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‘Application of the Pasha of Egypt for two armed Ships to be employed against the Wahabees’

Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	IOR/F/4/416/10290
Date(s)	12 Feb 1810-29 Oct 1811 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 item (10 folios)
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About this record

The item consists of copies and extracts of correspondence cited in, or enclosed with, letters from the Government of Bombay.

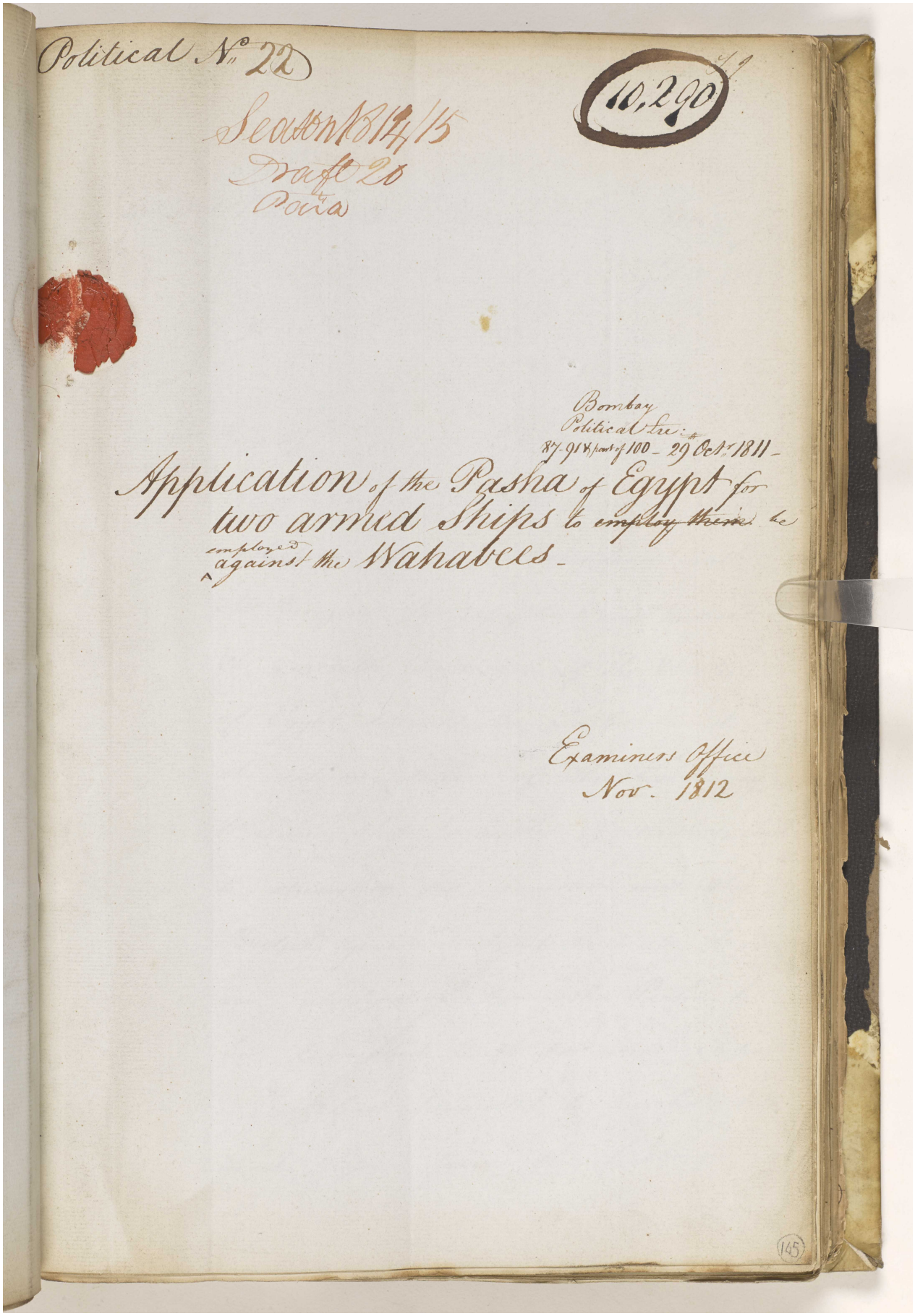
The item consists of correspondence regarding an application by the Pasha of Egypt [Muḥammad ʻAlī Pāshā] to procure or purchase two armed ships from the East India Company with the intention of sending an expedition to recover Judda [Jeddah], Mecca and Medina from the Wahabees [Wahhabis]. The application was made through Captain Rudland, British Resident in Mocha, and his assistant John Benzoni, Assistant to the British Agency in the Red Sea. The correspondence also concerns the general desire of the Pasha to strengthen connections with the British Government and the potential advantages and disadvantages of such a relationship.

The correspondence consists mainly of letters between Captain Rudland, John Benzoni and the Government of Bombay. The other correspondents are: Governor-General and Council at Fort William; Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay; Court of Directors of the East India Company.

The Pasha is alternatively referred to in the item as: Mahomed Ally Bashaw; Bashaw; Pacha; Viceroy of Egypt.

Captain Rudland is alternatively referred to in the item as: Agent in the Gulph [Gulf] of Arabia; British Agent in the Persian Gulph.

The title page of the item contains the following references: 'Political No. 22, Season 1814/15, Draft 20' and 'Examiner's Office November 1812'.



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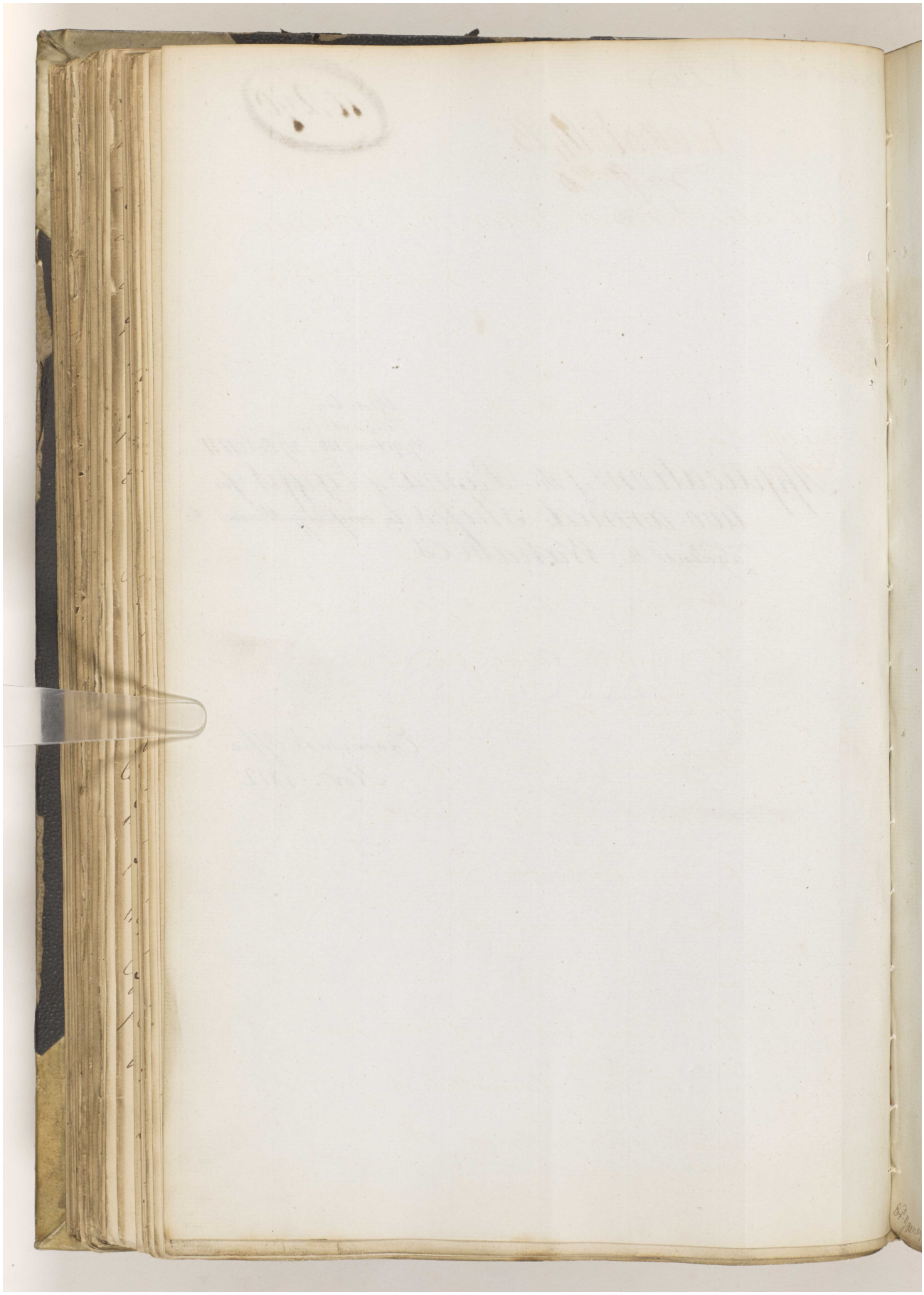

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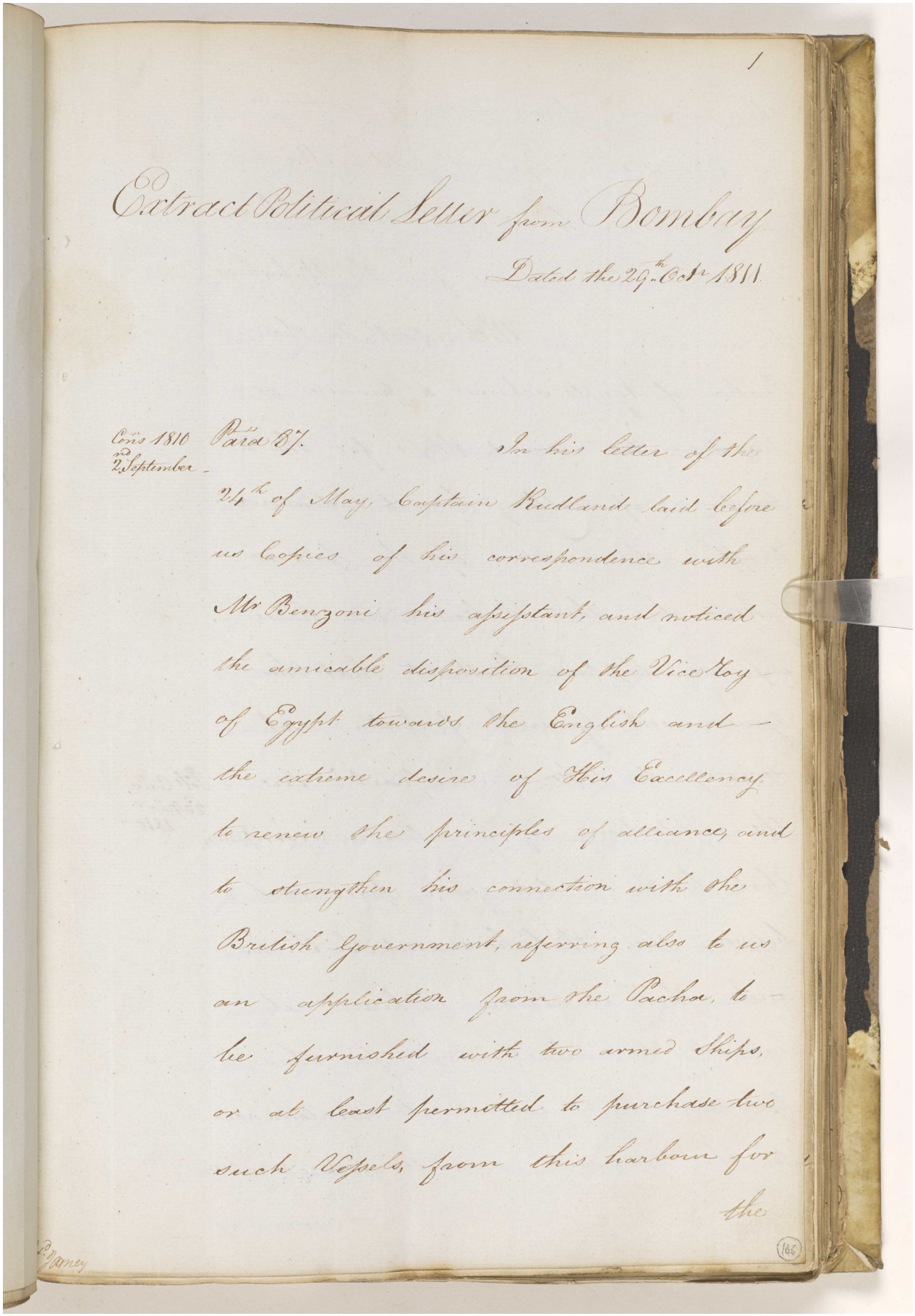

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Extract Political Letter from Bombay

Dated the 29th Octr 1811

Cons 1810 Para 87. In his letter of the
2d September
24th of May, Captain Rudland laid before
us Copies of his correspondence with
Mr Benzoni his assistant, and noticed
the amicable disposition of the Vice Roy
of Egypt towards the English and
the extreme desire of His Excellency
to renew the principles of alliance, and
to strengthen his connection with the
British Government, referring also to us
an application from the Pacha, to
be furnished with two armed Ships,
or at least permitted to purchase two
such Vessels, from this harbour for
the

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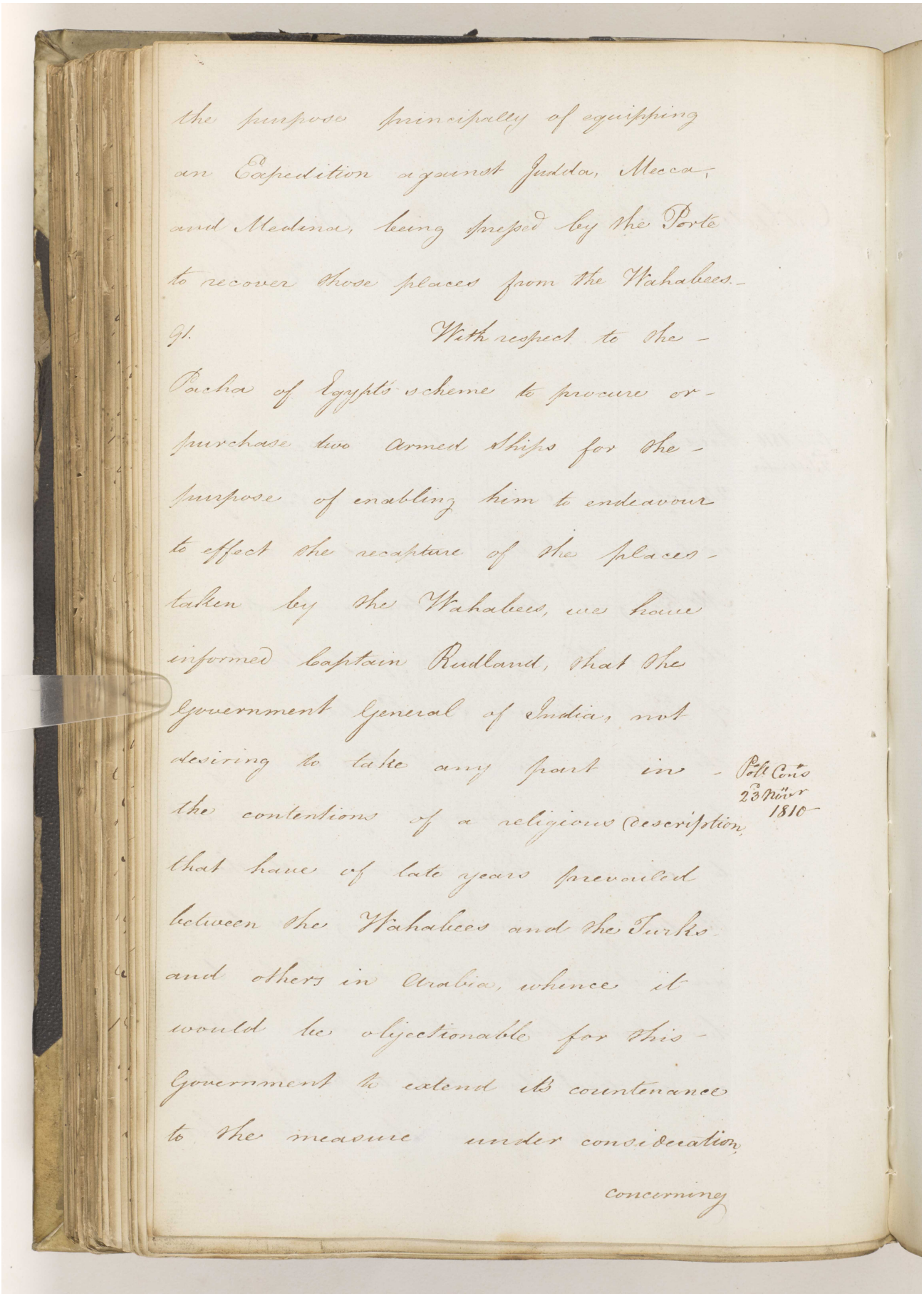

the purpose principally of equipping
an Expedition against Judda, Mecca,
and Medina, being prepd by the Porte
to recover those places from the Wahabees.-
9th. With respect to the -
Pacha of Egypt's scheme to procure or -
purchase two armed Ships for the -
purpose of enabling him to endeavour
to effect the recapture of the places -
taken by the Wahabees, we have
informed Captain Rudland, that the
Government General of India, not
desiring to take any part in - Pol Cons 23 Nov 1810
the contentions of a religious description,
that have of late years prevailed
between the Wahabees and the Turks
and others in Arabia, whence it
would be objectionable for this -
Government to extend its countenance
to the measure under consideration,
concerning

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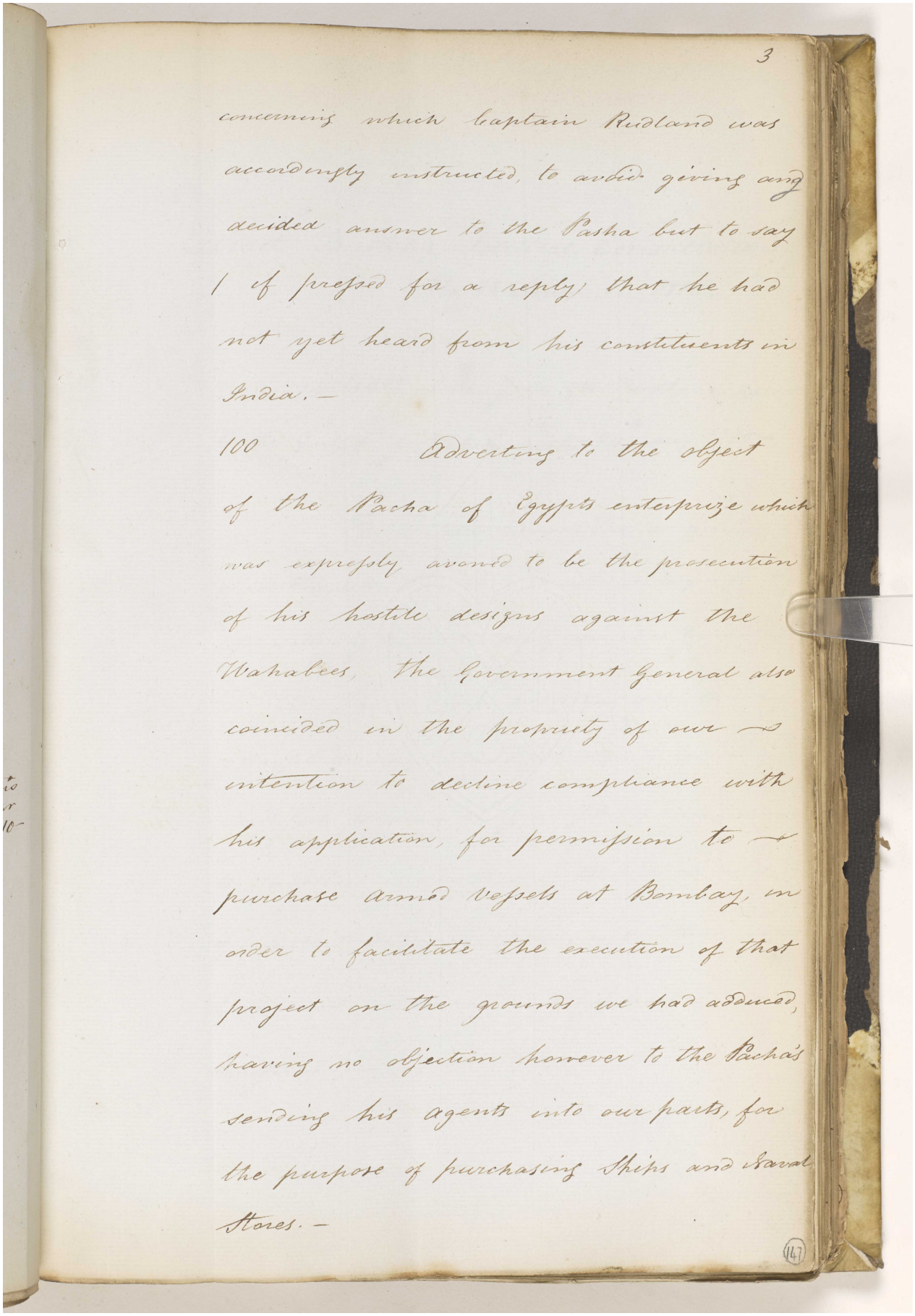

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concerning which Captain Ridland was accordingly instructed, to avoid giving any decided answer to the Pasha but to say if pressed for a reply, that he had not yet heard from his constituents in India. —

100 Adverting to the object of the Pacha of Egypts enterprize which was expressly avowed to be the prosecution of his hostile designs against the Wahabees, the Government General also coincided in the propriety of our intention to decline compliance with his application, for permission to purchase armed Vessels at Bombay, in order to facilitate the execution of that project on the grounds we had adduced, having no objection however to the Pacha's sending his agents into our ports, for the purpose of purchasing Ships and Naval Stores. —

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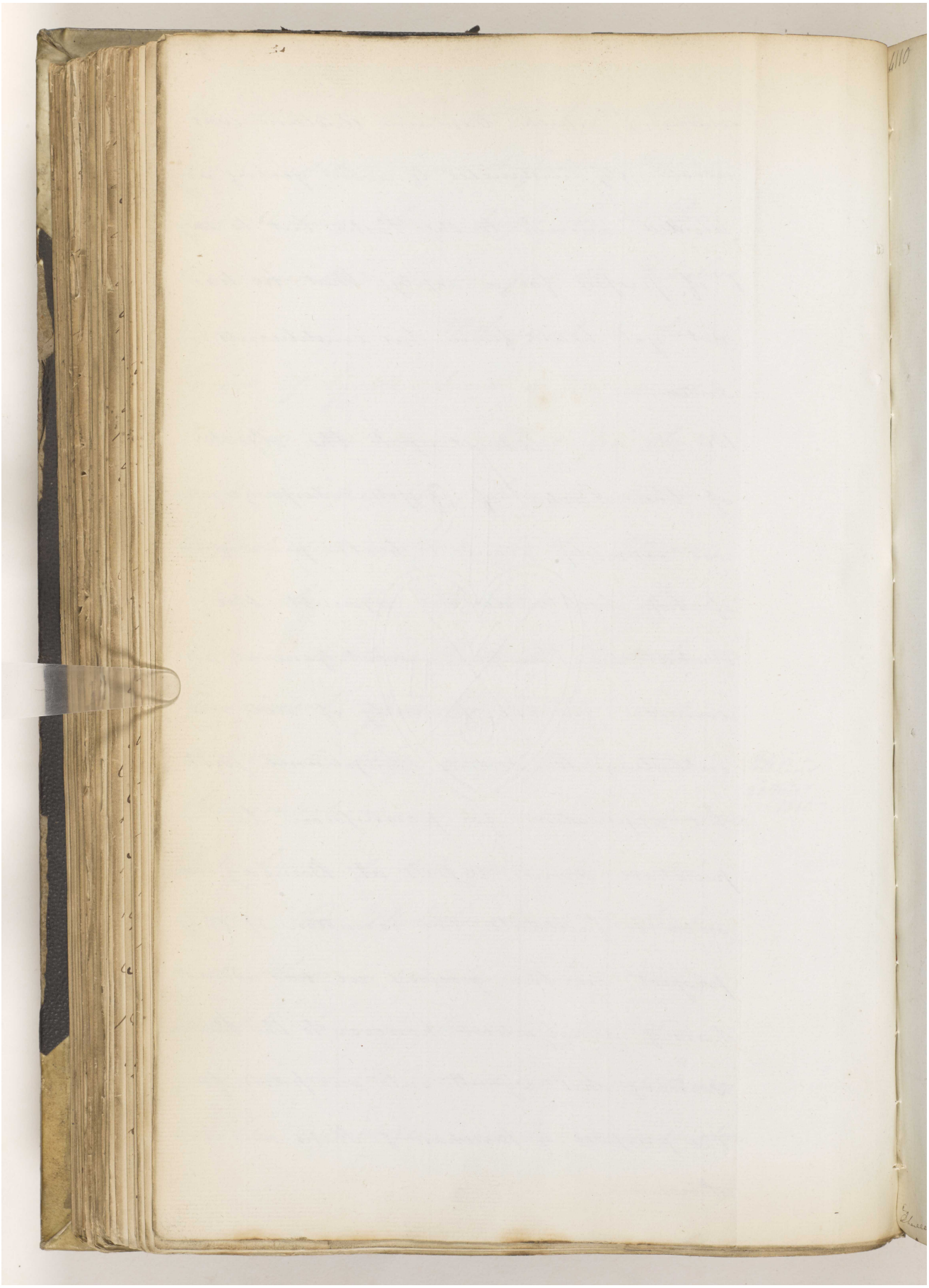

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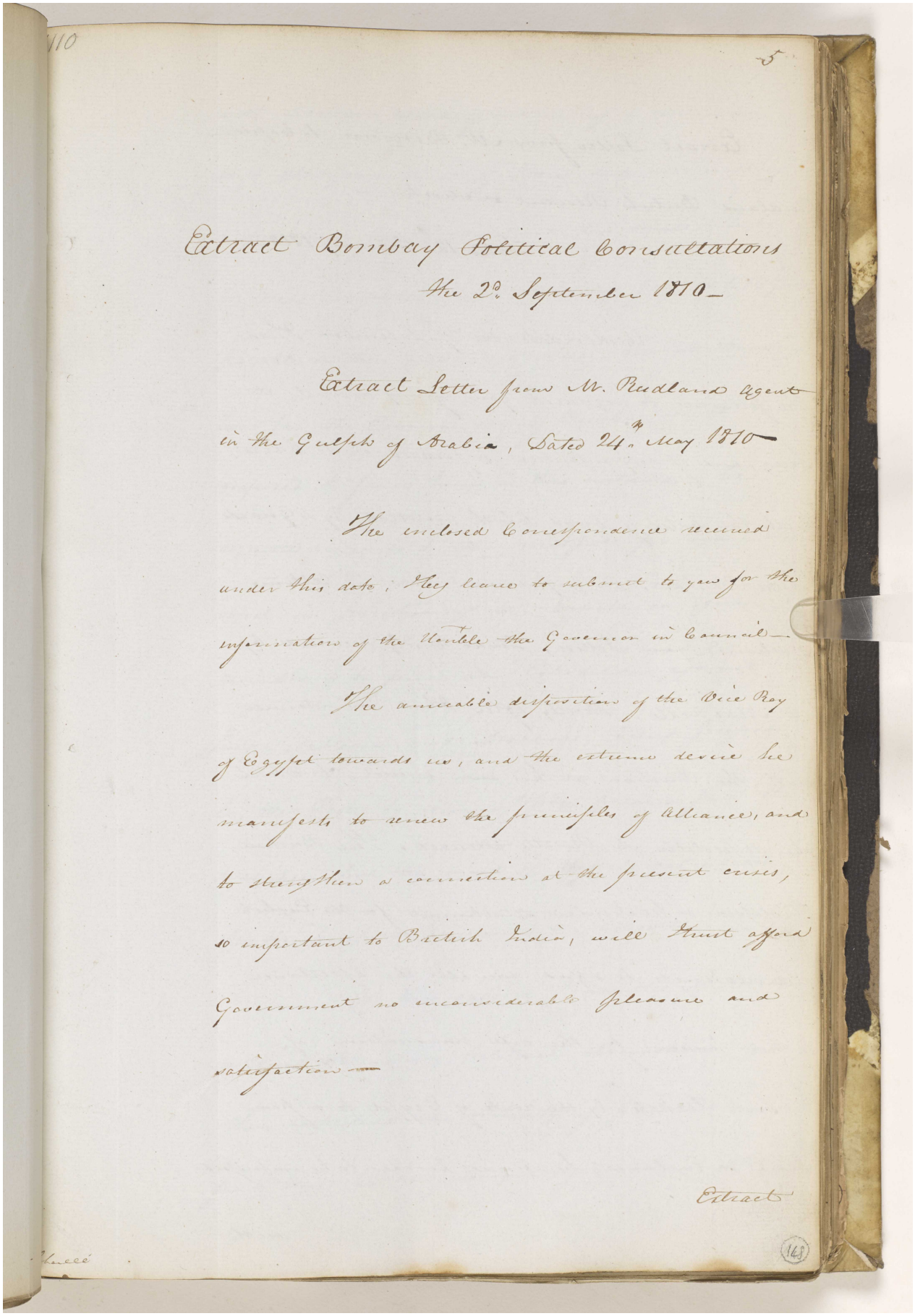


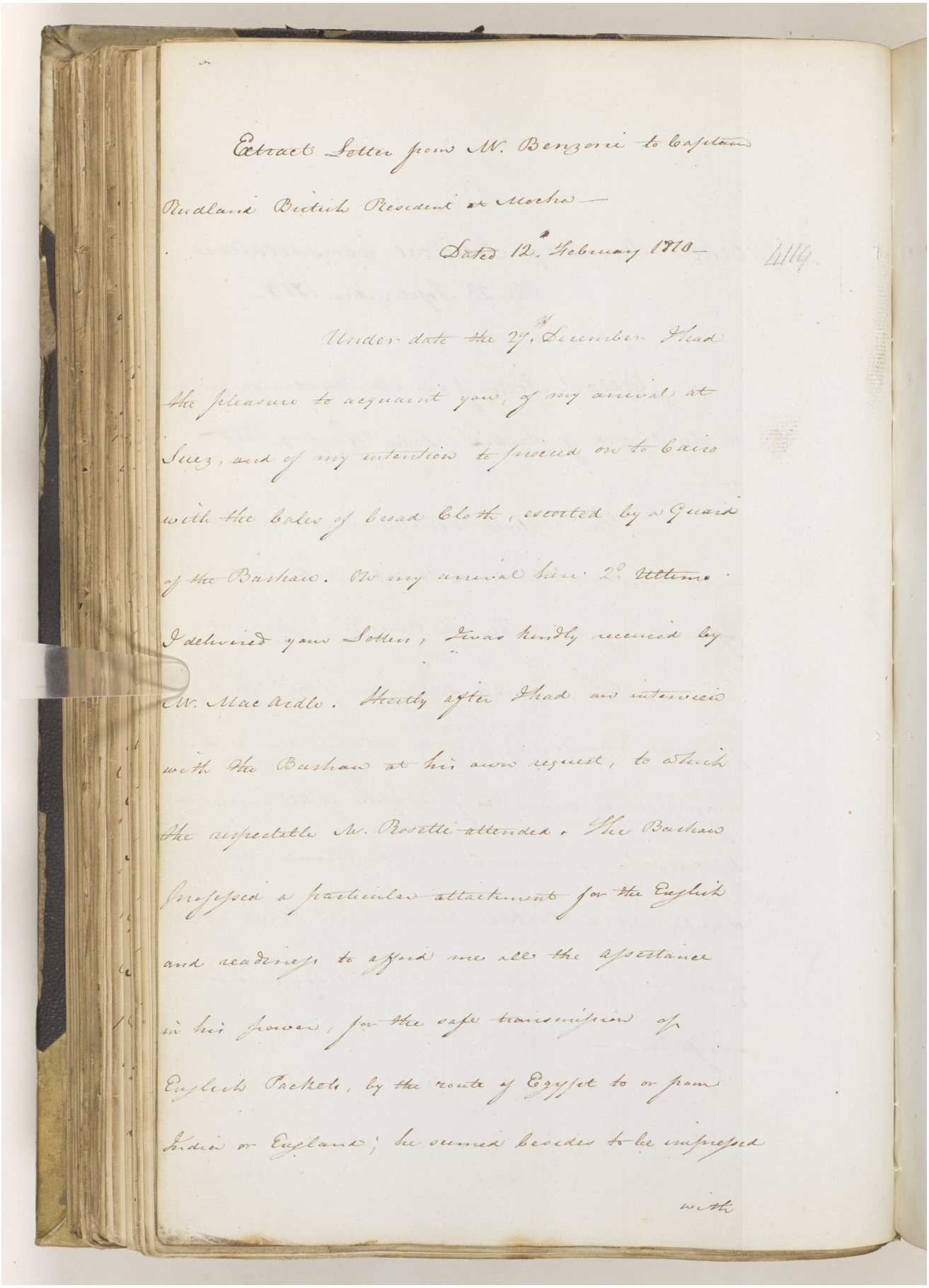
Extract Bombay Political Consultations
the 2d. September 1810—

Extract Letter from M. Rudland Agent in the Gulph of Arabia, Dated 24th. May 1810—

The inclosed Correspondence received under this date, they have to submit to you for the information of the Honble the Governor in Council—

The amicable disposition of the Vice Roy of Egypt towards us, and the extreme desire he manifests to renew the principles of Alliance, and to strengthen a connection at the present crisis, so important to British India, will I trust afford Government no inconsiderable pleasure and satisfaction—

Extract



Extract Letter from Mr. Benzoni to Captain Rudland British Resident at Mocha —

Dated 12th February 1810 —

Under date the 27th December I had the pleasure to acquaint you of my arrival at Suez, and of my intention to proceed on to Cairo with the bales of broad Cloth, escorted by a Guard of the Bashaw. On my arrival here 2d ultimo I delivered your Letter, I was kindly received by Mr. Macardle. Shortly after I had an interview with the Bashaw at his own request, to which the respectable Mr. Rosetti attended. The Bashaw professed a particular attachment for the English and readiness to afford me all the assistance in his power, for the safe transmission of English Packets, by the route of Egypt to or from India or England; he seemed besides to be impressed with

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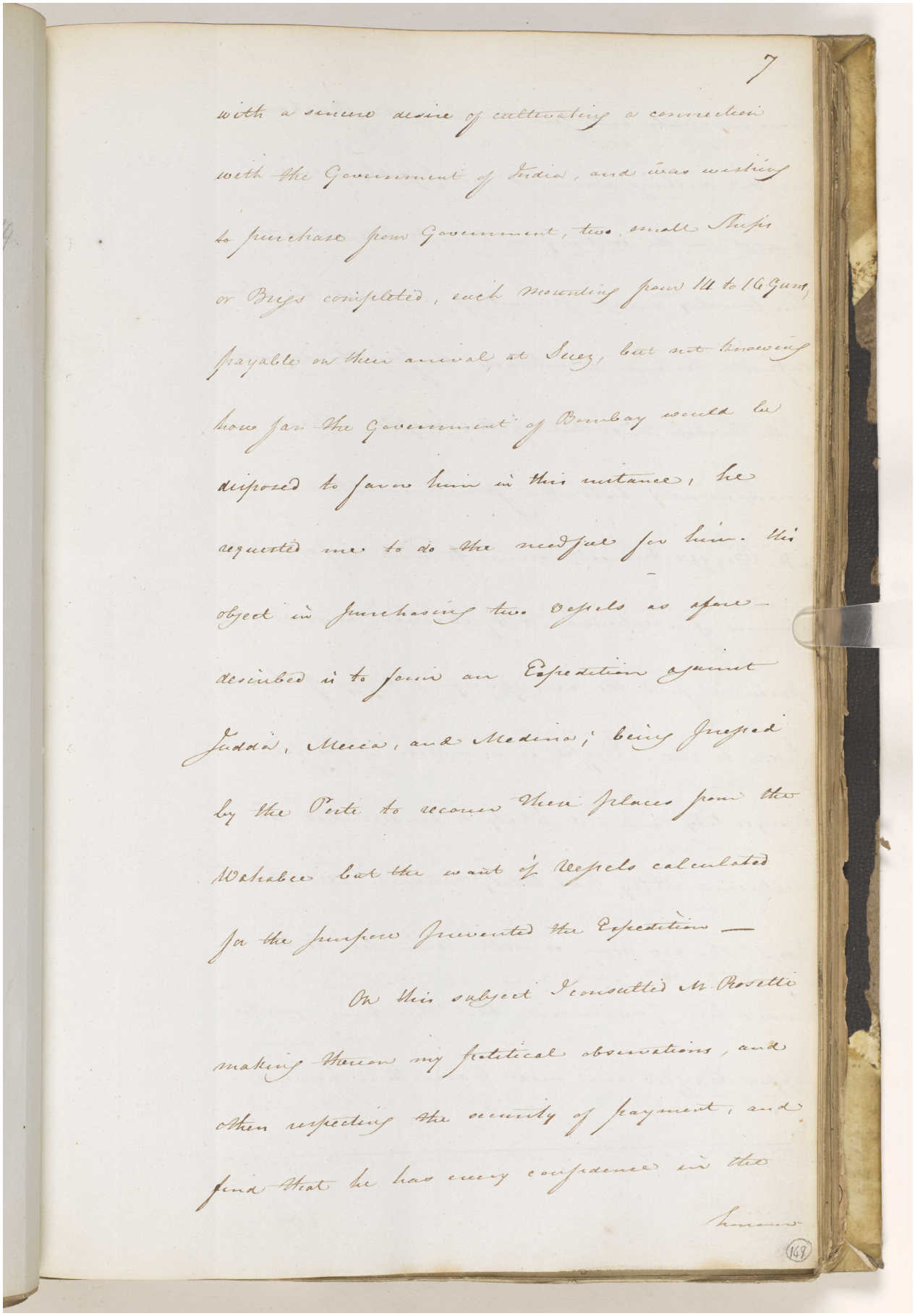

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with a sincere desire of cultivating a connection
with the Government of India, and was desirous
to purchase from Government, two small Ships
or Brigs completed, each mounting from 14 to 16 Guns,
payable on their arrival at Suez, but not knowing
how far the Government of Bombay would be
disposed to favor him in this instance, he
requested me to do the needful for him. His
object in purchasing two Vessels as above
described is to join an Expedition against
Judda, Mecca, and Medina, being engaged
by the Porte to recover their places from the
Wahabees but the want of Vessels calculated
for the purpose prevented the Expedition —

On this subject I consulted M. Rossetti
making thereon my political observations, and
others respecting the security of payment, and
find that he has every confidence in the
Honours

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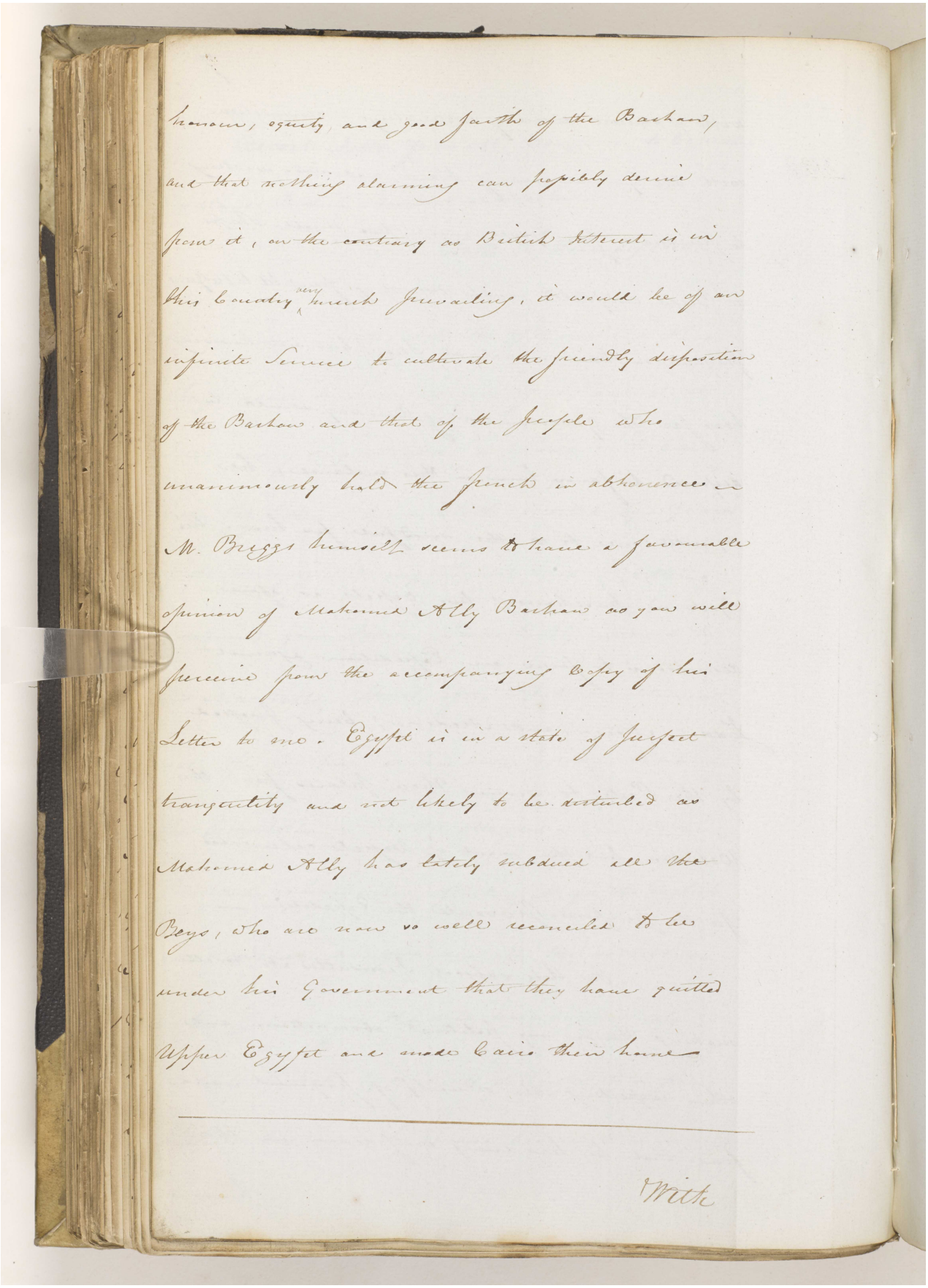

honour, equity and good faith of the Bashaw, and that nothing alarming can possibly ensue from it, on the contrary as British interest is in this Country very much prevailing, it would be of an infinite service to cultivate the friendly disposition of the Bashaw and that of the people who unanimously hold the French in abhorrence. M. Briggs himself seems to have a favourable opinion of Mahomed Ally Bashaw as you will perceive from the accompanying Copy of his Letter to me. Egypt is in a state of perfect tranquility and not likely to be disturbed as Mahomed Ally has lately subdued all the Beys, who are now so well reconciled to live under his Government that they have quitted Upper Egypt and made Cairo their home.

With

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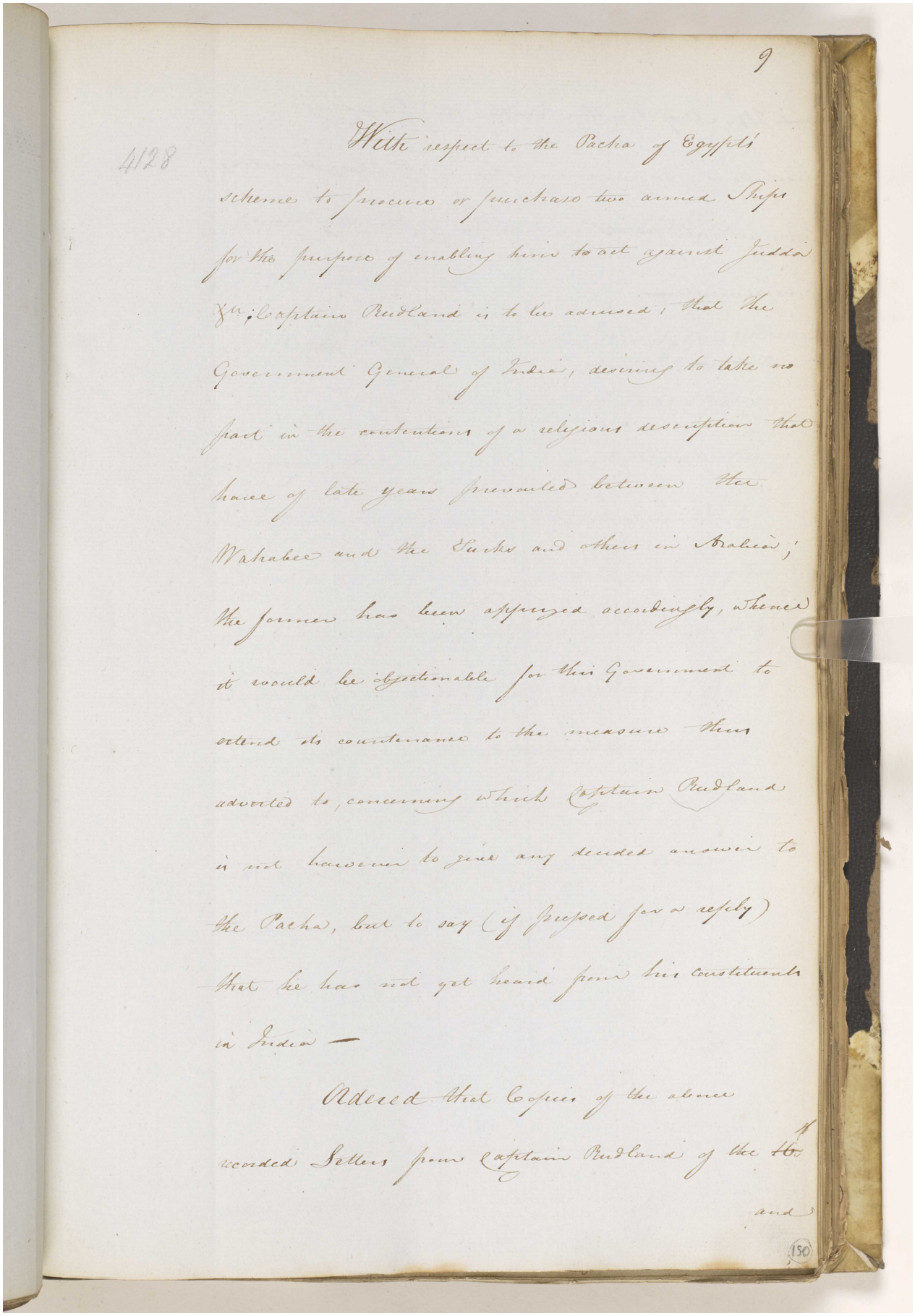

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With respect to the Pacha of Egypt's scheme to procure or purchase two armed Ships for the purpose of enabling him to act against Judda &c.; Captain Rudland is to be advised, that the Government General of India, desiring to take no part in the contentions of a religious description that have of late years prevailed between the Wahabee and the Turks and others in Arabia, the former has been apprized accordingly, whence it would be objectionable for this Government to extend its countenance to the measure thus adverted to, concerning which Captain Rudland is not however to give any decided answer to the Pacha, but to say (if pressed for a reply) that he has not yet heard from his Constituents in India —

Ordered that Copies of the above recorded Letters from Captain Rudland of the H. C. and

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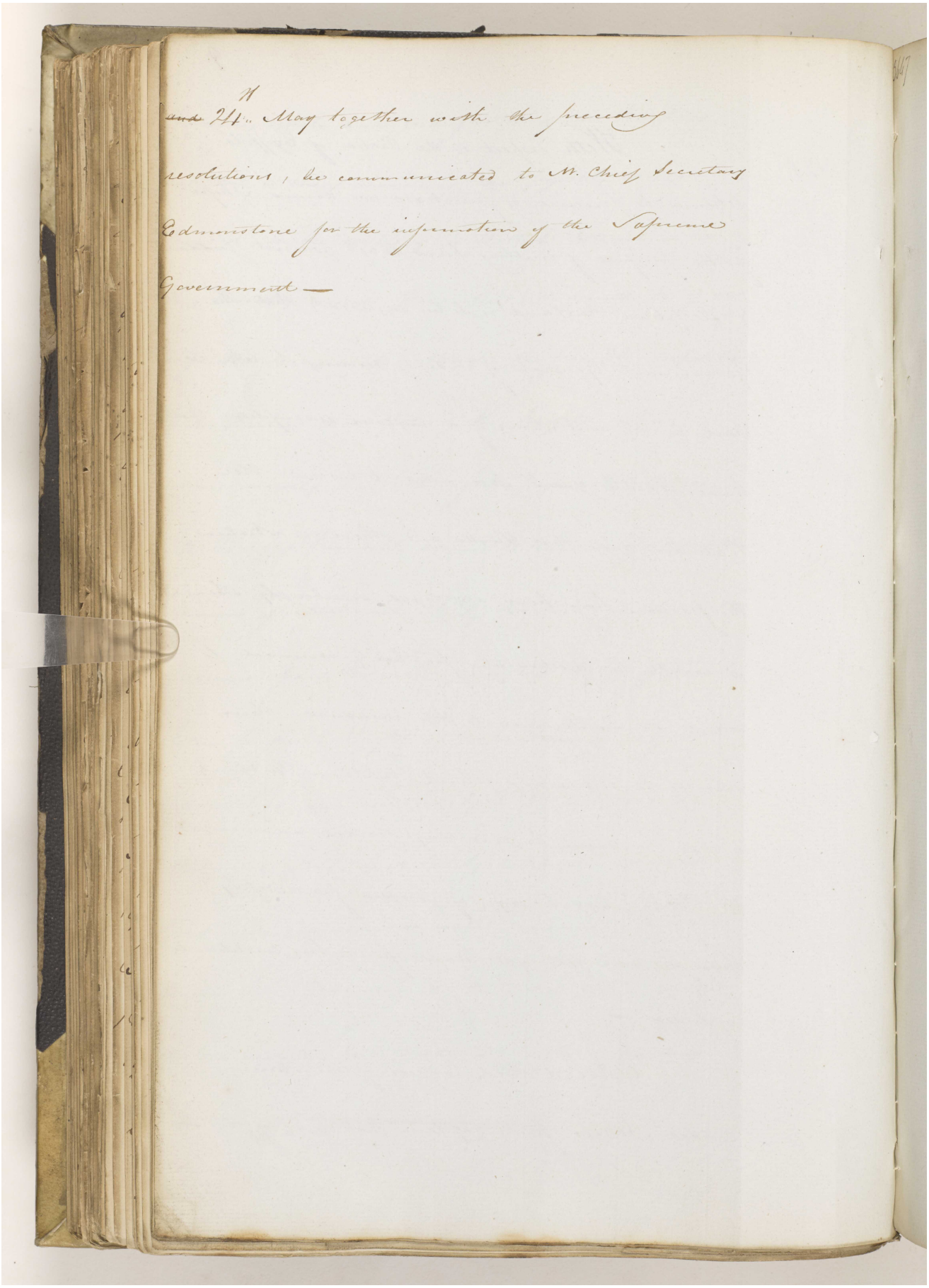
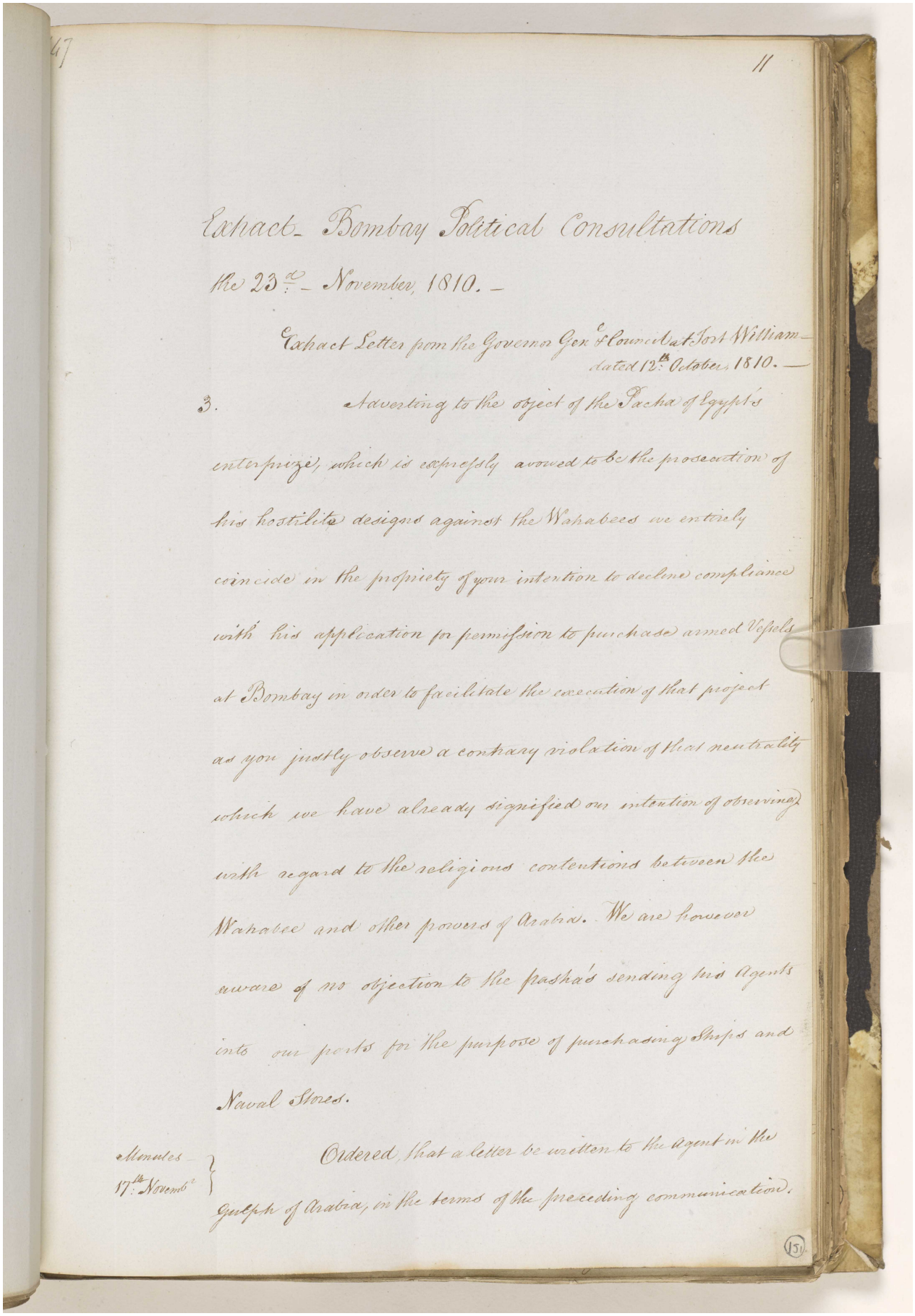


and 14th May together with the preceding
resolutions, be communicated to Mr. Chief Secretary
Edmonstone for the information of the Supreme
Government —



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11

Extract Bombay Political Consultations

the 23d. November, 1810.

Extract Letter from the Governor Gen.l & Council at Fort William dated 12th October, 1810.

3. Adverting to the object of the Pacha of Egypt's enterprize, which is expressly avowed to be the prosecution of his hostilities designed against the Wahabees we entirely coincide in the propriety of your intention to decline compliance with his application for permission to purchase armed Vessels at Bombay in order to facilitate the execution of that project as you justly observe a contrary violation of that neutrality which we have already signified our intention of observing with regard to the religious contentions between the Wahabee and other powers of Arabia. We are however aware of no objection to the pasha's sending his Agents into our ports for the purpose of purchasing Ships and Naval Stores.

Minutes 17th Novemb.r } Ordered that a letter be written to the Agent in the Gulph of Arabia, in the terms of the preceding communication.

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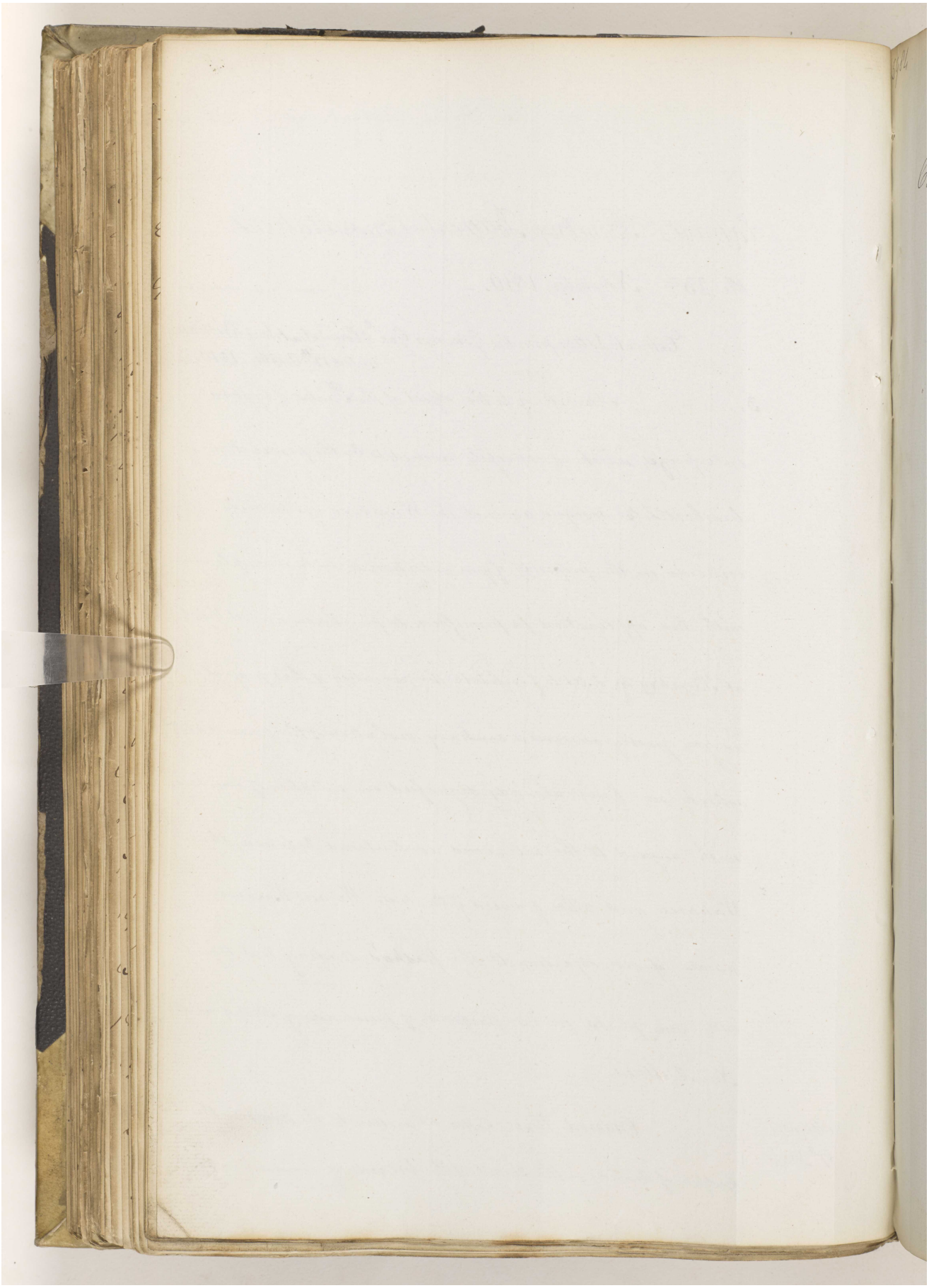

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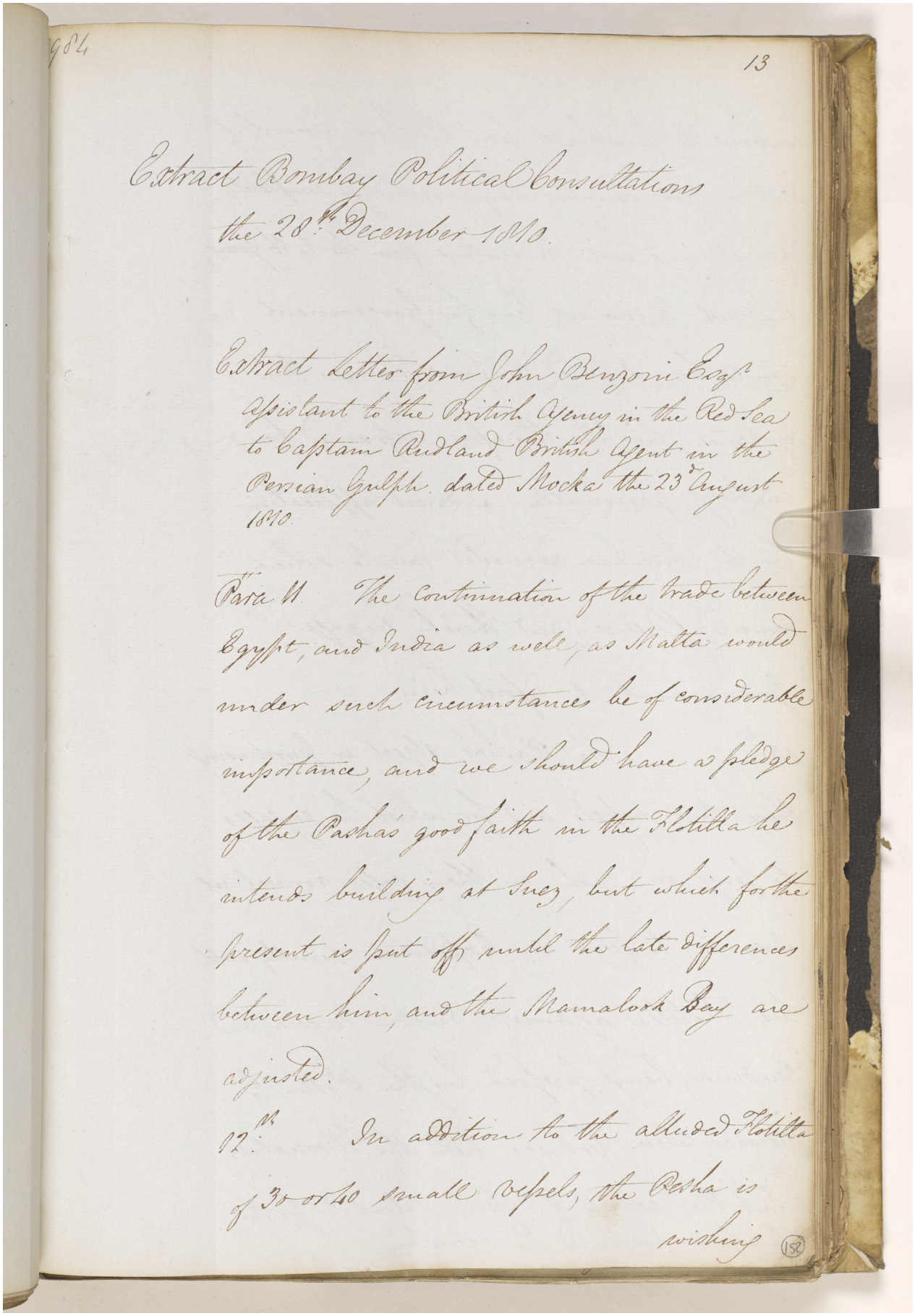

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Extract Bombay Political Consultations
the 28th December 1810.

Extract Letter from John Benzoni Esqr
Assistant to the British Agency in the Red Sea
to Captain Rudland British Agent in the
Persian Gulph. dated Mocka the 23d August
1810.

Para 11. The continuation of the trade between
Egypt, and India as well, as Malta would
under such circumstances be of considerable
importance, and we should have a pledge
of the Pashas good faith in the Flotilla he
intends building at Suez, but which for the
present is put off until the late differences
between him, and the Mamalook Bey are
adjusted.

12th. In addition to the alluded Flotilla
of 30 or 40 small Vessels, the Pasha is
wishing

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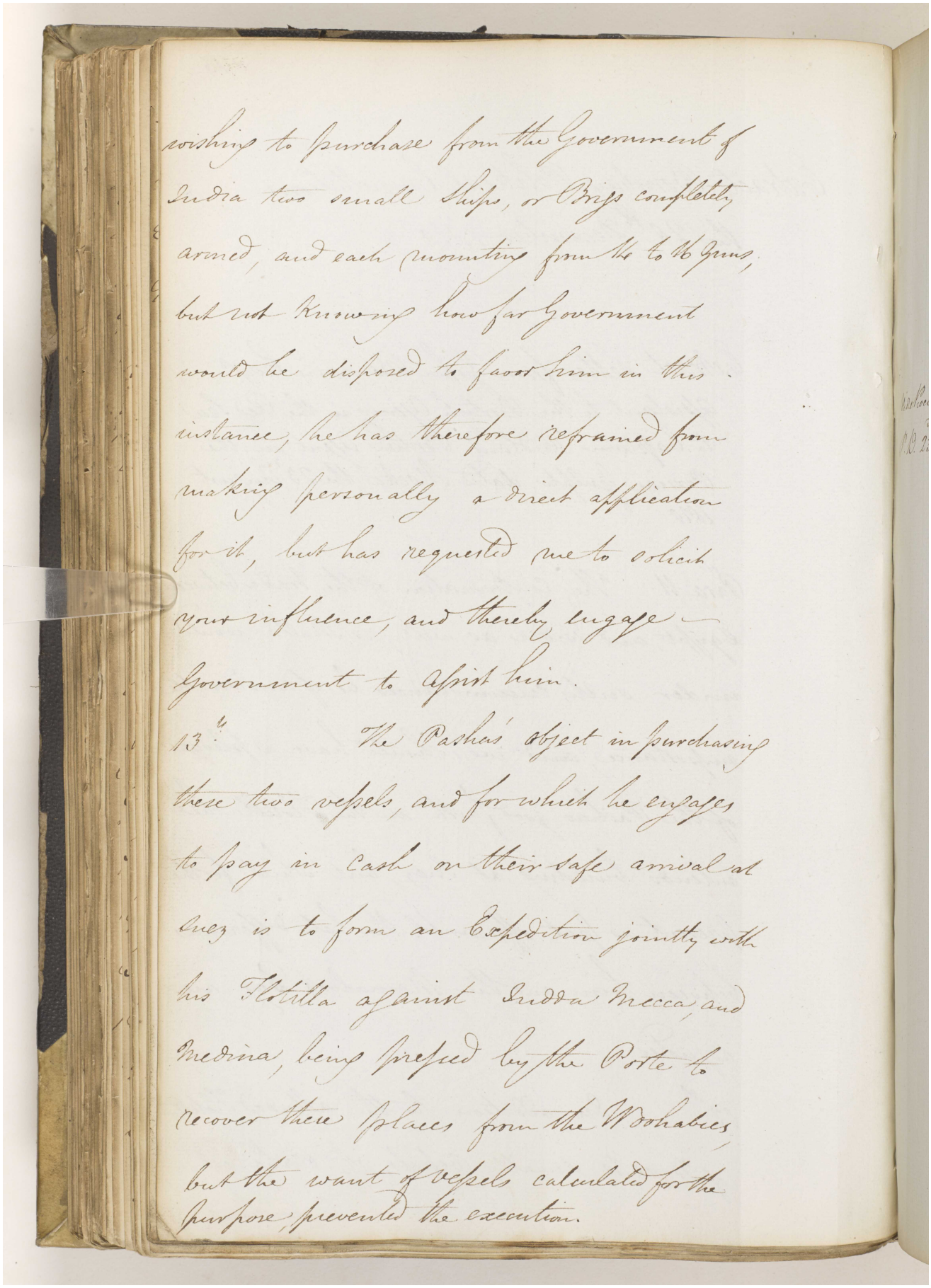

wishing to purchase from the Government of India two small Ships, or Brigs completely armed, and each mounting from 14 to 16 Guns, but not knowing how far Government would be disposed to favor him in this instance, he has therefore refrained from making personally a direct application for it, but has requested me to solicit your influence, and thereby engage Government to assist him.

13th The Pashas object in purchasing these two vessels, and for which he engages to pay in Cash on their safe arrival at Suez is to form an Expedition jointly with his Flotilla against Judda Mecca, and Medina, being pressed by the Porte to recover these places from the Wahabies but the want of vessels calculated for the purpose, prevented the execution.

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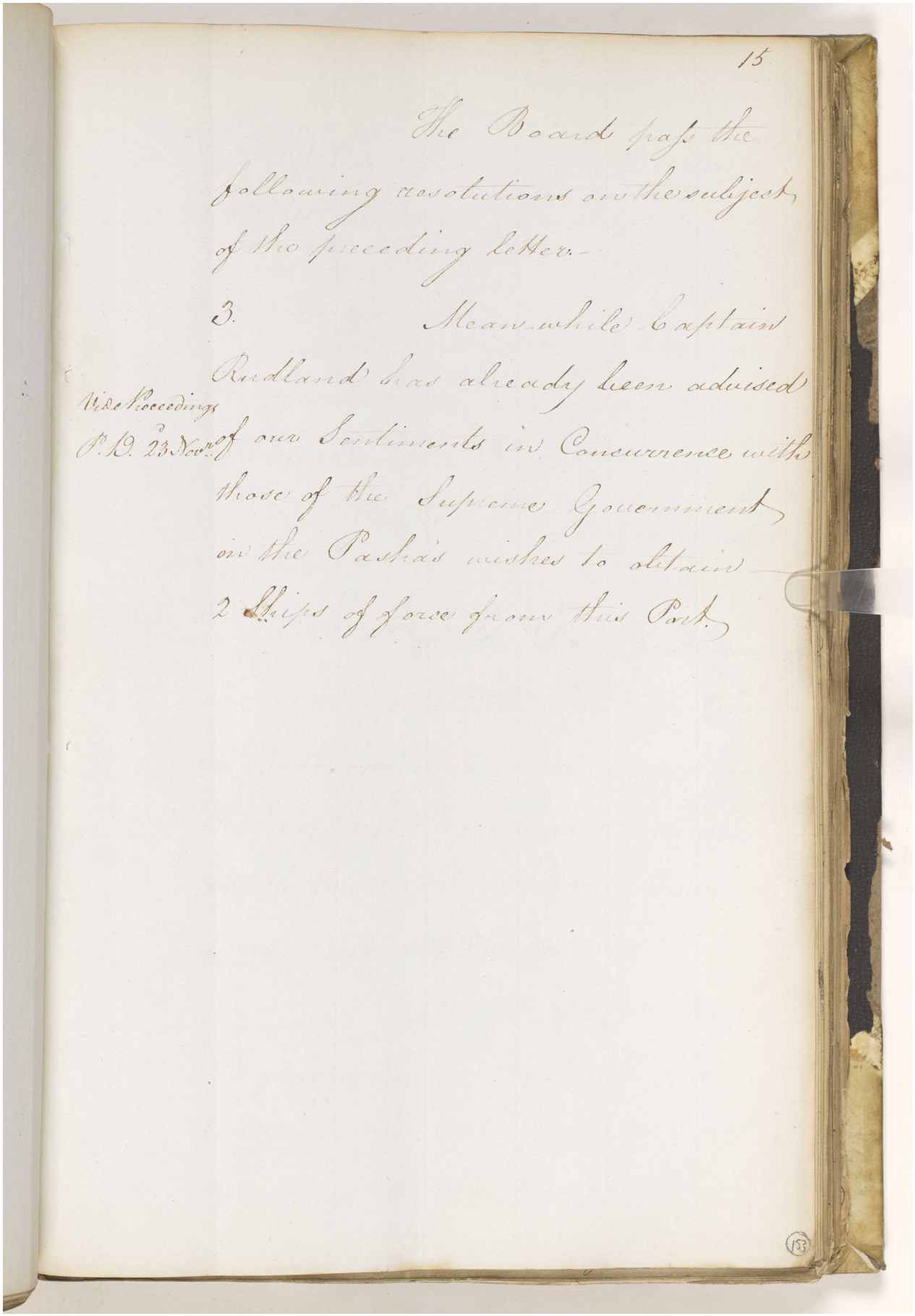

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The Board pass the following resolutions on the subject of the preceding letter.–

3. Mean while Captain Rudland has already been advised Vide Proceedings P.B. 23 Nov.r of our Sentiments in Concurrence with those of the Supreme Government on the Pasha's wishes to obtain 2 Ships of force from this Port.

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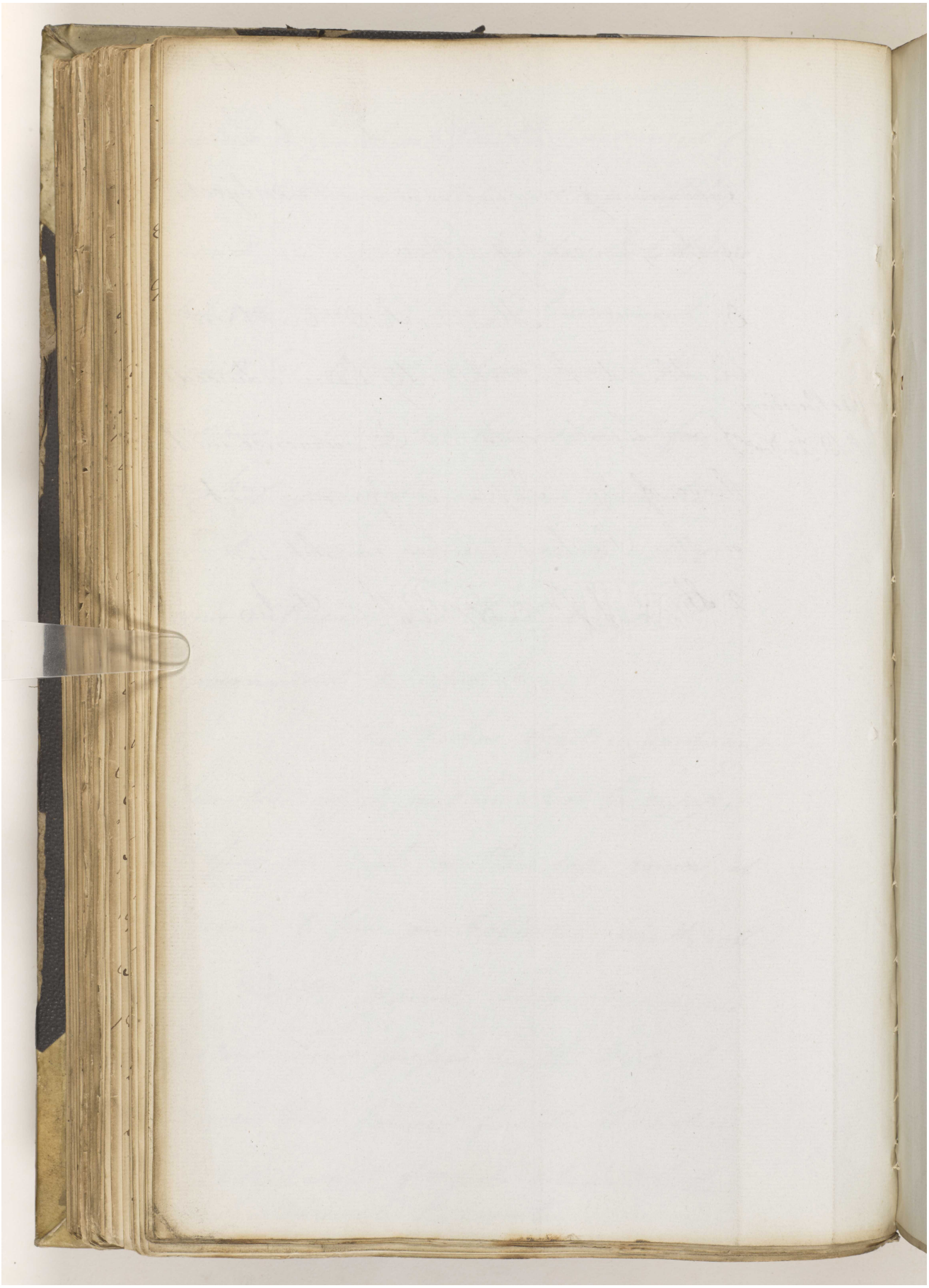

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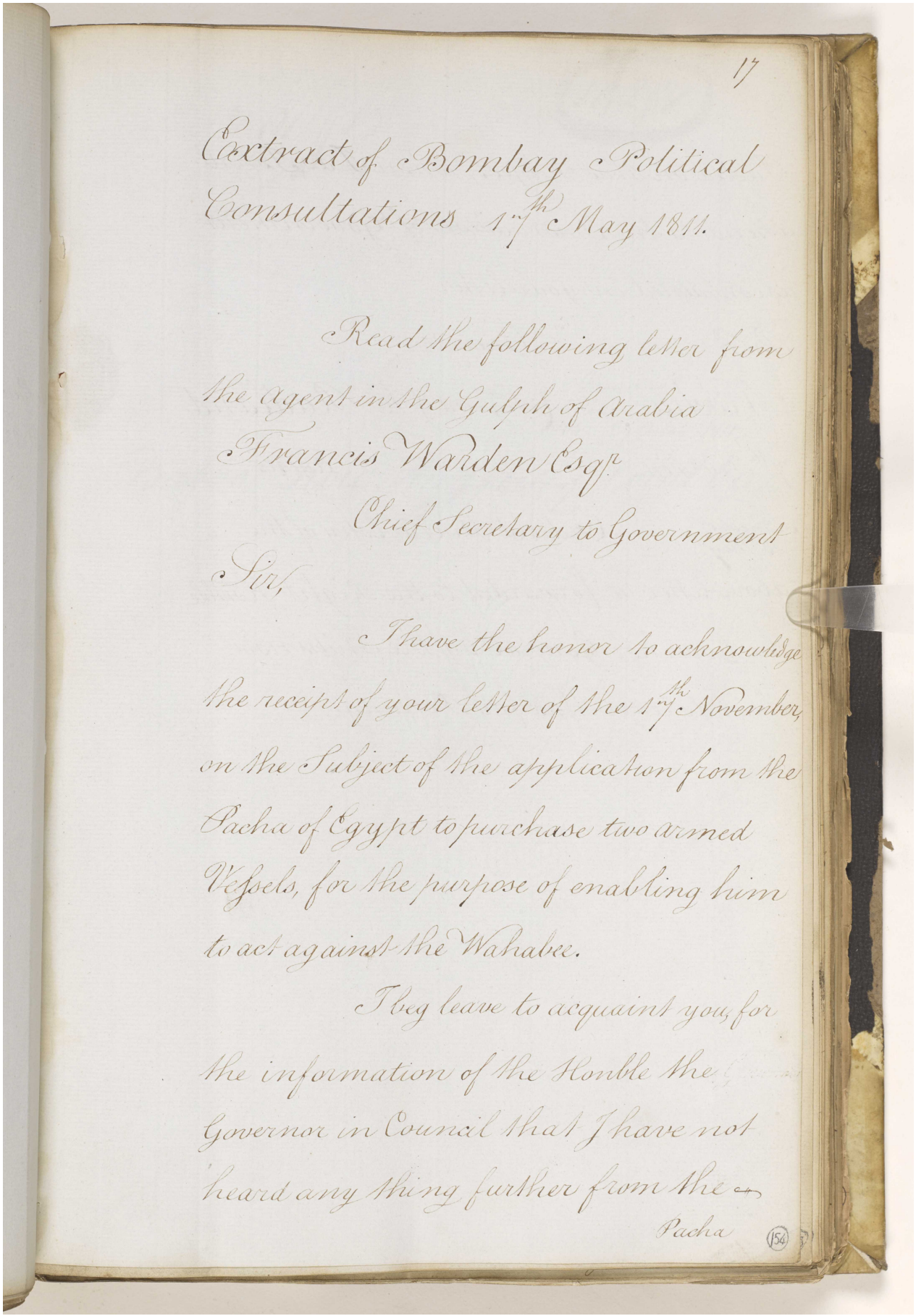

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Extract of Bombay Political Consultations 17th May 1811.

Read the following letter from the Agent in the Gulph of Arabia Francis Warden Esqr

Chief Secretary to Government

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st/ November, on the Subject of the application from the Pacha of Egypt to purchase two armed Vessels, for the purpose of enabling him to act against the Wahabee.

I beg leave to acquaint you, for the information of the Honble the Governor in Council that I have not heard any thing further from the Pacha

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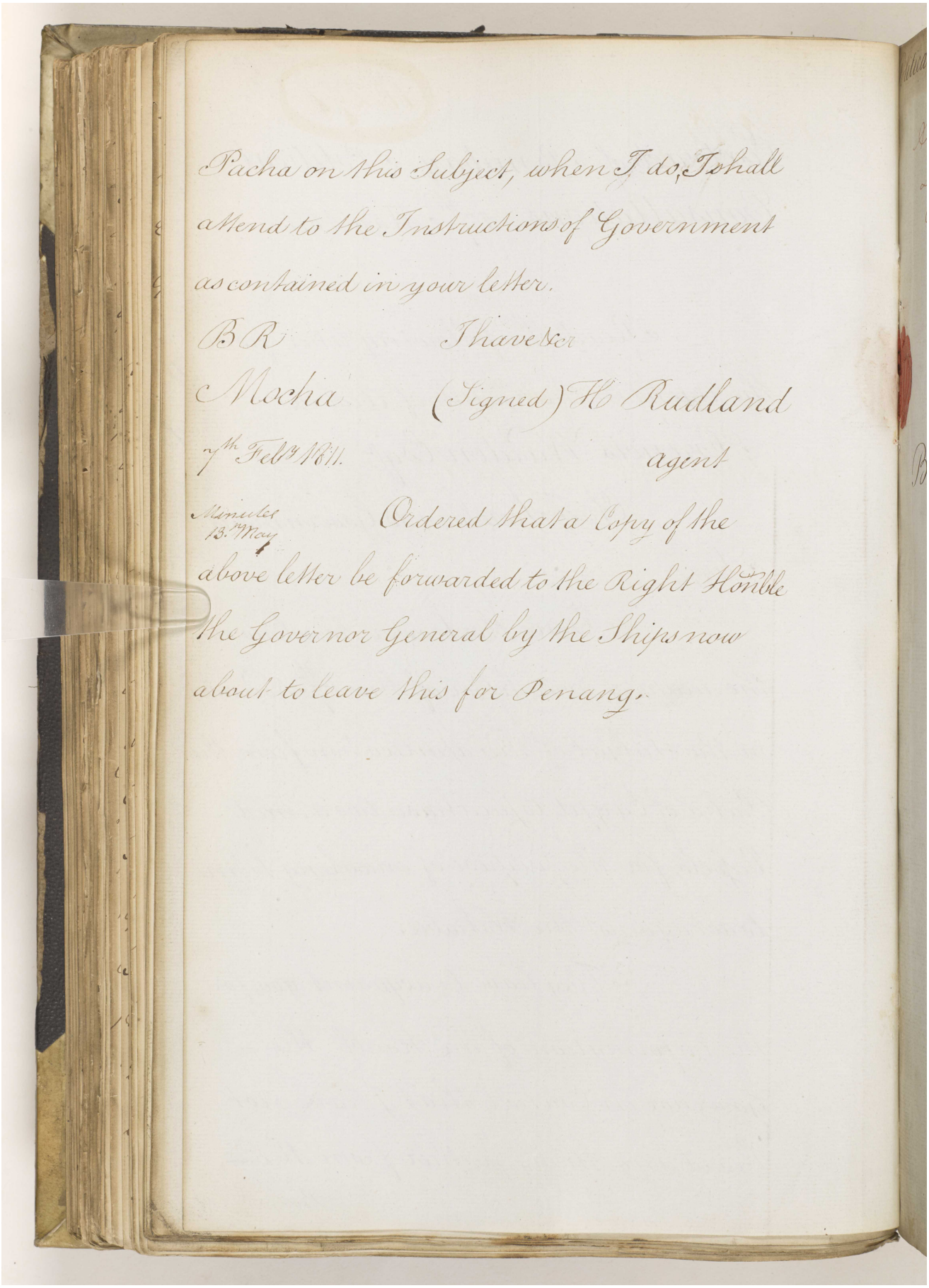

Pacha on this Subject, when I do, I shall
attend to the Instructions of Government
as contained in your letter.

B R I have &c.
Mocha (Signed) H. Rudland
7th Feb.y 1811. agent

Minutes 13th May

Ordered that a Copy of the
above letter be forwarded to the Right Honble
the Governor General by the Ships now
about to leave this for Penang.

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