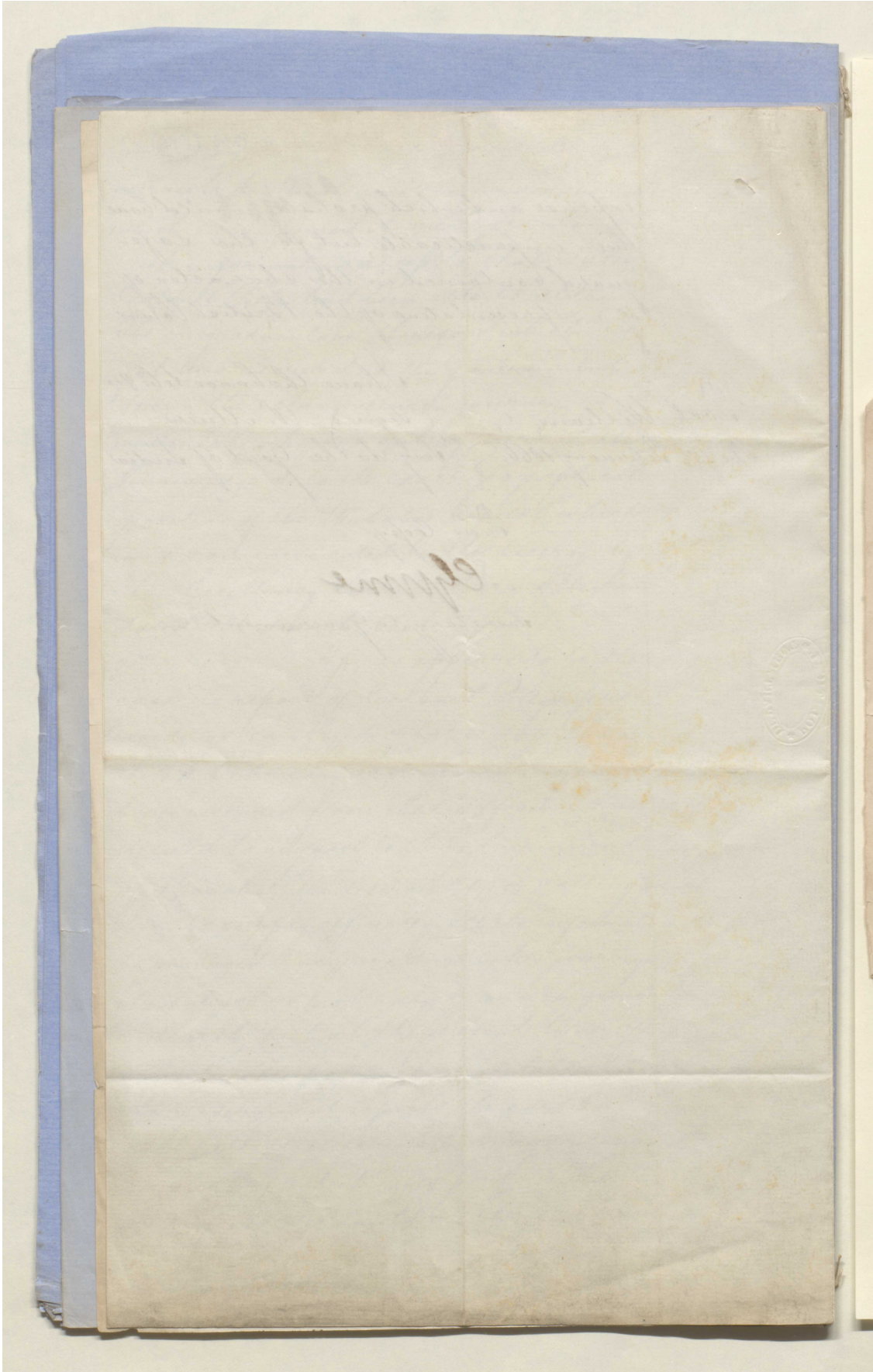
3<sup>rd</sup> If, as appears to be the  
case, no report of Colonel Pelly's pro-  
ceedings in Mejd of later date than  
the 14<sup>th</sup> February last year has yet  
been received from that officer, I am  
desirous to suggest to the Government  
of Bombay, the desirability of calling on  
him to supply officially all the information  
he managed to acquire during his journey.  
The subject is not only of much general  
interest, but at the present time of  
considerable political importance. And  
the Government expects the earliest  
and fullest information regarding  
a journey which was performed by  
one of its servants at the public  
expense,



Letter No. 148 from William Muir, The Secretary to the Government of India,  
Foreign Department, Fort William to Charles Gonne, The Secretary to the  
Government of Bombay [26r] (3/4)

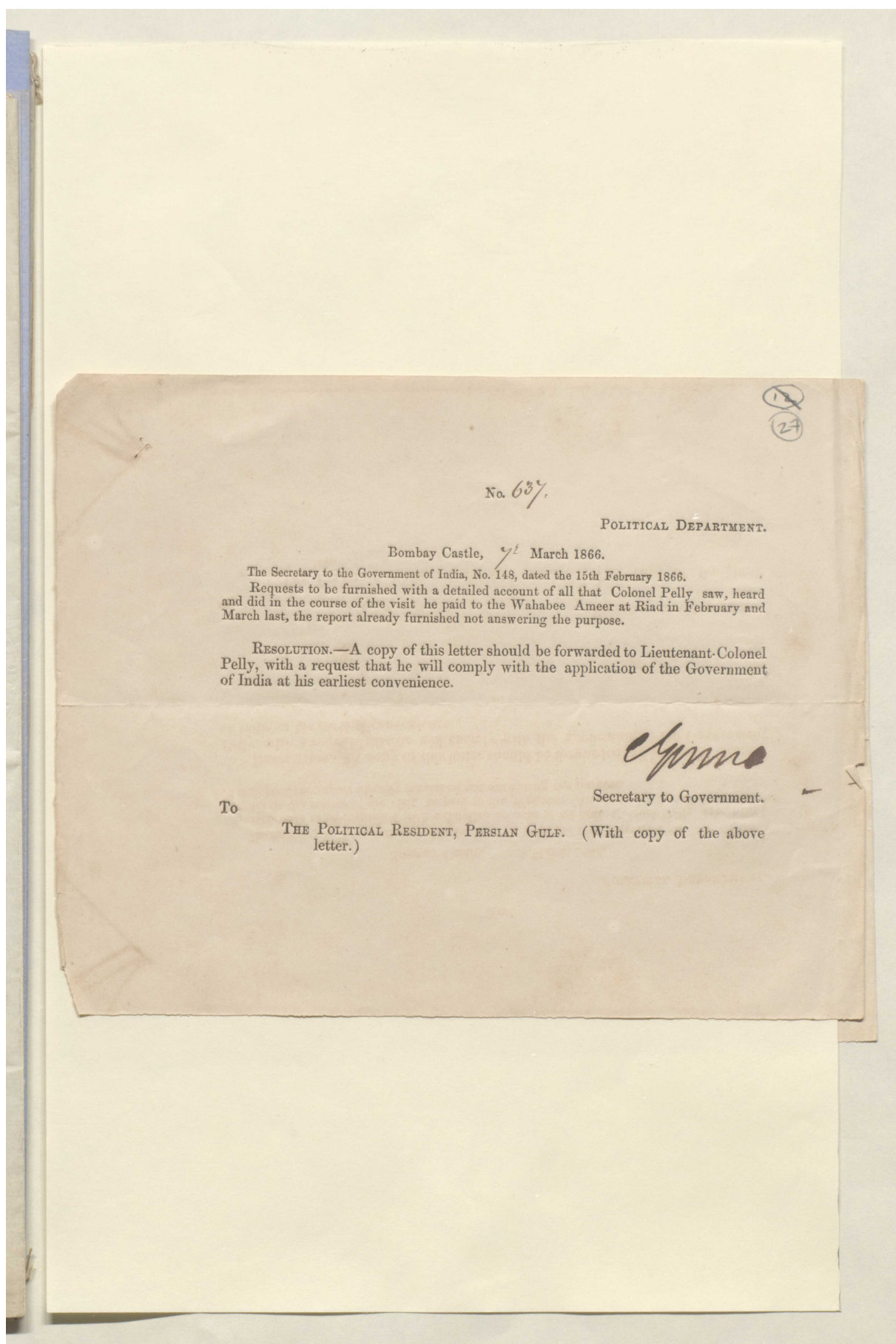


**Letter No. 148 from William Muir, The Secretary to the Government of India,  
Foreign Department, Fort William to Charles Gonne, The Secretary to the  
Government of Bombay [26v] (4/4)**





Memorandum No. 637 from Charles Gonne, Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay Castle to The Political Resident, Persian Gulf [27r] (1/2)



No. 637.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Bombay Castle, 7<sup>th</sup> March 1866.

The Secretary to the Government of India, No. 148, dated the 15th February 1866.

Requests to be furnished with a detailed account of all that Colonel Pelly saw, heard and did in the course of the visit he paid to the Wahabee Ameer at Riad in February and March last, the report already furnished not answering the purpose.

RESOLUTION.—A copy of this letter should be forwarded to Lieutenant-Colonel Pelly, with a request that he will comply with the application of the Government of India at his earliest convenience.

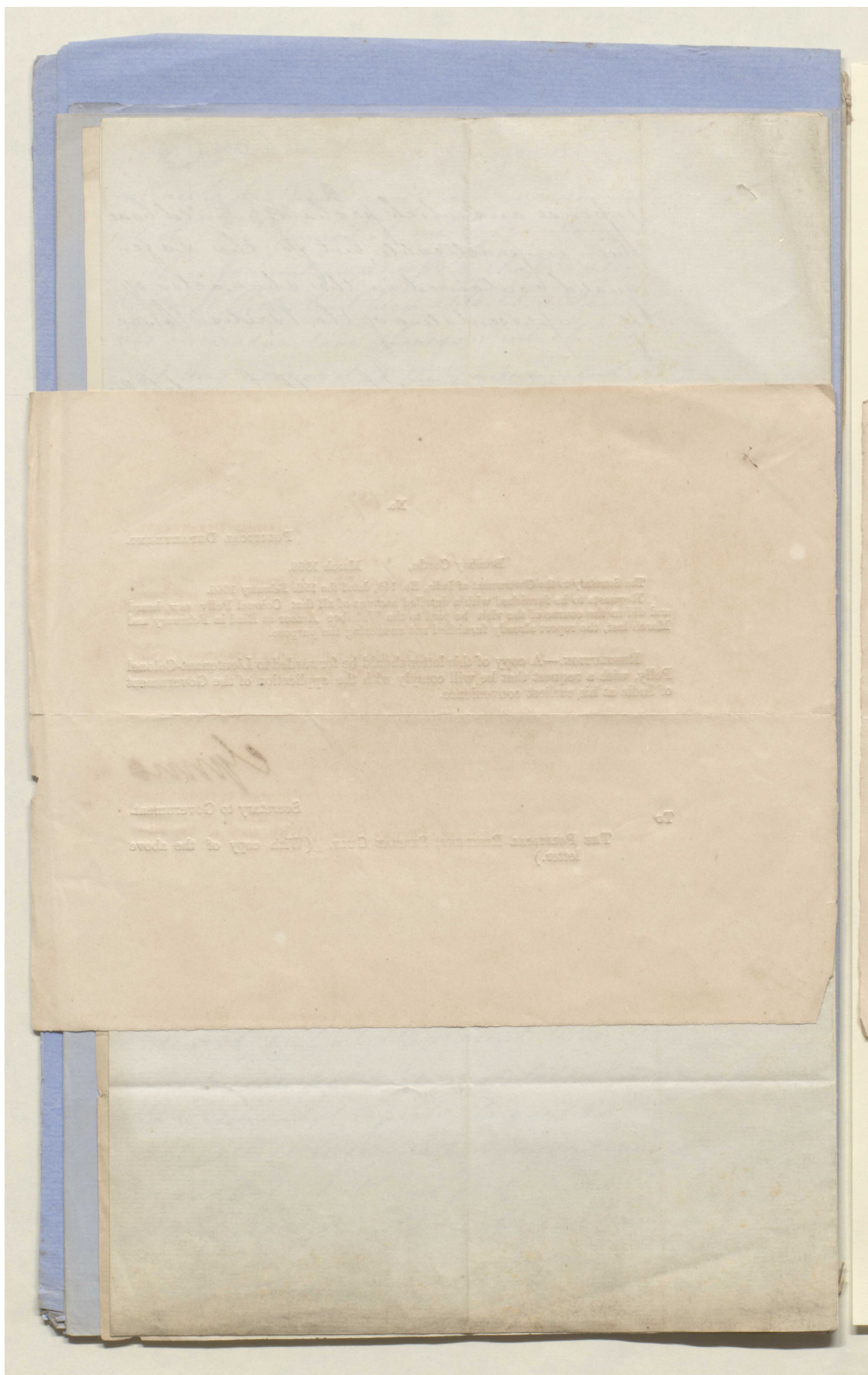
*C. Gonne*

Secretary to Government.

To

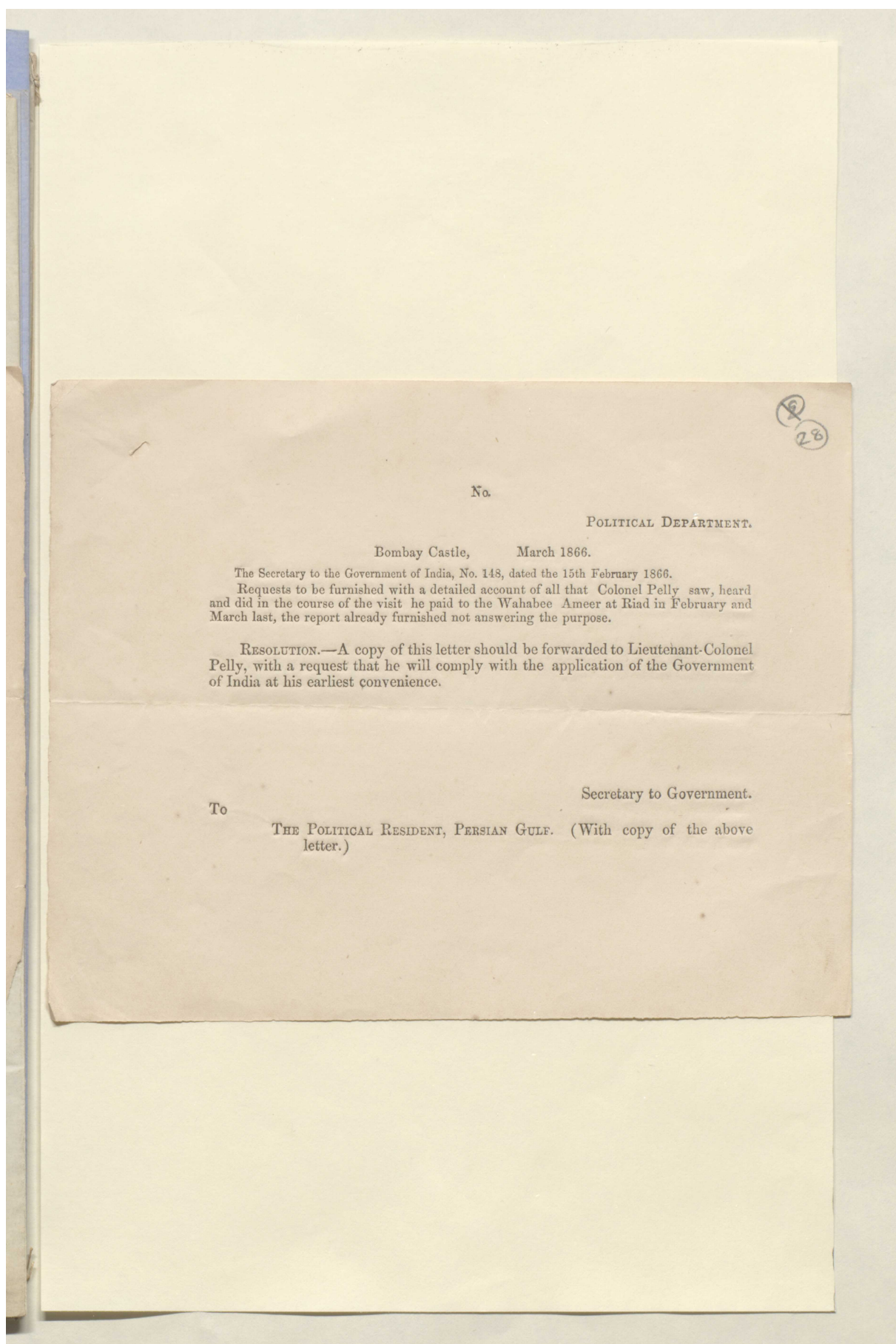
THE POLITICAL RESIDENT, PERSIAN GULF. (With copy of the above letter.)

Memorandum No. 637 from Charles Gonne, Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay Castle to The Political Resident, Persian Gulf [27v] (2/2)





Memorandum from Charles Gonne, Secretary to Government, Political Department,  
Bombay Castle to The Political Resident, Persian Gulf [back-i] (1/2)



Memorandum from Charles Gonne, Secretary to Government, Political Department,  
Bombay Castle to The Political Resident, Persian Gulf [back] (2/2)

