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‘Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe’

Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	IOR/F/4/1519/59962
Date(s)	20 Dec 1834-4 Feb 1835 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 item (11 folios)
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About this record

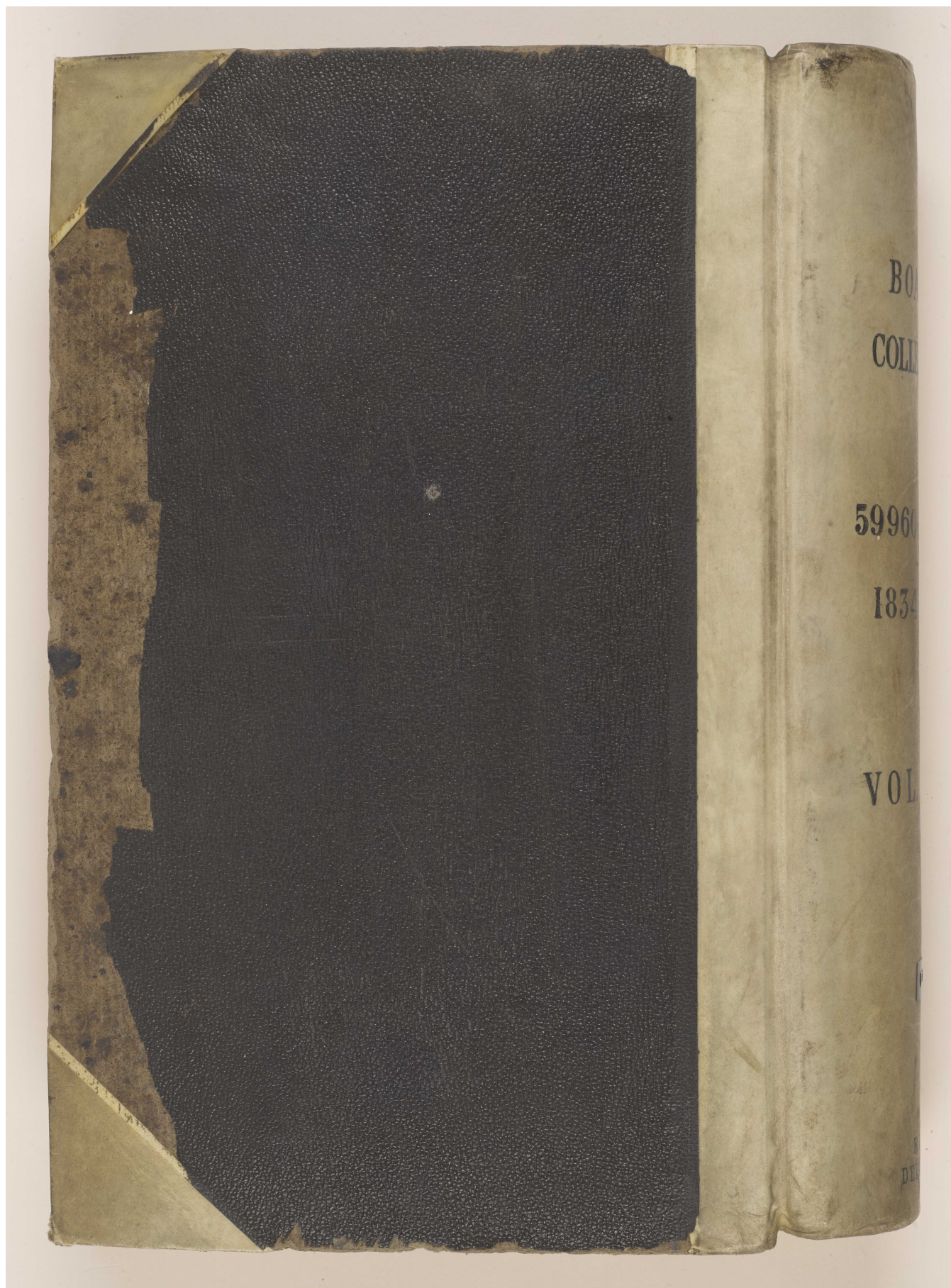
The item consists of copies of correspondence and a memorandum enclosed within a letter from the Government of Bombay [Mumbai] to the East India Company Court of Directors. The correspondence, written by Dr John Milne, former President of the Bombay Medical Board, relates to Milne's arguments for sending dispatches from Bombay to London via Ghrane [Kuwait]. He argues that this route is safer, cheaper, and just as quick compared to other proposed routes along the Euphrates river or over the Red Sea. Milne's correspondence also outlines the commercial and political benefits he believes would arise from maintaining a British presence in Ghrane.

The title page of the item contains the following references: 'P.C. [Previous Communication] 1631, Draft 696, 1835', 'Collection N. 1 of N. 3', 'Bombay Political Department', 'Examiners Office, 1835'.

**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [front]
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'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [back]
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'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [spine]
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**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [edge]
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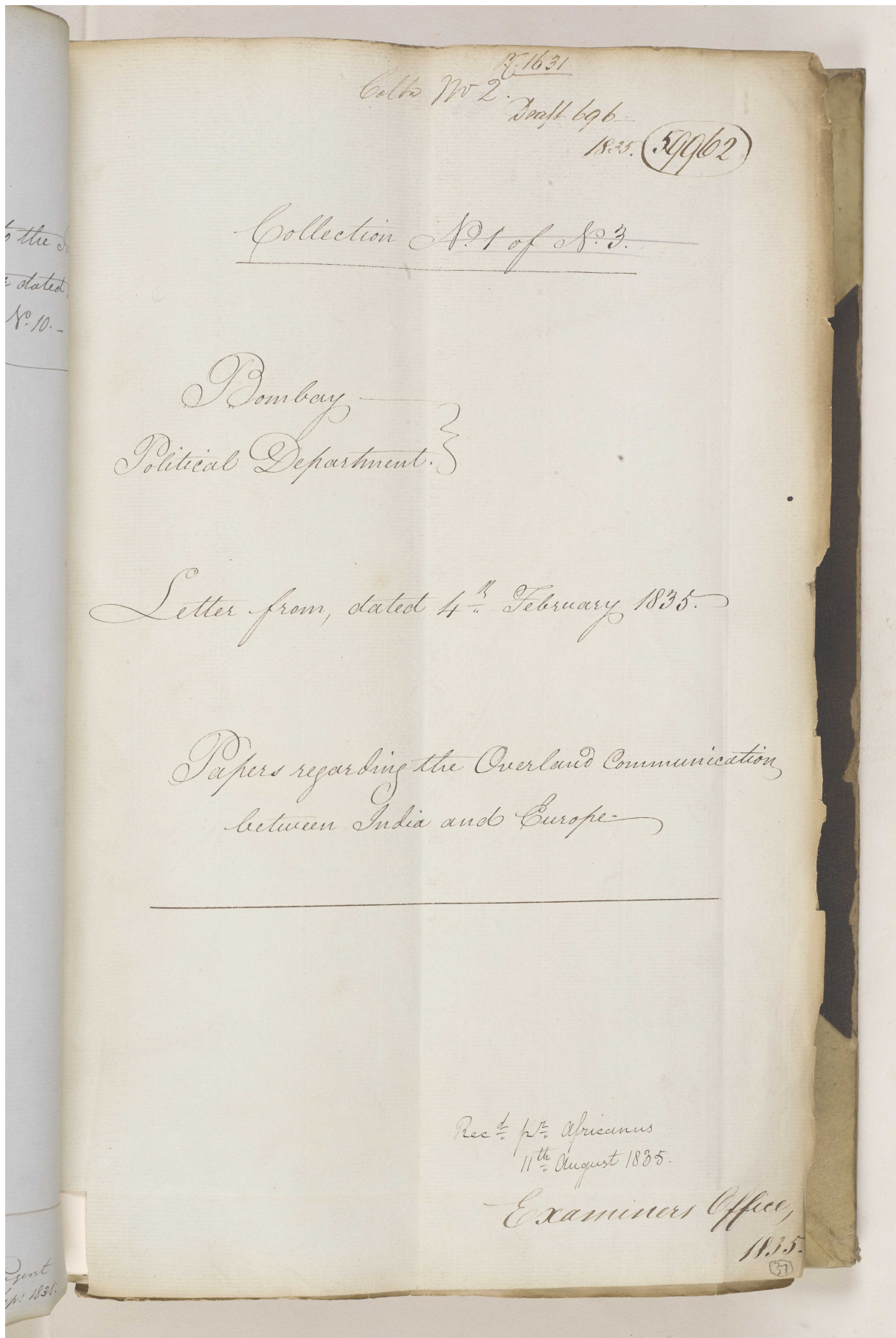
**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [head]
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**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [tail]
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'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [37r]
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1.	Government	Court	Transmitting copies of papers of Director received from Dr. Melre late President of the Medical Board at this Presidency on the subject of overland communication bet- ween India and Europe, together with a Memorandum relating to the same subject.	1835 Feb. 9 th	
3.	Dr. Melre	The Presi- dent of the of the Medical Board	On the above subject	1835 Oct. 5 th	1835 Feb. 4 th
5.	Ditto	The Private Secy of His excellency the Governor General	Ditto	Ditto	" 17 th "
9.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	" 20 th "
12.	Ditto	The Presi- dent of the Indian Board	Ditto	Ditto	" " "
13.			Memorandum by the Secretary to Government		" " "
			(True copy)		1835
	Bombay Castle		Signed by Mr. H. Mathon Secretary to Govt.		(38)
	4 th February 1835				
	2 signed				

**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [38v]
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'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [39r]
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3.	13 th Dec ^r 1834.	D ^r Milne	President of the India Board	4 th Feby 1835.
5.	18 th	Ditto	Private Secy to the Governor General	Ditto
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'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [39v]
(12/28)



'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [40r]
(13/28)

N^o 3. of 1835.

Political Department.

To, The Hon^{ble} the Court of Directors
For affairs of the Hon^{ble} East
India Company.

London.

Hon^{ble} Sir,

Overland 1.
Communication
between India &
Europe.

Pol. Consul: 1835.
Feb 4th N^o 195 & 96.

We have the honor
to transmit to your Honorable Court,
the accompanying copies of letters
received from Dr^r Milne late
President of the Medical Boards
at this Presidency, on the subject of
overland communication between India
and Europe, together with a Memo-
randum relating to the same subject.

Copies
(10)

'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [40v]
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2.

2. Copies of the above
papers have also been forwarded to the
Government of India..

We have the honor to
be, with the greatest respect,

Honble Sirs,
Your most faithful & obedient
humble servants,

" Ans.

" John Reade

" James Munland

" Caspessie

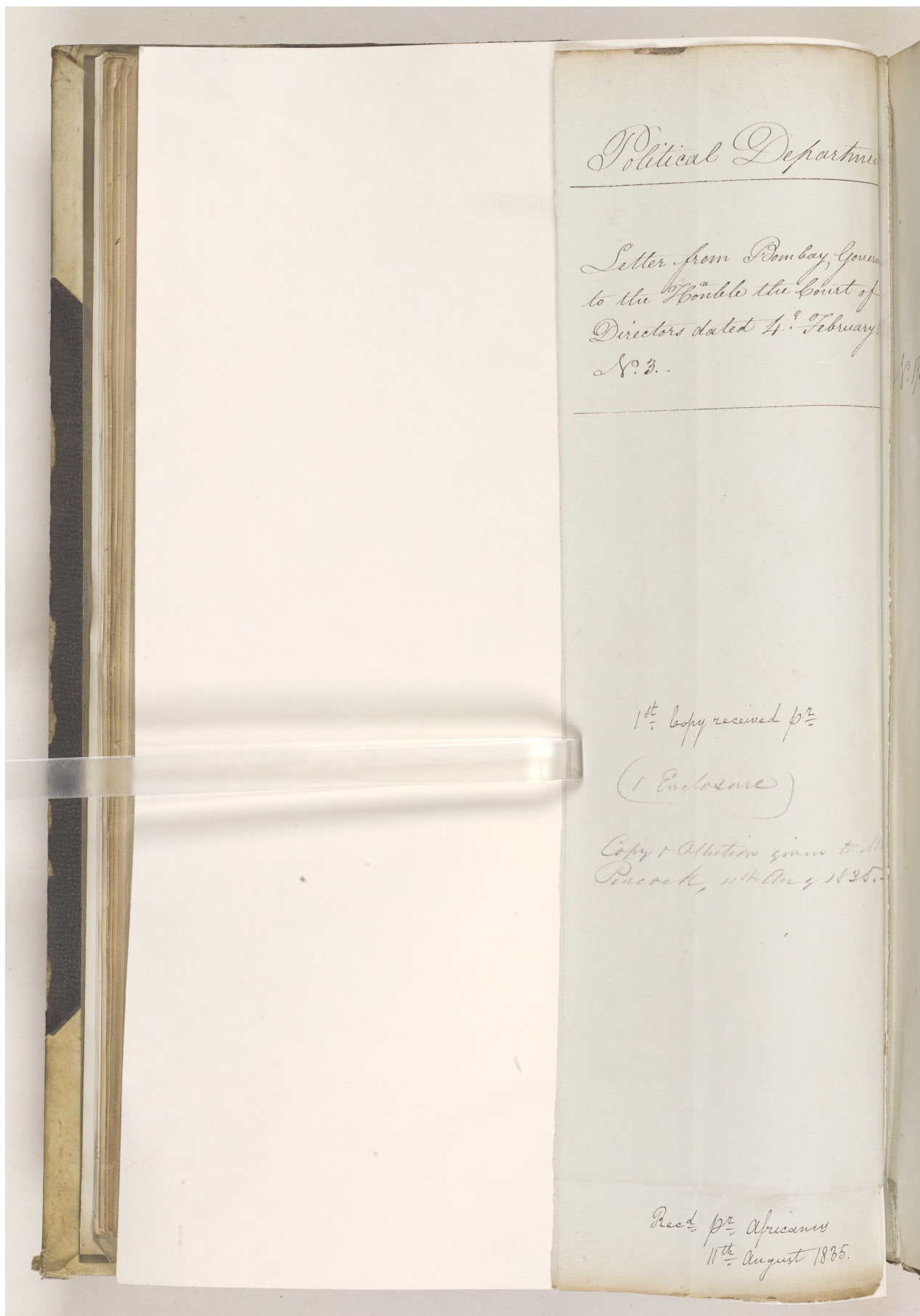
Bombay Castle,
4th February 1835.

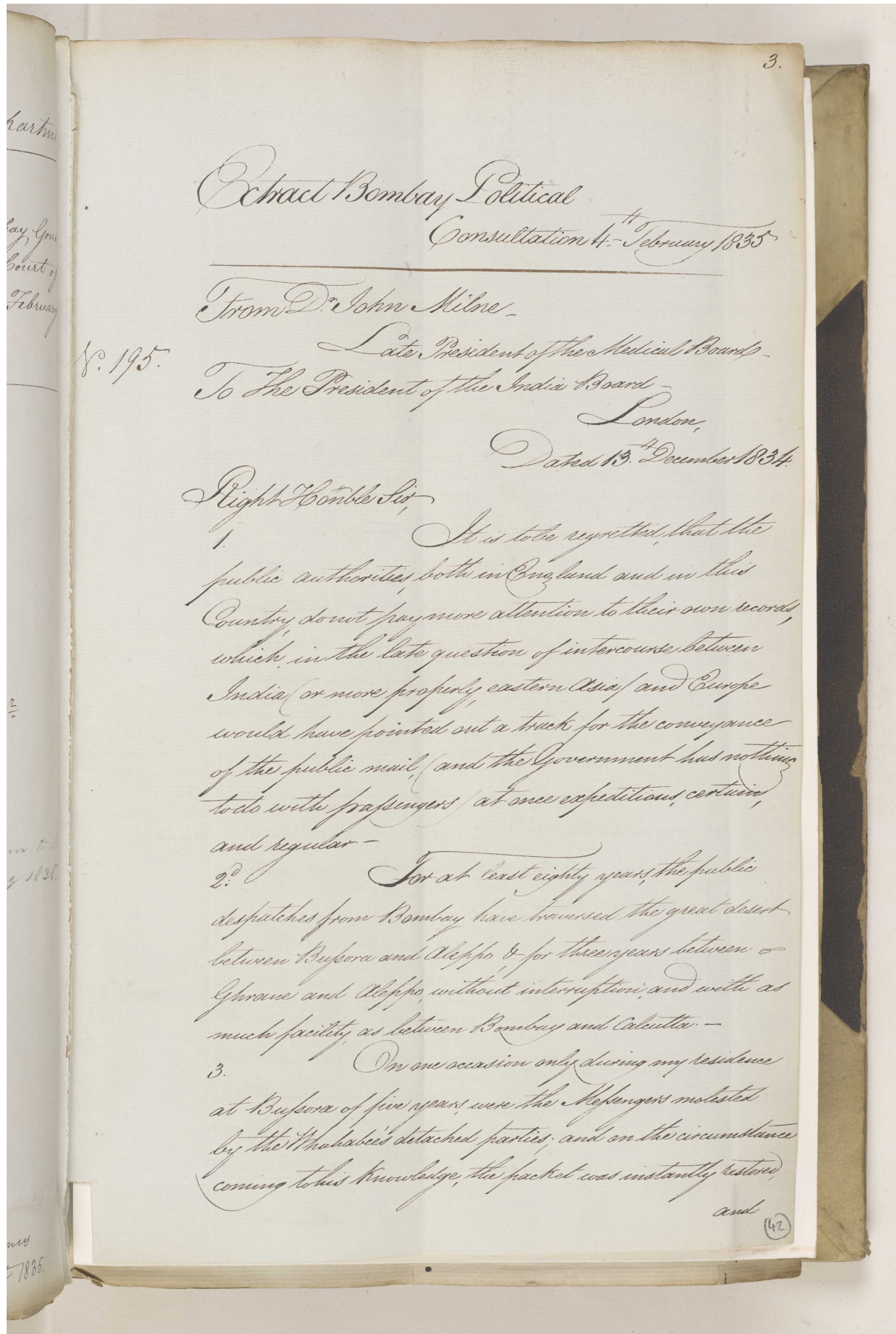
Copd by
F. P. Shaw-Hurysamkerie
Chas. W. S. S. S.

**'Papers regarding the Overland Communication between India and Europe' [41r]
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14.

and the plunderers were most severely reprimanded, and sent to the Resident for punishment.

4. There is, therefore, no occasion to employ either the Red Sea, or the Euphrates, in establishing a ready and early communication with Europe. The means which the Government at present possess are perfectly equal to the establishment of the proposed line which combines economy with efficiency for the expense of a couple of Arab Messengers from Ghrane to Aleppo, or it may be direct to Latakia, will not amount to one day's expenditure in supporting a steamer, and there is no doubt, the Mails will be conveyed at least with equal if not with greater expedition to the destined port in the Mediterranean, where a steamer may be ordered to receive them for conveyance to Marseilles and thence to London.

5. I would by this route apportion the different stages, as follows - From Bombay to Ghrane picking up the * N.B. Hyderabad steamer's despatches ten days - from Ghrane to Latakia ^{specious bay of the Mediterranean or the Gulf of Persia} twelve or thirteen days from Latakia to Marseilles calling ^{the difficulties of passing at the entrance of the Bosphorus} at Corfu and Malta eight days - and from Marseilles to London eight days - making a total on the average of thirty nine, but say forty days.

6. It will only, therefore, be necessary to direct that the ^{English} Lindsay's packet be despatched from Bombay on the 1st of each Month, which will reach Latakia on the twenty third and if you cause arrangements to be made that the mail from London be also forwarded on the eighth of each Month it will reach Marseilles about the sixteenth, which will allow time for the repair of the Mediterranean

Steamer

5.

Steamer, and that Steamer will arrive at Delicua about
the time the India despatch reaches it, being the twenty third
or twenty fourth of each Month, and the same mail will
arrive at Ghrane about the seventh or eighth of the ensuing
Month, and be in readiness for the arrival on the ninth or
tenth of the High Sunday.

You will best know, whether you have
obtained a more judicious proposal, than the present. My
residence for five years at Cassara, enables me to speak con-
fidently and decidedly, that a better cannot be devised, and
I have the honor to be Sir,
Signed John Milne

Bombay
3rd December 1834.

From D^r John Milne
Late President of the Medical Board.
To Thomas Pakenham Esq^r.
The Private Secy of His Excellency the Governor General
Calcutta
Dated 18th December 1834.

Sir,
The anxiety evinced, and the interest
manifested by His Lordship in the promotion of a more
speedy intercourse between India and Europe, have afforded
general satisfaction, and the recent determination of
the British Legislature to give effect to the measure
suggested, with a similar view by the President of the
Board of Control leads to a confident hope that some
decided and permanent steps will speedily be taken
to accomplish this great object.

Y^{rs}
John

(43)

6.

2. With the means, however, in my power in this quarter, of at once establishing a monthly mail or as soon as the Admiral, commanding in the Mediterranean, can furnish a steamer on that side to co-operate. I have shown, in the accompanying copy of a communication to the President of the Board of Control, that despatches may reach London from Bombay under forty days, and perhaps it may be done, when every thing is in train of execution, in thirty six, & my residence for five years at Bysara, enabled me to speak with some accuracy. -

3. Should the measure of establishing the seat of the Supreme Government at Birminghamb, be adopted, forty days may, in that case, be given as the average period of the receipt and transmission of despatches from that capital, and as this measure must produce incalculable benefits to the general prosperity and promote a degree of rapidity of improvement throughout the whole of India, and of efficiency in the conduct of public affairs, by the free intercourse, to which it must lead in the formation of good roads, bridges and canals in every direction I confidently anticipate, when the subject of this central influence is fully weighed, that its attainment will be deemed an object of paramount consideration. -

4. As an example of the beneficial effects which must result from this important measure, the fine emporium of Bombay which now remains

7.
remains insulated and cut off from the immense
continent of India, will at once be united, and
it is not a little remarkable, when a single
bridge would open a direct road to this great
mart and seat of Government from every
station belonging to this Presidency, that such
a work should have been so long neglected;
but this bridge will further embrace that
line of intercourse, which will reduce thirty
miles of the travelling distance between
Aurangabad and this port and consequently
of the great eastern line of road, communica-
ting with Calcutta. -

J. These advantages were so
apparent, that a late Governor even at the
risk of incurring the censure of his Superiors,
had resolved on his own responsibility, as he
did in the case of the Phore-Ghat road, to
commence this work, which is so essential to
the general convenience and prosperity and to
almost every operation of the Government
itself, affording as it does, diverging lines of
moving east, west, north and south, and forming
the first step in promotion of the glory of the
proposed future central seat of Supreme Power,
and providing also for so large a portion of the
population of the interior the most direct line

of

(let)

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8.

of intercourse with the great commercial port of
Bombay and with the whole of the west
of Asia, embracing, as the present accom-
-paniment shows, the most easy and
expeditious channel of reaching the
European World:—

Bombay

18 December 1834.

I have the honor to be Sir

Signed John Milne M.D.

Late President B. M. D.

From

From Dr. John. Mune
Late President of the Medical Board
To Thomas Pakenham Esquire of
The Private Secretary of His Excellency the Governor
General

Calcutta
Dated 20th December 1834.

Sir,
1. By the 9th resolution of the report of the
Committee appointed by the British Legislature to determine
on the most advisable mode of establishing a regular and
expeditions mode of communication with India it appears
that the Committee also held in their view such
commercial and political objects as are likely to result
from their proposal in suggesting the employment of the
channel of the Euphrates, and they advert to the probability
of its being requisite to come to some understanding with
the Chiefs of the principal tribes inhabiting the proposed
route.

2. As connected with the objects which the
Committee seems desirous of combining with the primary
one of establishing an expeditious line of intercourse with
India, which my last letter to your address of the
18th Instant embraced, I request you to do me the honor
of laying before His Lordship a copy of a communication
to

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10.

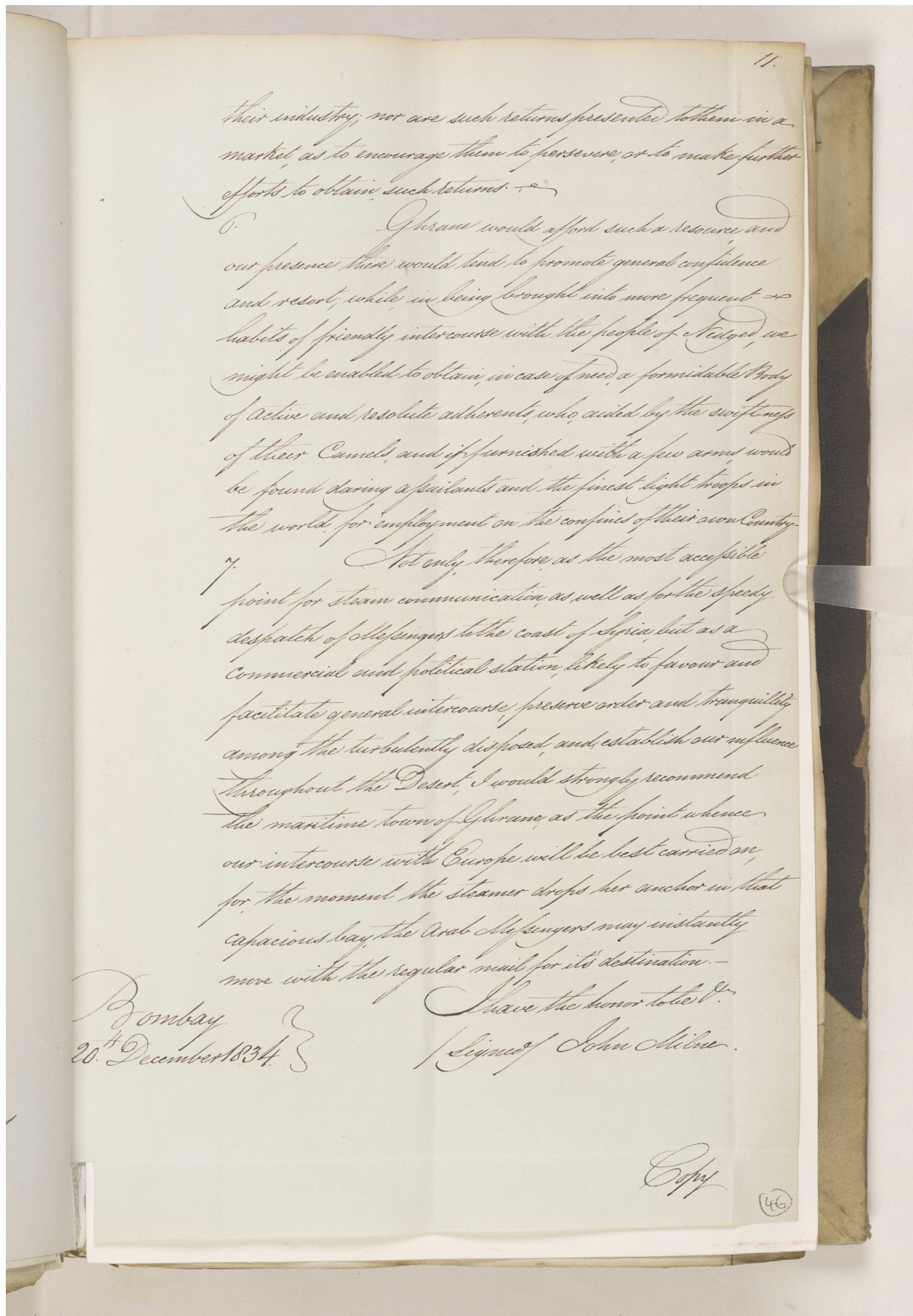
to one of the Members of Council of this Government, relative to the political importance of employing the route by Ibrane, which, I have also shown, is the one of most easy access, the most expeditious, and the least expensive; and judging from its having now been so long an established channel, I would pronounce it to be perfectly free and secure in its course, for the Arab Messengers were in the habit of passing and repassing, twice and thrice a month, between Baysora (and at one time between Ibrane and Aleppo, and on one occasion only, were they molested. —

3. The Pasha of the Desert, both under the Beni-Collect Shaikh, and, in later times, under the Thahabee, have always preserved a friendly intercourse with the Resident at Baysora, and I have no reason to doubt, that the same cordial feeling and confidence do not still exist. —

4. An establishment at Ibrane will tend to promote that good feeling, and our presence, in that quarter, will tend to repress the ravages of those predatory tribes on the Arab shore of the Gulf, which were formerly troublesome, and required to be checked. —

5. The maintenance of a convenient and secure emporium, as a medium of communication between the Desert tribe and the more frequented ports of the Gulf, where European and Asiatic produce is chiefly to be found, would be beneficial to all concerned, and tend to check the irregular habits of those, who have no encouragement to employ themselves industriously, and no established outlet for the produce of their

B
20th Dec



12.

From D^r John Michie
Late President of the Medical Board
To The Right Honble Charles Grant M.P. or
The President of the India Board.
London

Right Honble Sir With reference to my address of
the 13th Instant, introducing to your notice a communication,
made by me, to a friend in this Government, I there showed,
that the Arab Messenger will travel with as much
expedition and security between Sphraue and Aleppo
(or Latachia) and at a far less expense than the steam
vessel, it seems to be in contemplation to employ on the
Euphrates, which must entail, without the aid of
passengers, a comparatively very heavy expense -

2. The rate at which the Arab and his
Camel can travel throughout the year has been ascertained
and may be confidently relied on. -

3. I now beg to be permitted to introduce
him and his Brethren of the Desert in a political
character as most powerful and efficient Auxiliaries,
and as rendering available a body of light troops, which
under judicious management might contribute essentially
to check the progress eastward of any European opponent
of Britain, and the destructive impression they made
on the Roman Armies is a proof of what they can do,
and we ourselves felt the vigour of the arm of the same
description of People at Beni Boo Ali. -

I have

13.

Bombay
20th December 1834.

I have the honor to be
Signed John Milne

Memorandum by the Secretary to Government

N^o. 196.

The Secretary begs to state for the information of the Honorable Board that he has had the old Busbora and Ghrane Despatches all carefully searched, and that the documents quoted in the Margin appear generally to verify the assertion made by Doctor Milne in as far as it appears that despatches could be conveyed in as short a space of time from Ghrane to Aleppo as from Busbora - also that Ghrane was superior in point of salubrity to Busbora, and that the possession of the former place would be much more preferable as a Port for the Steamer to go to than the latter. As the intercourse was formerly carried on betwixt Busbora and Constantinople the distance is always calculated from Busbora to Aleppo and consequently Latakia is not mentioned. It appears from one of Mr. Manesty's letters to the Company's Agent at the former City that provided gratuities were offered to the messengers for every day the journey might be completed under the time usually allowed - Packets might be conveyed from Busbora to Aleppo in from 14 to 12 days - The Records however do not furnish any specific accounts

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on this point, and this information is merely
gleaned from a letter in which allusion was
casually made to the subject -

It further appears from the
Records that mail vessels were dispatched from
Bombay to Rupsora Monthly, but whether this
communication was subsequently kept up is un-
certain; and that the Sheik of Ghurane was
very well disposed towards the British Government.

Thus Extract

W. H. Van Thien
Seyt Government

Joseph
L. Russell