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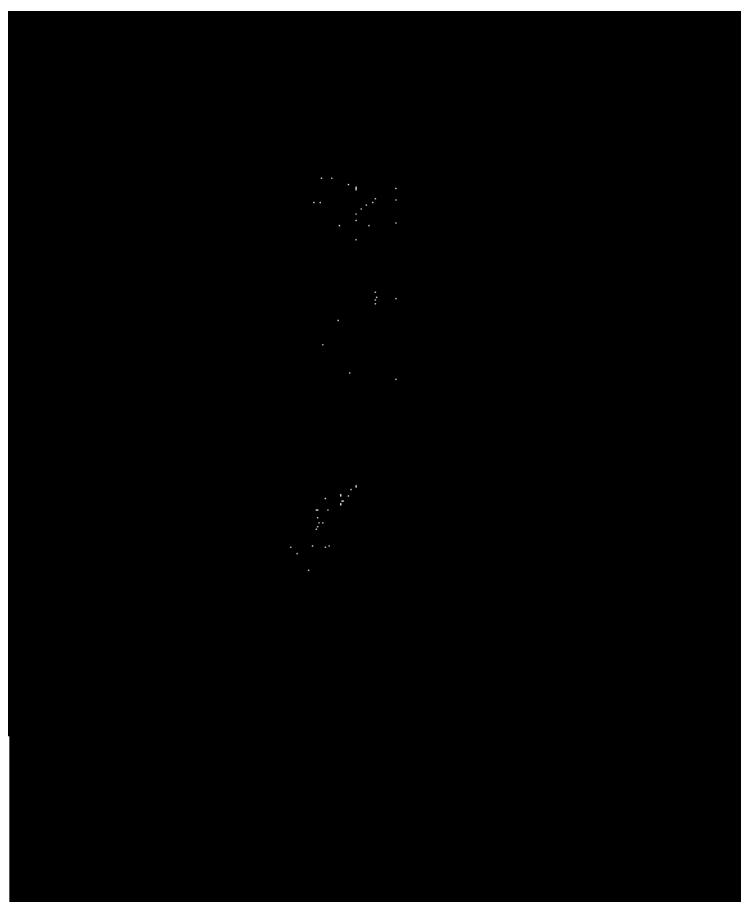
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SELECTIONS FROM THE STATH PAPERS OF  
THE GOVERNORS-GENERAL OF INDIA  
EDITED BY THE LATE SIR GEORGE FORREST, C.I.E.

EX-DIRECTOR OF RECORDS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

# LORD CORNWALLIS

VOLUME I  
INTRODUCTION

BASIL BLACKWELL  
OXFORD  
MCMXXVI

## NOTE

IN this Introduction the author has devoted some care to the account of the military operations under Medows in 1790, the full story of Cornwallis's own campaigns in 1791-92, and the Parliamentary debates in February and March, 1791. Unfortunately, he was unable from illness and infirmity to see it through the press himself, and therefore was compelled to entrust this task to friends, who, beyond supplying a few obvious omissions in the text, have made no alterations of any consequence.

OXFORD,  
*January, 1926.*





## INTRODUCTION

ON February 1, 1785, Warren Hastings attended for the last time a meeting of the Council over which he had presided for thirteen years, and, after wishing his colleagues a warm farewell and paying a handsome tribute of praise to those who had aided him in the heavy task of government, he said: "I now deliver up to the Board my keys of the treasury, and to Mr. Macpherson the keys of Fort William, both under the necessary reservation of my right to resume them in the event (which God forbid) of any accident befalling the ship in her passage to the open sea, or any other contingency compelling my return."<sup>1</sup> So closed the administration of Warren Hastings, and Mr. Macpherson, to whom Warren Hastings had delivered "the keys of Fort William," succeeded as Governor-General under the provisions of the Acts 13 and 21 George III., which provided that a casual vacancy in the high office was to be supplied by the senior member of Council.

John Macpherson, who now succeeded to the power and dignity of Governor-General, was the younger son of John Macpherson, the minister of Sleat in the Isle of Skye. He was born in 1745. He had the strong natural sense of his race, and a fine understanding, which had been improved by a classical education at Aberdeen and Edinburgh. His tall figure, handsome face, and courtly manners were calculated to win him friends both in European and Oriental courts. At the age of twenty-two he sailed for India, nominally as purser of an East India ship, commanded by his maternal uncle, Captain Alexander MacLeod. Macpherson landed at Madras, where he entered the service of

<sup>1</sup> Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, vol. iii., p. 234.

Mohammed Ali, Nawab of the Carnatic. Mohammed Ali, one of the worst specimens of an Oriental despot, owed the establishment of his authority and the extension of his territories to the arms and influence of the East India Company. He did not rule his wide dominions from any of the opulent cities and ancient castles, but from a house in the suburbs of Madras which he had purchased from the Company. It was the hotbed of intrigue and fraud. The Nawab's passion for power was outmatched by his lust for gold. While paying no one, Mohammed Ali borrowed from everyone who would lend, and repaid his creditors, who included certain servants of the Company, chiefly by bonds—some payable at stated times, some at indefinite periods, all eventually charged on the revenues of the country, while the gold was hoarded, as it was received, in his secret coffers. Four years before Macpherson landed at Madras, the treaty of peace between France and England was concluded at Paris. The eleventh article stated that "in order to preserve future peace on the coast of Coromandel and Orixia, the English and French shall acknowledge Mahomet Ally Khan for lawful Nabob of the Carnatic; and Salabat Jung for lawful Soubah of the Deckan."<sup>1</sup> The eleventh article of the Treaty of Paris was, Wilks states, discovered and communicated to Mohammed Ali by a European adviser. Mohammed Ali had supplanted his elder brother; he had been placed at the head of affairs of the Carnatic by the Madras Government; he was a deputy of the Mogul Emperor. Two great European powers had conferred on him a rank which he construed into a sovereignty. His ambition was fired. He would make himself Subahdar of the Deccan. He would, by alliance with the Marathas, destroy the power of Hyder Ali. He would hold the balance between the French and English in India, and render them severally his instruments of imperial conquest, afterwards of their own mutual destruction, and ultimately he would expel both of them from India. But he must first throw off the control of the

<sup>1</sup> Mill, *History of British India*, vol. iii., p. 271.

local English Government, and render it subordinate to himself. As an Oriental sovereign, he would open a direct intercourse with the sovereign of England. He had by wholesale corruption obtained a definite interest in the local Government, and he would by corruption establish a separate interest in the administration of the East India Company at home and in the House of Commons. To carry out this vile scheme, Macpherson was sent to England on a secret mission. On reaching England, Macpherson, through the intervention of the Earl of Warwick, to whom he was known, obtained an interview with the Duke of Grafton, the Prime Minister. Macpherson states, "I signified in some degree my commission,"<sup>1</sup> and the plan he presented was, as he mentions, intended to sound His Grace. His tact was rewarded. He was invited to a second interview. On that occasion, according to his own account, the Duke "spoke so feelingly of the oppression under which the princes of India laboured from the usurped authority of the commercial subjects of the state" that "it was unnecessary to act with further reserve," and he proceeded to unfold his mission. He first "expatiated upon the superior merits of the Nabob, showed that he<sup>N</sup> was the person to whom Britain owed the rise of her power in India—that his attachment and unsullied honour to the English were unparalleled"; and, secondly, he "dwelt upon the personal merits" of his employer as "a statesman and a gentleman." He urged with great vehemence the Nawab's wrongs, and "the indignity and even tyranny" to which that model prince, statesman, and gentleman was subjected. The chief defect in the oration was the absence of truth. It was to the British that Mohammed Ali owed his power. He had proved a worthless and treacherous ally. He was hated by his subjects on account of his cruel oppression, and he was regarded with scorn and disgust by Hyder Ali, the strong ruler of Mysore, whose faults, great as they were, had no affinity with meanness and cowardice. Having

<sup>1</sup> "Memorial of Services rendered to the Nabob" (Appendix I., Third Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, June 12, 1782).

**extolled** the princely virtues of his master, Macpherson produced the letters authorising him to act as agent, and then what he euphoniously calls the "credential presents." The Duke, however, declined to receive them, but he declared that as Prime Minister he would lend support to the cause of Mohammed Ali. "Overwhelmed with the nobleness of this answer," says Macpherson, "I took up the presents and offered them in the name of the Nabob to His Grace's secretary, Mr. Bradshaw." Bradshaw refused them with some warmth. The attempt to bribe the Prime Minister and his secretary had failed.

The implement of the Nawab was well fitted for his work. He devised a most subtle scheme of corruption. He declared that the Nawab was most desirous of providing for his younger children, and proposed that the prince should invest £700,000 in any public stock that the Prime Minister might name; but if the Duke preferred it, he would lend that sum or a larger sum to the British Government at 2 per cent. It was, however, a mere offer, meant to win the favour of the Ministry. And this he accomplished by secret and dishonest methods. They resolved to support Mohammed Ali, and they appointed, by a secret commission under the great seal, Sir John Lindsay, who was vested by the Company with the command of their fleet in the Indian seas, His Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary, with power to negotiate and conclude arrangements with the Indian sovereigns in general. The particular object of the appointment was that he should conclude an arrangement with the Nawab of Arcot.

On his arrival at Madras, Sir John Lindsay announced that he was the bearer of letters and presents from the Crown to Mohammed Ali, and he informed the Nawab that he was come to recognise him as a fellow-sovereign with the King of Great Britain, and to afford him the protection of that great King against all his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

Macpherson, the Nawab's agent, was rewarded in 1770 by being appointed a writer in the Company's service. He was

<sup>1</sup> Mill, vol.iv., p. 53.

employed by Dupr6, the Governor, in the most confidential transactions, "particularly in writing his despatches, to which the superior skill of Mr. Macpherson in the art of composition afforded a recommendation."<sup>1</sup> Macpherson renewed his acquaintance with the Nawab, for whom he procured sundry loans of money. In 1776 Lord Pigot obtained possession of a copy of the paper " Memorial of Services rendered to the Nabob," and he laid it before the Council. The paper had no signature, but it contained details regarding Macpherson's mission to England. It also contained severe reflections on the action of the Company, Macpherson was summoned before the Council, and asked whether he was the author of the paper. He replied " that he could not give a precise answer; that it was not written in his hand, nor signed by him; and that it referred to transactions before he was in the Company's service."<sup>8</sup> The President then observed to the Board " that Mr. Mc-Pherson's reply is a clear proof not only that he is the author, but that he still holds the same principles, unfaithful to the Company and ruinous to their Interest, and therefore a very improper Person to remain in their Service. On which Account He strongly recommends to the Board that John Mc.Pherson be dismissed from the Company's Service, which instance of condign punishment He has great reason to think will tend very much to bring the Affairs of the Company to Order."<sup>3</sup>

In 1777 Macpherson returned to England, bringing with him fresh despatches to the Ministry at home from the Nawab. In April, 1779, he entered the House of Commons as member for Cricklade, and for three years he sat in that assembly. He was one of the six members of the House suspected of being the paid advocates of Mohammed Ali, who owed their presence in Parliament to the Nawab's gold.

Macpherson, on his return to England, appealed to the Directors against his dismissal by the Madras Government. A majority of the court considered that he ought to be restored to their service, but by the Regulating Act a

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 2.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>2</sup> *Vestiges of Old Madras*, vol.iii., p. 85.

**servant** who **had** been dismissed could not be restored without the concurrence of three-fourths of the Directors and three-fourths of the proprietors. The court consulted the Solicitor-General, Mr. Wedderburne (afterwards Lord Chancellor Loughborough), who gave the opinion that an irregular dismissal was no dismissal, and the court had only to declare that Mr. Macpherson was still in the service of the Company. The court acted upon this opinion, but Macpherson did not return to Madras. In January, 1781, owing to the political services he rendered Lord North, he was named a member of the Supreme Council of Bengal to supply the place rendered vacant by the resignation of Mr. Barwell.<sup>1</sup>

In the first week of October, Macpherson arrived at Calcutta and took his seat at the Board. On the 18th Warren Hastings wrote from Benares: "I have truest satisfaction in congratulating Mr. Macpherson on his arrival, and the Board on the acquisition of a member of whom so long and intimate personal acquaintance enables me to pronounce that he is by abilities, integrity, and disposition, eminently qualified to assist and support his colleagues in the present arduous conjuncture, and to cultivate and improve that harmony in our Council so necessary to the reputation and success of our Government."<sup>2</sup> Hastings had reason early to suspect that this estimate of Macpherson's character was not correct. "A ray of inspiration/' he wrote, "very nearly flitted across my imagination more than once, and showed me the naked character of Macpherson, with his borrowed robes lying by him; but I either treated the warning as an illusion; or it escaped me while some more pressing object called off my attention; or I chose rather to be deceived than to yield to doubtful suspicion."<sup>8</sup>

When Hastings' recall was imminent, Macpherson laid

<sup>1</sup> Wraxall, in his *Memoirs*, states: "Lord North, then at the head of His Majesty's Government, conceived so favourable an opinion of his abilities and power of conciliation that he determined to avail himself of them for the service of the state" (*Memoirs of Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall, 1772-1782*, vol. iv., p. 236).

<sup>2</sup> *Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Foreign Department of the Government of India*, edited by George W. Forrest, vol. iii., p. 809.

<sup>3</sup> "W. H. Gleig, vol. iii., p. 129.

aside his borrowed robes and led the attack made on him by his colleagues, " whose instruments they are/' Hastings wrote, "and the puppets of his direction." The minutes of proceedings show two out of the three members of the Board constantly voting against Hastings, while Wheler, the third, gave him scanty support. The majority strenuously opposed the recall of Mr. Bristow, the English Resident at the court of Oudh, when the Nawab's Vizier complained of his intolerable interference with the administration. Hastings tells us<sup>1</sup> that he laid before the Council the charges first in a private, " and next in a public manner. After many shifts and delays, they were sent to Mr. Bristow for his reply to them. After longer delays, he replied. The Board acquitted him of every charge without any evidence but his denial of them; and I have adjudged him guilty of every one, even on the same evidence of his own defence." It was with the utmost difficulty that Hastings persuaded the Council to recall Bristow before he started from Calcutta on his final visit to Benares and Lucknow. During Hastings' absence from Calcutta Wheler died, and Macpherson became senior member of the Council, and as senior member, when Hastings laid down his high office in February, 1785, he became Governor-General of Bengal.

Macpherson had no easy task to perform. A war maintained during five years with the Marathas, the Mysore rulers, and the French, and the heavy demands of the other Presidencies, were, to use the words of the Select Committee, "particularly prejudicial to the financial system of India." The financial system of India was based, from the days of Clive, on the false belief that the revenues of Bengal were an inexhaustible fund upon which the other Presidencies might draw without limit. On March 4, 1785, Macpherson wrote to the Directors: " The public distress was never so pressing as at this moment. The season of the heavy collections is over; the demands of Madras and Bombay are most pressing, and our arrears for the army are upwards of fifty lacs." Macpherson used at once the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

cash in the Treasury to pay the troops. As a substitute to the deficiency of specie he issued certificates bearing interest at 8 per cent, per annum until redeemed. All civil servants, civil surgeons, and uncovenanted servants drawing more than 300 rupees per month were to be paid their salaries and all their arrears with these certificates. "He published in the *Bengal Gazette* the names of the holders, and number of the certificates, and pledged payment of every certificate according to *priority of date*." He had the utmost care exercised over the collections, and in this work he had the invaluable assistance of Jonathan Duncan, at the time a Bengal civilian, who was an expert in revenue matters.<sup>1</sup> Macpherson pursued vigorously the plan of retrenchment in the civil and military establishments which Hastings laid down.<sup>2</sup> The annual reduction in the established charges of the Bengal Government from June 3, 1785, to June 30, 1786, was about £1,200,000. Macpherson was an able man, who showed a genius for finance, and credit must be given him for the way in which he met the pressure of the Treasury, and for his successful exertions in reducing the cost of the establishments. Lord Cornwallis, however, in writing to Dundas, says: "I depend on your secrecy, and will not conceal from you that the late Government (Sir John Macpherson's) had no authority, and the grossest frauds were daily committed before their faces; their whole conduct, and all their pretensions to economy, except in the reduction of salaries, was a scene of delusion."<sup>8</sup>

The chief acts of Macpherson's political policy have, like his domestic administration, not remained unchallenged. It cannot, however, be denied that he showed firmness of temper in his dealing with Mahadaji Sindia, who was at that time the most powerful sovereign in India. The Maratha chief had re-seated the Mogul Emperor on the imperial throne, and the whole of the imperial dominions were under

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Duncan, Resident and Superintendent of Benares, 1786, Governor of Bombay, 1795-1811, born May 15, 1758, died August 11, 1811, a Bengal civilian.

<sup>1</sup> *British India Analysed*, part ii., p. 390.

<sup>3</sup> Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, vol. i., p. 227.

his **sway**. It is **true** he held them as the Peshwa's-deputy. but these very conquests gave him full control over his nominal master.<sup>1</sup> On the departure of Hastings, Sindia made a demand on the Bengal Government for arrears of the tribute due to "the king" (the Mogul Emperor), "and accompanied his application as *Vakil-td-Mutlook* or Viceregent of the Empire with a royal Sanad to the same purpose."<sup>2</sup> The Company had guaranteed, by the treaty under which they obtained the Diwani, to pay this tribute to the imperial Government. The Bengal Government, however, promptly refused to acknowledge the validity of the Sanad, or grant of this tribute, given by a titular Mogul Emperor to Mahadaji Sindia, who was his master. This royal Sanad, or order, was, under a flimsy disguise, a Sanad for the Maratha chouth, or the Emperor's sanction to levy the chouth—*i.e.*, 25 per cent, of the revenue of the province of Bengal.<sup>3</sup> The Bengal Government not only denied the validity of the claim, but insisted on its prompt withdrawal. Mr. Anderson, the British Resident at the headquarters of Sindia, "was immediately instructed<sup>4</sup> to inform Sindia that his interference in such demands would be considered in the light of direct hostility and a breach of our treaty with the Marattas; and Shah Alam was to be informed that the justice of the English to his illustrious House could never admit the interference or recommendation of other powers, and could alone follow from their voluntary liberality." On May 7 "the Governor-General received<sup>5</sup> from the Emperor Shah Alam and Maha Rajah Mahadaji Sindia an official and solemn disavowal under their respective seals, of demands which were transmitted by them, on Mr. Macpherson's accession to the Government, for the former tribute from Bengal."

<sup>1</sup> Diary of C. W. Malet on a journey from Bombay to Calcutta in 1785-86.

<sup>2</sup> *Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat* (Maratha Series), p. 511. "In 1784 Sindia made the Emperor sign a commission appointing the Peshwa Vakil-ul-Mutluk a Viceregent of the Empire, and received from the head of the Maratha state a commission to **be his deputy in that high office.**"

<sup>3</sup> **Grant** Duff's *History of the Marathas*, vol. ii., p. 343.

<sup>4</sup> *Selections from the Calcutta Gazettes*, by W. S. Seton Karr, vol. i., p. 98.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

Three years before Macpherson assumed the reins of government, Warren Hastings had made the Treaty of Salbai (1782) with the Maratha Confederacy, which established British influence across the peninsula of India from Calcutta to Bombay. The islands of Salsette and Elephanta were ceded to the Bombay Government, the Marathas agreed to make no alliances or friendships with any European nation except the English, the Gaekwar received back Gujarat, Sindia retained all his possessions west of the Jumna, and the fortress of Gwalior, the Gibraltar of Hindostan, was surrendered to the Rana of Gohad.

Two years after the Treaty of Salbai, Lord Macartney concluded at the town of Mangalore, on the Malabar coast, a treaty with the Mysore monarch. Retrocession of all the territory acquired by conquest during the war was made to him, and the English and Tippoo mutually bound themselves to withhold all help from the enemies of the other. In 1786 the Brahman Government of the Peshwa formed an alliance with the Mahomedan state of Hyderabad against the Mahomedan Sultan of Mysore. War was declared by the confederates against Tippoo. The British Government were bound by the Treaty of Mangalore not to help the enemies of Tippoo. Macpherson, however, offered the Marathas the assistance of three battalions to be employed in defending Maratha territories. His action was severely criticised by Lord Cornwallis, who, in writing to Mr. Dundas, declared " that he (Macpherson) was guilty of a breach of an Act of Parliament in the offer which he made of aid to the Poonah Government; and that he was guilty of basely degrading the national character by the quibbles and lies which he made use of to evade the performance of it." Lord Cornwallis afterwards discovered that he had to resort to a subterfuge in order not to be guilty of a breach of an Act of Parliament. In his criticism of Macpherson he at times displays the vindictiveness of a good man.

During Macpherson's tenure of office, Lord Macartney, who had resigned the Governorship of Madras, arrived at Calcutta (June, 1785), and "was received with every honour

by the Governor-General." When the armies of Hyder Ali devastated the Carnatic, an agreement had been made that the territorial revenues of that principality should for at least five years be managed by the Madras Government, a sixth part of the whole being paid over to the Nawab of Arcot for his own expenditure. When the Treaty of Mangalore terminated the war, Macartney refused to restore the control of the revenues to the Nawab. Hastings objected to the form of the treaty, as it made no mention of the Nawab of Arcot. A revised text of the treaty, so altered as to include the restoration of the Nawab's territory, was sent to the Madras Government. Macartney appealed to the home Government. The Board of Control agreed with the view taken by Warren Hastings, and it decreed that the administration of the revenues should be restored to the Nawab, for the purpose, the Board declared, of giving to all the powers of India a strong proof of the national faith. Lord Macartney resigned the office of Governor when he received the order for the restoration of the territory, and he proceeded to Calcutta in the vain hope of persuading the supreme Government to disobey the commands of the Board of Control; but he was detained there by a long and dangerous illness. On August 1 he received a letter from the Court of Directors, which had been forwarded from Madras, and two days later the Governor-General received a despatch from the Court, stating that, as Hastings had signified his desire that a successor should be nominated, they had appointed Lord Macartney to succeed as Governor-General. A certified copy of the despatch was sent to Lord Macartney by the supreme Government. His Lordship did not acknowledge its receipt until the 13th. He then wrote from "On board the *Swallow*": "So distinguished a mark of honour conferred upon me by the Court of Directors, being entirely spontaneous, without any solicitation from me or my friends, I must ever set a high value upon; but I have many reasons, which, I flatter myself, will be satisfactory to the Court, why I wish at present to decline entering upon this government. Very early after my arrival, I stated that,

were I appointed, it was not my intention to remain in India. My reasons were then strong, they are now stronger."<sup>1</sup>

Wraxall, in his *Memoirs*, states that as Macpherson had succeeded to the office of Governor-General by the Act of the legislature passed in 1773, he could not be legally deposed until he was expressly superseded and a successor appointed. He writes: "Mr. Macpherson having consulted the judges relative to the point, they unanimously declared that he was the one legal Governor-General to whom obedience was due, and he consequently prepared, if it should become necessary, to maintain himself in his situation. But Lord Macartney, who knew the utter invalidity of his commission, was too wise to make any effort for gaining possession of the chair."<sup>2</sup>

Macartney arrived in London on January 9, 1786, and four days after he had a conference with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors. He insisted that unless certain reforms were carried out he could not accept the government of India. The military power must be entirely dependent on the civil, promotion by the rule of seniority must be allowed, and the choice of candidates must not be confined to the Company's servants; the Governor-General must have a power of vetoing a decision of the supreme Council. A minute of this conversation was transmitted by the Chairs to the Board of Control, and on February 20 Lord Macartney met Dundas and Pitt. To the proposed reforms Pitt gave a general diplomatic approval. Macartney then suggested that, in order to strengthen his power and influence as Governor-General, some distinguished mark of favour should be bestowed on him, and he suggested a British peerage. This gave Dundas and Pitt their opportunity. Dundas had, with the concurrence of Pitt, got the Court of Directors to appoint Macartney Governor-General against the strong opposition of Lord Thurlow and several members of the Ministry, and a considerable number of the

<sup>1</sup> *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, by Peter Auber, vol. ii., pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> Wraxall, vol. ii., pp. 232-233.

proprietors. The President of the Board of Control wanted Macartney, Governor of Madras, to be Governor-General, in order to carry out the instructions of the Board with regard to the Nawab of Arcot's debt, and Cornwallis to be Commander-in-Chief, in order to amalgamate the European troops with the King's army. Cornwallis declined the office of Commander-in-Chief, and Macartney, after refusing to obey the orders of the Board of Control, had returned to England without assuming the office of Governor-General. The high office was therefore vacant. Lord Cornwallis had considerably increased his reputation as a diplomat by the tact with which he conducted a mission to Frederick the Great, and three days after Macartney's interview with Pitt and Dundas he was appointed Governor-General of Bengal. Macpherson was created a Baronet in June, 1786, in order to appease him, and the court's unanimous thanks were voted to John Macpherson, Esq., for his meritorious conduct during the time he had presided in the supreme Government, and to the other members of the Council.

Charles, second Earl Cornwallis, who had been appointed Governor-General of Bengal, was a man of mind and experience, who, as a General and administrator, had filled posts of the highest importance. In the sphere of civil administration his political moderation, combined with complete independence of political action, his special soundness of understanding and calmness of temper, commanded the confidence of Ministers. In the sphere of military service he showed during the Seven Years' War that he was an efficient and brave soldier, and in the American War he displayed, as a commander, a spirit of tactical ability in sieges, marches, and battles which commanded the approval of experts.<sup>1</sup> The surrender at Yorktown (October, 1781), the heaviest blow in his career, was not due to any fault of his, and did not diminish the confidence felt in his character and judgment by the foremost statesmen of the time. In 1782, whilst he was on parole, Lord Shelburne offered him the office of Governor-General of Bengal, which "with great

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Modern Military Biography*, by Colonel C. C. Chesney, R. E.

diffidence of my being equal to the arduous task" he accepted. "I was sensible that with the power intended to be lodged in the person who was to be both Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, much was to be done."<sup>1</sup>

Lord Shelburne resigned, and Portland became Prime Minister, Fox and North joint Secretaries of State, and Burke and Sheridan were also in the Ministry. The change in the administration prevented the appointment of Cornwallis being made, but Lord North asked the King whether he thought Cornwallis would go to India.

On November 11, 1783, at the opening of the autumnal session, the speech from the throne, which announced the loss of the American colonies, stated that the affairs and government of India "solicited the utmost exertion of their abilities, and that the fruit was now expected of these important inquiries which had been so long and diligently pursued." Seven days later Fox moved that leave be given to bring in, not as is so often inaccurately stated his East Indian Bill, but his two separate East Indian Bills—one having a reference to the Government at home, the other to the administration in India. On November 20 Fox presented to the House his first Bill. Its principal feature was that it vested the government of India for five years in a Commission of seven persons named in the Bill. "And for the sole purpose of ordering and managing the commerce of the said United Company under and subject to the orders and directions of the said Directors," new assistant Directors were named in the Bill, "being proprietors each of them of two thousand pounds capital in the said United Company." On November 26 Fox brought in his second Bill. It was entitled "A Bill for the Better Government of the Territorial Possessions and Dependencies in India," but, as James Mill states, no improvement whatsoever in the order and distribution of the powers of government was attempted, and hardly anything higher was proposed than to point out what was deemed the delinquencies into which the Government of India had strayed and o

<sup>1</sup> Earl Cornwallis to Lord Sydney, August 4, 1784. Ross, i., 173.

**forbid** them **for** the future. It is in the second Bill that we clearly trace the hand of Burke, directed by Philip Francis. It was the source of all Burke's Indian speeches. On December 1 the order of the day was read for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House upon the Bill "for vesting the affairs of the East India Company in the hands of certain Commissioners." Pitt and Dundas opposed the measure, which was defended by Burke in a speech which was filled up with a travesty of facts, with invectives against Hastings and the servants of the Company. He, who had with fiery eloquence contended that it was a clear violation of chartered rights to prevent the Company by Act of Parliament from managing its own affairs, now laid down with equal fervour the sound principle on which the good government of India must always depend—that the East India Company or governing body was accountable "to Parliament, from whom the trust was derived."

The seven Commissioners not being appointed by the Crown or removable except upon an address of either House of Parliament, was the rock on which the measure split. On December 17, owing to the personal pressure put on the Peers by the King, the Bill was rejected by the House of Lords by 95 to 76. The Ministers were dismissed, Pitt was installed in their place, and the absolute abrogation of the powers of the Company was postponed for eighty years. Much can be said in favour of Fox's Bill relating to the Home Government of India. It was a more honest Bill than Pitt's, and avoided "the dual control" which led to so many grave evils and disasters.

On January 14, 1784, Pitt moved "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of our Indian Concerns." In his opening speech he stated the real object of the measure : "The imperial dominion of our territories in the East ought to be placed under other control than that of the company of merchants in Leadenhall Street, but the change ought to be made with as little violence as possible; it ought to be made by the conviction of the Company, and not by violence." In this the Company agreed with him.

Pitt desired, like his father, to place the whole government of India under the control of the Crown; but when in opposition he had gauged the power of chartered rights. Fox still commanded a majority in the House, and Pitt's Bill was rejected. Every student of English history knows the story of the election of 1784, and Pitt's triumph and return to power.

On Pitt's accession to power, overtures were made to Cornwallis that he should assume command of the army in India. On May 9, 1784, Cornwallis informs Colonel Ross that he had been asked his sentiments with regard to the post of Commander-in-Chief. He declined to undertake the command, as he might find on assuming it that he had neither power to model the army or correct abuses.<sup>1</sup> The disasters which closed the Revolutionary War of America had impressed on his mind the evils arising from responsibility without power. On May 25 he wrote again to Colonel Ross: "I attended Lord Sydney to-day at his desire; he put the question again to me about India, and I answered nearly as before; but on my laying stress on the circumscribed power of the military command without the civil, he said he was sure Mr. Pitt would wish to give me both."<sup>2</sup> On July 2 Pitt again introduced his first East India Bill slightly modified. On August 3 Lord Sydney wrote to Cornwallis: "I enclose to you the East India Bill which will go to the Committee to-morrow. If there should appear in it any situation that would be agreeable to you, I am persuaded that you might command it. The East India Company are really desirous to trust their affairs to you; and I need not say that the Ministry go at least as far, if not still farther beyond them. The Bill will be in the Committee to-morrow, but I do not suppose it will be materially altered if at all." On the 4th Cornwallis replied: "I feel myself much flattered with the good opinion and confidence of the East India Company, and am most gratefully sensible of the good disposition of the Ministry towards me. I should, however, make but an ill return to their attention to me if I aimed at any situation in India in which I did not **think that I**

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., pp. 167-168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

**could** essentially serve them. If I sought for the place of Governor-General, I should not only abandon a profession to which I have from my youth wholly turned my thoughts, and to which I have hitherto sacrificed every consideration of advantage and happiness, but I should feel myself in competition with some person, whose habits of business would render him much more proper for the office than myself. I will besides own that the army is a favourite passion, and that I cannot give it up. But after acknowledging my predilection for the military line, I cannot undertake the command in India, being convinced that in the present circumscribed situation of the Commander-in-Chief, without power or patronage, an officer could neither get credit to himself, nor essentially serve the public."<sup>1</sup> Pitt's East India Bill was passed by a division of 271 to 60 in its favour on August 13.

Never was a Bill framed which so well concealed, by vague and ambiguous language, its real aim. It was said to be drafted by Dundas, and that able Scottish lawyer displayed all the worldly sagacity of the race. The Company were conciliated by being allowed to keep their trade privileges, and by the Court of Directors having their powers continued merely subject to the revision of a Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India. It was to be an ideal Board, consisting of six members of the Privy Council. The Commissioners were to have no salary and no patronage. Pitt stated in his speech that Privy Councillors who "at the same time were possessed of great and distinguished offices with large emoluments and little labour would no doubt be found to accept of their duties without any additional reward." The jealousy of the King and the suspicion of the country as to the increase of the power of the Prime Minister were disarmed by the Commissioners being appointed by the Crown and holding office during pleasure. The authority which the Government had of seeing all papers sent to and from India was transferred to the Board. The Commissioners were further empowered to call upon the Court of Directors to prepare despatches on

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 173.

**any** subject, to be submitted for their revision and alteration, **and** on their failure within fourteen days to write them themselves\* All high political matters were placed with a Secret Committee of the court, limited to three members (in practice to two, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman), who alone communicated upon them to the Board. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer and one of the principal Secretaries of State were absent, the senior of the remaining four presided. In early times the Commissioners did sit as a Board, and in a letter to Lord Cornwallis of July, 1787, Dundas says: " Mr. Pitt is a real active member of the Board, and makes himself thoroughly master of the business." But the Board soon became the shadow of a Board, and practically ceased to exist. Pitt and his most trusted friend Dundas obtained the patronage and power of India.

Early in 1785 Cornwallis " was again most violently attacked," as he put it, "to accept the Governor-Generalship." Pitt's letter " was kind and flattering to a degree," and " he earnestly requested an interview." When Cornwallis went to see him " our conversation on the business was rather superficial," and Pitt desired that he should talk to Dundas. The interview with Dundas did not prove more satisfactory. The old soldier proved himself to be a match for the Scotch lawyer. He " easily found out" that they wanted him to say he would go " merely to get rid of a momentary rub among themselves," and after taking twenty-four hours to consider he " gave a very civil negative." The " momentary rub " was due to Dundas insisting on Lord Macartney being appointed Governor-General of Bengal.

A few months after his refusal to proceed to India, Cornwallis, who was first and foremost a soldier, went to the Potsdam manoeuvres, and as Frederick the Great had frequently expressed his desire "to communicate to His Majesty, by the means of some confidential agent, his sentiments respecting the present state of Europe," Lord Cornwallis was " duly authorised to confer with His Majesty." An interview took place at the Duke of Brunswick's apartments at Potsdam, the Duke being present. Frederick the

Great first dwelt on the political state of Europe. " France, Spain, Austria, and Russia were in alliance," he said, " and that Holland was in the power of France, to whom the ruling powers were totally devoted." It was the plan of France, " after destroying the *staat-houderat*, to govern the states by an ambassador." He then expatiated much on the necessity of endeavouring to detach some of the powers from the great league, and he declared that if Russia could be got over he was ready to sign a triple alliance as soon as England pleased. He also said that " he knew France was trying to hurt us everywhere; that she had sent people to India to disturb the tranquillity of that country, but they had returned without effecting anything; that she was busily employed in Ireland."<sup>1</sup> Lord Cornwallis returned to England towards the close of the year, and on February 23, 1786, he wrote to Colonel Ross as follows:

" The proposal of going to India has been pressed upon me so strongly, with the circumstance of the Governor-General's being independent of his Council, as intended in Dundas's former Bill, and having the supreme command of the military, that, much against my will, and with grief of heart, I have been obliged to say yes, and to exchange a life of ease and content, to encounter all the plagues and miseries of command and public station."<sup>2</sup>

The old soldier got his way. He persistently declined to take the office of Governor-General or Commander-in-Chief separately, or to take the former office unless his powers were enlarged. Dundas kept his promise. In spite of Burke's opposition, an Act was passed which empowered the Governor-General in special cases on his own authority and responsibility to adopt, suspend, or repeal a measure in whole or part. The same Act enabled the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief to be united in the same person.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heads of what the King of Prussia said to Lord Cornwallis at Sans Souci, September 17, 1785 (Ross, vol. i., p. 201).

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> 26 Geo. III., c. 16. Mill remarks with considerable force: " It was undoubtedly of great importance to render the military strictly dependent upon the civil power, and to preclude the unavoidable evils of two conflicting

Cornwallis was the first Governor-General appointed after the whole power of government had been transferred to the Board of Control, or, in fact, the most energetic and powerful member of the Board and a politician appointed to the office for the service he had rendered his party. Dundas advanced the argument that powers, however great, might be safely lodged with the Board of Control without danger because the Board was responsible to Parliament. But as Mill remarks: "To all those who regard the Parliament as substantially governed by ministerial influence, responsibility to Parliament meant responsibility to the Minister,"<sup>1</sup> The system of governing a distant Eastern Empire by a Minister under the disguise of a Board of Control was swept away by the storm of 1857, which it materially helped to raise.

Pitt and Dundas sent Cornwallis to India, because they felt confident that he would bend honestly and steadily his considerable powers of administration to the object of carrying out the chief aims of Pitt's Act: (1) To reorganise the establishments civil and military; (2) to enquire into and fully investigate, and if founded effectually redress, the complaints of "the rajas, *zemindars*, and other native landowners," that they "have been unjustly deprived of their lands, jurisdictions, and privileges, or that the tributes, rents, and services required to be by them paid or performed for their possession to the Company are become grievous and oppressive"; and (3) neither "to declare war or corn-authorities. But very great inconveniences attended the measure of uniting in the same person the superintendence of the civil and military departments. In the first place, it raised to the greatest possible degree of concentrated strength the temptations to what the parliament and ministry pretended they had the greatest aversion: the multiplication of wars, and pursuit of conquest. In the next place, the sort of talents, habits, and character, best adapted for the office of civil governor, was not the sort of talents, habits, and character best adapted for the military functions; nor were those which were best adapted for the military functions best adapted for the calm and laborious details of the civil administration. And, to omit all other evils, the whole time and talents of the ablest man were not more than sufficient for the duties of either office. For the same man, therefore, it was impossible not to neglect the one set of duties in the same degree in which he paid attention to the other" (Mill, vol. v., p. 52).

<sup>1</sup> Mill, vol. v., p. 68.

mence hostilities, or enter into any treaty for making war, against any of the country, princes, or states in India, or any treaty for guaranteeing the possessions of any country or state."

On April 30, 1786, Cornwallis wrote from Portsmouth "We shall certainly sail to-morrow morning if the wind continues fair"; but the wind became "as contrary as possible," and it was not till May 6 that he wrote from the "back of the Isle of Wight": "We have just got under sail, and shall, if the wind stands, get down Channel." Cornwallis took with him on board the *Swallow* a pretty extensive code of instructions drawn up by the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, and for his chief fellow-passenger he had John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, who had been appointed to fill a coming vacancy in the supreme Council in order to supply Lord Cornwallis's want of experience of Indian affairs. No more dangerous mentor could have been found. He had sided with Francis in his controversy with Hastings regarding the revenue settlement, and, like Francis, he denounced the wars which Hastings waged against the most powerful of native states, and thus preserved India to Great Britain. Regarding the war against the Marathas and Hyder Ali, Shore had written: "The war with Hyder Ally, however, owes its origin to the politics of Bengal. Had Mr. Hastings been less ambitious; had he not volunteered in a useless, impolitic, absurd war with the Mahrattas, sending our troops across the Continent of India, and wasting resources which, with good management, would have secured us against all invaders . . . [MS. defective] . . . At present, it is impossible to guess the event of our manoeuvres: success may attend us in the field, but the most sanguine expectations cannot form an idea that we shall be reimbursed for any part of the large sums we have so idly, so foolishly expended."<sup>1</sup>

On September 17, within a fortnight of his landing, Cornwallis wrote to Dundas: "You will see that we are got into a very awkward foolish scrape by offering assistance to the Mahrattas; how we shall get out of it with honour, God

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of John, Lord Teignmouth*, vol. i., p. 67.

knows, but out of it we must get and give no troops." On September 27 he laid a minute before the Council in which, referring to the prohibition in Pitt's Act against making war, he stated: "It is unnecessary to examine the policy of a measure we are not at liberty to adopt: we cannot give the three battalions " which Macpherson had promised "without going to war; we cannot go to war without offending the laws of our country. It is, therefore, high time to extricate ourselves from our present critical and dangerous situation, the continuance of which will not only give the most just grounds of offence to Tippoo, but will probably produce a quarrel with the Poona Ministers."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly Lord Cornwallis, when announcing his assumption of office, intimated to the Marathas that "a strict adherence to subsisting treaties" would not allow the troops to be supplied, and he referred to this decision "as a proof that the British Government was determined in their future conduct to be guided by the spirit of justice." But the Ministers of Poona failed to see that refusing to fulfil a pledge given by a Governor-General was any proof of a future spirit of justice, and Nana Farnakis, the most subtle of Maratha Brahmins, declared that he was greatly pained and shocked at the duplicity of the new Governor.

The first days of the rule of Cornwallis were not altogether devoted to external politics. He threw into internal reforms the whole weight of his mind and character. Pitt's triumphant return to power was in a large measure due to the relentless campaign he waged against official corruption, and he sent Cornwallis to India to remove the official corruption and vices which blemished the splendid fame of the first conquerors of Bengal. Only three years before Cornwallis sailed from Portsmouth the long administration of Lord North had come to an end. The memorable proconsulate of Warren Hastings, so beneficent to the natives of Bengal, coincides with the twelve years during which North held the first place in the state. "Under North," says Lord Rosebery in his biography of Pitt, "political

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 22.

degradation seemed to have reached its climax," He adds: "Taxes might grow, and armies might disappear, and **the** gazettes might reek of disgrace; still, war loans and war contracts swelled the spawn of corruption; still, successive ministers and their friends filled their bottomless pockets, and found a solid set-off to national dishonour in the pickings of national profusion/"<sup>1</sup>

In May, 1783, Pitt had introduced a Bill for "The Reform of Abuses in the Public Offices." After informing the House "that abuses in offices of revenue existed, and that to a very great alarming amount," he proceeded "to say something with regard to fees, gratuities, and perquisites." He took first as an instance the Navy Office. The Chief Clerk of the Navy Office, he stated, received a salary of about £240 or £250 a year, and it turned out that he received no less than £2,500 in gifts. Other clerks with smaller salaries received gifts in proportion. In the course of speaking of fees, Pitt also mentioned the place of the Secretary of the Post Office, who, with a salary of £500 or £600, made an annual income of upwards of £3,000. He likewise alluded to the salaries of the two secretaries of the Treasury, which he stated at £2,000 a year during peace, but said they swelled to £5,000 a year during the war. After mentioning that the alterations "in the house in Downing Street" had cost £10,000, he came to the improvident consumption of stationery wares by the officers of the different departments of Government. "The annual charge on account of stationery was, he stated, to be above £18,000, and it would, he believed, somewhat astonish the noble lord in the blue ribband (Lord North) when he told the House, and informed him (for he really believed the noble lord had no idea of any such circumstances) that the noble lord alone, as the first lord of the Treasury, cost the public, the year before last, no less than £1,300 for stationery. One article of the bill was an item £340 for whipcord."

Pitt's Bill was rejected, but his exposure of official corruption gained him the support of the country. A **new**

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, p. 60.

spirit had been kindled by the cleansing fires of misfortune and discomfiture. It was this fresh departure in the morality of the public life of England that Lord Cornwallis carried to India.<sup>1</sup> As soon as he had investigated the state of things, Cornwallis saw, as Clive and Hastings had realised before him, that the cause of the disease was due to the policy of the Company of allowing their servants to eke out their pittance by private trade; the remedy was as clear—absolute prohibition of private trade and a substantial increase in salaries. Clive had proposed, "in order to put an end to corruption, that the totally inadequate salaries of the civil servants should be raised, and they should be absolutely prohibited from embarking in private trades. The Court of Directors refused to sanction the proposal."<sup>2</sup> Clive, knowing that the inadequate salaries were fatal to the interest of the Company, established a Society of Trade to conduct the traffic in salt in order to enlarge the incomes of the servants of the Company by giving them "a reasonable share of emoluments." He wrote to the Court of Directors:

"You no doubt will maturely consider how far it is probable that men will continue honest against all the seductions of private interest; and whether it may not be necessary to strengthen the ties of that duty expected from your servants, by the lighter bonds of gratitude for the affluence which they enjoy during the time of their servitude, and the independency they ought to secure before the close of their labours."<sup>3</sup> This scheme was discontinued by order of the Court of Directors after two years' trial. They, however, had not the wisdom to frame another plan regarding the increase of salaries, and speculation and corruption among the Company's servants revived.

Warren Hastings made a strenuous effort to abolish the worst evils arising from the permission of private trade by new regulations. He gave the administration of the revenue

<sup>1</sup> "He (Lord Cornwallis) was the first English statesman appointed to that office, who carried to India the morality of the public life of England" (*Essays on the Administration of Great Britain*, by Sir Cornwallis Lewis, Bart.).

<sup>2</sup> Warren Hastings, *Selections*, vol. i., p. 163.

\* *The Life of Lord Clive*, by Sir George Forrest, C.I.E., vol. ii., p. 338.

to a committee consisting of four persons. " They have no fixed salaries/' he wrote, " and are sworn to receive no perquisites." In lieu of both they were to draw a commission of 1 per cent, on the monthly amount of their net collections, and that commission was doubled on such sums as were paid immediately to the Treasury in Calcutta. He also abolished the Collectors of Customs, and established in their place three Commissioners who were to be paid by a commission on three months' collections like the Committee of Revenue.

After Hastings' departure his successor had not vigour nor authority enough to support the settlement then made, and considerable abuses began to prevail in every quarter. Lord Cornwallis, on assuming the reins of government, took instant and decisive measures to suppress them. He adopted and developed Hastings' scheme. As he was a Parliamentary General who had the complete confidence and support of Pitt and Dundas, he did what Clive and Hastings, who were the servants of the Company, could not do—he increased the salaries without consulting the Court of Directors. On August 14, 1787, he wrote to Dundas: " I hope you will approve of the additional allowances, and the commission that we have given to the collectors, for without them it was absolutely impossible that an honest man could acquire the most moderate competency. After this liberality I made no scruple in issuing the Revenue Regulations and orders against engaging in trade, which you will read, and I promise you that I will make an example of the first offender that I can catch."<sup>1</sup> But the Court of Directors did not approve of the additional salaries, and in a letter to Dundas of August 26 Cornwallis repudiated with warmth the assertion that, however well you paid a public servant in an Eastern land, he would not refrain from fee-taking or corruption in some form. " If the essence of the spirit of economy of the whole Court of Directors could be collected," he wrote, " I am sure it would fall very short of my anxiety on that subject. . . . If it is a maxim that, pay our servants as we

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 271.

please, they will equally cheat, the sooner we leave this country the better. . . . From the spirit of this letter [of the Directors] I conclude that the commission given to the collectors, the allowances to the residents, will all be disapproved of. I see the pay of the sub-treasurer is objected to. When I came I found the sub-treasurer playing with the deposits, amounting to three or four lacs. I fancy of the two he had rather I had taken his salary from him. I have saved [he forcibly concludes] since I came, upon the salt, upon the various contracts, upon remittances, balances, and jobs of different kinds, ten times, I may say fifty times, the amount of the salaries that are retrenched. I am doing everything I can to reform the Company's servants, to teach them to be more economical in their mode of living, and to look forward to a moderate competency; and I flatter myself I have not hitherto laboured in vain. But if all chance of saving any money and returning to England without acting dishonestly is removed, there will be an end of my reformation."<sup>1</sup>

But to reform the Company's servants was an easier task than to suppress a still more scandalous evil, the muddy source of which was in England. The Court, noble Lords, Bishops, party leaders, Directors, and proprietors regarded Bengal as a Paradise to which to send relations and friends who lay heavy on their patronage. The Governor was to provide for them a post, and they would soon return to England with fortunes sufficient to buy large estates and swell the ranks of the Nabobs. Clive and Warren Hastings made a most discouraging attempt to reform the evil. In such an attempt you hurt those who are able to return kindness or to resent injury. Hastings, in refusing to help William Burke, one of the most rapacious of adventurers, found he had made a mortal enemy of his cousin Edmund Burke, who was well able to resent an injury. Francis and Macpherson, wise in their generation, did their best to put large sums of money into the pockets of the adventurers, and were rewarded by the friendship of Edmund.

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i. p. 278.

Even Cornwallis thought it prudent to make certain gifts to conciliate the cousin of Edmund Burke. In a letter to Lord Rawdon, thanking him for "your friendly hint about William Burke," he states:

"I have, ever since I have been in India, treated William Burke with the greatest personal attention; and I have done little favours, such as ensigncies in the King's service, etc., to his friends. But it is impossible for me to serve him essentially—that is, put large sums of money into his pocket—without a gross violation of my public duty, and doing acts for which I should deserve to be impeached."<sup>1</sup>

He proceeds to describe in detail two suggestions which William Burke, then Paymaster-General in India, had made to him with regard to the payment of the King's troops in India. They would have put large sums of money into the pockets of William Burke, but the Governor-General absolutely declined to accept the proposals. He tells Lord Rawdon that he had entered into these details trusting that "if you should hear the subject mentioned before the Prince you will be so kind as to give some explanation of it." The notes of recommendation which the Prince of Wales and the Queen gave to the gentlemen who came out to be provided for were the source of considerable perplexities and vexation. Writing to Lord Southampton regarding a certain gentleman who brought a note from the Prince of Wales, Cornwallis says:

"I can assure you that I read it with the greatest concern, as it made me apprehend, what would be very painful to me, that I should appear backward and disinclined to exercise any commands that His Royal Highness might think proper to honour me with."<sup>2</sup>

As a rule, those who did not belong to the Company's service were met with inexorable refusal because Cornwallis would not indulge in the common administrative vice, not confined to India, of creating offices or extra offices. A

<sup>1</sup> John W. Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers*, p. 100 note.

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 445.

stance of laws, religion, and customs; and oppressions of individuals, errors of government, and several other unforeseen causes, will, no doubt, arouse an inclination to revolt. On such occasions it would not be wise to place great dependence upon their countrymen, who compose the native regiments, to secure their subjection."<sup>1</sup>

Dundas was desirous that the whole European army in India should be King's troops. But Cornwallis, who at first favoured the project, found, when he became Governor-General, grave difficulties would have to be surmounted. He wrote to Dundas :

"Several objections have occurred to me, upon more mature deliberation, against declaring all the forces in this country *King's troops*. If an Act of Parliament could be obtained permitting the Company to beat up for recruits, and to keep them under martial law till their embarkation, and if some means could be adopted to establish equality of rank among King's and Company's officers, I believe I should be satisfied."<sup>2</sup>

Some means were found to secure the abolition of the invidious distinction hitherto made in India between the two European military services. Before the arrival of Cornwallis it had been usual to confer a step of local rank on all Lieut.-Colonels of the Royal services so as to supersede those of the Company who were of the same standing, a practice both insulting and unjust. The Royal officers had also from the earliest days ignored as far as it lay in their power the local commissions of the Company's officers. In 1788 Cornwallis received as Commander-in-Chief the needful powers, and brevet commissions in the Royal service were granted by him to all the Company's officers with corresponding dates to those of their substantive ones. The special higher brevet rank bestowed on the King's field officers was ordered to be withdrawn after eighteen months' notice. By that act of justice the discontent of the Company's officers was removed, and the Indian army became a

<sup>1</sup> John W. Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers*, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 247.

**noble profession for the best youths of Great Britain and Ireland.**

Cornwallis, while engaged in the most arduous task of abolishing corruption and making reforms in the civil departments and military service, did not neglect foreign affairs. Soon after he had assumed his laborious office, the Nawab Vizier of Oudh and several other of the leading Indian princes proposed to visit Calcutta to welcome the new ruler. Cornwallis declined the suggestion. The Vizier then pressed in the strongest manner for leave to send to Calcutta his ablest and most confidential Minister, Hyder Beg Khan, and with this request the Governor-General thought proper to comply. He wrote to Dundas on December 28, 1786:

" I expect Hyder Beg in the course of next month, when I shall have a difficult game to play; but I think fairness, honesty, and firmness will be a match for cunning, corruption, and timidity."<sup>1</sup>

He tells the Directors, " this minister is described to me as a man of uncommon abilities, and he no doubt exercises at present the whole power of the Vizier's government." In February, Hyder Beg arrived in Calcutta, and Cornwallis writes to Dundas :

" I have had several interviews with Hyder Beg Khan, the Vizier's minister. The total mismanagement of Oude, the confused manner of stating accounts between the Vizier and the Company, and the constant practice on one part of trumping-up charges to extort every rupee that it was possible to get, and on the other of making use of every art and evasion to defer payment, have rendered it very difficult to establish a fair open line between us."<sup>2</sup>

Hyder Beg, with the characteristic suspicion of an Oriental, intensified by his painful experience of the past decade, was not inclined to believe the assurance of the Governor-General that the British Government did not wish to exploit Oudh for commercial gain. He often quotes, wrote Corn-

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

wallis, the proverb : " Whoever has been stung by a snake, is frightened when he sees a rope." Several months passed before Lord Cornwallis and Hyder Beg could come to an arrangement. The Vizier and his Minister urgently entreated that a considerable section of the English force stationed for the protection of the Vizier's dominions should be withdrawn. This would relieve the drain on his purse which their payment entailed. But the request was refused on the substantial ground that the withdrawal of so large a force might affect the safety of the Vizier's frontier and the internal peace of his kingdom. On April 15 Cornwallis wrote to the Nawab reminding him of the fact that the peace which Oudh enjoyed while the rest of India was disturbed was due to the British troops, who were superior to his own ; that they spent their pay in Oudh ; and he declared that in future—

" It is my firm intention not to embarrass you with further expense than that incurred by the Company from their connexion with your Excellency, and for the protection of your country, which by the accounts I find amounts to fifty lacs of Fyzabad rupees per year. It is my intention from the date of this agreement that your Excellency shall not be charged with any excess on this sum, and that no further demand shall be made ; any additional aid by the Company is to be supplied on a fair estimate."<sup>1</sup>

With regard to that grave evil, the interference of the British in the internal affairs of Oudh, he wrote:

" A resident, as at present, will remain at your Excellency's court; but as it is the intention of the Company, and my firm resolution, that no interference shall take place in the details of your government, strict orders shall be sent to him that he shall neither interfere himself nor suffer interference by public or private claims of exemptions of duties, or any other mode, for any British subject or person under the authority of this Government. In short, leaving the whole management of your country to your Excellency and your ministers, I will put a stop to the interference of others, and in order to carry

<sup>1</sup> Peter Auber, *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, vol. ii., Pp. 50.51.

this effectually into execution, I propose to your Excellency not to suffer any European to reside in your dominions without my written permission. In case that shall be granted, a copy of it will be transmitted to you."<sup>1</sup>

After a considerable delay a letter was received from the Nawab stating that, "with a view to preserve his Lordship's good will and satisfaction," he agreed to the troops remaining in Oudh and to the annual payment of fifty lacs. On July 21 a treaty was concluded with the Nawab Vizier through Hyder Beg Khan. A treaty of commerce was concluded with the state of Oudh in the following year, by which the power of exacting duties was defined.

Among the numerous instructions with which Lord Cornwallis was burdened when he sailed for India, not the least important was that he should demand from the Nizam of Hyderabad the surrender of Guntoor, one of the northern provinces lying along the eastern coast commonly called the Northern Circars (Carkars). Clive recognised their political and strategical importance, and by despatching a force under the brilliant command of Forde he wrested from the French<sup>2</sup> the rich territory which had been assigned by the Viceroy of Hyderabad to Bussy for the payment of the troops. On May 12, 1759, the Nizam ceded them to the British, and in 1765 the Mogul Emperor, by a famous treaty made with Clive, which granted the Diwani of Bengal to the Company, also ceded the Northern Circars. In 1768, the year after Clive's final departure from India, a treaty was concluded between the Nizam and Clive's successor, by which the Nizam agreed not only to consider Hyder Ali as a usurper, but also to aid the British in obtaining the cession of the Carnatic Balaghat or the Upland, an important part of Hyder's territory, on the condition of their paying him a peshcush or yearly tribute of seven lacs of rupees. A clause in the treaty expressly stipulated that the Circar of Guntoor should be ceded to the Company on the death or misconduct of the Nizam's brother, and it was also stipulated that

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

\* *The Life of Lord Clive*, by Sir George Forrest, C.I.E., vol. ii., pp. 115-116.

English troops to the amount of two battalions of sepoy and six pieces of cannon manned by Europeans should be lent to the Nizam " whenever the necessity of the Company's affairs would permit." In 1782 the Nizam's brother died, and the Company claimed the reversion, but the Nizam under various pretexts avoided compliance. The territory was of great importance to him as his sole outlet to the sea coast. To the Company it was of considerable strategic importance, as it lay between Madras and the other Circars. Cornwallis, when he arrived in India, did not think the time opportune for making the claim for the surrender of Guntoor. The Nizam, in alliance with the Marathas, was at war with Tippoo. There was every prospect of France declaring war against England, and in that case the Nizam, rather than part with Guntoor, might join in an alliance with France and Tippoo. On March 5, 1787, Cornwallis wrote to Dundas as follows:

"The business of the Guntoor Circars is a very delicate one, and requires the most mature reflection. There are several reasons which make it very doubtful whether this would be a proper time for us to call on the Nizam to settle accounts and deliver it up. I am by no means clear that upon a fair investigation, setting the revenues of the Guntoor Circars received by the Nizam, against the peshcush due to him from us, there would not still be a considerable balance against us, which we could not easily make good. Our demand of the Circars from the Nizam in the hour of his distress, would not only appear ungenerous, but would undoubtedly hurt him in the negotiations for a peace with Tippoo."<sup>1</sup>

After a year's contest peace was concluded between Tippoo and the allies. The prospect of a war with France had passed away. On June 16, 1788, Cornwallis laid a minute before the Board in which he discussed the material difference in the political situation of affairs between the present period and the last year when the claim of Guntoor was under discussion. He proceeded to state that:

"The pacification established in Europe between the

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., p. 252.

Courts of England and Versailles, has removed the principal ground of apprehension formerly entertained, on account of the intrigues of the French with Tippoo and the Nizam, and of their interference with a view to promote or assist hostilities."<sup>1</sup>

He pointed out that their knowledge of the views and situation of the different powers of Hindostan was also more perfect and satisfactory, and the intermediate time which had elapsed had afforded them an opportunity of improving their friendly intercourse with the Maratha state. The Nizam, he told the Board, was certainly ill prepared for war, and with respect to Tippoo the Board had no reason to conclude that he was either better prepared or more inclined to hostilities now than he was at the close of last year.

" Every movement of a formidable power, naturally creates alarm in those whose situation exposes them to danger from it. And it is upon this principle alone, that the apprehensions suggested in the correspondence now under consideration, particularly by the Rajah of Travancore, must be accounted for."<sup>2</sup>

Events soon proved that the apprehensions of the Raja were not groundless. The Board came to the following cautious conclusion :

" The Court of Directors have decided upon the recovery of the Guntoor; and the Board, being convinced that no period can occur in which this claim can be asserted with less risk to the interests of the Company than at present, do not deem themselves authorised to suspend that determination. It is only incumbent upon them in the execution of the measure, to act with caution and moderation."<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime Captain Kennaway, " a gentleman well acquainted with the country, languages, and customs," had left Calcutta in the beginning of May for Hyderabad to make demand from the Nizam for an immediate surrender of Guntoor. The virtuous Cornwallis, who was also a diplomatist, writes of the Nizam to the Secret Committee:

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

"The duplicity of his character and his talents for intrigue being likewise generally admitted, I considered myself as called upon by public duty to take every precaution of your Government against the disgrace of disappointment, and I thought it therefore equally prudent and necessary to leave him but a very short time, after making the requisition, for consulting with any of his neighbours on the means of opposition, and to direct that a good body of troops should be assembled near the Circar under other pretexts, to be ready to act if necessary in support of our demand of his performance of the terms of the treaty."<sup>1</sup> The Madras Government, acting according to the instructions of the Governor-General, conveyed under various pretexts a body of troops to the neighbourhood of the Guntoor province.

While Captain Kennaway was on his journey, Lord Cornwallis received advice from Sir Archibald Campbell, Governor of Madras, that the Raja of Cherika<sup>2</sup> had commenced hostilities on the Company's possessions at Tellicherry by order of Tippoo. "Sir Archibald appears likewise to be decidedly of opinion," Cornwallis wrote to Kennaway, "that Tippoo will immediately attack the Raja of Travancore. This may, however, I think, be doubtful." The appearance of hostile designs which Sir Archibald Campbell perceived in Tippoo led Cornwallis to consider again the advisability of laying aside for a time the claim to Guntoor. Alive to the necessity of not offending the Nizam and making him an ally of Tippoo, he told the British envoy to act with diplomatic prudence. "Unless this alarm should be blown over, previous to your arrival at Hyderabad, of which you cannot fail of having certain information, you will, of course, recollect that part of your instructions, and, instead of declaring the real object of your mission, confine yourself to the general expressions of friendship, and assurances of our earnest desire to cultivate a good understanding between

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. i., pp. 537-538.

<sup>2</sup> "The Raja of Cherika was a petty prince on the Malabar coast, in whose territory was situated the Company's factory at Tellicherry. This prince, with his neighbours, had been subdued by Hyder Ali, and remained a tributary under Tippoo his son" (Mill, vol. v., p. 229).

the two Governments."<sup>1</sup> The alarm blew over. Kennaway, on his arrival at Hyderabad, obtained a prompt and peaceful cession of the Guntoor Circar.

After the surrender of Guntoor, some important financial matters had to be settled between the Nizam and the Company. The Company had not paid any tribute or peshcush during the period the Circar had been withheld from them, and the Nizam during the same period had received the revenues of the province. With the ostensible object of settling these accounts the Nizam sent his confidential Minister to Calcutta. The accounts were soon adjusted, and then the real object of the embassy was revealed. It was to prevail upon the Governor-General to form a defensive alliance with the Nizam. At the same time the Nizam sent an envoy to Tippoo to form an alliance against the English. Tippoo was told that under the treaty of 1768 the Nizam had been compelled to cede Guntoor, and under the same treaty Tippoo might be forced to surrender a large and important portion of his territory. Tippoo did not require much argument to move him, and he declared that he was ready to enter into an offensive and defensive treaty. But he made one stipulation. The bond of union should be strengthened by a matrimonial alliance. But the Nizam, descended from a noble Mogul family, disdained to even answer such a proposal made by the son of Hyder Naick,<sup>2</sup> a soldier of fortune of the lowest birth, whose grandfather had been a wandering dervish from the Punjab. Tippoo resented the scornful action of the sovereign of Hyderabad, and the prospect of an alliance between the two great Mahomedan states in the South of India came to an end.

The Nizam, knowing that he had offended the implacable Tippoo, was now determined to force the Calcutta Governor-General to conclude an alliance with him. He acted with considerable dexterity. His envoy at Calcutta put forward the reasonable claim that, as the English had taken posses-

<sup>1</sup> Mill, vol. v., p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Hyder Naique (nayak), a provincial Governor. In the treaty the Nizam is styled, "Ausuph Jah Nizam-ool-Moolk Meer Nizam Ally Khan Bahadoor Phuttah Jung Sippa Sirdar, Soubah of the Deccan."

sion of the Guntoor under the treaty of 1768, they should now fulfil the other stipulation of the treaty. Cornwallis had to face a most delicate and difficult question. The 9th Article of the treaty of 1768 states that:

"Hyder Naique, having for some years past usurped the government of the Mysore country, and given great disturbances to his neighbours by attacking and taking from many of them their possessions, and having so lately invaded and laid waste with fire and sword the possessions of the English Company and the Nawab Wolau Jah in the Carnatic, it is certainly necessary for their peace and for the general benefit of all the neighbouring powers, that the said Naique should be punished and reduced, so that he may not hereafter have the power to give any person further trouble: to this end, the Nawab Ausuph Jah" (*i.e.*, the Nizam) "hereby declares and makes known to all the world that he regards the said Naique as a rebel and usurper, and as such divests him of, and revokes from him, all Sunnuds, honours, and distinctions conferred by himself or any other Soubah of the Deccan, because the said Naique has deceived the Nawab Ausuph Jah, broken his agreement, and rendered himself unworthy of all further countenance and favours." By the following Article the Nizam agreed to "relinquish to the English Company all his right to the Dewanny (Diwani)<sup>1</sup> of the said Carnatic Balagaute,<sup>2</sup> belonging to the soubadarry of Viziapore,<sup>3</sup> and that the Company shall present an urzee, or petition, to the royal presence, to obtain from the Emperor Shah Allum a Firmaun, confirming and approving their right thereto.\*' But that the Nizam, "as Soubah of the Deccan, may not lose his dignity or the revenue arising from the said countries, the English Company agree to pay him annually, out of the Dewanny collection, from the time they are in possession thereof, the sum of seven lakhs of Arcot Rupees, including

<sup>1</sup> Diwani, the office, jurisdiction, emoluments, etc., of a Diwan or minister, a chief officer of state.

<sup>2</sup> Carnatic Balagaute, the Carnatic above the Ghauts.

<sup>3</sup> Soubadarry of Viziapore, the office of a sQbahdâr, Governor of a province, a Viceroy under the Mogul Government.

Durbar charges."<sup>1</sup> But the payment was to be made provided the Nizam "Soubah of the Deccan assists the said Company and the Nawab Wolau Jah (Nawab of the Carnatic) in punishing Hyder Naique, and neither receives from, or sends either vakeels or letters to, him."

By the 6th Article of the treaty the Company and the Nawab of the Carnatic, "willing to show their voluntary attachment to the Soubah, will always be ready to send two battalions of sepoys and six pieces of artillery, manned by Europeans, whenever the Soubah shall require them, and the situation of their affairs will allow of such a body of troops to march into the Deccan, provided the Soubah pays the expense during the time that the said troops are employed in his service."<sup>2</sup>

A year after the treaty of 1768, which stigmatised Hyder Ali as a usurper, had been concluded with the Nizam, a treaty was made with Hyder formally recognising his right to the territories of which the treaty of 1768 professed to deprive him. Fifteen years afterwards, in 1784, a treaty was concluded with Tippoo acknowledging his rights. Lord Cornwallis had to decide whether these two treaties with the rulers of Mysore nullified the treaty of 1768 with the Nizam. He decided that the treaty of 1768 was in force, but owing to altered circumstances a new engagement explanatory of its terms must be made. He had in the past done his best to maintain peace with Tippoo; but he now knew that Tippoo might at any moment force on a war. He was determined that this critical situation should not occur without his having previously secured the co-operation of two efficient allies, the Nizam and the Marathas—two states best suited geographically for intervention in a war with Tippoo. But Clause 34 in Pitts India Act of 1784 stated that: "And whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of this nation; be it there-

<sup>1</sup> Aitcheson, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads*, vol. ix., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

fore further enacted, That it shall not be lawful for the Governor-General and Council without the express command of the Court of Directors, or of the Secret Committee, in any case (except where hostilities have actually been commenced, or preparations actually made for the commencement of hostilities against the British nation in India, or against some of the princes or states whose territories the Company shall be engaged by any subsisting treaty to defend or guarantee) either to declare war or commence hostilities, or enter into any treaty for making war, against any of the country princes or states in India, or any treaty for guaranteeing the possessions of any country, princes or states."<sup>1</sup> Tippoo had actually made ample preparations for the commencement of hostilities against one of the states whose territories the Company was engaged to defend or guarantee. Cornwallis, as Dundas told him, was most punctilious in interpreting the Act, and considered that he could not enter into negotiations to make a new treaty, but that he was at liberty to explain the treaty of 1768 "with a view to a more perfect execution of it." He wrote to the Nizam on July 7, 1789, a letter which he intended should lay the foundation of permanent and powerful co-operation. It stated: "In proof of the sincerity of my intentions that the Treaty should be carried into full effect, I agree that, in the sixth Article of the Treaty, the words 'whenever the situation of affairs will allow such a body of troops to march into the Deccan,' shall be understood to mean, that the force engaged for by this Article—viz., two battalions of sepoy and six pieces of cannon, manned by Europeans—shall be granted whenever Your Highness shall apply for it, making only one exception, that it is not to be employed against any power in alliance with the Company—viz., Pundit Pirdhun Peishwa, Ragojee Bhoosla, Madajee Sindia; and the other Mahratta Chiefs, the Nawab of Arcot and Nawab Vizier, the Rajahs of Tanjore and Travancore. That the battalions at present not defined in number shall not consist of less than eight hundred men each. That the six field pieces shall be

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *Making of British India*, p. 174.

manned with the number of Europeans which is usual in time of war."<sup>1</sup>

There is no mention of Tippoo. His name was deliberately excluded. Cornwallis was fully alive to the imminent danger of an attack on our ally the Raja of Travancore, and resolved to show Tippoo and the other native states that the British power was to be reckoned with. Sir John Malcolm states **that** this part of the engagement "appeared to excite apprehension in the mind of Tippoo." The letter was written to excite the apprehension of Tippoo, and to convince him that the Indian Government, with the co-operation of the Nizam, would enter into a war with him if he carried out his cherished hostile projects against Travancore. Cornwallis considered it was the last chance of maintaining the peace. With the same object the letter went on to state that: "In regard to the Articles relative to the Dewanny of the Carnatic Ballagaute, Your Highness must be well convinced that circumstances have totally prevented the execution of these Articles, and the Company are in the full enjoyment of peace with all the world; but should it hereafter happen that the Company should obtain possession of the country mentioned in these Articles, with Your Highness's assistance, they will strictly perform the stipulations in favour of Your Highness and the Mahrattas."<sup>2</sup> Cornwallis uttered an impressive warning to Tippoo that if the English were landed into a contest with him he might lose a large portion of his territory. He wrote to the Nizam with clearness and firmness, which arose from a due conception of his duties and a determination to fulfil them. At the close of his letter he requests the Nizam, "in consideration of the authority vested in me by the King and Parliament of England," to "consider my letter, though merely purporting a clear explanation of the several Articles in the Treaty of 1768, strong and efficient upon the English Government in India, equally so as a Treaty in due form could be, since the Members of the Council have given their cheerful acquiescence to its contents."<sup>3</sup>

Serious objection has been entertained to the principle

<sup>1</sup> Aitcheson, vol. ix., p. 44.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

of the letter, and it has been discussed whether a fresh treaty would not have been more advisable and more consistent with the character of the British Government. Mill remarks that Sir John Malcolm makes "the following severe reflection": "The literal construction of the restrictions of the Act of Parliament had, upon this occasion, the effect of making the Governor-General pursue a course, which was perhaps not only questionable in point of faith; but which must have been more offensive to Tippoo Sultaun, and more calculated to produce a war with that Prince, than an avowed contract of a defensive engagement framed for the express and legitimate purpose of limiting his inordinate ambition."<sup>1</sup> Mill, who loves to attack Cornwallis, omits the qualifying words with which the passage opens: "There is no person acquainted with the nature of the times in which this engagement was formed, but must be sensible that every measure of precautionary policy was then necessary, on the part of the British Government, to counteract and frustrate the ambitious designs of Tippoo Sultaun."<sup>2</sup> Mill adds: "To the same purpose, another enlightened Indian soldier: \* It is highly instructive to observe a statesman, justly extolled for moderate and pacific dispositions, thus indirectly violating a law, enacted for the enforcement of these virtues, by entering into a very intelligible offensive alliance."<sup>3</sup> Mill, however, omits the most important concluding words, "which, although the effective revival of the abrogated conditions of an old treaty, was certainly neither a declaration of war, nor that technical instrument named a treaty for making war, executed subsequently to the prohibiting Act of Parliament."<sup>4</sup> Sir John Malcolm was a writer of considerable ability, but his inferences are not always legitimate nor his admissions admissible. His *Sketch of the Political History of India* is a tract intended to expose the evils resulting from the system of neutrality prescribed by the Act of 1784, and to justify the brilliant schemes and daring policy of Wellesley.

<sup>1</sup> *Sketch of the Political History of India*, by John Malcolm, pp. 68-69.

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm, p. 68.

Mill, vol. v., p. 229 n.

<sup>4</sup> Thornton, *History of the British Empire in India*, vol. ii., pp. 395-396.

Parliament, the Company, Hastings, Cornwallis are all arraigned for the purpose of extolling that policy. But it is possible to approve of Wellesley's proceedings without casting a doubt on the justice and good faith which marked all the public acts of Cornwallis. Cornwallis was guilty of no breach of faith with Parliament. The policy he pursued, he had good reason to believe, would receive the complete approval of Pitt and Dundas. Dundas wrote to him before the letter to the Nizam was despatched : " It is so very essential to our interest to detach him from all other Indian connexions, and to unite him in the closest connexion and dependence upon our protection, that there is no alliance formed upon that basis to which you may not expect our concurrence." An alliance with the Nizam was no breach of faith with Tippoo. He had violated the Treaty of Mangalore by the brutal detention of native British subjects, and he had incessantly exposed our frontiers to innumerable minor insults. He had sent an embassy to Paris and opened secret negotiations with the French at Pondicherry, as a war with France and England was expected. If war between the two nations broke out, he would be able to take advantage of it to invade and plunder the Carnatic, as his father and he had before done. He would obtain possession of the state of Travancore, which he desired as an outlet to the sea. It had been placed under the protection of the British by the Treaty of Mangalore; but the British forces were ill prepared for war, and his own army he had made for all purposes of war the most powerful in India.

The kingdom of Travancore, which Tippoo so greatly coveted, lies on the south-western side of the great peninsula. It consists of a stretch of land seventy-five miles broad which runs down in a series of hills and valleys to the sandy beach of the Malabar coast a little west of Cape Comorin. A range of mountains averaging four or five thousand feet in height, bristling with forest, hedges it on the east. On the south and west the turbulent surf is its barrier. Many streams rising among the hills wind their way across the land from east to west, but on approaching the ocean they spread

**themselves into** numerous lagoons, which **extend nearly the whole length** of the coast. Behind **the** lagoons **stretches a plain** covered with cocoanut and areca palms, clustered villages, and stretches of waving rice. Nature had protected this Garden of Eden with her strongest barricade except on the north, where it is only partially protected by the Ghauts. In order to render his northern frontier the more secure, the Raja of Travancore and his neighbour the Raja of Cochin constructed the works known as the lines of Travancore. "They run west to east. They commence at the sea on **the** island of Vipeen, and continue to the Chinnamungulum River, which intersects them. They begin again on the opposite bank, and extend as far as the Animally Hills, where they terminate on one of them, so that the eastern boundary is covered by a range of mountains under that denomination. From the sea to the Chinnamungulum River is an extent of about four or five miles, and from the opposite bank to the hills, the lines continue without any interruption about twenty-four or twenty-five miles. They consist of a ditch about sixteen feet broad and twenty deep, a slight parapet and thick rampart, and bastions flanking each other from one end to the other. The approach to them is only from the north."<sup>1</sup>

South of the small island of Vipen lies Cochin (Koche or koche-bandar, small port), situated on the south bank of the principal navigable entrance to the great Travancore estuary. There is much in the town and port to attract the student of antiquities or history. Legend states that here came St. Thomas the Apostle in A.D. 52, and established a colony of Christians now called Nozerane Mopla. Some Jews settled here in the first year of the Christian era. From copper-plates it is known that the Jewish and Syrian Churches were firmly established in Cochin by the eighth century. Eight centuries drove on, and then Vasco da Gama landed at Cochin and established a factory. The next year **the** great Alfonso de Albuquerque, founder of the Portuguese Empire, arrived at Cochin and succoured the Cochin Raja,

<sup>1</sup> An extract of a letter dated in January, 1790, from Mr. Powney.

who was besieged by the Zamoren (Emperor) of Malabar, who resided at Calicut, one hundred miles to the north of Cochin, in the island of Vipen. It was on Christmas Day, 1524, that Vasco da Gamadied at Cochin and was buried in the cathedral church of Santa Cruz. Our pioneer traveller, Ralph Fitch, visited and described Cochin in 1589. The Dutch came and took from the Portuguese the town and fort in 1663, and they, after their fashion, built strong houses and erected quays for the growing trade. They also greatly strengthened the fort.

On December 14, 1789, Tippoo encamped his army about twenty-five miles distant from the boundary of Travancore, and his cavalry ravaged the country within a mile of the works. Ten days later his camp was established at about six miles to the northward of the principal gates of the line. On the night of the 28th he issued orders that at daybreak the army should manoeuvre in front of the principal gateways. At ten o'clock he stole away from the camp with 14,000 infantry and 500 pioneers. A native guide had promised to guide him by a circuitous route that would enable him to turn the right flank of the lines which terminated in a precipice and was supposed to be inaccessible. At daybreak Tippoo had entered the lines and had obtained possession of a considerable stretch of rampart. His aim was to reach the gate, nine miles away, and throw it open to his army manœuvring outside of it. His troops had advanced between two and three miles when Tippoo, seeing that his advance was being opposed and he might be obliged to take post and bring up his guns, ordered the pioneers to throw a certain extent of rampart into the ditch, and so make another entrance into the camp. At the same time his troops advanced in one column along the rampart. The defenders retired from tower to tower fighting, and many of the column fell as they advanced. A square enclosure used as a magazine was reached. The fugitives dragged a gun into it, and opened with grape on the advancing foe and killed or wounded many of the leading corps. Tippoo sent for one of his crack regiments, and ordered them to carry the building at the point of the

**bayonet** and the leading corps to return. As the relieved corps was about to return along the flank, a small body of defenders opened fire upon them from a thick cover which approached the ramparts, killed their commanding officer, and threw them into disorder. They rushed down on the relieving corps, and the whole force became a rolling mass of fugitives. "The Sultaun, himself, was borne away in the crowd; the rear, now become the front, rushed into the intended road across the ditch, which had been no farther prepared than by cutting down the underwood, and throwing a part of the rampart on the berm; the foremost leaped or were forced into the ditch; and such was the pressure of the succeeding mass, that there was no alternative but to follow. The undermost, of course, were trampled to death; and in a short time the bodies, by which the ditch was nearly filled, enabled the remainder to pass over. The Sultaun was precipitated with the rest, and was only saved by the exertions of some steady and active *chélas*,<sup>1</sup> who raised him on their shoulders, and enabled him to ascend the counterscarp, after having twice fallen back in the attempt to clamber up; and the lameness, which occasionally continued until his death, was occasioned by the severe contusions he received on this occasion."<sup>2</sup>

On January 26, 1790, a despatch was received by the supreme Government from Madras informing them of Tippoo's attack on the lines at Travancore. Cornwallis did what he said he would do; he considered it equivalent to a declaration of war. The next day, in writing to Madras, the supreme Government "could not allow ourselves to doubt that upon the first information they had of it, they had considered the Company as at war with him" (Tippoo), "and had proceeded to take measures to carry it on with vigour, according to the terms of our instructions, dated the 29th of August last." **The** supreme Government expressed their intention "to exact

<sup>1</sup> Cheyla. "It has meant a 'slave, a household slave, a family retainer, an adopted member of a great family, a dependent relative, and a soldier in its secular senses" (Hobson-Jobson).

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, *Mysore*, vol iii., p. 148.

a full reparation from Tippoo for this wanton and unprovoked violation of his treaty." Orders were sent at once to the Resident at Poona to negotiate for an alliance with the Maratha state against Tippoo, and to the Resident at Hyderabad to take the necessary steps for securing the co-operation of the Nizam in the war against Tippoo. A treaty \*bf offensive and defensive alliance was concluded with the Nizam on July 4, 1790. By Article 3 of this treaty : " It is agreed that on Captain Kennaway's annunciation to the Nawab Ausuph Jah of the actual commencement of hostilities between the Honourable Company's force and the said Tippoo, and on Mr. Malet's announcing the same to Pundit Prudhan, the forces of the said Nawab Ausuph Jah and Pundit Prudhan, in number not less than 25,000, but as many more and as much greater an equipment as may be, shall immediately invade the territories of the said Tippoo, and reduce as much of his dominions as possible before and during the rains, and after that season the said Nawab and Pundit Prudhan will seriously and rigorously prosecute the war with a potent army, well appointed and equipped with the requisite warlike apparatus."<sup>1</sup> By Article 4 it was stipulated that: " If the Right Honourable the Governor-General should require a body of cavalry to join the English forces, the Nawab Ausuph Jah and Pundit Prudhan shall furnish to the number of 10,000 to march in one month from the time of their being demanded by the shortest and safest route with all expedition to the place of their destination, to act with the Company's forces; but should any service occur practicable only by cavalry they shall execute it, nor cavil on the clause of ' To act with the Company's forces.' The pay of the said cavalry to be defrayed monthly by the Honourable Company at the rate and on the conditions hereafter to be settled."<sup>2</sup> By Article 6 it was agreed that an equal division should be made of the territories conquered, and by Article 10 that if Tippoo should attack any of the contracting parties the others should join to punish them.

On the day after the account arrived from Madras that

<sup>1</sup> Aitcheson, vol. ix., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Tippoo had actually commenced hostilities, Lord Cornwallis informed the Board that he regarded it as a duty that he should proceed to Madras, and "with that view, and upon the ground of State necessity, it was the intention of Lord Cornwallis to take the responsibility of an irregular measure upon himself, and to propose that the Board should invest him with full powers to assume a temporary charge of the civil and military affairs at your Presidency of Fort St. George, by exercising the functions of Governor, as well as those of Commander-in-Chief." After the grave disaster of Yorktown it was only natural that Cornwallis, the soldier, should be desirous of again taking the field, and as Commander conducting a successful campaign, and that he should have heard with regret that General Medows, Governor of Bombay, had been invested with the offices of Governor and Commander-in-Chief at the Presidency of Fort St. George. He wrote to his brother, "I must now be satisfied" as to "Medows."<sup>1</sup>

William Medows was a veteran soldier, high-minded, chivalrous, and brave. He entered the army at the age of little more than eighteen, having obtained a commission in the 50th Regiment in 1756, the year before Plassey was won. Soon after the splendid victory of Minden, Medows's regiment was ordered to join the allied force under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who was keeping at bay a French force vastly superior in numbers. He took part in several skirmishes, and was present at the battle of Warburg, which was won chiefly by the British cavalry. The Peace of Paris put an end to the war, and Medows left Germany in March, 1764, having acquired a considerable knowledge of the organisation of war. At the close of that year he was posted as Lieut.-Colonel to the 54th Regiment, and nine years later he left the infantry and exchanged into the 12th Light Dragoons. His service as a cavalry officer was of short duration. The prospect of immediate employment before an enemy led him to exchange into the 55th Regiment. In 1775 the English-speaking race in America had made appeal

<sup>1</sup> John W. Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. i., p. 81.

to arms to preserve the freedom which their forefathers had bequeathed them, and the 55th Regiment was on the eve of departure to reinforce the British troops acting against the colonists. On arriving at the seat of war he shared in the various operations of a frontier campaign. He displayed his zeal and courage at the battle which took place on Brandywine Creek (September 11, 1777), when Washington suffered a complete and severe defeat. Two years later he served in an expedition to drive the French from St. Lucia, the gem of the Windward Islands, and again gained due distinction. In 1780 he returned to England, and was gazetted Colonel of the 89th ; but his quality as a soldier was known, and he soon obtained a high command. England being at war with Holland, an enterprise was secretly planned to drive the Dutch from the Cape of Good Hope, and ultimately destined to render substantial support to the war in India. Commodore Johnstone, an able and daring seaman, was appointed to command the squadron, and to Medows was assigned the command of the land forces, consisting of three regiments, each 1,000 strong. On March 13, 1780, the armament, accompanied by several outward-bound East Indiamen, set sail from England. The secret was not well kept, and a naval force under Suffren was sent to follow Johnstone and to protect their allies at the Cape. Suffren found the English squadron at Porto Praya in St. Jago, one of the Cape Verde Islands, belonging to the Portuguese, and a Homeric contest took place, in which the French ship, the *Hannibal*, of seventy-four guns, played an heroic part. The French attack was repulsed, but the English fleet was much damaged. They had to remain a month in the bay to refit, and on approaching the Cape they discovered that Suffren had arrived before them, and French troops had reinforced the Dutch. The projected attack was abandoned. Commodore Johnstone, having made prizes of four Dutch East Indiamen, returned with them and the frigates to Europe. The-remainder of the fleet and the troops proceeded to India. Arriving at Madras with his troops, Medows was with Colonel Fullarton in his brilliant enterprise when, after

capturing three strong forts, the latter penetrated to the confines of Mysore ready and able to advance against Tippoo's capital, and then was recalled. He was also present at the closing scene of the second Mysore war, the signing of the disgraceful Treaty of Mangalore on March n, 1784. He again proved himself to be a brave and capable soldier, and four years later the Court of Directors appointed him Commander-in-Chief and Governor at Bombay. He had ruled with tact that Presidency for two years when he was sent to Madras as Commander-in-Chief and Governor.

On February 20, 1790, Major-General Medows, landing at Fort St. George, assumed charge of his high office, and at once made preparations for taking the field. Lord Cornwallis, who was determined to carry on the war with the utmost vigour, issued orders the same month for the formation of a detachment from Bengal for service in the Carnatic. It consisted of the 76th Foot and six battalions of Bengal Native Infantry, with a battalion of artillery and twelve companies of Lascars; the 76th Foot and part of the artillery were sent to Madras by sea, but as the high-caste Brahman sepoy objected to crossing the Black Water, as being destructive to his caste, Lord Cornwallis sent the six battalions by land. They marched from Midnapore, south-west of Calcutta, to the southern bank of the Subanrika River, and from thence proceeding onwards on March 12, 1790, reached Conjeveram, below Madras, on August 4, and joined the 4th, 74th, and 76th Regiments of Europeans and the 21st and 27th Battalions of Madras sepoys, who formed the centre army.

According to the plan for conducting the operations of the campaign, Colonel Kelly, with the centre array, was to hold a position before the passes which led directly from Mysore, and thus secure the Carnatic from the enemy's inroads. The main army, called the southern army, was to occupy the fertile Coimbatore country, and thence, through the Gujelhetty Pass, to invade Mysore. Colonel (afterwards Sir Robert) Abercromby, Governor and Commander-in-

Chief at Bombay, was, with a force of Bombay troops, to seize Tippoo's territory on the coast of Malabar, and, if necessary, effect a junction with Medows, if Medows accepted the plan of operations. On April 1, 1790, Cornwallis wrote to Dundas: " Medows has adopted Musgrave's plan of operations, which is to invade Tippoo's country with one very considerable army from Trichinopoly, and leave all the rest of the Carnatic force on the defensive. I am not quite sure that I perfectly approve of this, for although our army will by this means possess the rich country of Coimbatore, yet as they cannot pass the Ghauts which divide that part of Tippoo's dominions from the Mysore country, until the rains cease in the latter (for you must understand that in Coimbatore they have the rains at the same time as in the Carnatic, and in Mysore at the same time as on the Malabar Coast), I cannot help apprehending that during the period in which our army will be detained in Coimbatore, the Carnatic will be greatly exposed to the incursions of Tippoo's cavalry. But it was too late, even if I had been convinced of its imperfection, and had possessed sufficient local knowledge to have proposed a better, to have rendered it prudent for me to attempt to alter it."<sup>1</sup>

On March 24, 1790, General Medows joined the main army, which was encamped on the wide veldt at Trichinopoly. It was formed in two European and four native brigades. " The 36th and 52nd Foot composed the first of these, under the command of Major Skelly of the 74th Highlanders, which, along with the 1st and 3rd Native Brigades, formed the left wing of the army under Colonel James Stuart of the 72nd Highlanders; the second brigade consisted of the 71st and 72nd Highland Regiments, and the 1st European Battalion of the Company. The horse were the 2nd and 5th Native Cavalry, with some companies of Bengal Artillery under Colonel Deare."<sup>2</sup>

On the morning of May 26, General Medows, with the southern army, began his march towards Coimbatore with

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Rec. 52nd Regiment*, quoted by Cassell's *History*, p. 278.

provisions for forty days. The transport of an army in those days depended almost entirely on bullocks, and "owing to the badness of the bullocks or their drivers" his progress was slow. Twenty days were consumed in marching sixty miles to Caroor,<sup>1</sup> in the Coimbatore district. The garrison retired on his approach. He halted there till some repairs were done on the works and a magazine was formed in the fort—thirty days' rest for the army. He then again set forth, and on July 10 he arrived at Dhārapuram,<sup>2</sup> near the Amaravata River, and found the fort abandoned. It contained a rich store of grain, and, leaving there a large garrison and his superfluous baggage, Medows advanced towards Coimbatore in the hope of meeting Tippoo. But news reached him that Tippoo had abandoned the city, and transporting his army across the Bhowani, a deep and remarkably rapid river, had ascended the steep defiles on the road to Seringapatam. Tippoo, however, had left his ablest General, Saiyid Sahib, with a large force of Mysore cavalry, to watch the motions of the British, and to burn the town before they reached it. Colonel John Floyd, of the 19th Dragoons, was sent forward with the cavalry troop, and by his unexpected approach caused the Mysore General to retreat before destroying the city. On July 22 the army took possession of it, and Medows made it his headquarters. Thinking that the Coimbatore country was well protected by the Bhowani and Caveri, Medows determined to send detachments to capture several forts and establish a chain of posts from the Coromandel coast to Tellemungatum, a fort on the bank of the Bhowani nearest to the pass of Gujelhetty, through which Medows hoped to pass about the close of October.

On August 6 Colonel Oldham, of the Madras army, was sent with a detachment to capture Erode on the Caveri, northward of Caroor, and on the best route to the pass. The place was of no great strength, and it yielded after

<sup>1</sup> 11° 20' N., 77° 46' E. (*Constable's Hand Gazetteer of India*).

<sup>2</sup> Dhārapuram (S. Viratapura), Koimbatour, near Madras, 10° 45' N., 77° 34' E.

a slight resistance. Colonel Shears, with the 52nd Regiment, the grenadiers of the 1st Regiment of the Company, and four out of five battalions of sepoys, were sent to attack the strong fortress of Dindigul, a place of considerable importance.<sup>1</sup> The detachment arrived there on the 16th, and the next day two heavy batteries and one of field-pieces for enfilade opened fire. The enemy's fire was soon silenced, but the day after, the ammunition having been expended, it was determined to storm, though the breach was hardly practicable. "The rock was so steep, that the troops were obliged to push one another up, which occasioned their advancing to the breach in small straggling parties, and thus being repulsed with ease by a very trifling fire from the garrison."<sup>2</sup> At daybreak a white flag was seen on the wall. The gallant commandant, deserted by the majority of the garrison, surrendered. A few days after the fall of Dindigul, Satimangalam was taken by a detachment under Colonel Floyd. On September 21 Palaghautcherry was attacked, and the garrison surrendered after a feeble resistance. So far the operations had been successful, and a chain of posts occupied from the sea to the mouth of the pass. But it entailed the division of the army into three corps: General Medows at Coimbatore, Colonel Floyd nearly sixty miles in advance, and Colonel Stuart at Palaghautcherry, about thirty miles in the rear. Tippoo, with lynx-eyed perspicacity, realised that these three divisions, slow in moving when they did abandon their strong positions, might be attacked and defeated by his vast army swiftly advancing in compact order.

Early in September Tippoo, with his whole army, marched suddenly from Seringapatam, and, to the surprise of everyone, descended the Ghauts. On the 13th, having crossed the Bhowani, his horse encountered some pickets sent out to patrol, and drove them back. Major Darling's regiment, which had been sent to support them, was surrounded and obliged to take post among some enclosures. Here they stubbornly held their own till Floyd came with the rest of

<sup>1</sup> Dindigul or Dindudkal.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Sir Thomas Munro, Ambore, September 22, 1790.

the cavalry to his relief, dispersed the enemy, and killed about four hundred of them.

Soon after Floyd's return to camp, two guns opened upon him, and the enemy were discovered descending the northern bank of the stream, while a large force was advancing rapidly from the west. Floyd had barely time to change his front so as to protect his flank when Tippoo opened a distant cannonade. Floyd's artillery promptly returned the fire, but "the axle-trees of two of my twelve-pounders soon gave way," he reported, "and a six-pounder was disabled; the rest were fired with excellent aim, but sparingly, as my stock of ammunition was not great. Our line stood on the shoulder of a rising ground to the right; on the summit it was stony, but free from bushes. The enemy was on strong ground among enclosures and villages, and at a considerable distance, so that most of the shot struck the ground short of our line, though some went an incredible distance beyond it. The cannonade was kept up until perfect dark; nothing on earth could exceed the bravery and firmness of every man in our whole line. When it was dark, I determined to join the commander-in-chief, and take the shortest route to Coimbatore."<sup>1</sup>

The casualties, particularly among the grenadiers of the 36th Regiment, were very great. The sepoy loss was also severe. Floyd rode along the line and began to express his regret and offer some consolation to the native officers, when he was interrupted by them. "There is no occasion," they said, "for such feelings or expressions. We have eaten the Company's salt, and God forbid that we should mind a few casualties."

At the break of day Floyd commenced his retreat. Two of his twelve-pounders had been disabled, many of the bullocks belonging to the guns had been killed, and his damaged ordnance had to be left behind. The River Bhowani was crossed in wicker boats, and it was noon before the enemy overtook them, opened fire, and enfiladed them as they marched through narrow lanes among thick hedges.

<sup>1</sup> Despatches, quot. Cassell's *History*, p. 281.

**The enemy** again and again came down upon the right of the line with a storm of horse; but when they were almost on the point of the bayonet a steady fire from the infantry dispersed them with considerable loss. At the same time a party of the 36th, which was in the rear of the line, had been attacked and repulsed by superior numbers, and all their officers killed or wounded. But before they were struck down they had killed by their fire Tippoo's second in command while he was urging his artillery forward. The enemy's horse had at the same time charged and been driven back with considerable slaughter. The infantry again began to move, picking up and carrying off with them our wounded officers and men. The enemy took care to ply them with fire, and large bodies of their horse were collecting to charge them again when Floyd with the cavalry arrived. They were two miles in front of the infantry, near the village of Shawoor or Cheyoor, when a troop, which had been ordered to examine and make the detour of the village, appeared on its opposite side, on the road leading from Coimbatore. A cry was raised that it was General Medows' body-guard and the head of his column; and Floyd, "seizing the fortunate error, caused it to be announced to the cavalry, who, throwing down their forage, formed, and returned to the scene of action, proclaiming with three huzzas the arrival of Medows, which was instantly greeted by a similar cheer along the infantry ranks. It was almost at the same critical period that the Sultaun's army had rushed to the close of a fancied triumph with a general shout, but were checked in the first instance by the admirable conduct of the infantry, and in the next by the exulting intelligence of succour; in this state of wavering they were charged by the British cavalry, who pursued on both flanks of the position and completely cleared the field."<sup>1</sup>

The Sultan drew off his army in disappointment and indignation at the escape of a prey deemed to be in his grasp, and on their disappearance Floyd occupied the ground near the village. During the course of the day he

<sup>1</sup> Wiiks, vol. iii., pp. 88-89.

had received a despatch from headquarters, stating that **Medows** would march on the 4th for Vellady, which was on the nearest road through a pass to Coimbatore. But it was not on the direct road to that place, which was fifteen miles lower down the river, and on which Floyd was marching. Tippoo hoped that Floyd would continue to pursue this route, and he would then be able to attack the two forces in detail, and destroy them by his superior numbers. Floyd, however, realised the absolute necessity of a junction. The distance between Shawoor and Vellady across country was eighteen miles. At two in the morning the detachment started for Vellady, and arrived there "at eight at night, without seeing an enemy, the troops having been three days without eating."<sup>1</sup> He found that the General, perplexed by bad intelligence, had already passed through Vellady. Floyd's men and their horses were too weary to move another step, and it was of vital importance to stop the further advance of the General. Brigade-Major Dallas volunteered to ride alone and inform the General where the detachment was encamped, and their pressing wants. "The most urgent was that of surgeons for the wounded (two surgeons having been killed), and an immediate refreshment of biscuit and spirits for the Europeans, the sepoy being already occupied in dressing the rice which they always carried on their backs; these wants were supplied in the course of the night, and the next morning the General retraced his steps to Vellady. His reception of Colonel Floyd was a noble example of candour: 'My dear Colonel! Yours is the feat, and mine the defeat.'<sup>2</sup> Floyd by his foresight and promptness had saved the General's division, which consisted of only three battalions of sepoys and two of Europeans without flanking parties.

The disastrous retreat of a small part of Medows' army under Colonel Floyd would, in a European campaign, have been regarded as an accident of war, but in an Oriental land the slightest disaster to a military force, or the slightest check to lawful authority, weakens the prestige of the

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Government, and on prestige our Indian Empire was built and stands. Tippoo now began that campaign which illustrates the particular character of his merits as a General. He knew what his host of cavalry and well-trained infantry could effect in the way of long marches and manoeuvring in the face of the enemy; he knew how the British, with their lack of trustworthy information and their mass of camp-followers and bullocks carrying grain for the troops, were in their power. Medows had been trained to methodical warfare, and he did not understand Tippoo's war of shifts and devices. His genius lay in fighting a battle with great courage and skill, but he was not equal to conducting a campaign in a most intricate country unknown to him. Tippoo and his commanders knew every mile of it. The Sultan, foiled in his attempt to destroy the two divisions of the army in detail, proceeded south rapidly in order to cut off convoys and to capture the chain of posts. Erode surrendered as soon as he appeared, and, proceeding farther south, he entered Daraporam. He then set forth to the north in order to capture Coimbatore, the most important station, as it divided him from an important pass. He had not marched fifteen miles before he discovered that it had been strongly reinforced by a detachment sent by Colonel Hartley, who had ascended from the Malabar coast. Medows also arrived in its neighbourhood on September 17. Tippoo, finding himself baffled, moved his army farther south, in order to give the impression that he would sweep round the Malabar coast and ascend from there. The strategy answered. Returning suddenly and passing Medows' army unobserved, he again arrived at Satimangalam, and encamped between the Bhowani and the Caroor, within ten miles of the British encampment. He had heard that Colonel Maxwell, who had succeeded Colonel Kelly in the command of the Carnatic army, and was watching the passes that lead directly from the Carnatic into Mysore, had invaded the rich valley of Baramahal. Leaving a portion of his army to watch the motions of the British, he began to cross the Caveri on October 31, and "the stream being barely fordable, it required three days to

**complete the passage."** Large bodies of his **cavalry appeared every day near** the pickets, and it was not **until** November 7 **that** Colonel Floyd, on making an extensive reconnaissance with a strong force, discovered that the Sultan's army **had** crossed the river and had marched northward. Medows, informed of this, at once took steps to pursue Tippoo, and overtake him before he attacked Maxwell. The next day he began to cross the river " at a ford below Eroad, so deep as to make it necessary for the cattle to swim over, the stores and ammunition to be carried on men's heads, and the tumbrils crossing under water to be opened and dried in the sun on the opposite side, before it could be repacked."<sup>1</sup>

On the 10th he began the pursuit. Five days after he cleared the pass of Tapoor and the range of hills he encamped on an elevated ground overlooking Baramahal. " On the arrival of the advanced guard at the intended ground, a camp was observed gradually to arise, flags to be erected, and troops to take up their ground on the plain, distant about six miles. Nearly three weeks had elapsed since any direct intelligence had been received from Colonel Maxwell. No doubt was entertained that the English army beheld their comrades, and three signal guns were fired to announce the event."<sup>2</sup> When Tippoo discovered that the two armies were so near to each other, he abandoned the idea of attacking them separately, and he marched some ten miles up the great vale of Palicode and encamped. On the 17th Medows' army joined Maxwell, who, by the skilful disposition of his forces, had kept the Sultan at bay. Tippoo's main plan of campaign had been to keep the British army employed in the country below the Ghauts, away from his own territory, and he determined to double back through the pass of Tapoor, and again carry the war into their country. He therefore marched his army all through the night, in order to gain its northern head undiscovered. About eight in the morning the entrance into the defile was reached, and a heavy column had begun to descend when Medows' advanced guard was perceived. They had come to mark out a new encampment,

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

as Medows had determined to return by the same pass. Tippoo decided promptly to abandon his baggage and rear-guard, and to continue the march of his army through the pass, while he himself took personal command of two thousand horse to protect its rear. By sunset his troops had cleared the pass, and, making their way to the Caveri, they proceeded down its northern bank, and did not halt until they arrived opposite Trichinopoly, a most important post and extensive magazine. A sudden rise of the river prevented him from making an immediate attack in force, but he made several demonstrations, and pillaged and devastated the island of Seringham, on which is situated the stupendous temple of Seringham, with its lofty red battlements and gate towers.<sup>1</sup> He had quickly to turn and deal with a pressing danger.

When Medows' advance guard discovered that Tippoo's force had begun to descend the pass of Tapoor, Colonel Stuart, a gallant and dashing officer, who commanded the right wing of the army, and led the main column, proposed by a rapid advance to cut off with his own wing of the southern army a considerable body of Tippoo's infantry, and attack the remainder to advantage in the pass. General Medows, with a brigade of infantry and the cavalry, was watching the demonstration made on the right by a considerable body of the enemy's horse, who were supposed, by the columns of dust raised, to be masking a movement of infantry. General Medows refused permission, and his decision has been severely criticised. Sir Thomas Munro, who was at the time a subaltern in the 21st Battalion of Native Infantry, which formed part of Colonel Maxwell's

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Lord Clive*, by Sir George Forrest, C.I.E., vol. i., p. 132. "About a mile and a half from the great pagoda is a smaller one with four quadrangles dedicated to Shiva, the destroyer and the healer. The two temples so well fortified afforded good posts for an invading army, and the sacred place is charged with history. Men call it an island, but it is, in fact, a peninsula, two miles broad at its western extremity, but growing narrower until at about the end of thirteen miles it joins a large and strong mound of earth which prevents the union of the two branches of the river Caveri, and sends the northern stream, which takes the name of Coleroon, rolling farther north-west until it reaches the sea near Devicotah, while the Caveri, retaining the name, spreads out into many channels and fertilises the green rice-fields of Tanjore."

force, writes in a letter dated "Camp, Trichinopoly, 24th December, 1790," as follows: "The advance, which consisted of four regiments of cavalry, and three battalions of sepoys, could have reached the head of the pass at noon, **and** the army might have been there an hour after; instead of which, they did not reach it till near sunset, when most of the enemy were already through it. If they had advanced briskly, they would, without any loss, have got possession of all the guns in it; but the contempt with which Tippoo was once regarded, had unfortunately changed into greater respect than he was entitled to, and ambuscades were looked for in every wood."<sup>1</sup>

Colonel Wilks states: "This proposition was not approved, and the corps on the right under General Medows, impeded by ravines, was making slow progress. The demonstrations were continued, and the effect of a more rapid advance was sufficiently evinced by the fact of three battalions of infantry of the rear of the main column being intercepted under all these disadvantages of delay, and forced to make a straggling retreat through the ravines and woods in the opposite direction."<sup>2</sup>

The comments of Munro are the comments of a young subaltern on the action of a General who had a considerable experience of the business of war. The nature of the ground, with its rough scrub and numerous ravines, rendered a brisk advance impossible. So late as November 11 the enemy had succeeded in drawing a troop of cavalry into an ambushade, and the whole party, within sight of the camp, were slain or captured. General Medows had learnt from experience that at the head of the multitude of troops in front of him was a man with whom it was not safe to be entirely careless.

After a tedious march of twenty miles, the British army encamped at night near the summit of the pass. The next morning it passed through the defile, and Medows, closely following in the track of Tippoo, arrived at the bank of the Caveri, opposite Caroor, on November 27. Believing, in

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Major-General Sir Thomas Munro, Bart.*, vol. i., p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 101.

the report spread by Tippoo that he would cross the river below that town, Medows felt satisfied that the Mysore Sultan would proceed southward and transfer the seat of the war to the low countries. He wrote to the Governor in Council " that the most determined measure, the likeliest to bring him to action, and drive him out of this country, is boldly to go up the ghauts ourselves, which I mean to do by the Caveriporam pass."<sup>1</sup> He added that he hoped to set out for that pass by December 8, and expressed his belief that if he were once up the Ghauts the enemy would either fight or treat. His premises were not sound and his conclusions not logical. Before that date news of Tippoo's demonstrations before Trichinopoly reached him, and, breaking up his camp, he marched rapidly and arrived opposite to that town on December 14. On Sunday evening, December 12, 1790, the Right Honourable Lord Cornwallis, K.G., Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in India, arrived at Madras in His Majesty's ship the *Vestal* frigate, commanded by Sir Richard Strachan.

The embers of the desire to take the field in person were yet smouldering when it became plain that the campaign of 1790 had proved indecisive, and Cornwallis, moved by the old desire and reasonable mistrust and anxiety, resolved to assume the personal direction of offensive operations. His reasons, as stated in a letter dated November 12, 1790, to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, of the Board of Control, were: "That we have lost time, and our adversary has gained reputation, which are two most valuable things in war. It is vain now to look back; we must only consider how to remedy the evil, and to prevent the ill effects which our delay may occasion in the minds of our allies. It immediately occurred to me that nothing would be so likely to keep up their spirits, and to convince them of our determination to act with vigour, as my taking the command of the army ; I have accordingly declared my intention of embarking/or Madras in the first week of next month, and besides the 73rd Regiment, and a detachment of 12 or 14 hundred

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

sepoys, I mean to endeavour to transport in small vessels called dhonies, about the end of next month **our** 1st Regiment of cavalry completed to six troops by drafting the men and horses of the 2nd, three or four hundred horses for remounting the Madras cavalry, and one thousand large bullocks for the service of the artillery."<sup>1</sup>

Cornwallis looked forward with earnestness to reaching England in May or June, and "enjoying the society of my nearest relations and best friends," but, he adds, "my duty to my country obliges me to go to Madras, in order to take the field against Tippoo Sultaun, who has proved a more formidable enemy than we at first apprehended."<sup>2</sup>

Writing to the Bishop of Lichfield on December 5, 1790, he says: "To-morrow morning at daybreak I shall embark for Madras, with a head full of care and an aching heart." In a letter to Mr. Grenville, dated Fort St. George, Madras, December 28, 1791, Lord Cornwallis says: "In pursuance of the intention which I notified to you in my letter of November 15th, I left Calcutta on the 6th, to embark in the *Vestal*, frigate, at Diamond Harbour; and, after a very prosperous voyage, landed here on the 13th instant. My time has been partly employed in attending to several important points of the civil business of this presidency; but principally in acquiring minute information respecting the condition of the troops, of the magazines, of provisions, and of the nature of the different passes that lead to the Mysore country; and, after the most deliberate reflection, I have resolved, instead of prosecuting the plan of the southern invasion, to penetrate by the passes that lead from the centre of the Carnatic, and to commence our operations with the sieges of Oussore and Bangalore, unless Tippoo should resolve to hazard an action, and its event shall render it expedient to take other measures."<sup>3</sup>

Lord Cornwallis took with him on board the *Vestal*, and on a fleet of native boats which accompanied the frigate, six battalions of infantry, chiefly composed of Bengal grgna-

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 50.

\* *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Grant, *History of British India*, vol. i., p. 283.

diers, the 1st Regiment of Bengal Cavalry, a detachment of Bengal artillery, with a number of heavy guns, and a multitude of horses and draught bullocks for transport service. He also took with him what was greatly needed—a well-filled military chest.

When tidings reached Tippoo of the landing of the Governor-General at Madras with substantial reinforcements, he broke up his camp at Trichinopoly and proceeded in a northern direction into the heart of the Carnatic, "marking his route by the accustomed train of plunder, conflagration, and ruin." Pushing rapidly forward, he reached Tragar, eight miles from Trichinopoly, a hill-fort with an extensive town at its foot weakly protected. Tippoo made two attempts to carry the town, but was repulsed with considerable loss by the sepoy garrison under the command of Captain Flint, who had defended Wandewash with chivalrous gallantry and considerable military skill.<sup>1</sup> Judging it prudent to abstain from a third, Tippoo left Tragar, and, marching farther north, arrived at Trinomalee, a town adjoining an ancient temple in a lofty square enclosure. The Hindu inhabitants, collecting the arms of the vicinity, prepared to defend this shrine from the usual foul Mahomedan desecration. "But batteries erected across the streets of the town, and a position on the neighbouring hill, overlooking the square, induced an unconditional surrender, which was accompanied with circumstances of cruelty and outrage too horrible for description."<sup>2</sup> From Trinomalee the Sultan, making a circuit of the fertile plain,

<sup>1</sup> "Flint reached this important post in the nick of time; for the native commandant, who was one of Mohammed Ali's officers, had already agreed to surrender it to Hyder. Having put this functionary in ward, Flint rallied the native garrison upon his Sepoys, and on the approach of Hyder's troops on the next day was able to oppose a firm front to the enemy. He then set about the repair of the fortifications, built carriages for the guns and mounted them, manufactured powder, trained native gunners, and, with the assistance of only a single European, not only held the place in security for eighteen whole months, but made it a base of supply to the main army. So much must be said, in anticipation, of the work of this excellent officer, whose ability and resource at this critical time were of inestimable value" (Fortescue, vol. iii., pp. 433-434).

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 106.

reached Permacoil, which was held as a post of observation by a company and an officer. It was unexpectedly surrounded, and, retreat being impracticable, the garrison had to surrender. Tippoo then turned south-east and marched to the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, where he encamped his army. His time was now mainly occupied in negotiation with the Governor of that place through the medium of M. Leger, "Administrates Civil of France in India, who understood the Persian language, who became himself the envoy to Louis XVI., and who wrote the dispatches dictated by Tippoo relative to this embassy."<sup>1</sup> The Sultan asked of the King the aid of six thousand troops; he offered to pay for their transport, clothing, and maintenance, and with their assistance he engaged to destroy the English army and to ensure the possession of their settlements to the French. M. Leger carried the despatches to France, and also some presents for the King and Queen. The gifts could hardly be regarded as royal; for the King some gold gauze silk stuffs and an aigrette of bad diamonds; for the Queen three bottles of otto of roses, a box of perfumed powder-balls, and some scented matches. On arriving at Paris he presented the despatches and presents to Bertrand de Molleville, Minister of Marine, who informed Louis XVI. of Tippoo's proposal. Some of the Ministers seemed to favour the idea of sending at the cost of Tippoo a strong expedition to the coast of Coromandel or that of Malabar; but Louis XVI. said: "This resembles the affair of America, which I never think of without regret. At that time my youth was taken advantage of, and we are suffering for it now. The lesson is too severe to be forgotten."<sup>2</sup> When Bertrand offered the Sultan's gifts to the French monarch, Louis remarked: "What can I do with all this trumpery? It seems only fit to dress dolls! But you have little girls who may be pleased with such; give it to them." "But the diamonds, sire?" urged Bertrand. "Oh, they are mighty fine!" replied Louis, in the tone of mockery. "Perhaps you would like them placed among the jewels of the crown? But you may take them, too, and wear them in your hat, if you like."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. Hi., p. 107.<sup>2</sup> Grant, vol. i., p. 273.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

**The** Queen accepted a bottle of "Otto of Roses,"<sup>1</sup> and some of the fine linen which had been sent for the monarch.

Tippoo remained encamped on the red hills overlooking Pondicherry, but the expected aid from France did not come. Medows remained before Trichinopoly, awaiting the orders of the Governor-General. Owing to untoward accidents, the first intelligence he received of his coming to supersede him came, unfortunately, from the Madras Board. But Medows was too strong and noble a man to nourish a personal grievance. Cornwallis wrote to Dundas: "I hope you will give Medows full credit in England for his generous and noble conduct on the trying occasion of my superseding him in his command. I knew the excellence of his temper and of his heart, but he has really in this instance surpassed my expectations."<sup>2</sup> On December 21, 1790, Medows wrote to Lord Cornwallis: "I received yours of the 25th of November, with your Minute of Council, yesterday; as well as yours of the 15th of this month. To receive your orders, to understand them, and obey them, are the same thing. I shall march the army to Trinomalee as soon as possible, and I hope to set out this day sennight."<sup>3</sup> At the close of the letter he stated: "Be assured I will exert myself to execute your plans as if they were my own, and be delighted should they prove the best. . . . We want nothing but the success." On December 29 Medows informs Cornwallis that he intends in a day or two to start for Trinomalee, and "I wish to God you would meet us there and eclipse the brilliant action of Colonel Hartley!" The Sultan's troops in Malabar had taken up a strong position close to Calicut.<sup>4</sup> The forces, commanded by one of Tippoo's ablest Generals, "were variously estimated as from six thousand to nine thousand men, besides a large body of Mapillas."<sup>5</sup> On December 10 Hartley, with a field force of one regiment of Europeans and two battalions of

<sup>1</sup> Or by imperfect purists, "Attar of Roses" (Hobson-Jobson).

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Minute dated November 6, 1790.

<sup>4</sup> Calicut (Kolekkotu or Kallekkotai), town and port on the Malabar coast. Vasco da Gama anchored off the city on May 20, 1498.

<sup>5</sup> Mapillas (Malayal MSppilla), converted into Moplah.

sepoys, with their six guns, attacked the Sultan's troops and defeated them with complete success. It was a gallant feat of arms. Another incident which, in its effects on the future of the war, was of considerable importance also brightened the close of the year. A few days before Hartley's brilliant action, General Abercromby, the Governor of Bombay, arrived at Tellicherry with a substantial force, and on December 14 laid siege to Cannanore, which, after a short resistance, surrendered. He then proceeded to capture every place in the possession of Tippoo on the coast of Malabar.

On December 30 Medows marched from Trichinopoly, and arrived at Vellout (January 27, 1791), some eighteen miles west of Madras, where the principal army was being concentrated. The same day Cornwallis wrote to Dundas : " The calm and southerly winds which have so cruelly prevailed for these last live or six weeks in the Bay of Bengal have hitherto disappointed us of the greatest part of our cavalry and bullocks." On January 29 Lord Cornwallis assumed the command at Vellout, and on February 5 marched with his whole force towards Vellore, about eighty miles from Madras. It was one of the two chief towns of the Payanghat, or Lower Carnatic, well fortified, and its citadel stands near some rocky hills on a plain rich in fields of grain. It was taken by the British in 1761, and from that time it became an important post, as it is situated at the entrance of the Amboor Valley, which leads to one of the principal passes into Mysore. Lord Cornwallis let it be widely known that he intended to ascend into Mysore by the passes near Amboor, or those of Baramahal. On February 11 the British army arrived in the vicinity of Vellore, and the sick were placed in the fort. Three days later the force again moved. A battalion was sent up the valley to reinforce the garrison of the hill-fort at Amboor, and to create the impression that it was the vanguard of the army on its way to force the pass. At the break of day the force, divided into two distinct divisions, inclining of a sudden to the right, advanced north, and after several days' continued marching amongst rock and jungle the two divisions reached Chilloon on the 15th. Then, turning

slightly westward, they reached the comparatively easy pass of Muglee on the 17th, and the next day a brigade, followed by the artillery, ascended the Ghaut, and on the 19th the whole force, with the battering-train and sixty-seven elephants from Bengal, and provisions for forty-five days, was encamped on the high tableland of Mysore. Before ascending the Ghauts, a letter was received by Cornwallis containing some proposals of peace. He replied that none would be listened to while Tippoo had a man in the Carnatic. On the 19th Cornwallis wrote to Captain Kennaway: "On the day before yesterday, a letter was brought to me by a person of some consequence, attended by a camel Hircarrah from Tippoo himself, nearly to the same purport as that which was written to me by Seyd Saheb, and to which I shall give nearly a similar answer."<sup>1</sup>

Two days later he wrote to his brother, the Bishop of Lichfield, from Mysore. "Camp at Pallemave, seven miles to the westward of the Ghauts. I have brought all my heavy artillery and stores over the mountains without any accident, and to-morrow I shall begin my march for Bangalore, and I hope for Seringapatam."<sup>2</sup>

At daybreak the army began their march towards Bangalore, and their course was marked the first day by the dark trail of war: the houses in the villages shut, the people flying, and the granaries, with their rich stores of grain and forage, deserted. Houses were plundered and villages burnt by the marauders which accompany every army. Parties of horse were sent in every direction to check the spread of the devouring flames and to seize the plunderers. But it was in vain they strove that unhappy day to stop the burning and pillage; the whole country was in a blaze, and next day "nine of the principal leaders, being clearly convicted, were executed in the most conspicuous situations of as many bazaars, and the following General Order issued :

*"February 26, 1791."*<sup>3</sup>

".Lord Cornwallis has too high an opinion of the zeal, honour, and public spirit of the Officers of the Army, to

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

**doubt** for a moment that every individual among them felt **the** same concern and indignation that he did himself, at the shocking and disgraceful outrages that were committed on the last march. His Lordship now calls in the most serious manner for the active assistance of every Officer in the army, and particularly those commanding flanking parties, advance and rear guards, to put a stop to these scenes of horror: which, if they should be suffered to continue, must defeat all our hopes of success, and blast the British name with infamy."

The severe example and the General Order had a salutary effect. The march of the 27th was through a country in a high state of cultivation, and abounding with inhabitants, and they "did not suffer the smallest degree of molestation." The next ground of encampment was near Colar, whose citadel stood at the bottom of a range of hills of that name. It was surrendered to the 3rd Battalion of Bengal sepoys. Here the enemy's horse made their first appearance since the departure of the force from Vellore. At Ooscotah the garrison refused admittance, and did not surrender until the gate was shattered by a discharge of shot. "Abandoned by its inhabitants, the pettah " (town) "was given over to be plundered by our followers during a halt on the ensuing day. They were, however, prohibited from injuring a plantation of coffee trees, apple trees and vines, that was evidently in its infancy; indeed, the high state of cultivation of the country around promised and afforded a considerable supply of grain."<sup>1</sup>

During the march next day (March 4) large bodies of the enemy's horse were seen, and, while Cornwallis was encamping, Tippoo, with his whole army, passed about four miles away from the Governor-General's left flank. He had remained at Gingee, the great mountain fortress sixty miles from Pondicherry, in the hope that the troops from France would reach him, and with the idea that the British would not venture to leave the Carnatic while he and his mass of horsemen were in the flat country. When the intelligence

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 21.

arrived that his adversary was ascending the Ghauts, he rapidly took his army over them, and was soon on his way to Bangalore, the second most important city in his kingdom, where his harem was residing.

At dawn on March 5 Cornwallis drew up his left wing, strengthened by the 4th Brigade, on a range of heights fronting the direction in which the enemy had been seen on the previous day.<sup>1</sup> Two brigades, passing behind screening columns of half companies, proceeded on their march for a short distance, and then halted in order to render aid to the line facing the enemy if necessary. The remaining brigade, the pickets, and the cavalry awaited orders to advance with the baggage. Thick fogs concealed the foe, but, clearing up as the day advanced, the Sultan's whole force was discovered in motion towards Bangalore.<sup>2</sup> Orders were immediately issued for the British army to march, and the remaining brigade, the cavalry, heavy ordnance, and baggage, having passed beyond the screen, the line of infantry on the height broke into column, and followed slowly to the rear and to the left of the baggage. The two armies moved for some time parallel to each other, separated by a piece of low swampy ground; but when Tippoo perceived the disposition of the British army, he "inclined to his right"<sup>3</sup> as near as the nature of the ground would admit, and pushing forward his cavalry, in order to strike at our baggage in front, he opened a heavy cannonade about ten o'clock across the swamp. The distance, however, was so considerable, that not one shot was fired in return." The 1st and 3rd Brigades proceeded with the baggage, and unlimbering the 12-pounders when the enemy's horse appeared, held them in complete check. But while Lord Cornwallis, accom-

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 23. Wilks says: "On the ensuing morning the Sultan made a demonstration in force, which was distinctly penetrated by the English General. Lord Cornwallis drew up in order of battle on the heights fronting the enemy the portion of his army which was destined to form the rear of his principal column of march " (Wilks, vol. iii., p. 117).

Munro states: "The army was formed on some height to the left before daybreak, and halted till daylight to see where he was" (Munro, vol. i., p. 107).

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.

panied by General Medows and their respective staffs, were viewing from a rising ground the movement of the enemy, three of their troopers were seen to approach somewhat near; but little attention was paid to them, as it was supposed they were out to reconnoitre. Gradually, without being noticed, they became mixed with a body of our troops. Suddenly, to their astonishment and wrath, they saw the three desperadoes, mad with bhang, make a dash at full speed for Cornwallis. Two of them were cut down; the third was spared through the mercy of the General.<sup>1</sup> The army continued its march without any serious opposition, and "towards sunset the troops encamped within random shot of Bangalore after witnessing villages blazing to ashes in every direction by order of the Mysorean ruler."

On the morning of the 6th Lord Cornwallis moved his encampment to stronger ground on the north-west of the town. Meanwhile, a large number of the cavalry were employed in covering a reconnaissance made by the engineers to the north-east. Towards three in the afternoon all the cavalry under Colonel Floyd, supported by a brigade of infantry commanded by Major Gowdie, were sent to escort the engineers whilst they reconnoitred the town from an eminence on its north-east face. Between the height and our camp there was a broad and deep swamp which the artillery and infantry were ordered not to cross. When Floyd and his cavalry in separate columns reached the height, they saw on a rising ground in front a considerable body of the enemy's horse. They had been sent to check his approach. Tippoo had, during the forenoon, made a circuitous march, concealed by the nature of the ground, to the west of Bangalore, while his line of encamp-

<sup>1</sup> "Two were killed, and the third, who was secured and spared, appeared stupefied, and could give no intelligible account of the enterprise ; conjecture was divided between assigning to them the character of ferocious drunkards or hired assassins. The fact, as related in the Mysorean army, appears to be that on the preceding evening one of them had upbraided the other two with cowardice in the business of the day ; after some discussion, they retorted that on the next they would go where he durst not follow; it was agreed that their valour should be put to this issue ; each prepared himself with an intoxicating dose of bhang, and the quarrel ended in the frantic attempt which has been noticed" (Wilks, vol. iii., pp. n8, 119).

ment was marked out to the south-west. A large part of his army had already reached this new camping ground when news reached the Sultan of the advance of the British cavalry in a direction likely to intersect the column of march. He sent the part of his cavalry which were not foraging to check their approach, and this was the body of horse which the British commander saw. Floyd had strict orders not to attack the enemy, but he moved on his corps with the 19th Dragoons, supported on the right by a native cavalry regiment, and followed by the remainder of the cavalry brigade in columns of regiments. The infantry, according to instruction, had been left at the low ground, a continuation of the swampy hollow. As the British cavalry advanced at two-third speed the Mysorean horse retreated, and in the chase of them Floyd discovered the rear of the enemy's infantry and guns, with large masses of baggage on elephants and camels. Contrary to the orders he had received, Floyd ordered his regiment on the right to push forward, whilst he with the other corps advanced in the same order and at the same speed. The enemy, panic-struck at the bold attack, fled in every direction, and the guns, deserted by their infantry, were soon passed. The rocky heights and deep ravines which intersected the country impeded the pursuers, and gave the fugitives time to rally and to impose on their pursuers a bold front. They had discovered that the cavalry were not supported by infantry. Their own infantry, collecting on several heights, opened a heavy discharge of musketry and rockets. Colonel Floyd, at the head of the 19th, was advancing to dislodge a large body of the enemy from one of these heights when he was struck by a bullet, which passed through both cheeks.<sup>1</sup> He fell as if struck by a twenty-four pound ball. The enemy from the height plied their fire fast. The second in command was on the extreme left, and the cavalry, having no one to order

<sup>1</sup> Wilks states : "A musket-ball entered his cheek and passed through both jaws ; he fell as if struck by a cannon-shot " (Wilks, vol. iii., p. 122). Mackenzie writes: "Colonel Floyd, by this time shot in the head, had fallen from his horse as suddenly as if struck with a twenty-four pound ball " (*A Sketch of the War with Tippoo Sultan*, vol. ii., p. 20).

them, put about. In an instant the retreat was general. Floyd, supposed to be killed, was left on the field. However, "Corporal Murray, with Buchan, a dragoon, observed the situation of their colonel, and in defiance of danger dismounted, examined the wound, and finding it was not mortal, the former hastened to report, whilst the latter remained to protect his leader on the spot."<sup>1</sup> When Murray overtook his regiment, a troop was instantly sent to bring off the Colonel. Floyd was remounted by the dragoons, and he rejoined the fleeing cavalry. "At this moment Brigade Major Dallas, who had been with the regiment now left unsupported, perceiving what occurred, came up from the rear to represent the necessity of halting; this was accordingly ordered by Colonel Floyd, who wheeled the 19th towards the enemy; which movement, together with the efforts of the skirmishers of the columns of regiments, checked the enemy for an instant, but the disorder had become too general to be easily retrieved; the fugitives of the enemy's infantry and rocket men rallied on the different heights; the works of the fort, and the recovered guns, opened a cross fire, the English cavalry retreated precipitately from eminence to eminence across ravines, and the confusion was extreme; perceiving this the brigade of infantry, left under Major Gowdie at the swamp, advanced with its guns to a position on an eminence, which commanded the only access for retreat or pursuit, and enabled the cavalry to rally in its rear, when Gowdie opened a fire which soon cleared the field."<sup>2</sup> The cavalry now re-formed, and, followed by the infantry and guns, returned after it was dark in good order to camp. Ten of the enemy's guns were brought in as trophies. Our casualties in men were, according to Wilks, "not numerous, amounting to only seventy-one, but two hundred and seventy-one horses in the opening of a campaign was a loss the more serious in the small body attached to the English army, because it was irretrievable."<sup>8</sup>

At four o'clock on the morning of March 7, 1791, a detach-

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., pp. 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 120-121.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

ment consisting of the 36th Regiment and Captain Scott's battalion of Bengal sepoys (with four iron 18-pounders and two iron 12-pounders) received orders to march down from the camp and attack a gateway on the north face. It was of considerable strength. The infantry were under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Cockerell, of the Bengal Army, the artillery under Lieutenant-Colonel Moorehouse, of the Madras Artillery. When the detachment arrived within 400 yards of the town they had to halt for the chief engineer, who was to point out the gate to be attacked. Dawn had begun to break, and for half an hour they remained in suspense, fearing that they would be discovered. On his arrival they advanced under cover of some rising ground to within 100 yards of the enemy's works. The heavy guns were unlimbered and opened fire, the enemy returning a smart discharge of musketry and rockets. The advance continued. When within thirty yards of the gate, the flank companies of the 36th Regiment stormed a redoubt which covered it, drove the enemy from the works, and were following them into the town, when they were stopped by a strong inner gate. It was situated at the end of a narrow, winding road, enclosed on each side by a high wall and a closely-set hedge of prickly pears,<sup>1</sup> and covered with two strong bastions. The field-pieces opened fire upon the gate, but without effect, as a barricade of stones and earth had been thrown up behind it. The 18-pounders were brought up and turned against the gate, but the stone barricade slowly crumbled. An effective fire from a bastion and from the turrets and roofs of houses was poured on the column of troops in the narrow road. Many fell dead or dying. Fourteen out of twenty artillerymen were among the number. Colonel Moorehouse, their gallant commander, received two bullets, but went on cheering his men, and then he was struck by two more in the chest, and half an hour afterwards the gallant Moorehouse expired. "He had risen from the ranks," says Wilks, "but nature herself had made him a gentleman; uneducated, he

<sup>1</sup> Munro says : " It was surrounded by a wide dry ditch twenty feet deep, and an almost impenetrable hedge fifty yards broad of thorns and bamboos."

had made himself a man of science: a career of uninterrupted distinction had commanded general respect, and his amiable character universal attachment."<sup>1</sup>

Medows, who, when any fighting was to be done, was always on hand, on hearing of the death of Moorehouse, proceeded with haste to join the detachment. As the guns were having little effect on the strongly-barred gate, the pioneers pressing forward demolished part of the mud wall within the ditch. Over it rushed the flank companies of the 36th Regiment, followed by the rest of that corps and the Bengal Regiments. A hole made in the gate by a round shot was discovered. One sturdy grenadier of his regiment lifted up Lieutenant Aire, short and slender in frame, and he pushed his way through it. Medows, whose animal spirits were unconquerable, his gaiety and humour unfailing, called out, "Well done! Now, Whiskers, try if you can follow and support the little gentleman."<sup>2</sup> The grenadiers burst in, and ladders being brought and raised, the remaining troops pressed after them, and the garrison driven into the fort. Tippoo, realising the importance of the town, was greatly affected by the loss. In the afternoon he made a powerful effort for its recovery. To distract the attention of the English he sent his army to cannonade their right, while 4,000 of his chosen infantry, passing along the covered way of the fort, entered simultaneously several streets of the town, there being no wall nor ditch on that side. Cornwallis had a suspicion that Tippoo's approach was a feint. He struck his encampment, and, wheeling to the right, he formed his line with its front to the enemy, and at the same time he reinforced the town by the 76th Regiment, which had been recalled to camp, and two Bengal battalions. As if confident of success, the Mysorean infantry advanced on the 36th and 76th Regiments. They were received at the point of the bayonet. "The struggle was obstinate and bloody. As if fired at being driven from their homes by strangers, they yielded to superior discipline with nuch unwillingness. Mortified that their foes should triumph

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>

Grant, vol. i., p. 285.

**around** their altars and zenanas, they fought with uncommon resolution; and at length, although defeated and pursued with considerable slaughter, they retreated reluctantly, and disputed every wall, range of houses, or other building that afforded the least prospect of shelter. The loss fell heavy on the 76th Regiment. But although this was their first trial in arms, they behaved with a firmness that would stamp credit on the most veteran troops. The Mysoreans, after losing from three to four hundred men, no longer able to contend with such successful opponents, abandoned their intentions, and returned to their encampment."<sup>1</sup>

The town taken, Lord Cornwallis determined to begin at once the siege of the fort. It was oval, with round towers at intervals, five cavaliers, a faussebraye, a ditch and covered way, but the glacis was imperfect. It had two gateways—the Delhi, north-east of the fort, opposite the town, overbuilt with traverses; the Mysore, south-west.<sup>2</sup> The Governor-General determined to commence the siege from the north-east, where he was encamped, and the

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., pp. 32-33.

<sup>2</sup> General Order, March 26, 1791 : "Lord Cornwallis having this morning received from the 36th regiment the colours, that were so gallantly taken by that corps, at the time that it contributed to render abortive an attempt which was made by a large body of the enemy, to retake the pettah on the 7th instant, he gladly embraces this opportunity of declaring that the behaviour of the officers and soldiers of that regiment, during the whole of that day, must ever reflect great honour upon their courage and discipline, and justly entitles them to his highest approbation. He likewise desires that his best thanks may be presented to the 16th Bengal battalion for the zeal and spirit which was manifested by that corps in the assault of the pettah ; and to the 76th regiment, and third Bengal battalion, and the 1st battalion of Bengal volunteers for the firmness and gallantry which they displayed in repulsing the attack which the enemy afterwards made upon it ; and his Lordship requests that Lieutenant-Colonel Cockerell will accept of his warmest acknowledgments for the vigour and judgment with which he so successfully conducted the assault of the pettah, and for the military ability with which he occupied the different posts, and maintained possession of them during the day, against the very extraordinary powerful efforts of the enemy to dislodge them—Ensign Manoury, of the 52nd regiment, is to do duty as an assistant engineer in Bangalore until further orders. Lord Cornwallis orders the following sums to be paid to the sergeant and twelve of the advanced party, on the assault of the 21st instant : the sergeant 20 pagodas ; corporals 5 pagodas ; and privates three pagodas each ; if any of the men who were killed in the assault have left families, they are to receive double."

attack against the castle was rapidly pushed forward. The first parallel was formed by cutting down a part of the town wall, and the first battery for ten 18-pounders was commenced near the east end of the town on the evening of the 9th, and on the 12th opened fire. The same day two enfilading batteries opened. The fire of the first battery had little effect, as it was situated eleven hundred yards from the fortress, but the enfilading batteries, being within eight hundred yards, did considerable damage to the defences. Fresh parallels were constructed and fresh batteries were thrown up nearer and nearer to the fort, but the operations were conducted under the greatest difficulties. The besiegers were outnumbered by thousands, and the garrison was regularly relieved by fresh troops. They were "a besieging army not only not undisturbed by field operations, but incessantly threatened by the whole of the enemy's force. No day or night elapsed without some new project for frustrating the operations of the siege; and during its continuance, the whole of the besieging army was accoutred, and the cavalry saddled, every night from sunset to sunrise."<sup>1</sup> As these new projects became every day more threatening and more dangerous, Cornwallis determined on the 21st to storm without further delay.

As night approached, preparations were made for the assault. A sergeant and twelve others, supported by two officers with thirty chosen men, composed the forlorn hope. The grenadiers of the European regiments<sup>2</sup> and their light infantry followed, and in the rear of the Europeans two Bengal battalions with instructions to scour to the right and left as soon as the storm began. "Pioneers carrying ladders were judiciously interspersed with the troops; the appearance of General Medows amidst the ranks added vigour to discipline and valour," says the historian of the campaign.

During the day, and even after sunset, the great batteries kept up an unremitting fire on the fortifications, and the

<sup>1</sup> "Wilks, vol. iii., p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> 36th, 52nd, 71st, 72nd, 74th, 76th, and 4th Madras Regiment (102nd) (Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 33).

effect was visible in more than one wide breach. The troops selected for the assault moved forward under a heavy cannonade to their respective stations. The moon, at times obscured by a passing cloud, shed a clear light upon the battered works. At eleven o'clock the appointed signal was whispered along the silent ranks, and the men moved briskly forward from the trenches to the assault. The wide ditch which went round the town was soon reached. It was not fordable at that point. A narrow causeway a hundred yards in length was the only means of communication between the trenches and the point of attack, a wide breach in the first curtain to the eastward of the Delhi gate. The garrison had cut a broad and deep ditch across it, leaving a wall about two feet thick entire on the right hand. Making their way in single file on the top of the wall, the storming party crossed the ditch and rushed to the breach. "To the left the *faussebraye*, about twenty feet in height, and but little damaged, as it was covered by the *glacis*, was escaladed in an instant; but the principal part of the troops, in defiance of all obstructions, advanced straight forward, and surmounted every obstacle."<sup>1</sup> They joined the storming party as the ladders were being placed, and whilst the forlorn hope mounted them, the leading companies kept a constant fire on the parapet. The *faussebraye* was escaladed before the garrison took the alarm. The Mysorean drums beat to arms in their camp. "In an instant," writes one who was present, "blue lights and fire-balls thrown in every direction rendered all objects around the fort clear as at noon day; a blaze of musquetry, which added strength to this magnificent illumination, furnished it also with abundance of victims; a general discharge of rockets contributed to the awful grandeur of an exhibition in itself truly tremendous; and one universal roar of cannon all over the fort and pettah at once struck the spectator with consternation and horror."<sup>2</sup>

The Killedar (or commander) of the fort, gathering a handful of the garrison, rushed sword in hand to the breach.

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 39.

\* *Ibid.*, p. 40.

He found the assailants with ranks somewhat shattered standing on its summit. He and his chosen guard fell furiously on them. A bloody contest ensued. While the combat was raging, a few British soldiers reached the rampart on the left of the breach by a narrow circuitous way. They quietly halted until their numbers were increased, and then charged with the bayonet into the enemy fighting desperately at the breach. Attacked in front and flank the latter slowly gave way, and then came the struggle of man against man, of sword against bayonet. The queen of weapons wielded by the British soldier prevailed, and the storming parties secured a firm footing. The flank companies of the European corps, proceeding alternately to the right and left, cleared the ramparts, and on meeting over the Mysore gate, descended into the body of the fort. The Moslem soldiers of the garrison, spurred on by the fury of religious hate, fought desperately; no quarter was sought and none was given. After an hour's deadly conflict, the Grenadiers' March beating all over the works announced to their comrades without that the storming party was in complete possession of the great fortress of Bangalore. The loss of the garrison was great; among the slain was the intrepid Killedar Bahadur Khan, who fell covered with wounds at the breach while attempting to drive back the assailants. Though stricken in age, he was tall and robust, with a beard "which vied with silver in whiteness" descending to his middle, and he was altogether one of those majestic figures which bring to the mind the idea of a prophet. His body, covered by a cloth, lay on the rampart the whole of the next day. "It was visited by almost every man in the army, and all who saw it were struck by the nobleness of its appearance." Lord Cornwallis offered the body to the Sultan for interment, but the offer was declined "with many acknowledgements of the attention." The British, therefore, had the privilege of rendering full military honour to the remains as they were laid in a warrior grave according to the offices of Islam.

Lord Cornwallis, after the capture of the fort, had the

breaches repaired, and Bangalore put in a state of defence with a considerable garrison. Yet the safety of the fortress was not the vital question, but how he was to keep his army in existence. "The forage and grain found in the Petta," says Wilks, "had long been consumed, the neighbouring villages had all been effectually destroyed, and the resource of digging for the roots of grass within the limits of the piquets had been so exhausted that scarcely a fibre remained. The draught and carriage cattle were daily dying by hundreds at their piquets; and those intended for food scarcely furnished the unwholesome means of satisfying hunger. Grain, and every other necessary, including ammunition, were at the lowest ebb."<sup>1</sup> It was absolutely necessary to move his army to a country that had not been stripped by Tippoo of all its forage. On March 22 Lord Cornwallis moved from the exhausted and horribly offensive encampment which he had occupied during the siege to the west of the fort, "where it was just possible to affirm that some patches were not entirely destitute of grass." On the 28th he moved in a northern direction, in the hope of finding pastures new, and of effecting a junction with the force the Nizam was sending to serve with the British army. At the same time Tippoo's army moved, and the next morning the British advanced guard saw his army, and pushed on to overtake them; but Tippoo's tactics were guerilla war, and he continued his retreat, covered by his cavalry under his personal command. The bullocks attached to the British guns were so exhausted that they could no longer drag them; but the Europeans and sepoys seized the drag-ropes and brought them along with them frequently at a run. Continuing northwards, the British army reached a country rich in pasture, and the condition of the animals soon improved. "The forts of Deonhully and Little Balipoor surrendered to Cornwallis without opposition as he passed," says Mill, "and he was joined by the polygars, who paid dearly afterwards to the Sultan for their fault." According to Wilks, they certainly paid dearly for their fault. He states that the polygars of Little Bali-

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 130-131.

poor, " resuming the military spirit which they had opposed to Hyder's earlier career, undertook the occupation of the place; a premature and unfortunate determination for the actual garrison: the place was soon afterwards retaken by surprise and escalade, and the garrison, as rebels, suffered the horrible punishment of amputation of a leg and an arm each."<sup>1</sup>

After marching north for seventy miles, Cornwallis halted for five days, not knowing what to do. Tippoo was a past-master not only in the art of disseminating false intelligence, but also in preventing any true intelligence reaching the foe. Deceived by false information, Cornwallis abandoned the hope of forming a junction with the Nizam's force, and moved south in order to meet a convoy advancing from the pass of Amboor. After a day's march he received news which led him to resume his northern route, and on April 13, about eighty miles from Bangalore, he effected a junction with 10,000 cavalry sent by the Nizam to serve with the British arms. They were well mounted, but irregularly and badly armed, their weapons and accoutrements including " the Parthian bow and arrow, the iron club of Scythia, sabres of every age and nation, lances of every length and description, and matchlocks of every form, metallic helmets of every pattern, simple defences of the head, a steel bar descending diagonally as a protection to the face; defences of bars, scales or chain work descending behind or on the shoulders, cuirasses, suits of armour or detached pieces for the arm, complete coats of mail in chain work, shields, bucklers, and quilted jackets, sabre proof."<sup>2</sup> The arrival of the Nizam's large mounted force was keenly anticipated, as it was expected that they would relieve our slender force of cavalry of some of its light duties. But the hope was soon dispelled. The Mysore horse routed them whenever they found them, and at last they never stirred beyond the British pickets. Cornwallis with his motley reinforcement turned south-eastward to Venkitaghery, where he found awaiting his arrival a force of 450 Bengal cavalry, 700 European infantry, and nearly 4,000 sepoys.<sup>3</sup> Inhere

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 134 135.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii.. p. 58.

was a plentiful supply of provisions, " but of bullocks, which were of no less importance than men, we got a very small supply."<sup>1</sup> With this reinforcement Lord Cornwallis marched again for Bangalore, which he reached on April 28, 1791, Tippoo marching on his right about fifteen miles distant.

Cornwallis now determined to carry out the bold offensive project which he had formed of marching on Seringapatam before the monsoon burst, and of bringing the war to a speedy termination by capturing Tippoo's capital. The plan, it is stated by Wilks, was founded " on the critical situation of public affairs in Europe consequent on the portentous events of the French Revolution," which, " added to the powerful motives of local policy and public economy, produced in the mind of the Governor-General an anxiety to hasten the conclusion of the war, by attempting the siege of Seringapatam, at a period which, under other circumstances, might be deemed precipitate."<sup>1,2</sup> In fact, military policy was sacrificed to civil policy. The plan, however bold in conception, did not correspond to the facts, and was bound to prove abortive. Heavy monsoon clouds hung over Bangalore, and there was every reason to expect that the monsoon might burst at any moment and flood the country, seamed with rivulets and deep ravines. His army was lacking in every matter of detail which makes military existence possible. The whole plan was based on imperfect information and therefore doomed to failure.

On May 3 Cornwallis left Bangalore to carry out the project on which he had set his heart.<sup>3</sup> The direct route was

<sup>1</sup> Munro, vol. i., p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> " Our success at Bangalore has tended to establish, in the general opinion of the natives, the superiority of the British arms; and it has, in particular, made an impression on the minds of our allies, which I am persuaded will contribute to induce them to use vigorous exertions in prosecuting the war to an honourable conclusion. At present we can only look for the speedy accomplishment of that desirable object, by proceeding to attack the enemy's capital, which I clearly foresee will, from the near approach of the season of the periodical rains, and the danger of a scarcity of provisions and forage, for the large bodies of troops that are to be employed, be attended with so many difficulties, that upon any other occasion I should have thought it advisable to have deferred the attempt to the end of the ensuing monsoon. Having, however, been informed of the critical situation of political affairs

strongly occupied by Tippoo. A more northerly route was barred by three great fortresses which would have to be reduced by the way. The southerly route by Kankanelli, Sultanpet, and Malavilly was therefore chosen. But the track (for it was not a road), rugged and stony, went through a rather narrow jungle intersected by rivulets and ravines, and confined on both sides by a chain of hills. Cornwallis hoped to find food and forage during his march, but a bare stony valley covered with wood produced little grain, and Tippoo contrived to reduce to ashes not only the villages, but every vestige of straw and forage above ground in the direction of the English route. The bullocks, fed on a few grass roots and the leaves of the mango tree, fell down exhausted under their yokes, and were left to die by the roadside. The stores that could not be dragged by the troops had to be destroyed, and slow was the progress. The troops started before the light of dawn, and the rear-guard did not reach camp until after the sun had set. The tents afforded slight shelter from the monsoon storms, which burst at night accompanied by torrents of rain. Pressing forward in the face of all difficulties, the army took possession of Malavilly, a strong fort clear of the jungle, on May 10, and three days later arrived at Arikerā, about nine miles east of Seringapatam. Lord Cornwallis had heard that the ford here across the Caveri was passable for troops, and that Hyder had taken his army across it; and his intention was also to cross it and effect a junction with General Abercromby and the Bombay force, who were forty miles away with a considerable quantity of provisions and a battering train. Cornwallis found the ford at Arikerā was impassable, and he discovered, he tells us, " that Tippoo, with

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in Europe, and being sensible that the finances of the Company require the adoption of those measures that are most likely to bring the contest to an early decision, I have thought it my duty to hazard the undertaking; and having received the strongest assurances of exertions from the chiefs of the Nizam's cavalry that are now with me ; and the Marattas having also promised an hearty co-operation against the common enemy, I am encouraged to entertain sanguine hopes that all obstacles will give way to our efforts, and that the enterprise will succeed " (Earl Cornwallis to the Right Honourable W. W. Grenville, April 21, 1791).

his whole army, had encamped between us and Seringapatam, his right covered by the Caveri, and his left extended along the front of a high mountain with a deep swampy ravine, the passage of which was defended by batteries running along the whole of his front; and that, being encouraged by the advantages of this position, as well as those of the intermediate ground, which, by the river on one side and a steep ridge of hills on the other, was narrowed to a space nowhere between the two encampments exceeding a mile and a half, and within cannon shot of his line not above one mile in breadth, he had determined at a hazard of the event of a battle, to endeavour to prevent our nearer approach to his capital."<sup>1</sup> It was a very strong position, but it was necessary to attack it if Cornwallis were to deal the decisive blow which his own position demanded. A direct assault was impossible, and he was told that "it was practicable though difficult " to cross the ridge on his right. "I resolved upon that knowledge to attempt, by a night march, to turn the enemy's left flank, and, by gaining his rear before daylight, to cut off the retreat of the main body of his army from the island and fort of Seringapatam."<sup>2</sup> Orders were accordingly given with the utmost secrecy "that the 19th Dragoons, the three strongest of the native regiments of cavalry, His Majesty's six regiments, and twelve battalions of native infantry, with field-pieces only, should be in readiness to march at eleven o'clock at night."<sup>3</sup> The design was a bold one, but there was little prospect of its success. The night was dark, and the ten miles of country through which the troops had to march was full of rocks and ravines; there was no knowledge of the route to be taken and no guides could be procured. The army had suffered during the preceding week "by rains uncommonly frequent and heavy, and there was every sign of the coming Monsoon." Before the hour appointed for the troops to assemble "one of those heavy storms," says Wilks, "peculiar to the season, set in with more than its accustomed violence."<sup>4</sup> Owing to the ground of the British encampment being intersected by some ruined

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., pp. 91-95.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 147.

villages and enclosures and several deep ravines, much time was lost, says Cornwallis, before it was possible to form the troops in the order of march which was directed. When they began to move forward, "the cattle, scared by the lightning, and shivering under the torrents of rain, could scarcely be made to move. In the irregular" but incessant "succession of vivid light and impenetrable darkness, almost every corps lost its way, and was moving in every variety of direction. Lord Cornwallis himself, with the best guides, was found to have advanced between four and five miles, accompanied by no more than one company and one gun ; then he halted; and the staff officer who made the discovery, and was confident of being able to find the column, by retracing the marks of the gun wheels, with the aid of lightning, soon found the tracks completely obliterated by the deluge of rain, and narrowly escaped riding into the enemy's encampment. "<sup>1</sup>

As Lord Cornwallis states, all hopes were at an end of being able to execute his original plan of surprising the enemy and placing a force between him and his capital. But, says Cornwallis, "I determined to persevere in endeavouring to force Tippoo to hazard an action on ground which I hoped would be less advantageous to him than that which he had chosen ; with the expectation that a complete victory might not only relieve many of our temporary distresses, but tend to bring the war to a very speedy conclusion."<sup>2</sup> Cornwallis does not mention that there was no other ford below the fort of Seringapatam except one which led to the island, and was covered by the enemy's army in front and by batteries in the rear. "It became, therefore, necessary to dislodge Tippoo's army in order to reconnoitre it." No easy task. The Sultan had taken up a strong position with his right to the river and his left among a range of hills which ran nearly parallel to the Caveri about two miles from its bank. About two miles from the extremity of his left was the granite "summit of a rising ground" or hill which commanded it.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

" Mackenzie, vol. ii., p.96.

At seven the British were seen descending the heights on the eastward of the deep ravine which ran along the enemy's front at the distance of four or five miles from the left. The summit on the left was the important point, and Tippoo quickly realised that the British force were moving rapidly to occupy it. He sent an instant order to the commander of the left wing to occupy the granite block till he sent him from his main body a large corps of infantry and cavalry with eight guns. At the same time Tippoo changed the front of his army to the left, covering his left front with the steep hill of Carighaut, which had been on his rear, and his right flank with the ravine which ran along his former front. He also despatched some cavalry to hover on the right of the English and to impede their progress in every way.

Owing to the nature of the ground, two hours passed before the British column crossed the great winding ravine. The detached body of the enemy, who had reached and posted themselves on the summit of the hill, opened their guns first as the first English corps cleared the ravine, and Tippoo, with his main body in front of them, also opened his fire. "We suffered a good deal," says Munro, "while forming after passing the ravine." The British army, owing to the position occupied by the enemy, was formed into two unequal fronts at right angles to each other. "Nine battalions were formed opposite to the enemy's main body in a first line under the command of Major-General Medows and Lieut.-Colonel Stuart, four battalions in a second line under Lieut.-Colonel Harris, and five under Lieut.-Colonel Maxwell were destined for the attack of the enemy's corps on the summit of the hill upon our right."<sup>1</sup> The cavalry and the Nizam's horse were left out of the reach of the cannonade on the opposite side of the ravine. "Orders were given to Lieut.-Colonel Maxwell, after succeeding in his attack, to leave only a sufficient force to retain possession of the summit of the hill, and to advance immediately with the remainder of his corps, and endeavour to possess himself of the mountains which covered the left flank of the main army

<sup>1</sup> Earl Cornwallis to the Court of Directors, September 7, 1791.

of the enemy."<sup>1</sup> The order given, Maxwell's corps made an impetuous charge uphill so very rapidly that he overtook the infantry who were covering by musketry the retirement of their cannon " according to the uniform practice of the dynasty of Hyder, which never risked guns against the English, to perform their best service with grape."<sup>2</sup> The enemy were steadily shoved back, and the British captured three guns. Cornwallis, on observing Maxwell's success, moved forward with the main body of the army, and the action soon became general along the whole front. As the British troops advanced the enemy fell steadily back, covering the withdrawal of their guns. They took every advantage of the ground, full of rocks and ravines, which Tippoo had selected for a battle, and defended every favourable position vigorously.<sup>3</sup> When Maxwell's three corps began to turn their left, they fell back with a more rapid step in order to avoid being taken in the rear. The British cavalry, which had crossed the ravine, now made a gallant charge and almost destroyed a small body of infantry that made a very determined resistance, but they " were soon obliged," says Cornwallis, " to fall back from a more considerable body of infantry that had rallied and made a stand on a space of broken rocky ground, extremely disadvantageous for cavalry."<sup>4</sup>

At the moment of their retreat, and while the British first line was impeded by it, the Nizam's horse, which had followed Colonel Floyd across the ravine, threw themselves in an unruly mass into the front of the British left wing and prevented Maxwell's line of infantry from advancing. By this means, says Cornwallis, "an invaluable though short space of time was lost, which enabled the enemy to avail themselves of the vicinity of the batteries upon the island, and, by retreating to their protection in the utmost confusion,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 150-151.

<sup>3</sup> " They stood the fire of musketry, often till our troops were within a few yards of them ; they defended every post ; they rallied wherever the ground was favourable ; and, when at last driven from the field, they retreated without confusion " (Munro, vol. i., p. 118).

<sup>4</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 514.

to save their army from entire destruction."<sup>1</sup> As it was, Tippoo's army was not annihilated, but only retired, after a stubborn fight, into the island. "We gained nothing by the victory," Munro wrote to his father at the time, "but the liberty of looking at the island." Fatigued and exhausted, the British troops lay on their arms, nearly on the ground where the contest ended, and after the arrival of the tents from Arikera encamped from just beyond the reach of the enemy's cannon. The British loss during the day was 140 Europeans, 286 natives. The loss of the enemy was by their own account from 1,500 to 2,000.

After a halt of two days the British army set forth for the Caniambady ford, eight miles above Seringapatam, where Cornwallis hoped to cross the river and effect a junction with the Bombay force. To reach the ford, he had to make a detour of twenty miles, but the face of the country did not alter—uneven and hilly, intersected with a number of deep ravines. The road for the heavy guns had to be made by the pioneers, and his lordship states that he had to halt one day after the first march because the draught cattle had been completely exhausted in accomplishing it.<sup>2</sup> In the next paragraph, his lordship says: "Considerable detachments of troops were ordered to attend and assist the heavy guns on the second day's march; but the bullocks were so extremely reduced, that even with the aid of the soldiers at the drag-ropes their progress was so tedious that the body of the army was upwards of twelve hours in marching as many miles, and the rear-guard did not reach the encampment near the ford till nine o'clock in the evening of the 20th of May."<sup>3</sup> Wilks,

<sup>1</sup> Cornwallis states: "With very good intentions, but very injudicious." Wilks writes: "It is asserted by many officers in the Mysorean army that this impediment was designed." He adds: "The author has since proved the active and treacherous correspondence with the enemy in this campaign not only of Assud Ali, a person notoriously worthless, but of other officers of fairer fame in the same service whose names it might be injurious to the English interests in India to disclose at the present period" (Wilks, vol. ii., p. 153).

<sup>2</sup> Earl Cornwallis to the Court of Directors (Camp near Bangalore, September 7, 1791).

<sup>3</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 515.

however, writes that " in these two marches all the battering **train and** almost every public cart in the army were dragged by the troops, and the reflection was not pleasant of exhibiting to the enemy, during two tedious successive marches, with an intermediate resting day, evidence so conclusive of the utter failure of all the equipments of the English army."<sup>1</sup> The Governor-General is singularly infelicitous in his statement that " it was not, however, till after I had received the reports from the different departments on the following morning, of the general wretched conditions of the public cattle of the army, that I saw the impossibility of moving the heavy guns and stores from the spot where they then were, and that it became necessary for me to decide on relinquishing entirely the prosecution of the plan for the campaign, in which General Abercromby has been instructed to co-operate."<sup>2</sup> Mill comments on it as follows : " Such, in the mind of Lord Cornwallis, was the state of the faculties on which foresight depends, that, after he had brought the army to the extreme point of its line of operations, on the day after his arrival at Caniambaddy, when the official reports of the morning were presented to him, and not before, did he discover that all this misery, all this loss of lives, and all this enormous expense, were to no purpose; that he could not attempt a single operation, that he must destroy the whole of the battering train and heavy equipments, and lose no time in endeavouring, by retreat, to save, if it yet were possible, the army from destruction."<sup>1,3</sup>

The necessary orders were sent at once to Abercromby. He was directed, " after descending the Ghaut with the troops under his command, to put them into cantonments on the coast of Malabar during the rains, and until the proper season should return for recommencing our operations."<sup>4</sup> It was a grievous blow to the Bombay General and his troops. They had with infinite labour constructed roads through the dense forests which clothe the western Ghauts, and, accompanied by

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> Mill, vol. v., pp. 273-274.

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 515.

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Ross, vol. ii., p. 515.

a battering train and a large supply of provisions and stores, had marched fifty miles over the immense barrier of mountains which separate the Mysore plateau from the coast of Malabar. They had arrived within easy distance of their goal, and they now found that their hardy toils were in vain. Worn down by toil and sickness, they were ordered to return through the malarial jungle to the coast of Malabar exposed to the drenching monsoon storms. The orders were carried into immediate execution. Four of the heavy guns imperfectly destroyed were left at Periapatam. Burying the remainder of their battering train at the summit of the pass, Abercromby's force reached the coast.

Lord Cornwallis remained some days in his position near the ford in order to cover Abercromby's march to the Ghauts. In the meantime he gave orders to burst the heavy guns, to bury and destroy the military stores that could not be carried, and to issue to the troops the remaining public store of rice as the only means of securing it for their subsistence. On May 26 Cornwallis began his retreat on Bangalore. "The ground at Caniambaddy, where the army had encamped but six days, was covered, in a circuit of several miles, with the carcasses of cattle and horses ; and the last of the gun-carriages, carts, and stores of the battering train, left in flames, was a melancholy spectacle, which the troops passed as they quitted this deadly camp."<sup>1</sup>

The army had not completed the first day's short but dreary and tedious march of six miles, when a party of horse approached on the left flank. At first sight it seemed that they were a party of Tippoo's horse, intent on harassing the retreating foe. "Prompt dispositions to frustrate the attack were ordered by Colonel Stuart, who commanded in the rear: and they were not completed, when one of his staff, employed on the left flank in giving directions regarding the skirmishers, was addressed in a loud voice by one of the horsemen, announcing that he was a Mahratta, and begging that the firing might cease."<sup>2</sup> He belonged to a troop of Marathas that had escorted the Paymaster of the Bombay

<sup>1</sup> Dirom's Narrative, pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 156.

troops accompanying one of the Maratha armies. He had daringly ridden forward to bring them the glad tidings that two Maratha armies were within a march of them, and a few hours later Hurry Punt and Purseram Bhow, the two Maratha commanders, rode into camp. Hurry Punt, a Brahman about sixty years of age, was an able politician who took a prominent part in the senate of the Poona state, but he was not an able military commander. " His figure is venerable," says an historian who took part in the campaign, " of middle stature, and not corpulent; he is remarkably fair, his eyes grey, and his countenance of Roman form, full of thought and character." The same writer gives us a sketch of Purseram Bhow, aged about forty. " He is an active man, of small stature, rather dark in his complexion, with black eyes, and an open animated countenance, in which, in his mien, he seemed desirous to show his character of an intrepid warrior/" The main army, commanded by Hurry Punt, consisted of twenty thousand horse and foot and two battalions of Bombay sepoy commanded by Captain Little; the force commanded by Purseram Bhow consisted of twelve thousand horse. The two Maratha armies had marched near three hundred miles towards an army of allies, and no communication or intimation of their approach had reached the British. Wilks states that Lord Cornwallis received " new evidence of the unparalleled excellence of the enemy's light troops; in finding that, not only while distant, every customary means had been employed of transmitting to him distinct intelligence of every successive step in the approach of the Mahratta army, but that in their nearer approach with an overwhelming and certainly not an inactive cavalry, they were prevented, by comparatively a few straggling horsemen, from conveying even the rumour of their approach until actually in sight."<sup>1</sup> The statement is incredible that frequent messages were sent, and that they were prevented by a body of horsemen from conveying even a rumour of the approach of the Maratha armies. The absence of any rumour reaching the British is more likely to be due to

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 157.

the Marathas **not** caring to reveal their movements nor to hasten their steps to join the English until they learnt that either the British or Tippoo were victorious. When they heard that Tippoo had been defeated in sight of the walls of his capital, they hastened their tardy advance. Lord Cornwallis, in a letter to his brother dated Camp near Ousmore, August 20, 1791, states that the victory "was attended with many important consequences, and in particular it brought forward two large Maratta armies in haste to join me, which would otherwise have probably remained many months at a great distance from the scene of action, and employed themselves solely in collecting the resources of the country they had overrun."<sup>1</sup> Relieved from his pressing anxiety with regard to a sufficient supply of food, Cornwallis did not continue his march, but on May 27 he moved his force two miles, and occupied his old encampment opposite to Seringapatam. Tippoo, on finding that the British had been joined by the Marathas, and that their army was in full view of his capital, sent out a flag of truce, accompanied by a numerous retinue of servants bringing trays of fruit, according to an ancient Oriental custom.

A letter from the Sultan's secretary to Lord Cornwallis's Persian interpreter, which was delivered with the fruit, signified that he had his royal master's permission to send it for the use of Lord Cornwallis. Tippoo had no intention of running the risk of a present offered from the Sultan of Mysore directly to his lordship being refused, and he had good reason for fearing that it would be returned on the substantial ground that the English would not enter into any negotiations apart from their allies. And this proved to be the case. Major Dirom writes : "The flag and the fruit were returned next morning (a sight which gave pleasure to the army), with an answer, acquainting Tippoo that the English nation would agree to no peace which did not include their allies; and if he meant to negotiate he must, in the first instance, deliver up all the British subjects who were prisoners in his dominions, and consent that a truce should

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 104.

**take place until** his proposals could be considered, and the **terms** adjusted. The fruit was returned in **the** same manner as it had been sent; not as an insult, but merely to show **that** his lordship declined even the appearance of friendly intercourse with the Sultan."<sup>1</sup>

According to Colonel Wilks, with the present of fruit a camel was sent to replace that of a courier which had died at Seringapatam, and he remarks: " It will be difficult for the reader to comprehend the intense delight with which on the ensuing morning they (the whole army) beheld the loads of fruit untouched, and the camel unaccepted, returning to Seringapatam."<sup>2</sup>

Mill comments on this episode. He considers that " the arrival of these presents indicated a good understanding; which, if it existed, might be supposed to exist on grounds deemed more favourable to the nation than war."<sup>3</sup> The arrival of the fruit did not indicate any good understanding; Tippoo had on more than one occasion professed his desire to enter into negotiations, and Lord Cornwallis always insisted on receiving a written proposition from him. On May 17, two days after the action before Seringapatam, Cornwallis offered the release of the wounded prisoners, which offer Tippoo accepted with thanks, and renewed the proposal of negotiation. Cornwallis wrote to " Tippoo Suldaun " on May 19 as follows:<sup>4</sup> "The desire that you express in the letter to enter into a negotiation for terminating the differences between the two Governments, was highly satisfactory to me; but at the same time I was equally disappointed at your passing over unnoticed the declarations

<sup>1</sup> " The Persian translator to Syed Ahmed Ali: ' I have received your letter and have understood its contents. . . . As Tippoo Suldaun has been pleased to direct you to send a present of fruits through me to Lord Cornwallis, I have mentioned it to his Lordship, who has desired me to reply to your letter that, in the present situation of public affairs, his Lordship cannot with propriety receive a present, but that, whenever peace shall be re-established between the two Governments, he will be happy, by every means in his power, to encourage and increase a friendly intercourse' . . ." (Dirom, p. 6).

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Mill, vol. v., p. 278.

<sup>4</sup> Earl Cornwallis to Tippoo Suldaun, May 19, 1791 (Ross, vol. ii., p. 93).

that I have repeatedly made to you, that I do not think myself at liberty to treat for the restoration of peace, except in concert with Nizam Ali Khan and the Peishwa, who are engaged in a treaty of alliance and confederacy with the Company."\* His lordship proceeds to recommend to Tippoo that after reflecting upon the causes of the war, the great expense it has occasioned to the Company and the allies, and the grounds upon which they may expect to obtain a compensation, he should "transmit in writing to me such propositions, as in your opinion ought to satisfy the different members of the confederacy; and if they should appear in the same light to me, and you should in addition to them agree to give me sufficient security that you will not, before the conclusion of the treaty, depart from them, I shall not only recommend that a Congress of Deputies from all parties concerned shall be immediately assembled at some convenient place to endeavour to adjust the terms of a general peace, but I will also consent, if you should wish it, to a cessation of arms for a limited time and under certain conditions, which may be easily arranged, in order to facilitate the conduct of the negotiations."<sup>2</sup> On the 24th Tippoo answered this letter. He took no notice of a cessation of arms, but again renewed the proposal, sending to him a confidential envoy. Lord Cornwallis, in his reply, abandoned the point of Tippoo's transmitting "in writing" his propositions, and he again suggested that a Congress of Deputies from all parties concerned should meet at Bangalore. Tippoo sent no answer to this letter. His policy was to enter into separate negotiations with the English, the Marathas, and the Nizam, and so be able not to acknowledge the existence of a confederacy. He had already, by means of emissaries, done his best to prevent the Marathas from joining Cornwallis. When he knew that his attempt had failed, the day after the Marathas joined the English he attempted to open a separate communication with the latter by sending a flag of truce accompanied with a letter and a present of fruit. Mill is very wroth at the delight of

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

**the army** on seeing the fruit return unaccepted, for they had no will for peace with Tippoo. He attributes it to the fact "that the English in India, at that time, had been worked up into a mixture of fury and rage against Tippoo, more resembling the passion of savages against their enemy, in fact, more resembling his passion towards them, than the feelings with which a civilised nation regards the worst of its foes."<sup>1</sup>

The English had the greatest reason for their aversion to Tippoo. His brutal treatment of his prisoners is constantly mentioned in the despatches, records, and letters of the time. It is enough to give one foul act which would account for any man "being worked up into a mixture of fury and rage against Tippoo." He had some European lads who were his prisoners converted into eunuchs and educated as singers and dancers, their performance and dress being precisely like that of the professional Eastern dancing-girl. When war began, secret orders were sent to murder these youths, and they were killed "by the well-understood practice of a sudden and violent twist to dislocate the vertebrae of the neck."<sup>2</sup>

On May 28 the British army left the vicinity of Seringapatam, and joined the Marathas at Milgota, where, nineteen years before, the latter had so completely routed Hyder's army and captured his cannon. Lord Cornwallis and General Medovvs had the next day a conference with the two Maratha chiefs in tents pitched midway between the Maratha and the British camps. The chiefs showed great eagerness to hear the news, and to know the reason why the great guns were burst. "On being told of the victory of the 15th May and of the subsequent necessity of destroying the battering train, from want of provisions, and not knowing of their approach, they partook in the joy and grief we had experienced on those events; and seeing that we considered the late defeat of Tippoo as a matter of course, and that we looked forward with confidence to the capture of the capital, they expressed themselves to the following

<sup>1</sup> Mill, vol. v., p. 27S.

<sup>2</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., p. 141.

effect: ' We have brought plenty—do you get more guns—we will feed you, and you shall fight.' "<sup>1</sup>

On June 6 the allied armies began their march towards Bangalore, first proceeding in a northward direction through a bare stony country, and then, striking eastward, they crossed on June 19 the Maddoon, a wide and beautiful stream, and encamped in a fertile land. In sight of the camp was the fort of Hooliadroog, standing on the summit of a high circular rock, surrounded at its base by an extensive pettah or town. The 6th Brigade was sent to summon it. " It was of great strength, but the appearance of so powerful an army within three miles induced the killedar to surrender, on a promise of security for private property and personal protection to the multitude that it sheltered."<sup>a</sup> Some thousand head of cattle and sheep were collected from the country round the camp, and a large quantity of grain found in the fort and pettah afforded a most seasonable aid to the subsistence of the army. On the 22nd the allied armies left Hooliadroog, and, first marching up the valley to the north, and then making their way through the hills to the eastward, they encamped on June 25 before the hill-fort of Ootradroog. The Chief Engineer, on being sent to reconnoitre and summon the commander, received the following simple but firm answer: " He declared by a messenger that he could not for a moment think of a surrender; that as a confidential servant, entrusted with a stronghold, he could not, after eating the salt of Tippoo Sultan for upwards of twenty years, deliver it up until his master would show the example at Seringapatam; that as the children of an indulgent parent, the people were determined to hazard their all in his support, even their lives, or what was still more their near and dear."<sup>3</sup> As the army was unfit to undertake the siege of a strong fortress, the loyal killedar was left in quiet possession of his post.

On leaving Ootradroog the armies, passing eastward through a narrow defile, "entered a rich, beautiful, and

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. Q.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie, pp. 113-1x4.

varied country, where Savendroog, the prominent feature of the landscape, towered like an elephant amidst the lesser hills which encircle this romantic district"<sup>1</sup> On June 28 the armies encamped at a large town in the centre of the valley, six miles from the fort, to whose shelter the inhabitants, with their cattle and effects, had retired. After a close reconnoitre of the fort by the Chief Engineer and his staff, it was decided that to invest and blockade Savendroog closely was impossible, and, as the advantage to be gained by any attempt to capture it in the present distressed state of the army would not compensate for the loss and delay, Lord Cornwallis continued his march on July 2, and nine days later he encamped at a short distance to the westward of Bangalore.

Thus closed a disastrous campaign. Lord Cornwallis somewhat rashly plunged into it because he wished to bring the war to a close. He feared that the policy of the war would be condemned at home, and he would receive peremptory orders to conclude a peace. Great was his joy, therefore, when, on approaching Bangalore, he learnt that accounts had arrived from England of the vote of Parliament approving of the war, of his determination to continue it, and of the treaties he had made with the Nizam and the Marathas. On December 21, 1790, Mr. Hippisley<sup>2</sup> requested in the House of Commons that part of His Majesty's speech which related to India might be read—viz. : "You will have observed, with concern, the interruption which has taken place in the tranquillity of our Indian possessions, in consequence of the unprovoked attack on an ally of the British nation. The respectable state, however, of the forces under the direction of the government there, and the confidence in the British name, which the system prescribed by parliament has established among the native powers in India, afford the most favourable prospect of bringing the contest to a speedy and successful conclusion."<sup>3</sup> Hippisley then begged to state

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Mill gives the wrong date, 22nd, and spells the name "Hippesley."

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary History*, vol. xxviii., p. 1179.

the fact to which he presumed this part of His Majesty's speech applied. He then proceeded to state, not the fact, but a manipulation of the fact, intended to show that the Raja of Travancore was the aggressor by his acquisition of the forts of Cranganore and Ayacotta. He stated : " His doubts were not less of the policy than of the justice of the war." " We were to rely much on the Mahrattas, it was said, and on the Nizam. Could we so soon forget the first feature of the Mahratta character? Mahratta faith was as proverbial in India, as the *Punica fides* in the days of ancient Rome. Had we forgotten our dependence on the Mahrattas in 1767, when they marched to attack the frontier of Hyder, and co-operate with us and with the Nizam, with a view to extirpate the tyrant of Mysore ? What was the consequence ? They reached Hyder's frontier, from whence he sent them back, with a few concessions, in peace to their own country. And how<sup>2</sup> did the Nizam conduct himself? He concluded a treaty of perpetual friendship with us, offensive and defensive. He joined our army under General J. Smith, and marched with us against Hyder Ally. When he came in view of our enemy, he deserted us, and joined the standard of Hyder : he continued for some time actively fighting against us, and Hyder, in the sequel, dictated a disgraceful peace at the gates of our capital."<sup>1</sup> Hippisley concluded with moving that all the correspondence between the Raja of Travancore and the Madras and Bengal Governments on the subject of the purchase of the fort of Cranganore, and all the correspondence between Tippoo Sultan and the said Governments on the said subjects, be produced. Francis, seconding the motion, said that in the present situation of India some information was most certainly wanted of what was either done or intended. What was the system England should pursue in the management of dominions in India? " In the first place, the general principle, that peace is preferable to war, more particularly held good in this instance. The preservation of peace was indeed the essential and fundamental principle of our government in India. \* Secondly, the security of our possessions in Bengal

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1181-1182.

was to be attended to, preferably to that of our other dominions. And thirdly, satisfied with what we possess, we ought not to aim at any extension of territory, since every such attempt must infallibly prove hurtful in its consequences."<sup>1</sup> There were two subjects of special interest. First, the state of the army and finances; and secondly, the regulation of our alliances abroad. It was the policy of the English to avoid alliances with the native powers of India. Such alliances, he considered, were in every instance dangerous. "The policy of this country, with regard to the native states, was to preserve between them the balance of power." The powers of India he divided into three: first of all the English; secondly the Mahomedan, or the remnant of the Mogul Empire; and, thirdly, the Hindu Government. Between the Nizam and Tippoo there subsisted a mutual jealousy which it was the interest of this country to encourage in order to keep them opposed to one another. The Hindu Government included the Marathas, whom, of all of them, we had most to dread. "And on this account it would be impossible to extirpate Tippoo, even if we had it in our power, which he very much doubted, as he served to maintain the balance against this last power." Dundas defended the legality of the purchase of the forts from the Dutch. The claim of Tippoo Sultan to the feudal sovereignty of those forts was recent, and founded on the province to which they belonged, having been overrun and conquered by the Mysorean power about twenty years before. The Dutch contended that they had held it, by right of conquest, from the Portuguese for more than a century. Such was the state of the respective claims to the forts in question, to which, when he considered that both were founded on the right of conquest, the recent date of the one, and the antiquity of the other, he was confident that Tippoo Sultan could have no just right.<sup>2</sup> Dundas, however, did not desire the war to be judged on this ground only. "There were other proofs of a nature still more unequivocal that Tippoo had engaged in the dispute, not from any notion of right, but

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1183.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1186.

from motives of ambition, and an idea that in any future war with the Raja of Travancore, the possession of the forts by the latter would be a great disadvantage to himself,"<sup>1</sup> Fox expressed the hope that a war for conquest would never be undertaken by England, either in India or elsewhere. Tippoo's "vices, his inhumanity, made him detestable ; but with the Mysorean country we ought to be friendly ; inasmuch as it was the strong barrier between the most powerful of the Indian states and our settlements."<sup>2</sup> Pitt observed, " He was perfectly willing to agree that wars for conquest were to be deprecated ; but he could not allow, that in case we should be involved in a war to which we were provoked by the injustice of our neighbours, we were not to covet any new acquisition of territory, by which we might recompense our selves for the expenses of the war, and by which we might make the enemy feel the consequences of their own injustice."<sup>3</sup>

On February 25 the discussion was renewed by Mr. Hippisley, who had been sent to India by Lord North in 1781, and returned home six years later, having made a large fortune by trade. He entered Parliament as M.P. for Salisbury in 1790. He was a friend of Burke and Francis, and had rendered them assistance in the preparation of documents for the trial of Hastings. On February 14, 1791, it was moved by Burke that the House should proceed with the impeachment of Hastings, which had been interrupted by the dissolution of Parliament. The main question was whether the impeachment did not expire with the Parliament which gave it birth. After a long debate it was decided that the impeachment had not expired, and on the 23rd the proceedings were resumed in Westminster Hall. Three years had passed since the trial began, and the sensation produced by Burke's harrowing pictures had faded after Sheridan's brilliant speech upon the charge relating to the Begums of Oudh ; the interest of the public in the trial had gradually decreased. There was also a growing impression that Hastings was an ill-used man. In 1789 the House passed a vote of censure on Burke for having stated " that Hastings had murdered

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1190.

\* *Ibid.*

Nuncomar by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey." The attack on Cornwallis was made in order to again rouse public interest in the wrongs of India and the trial of Hastings. Francis hoped that a condemnation of the war with Tippoo might lead to the resignation of Cornwallis, and he would obtain the great ambition of his life, the Governor-Generalship of India.

Mr. Hippisley opened the debate in the House on February 25, moving that the 35th clause of the Act of the 24th of His present Majesty might be read. This was Pitt's famous India Act, and the clause which was read contained the emphatic declaration that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the will, the honour, and the policy of this nation," and the further enactment "that it shall not be lawful for the governor-general and council of Fort William aforesaid, without the express command and authority of the said court of directors, or of the secret committee of the said court of directors, in any case (except where hostilities have actually been commenced, or preparations actually made for the commencement of hostilities against the British nation in India, or against some of the princes or states dependant thereon, or whose territories the said united company shall be at such time engaged by any subsisting treaty to defend or guaranty), either to declare war or commence hostilities or enter into any treaty for making war, against any of the country princes or states in India, or any treaty for guarantying the possessions of any country princes or states ; and that in such case it shall not be lawful for the said governor-general and council to declare war or commence hostilities, or enter into any treaty for making war, against other prince or state, than such as shall be actually committing hostilities, or making preparations as aforesaid."<sup>1</sup> After the clause was read, Hippisley then moved "' That the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 23d, and 44th resolutions of the House of Commons, on the 15th of April, 1782, originally moved by Mr. Dundas, might be read;' and the same were

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1272.

read accordingly."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hippisley next read numerous extracts from the records in Madras, intended to prove that the Governor and Council of Fort St. George had always been opposed to an alliance with the Marathas, and that the destruction of the power of Tippoo would mean "the removal of the only bar to the invasion of the Carnation. The Nizam was considered, not only as a precarious friend, but a secret enemy. After Mr. Hippisley had read the numerous extracts, he informed the House he was too ill to proceed with the business, and he would leave it to an honourable friend near him, and deliver to him the several motions which he had intended to lay before the House. It is hardly necessary to say that Philip Francis did not decline the task. He opened his able speech with an indirect attack on the want of interest now shown in the impeachment. "I am too well acquainted with the temper of the House," he said, "and indeed with the disposition of the nation at large in respect to Indian questions, to think of exciting their attention to the present subject, by affirming generally, that it is of very great importance. The proposition would be readily agreed to on all sides; it would be admitted without dispute, and as soon as it was admitted, that moment it would be discarded."<sup>2</sup> Neither would he attempt to engage their attention by asserting that the subject was specially important to the well-being of the East India Company. "I know by experience with what facility that assertion would be granted, with how much candour it would be acknowledged, and with what philosophical indifference it would be instantly forgotten; nor indeed do I myself think it quite true."<sup>3</sup> It affected the well-being of England, because India did not possess the means of conducting the war, except by incurring debts which must be paid by England. "You deceive yourself," he said, "if you think that this is nothing but an Indian question. Loaded as we are with burthens; sinking under taxation; when the heart of the country is gone; when its spirit is so subdued, that, for the sake of securing a rigorous exaction of a falling revenue, we submit to the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1278.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

inspection and control of the officers of government over our domestic liberty, over the most indifferent actions in private economy, how will the people endure to be taxed, as they must be, for the support of a war in India? Compared to which, if it should be extended to any considerable length, a war with Spain would be a blessing; a war in Germany, or even in America, would hardly be a calamity. This is the real subject of the debate."<sup>1</sup> He intended to discuss the subject fully and freely, but "without intended disrespect to any man." Francis knew that Cornwallis was a statesman too highly esteemed to be attacked with impunity. He declared that he had "no personal interest in the question beyond that which belongs to every member of the community," a statement which was hardly true, because his heart was set steadily on one point—to succeed Cornwallis. He, however, adroitly stated that "no opinion of private character, however honourable, should be suffered to be stated, much less interposed, for the protection of a measure that ought to be condemned. If the House meant to form a sound comprehensive judgment of the merits of this war, they must allow him for a moment to carry them back to principles."

The main principle laid down since the foundation of the Company, and confirmed by Pitt's Act, was "that to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, were measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation."<sup>2</sup> Did Parliament mean to limit executive power by a legislative declaration? It should have left its prohibition absolute, like one of the Commandments: "Thou shalt do no murder." Francis proceeded to attack the treaty concluded with the Marathas and the Nizam as repugnant to the declaration, because it proposed a new partition of dominion. "Defence is not only your right," he said, "but your duty: the right of defence includes that of attack: but in no case are you to aim at the acquisition of territory"—a counsel of perfection. As for the merits of the war, he sketched an outline of the conditions which,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1278-1279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1280.

he said, gave rise to it. It was done with a studied, though apparently natural, moderation, and fortified by well-selected extracts from the records; but they were mainly taken from the records of the corrupt Government of Fort St. George. From time to time sharp bursts of scorn revealed Junius. The princes of India, he declares, are in general restless, cunning, and ambitious. "They catch at their immediate object with the eagerness of children: they are dexterous and artful in their means, and they have no sort of scruple in the choice of them. But true wisdom they have none; of a solid, permanent, remote interest, they have no idea; otherwise would it be possible that, with all the experience of India before their eyes, with the fate of the ruined Nabob of Bengal, the vassal Nabob of Oudh, the banished Raja of Benares, the Rana of Gohud, the Padsha himself, and twenty other prostrate princes, the victims of British friendship, in their view, they should ever think of engaging in measures which might lead or oblige them to call in our assistance! This Raja of Travancore at least might have been better instructed by the example of his immediate superior the Nabob of Arcot, who, after wasting a long life in perpetual intrigues with the company's servants, with the king's ministers, and with adventurers of every denomination—after squandering millions without end, to support a cabalising interest at Madras and in England, finds himself stripped, at last, of territory, wealth, and dominion, and finally doomed to go out of life as naked as he came into it. The last resource of the lawful Nabob of the Carnatic, is to file a bill in chancery against the East India company, to oblige them to account with him for the remnant of his revenues! Such, I have no doubt, will be the fate of Travancore. We may possibly protect him from the sword of Tippoo Sultan; but I defy him to escape from the devouring friendship of the English."<sup>1</sup>

Francis, at the close of his long speech, read thirteen resolutions, all of which were narrative except the two last. The twelfth condemned an alliance with the Marathas and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1288-1289.

the Nizam, and the last declared " That it is the opinion of this House, that it is the duty of the directors of the East India company, and of the board of control, to remit such orders to the company's servants in India, as may tend more speedily to procure peace with Tippoo Sultan, on moderate and equitable terms."<sup>1</sup> The question being put upon the first resolution, Dundas rose to reply. Less eloquent and ornate than Burke, less subtle and caustic than Francis, his opinions were stated with admirable clearness and pithy good sense. He began his speech by declaring that Francis " had left unnoticed a great many of the most material facts, and had built much of his reasoning upon certain extracts and resolutions, dated upwards of twenty years ago, and upon certain papers which it would have been more regular and more fair to have had upon the table, instead of their having been pulled out of the private pockets of the gentlemen who referred to them."<sup>2</sup> He, however, had no intention of leaving the matter as a neutral question. As soon as the motions were disposed of, he would himself bring forward other resolutions approving of the conduct of the Government abroad, of the conduct of our allies, and of the whole conduct of Lord Cornwallis. In what he was about to say he would put wholly out of his argument the question of the cost of the war. The war was a very expensive war, "so seriously expensive, that nothing could justify it but considerations of justice, of policy, and a sacred regard of treaties solemnly entered into, and for the due observance of which the national faith stood pledged."<sup>3</sup> His arguments were delivered with a gravity and force that told powerfully on the House. If the Members had seen the map of that part of India, he conceived they would not reason a moment respecting the policy and the wisdom of the Raja of Travancore obtaining possession of the forts of Cranganore and Ayacotta. Tippoo's claim of right to them was but his own bare assertion. " And on the other side, there was the indisputable fact that the Dutch had been actually possessed of these forts for more than a century.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1304-1305.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1305.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1305.

If the French had possession of Scotland, **England would** not have been in greater danger than the Travancore country, and our possessions in the Carnatic, if Tippoo had possession of these two forts. It was absurd to say that more danger was to be apprehended from the Marathas than Tippoo, and he considered the treaties entered into with the Marathas and with the Nizam tended to maintain the peace of India. He closed his speech by repeating his conviction "that the war was necessary and unavoidable, and that it was equally founded in justice and policy: but he declared he verily believed we should have had no war, had Mr. Hollond followed the instructions of Lord Cornwallis."<sup>1</sup>

Fox assailed Dundas and the treaty in the most vehement manner. He declared "that he had never heard from a person in authority such confused notions, such a juggle as it were of justice and policy, and tenets so far stretched, and so extraordinary, as had been laid down by the right hon. gentleman over against him."<sup>2</sup> As for the alliance, it had been entered into with the Marathas and Nizam "for the extirpation of Tippoo and the plundering of his territories." He said that during the course of his political life the ungracious and unpopular task of finding fault with the measures of government had often fallen to his lot. "On the present occasion, he was willing to encounter the unpopularity of asserting that we had embarked not only in an expensive, but in an unjust war; a war in which defeat might prove almost as good as conquest, and the most brilliant successes might be justly deemed misfortunes."<sup>3</sup> After the vehement invective of Fox the alliances and war were defended by the refined argument of Pitt. It was Fox and not Dundas, he said, who had confounded the justice and policy of the war, and cleared it from all the fallacy and misconception with which it had been obscured. He contended "that we were bound by the sacred faith of a solemn treaty, to act in the manner we had done, and to assist and support the Raja of Travancore in the war commenced against Tippoo."<sup>4</sup> With regard to Fox's complaint that

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1309.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1317.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1316.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1318-1319.

the treaties were offensive as well as defensive—how in the nature of things could it be otherwise? Were not all alliances, with some modifications, offensive alliances? With regard to the famous clause which had been read, it had been copied from his Bill, and there was a provision for the case which had happened in consequence of the express words of the clause. Lord Cornwallis had acted as he had done by making the treaties with the Marathas and the Nizam. Pitt, after having declared that the war was necessary and inevitable, unless we meant to have been guilty of a violation of public faith, signified his determination to move a negative upon the first resolution. The motion was put and negatived without a division.

On March 2 Mr. Dundas read the following resolutions without any preliminary observations :

1. " That it appears to this House that the attacks made by Tippoo Sultan on the lines of Travancore, on the 29th of December, 1789, the 6th of March, and 15th of April, 1790, were unwarranted and unprovoked infractions of the treaty entered into at Mangalore, on the 10th day of March, 1784."

2. " That the conduct of the governor-general of Bengal, in determining to prosecute with vigour the war against Tippoo Sultan, in consequence of his attack on the territories of the Raja of Travancore, was highly meritorious."

3. " That the treaties entered into with the Nizam on the 1st of June, and with the Mahrattas on the 7th of July, 1799, are wisely calculated to add vigour to the operations of war, and to promote the future tranquillity of India; and that the faith of the British nation is pledged for the due performance of the engagements contained in the said treaties."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Dundas then moved the first resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Pitt. Mr. M. A. Taylor read a very long statement of the case, communicated to him by Mr. Hipsley, as part of his speech. Going into many details, its object was to prove : " 1st, That the original aggression was made by the Raja's taking possession of Cranganore and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1322-1323.

Ayacotta. 2d, That if so, the first attack of the lines (had it not been disavowed by Tippoo Sultan) was not an aggression which, *vi termini*, is the first provocation, but the consequence or resentment of an aggression. 3d, That even if Tippoo's act was an aggression, it would not justify our entering into a war without leaving a door open to accommodation. 4th, That if the object of the war be to extirpate Tippoo, and to divide his countries between us, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas, the success of the war in obtaining such object might eventually be injurious to the essential interests and hazardous to the ultimate security of the British empire in the East."<sup>1</sup>

Francis then rose, and, after roundly stating as the truth that the collusive acquisition made by the king of Travancore of two forts in Tippoo's country was the true and only cause of the war, inveighed against the treaty which had been made by Lord Cornwallis with the Nizam, and "a most important letter from Lord Cornwallis to the Nizam laid this afternoon upon your table." This, he said, "is dated the 7th of July 1789, and is referred to in the treaty with the Nizam, and declared to be equivalent to a treaty. There is an air of mystery on the face of it, little suited to that description. If it be a treaty, it ought to have been explicit; if, as it professes, it be strong and efficient upon the English government in India, equally so as a treaty in due form could be, it should have left nothing to inference and conjecture."<sup>2</sup> The true meaning of the letter, he declared, was sufficiently obvious: it was an offensive alliance against Tippoo. He noticed that the only chief of any consequence for whom the troops lent by the British to the Nizam are not to be used is Tippoo. "This mode of designation by omission," he said, "is to my mind the strongest indication of a determined object that can be imagined." He closed a most formidable attack by asking the House, "Does the prospect of success entitle you to abandon your principles; to renounce your pacific system; to make war for the acquisition of territory? Will you give

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1347.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1355-1356.

the encouragement of parliamentary approbation to measures which even legislative prohibition has not been sufficient to prevent ? These are the real questions which you are called upon to decide."<sup>1</sup> The attack failed, for the first resolution, being put, was carried.

The second resolution being put, Fox, considering it to be unnecessary, moved the previous question. Pitt said that "the question having been once agitated, it was necessary that it should be completely settled." The previous question was negatived, and the resolution put and carried. Mr. Dundas then moved the resolution approving of the treaties.<sup>2</sup> He considered that, as a doubt had been started by persons of great weight and authority upon the justice of the war and the policy of the treaties made with the Marathas and the Nizam "upon the ground of that doubt, certain resolutions condemning the war, and censuring Lord Cornwallis for having entered into it, had been submitted to the House. Those resolutions had been rejected, some by being negatived, and others by moving the previous question ; but that was not enough; they all knew in what manner every thing that passed in that House on the subject of India, was treated without doors; it became therefore necessary to appeal to the authority of that House, to apply an antidote to the poison, by a vote, manifest to the world, that the House were decidedly of opinion, that there was no ground whatever for any such doubt as had been stated; that they thought the conduct of Lord Cornwallis, in having entered into that war, highly meritorious; and that they approved of the treaties entered into, in direct conformity of the act of parliament, for the purpose of carrying on the war with vigour; and that they readily plunged into it to support their allies."<sup>2</sup>

Fox declared it was obviously unwise and impolitic to make the power of concluding a peace depend on three instead of one. By the treaty we stood engaged to the Marathas and also to the Nizam. If Tippoo offered reasonable terms it would not be in our power to make peace, but

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1358.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1359.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1360-1361.

must depend on the pleasure of our allies. He continued, and Malcolm borrowed the severe reflection: "In fact, the whole of this business, from the beginning to the end, was a kind of shuffle, to evade our pacific professions, and yet appear to adhere to them; for which purpose we seemed to take the principle of extreme injustice, under the pretence of extreme justice/'<sup>1</sup> Pitt, with characteristic discretion, did not enter into a detailed defence of the justice of the treaty, but he asked Fox to state if he had ever heard of an offensive treaty, entered into for the express purpose of carrying on a war, which did not contain such a condition. Fox replied it was the general nature of offensive treaties, but he would ask the right hon. gentleman if there was no difference between a treaty entered into with the Marathas and the Nizam, and a treaty entered into in an European war. There was certainly a very material difference. He had no scruple to own that he would prefer terms of peace somewhat reasonable to the concluding of a treaty of partition with the Marathas and the Nizam; "the way in which the right hon. gentleman had laid down the principle that we were not to be bound by the treaty, if, when we wished for peace, the Mahrattas and the Nizam obstinately refused to accede, rather surprised him. He should himself be inclined to act in that manner, but he should not have expected to have heard such an argument from the right hon. gentleman, who had laid so much stress upon the sacred faith of treaties."²

Pitt, in a few cold sentences, said "he had stated that in case of either of our allies introducing unreasonable objections, when peace could be concluded, the treaty might be considered by us as no longer binding, because the ninth article contained these words, 'and in the event of peace being judged expedient, it shall be made by mutual consent, no party introducing unreasonable objections.'"<sup>3</sup> Fox then desired to know, if that were the sense of the case, what was the sense of conditioning that there should be no separate negotiation. Dundas replied that "the practice of Tippoo had been to attempt to bribe and buy off our allies, and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1361.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1363.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1363.

therefore that condition was introduced. The treaty was calculated to produce peace, but peace was not to be concluded when a reasonable objection was offered; when unreasonable objections were introduced, it might be made separately."<sup>1</sup> The Speaker was putting the question when Fox rose again to move the adjournment. The treaty, he contended, ought to be made the subject of more deliberate discussion. The East India Company had avowedly gone to war "in defence of their ally the Raja of Travancore, and to resent the insult offered to them by Tippoo Sultan. Supposing that the East-India Company can have satisfaction equal to their objects, could peace be obtained? Undoubtedly not, for the Nizam would say, 'your objects are answered, but mine are not,' and so would the Mahrattas answer; we should therefore be engaged in a long and expensive war, when all the objects of our going to war were gained."<sup>2</sup> After a short conversation, the motion for adjournment was put and negatived. The resolution approving of the treaties was then agreed to. Thus ended a memorable debate on Indian affairs, which has been neglected by historians.

Lord Cornwallis, on approaching Bangalore, not only received the good news from England that the House of Commons had approved of the war and his conduct, but also the more gratifying intelligence that the Company, in order to enable him to carry on the campaign with vigour and effect, had resolved to send out for this reason £500,000 in specie, that an augmentation had been voted to the establishment of the King's regiments in India, which would be completed by the ships of the year, and that a detachment of the Royal Artillery might also be expected. The Company were also making every exertion to send out recruits for their own service.

The want of efficient transport had been a main cause of the failure of the late campaign. Beside the news from home, Cornwallis received the welcome intelligence that 100 elephants for transport purposes had arrived at "Aellore,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1363.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1363-1364.

and that the contractors had engaged to have 28,000 bullocks in readiness by August. The fair prospect of his army being soon refitted, and in a state fit to advance in full force, enabled Cornwallis to lay down a plan for his new campaign. A portion of the Maratha army under Purseram Bhow, with Captain Little's detachment, was sent to the north-west. The Nizam's force also, with an English detachment, were employed in reducing the country to the north-west, while the main army, with Lord Cornwallis, aided by Hurry Punt, remained for the central main service.

Before again advancing on Seringapatam, and before the arrival of reinforcements, Cornwallis had to open and secure free communication with his base. The Palicod Pass afforded the easiest communication with the Carnatic, but it was commanded by several of those gigantic mountain fortresses which form so striking a feature of the Mysore country. The two strongest were Oosoor and Rayacotta. On July 15 the army, with a small battering train, two 24-, two 18-, and four 12-pounders, "marched towards Oosoor, through a fertile varied country, beautified with chains of tanks for the culture of the low grounds, and with numerous villages and small forts; which, surrounded with trees, crowned and adorned every eminence."<sup>1</sup> Major Gowdie, who commanded the 7th Brigade, partly composed of the 4th European and 28th Battalion of sepoys, with eight battering guns, had marched the day before for the fort itself. He reached it on the 15th, and found the enemy prepared to abandon it. His sudden arrival led to a precipitate retreat. Before they went they spiked the guns, burnt the carriages, and fired a mine which blew up one of the bastions. They had laid a train to the magazine, but fortunately it did not take effect.

Leaving a strong garrison at Oosoor, Major Gowdie with his detachment proceeded towards Rayacotta, a stupendous rock, which rears its crest above the surrounding hills. At its base was the usual pettah or town, enclosed by a lower fort; about the middle of the rock were two front walls,

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 31.

which formed a kind of fort, and the lofty summit was defended by a strong work, nearly of a circular form. On arrival the Major summoned the Killedar to surrender, but he refused. The next morning Major Gowdie, as directed, sent a detachment with guns to attack the lower work, which enclosed the town. The gate was soon blown open and the town taken. The garrison, however, kept up a brisk fire from the middle and topmost fortifications. Major Gowdie, placing himself at the head of the troops, and leading them up the steep hill in the face of the fire, obtained possession of the two walls about the middle. The strong fortifications on the summit remained to be taken. Strong by nature, more strong by art, they could not be captured if held by a garrison resolute in their defence. Gowdie had been ordered to return to the army if they did not surrender at the first attack. He had, however, made a lodgment in the hill where his troops were sheltered from their fire, and he requested leave to continue the attack with further reinforcements. A regiment of sepoys with two more breaching guns were sent to join his brigade on July 22, and he promptly breached one of the walls, which was within reach. About the same time the main army moved towards Rayacotta and the Killedar proposed a parley, which soon ended in his surrendering the fort. It was found to be amply supplied with guns, ammunition, and provision for its defence. Besides Rayacotta, the key of the Mysore country, several hill-forts of importance, by which the pass was defended, surrendered on being summoned, or were taken after a slight resistance. On July 29th the army returned from Rayacotta, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Oosoor, in order to cover the vast convoy which had arrived at Amboor from Madras ; a garrison was left at Rayacotta and two other hill-forts, three of them being destroyed as not being considered necessary to the defence of the pass. Two battalions of sepoys were sent to escort the convoy. It left Amboor on August 2nd, and marched through an open and well-cultivated country to Rayacotta. Leaving the fort a few miles to the south, and passing under the other hill-forts

which had been recently taken by us, they proceeded towards Oosoor.

On August 10, 100 elephants, marching two abreast, were seen entering the camp. The foremost carried the British standard. They had set out from Lucknow and Cawnpore and marched to Calcutta, and from thence, escorted by the 28th Bengal Battalion and two volunteer companies, they marched to Madras, where they were loaded with treasure. Accompanied by 6,000 bullocks carrying rice, 100 carts with arrack,<sup>1</sup> and some thousands of coolies with trunks and baskets of private supplies, they reached the army. The supplies they needed were distributed to the several departments, and the remainder stored in the fort of Oosoor.

On August 6 Lord Cornwallis wrote from camp, seven miles from Oosoor, as follows: " We some time ago gave Tippoo permission to send a Vakeel, who has arrived this day, to make some propositions, but I have no reason to hope that they will be such as will be suitable to the expectations of the Confederacy."<sup>2</sup> The name of the envoy was Apajee Row, by birth a Maratha, and Cornwallis wrote to C. W. Malet that at the earnest recommendation of Hurry Punt, he consented to receive him. It was a mistake. An honest but not astute statesman, Cornwallis was no match for a Maratha chief. On August 23, 1791, he writes: " By your letter to me I find you are most perfectly acquainted with the character of the Maratha Chief. It is not easy for a man of very different habits and temper to be a match for persons who possess the qualities you describe, yet I trust that I have not often been unguarded and in the business of the Vakeels have hitherto defeated the design of Hurry Punt who appeared to have taken them under his protection and by an unguarded letter which Apajee Row wrote, seem to have promised to introduce them to me.

" I positively declared that it never was my intention to treat with them personally, nor did I think it became any of

<sup>1</sup> Arrack. " In India the word is applied to a variety of common spirits; in South India to those distilled from the fermented sap of sundry palms " (Hobson-Jobson).

<sup>3</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 102.

the principals, such as Hurry Punt, Meer Allum, or myself, who possessed full powers from our respective Governments, to meet them, until they had explained to confidential persons deputed by us, the outline of the terms on which Tippoo was willing to negotiate, and I objected to their being received with honours, or being admitted into our camp, until the negotiation should be so far advanced as to give a certainty of a speedy accommodation. In the next line I pointed out Oosoor as a proper place for their present residence, where they would be treated with great civility and supplied with everything they could want, and where our Deputies could conveniently meet them, to enter upon the business of their mission."\* The Vakeels remained near our camp longer than Cornwallis desired, and pretended, in order to gain time, that they would meet the deputies of the allies there if Cornwallis would not insist on their going to Oosoor; "but on finding that I was determined not to relax from my first resolution they are gone this day (August 23, 1791) to Bangalore on the way to their master."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Major Dirom writes : " This Vakeel, named Apagy Row, a Mahratta, had been employed in negotiations with our Government during the former war, and was considered as a person not likely to be entrusted by Tippoo with full powers to make the concessions expected by his enemies. He proposed such conditions, with respect to the forms of his reception, and opening the negotiation, as showed that he was merely an instrument of intrigue and delay ; and as he said he was not authorised to dispense with those forms, he was sent back to his master without being permitted to enter the camp. So little respected was this ambassador by the people of his own caste and nation among our allies, that he was openly insulted by the Mahrattas, and under the necessity of requesting to have a guard of our troops to protect his person. His dismissal soon relieved them of this irksome charge, and was a subject that afforded general satisfaction to the confederate armies " (Dirom, p. 38).

Mill states: " Upon a point of form, the ambassador being directed to treat only with principals, and Lord Cornwallis declining to treat with an agent, and upon the surmise that the object of Tippoo was intrigue and the consumption of time, the messenger was sent back to his master without being permitted to enter the camp." He adds : " On this occasion, as well as on that of the overture on the 27th of May, Major Dirom is careful to mention the joy which pervaded the army when the overture was rejected. . . . It is another among the many proofs of a most remarkable fact, that whole masses of men are capable of desiring the death of thousands of their fellow-creatures, at once, simply for their own profit. Had the negotiation proceeded, and

Lord Cornwallis, having secured the safety of his main communication with his base, turned his attention to the reduction of several hill-forts to the north-east of Bangalore, which interrupted the communication with the Nizam's army and the supplies which might be obtained from the country to the north. Of these forts, the most important was the fort of Nundidroog, the capital of a large and valuable district. The enormous mountain on whose summit it is built rises sheer about 1,700 feet from its base, which is about twelve miles in circumference and the walls above are nearly three miles in girth. The works were carried on all round, although two-thirds of the rock upon which they stand are perfectly impracticable. To the westward the mountain has a gradual slope down to a pass only about 150 or 180 feet above the plain which separates it from a neighbouring hill. This face of the mountain was defended by two strong walls and an outwork which covered the gateway, and afforded a formidable flank fire. The foundation for a third wall had been dug when the outbreak of the war put a stop to the work.

On September 22, 1792, Major Gowdie wrote as follows: " You will be pleased to acquaint his Lordship, that I marched with the flank companies of the detachment at ten last night, for the pettah of Nundidroog, and completely surprised it at day break this morning. Zeal for the service, in this instance carried me farther than I intended. Captain Read and Lieutenant Mackenzie, of the engineers, with astonishing resolution mounted the hill, and made a lodgement within one hundred and fifty yards of the first gate; but the place is of such wonderful strength, there being three walls, one above the other, that I have given up the idea of keeping possession of the post, and shall withdraw the troops immediately after dark; with a full conviction, that this part, the north face of the hill, is not to be taken. I have

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been productive of peace, it might have been supposed by an army which had confidence in Lord Cornwallis, that the peace, which he deliberately approved, was better for their country than war. *Better for their country!* Yes. But not better for them, because it precluded the acquisition of plunder, promotion, and glory " (Mill, vol. v., p. 284).

had a very heavy cannonade and musketry on me the whole day."<sup>1</sup>

Reports having reached Major Gowdie that a strong force had been sent to support the northern hill-forts, he moved from Nundidroog to meet their advance, but four days later the detachment returned and took up its position on the west side. On the 29th Captain Norman Macleod with the 13th Bengal and 10th Madras Native Infantry brought two more siege guns and two large mortars. The besieging force now consisted in all of one regiment of Europeans and six battalions of sepoy, with six battering guns and four mortars.

It was decided that the first object should be to cut and form a road to the summit of the adjoining hill, and erect a battery on it from which the fort might be most easily and quickly breached and carried by assault. On October 2 the battery was completed and ready to be armed. But to drag the guns up that hill of granite was a stupendous task. When it was dark two 24-pounders, two 12-pounders, and two 18-pounders were pulled up the hill by tackle fixed to rocks, trees, and posts driven into the ground, worked by elephants, whose strength, sagacity, and patient docility can only be known to those who have seen them employed in the Indian armies.<sup>2</sup> Major Gowdie writes on October 3: "With astonishing labour and exertion, Major Montagu did in the course of last night get the two twenty-pounders only into the battery, and I believe no man had more resources within himself. I have not a doubt but I shall be able to open the battery to-morrow as soon as the clouds disperse from the hills, which generally happens about ten o'clock." On the morrow, October 4, a mortar battery opened from the pettah without effect, owing to the great height of the hill, and the

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 144 note.

<sup>2</sup> Dirom, p. 44. Lieutenant Mackenzie writes: "Situated as the battery lay, it is highly probable that no degree of exertion in the troops, or of skill in the director, could have overcome the difficulties that intervened, but for the assistance of elephants, the wonderful sagacity of which animal is highly conspicuous in his performance of the most severe task in perfect silence, when noise would expose him to danger" (Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 145).

following day the battery on the hill opened, but the distance from the fort was found to be too great for it even to reach the walls or its defences.

The failure of the operations was duly reported to Lord Cornwallis. The admirable strength of its works as well as its natural position, standing on the summit of a lofty granite rock, might well give rise to the question whether it would be better, instead of a long siege, to withdraw the troops and abandon for the present the attempt to capture Nundidroog. The question was one of great moment. To abandon the attack would damage the warlike repute of the army engaged in close strife with an enemy hugely superior in numbers, it would shake the fidelity of doubtful allies, and it would so act upon the mind of Tippoo as to make him certain of ultimate victory. Cornwallis came to a prompt decision. Orders were immediately sent to prosecute the siege with the utmost vigour. Regular approaches were to be made up the face of the steep rocky hill to within breaching distance of the fort. It was a most formidable undertaking. By the most arduous exertions a gun road was cleared and a trench which had been dug for the foundation of the proposed third wall occupied. This advanced post lay parallel to the enemy's second or outer wall at the distance of about 100 yards. By the nth a battery of eight 18-pounders was completed, and each gun, by means of four drag-ropes crowded with men and with the assistance of two elephants, was drawn up the steep rocky ascent and placed in the battery. The next day Major Gowdie sent the following summons to the commander, who was one of Tippoo's ablest and most trusted Generals:

"Sultaun Cawn Sheriff Benauder, killedar of Nundidroog. Major Gowdie now addresses him, to let him know, that he has orders from the Right Honourable Earl Cornwallis to take Nundidroog. If Sultaun Cawn Sheriff is determined to hold out, Major Gowdie recommends to him, for the sake of humanity, that he will send down from the fort all women, children, bramins, and ryuts, that they may be escorted to any place of safety he may point out. After this intimation

the killedar may depend on it, that if he obliges Major Gowdie to open his batteries of guns and mortars, no flag will be attended to. Major Gowdie thinks it necessary to acquaint Sultaun Cawn Sheriff of the fall of Chittledroog to Purseram Bhow; also of the Marattas having possession of Perbalaporam, and of their having spread themselves over the country. Added to this, the grand army is within ten miles; so that all succour is entirely cut off from Nundidroog. Major Gowdie hears that Sultaun Cawn Sheriff is a good soldier: he therefore must be a good man, and one who would save the blood of his fellow creatures. He therefore recommends to him to take one day's consideration of the consequence that must ensue, should he oblige him to storm the fort with the forces he has the honour to command. If the killedar is disposed to treat on honourable terms, Major Gowdie will negotiate matters, by Sultaun Cawn sending proper people down before the batteries are opened. The bearer of this, Huffain Cawn Jemadar, is the confidential man of Major Gowdie; he therefore expects that he will be treated with respect, in such a manner as Major Gowdie would treat a man from Sultaun Cawn. An answer is expected to this letter, such as one soldier would send to another."<sup>1</sup>

Major Gowdie to Major Close: "I sent a jemadar and flag to summon the fort. The Killedar refused having anything to say to him and fired both cannon and musketry at him."

On October 13 Major Gowdie wrote to Major Close: "Since writing you yesterday, I have eight or ten people killed and wounded, but as I have not had a return of them, I cannot be particular. The firing to-day has made a considerable hole in the wall, which is of much greater strength than I could have formed any idea of. The people in the fort are stockading both sides of the breach. Fascines and earth was laid behind the wall last night, which we are now bringing down. Captain Kyd writes to Colonel Ross. He will give a further description of the breach; for my part,

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 146 note.

I think it will take two days more to effect a practicable one. As the wounded men are now very numerous, and many of them bad cases, the surgeons are desirous of removing them to an hospital, and have requested of me to write to his Lordship for twenty or thirty doolies to be sent from the grand army."<sup>1</sup>

The battery on the 12th silenced all the guns which bore in its direction, except one that fired in flank from the south-east angle and did much damage. Against this a traverse was thrown up in the night and another battery constructed in advance for two 6-pounders.. A 12-pounder was also conveyed into this battery. A few well-directed shots from it brought down the rampart at this angle, and the destructive gun came tumbling down the rock.

On the 17th, as the breach was reported practicable, the flank companies of His Majesty's 36th and 71st Regiments were sent to join the besiegers, and on arriving they immediately advanced and occupied the last parallel (the trench which was dug for the foundation of the third wall) before daybreak on the morning of the 18th. The same day, with a view of intimidating the garrison, the army encamped within four miles of Nundidroog, and Lord Cornwallis proceeded to the advanced parallel, and, having examined the breaches, directed that the siege guns should continue their lire till night, when the rising of the moon should be the signal for the assault. It was determined to storm the breaches, then to attempt to carry the inner wall by escalade, and if this bold attempt should fail, to make a lodgment behind a cavalier between the walls, and thence proceed by regular attack. The command of the forces that were to carry out this desperate service was, at his especial request, entrusted to General Medows, to whom the approach of fighting was always welcome. The grenadiers of the 36th and 71st were to carry the breach in the curtain; the light companies of the same regiments were to storm the out-work ; and the flank companies of the 4th Battalion of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

corps under Captain Doveton were to follow with ladders to escalate the inner wall.<sup>1</sup>

About dusk General Medows and Major Gowdie joined the troops in the advanced parallel, and in the dark of the night the instructions for the disposition of the troops were silently carried out. As the storming party stood in the trench ready to be launched by the appointed signal, a foolish person mentioned in the hearing of the men that a mine was reported to be near the breach, and Medows of many counsels answered in a loud voice so that all could hear, " I f there be a mine, it must be a mine of gold."

When the early moon shone forth, two signal guns were fired, and the order to advance was given. The grenadiers, accompanied by Medows, moved out from the right of the parallel and the light companies from the left, and rushed forward to the assault. It was slow work ascending the steep hill, and they were soon discovered. The walls were instantly illuminated with blue lights, and a heavy fire of jingals,<sup>2</sup> muskets, and rockets opened upon them; large stones and fragments of rock were hurled down upon them. The character of the ground made the fire from the fort ineffective, but the huge stones rushing down the hills with tremendous velocity had considerable effect. The breaches were reached, soon carried, and the storming party followed so closely that the garrison were unable to barricade effectually the gate of the inner wall, which was forced open with some difficulty. The troops poured into the body of the place, and Captain Robertson of the 71st Regiment, who led the assault with great gallantry and judgment, was soon complete master of the fort.

<sup>1</sup> " Captain Robertson, the senior officer of the flank companies, was to lead the grenadiers of the 36th and 71st Regiments to the breach in the curtain. Captain Burne, of the 36th, the next senior officer, declining to quit his grenadier company, at the head of which he had distinguished himself during the war, the light companies were to be led by Captain Hart to the breach in the outwork. The flank companies of the 4th European Regiment, commanded by Captain Doveton, were to follow with ladders for escalating the inner wall " (Dirom, pp. 45-46).

<sup>2</sup> Jingals, gin jail, a wall-piece or large musket of great length, used with a rest, and employed in the defence of forts.

" Nundidroog, defended by seventeen pieces of cannon, chiefly iron guns, of a large calibre, improved by its late works, and well garrisoned, was thus taken by regular attack in the course of three weeks, although of such strength that it was not yielded to Hyder by the Mahrattas till after a tedious blockade of three years I " <sup>1</sup>

After the fall of Nundidroog, another hill-fort of great strength near to it and dependent on it opened its gates on the first summons.

The ships of the season had now brought out the promised reinforcements, money, and military stores, also 300 troops from St. Helena, and the army moved from Nundidroog to cover the convoys that were coming from Madras. A detachment commanded by Colonel Maxwell was sent to the Baramahal to clear it of a party of the enemy which were plundering in the valley, and threatened annoyance to the convoys. Maxwell with the 74th Regiment, the 7th Bengal and 1st Coast Battalion, with three field-pieces, left the army on October 21, and by forced marches arrived ten days later before Penagra, a strong mud-fort at the south end of the valley. A flag of truce, sent to summons it, was beckoned from the walls to advance and then fired on. The treacherous breach of the rules of war met with severe punishment. The fort was at once attacked and carried by escalade. "The resistance of the enemy was feeble, and they hung out the flag for quarter in the midst of the assault. It was too late : they had violated the rules of war."<sup>2</sup>

Colonel Maxwell, having scoured the Baramahal to the northward, returned and encamped within six miles of Kistnaghery, one of the great insulated mountain-forts. The detachment had neither the men nor the guns sufficient to take the upper fort, but it was determined to destroy the pettah and the fortification at the bottom of the hill in order to leave the predatory gangs as little cover as possible. On November 7, 1791, Maxwell marched from his camp in three divisions. "The right and left divisions, sent by a circuitous route, to avoid the enemy's guards, were directed

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Dirom, p. 46 ; Mackenzie, p. 154.

to attack the lower fort on the western and eastern sides; while the centre division advanced slowly towards the front wall, to sustain the other attacks."<sup>1</sup> The two divisions approached close to both sides of the lower fort before they were discovered, and, escalading the walls, got possession of the gates and entered without much resistance. The enemy fled to the upper fort, and the assailants hotly pursued them up the rock in the hope of reaching the gates before they were closed. But they found the gates shut and the ramparts lined by the garrison.

"Every attempt at escalade was frustrated by an immense quantity of stones, which, incessantly pouring down the rock, swept away the ladders and those by whom they were carried. As one party was driven off, another returned to the walls; straining every nerve, they repeatedly renewed their efforts; but as a bright moon discovered every movement, the activity of the defenders made considerable slaughter, and pointed to the propriety of withdrawing the troops. Thus abandoning the enterprise, the retreat was effected with composure, and after destroying the pettah, the whole returned to their encampment before daylight."<sup>2</sup>

The failure to storm the upper fort of Kistnaghery and the surrender of Coimbatore, which took place on November 2, were the only strokes of good fortune which fell to the lot of Tippoo. The defence of Coimbatore, though it ended in capitulation, is one of those heroic episodes which illuminate the history of the establishment of an Indian Empire. Coimbatore was held by Lieutenant Chalmers with a small force of 120 Topasses (soldiers of mixed blood, generally

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie, p. 155. "Lord Cornwallis returns his best thanks to Lieut.-Colonel Maxwell for the zealous and able manner in which he has executed his general instructions to dislodge and drive out the detachments that the enemy had sent into the Barahmahl and the district of Oussore. The good conduct and gallantry which was manifested at the assaults of Pinagra reflects great credit upon Lieut.-Colonel Maxwell and the corps under his command; but his Lordship considers the spirited and judicious attempt which, after surprising and carrying the pettah and lower fort, was made upon the upper fort of Kistnaghery, as highly honourable to all the officers and soldiers who were employed on that occasion, and justly deserving his warmest applause."<sup>1</sup>

claiming Portuguese descent) and 200 sepoys belonging to the Travancore army under a young Frenchman, Migot de la Combe, with artillery consisting only of one 5-pounder and two 3-pounders. A few swivels and jingals and a quantity of damaged powder were left in the fort when Major Cuppage, who commanded the detachment charged with the defence of Palgaut and Coimbatore, removed the heavy guns, ammunition, and stores to Palgaut, a strong fort a few miles away. Lieutenant Chalmers was directed to fall back to it in case the enemy should appear in considerable force.

On June 13 Coimbatore was invested by about 2,000 regular infantry and a considerable mass of irregulars, eight pieces of cannon, the heaviest of which was an 18-pounder, a number of jingal pieces served by irregular infantry, 1,000 horse, and two elephants, and four camels loaded with rockets.<sup>1</sup> Chalmers, more brave than prudent, did not consider this force of sufficient magnitude to justify his quitting his post. On the 16th the Mysorean commander summoned the fort verbally; he demanded immediate possession of the place on pain of death without exception of women and children. The answer was a determined refusal. Two other summonses met a similar fate. On the 20th the besieged observed a battery within 400 yards of the wall; on the 26th a further battery within 150 yards of the half-moon was seen. The belief that a general assault was immediately intended made the garrison more solicitous to provide for the safety of the fort. Mines were placed on the ramparts, guns loaded, the gates were blocked with earth and large stones and huge logs of woods. A number of small barrels filled with combustibles and provided with fuses were so placed as to be rolled down the breaches or over the parapet.

On the 29th and 30th the assailants advanced their works whilst the guns and small arms played with increased vivacity. In the first week of August their batteries were all completed. On the nth at dawn the roar of the guns and the rattle of musketry announced that a general assault was imminent. The garrison rushed to their stations and

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. ii., p. 195 ; Dirom, p. 51; Mackenzie, vol. ii.

boldly replied. Despite the rapid fire of musketry, the assailants pushed forward, and, crowding the ditch, raised ladders and mounted the ramparts at several points. Then came a fierce struggle, man against man. The post first attacked was held by the gallant Frenchman, De la Combe, who defended it with great courage against the overwhelming odds. While the deadly contest was going on in this quarter, a vigorous attempt was made to carry the post defended by Lieutenant Chalmers.

They were met with the same spirit. At the heat of the fight a native officer exploded one of the combustible barrels in a crowded mass of the enemy with disastrous effect, and as they began to fall back the garrison rolled over the parapet on them the huge stones, logs of wood, and iron shot which had been previously laid along its whole extent. The effects were so disastrous that the assailants abandoned their ladders, and took shelter in the ditch and under a wall on the crest of the glacis. At the same time the ramparts were cleared of the foe after a desperate hand-to-hand fight. When the mist of the dawn cleared, the enemy were seen carrying off the killed and wounded and preparing to evacuate the batteries. The defenders also saw from the rampart in the far distance reinforcements coming to their assistance. The end of the siege had come, and Chalmers felt he must not defer the capture of the enemy's guns. The signal to sally was given, and De la Combe with eighty sepoys sallied forth and entered the trenches. "Although under a heavy fire of musketry and rockets, he took possession of their batteries, put their guards to the rout, and as one eighteen and one twelve pounder had been already limbered, they were dragged into the fort."<sup>1</sup>

Major Cuppage, in order not to risk the safety of Palgaut, brought with him only "a weak battalion of regular sepoys, one of Travancoreans, 350 poligars, under the direction of an enterprising civil servant Mr. Macleod, the collector of Madura, the whole not exceeding one thousand men^ with four iron four-pounders of Travancore, and the two brass

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 133.

sixes of the regular battalion.\*<sup>1</sup> Arriving just as the enemy were driven from the breaches, the two flank companies of the regular battalion joined De la Combe, and the enemy were driven from all their posts in the pettah. The approach of night rendered pursuit almost useless. The next morning, however, De la Combe joined Major Cuppage with as many men as the garrison could spare, and for two days they pursued the enemy until they reached the banks of the Bawana, and found that the enemy had crossed the stream and secured the boats on the opposite side and the river was nowhere fordable. Major Cuppage returned by easy marches to Coimbatore, bringing with him a large quantity of stores. After a brief halt Macleod returned with his poligars to his civil duties at Madura. The Travancoreans went with Cuppage's detachment to Palgaut, but a company of regular sepoys under Lieutenant Nash and two heavy guns were left to reinforce the garrison. By some subsequent addition the strength of the garrison was increased to 700 men. The two heavy guns captured from the enemy were also an important addition. Chalmers was soon busily employed in repairing the breaches and in strengthening the defences of the fort, and in placing the two heavy guns in the best position for resisting the enemy. On October 6 they appeared again. Tippoo, filled with rage at the defeat of his troops, determined to capture Coimbatore. Under the command of Kummer-ud-Deen, a brave and skilful General, he sent a force "said to consist of five hundred regular cavalry, and eight thousand regular infantry, with six pieces of cannon, besides a body of irregulars, both horse and foot."<sup>2</sup> Chalmers resolved to hold his post against this formidable and well-equipped force till relieved by Major Cuppage. The besiegers at once took possession of the pettah, erected batteries, and continued to advance by sap under the cover of a heavy fire, which the besieged were able to return with little effect owing to the want of proper ammunition. Major Cuppage was able to send supplies of musket ammunition repeatedly to the garrison by sepoys, who contrived

<sup>1</sup> *Wilks's South of India*, vol. iii., p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *Dirom*, p. 62.

to get into the fort at night, but only the shot from the two largest guns could reach the assailants' batteries; " and as twelve pound balls were the largest in the place, the aim of these guns, from the disproportion of their shot to their calibres, could not be taken with any degree of certainty."<sup>1</sup>

About the middle of the month a letter from Major Cuppage promising relief was brought into the fort. " Although much harrassed with constant work and duty, this communication threw the whole of the defendants into the highest spirits; the gates which had been blocked up with large stones from the beginning, were now cleared away and every preparation was made for co-operating with the troops expected in the field."<sup>2</sup>

On October 23 a second letter from the Major brought the glad tidings that he had marched the previous day from Palgaut to their relief with three battalions of sepoy and six field-pieces, and two of the Raja of Travancore's battalions without guns. The same afternoon just as the detachment had come to its ground within six miles of the fort the Mysorean General at the head of a large force came in sight. Leaving a portion of his troops in the trenches, he had moved forward with the bulk of his host to meet them. The camp was struck and the detachment drawn out to give them battle. But the Khan did not press forward. He moved his masses to the right of the detachment, and threatened to overwhelm the flank, get into the British rear, and occupy the strong and narrow defile through the woods and mountains that separate Palgaut from Coimbatore. Instant decision was imperative : either to force a way to Coimbatore or to fall back and occupy the pass. If the enemy got possession of the pass, it would be no easy task to return to Palgaut, a post of considerable importance with regard to keeping open communication with the Bombay army. A large convoy of bullocks was now on its way to join that force, and might certainly be intercepted by the enemy if they got between him and the pass. Major Cuppage determined to fall back. As soon as he began to retire,

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*,

the Khan pushed on the attack; showers of rockets were thrown on the right flank, while his cavalry charged impetuously on the rear in solid columns. The flank companies of the three battalions which formed the rear-guard received them with great courage and the steadiness of discipline, and sent them back with great loss. Again and again the enemy's squadrons attempted to drive in the flank companies, but when hard pressed by overwhelming numbers the battalions came to their support, and the attacks were repulsed. So the fight went on till the baggage and the head of the column moved off, when the troop that held the enemy in check in the rear followed in regular order, and covered the retirement. The enemy's horse did not attempt to pursue.

The Khan proclaimed a victory, and returned to Coimbatore to renew the siege. He told the brave garrison: "I have seen the nature of your expected relief; do not persist in throwing away the lives of brave men." He was right. The days of the garrison were numbered. The fire of the besiegers was renewed with more than usual severity until a wide breach was practicable, and the sap was carried to the covered way. The powder and cannon-shot for the few gunshots in the fort were nearly expended. Then came the crowning disaster. Chalmers and Nash were wounded on the same day. There was now no room for hesitation in the bravest mind, and on November 3 Chalmers capitulated on the most honourable terms—the garrison should march out with the honours of war, and be allowed to proceed to Palgaut, with leave to go from thence to the Carnatic, to remain on their parole during the rest of the war.<sup>1</sup>

The capitulation was grossly violated. After the actual surrender of the fort Chalmers and his brother officers were sent into the pettah, where they were detained as prisoners under the plea that Tippoo's approbation was necessary for the ratification of the terms of the capitulation. This the Sultan refused, and ordered the Khan to return with his force and bring his prisoners with him to Seringapatam.

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 64.

**They** Were marched as close prisoners to Tippoo's capital, **and** on arrival there had to endure the cruelties and indignities which marked the conduct of the ferocious despot towards his captives.<sup>1</sup>

The capture of Coimbatore was the only stroke of good fortune which fell to the lot of Tippoo. The majority of his rock fortresses between the coast of Coromandel and Bangalore, where the grand army was encamped, had been captured by the British, and convoys and supplies could with comparative safety reach Lord Cornwallis. Some of the strongest mountain-forts, however, blocked the advance to Seringapatam. Of these, the most important was Savendroog, eighteen miles from Bangalore. It has been described as a vast mountain of rock, half a mile in height and eight or ten miles in circumference. At the height of about two-thirds of its total elevation it was separated by a chasm into two hills, each having their own citadel, capable of independent defence. The lower works embraced the whole mountain, and cross-walls and barriers were constructed wherever the ascent was practicable. The most potent defence was, however, a deep belt of jungle about five or six miles in depth, low and swampy, the home of the malaria mosquito, to whose fatal ravages the place owes its name Savendroog, "the rock of death." Tippoo declared that malaria would destroy one-half of the British force and he would slaughter the remainder.

On December 10, 1792, Colonel Stuart, 72nd Regiment, who was appointed to command the force sent to capture Savendroog, pitched his camp within three miles of the north

<sup>1</sup> Ross states: "Contrary, however, to Tippoo's usual practice, they were well treated" (vol. ii., p. 73). This statement does not agree with Lord Cornwallis's letter to Tippoo dated February 11, 1772 (*ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 149). Mackenzie states: "On his arrival at this capital he was confined two months in a bullock stable, which resisted neither wind nor water, and on the wretched allowance of one measure of rice with ten cash per day to maintain himself and family. An infant son soon fell a victim to this barbarous treatment. Lieutenant Nash, with the rest of the garrison, underwent indignities and cruelties nearly similar to those which Mr. Chalmers was compelled to endure" (Mackenzie, vol. ii., pp. 139-140).

side of the rock. The force consisted of the 52nd and 72nd Regiments and three battalions of sepoys. The battery equipment consisted of four 18- and four 12-pounder iron guns with two howitzers, besides the battalion guns. Lord Cornwallis with the main army was encamped on the north of the fort five miles in the rear of Colonel Stuart's detachment, so as to support the attack, and also to cover the important convoy which was on its way from the Carnatic. Three columns were also so posted as to guard against the constant danger of being taken unawares in rear by sudden movements of the enemy through the defiles that lead from Seringapatarn towards Bangalore and the passes to the Carnatic.

The first work to be done was to cut a gun-road through all the tangled mass of jungle from the encampment of the detachment to the foot of the mountain. It consisted of bamboo, almost impervious to the axe, broken by rocks and hills of considerable height. Through the forest by infinite labour the troops cut their way, and over the rocks and hills they transported the guns. On the 10th the pickets, clambering up an immense precipice, occupied the mountain-side above it, and in the course of the night a few companies of Europeans with the 26th Battalion of sepoys formed a lodgment within 205 yards of the first wall in a situation which was fixed on for the upper batteries. Seven days of hard labour were spent before the two batteries of heavy guns below were able to open, but owing to the indirect fire due to their great elevation and the walls being built of massive stones the effect was slight. By the 19th, however, the two upper batteries were opened, and their continued fire soon made breaches in the outer and upper walls. They were, however, considered not sufficiently practicable, and all the next day the batteries operated with destructive powers against the walls. The breach widened, and the outer wall was easily brought to utter ruin. Lord Cornwallis had come from camp to watch the operation, and orders were issued for the assault next morning.

The grenadiers of **the** 52nd and flank companies of the 76th, led by Captain Gage, were to gain the eastern summit to the left, and cover the ascent of the main body; the Hon. Captain Monson with the light company of the 52nd was to clear the works towards the western hill on the right; Captain Robertson with the light companies of the 71st and 72nd Regiments "will move as much to the right of the breach as shall be possible, and make along the wall a short distance, to some huts, pass them, and ascend the hill by a path which will be found in the recess of the rock ; a guide, however, will attend to show this path. Captain Robertson will use the utmost expedition in getting to the top of the hill, where he will join Captain Gage, and will remain with him to cover the ascent of the main body."<sup>1</sup>

"The main body, under the direction of Major Fraser, assisted by Captain Hunter, and led by the Honourable Captain Lindsay, will consist of the seventy-first and seventy-second grenadiers, four battalion companies from the two regiments in camp, and four companies of native grenadiers are to move under cover of the parties to the right and left up the rock, opposite the European post, deliberately and slowly and keeping as collected and compact as possible, and are to have no other object in view than that of gaining the hill."<sup>2</sup>

When dawn broke on the 21st, dense wreaths of fogs rising from the swamps wrapped the mountain-side and rendered our guns of little service. It was about ten o'clock before the rays of an Eastern sun began to dispel the dense curtain, and the enemy were seen descending to defend the breaches. All the heavy guns opened upon them a well-directed and deadly fire. At eleven, on a signal of two guns being fired from the batteries, the flank companies in the order laid down, followed by the 52nd and 72nd Regiments, advanced to the assault. The grenadiers of the 52nd and the flank companies of the 76th, led by Captain Gage, rushed to the breach and mounted it while the band of the 52nd played "Britons, strike home." The enemy fled in panic,

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., pp. 165-166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

and the stormers scaled the rugged rock which towered above the breach, some here, some there, clutching at clumps of bamboo and bushes, and the citadel was occupied. When some of the stormers reached the top of the eastern summit, they saw a heavy column of infantry coming from the western hill to take them in flank and reinforce the citadel. But they were too late. The light companies under Captain Robertson, who had been ordered to follow a path among the rocks, met them, to their great surprise, and they fled panic-stricken. The British soldiers dashed on, firing as they went. As the Killedar approached the gate a shot killed him, and the assailants were borne with the tide of fugitives into the western citadel. Many of the garrison were slain, and numbers in endeavouring to escape lost their lives from the height of the precipices down which they attempted to descend. So Savendroog, reputed to be one of the strongest forts in India, was stormed in open day without the loss of a man; the Marathas had besieged it in vain for eighteen months. The "General After Orders/" issued December 22, 1791, opens thus :

" Lord Cornwallis thinks himself fortunate, almost beyond example, in having acquired, by assault, a fortress of so much strength and reputation, and of such inestimable value to the public interests, as Savendroog, without having to regret the loss of a single soldier on the occasion. He can only attribute the pusillanimity of the enemy, yesterday, to their astonishment, at seeing the good order, and determined countenance, with which the troops who were employed in the assault entered the breach, and ascended precipices that have hitherto been considered in this country as inaccessible. But although the resistance was so contemptible, he is not the less sensible that the behaviour of the grenadiers and light infantry of the 52nd, 71st, 72nd and 76th regiments, who led the assault, and who must have made the decisive impression upon the minds of the enemy, reflects the most distinguished honour upon their discipline and valour."<sup>1</sup>

The strong fort of Ootradroog, twelve miles west of

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 72.

Savendroog, was now the main obstacle to the advance on the capital, and on December 23 Colonel Stuart's detachment marched against it. The next day Lord Cornwallis moved the army to the pagoda of Magre, situated between the two forts.

Colonel Stuart, on his arrival before Ootradroog, sent an escort with a flag of truce to summon the place. "The flag was escorted to a proper distance, and the garrison beckoned the staff-officer who accompanied it to advance, until within sixty yards of the gate, when a fire of musketry opened from which he and the non-commissioned officer who bore the flag were so fortunate as to escape unhurt."<sup>1</sup> The chief engineer who accompanied the escort now proceeded to examine the ground, and on his report Colonel Stuart made his disposition to attack the lower fort and pettah next morning.

About ten o'clock the following day a detachment consisting of the 26th Battalion of Bengal sepoys, four battalion companies of the 52nd and 72nd Regiments, with two field-pieces and a proportion of artillerymen and pioneers, advanced under the command of Captain Richard Scott of the Bengal battalion to storm the pettah. On approaching the town, the Killedar sent to request a cessation of hostilities for two hours. This was granted on his promising that he would bring the garrison to submit.

"Treachery was soon suspected; the people on withdrawing their property from the pettah, were seen to range along the fortifications, pointing their guns and making every preparation for resistance; and as the place, independent of its natural advantages, was defended by seven strong walls at the only point where it was accessible, delay became highly dangerous."<sup>2</sup> Some shots fired from the fort confirmed the suspicion. The guns opened on the lower works, and the order was given to storm. The companies of the 72nd, led

1 Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 203-204. Dirom states : "The Killedar fired on the flag of truce" (Dirom, p. 74). Mackenzie says : "At this time, as on a former occasion, the Killedar of Ootradroog treated a summons sent by Lieut.-Colonel Stuart with contempt and threatened to fire on the flag, if it did not retire"<sup>M</sup> (Mackenzie, p. 169).

<sup>9</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 169.

by Lieutenant McInnes, escalated the pettah in an instant. Some companies of the 52nd, headed by Captain Zouch, entered somewhat on the right, and the sepoy's mounted the walls directly in front. After the capture of the pettah the troops formed a junction on its opposite side, and rushed on to the assault. Some of the gateways were burst open by the pioneers, but most of the ramparts were carried by escalade. To cover their retreat, the garrison let loose a herd of wild cattle, which charged down into the British ranks. "Several Europeans and Sepoy's, tossed in the air to a considerable height, received severe contusions; but the steady discipline of the troops overcame every impediment."<sup>1</sup> After four or five different walls had been taken and passed, the passage, which had been single, branched to the right and left. The latter path, "defended by two lofty walls, led by single steps cut in solid rock over the brow of a frightful precipice; the former passing through a natural arch of the rock, could not have been forced if guarded by a few resolute men, as it was not of width sufficient to admit troops by files. Through this latter passage, however, the assailants continued to advance; the road through the arch was but feebly defended, and the troops entered the upper works without having one man slain; two only were wounded by musket shot, but several were for a time disabled by the bullocks, and amongst them Captain Zouch was much bruised from a severe heave."<sup>2</sup>

The Killedar was taken prisoner; a number of the garrison were killed, but the majority, taking advantage of the ladders which had been planted at two different points, made their escape into the jungle. The Killedar, who was made a prisoner, mentioned that the garrison, on the arrival of the detachment, had mutinied, and that four hundred had deserted during the night. In the upper fort was found several hoards of grain, and in one immense chasm an inexhaustible reservoir of excellent water; and Cornwallis decided to occupy Ootradroog as an advanced depot during the coming operations against Seringapatam.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup>

*Ibid.*, p. 171.

After the fall of Savendroog Captain Welch and the Bengal army was ordered to advance and summon the hill-forts of Ramgeri and Shevanageri, which commanded the middle or direct road from Bangalore to Seringapatam. As the former refused to surrender, Welch immediately attacked and carried by assault the lower fort and pettah. "The rapidity of the attack alarmed the garrison and the Killedar instantly gave up the place, which was followed by the surrender of Sheria Gurry without any resistance."<sup>1</sup> The capture of these hill-forts by storm, hitherto regarded as a hopeless feat of arms, made a strong impression on the minds of the allies, and also of the enemy. A native chief who watched the storming of one of these heights crowned by a powerful battery said to the British officer standing by his side : "For friendship's sake, tell me candidly and confidentially, were those troops of yours made drunk previously to the assault ? for, whether I consider the desperate nature of the service, or the gaiety with which it was undertaken, I am alike at a loss to attribute their conduct to men in their sober senses."<sup>2</sup>

The capture of the strong hill-forts between Bangalore and Seringapatam increased the security of the convoys. On January 12 Colonel Floyd joined the army with reinforcements and the last convoy of stores. Two companies of Royal Artillery formed in England by men volunteering for service in the East Indies were with them. They were attached to the park. The same day the train arrived. The draft cattle, owing to the abundance of forage, were "in such high order that they literally came in with the heavy guns on a gallop." By protecting the inhabitants and paying in cash the British had secured the support of the countryside. They had also won the good-will of the Brinjaries—hereditary dealers in grain and salt—who moved about the country in large parties with cattle carrying their goods to different markets. Lord Cornwallis had engaged them in the service of the army, granting passes for above 50,000

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Stubbs, *History of the Bengal Artillery*, vol. i., p. 124.

bullocks, and they were constantly bringing forward supplies to an extent that could never have been accomplished by any arrangement of public carriage. As parties of them passed to and from the army they were most friendly with the troops and convoys they met on the road. " They had great pleasure in telling the news; said that the road was quite open, and showed their tickets from Lord Cornwallis. They spoke highly in his lordship's praise; and said ' He always kept his word with them ; and that they never went to him ill received, nor came away disappointed.'"<sup>1</sup> From the state of public credit and the large sums sent out from England Lord Cornwallis had now an overflowing treasury and ample supplies to support the myriads that composed and followed the allied armies.

On January 25, 1792, the Nizam's army, consisting of about 8,000 men under the command of his son, having joined the army, the confederate forces advanced from Ootradroog, and marching through the jungle among the hills, encamped in a valley close to the fort of Hooliadroog, which, though small, was inaccessible to assault. A good many shots were fired as the reconnoitring party approached, but the Killedar, on being told by Colonel Maxwell that " there was no time to deliberate, and if he delayed he should instantly commence the attack, surrendered without further resistance."<sup>2</sup> Hooliadroog, being garrisoned by a small party of sepoys, was established as an advanced post, being ten miles nearer to Seringapatam than Ootradroog.

On the last day of January, 1792, the British troops were drawn out for the reception of His Highness the son of the Nizam, who had been invited by Lord Cornwallis to see them under arms. The Governor-General, Hurry Punt, and the Indian Prince were on elephants arrayed in the most dazzling trappings, followed by a strong body-guard mounted on chargers, whose harness was covered with gold and silver scales. As the pomp passed down the line they took particular notice of the 19th Dragoons, of which they had all heard. They passed the sepoys at rather a quick pace, but went very

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 86,

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

**slowly** past the European corps, and seemed much struck by their appearance. "The troops all in new clothing, their arms and accoutrements bright and glittering in the sun, and themselves as well dressed as they could have been for a review in time of peace ; all order and silence; nothing heard or seen but the uniform sound and motion in presenting their arms, accompanied by the drums and music of the corps, chequered and separated by the parties of artillery extended at the drag-ropes of their guns."<sup>1</sup> It was the greatest display of England's strength till then witnessed in India.

The scene rapidly faded away before the sterner work in which the men were engaged. On the following morning the allied armies commenced their march from Hooliadroog to attack Tippoo's capital. The English army moved in three columns; the battery guns, tumbrels, and heavy carriages, on the main road, formed the centre column. Number two, the line of infantry and field-pieces, marched parallel to the battery train and on its right, that being the flank next to the enemy. Number three, to the left of the battery train, was the great mass of baggage carried on elephants, camels, bullocks, and coolies, and beyond them was an immense number of camp-followers.

On January 5 the armies of the allies, marching across the range of barren hills north-east of Seringapatam, arrived at their ground, which extended across a valley at the distance of six miles from Tippoo's fortified camp under the guns of his capital.

A small stream ran down the valley through the encampment of the allied armies. The right wing in the British army, which formed the front line, reached from the river along the rear of a cluster of huge rocks, called the French Rocks, to a large tank which covered the flank of the line. The park and the left wing extended from the other side of the stream to the verge of the barren hills, which afforded protection to the line. The reserve encamped about a mile to the rear, facing outwards, with the stores and baggage in the interval between. The Maratha and the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

Nizam's armies were somewhat **farther in the rear on each** side of the reserve.

On the morning of the 6th Tippoo's whole position was carefully reconnoitred from the top of the neighbouring height, which, though at a considerable distance, commanded a view of it through its whole extent from the right to the left. The ground they were surveying—a tract of land oblong in shape, three miles long by half a mile broad—was situated close to the north bank of the river, and almost parallel to the island. All along that long expanse was a wide "bound" hedge,<sup>1</sup> difficult to penetrate, and the approach to it rendered difficult by rice-fields, ravines, and intricate water-courses.<sup>2</sup> Six large redoubts, constructed on commanding ground within the "bound" hedge, added to the strength of Tippoo's position. His right was covered outside the hedge by the Lockany River and the great Carighat Hill, which he had strongly fortified after the British retirement in May, 1791. Within the hedge, not far from the two rivers, was the Sultan's redoubt, so called because near it were pitched the Sultan's tents, and it was under his own immediate order. So also were the two powerful redoubts near the hedge which covered his front. On the extreme left Tippoo's position was guarded by the Mosque redoubt and by Lally's redoubt in its rear. Some little distance below and to the right of Lally's was a powerful redoubt called Mahomed. Two of the Sultan's ablest officers, supported by his own European corps and by Lally's brigade under Monsieur Vigie, commanded the left of the lines. All these redoubts in what constituted Tippoo's first line were mounted with heavy cannon, and the Mysore army and its field artillery were posted so as to support them. The second line, parallel to it at a short distance behind, was formed by the fort which stood in the western extremity of the island, with its northern face, a mile in extent, protecting Tippoo's position, and the eastern

<sup>1</sup> A thick hedge of cactus and other thorny plants.

<sup>2</sup> Cornwallis to the Court of Directors (Camp before Seringapatam, March 4, 1792).

part of the island, fortified towards the northern part of the river by various redoubts and batteries, connected by a strong entrenchment with a deep ditch. In the first line there were 100 pieces of artillery, and in the fort and island there were at least three times that number of cannon, Tippoo had 5,000 cavalry and 40,000 to 50,000 infantry to put in action to defend his strong position. He had selected it because his sole object was to gain time. His father Hyder had chosen it and fortified it with redoubts when his capital was threatened by a similar confederacy, consisting of a large army of Marathas and a considerable force of the Nizam, commanded by him in person, and a detachment of British troops, who were bound to co-operate with the Nizam in accordance with the disgraceful treaty made by the Madras Government on November 12, 1766. Hyder, a past-master in the art of intrigue, got the Marathas to retire from the siege by the payment of a large sum, and he also, by the prompt payment of twenty lacs of rupees and a promise of more, got the Nizam to conclude with him a treaty of alliance, according to which they united their forces to exterminate the English from the Carnatic. Tippoo remembered how, during the operations which followed, he, then a lad of seventeen, marched on Madras with a body of horse, and plundered and burnt the country houses of the European residents. He was now playing the same game of intrigue as his father, and with a prospect of success. The Generals of the Peshwa and the Nizam were engaged in separate clandestine correspondence with him as to the terms on which they should desert the English. It was a matter of time, Tippoo considered, before he would reap the fruits of his crafty diplomatic efforts. He did not consider that Cornwallis would dare to attack his strongly-fortified position until the main body of the Marathas and the Bombay army reached him. By then the grand army would have wasted away from want of food and forage. He had, like his father, laid waste the country. But Tippoo's calculations were shattered by the prompt decisions of one man.

On the evening of February 6 Lord Cornwallis, after

receiving the report of the officer sent to reconnoitre, issued the following order at five o'clock : " The army marches in three divisions at seven this evening to attack the enemy's camp and lines." He states in his letter to the Court of Directors (" Camp before Seringapatam, March 4, 1792 ") that, taking into consideration the nature and strength of the fortifications of the camp, it was evident that an attack in daylight might be doubtful, and that the loss of a great number of our best soldiers would have been certain, whilst at the same time Tippoo had a retreat for his army so near and so well covered that he could hardly have been sanguine enough to hope that any advantage which it would have been possible to have gained in the day would have been decisive. He adds :

" I therefore determined to attack him in the night, and without loss of time; and as little use could be expected from our guns in the dark, and the nature of the ground between us and the enemy's camp would have rendered it extremely difficult to convey them, I resolved to march without artillery of any kind; and in such an enterprise neither our own nor the cavalry of the allies could afford any assistance."<sup>1</sup>

The decision was adventurous, but not rash. It shows the spirit which led Clive to cross the river at Plassey and Wolfe to scale the heights of Abraham. Cornwallis had now an army of hardy and efficient soldiers, who had proved their worth by the noble and gallant manner in which they had stormed forts considered impregnable. Lord Cornwallis took a legitimate risk—that is, a risk commensurate with the advantage to be gained—because he had confidence in the bulldog tenacity and impetuous courage of the British soldier. Great was the astonishment of the allies when they were told that a British force numbering about 3,000 Europeans and 6,000 native fighting men had gone forward to attack without cannon an army of 50,000 in a well-fortified camp, and their surprise was increased when they learnt that Lord Cornwallis had accompanied a division in order, as they expressed it, to fight like a private soldier.

\* *Ibid.*

The centre division which Lord Cornwallis accompanied was under Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart as second in command. It consisted of the 52nd, 71st, and 74th Regiments under the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Knox; the 4th Brigade under Major Russell, consisting of four Bengal Native Infantry Regiments; the 2nd and 21st Madras Native Infantry; and Lieutenant Dowse's company of Pioneers. Four officers of artillery, 50 men, and 150 lascars accompanied it.

The left column, under Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, consisted of the 72nd Regiment; the 5th Brigade under Lieutenant-Colonel David Baird, consisting of four Madras Native Infantry Regiments; and Ensign Stokoe's company of Pioneers. Two subalterns of artillery, 30 men, and 50 lascars accompanied it. The right column, under Major-General Medows, consisted of the 36th and 75th Regiments under Lieutenant-Colonel Nesbitt; the 3rd Brigade under Lieutenant-Colonel Cockerell, consisting of four Bengal Native Infantry Regiments; the 22nd Madras Native Infantry under Captain Oram; and Lieutenant Lennon's company of Pioneers. A Captain with 2 subalterns, 50 artillerymen, and 150 lascars accompanied this column. A detail of engineers, officers, and a proportion of scaling ladders accompanied each division. The artillerymen were furnished with hammers and spikes to spike if they could not use the enemy's guns.<sup>1</sup>

On February 6, at the appointed time, half an hour after eight o'clock, the troops moved on in silence. It was a calm evening, and the slanting rays of a full moon lighted their course. After a march of about two hours across the country the centre column came in touch with the enemy's grand guard, a body of cavalry who were escorting a party of rocket men that were on the way to disturb our camp, as they had done the previous night. They galloped back to their lines to announce the near approach of the enemy, while the rocket party, steadily falling back, harassed the column by the discharge of numberless rockets, and endeavoured to impede its march. But in perfect silence it went on; every man by a single impulse lengthened his step.

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs, vol. i., p. 140.

Twice was the winding Lockany that covered a great part of the enemy's right crossed. "Whilst wading the second time," the column "was severely galled by heavy discharges of musketry poured from a hedge, behind which the Sultan's first line had been posted. So close and frequent were the flashes, that the atmosphere was for awhile in one continual blaze."<sup>1</sup>

The opposite bank was reached, and the leading division, approaching close to the hedge, gave one volley, and with a tremendous shout the whole column rushed on with the bayonet. "The ardour of the troops rendered the daring exertions of the pioneers of no avail. Some pressed through, some crept under, whilst others bounded over; all mingled with the enemy."<sup>2</sup> After a murderous hand-to-hand combat the enemy were driven back and became a disordered mob of fugitives. The advanced companies, pushing their way through them, made straight for the river, passing by Tippoo's abandoned tent. The Sultan, on hearing that the hedge had been penetrated and his troops were in flight, mounted his horse, dashed in hot haste to the ford, crossed the river, and reached the fort. The way to the river now lay through a tract of rice-fields, the light was uncertain, and in the tumult of a night attack a heavy body of the enemy pressed through the advanced companies and separated them into two bodies.<sup>3</sup>

The first body that reached the ford consisted of the battalion company of the 52nd Regiment, which led the column: (a) The grenadiers of the 52nd, 71st, and 74th Regiments; and (b) the light company of the 52nd Regiment, commanded by the Hon. Captain Monson, who was the senior officer. "They crossed the river under the very walls of the fort without opposition; and had it not been found that the east gate of Seringapatam was shut, and the bridge drawn up, that night might have put an end to the war, as Captain Lindsay pushed into the sortie<sup>4</sup> (the entrance which leads through the glacis into the fort) in hopes of entering the gates with the fugitives."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> I.e., sally-port.

<sup>2</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>6</sup> Dirom, p. 154.

Led by the "Harcarrahs," or spies, they proceeded along the glacis through an extensive bazaar which stretched towards the south bank of the Caveri. "The only serious opposition made to this handful of troops was by a small redoubt at the end of the street, from the gorge of which two guns played on the assailants under cover of musketry. The free use of the bayonet not only cleared the street, but obtained possession of the redoubt also."<sup>1</sup> The redoubt defended a ford across the southern branch of the river, and a part of the troops took post in it and at a bridge over a canal that ran nearly across the island.

The second body, under Lieut.-Colonel Knox, consisting of the light companies of the 71st and 74th Regiments, commanded by Captains Robertson and Knox, reached the same northern ford which had been passed about five minutes before by the first party. Their passage, however, was now rendered more difficult owing to the ford being choked with the number of the enemy flying into the island, and a crowd of cart followers, numerous tumbrels, and bullocks. Through them the small party pushed their way with the bayonet, and on reaching the opposite bank, Knox, instead of continuing along the glacis, turned to the left, and proceeding towards the eastern angle of the island, they passed the Daulat Bagh, or Royal Garden, and, guided by two French prisoners, they arrived at the western gate of the pettah or town of Shahr-Ganjam. It was found shut, but was soon forced open, and the French prisoners guided the party through the town to the eastern gate, which led to the lines and batteries on the northern branch of the river and commanded the eastern ford opposite to the Pagoda Hill.

Knox took post in the street leading to the gate. His party consisted of only one hundred men, but he expected to be joined by other troops of the First Division. The Grenadiers' March was beat as a signal, but soon there came a louder sound—the thunder of the guns on the river. Knox was swift to infer what had happened. Maxwell's column had penetrated the enemy's camp, and the batteries were

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, vol. ii., p. 199.

striving to prevent his troops crossing the river. He sent promptly three parties from his small band to take the batteries in reverse, and he remained himself at the gateway with only thirty men to resist any attempt made from the pettah to dislodge them.

The enemy, completely surprised by the parties which moved down to the river, unable to judge of their numbers in the night, and strongly impressed with the terror of the bayonet in the hands of the British soldier, deserted the lines and batteries, which were all open to the rear, and dispersed. Some of them fled to the eastern gate of the pettah, where they were made prisoners, and from one of them Knox learnt that several Europeans were confined in an adjacent hovel. "A party was immediately sent, who released twenty-seven half-starved wretches in heavy irons; among them was Mr. Randal Cadman, a midshipman, taken ten years before by Suffren, and by him delivered to Hyder."<sup>1</sup>

A third party reached the river soon after Knox had crossed. It consisted of the seven battalion companies of the 52nd Regiment commanded by Captain Hunter, and some companies of the 14th Bengal Native Infantry. The 52nd, marching through the camp in regular order, reached the river between the two fords, where they crossed opposite to the Daulat Bagh, and after forcing the river gate took post in that royal palace, the centre of a beautiful garden surrounded by a high though slender brick wall. Hunter thought he was the first to cross into the island, and he ordered the Grenadiers' March to be played in order to attract attention and bring him substantial reinforcement. But the enemy, as soon as they discovered what had taken place, surrounded the garden in vast numbers, and opened fire on it from some guns in the fort and a redoubt on the bank of the river. Hunter realised that when the light of day came he could no longer hold his post, for the garden was perfectly exposed to the guns of the whole eastern face of the citadel. He therefore determined to send a mes-

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 157.

senger to Lord Cornwallis to inform him of his situation. Lieutenant Dowse gallantly volunteered for this perilous service. He crossed the river, but was soon forced to recross it, driven back by a party of horse. Two anxious hours were passed in the garden, when morning began to bring light to them, and they saw a party of the enemy with two field-pieces on the opposite bank of the river. Hunter divined what would be the full effect of their attack. He at once quitted the garden, rushed with his corps into the river, crossed it under a heavy fire from the fort, and attacked and defeated the party before they had time to unlimber their guns. Hunter then returned through the camp and joined Cornwallis with his men at a critical moment.

When the 52nd Regiment and the 14th Bengal Battalion, who were directed to follow the flank companies in regular order, approached the "bound" hedge, they came under a very heavy fire. The 14th Battalion, whose commander was killed, fell into disorder in taking ground to the right. The leading grenadier company and two other companies with the colours penetrated the hedge and acted with the 52nd during the day. Lord Cornwallis, on seeing the 14th thrown into disorder, sent the 71st Regiment forward. They penetrated the "bound" hedge, followed by the remainder of the 14th and ten other Bengal battalions. Lieut. - Colonel Stuart, who commanded the centre division of the column, then moved with these corps to the left to attack the enemy's right. On approaching the Sultan's redoubt, they found a large body of horse prepared to oppose them. "Major Dalrymple formed the 71st Regiment, and gave them orders to fire one round, to load and shoulder. This order was executed with great steadiness; and, on the clearing up of the smoke occasioned by the volley, the horse were seen at a distance scattered over the field."<sup>1</sup> The corps advancing to the storm of the redoubt found it abandoned. Leaving two companies of the 71st Regiment under the command of Captain Sibbald, a company of the 28th Bengal Native Infantry with an officer, and fourteen

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16a

Bengal artillerymen for its defence, Stuart moved forward, following the direction of the enemy's tents as his guide. On approaching the extreme right of the camp, he found a line of troops drawn up to oppose him. Colonel Stuart had just ordered a volley to be given and an immediate charge with the bayonet, when he discovered that it was Maxwell's division which had accomplished the work assigned to it—the turning of Tippoo's right.<sup>1</sup>

Tippoo considered his right impregnable owing to it being protected by the Carighat Hill, steep and of great height, defended by a double breastwork in front of a strong redoubt lately completed by the Sultan on its summit. A considerable body of infantry, but without artillery, was stationed for its defence. Maxwell's division clambered up the hill, and the enemy, taken by surprise and their commander mortally wounded, were quickly driven from their posts, and the redoubt was gallantly carried by the flank companies of the 72nd Regiment, with David Baird, always impetuous in battle-time, at the head. Leaving a party in possession of the redoubts, the division descended to the Pagoda Hill, a lower spur of the same range, and then down towards the encampment. When they reached a water-course which winds round the base of the hill, they were greatly galled by a party of the enemy concealed behind its high bank. They crossed it, and dispersing the sheltered troops, they pushed on to the River Lockany, which they forded under a heavy fire from the right of Tippoo's line posted within the "bound" hedge. They forced their way into the enemy's camp, and whilst marching through it they suddenly found themselves confronting Stuart's corps, and they mistook each other, as related, for enemies.

The united forces were now near the river, and a vigorous fire was opened on them from batteries on the island opposite. The river was deep and swift, and many a man of the 71st and 72nd lost his life in attempting to cross. At last Baird with about twenty men managed to reach the opposite bank, but with their ammunition soaked not a cartridge was

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. ii., p. 224.

fit for use. They must trust to their bayonets to clear the enemy's line. At this critical moment the firing ceased. The party sent by Knox had attacked the batteries in the rear and cleared them. The rest of Maxwell's column moved up the river, and, having discovered a ford, passed into the island, followed soon after by the troops under Stuart. The three forces were now united at the eastern end of the island, and Lieut.-Colonel Stuart took command as senior officer of the whole forces. The next morning he was joined by the leading companies of Cornwallis's column, who had first entered the island and taken post on the southern side. They had done good service by keeping the enemy in check during the night. When morning came, an officer was sent to report to Cornwallis that British troops had established a footing on the island of Seringapatam.

Lord Cornwallis had spent a long and anxious night on horseback. After sending forward the front and centre divisions of his column, he ordered the 74th Regiment and the 2nd and 21st Battalions of Madras sepoys to be formed near the Sultan's redoubt. He expected every moment to be joined by Medows, according to directions given. About two hours before day began to break, seven companies of the 52nd Regiment and three companies of the 14th Bengal Battalion under Hunter, after their dash across the river, joined him. They had barely time to replace their wet cartridges when a large compact force of the enemy marched resolutely against the few British troops. There was no doubt as to their overwhelming number as they came forward with loud cries; the four corps stood firmly on their ground, returned their fire, and when they approached near, Cornwallis gave the order, and they charged them with the bayonet and drove them back. Again and again they attacked, and were beaten and driven back after a sharp tussle. "If General Medows be above ground this will bring him/" said Cornwallis; but Medows did not come, and day was approaching fast when the enemy gave their last attack. Two hours of fierce fighting against superior numbers had brought the gallant band almost to the limit

of their endurance. Cornwallis early in the action had been wounded in the hand, and the number of casualties of his staff and among the troops had been considerable. The ground occupied by the gallant band was commanded by the guns of the fort, and at daylight they would be exposed to their fire and also run the risk of being surrounded, so Cornwallis thought it necessary to move his four corps towards the Pagoda Hill, leaving a detachment in possession of the Sultan's redoubt. On approaching the fort on the hill he met Medows, whose column was on its way to support him.

Medows had during the night been to many ills a prey. The route of the intended march of the column was across a space of country which, though apparently open, was cut by several difficult ravines and an irrigation canal which ran through it. It followed so tortuous a course that the column had to cross it three or four times; and this not only led to considerable delay, but caused the guides to lose the proper direction of the march and to carry the head of the column farther west than was intended. Cornwallis states that it was not his intention that the Ead-gah redoubt should be attacked, and directions were accordingly given that the right column should penetrate the enemy's line about half a mile to the east of the Ead-gah.<sup>1</sup> The column penetrated into the camp not far from the Mosque, and Lieut.-Colonel Nesbitt, who led it, meeting with no opposition, and not finding the enemy's camp, the extremity of which was at a considerable distance to the east, determined, agreeably to the orders of the day,<sup>2</sup> to advance against the Ead-gah redoubt, one of the posts within the enemy's lines which defended

<sup>1</sup> \* The commanding nature of the ground on which the Ead-gah stands had induced Tippoo to construct a redout upon that eminence, but though within the bound-hedge, as it was not less than half a mile distant from the front of his army, and I had received certain information that the work was uncommonly strong, and as I likewise conceived that from its advanced situation it would soon be evacuated if we should succeed in routing the army, it was not my intention that it should be attacked " (Ross, vol. ii., p. 527).

<sup>2</sup> The order was as follows : " If the right attack is made to the westward of Somarrjet, the troops of that attack should, after entering the enemy's lines, turn to the left. But if the attack is made to the eastward of Somarpet, the troops should turn to the right to dislodge the enemy from all their posts on the left of their position " (Stubbs, i. 140).

**the** left of their positions. He wheeled his division to the right, and, crossing the canal, ascended the hill. As they approached near to the redoubt, the enemy poured a heavy fire of grape and musketry on their ranks. The gleam of this discharge gave a momentary view of the enemy and their post. The redoubt and covered-way were full of men, and troops were seen drawn up to the right and left, but chiefly to the left of the redoubt. Six companies of the 36th advanced to oppose a corps of 360 Europeans under Monsieur Vigie drawn up on the left, while the flank companies of the 36th and 76th Regiments charged forward regardless of the enemy's fire. They drove them from the covered-way, but owing to the storm of bullets that fell on them from the multitude that manned the inner works, they repeatedly but in vain made gallant efforts to pass the ditch. Lieutenant Stuart, who had charge of scaling ladders, was killed while with calm bravery he was pressing forward to the ditch; several lascars who carried them fell at the same time. Without ladders it was impossible to enter the redoubt. And when it became evident that the ditch could not be passed and the position could not be long retained, the grenadiers of the 76th, by a stroke of good luck, found a pathway left across the ditch which led from the end of the mosque into the redoubt. Officers and men instantly crowded it. A slight gateway which closed the sortie or entrance was soon forced, and after a tussle, fought with great courage by both combatants, a large traverse between the gateway and the body of the redoubt was captured. Driven to the inner circle of the redoubt, the retreat of the garrison was cut off. There was nothing they could do but surrender, or die at their post. On firing and turning one of their guns towards the gorge, they swept the traverse crowded with assailants with a storm of projectiles. The only hope of preventing a bloody disaster was an immediate attack with the bayonet. The men were re-formed by their officers, and headed by Major Dirom and Captain Wight they entered the gorge. No force assailed them. But they had scarcely advanced when the gun facing the gorge opened suddenly on them with grape, and a heavy

fire of musketry was poured on them from the parapet. Fearful was the execution in that narrow space. Most of the advancing party fell, and the few left retired in confusion to the traverse. Here the men were rallied, and again led by Major Dirom and Captain Wight they rushed up the gorge, and so rapid was the run that the gunners were shot down before the piece could be reloaded, and the enemy, surprised by the sudden onslaught, broke as the grenadiers attacked them with the bayonet. The ladders had by this time been planted from the ditch, and the assailants, ascending the ramparts, entered the redoubt from every direction. As there was no way to retreat, the slaughter was very great. The commandant—a soldier of high renown, who also commanded Tippoo's left wing—and about four hundred of the brave garrison fell in the defence. The loss on the British side was eleven officers and about eighty men, mostly belonging to the 36th Regiment of that corps, and the flank companies of the 76th Regiment, being the troops which formed the First Division of the column.

Leaving four companies of the 36th Regiment and a battalion of sepoys for the defence of the redoubt, Medows formed his troops again in their original order and wheeled to the left in order to join Cornwallis as soon as possible. The column moved on, guided by a deserter who had given himself up at the redoubt, till it came close to two redoubts—one known as Lally's post and the other as Mahomed's redoubt—when the rattle of musketry suddenly ceased, and the quiet of the night was unbroken except by a few cannon-shot from one of the redoubts, which was only some hundred yards in front of the column. Major Dirom (Medows\* Adjutant-General and the historian of the campaign) writes: " Being now in possession of the enemy's principal redoubt in this quarter, which must probably oblige them to evacuate the other posts on the left of their position, and the loss sustained having been very considerable, it became an object of deliberation whether it might be more advisable to storm these redoubts also and get directly to the island; or, by leaving them to the right, avoid the further delay which

might be occasioned by this attack. The latter measure was adopted. The general resolved to get into the track by which Lord Cornwallis had marched, and to advance and support his Lordship in that direction."<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, who was with the centre column that day, writes as follows: "An unhappy council of war, in order to avoid delay, after some little deliberation determined to make a circuit to the left" It was a most unfortunate decision. Major Beatson, in his report of the operations of the right column, states that from the point where the column counter-marched, fifteen minutes would have sufficed to have brought it to where the centre column was. According to the determination of the council of war, the division recrossed the hedge and canal. Owing to the number of ravines and swampy rice-fields that had to be crossed<sup>2</sup> and the misleading of the guides, the division proceeded too far to the left, missed the track of the centre column, and reached the Carighat or Pagoda Hill without receiving any news of Cornwallis. Medows halted the column and sent officers with a few troopers to endeavour to obtain intelligence. He returned without obtaining any information of the centre column. Soon after, heavy firing was heard in that part of the camp between the fort and the hill. Medows at once counter-marched, and was advancing to support the troops where the firing indicated they were engaged when day broke, and not far from the foot of the Pagoda Hill he met the centre column. Cornwallis, in a moment of irritation, asked, "Where General Medows had been disposing of himself," and one of the bravest of men was wounded to the quick.

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, pp. 150-151.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Cornwallis writes: ' \* Finding great difficulty from swamps and ravines in marching within the bound hedge, he returned to the outside of it " (Camp before Seringapatam, March 4, 1792). This is a strange error for Cornwallis to have made. Dirom and Mackenzie both state the rice-swamps were outside the " bound " hedge. Cornwallis's letter to the court misled Mill, who writes: "And finding it very difficult, from swamps and ravines, to march within the hedge, he proceeded to the outside, and marched along its front to the Carighaut Hill: where he had not long remained, «when his attention was fixed by the firing of the attack upon the Commander-in-Chief " (Mill, vol. v., p. 308).

So ended the operations of the daring night attack. The result was on the whole satisfactory. The centre and left division had obtained a firm footing on the island, and the right division, commanded by Medows, had by the capture of the Ead-gah redoubt rendered it most difficult for the enemy to remain in force on the north side of the river. However, they had still possession of the redoubts between the Mosque and the Sultan's redoubts, and an hour before day began parties of the enemy, scattered by an unexpected attack in the dark, began to assemble from every quarter around the Sultan's redoubt in order to recover it. The redoubt was exposed not only to the musket fire of the enemy posted behind some rocks, but it was also within reach of the guns of the fort, and the gorge was open towards the fort. "The party put into it for its defence, commanded by Captain Sibbald, consisted of his own and another company of the 71st regiment (the two about eighty men), two lieutenants, and fourteen men of the artillery, and a subaltern, with fifty Bengal Sepoys; in all one hundred and fifty." <sup>1</sup> Owing to the guns of the fort, no reinforcement could be sent to the small garrison.

At daylight on the 7th the enemy opened a crushing fire on the Sultan's redoubt from the fort. The garrison attempted to close the gorge by broken litters and a gun-carriage, but no sooner was this perceived by the fort than they opened their guns on the gorge and sent three field-pieces to the rocks, which were within pistol-shot of the work. The slender barricade was soon destroyed, and the enemy, seeing the gorge clear, rushed to the assault. In vain did they attempt to force their way through the little band which lined the entrance. Repulsed with a considerable loss, they fell back in confusion behind the rocks. Heavy also was the loss to the besieged. Sibbald, their heroic commander, foremost in defending the gorge, was killed by a cannon-shot soon after the repulse was complete. Major Shelly, one of Lord Cornwallis's Aides-de-Camp, who had been sent to the redoubt on duty and was unable to return, now took command. It was, indeed, a critical moment, when the bravest soldier might well be fearful

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, p. 170,

of the fate of the besieged. In consequence of the sultry heat the wounded lay dying of thirst, for there was not a drop of water in the place. Several of the small band were much scorched by the explosion of a quantity of powder. The enemy sheltered behind the rocks around the redoubt, constantly reinforced, kept up an unrelenting fire of musketry. The ammunition of the besieged was getting very low when an officer observed two loaded bullocks in the ditch. He judged them to be two of the oxen that carried spare ammunition for the regiments. Fortunately this proved correct. They had strayed during the confusion of the night into the ditch. Rushing forth, the men seized them, and scarcely had they filled their cartridge boxes when the enemy were seen advancing again to the attack.

Tippoo, seeing from the first the repulse of his troops, exclaimed, "Havel no faithful servants to retrieve my honour?" A body of cavalry at least two thousand strong responded to their monarch's call. About one o'clock they advanced in order to the redoubt, but before they came within reach of musketry they halted, and three or four hundred dismounted and drawing their sabres rushed towards the gorge determined to carry the work by storm. The besieged reserved their fire until they approached the opening, and then, concentrating their aim on the head of the column, they sent volleys of musketry on the foremost. Many were brought down, and the rest fell into confusion and withdrew. Tippoo, however, was determined to retake the redoubt. An hour later he sent the remains of Lally's brigade headed by Europeans to capture it. The survivors of the heroic band expected a mortal struggle, but the fresh assailants had advanced but a little way from the rocks when, a few of them falling, they hesitated, got into disorder, and went off. The Sultan's redoubt was not to be won. About four in the afternoon the fire from behind the rocks slackened, and soon after the enemy began to retire from their post and return to the island. As they withdrew, a part of the garrison rushed out and brought from a pond close by water for their comrades who lay wounded on the ground in that small enclosure.

Among them lay dead two officers and nineteen privates—a loss not great in number, but to be estimated as considerable when we remember that the garrison consisted of six officers only, of whom two were killed and three wounded. Out of eighty men of the 71st, fourteen men of the artillery, and fifty Bengal sepoys, nineteen were killed and twenty-two severely wounded. A small body of warriors had defied for the space of a whole day the efforts of a large body of disciplined infantry acting under the support of the guns of their fort. The defence of the Sultan's redoubt is one of those memorable episodes in the history of our Indian Empire which serve to illustrate how it was acquired by the pluck and tenacity of the British soldier and the bravery and devotion of the sepoys.

On the evening of the 7th Lord Cornwallis issued the following order: "The conduct and valour of the officers and soldiers of this army have often merited Lord Cornwallis' encomiums, but the zeal and gallantry which were so successfully displayed last night in the attack of the enemy's whole army in a position that had cost him so much time and labour to fortify can never be sufficiently praised; and his satisfaction on an occasion which promises to be attended with most substantial advantages has been greatly heightened by learning from the commanding officers of divisions that this meritorious behaviour was universal throughout all ranks to a degree that has rarely been equalled." \*

In the pettah or suburb town of Shar-Gan, within about fifteen hundred yards of the outworks of the fort held by one European regiment and two battalions of sepoys, was the Sultan's new palace, which stood towards the centre of the Lai Bagh. A fine avenue of Cyprus trees connected the palace with the tomb of Hyder. The upper part of the palace was occupied by the officers; the lower portion and the Choultries or loggias round Hyder's tomb, which furnished pleasant retreat for priests and pilgrims, were occupied by the European corps. Avenues of Cyprus intersecting each other in every direction divided the vast garden into plots of

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, p. 212.

different shapes, and in these plots, as in the garden of Eden, grew every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.<sup>1</sup> The garden covered the east end of the island, and owing to the exigencies of war, the whole corps of engineers encamped in the centre of it. And the Royal garden afforded materials for the siege. " Assisted by a division of lascars, and of European and native pioneers, upwards of two thousand men daily reduced the several plots of planting, with the rows of Cyprus by which they were enclosed, to mere waste."<sup>2</sup>

The prompt preparations for commencing the siege led Tippoo to fear that he would be again vigorously attacked whilst his troops were scattered and dispersed after their late defeat. On the evening of the 8th he sent for Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, whom he had detained contrary to the terms of the capitulation of Coimbatore. " They found him sitting under the fly of a small tent (the roof without the walls) pitched on the south glacis of the fort, apparently much dejected, very plainly dressed, and with only a few attendants. After giving them the welcome tidings of their intended release, he asked Lieut. Chalmers, who had commanded in Coimbatore, whether he was not related to Lord Cornwallis, and an officer of considerable rank in our army. On being answered in the negative, he then asked whether he should see his Lordship on going to camp; and being told he probably should have that honour, requested him to take charge of two letters on the subject of peace, which he said he had been very anxious to obtain ever since the commencement of the war, as it was not his intention to break with the English; and requested his assistance in effecting that important object."<sup>3</sup> Tippoo further expressed a wish that Lieutenant Chalmers " would return with the

<sup>1</sup> "The Laul Baug appeared a princely nursery for the produce of Mysore ; trees bearing apples, oranges, guavas, grapes, plantains, cocoanuts, beetlenuts; as also sandal-wood, sugar-cane, with cotton and indigo plants, rose from out the several enclosures; and paddy, raggy, choulum, chewaree, nachine, coultie, with various other species of pease, grains and pulses, might be seen in different directions. Plants of mulberry too, from the extraordinary attention with which they were treated, discovered that the Sultaun had set his mind on the manufacture of silk " (Mackenzie, pp. 215-216).

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie, p. 219

<sup>3</sup> Dirom, p. 189.

**answer**; and told **him** their baggage should be sent after them ; gave him **a** present of two shawls and five hundred rupees **and** ordered horses and attendants to go with them to camp." Chalmers and Nash and the few other Europeans that had been taken prisoners with them reached camp in the evening, and the following morning Chalmers waited on Lord Cornwallis with the letters from Tippoo. They again requested that Vakeels might be received from him to open **a** negotiation for peace. But whilst suing for peace, Tippoo determined by **a** blow to destroy the mainspring of the British army and the Confederacy. The spies had stated that the headquarters of Lord Cornwallis, known by its distinguishing flag, was pitched a little to the left in the rear of the Carighat Hill in a somewhat exposed situation. A few daring men might make a dash at it and slay the Governor-General. It was a common custom in the East to end a revolution or a war by the assassination of the leader. On the morning of the 8th, before the day that Tippoo sent for Chalmers, he summoned to his presence the chief officers of his crack cavalry corps known as the stable horse or guards, and harangued them "on the importance of the enterprise with which they were charged, and the confident certainty of an early and glorious termination of the war, if they could only rid him of one individual; the officers all solemnly pledged themselves not to return without executing the service, and received the betel from the Suldaun's own hand."<sup>1</sup> The same forenoon the corps were seen marching from their encampment down the south side of the river. But their march did not attract much notice or raise any suspicion as to their destination. They crossed at a ford six miles below the island, and by making a circuit they also crossed the north-east extremity of the Carighat Hill and arrived by daybreak on the 10th in the rear of the left wing of the English camp undiscovered, and entered between the English camp and **that of the Nizam**. Owing to the similarity in uniform, they **were thought by** the British pickets **and rear-guards to belong to the Hyderabad** force. "They lounged on, **until they**

<sup>1</sup> Wilks, vol. iii., pp. 236-237.

approached the park of artillery, and asked some gun lascars with apparent indifference, for the tent of the burra sahib, or commander."<sup>1</sup> Supposing the commandant of artillery to be meant, the lascars pointed to his tent. Drawing their sabres, the Mysoreans instantly rushed at full gallop towards it, cutting down all they met on their route, but their daring charge was checked by the fire of a small party of sepoys and recruits who were encamped in the rear of the park, and turned out with alacrity. The daring horsemen swiftly dispersed, and got away across the hills with very little loss. As this was the second attempt made against his life during the war, Lord Cornwallis, who always declined to have any guard over his own tent, except a couple of native troopers from the Governor-General's body-guard, was now persuaded to have a Captain's guard at night from one of the European regiments.

After withdrawing his force to the coast, General Abercromby had proceeded to Bombay, where the duties of his high office demanded his presence. He, however, in November returned to Tellicherry, bringing with him a new battering train, a fresh supply of ammunition and stores, and drafts and recruits for completing the corps. Towards the close of November the Bombay army quitted their cantonments and assembled at Cannanore to take part in the ensuing campaign. According to the orders of Lord Cornwallis, they were to act again from the same quarter. Once more they had to make their way through forests and hills and scale the great mountain barrier which divides the Mysore plateau from the Malabar coast. On December 5 they set forth northwards towards the Poodicherram Ghaut, and two days later they crossed in boats the stream on which Iliacore stands, as it was not fordable owing to recent rain. From Iliacore the march continued through woods and over hills for twenty-five miles, when "the ascent commences up the great hill which is particularly called the *Ghaut*, the pitch or steepest part of which is the last two miles to the summit."\* The trees, of an enormous size, were difficult to fell and **clear**

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 237.

<sup>2</sup>

*Dirom*, p. 90.

from the road made through them. But for these trees holding the ropes and tackle it would have been impossible to hoist and lower the guns. " On the 18th of January, the whole of the artillery, amounting in all to eighty-six carriages, with the usual proportion of powder, cannon shot, musquet ammunition, and a provision of forty days' rice for the fighting men, carried on bullocks, was above the Ghaut,"<sup>1</sup> Thirty miles remained to be traversed through intermediate rugged valleys before the foot of the Sedaseer Ghaut was reached. The march lay through the territory of the Raja of Coorg, which stretched along the very summit of the western Ghaut, and owing to his friendly aid the army, provided with the battering train and supplies, descended from the Ghaut, whose slope was gradual, and made their first march towards the Mysore country on January 22. Two days later General Abercromby received orders from Lord Cornwallis to place his heavy artillery in a secure post at the top of the Ghauts, and to hold his corps in readiness to move, lightly equipped in every respect, at the shortest notice.

The heavy guns and their stores were sent back to the summit of the Ghaut, where they were placed in batteries constructed for the defence of the pass. On the day of his arrival in the neighbourhood of Seringapatam, Cornwallis sent further instructions to Abercromby " to march without delay and occupy as strong a position as he could find on the south side of the Eratore ford, at the distance of between thirty and forty miles from hence, and which had been described as one of the best fords upon the river."<sup>2</sup>

On February 8 General Abercromby, having sent back the sick to the hospital at Poodicherram, and leaving a detachment strongly posted at the foot of the Sedaseer Ghaut, marched according to the orders he had received. Three days after the Bombay army crossed the Caveri at Eratore, a good ford about thirty miles above Seringapatam. Tippoo had sent a corps of cavalry to harass them on their march, and on the 13th they broke into the baggage and captured some part of it. Next morning the enemy's horse hovered round

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>

*Selections*, p. 47.

**them**, and shortly before noon, as the first line came to a bend in the road, they saw in front of them a large force of cavalry. Great was the alarm. The line was halted and formed for action, when an officer rode up to them and informed them that the force consisted of our cavalry under Colonel Floyd, a large body of the Nizam's and the Maratha horse, and a battalion of sepoys which Lord Cornwallis had sent to meet them on the march. Tippoo's corps of cavalry which had been sent to harass them were completely foiled, and on February 16<sup>1</sup> the Bombay army joined Lord Cornwallis without further loss or interruption on the march. It consisted of four European regiments (one the 1st Bombay European Regiment) and seven battalions of sepoys, a very important reinforcement for the service of the siege.

All the necessary measures had been taken in the meantime to quicken the preparations for the commencing of the siege. The besiegers had found ample material to make a sufficient supply of fascines and gabions, and everything was in readiness to deliver the attack.

Cornwallis had at first proposed to make the principal attack against the east face of the fort from the island, but from the information he received from some of Tippoo's Europeans who had come over to us and our own careful reconnoitring he discovered that it was very strongly fortified on the island side. He therefore resolved, "after the most mature consideration," to relinquish the attack from the island against the east face, and to carry on that across the north branch of the river against the north face of the fort. The weakness of the wall, the shallowness of the ditch, and the incomplete state of part of the glacis in that quarter would, as Lord Cornwallis suggests, have afforded him sufficient grounds for that resolution. The difficulties of establishing communications to the breaches across the north branch of the river was the main objection to it. Cornwallis, however, states that he was "further encouraged to adopt it by having ascertained that it would at this season of the year be practicable to throw the greatest part of the

<sup>1</sup> Lord Cornwallis states February 15.

water of the Caveri out of the two branches that form the island of Seringapatam, by repairing and improving a dam that goes across the river a few miles above the island, which seemed to be an ancient work, and constructed, like several others on the Caveri, for the purpose of forcing part of the current into canals, and have been cut with great skill and labour, to furnish water for the cultivation of a long tract of land on both sides of the river."<sup>1</sup>

Having determined to attack from the north, Lord Cornwallis gave instructions to strengthen further our posts on the island. This object having been accomplished on the night of the 18th, a considerable number of gabions, fascines, and pickets were carried over the river from the island to Brown's redoubt. This redoubt, situated a mile to the north of Seringapatam, was to be used as a depot. Below it some fifteen hundred yards from the northern face of the fort, and built for the defence of the centre of the Sultan's camp, was Mahomed's redoubt. It was determined to carry on the approaches from this large redoubt. On the afternoon of the 19th orders were issued for opening the trenches. In order to distract the enemy's attention, Lord Cornwallis also directed that an attack was to be made that night on Tippoo's encampment on the south of the river.

About 9 p.m. a brigade of His Majesty's 71st and 13th Bengal Native Infantry under Major Dalrymple marched from the island, and crossed the south bank of the river. After making a detour of several miles over rice-swamps and broken ground, they arrived within a mile of the enemy's camp. Captain Robertson, of the 71st, was sent forward with four companies of his regiment and four companies of the 13th, and entered the camp without being discovered. Many of the enemy were slain before the call to arms; and when it was given, after firing a few volleys to attract the attention of the fort to that side, Robertson was so fortunate as to bring his men in safety back to the detachment. The move proved completely successful. The attention of the besieged was so strongly riveted to the south, where they expected

that the attack might develop into a general assault, that they did not fire a shot on the entrenching parties, who during the dark night had advanced the parallel within eight hundred yards of the walls. When the light of morning disclosed what had been done, the Sultan opened every gun that he could bring to bear upon the parallel, and he sent parties of infantry across the river to harass the troops who were engaged on the work.

On the same morning Cornwallis ordered Abercromby to cross the river to the south with nine battalions, and to occupy an advantageous and strong position at the distance of about random cannon-shot from the works; and he was instructed to make immediate preparations for carrying on approaches, and for constructing batteries to assist in destroying the enemy's works, and to enfilade the whole front that was to be attacked.<sup>1</sup>

Abercromby crossed the river, gained the neighbouring heights, and obtained possession of a village on them. A mile in front of the heights there was a redoubt, and beyond it stretched a tope or grove to the walls of the fort. When Tippoo learnt that our troops had crossed to the south side, he left the fort at the head of his infantry to prevent our taking possession of the redoubt. From the tope he opened a continuous cannonade on the British line, and he sent a body of infantry to recover the village. But the attempt failed, and in the evening the Sultan retired to the fort. Lieut.-Colonel Hartley with the grenadier battalion took possession of the circular battery or redoubt. But as it was within reach of the guns of the fort it was quitted next morning.

On the night of the 21st Lord Cornwallis had given orders that active preparations should be made for commencing the enfilading attack. The redoubt was again occupied by eighty men of the 75th, and the next morning the enemy were driven out of the tope. During the day the enemy threw rockets into the grove, and when the sun was set the guns of the fort opened upon it, and a formidable

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57-

body of the enemy horse made a flank attack. Two companies of the Bombay European Regiment under Caipitains Cameron and Macdonald and two companies of the 10th Battalion of sepoys were sent to reinforce the small party that held the redoubt. The assailants came steadily on, and fierce was the struggle for the possession of the grove. As the contest lasted far into the day, the ammunition of the defenders' troops became expended, and they retired towards the shelter of a nullah in the rear. Loud cries of triumph rose in the air as the enemy rushed in on all quarters. Brief was their triumph. The detachment faced about, charged them with their bayonets, drove them through the tope, and pursued them till checked by the fire of the fort.

The enemy, reinforced by still greater numbers, advanced again and opened a heavy fire on the gallant band. Being without ammunition they fell back slowly, and before the Mysoreans could again charge they were met by the 12th Battalion of sepoys with a supply of cartridges. Replenishing their cartouche boxes, they retraced their steps and took post again in front of the tope, and with a stern determination held their ground. Abercromby, expecting to be attacked in the rear by Tippoo's ablest General, could not spare many reinforcements. He, however, sent down from the heights Major Sterling with the remainder of the European Regiment, and the 3rd Battalion of the sepoys to support them. They afforded effectual aid by forming to the right and left, and opened a heavy and steady fire on the assailants. For an hour the contest raged along the front of the tope. It was about four o'clock when the fire of the enemy slackened, and before darkness fell they quietly withdrew to the fort, leaving hundreds of dead and wounded in the field.

Whilst the Bombay army was establishing its position to the south, the work in the trenches was carried on with unabated vigour. During the day of the southern contest, the trenches had been advanced within six hundred yards of the walls; by the 23rd the second parallel was completed, and ground marked out for the batteries within five hundred

yards of the fort. Three companies of Europeans and seven companies of sepoys were sent on the night of the 23rd to take possession of a small island on the river about fifteen hundred yards from the north-west angle of the fort. At the same time, the Bombay army had thrown up a work in front of the tope, and next evening, the 24th, a lodgment was to be made in a ravine further advanced, beyond which the enfilading battery was to be erected. The two breaching batteries and the enfilading battery were to be ready to open on March 1.

Seringapatam was now at the mercy of the besiegers. The envoys of Tippoo arrived at a spot near the British camp (as has been stated) on February 14, and were met by the British deputies. The negotiation lingered on for some days. Then, seeing that the Sultan and his envoys were inclined to dally with the business, Cornwallis dictated to the envoys the following articles, which were to be the basis of a treaty :

ARTICLE I.

" One-half of the dominions of which Tippoo Sultan was in possession before the war to be ceded to the allies from the countries adjacent, according to their situation."

ARTICLE II.

" Three crores and thirty lacs of rupees to be paid by Tippoo, either in gold mohurs, pagodas, or bullion;

" 1. One crore and sixty-five lacs to be paid immediately;

" 2. One crore and sixty-five lacs to be paid in three payments, not exceeding four months each."

ARTICLE III.

" All prisoners of the four powers, from the time of Hyder Ally, to be unequivocally restored."

ARTICLE IV.

" Two of Tippoo Sultan's three eldest sons to be given as hostages for a due performance of the treaty."

## ARTICLE V.

" When they shall arrive in camp, with the articles of this treaty, under the seal of the Sultan, a counterpart shall be sent from the three powers. Hostilities shall cease, and terms of a treaty of alliance and perpetual friendship shall be agreed upon."\*

On the night of the 22nd the articles were sent to Tippoo. On the following day the Sultan assembled the principal officers of his army in the great mosque, and laying before them the Koran, he charged them under oath to give him their sincere and frank advice. He then read to them the five articles. " You have heard," said the Sultan, " the conditions of peace, and you have now to hear and answer my question, *Shall it be peace or war ?*" The officers replied that they were ready to lay down their lives in defence of their sovereign and his capital, but that the troops were disheartened and unworthy of confidence. Tippoo knew that this was true, owing to the wholesale desertions. He sealed the preliminary articles, and they were sent to Lord Cornwallis the same day, but they were not delivered according to the terms of the articles by the hostages in person. Owing to the tragic scenes in the Royal harem due to the parting from the lads, Cornwallis consented to a delay of two days in their arrival. But his lordship agreed to a cessation of hostilities the next day.

On the morning of February 24, 1792, orders were sent to the trenches to cease working and forbear from further hostilities. The soldiers, burning to avenge their tortured and slaughtered countrymen, "were dejected to a degree," says Dirom, and " could with difficulty be restrained from continuing their work. Still, it was supposed there must be some mistake; and the men became irritated on finding that, after receiving those orders, the fire of cannon from the fort and musquetry from the enemy's advanced parties was kept up more incessantly than ever, and from every side of the fort where they could reach our troops. Brigade-Major Turing and several men were wounded."<sup>2</sup> After repeated

<sup>1</sup> Dirom, pp. 225-226.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

messages the firing ceased from the fort towards noon, and immediately after General Orders were issued stating that—

" Lord Cornwallis has great pleasure in announcing to the army, that preliminaries of peace have been settled between the confederate powers and Tippoo Sultan, containing conditions highly honourable and advantageous to the Company and the British nation ; and, in consideration of the uncommon valour and firmness that has been manifested by the Officers and soldiers of the King's and Company's troops, during the whole course of the war, it is his Lordship's intention to take upon himself to order a handsome gratuity to be distributed to them, in the same proportions as prize-money, from the sum that Tippoo has bound himself by one of the articles to pay to the Company."<sup>1</sup>

The closing words of the General Orders were worthy of a British General: " His Lordship thinks it almost unnecessary to desire the army to advert, that moderation in success is no less expected from brave men than gallantry in action; and he trusts that the officers and soldiers in his army will not only be incapable of committing violence, in any intercourse that may happen between them and Tippoo's troops, but that they will even abstain from making use of any kind of insulting expression towards an enemy now subdued and humbled."<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cornwallis was a soldier of stout and invincible courage who was also a pattern of civility and good nature. He instructed Tippoo's envoys to inform their sovereign that " his Lordship would wait upon the Princes as soon as they came to their tents; and besides the guards and attendants, about 200, allowed to be sent with them, that his Lordship would appoint a careful officer, with a battalion of Sepoys, for their protection. The Sultan sent in answer, ' that he was fully sensible of his Lordship's goodness; that he could not agree to his being at the trouble to go first to wait on his sons; and having the most perfect reliance on his honour, it was his own particular desire and request, that he would be

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

pleased to allow them to be brought at once to his tent, and delivered into his own hands.' " \*

On the 26th about noon, a Royal salute was fired from the fort, the principal gates of the fort opened, and under the archway a long procession began slowly to defile. Tippoo was on the rampart above the gateway to watch the departure of his sons, and the streets were thronged with men and women crowding to see them pass. Seven messengers came foremost on camels, and by their sides were seven standard bearers carrying small green flags suspended from rockets. After them followed one hundred pikemen with spears inlaid with ivory. Next, at a little interval, came the two princes seated in silver howdahs borne by two enormous elephants richly caparisoned. Their father's envoys followed mounted on elephants trapped in scarlet and gold, and the procession was closed by a guard of two hundred sepoy and a troop of horse in uniform. The procession moved on to the Mosque redoubt, where it was joined by Sir John Kenna-way, the British Plenipotentiary, and the two deputies of the Confederates, also mounted on elephants. On approaching headquarters, the cortege passed through an avenue formed by a battalion of stalwart Bengal sepoy, and arrived in front of the Durbar tent of the Governor-General.

Lord Cornwallis, attended by his staff and some officers of the highest rank, received the princes as they dismounted from their elephants. The eldest was about ten, the youngest about eight years of age. They were dressed in long, loose, flowing upper garments of muslin and wore red turbans. " They had several rows of large pearls round their necks, from which was suspended an ornament consisting of a ruby and an emerald of considerable size, surrounded by large brilliants ; and in their turbans, each had a sprig of rich pearls. Bred up from their infancy with infinite care, and instructed in their manners to imitate the reserve and politeness of age, it astonished all present to see the correctness and propriety of their conduct. The eldest boy, rather dark in his colour, with thick lips, a small flattish nose, and a long

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 227-228.

thoughtful countenance, was less admired than the youngest, who is remarkably fair, with regular features, a small round face, large full eyes, and a more animated appearance."<sup>1</sup> Lord Cornwallis led them into the tent one in each hand, and placed them each side of him. Then the chief envoy of the Sultan addressed the Governor-General: "These children were this morning the sons of the Sultan, my master : their situation is now changed, and they must look up to your Lordship as their Father."

" Lord Cornwallis, who had received the boys as if they had been his own sons, anxiously assured the vakeel and the young Princes themselves, that every attention possible would be shown to them, and the greatest care taken of their persons. Their little faces brightened up; the scene became highly interesting; and not only their attendants, but all the spectators were delighted to see that any fears they might have harboured were removed, and that they would soon be reconciled to their change of situation, and to their new friends."<sup>2</sup>

The Governor-General then presented each of the lads with a gold watch, which seemed greatly to please them. The scene concluded in the usual Oriental style. Betel-nut and ottar of roses having been distributed, Lord Cornwallis led the princes back to their elephants and embraced them again before they mounted. They returned to their tents escorted by their suite and the battalion of sepoys. The next day Lord Cornwallis paid them a visit in their camp. They came out of the enclosure, whose canvas walls were richly embroidered, to meet him, and he led them by the hand to a spacious tent, within which chairs had been arranged for the ceremony. " The eldest boy, now seated on his Lordship's right hand, appeared less serious than yesterday; and when he spoke, was not only graceful in his manner, but had a most affable, animated appearance. The youngest, however, appeared to be the favourite with the vakeels; and, at the desire of Gullam Ally, repeated, or rather recited, some verses in Arabic, which he had learned by heart from the Koran,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

and afterwards some verses in Persian, which he did with great ease and confidence, and showed he had made great progress in his education."<sup>1</sup> Each of the princes presented the Governor-General with a fine Persian sword, the sword being conferred by the Indian Mogul as a distinction upon successful soldiers and great nobles, and in return his lordship gave "the eldest a fuzee<sup>2</sup> and the youngest a pair of pistols, of very fine and curious workmanship." The visit ended by the princes conducting his lordship without the tent, when he embraced them and took his leave. On February 26 Lord Cornwallis wrote as follows: "Tippoo's second and third sons did not arrive in our camp till this day. The former is about ten years old, and the latter, who is the son of Burramund Dien's sister, and considered as the heir to the Sultanah, about eight. The delay in their arrival was not occasioned by any interruption of the Treaty, but by the difficulty and distress of their leaving the Zenana, and by Tippoo's anxiety that they should be properly received by me.

"You will easily imagine that to children under their circumstances, I could not be deficient in showing every mark of kindness and respect, and I was happy to observe that the boys seemed to entertain no apprehensions of their new father.

"Our deputies and Tippoo's Vakeels will now enter earnestly upon their business, and as soon as we can receive our first payment of money, I think we may retire a little from this dreary waste."<sup>3</sup>

Tippoo's Vakeels entered earnestly upon their business, but with the full intention of prolonging it. The abstract made from the minutes of each day's conference exhibits the evasions, artifices, and delays employed by them according to the command of the sovereign. Tippoo's main object was to obtain time. He sent his two sons as hostages and a million sterling, because he knew that in a few days the fort

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

<sup>2</sup> Fuzee, a firelock (from fusil, Fr.), a small neat musket.

<sup>3</sup> Ross, vol. ii, p. 151.

would be taken by storm. He did not send his eldest son and heir, but two young boys, as he felt certain they would be well and kindly treated by Lord Cornwallis. A million sterling was not a large sum to pay for the safety of his capital, Tippoo knew that a severe epidemic had attacked the Europeans, and that the British army would soon be forced to retire from their pestilential camp. He also expected, from the secret correspondence and clandestine negotiations that he was carrying on with both the Marathas and the Nizam, that if the English were again forced to retire they would enter into an alliance with him.

On February 29, 1792, Sir John Kennaway, Tippoo's Vakeels, and the Vakeels of the allies met for the purpose of adjusting a definite treaty. The negotiations which took place were protracted. It was stipulated by Article I. of the preliminary treaty that half of Tippoo's territories were to be ceded to the allies. But it was to be a revenue, not a geographical, division. The confederates were to take countries adjacent according to their situation, whose revenue amounted to half Tippoo's revenue. It offered a fine means of procrastination. Tippoo was desired to send an account of his revenues that the selecting might be made. He declared that all his accounts had been lost at Bangalore and other places. He was then informed that the allies would make the partition according to a statement in their possession. Accounts were then delivered, but they were, as Sir John Kennaway observed at a conference, useless.

In Tippoo's accounts the revenues of the frontier countries were overrated, while those in the centre of his kingdom which would not be taken were underrated. The whole amount of his revenue was also diminished about thirty lacs of rupees. The Maratha and Nizam's Vakeels, however, proved a match for Tippoo. They produced revenue accounts procured from one of Tippoo's revenue officers of rank, a prisoner in the Maratha camp. Considerable was the difference between these accounts and those of the Sultan's schedule. The Maratha deputy declared that Hurry Punt was sure to take "at double the amount of

Tippoo's value." The Sultan's Vakeels were requested to send more accurate accounts, but they continued to evade furnishing them, and at last even the patience of Lord Cornwallis was exhausted. On the 8th Sir John Kennaway waited on the Sultan's Vakeels and expressed in strong language " Lord C.'s astonishment at the treatment he had received from their master, who had delivered in false accounts, etc. He stated, that Seringapatam, Tippoo's family, treasure, in short, his kingdom, being within his Lordship's grasp, he, consulting nothing but his moderation, had, against the wishes of his allies, consented to a peace. In return, every effort was made to deceive him. The necessity of the English retaining Calicut had been candidly communicated, and Tippoo had estimated it at five or six lacs of rupees beyond its real value. The Vakeels replied in general terms, professing their master's friendship for the Governor-general, and wishing that he, himself, would deliver in his plan of partition, when no opposition would be offered to the interests of the Company, but that the Sultan indulged a rooted hatred, which was mutual, to the allies, and could ill bear to part with his possessions to them; and were it not for the support of the English, their master, in his present reduced state he would soon expel them from his country." <sup>1</sup>

Sir John Kennaway replied that his Government was bound to the allies by treaties which would never be infringed to obtain any sinister object. After leaving the Sultan's deputies Kennaway met the deputies of the allies, who produced lists of the provinces which they expected as their share of the partition. Sir John struck out some of these from the schedule, and the next day he drew up the draft of a definite treaty conformable to the preliminary treaty, and containing a specification of the countries to be ceded. It was sent to Tippoo's Vakeels with an official note. On the following morning Sir John Kennaway met the Vakeels and Tippoo's Finance Minister, who proceeded to read out the list of the proposed cessions. " He began with Coorg, which

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm's *History of British India*, vol. ii., p. 24.

he termed one of the doors to Seringapatam, from which it was distant only ten or twelve coss. Sir John Kennaway replied, that the distance was greater, and that Lord Cornwallis had entered into engagements with the Rajah, which would prevent the possibility of giving it up."<sup>1</sup>

Tippoo's envoy raised objections to other districts he mentioned in the lists, but the main opposition was to the cession of Coorg. During the time that the negotiations were being protracted, working parties were busy on the fort.

On March 10 Sir John Kennaway at a conference, turned to Ali Reza, Tippoo's envoy, and said "that the Governor-General, in consequence of an authentic report of their master continuing to repair the works opposite the trenches, had ordered the engineers to resume their work on the fascines and gabions. Ali Reza expressed his regret, and said the works should be immediately discontinued."<sup>2</sup>

Two days later " Lord Cornwallis directed Sir John Kennaway to write to the vakeels at eleven a.m., to say, that as, contrary to the agreement, at the cessation of arms, the working parties continued employed in the fort, his lordship would immediately direct the resumption of operations in the trenches, unless their labours instantly ceased."<sup>3</sup>

The messengers met the Vakeels as they were coming out of the fort, who, after perusal, forwarded the letter to Tippoo.

At a conference held that evening the envoys saki that "Tippoo was willing to cede half the territories, according to the valuation in his own paper, and the other half as valued by the allies, and also to deliver up some of the districts required for our boundaries; but that he objected to others, particularly Coorg, which being close to Seringapatam, might be viewed as one of its entrances ; that he considered, by the treaty, we were not entitled to require Coorg, which did not lie *adjacent* to our boundary. Sir John replied, that he would not enter into a critical examination of the piean-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

ing of the term 'adjacent/ that, in matters of business, it signified *not far removed*; that the allies were only debarred by this term from taking districts in the centre of Tippoo's dominions; and that Coorg, which they called the door to Seringapatam, was distant forty coss,<sup>1</sup> and within fifteen<sup>2</sup> of our settlement of Tellicherry, and certainly 'adjacent' to Calicut, which they had agreed to cede. That, finally, engagements had been concluded with the Rajah, which could not be infringed, otherwise what reliance could Tippoo place in those engagements about to be entered upon? Both the vakeels warmly defended their construction of the term 'adjacent' which Sir John Kennaway denied. After a good deal of argument, the matter was, at the earnest request of the vakeels, referred to the Governor-general. Sir John on returning from Cornwallis, informed them that his lordship having been forced to make the partition treaty on the best data in his power, was determined, after mature deliberation, not to relax in the least, or yield up any of the countries specified; and that the vakeels ought now to return to the fort, and bring Tippoo's final answer. They replied, that it was not necessary to make any further reference to their master, for if Lord Cornwallis did not choose to accept their offer, they requested their dismissal, and left the future to fate. Sir John Kennaway observed, that there could be no objection to their departure when they chose; but they insisted that, before going, Lord Cornwallis should know *vMiat* had now passed."

The proposal to deliver from his grasp an independent kingdom which he and his father had devastated and whose brave inhabitants he had carried off by thousands into slavery excited, we are told, the frantic wrath of Tippoo. Wilks states that he asked: "To which of the English possessions is Coorg adjacent? Why do they not ask for the key of Seringapatam? They know that I would sooner have died in the breach than consent to such a cession, and durst not bring it forwards until they had treacherously obtained possession of my children and my treasure."

<sup>1</sup> Eighty miles.

<sup>2</sup> Thirty miles.

The question as to Coorg's contiguity to any of the countries of the allies is open to argument, but as to the allegation that its demand was purposely kept back until the payment of a million, it was satisfactorily shown to be (as Malcolm points out) a principle of the negotiation not to name the countries which the allies meant to claim till the moment that their cession should be required. Moreover, Coorg was not one of the countries which belonged to Tippoo, but it was an independent kingdom over which he had established by force of arms a rule of terror and cruelty. In 1788, however, two years before our war with Tippoo, the Raja of Coorg escaped from prison, and joined by his brave clansmen he cleared his country of its invaders. At that time he applied to the British Government for assistance, which then could not be granted. But as soon as the war broke out, he offered his services and sent a large supply of highland bullocks famous for their strength and value as transport animals for the use of the British army. On October 26, 1790, an engagement was made with him by which he agreed to co-operate with the British army against Tippoo; the independence of his country was guaranteed, and it was stipulated that in any peace made with Tippoo the interests of the Raja would faithfully be consulted. Wilks states that "there can be no question that the demand of Coorg was unexpected by the Sultan." It is certainly open to question. The Raja had as an ally a body of troops serving with our army, and Tippoo must have realised that, like the other two allies, he had some engagement with the British Government, and "it is difficult to believe that he could ever have really expected such an ally would be gratuitously abandoned to his vengeance."<sup>1</sup> And he was not abandoned. At the conclusion of the war Coorg was not annexed as an "adjacent" country, but it was arranged by an engagement dated March 31, 1793, that the tribute of Rs. 24,000 which Tippoo had exacted from Coorg should be transferred to the British Government in consideration of their friendship and protection. This arrangement, we learn, was most distasteful to the

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm's *History of British India*, vol i., p. 83.

Raja, who denied that he had ever paid tribute to Mysore.<sup>1</sup> No subsidy ought to have been demanded, as the independence of his country had been guaranteed by a treaty.

A day after requesting leave to depart the Sultan's Vakeels again attended a conference, and the chief envoy expressed a hope that "the Governor-general, actuated by the same motives which had induced him not to insist on the cession of Bangalore and Savendroog, would also refrain from insisting on the cession of Coorg, which was so much nearer the capital." Sir John replied that his lordship's good faith was not involved in the cession of the two forts mentioned, and that he knew that nothing would alter the determination of the Governor-General with regard to Coorg. The chief envoy then demanded with warmth what, in the event of breaking off the negotiations, would be our conduct to the princes? Sir John replied that they would be detained as hostages for the violation of the treaty. They asked how and by whom it had been violated. After a long discussion Sir John informed the Vakeels in most polite diplomatic language "that the Sultaun's guards, now with them, must take their departure. The Vakeels requested permission to accompany the hostages, which was objected to."<sup>2</sup>

The next morning the chief envoy Ali Reza came to Sir John in his sleeping tent, and earnestly entreated him "to use his influence with Captain Welsh, commanding the guard of honour with the hostages, to delay their departure for one day, when he would engage to bring back Tippoo's answer to the list of districts by the evening, otherwise the removal of the princes would, in all probability, cost him and his colleagues their lives. Sir John Kennaway replied that Captain Welsh was acting under superior orders, and was not bound to obey him; but that he would write to Lord Cornwallis, and request the respite so urgently sought. The princes had, however, moved before his note could be despatched, but, at the desire of the Vakeel, Sir John requested

<sup>1</sup> Aitchison's *Treaties*, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm's *History of British India*, vol. ii., p. 31.

they might not take their final departure until he returned, at the appointed time, from the fort. Lord Cornwallis, in consequence, directed the princes to be encamped one mile in the rear of head-quarters."<sup>1</sup> Oriental pertinacity was not exhausted. The next day the Vakeels attended a conference "and commenced by demanding Lord Cornwallis's determination, more especially with regard to Coorg. Sir John Kennaway replied, that Lord Cornwallis with every disposition to gratify Tippoo, could not consent to abandon the Raja of Coorg. His lordship, he said, considered the preservation of faith to his engagements to be of equal importance and sanctity, and as superior to all other considerations as a sincere adherence to the tenets of his religion; he could, therefore, hear nothing further on this subject."<sup>2</sup> Lord Cornwallis acted towards the princes in a manner natural to a kind amiable man, but in his line of action towards the Sultan he could no longer at least be accused of want of character and vigour. As Tippoo had to this moment continued, in spite of repeated remonstrances, the repairs and work inside the fort opposite to the besiegers' trenches, and as he refused to part with places which could be useful to him only in an offensive way, Lord Cornwallis decided that a renewal of hostilities might at any moment become unavoidable, and he ordered preparations for resuming the siege. The guns which had been brought to camp were sent back to the batteries and to the redoubts, and working parties were set to work to bind up the old fascines and prepare a further stock of material.

When Lord Cornwallis permitted the princes to halt, he at the same time informed Tippoo's envoys that if the Sultan did not instantly agree to execute the definite treaty as drawn up, he must expect no further delay, and orders would be given to renew hostilities. On the morning of March 16 Purseram Bhow, who had arrived in camp some days before with his division of the Maratha army, and Captain Lille's brigade crossed the river to join General Abercromby and to be in readiness to invest the south side of the fort. The

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Maratha force consisted of about eighteen thousand horses and several thousand infantry, and, according to Maratha custom, the cavalry plundered and devastated the country. Tippoo turned in bitter wrath at the outrage. It became evident to him that he had been betrayed by the Marathas and the Nizam, and that he was left substantially alone. There was nothing to be done except to put his great seal of state to a treaty which deprived him of half his dominion. Round that seal was a proud inscription : " From my conquest and the protection of the Royal Hyder comes my title of Sultan; and the world as under the sun and moon is subject to my signet."

On March 18 the Sultan's Vakeels attended a conference in Sir John's tent, and " commenced by making complaints against Purseram Bhow, and whilst they were yet talking a letter was brought to them from the Sultan giving details of the plunderings of Purseram Bhow on the road to Sera; that he made collections, beat and imprisoned ryots, and had taken 63 camels, 3,000 bullocks, etc." He requested that the Maratha General with his twenty thousand horse might be recalled across the river. Misfortune could not subdue the spirit and pride of Tippoo, and he added that " he should consider it as a still greater favour if his Lordship would be pleased to permit him to go out and punish the Bhow himself." Sir John Kennaway replied that the Governor-General would do all in his power to restrain the Bhow. At the close of the conference it was settled that the princes on the next day should formally deliver the definite treaty in triplicate to Lord Cornwallis.

On March 19, 1792, at ten o'clock, the princes, escorted by their own guards, which were restored to them, arrived at headquarters. Lord Cornwallis received them again with the greatest kindness and attention. After some general conversation, a parcel was handed to the elder prince which contained the three treaties in triplicate. He rose, and with that calm dignity which is the heritage of the high-born Oriental he handed them to Lord Cornwallis. The Governor-General returned to him two of the treaties.

Neither the Nizam's son nor the Maratha Plenipotentiary, Hurry Punt, were present, but had sent their Vakeels in order to magnify their importance. Imagination may readily picture to itself the indignation felt by a proud Mahomedan prince when he was forced to hand a copy to each of the Vakeels of two neighbouring powers. He, however, performed a most disagreeable task, we are told, "with great manliness." The Maratha Vakeel muttered something on the subject of the treaty. The temper of Hyder and Tippoo burst into flame. The young prince asked at what he grumbled, and without giving him time to answer said "they might well be silent, as certainly their masters had no reason to be displeased." The princes, having performed the ceremonies of delivering the treaties, took their leave of Lord Cornwallis and returned to their tents. The curtain drops on the last scene in the great war we had pursued with so much determination.

Peace established on the prostrate armies of the Sultan, the conquerors proceeded according to the treaty to cut up and parcel out half his dominions. The territory was divided according to the revenue it yielded, and the different tracts were chiefly selected in order to control the boundaries and restrain the ambition of Tippoo and his martial Mahomedans. The revenue of the whole territory ceded amounted to £1,135,029, and as the shares were allotted on the principle of perfect equality, each ally got territory which yielded revenue amounting to £395,000.<sup>1</sup> But as the yield of the soil varied, each ally did not receive in miles the same extent of territory. With regard to the territory acquired by the British, Cornwallis writes: "A substantial protection to the southern provinces, and by the acquisition of the Barramahal, and of the country which, though composed of several different districts, is commonly called the Salem country, which gives

<sup>1</sup> The rupees are reckoned throughout this work at the rate of 365 to 100 star pagodas, or £40, the exchange at which they were issued from the Company's treasury, about 2s. 25d. the rupee. On this principle Tippoo's revenues amounted to £2,597,259; and the cession to the three confederate powers, being one-sixth part to each, would amount to £432,876 (Dirom, p. 238).

us the command of all the passes of the Ghauts to the northward of the Caveri, we have obtained an effectual barrier to the Carnatic against all future invasions of the westward."<sup>1</sup>

On the east, he added, " The districts ceded to us on the coast of Malabar consist of the whole of the tract of country below the Ghauts laying between Travancore and the Kaway River, which is our northern boundary, and they are so fortunately situated that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for Tippoo or any future sovereign of Mysore to disturb them."<sup>1</sup> This large strip of fertile territory on the Malabar coast was of special commercial value, as it included the ports of Cannanore and Calicut. It was annexed to Bombay, which from that acquisition began to take rank in value and importance with the other two Presidencies. The Maratha acquisitions, situated to the north and west of the peninsula, extended from their territory immediately below the Kistna to a considerable tract below the River Toombudra. As was the case with the Marathas, the territory allotted to the Nizam on the north and east of the peninsula adjoined his own boundary and extended from the Kistna to the River Penna, and included the important forts of Gunjecotah and Cupada. Besides being deprived of one-half of his dominions, Tippoo was bound to pay to the allies by the treaty " three crores<sup>2</sup> thirty lacs of rupees to be paid either in gold mohurs, pagodas or bullion, half to be paid immediately and thoi other half in three instalments not exceeding four months each."<sup>3</sup> Lord Cornwallis, having promised the troops a handsome gratuity to be distributed to them from the money paid by Tippoo, now ordered a gratuity equal to six months' battas (about 22 lacs of rupees) to be issued to the troops from the money paid by Tippoo. At the commencement of the war it was agreed that the plunder taken should form one general fund, and prize agents were appointed to take charge of all captured property. The Court of Directors not only approved of the six months' batta, but directed as

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 534. <sup>2</sup> A crore of rupees = one million sterling.

<sup>3</sup> Article II.

much more to be distributed " in testimony of their approbation of the services of the army." The two sums made a very handsome addition to the prize money. Lord Cornwallis relinquished his share of the prize money and gratuity as Commander-in-Chief, which together amounted to the large sum of £47,244, and General Medows also followed his generous example and relinquished his two shares as second in command, which amounted to the substantial sum of £14,997. Neither of them were rich men, and during the war Lord Cornwallis found his expenses far heavier than during peace. In a letter to his brother, informing him that he had sent " a draft on Hoare for 100 L. to poor Captain ——who was formerly in my regiment," he states: " You will judge from the savings of other years, that I must have been considerably out of pocket by the war, when I tell you that I spent 27,630 L. (reckoning the current rupee at two shillings) between the 1st December, 1790, and the 31st July, 1792, besides the wine from England and two Arabian horses, for which I am to give English hunters."<sup>1</sup>

By the Treaty of Seringapatam and the subsequent arrangement, 20,000 square miles were added to British territory. The Nizam and the Peshwa eventually bound themselves jointly to defend their respective acquisitions by a treaty of defensive alliance against Tippoo.

The conduct and termination of these negotiations have, however, been much criticised. Lord Cornwallis has been accused of want of character and vigour in not capturing Seringapatam. "Everything is now done by moderation and conciliation," wrote Munro. " At this rate we shall be all Quakers in twenty years more." When the negotiations were on the point of breaking down and the capture of Seringapatam imminent, Lord Cornwallis is reported to have frequently exclaimed: " Good God! what shall I do with the place?" He knew that the possession of it would increase the difficulty of a settlement with the allies, and his object was not to destroy the power of Tippoo, but to check

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 179.

his power of aggression. His aim was to establish a firm peace throughout the south of India by a well-arranged balance of power, for at that period European statesmen had a profound belief that an adjustment by the balance of power was the height of political civilisation and wisdom. The *Annual Register* of 1793, which reflects the belief of the hour, states: "The wise moderation of these counsellors, which directed a partial division only of the conquered countries, cannot be too much praised; for had not a sufficient extent of territory been left to Tippoo Suldaun to make him respectable, and still, in some degree, formidable to his neighbours, the balance of power in India might again have been materially affected, the future adjustment of which might have led to new wars."<sup>1</sup> But there could be no balance of power among states who owed their origin to usurpation, and whose life-blood was plunder and aggression. The four chief powers—the Peshwa, the Nizam, Tippoo, and Sindia—were not the hereditary rulers of ancient states, but of kingdoms created by predatory leaders, military adventurers, and ex-officials of the decaying Mogul Empire. Shivaji, warrior, statesman, and bandit, took advantage of the decay, and had himself recognised as an independent sovereign of the Maratha kingdom, and English ambassadors from Bombay attended the gorgeous ceremony. Shivaji, with his mountain warriors mounted on sturdy ponies, not only made extensive raids and carried off much plunder, but he also organised a regal system of blackmail, known as the Maratha chout. It amounted, as its name implied, to a fourth part of the revenue of the land.<sup>2</sup> So long as the chout was paid, the Marathas abstained from pillaging and devastating the country. Shivaji, a great captain, who converted shepherds and cultivators into efficient soldiers, had also a sense of the importance of using able men in great affairs to organise a kingdom. He appointed Deccani Brahmins, the ablest and most subtle of his subjects, to administer the different Subahs or provinces. The grandson of Shivaji was a young man not fit to

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm, vol. i., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Mah chout, one-fourth.

wield a sceptre, and he allowed his kingdom to be entirely administered by his chief minister or Peshwa, which literally means " he who precedes." In 1714, the year that George I. ascended the throne, " Balaji Vishvanath, a Brdhman, raised himself from an inferior position in the state to the high office of Premier. By degrees he gained the complete confidence of Shahu, and persuaded him to divest himself of all the cares of government and resign them to him. In course of time Shahu even went so far as to invest Balaji with all the ensigns of authority. Every order was issued directly from the Peshwa, who was further styled the Raja Pandit Pradhndn, or Chief of the Pandits."<sup>1</sup> In 1717 the Peshwa induced the Emperor of Delhi to recognise Sh&hu as an independent sovereign of certain districts.

" On the death of a Peshwa his successor was bound to go to Satara to be formally invested with the robe of office. B&il&ji, however, caused the office to be made hereditary in his family, and he was succeeded by Bdjirdo, his eldest son, an able man and thorough soldier, who greatly extended the Maratha dominion. His father had deprived Shahu of power; he deprived him of liberty. The descendant of the great Shivdji was made a State prisoner and became the mere name and image of authority in the Maratha Empire."

" When Bajirdo the first Peshwa usurped the supreme authority, Raghoji Bhonsla, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, and held the province of Berar in jaghir, proceeded to turn it into an independent Government. As the Mahomedan historian informs us, ' this man was the first who assumed independence from being a tax-gatherer.' The example set by the Peshwa was also followed by his own subordinates. Mulharji Holkar, a cavalry soldier of the Sudra caste, Ranoji Sindia, slipper bearer, and Pilaji Gaikawar, the cowherd, from being menials became the founders of regal dynasties. They held commissions from the Peshwa to effect conquests which they received

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from the Bombay State Papers* (Maratha Series), vol. i., Introduction, p. ii.

upon certain stipulations, the chief of which was to maintain a body of troops for the support of the empire. The distance of their sphere of action, however, removed them from the control of the Peshwa, and they began to make war and peace without his knowledge and approbation, and to use the troops, not for the advantage of the empire, but their own aggrandisement. In course of time each assumed independent authority, and, while they professed nominal obedience to the Peshwa, they stood in the same relation to him as the Peshwa stood in respect to the Raja of Satara, the descendant of Shivaji."

"In 1721, twenty years before Clive landed, a Turki nobleman—best known by the title of Nizam-ul-mulk or 'regulator of the state,' bestowed on him by the Mogul Emperor—assumed the subadarship or viceroyship of Hyderabad."

On July 17, 1792, Cornwallis wrote to Dundas : "I have at length settled everything with the Nabob of Arcot, and I believe in the best manner that it could have been done, unless I had kept possession of the country; but that point could only have been carried by force, without the least shadow of reason or justice, and consequently was not to be attempted."<sup>1</sup> He closes the letter as follows :

"I shall embark to-morrow for Bengal, from whence I hope to send you a good account of the state of our affairs by the *Ganges* Indiaman, which will be despatched next month."<sup>2</sup>

On August 26 he wrote to the Court of Directors : "The miserable situation of the northern Circars constituted one of those cases to which some relief could not be refused, and the Members of the Board had accordingly, in the course of the last nine or ten months, sent them considerable supplies. But as the Company's servants in those districts have continued to represent that, unless a much more extensive aid can be furnished, the greatest part of the wretched inhabitants must unavoidably perish, I have, I confess, **more** from **the** feelings of humanity than the rigid dictates of

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., pp. 172-173.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

prudence, been encouraged by the prospect which the present season holds out to us of an uncommonly abundant crop in Bengal, not only to propose that several of the Company's ships shall be immediately despatched with cargoes of rice, but also that the embargo shall be so far taken off, as to allow all the other vessels in the river that can give sufficient security for their going to the Circars only, to load likewise with grain, in order that no means in our power may be left untried to save as many of these unfortunate people as may be practicable."<sup>1</sup>

He proceeded to state: "The accounts of the death of Hyder Beg Khan (Prime Minister of Oudh) had reached me at Madras, and, although it has been a general maxim with me to avoid as much as possible all interference in the details of the Vizier's Government, I was glad to find upon my arrival here, that his Excellency had been persuaded to show his respect for this Government by making only a temporary appointment of minister to conduct his affairs, until he could consult with me on a proper permanent successor to his late Minister."

The appointment of a nominal successor led to the real power of the state passing into the hands of a few personal favourites, "men of the most abandoned character, and some of them known to entertain sentiment hostile to the British connection."<sup>2</sup>

On October 15 Cornwallis wrote to Dundas: "You will see by our letter to the Court of Directors, that I have had favourable opportunities of sending persons into Nepaul and Assam; and as I understand that the Rajah of Nepaul has just made peace with the Chinese, I am in good hopes that Kirkpatrick will open a communication with their chiefs, for whom he is provided with letters and presents."<sup>3</sup>

About ten years after the Battle of Plassey active, robust mountaineers of great courage, well-trained in the use of arms, subdued and consolidated the extensive territories constituting the kingdom of Nepal. The country extending

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176. <sup>2</sup> Grant, *History of British India*, vol. i., p. 168.

\* Ross, vol. ii., p. 181.

along the northern frontiers of Bengal and Oudh, about seven hundred miles from the Sutlej to Sikkim, is for the most part a broad, fertile valley lying below the southern range of the Himalayas and the northern, which divides it from the tableland of Tibet. An army of Gurkhas, elated with long-continued success, penetrating the mighty barrier, the "abode of snow," made a hostile inroad into Tibet, occupied and harassed the Rome of the Buddhist, and plundered its sacred shrine. The wrath of the Emperor of China, who was the secular head of the Buddhists, was aroused, and to avenge the acts of sacrilege, which could not be forgiven, he despatched in 1792 an army of sixty thousand men against Nepal.

The Company from early days carried on a profitable trade with that country, but the Gurkhas, ever since they possessed the government, had shown a jealous and hostile spirit towards the Bengal Government and a determination to exclude from Nepal traders from British territory. Dread of the Chinese advance now led them to contract a treaty of commerce with the English Government. By this treaty certain privileges were granted to traders from British territory, and a fixed duty of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, was to be charged by either Government on all commodities imported on either side. The Gurkhas, as a return for the commercial treaty, invoked the aid of British military assistance against China, which Lord Cornwallis was bound to decline, as the English were on peaceful terms with the Chinese Government. He, however, tendered his good offices to mediate between the two powers, and for this purpose he sent Colonel Kirkpatrick on a mission to the court of Nepal. But before the mission entered the Nepal country the Gurkhas were signally defeated by the Chinese and driven back to their own territory. The Chinese army advanced to within a day's march of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and the Gurkhas agreed to the severe terms of peace dictated by the Chinese. By the treaty which was then made they had to restore all the spoil which they took from the temple, and to bind themselves to pay tribute for the future to the court of Peking. Messengers were at once despatched to

inform Kirkpatrick of the treaty, and on meeting him they did their best to induce him not to proceed farther. But Kirkpatrick went on and reached Kathmandu, and was received with every mark of courtesy by the Nepalese Government, but his constant efforts to open negotiations were vain. The mission returned to Bengal a failure when estimated by its results. The terms of the commercial treaty were disregarded by the Gurkhas, and they continued to guard jealously the fair valley of Nepal from the intrusion of foreigners.<sup>1</sup>

The favourable opportunity of sending persons into Assam to which Lord Cornwallis refers in his letter to Dundas was a revolution in that country. The reigning monarch was driven from the throne and threw himself on the protection of Lord Cornwallis. His lordship did not merely send "persons," as he euphoniously states, but he despatched Captain Walsh with about 1,100 sepoys to the aid of the deposed monarch, and they rendered him material assistance in reinstating him. But he was not fit to govern, and when Walsh quitted Assam one of the principal<sup>^</sup> chiefs became supreme ruler of the country under the thin disguise of Prime Minister.

The mission to Nepal and the despatch of Captain Walsh to Assam were the last two important acts in the international policy of Lord Cornwallis. During the closing months of 1792 his attention was principally occupied in framing the measures which led to a settlement of the land revenue in perpetuity, and to a code of regulations for the guidance of the courts of justice in Bengal. The permanent settlement of the land revenue has been the subject of controversy among administrators and economists from its first promulgation to this day. The controversy has been in a large measure due to ignorance of the circumstances which led to its birth and to the character of the measure. It has often been erroneously supposed that it was a mere project of Cornwallis's brain due to his proclivity as a great English landlord;

<sup>1</sup> See minute of the Governor-General, Fort William, January xi, 1733 (Cornwallis, vol. iL, pp. 203-204).

but as a fact he merely construed a system according to the orders of the Ministry and the Court of Directors, and in framing the measure he had the assistance of men of considerable local experience and knowledge. The early regulations were drafted to avoid as far as possible the errors of the various systems of land administration which had been tried in Bengal and had not proved a success.

It is not necessary here to discuss in detail a succession of failures. Mistakes were inevitable. In 1765 the Dewani or Imperial grant of the fiscal administration of Bengal was conferred on the Company. A Government ignorant of the laws and customs of the people was imposed on the revenue and judicial administration of the country. For the first seven years they had to leave the revenue administration almost entirely in the hands of Indian officials, for factors and mercantile clerks had to acquire a knowledge of administration by a slow process of study and experience. In 1769 British supervisors were appointed "with powers of superintending the native officers employed in collecting the revenue or administering justice in different parts of the country; and councils with superior authority were in the following year established at Moorshedabad and Patna. The Supervisors were furnished with detailed instructions for obtaining a summary history of the provinces; the state, produce, and capacity of the lands; the amount of the revenues; the cesses or arbitrary taxes; and of all demands whatsoever which are made on the cultivators; the manner of collecting them; and the gradual rise of every new impost; the regulations of commerce, and the administration of justice." \* The reports of the supervisors, which show considerable ability and knowledge acquired, revealed to the Court of Directors that the whole system of native administration had proved disastrous alike to the rulers and the people. "The Nazims<sup>2</sup> exacted what they could from the zemindars and great farmers of the

1 The Fifth Report, p. 4.

\* Naftim, an administrator, a governor, a viceroy, the superior officer or governor of a province, charged with the administration of criminal law and the police.

revenue, whom they left at liberty to plunder all below, reserving to themselves the prerogative of plundering them in their turn, when they were supposed to have enriched themselves with the spoils of the country." " With respect to the administration of justice, the regular course was everywhere suspended; but every man exercised it who had the power of compelling others to submit to his decisions."<sup>1</sup>

On April 28, 1772, Warren Hastings took his seat as President of the Council at Bengal, and the first task imposed on him was to issue (May 11, 1772), under orders from the court, the memorable proclamation declaring that the Company had determined "to stand forth as Dewan," and by the agency of the Company's servants to take upon themselves the entire care and management of the revenues.

The office of Naib Deputy Dewan, which controlled the whole of the Nizamut or ordinary administration, was abolished. Hastings had the intricate and delicate task of establishing a just and efficient administration in the place of a corrupt and inefficient system of government. He had to construct it out of "a confused heap of undigested materials as well as the chaos itself." Hastings realised that the security of prosperity and contentment of the people principally depended on two departments of business—the revenue administration and the judicial administration—and during his long and stormy career he laboured strenuously to reform them. In an address to the court dated November 3, 1772, one of the State Papers which show a power of clear and logical exposition, he informed them: "In our letter by the *Nottingham*, you were informed of our intention of letting the lands throughout the provinces in farm, upon long and well-regulated Leases; and we are happy to reflect that such a material and principal mode of conducting the Collections should coincide so entirely with your sentiments and orders on the subject." On May 11, 1772, the memorable proclamation was issued, and on May 14, "After the most serious and mature deliberation on this point," Hastings and the Council determined "to establish a plan for settling the

\* Fifth Report, p. 5.

several districts upon this footing, and for the future government of your Collections. This being the Constitutional Ground-work of all our subsequent measures, and of the system which we have since attempted to build upon it, we have thought it necessary, for your immediate attention, to transmit a copy of it as a Number in the Packet, with our reasons at large for adopting the Regulations therein laid down."<sup>1</sup> Hastings realised that when the Government began to grant leases or settlements for a term of years it was bound to ascertain by minute local inquiry the primitive elements of Hindu agricultural society and the amount of revenue that society should contribute. For this purpose a Committee of Circuit was appointed to visit the different districts. Hastings informs the court that "The Regulations which we have before mentioned being compleated, and the Committee of Circuit appointed, consisting (as we mentioned in our last) of the Governor, Messrs. Middleton, Dacres, Lawrell, and Graham, we published our Intention of Farming all the Lands of the Province of Bengal, on Leases of Five Years, and invited all persons to make proposals." Hastings also conveys the important information: "At a meeting of your Council of the 30th August, it was unanimously resolved to adopt the plan proposed by our President and members of the Committee of Circuit at Cossimbazaar, for removing the Seat of the Revenue Business to the Presidency, and for putting this important Branch of your affairs under the immediate management of your Governor and Council; in consequence of which we formed ourselves into a Board of Revenue the 13th ultimo. Since that time all affairs respecting the Collections or internal Government of the Provinces have been confined solely to this department, and we shall henceforth address you separately upon all matters which come under these Heads."<sup>2</sup> In accordance with this resolution the Khalsa or Exchequer and the treasury were removed from Moorshedabad to Calcutta. As

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from the Despatches of the Governor-General, Warren Hastings*, vol ii., Appendix A, p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

the Government had undertaken direct administrative functions, including the collection, the "Gentlemen in the Service " who had been appointed in 1769 supervisors in every province and district to supervise the action of the native officials were to be termed collectors, and with native officers, chosen by the Board, styled Dewans, should control directly the collections in the districts. The collectors, like the supervisors, were permitted to engage in private trade, a fruitful source of evil, and for this reason Hastings would have recalled them to Calcutta, but found it impracticable to make the reform. He wrote: " It was once intended to withdraw the collectors entirely. They monopolise the trade of the country, and, of course, prevent the return of specie by trade, since they trade with the amount of their perquisites. These perquisites I believe to be an oppression on the people and an obstruction of the revenue. They are most of them the agents of their own *banyans*, and they are devils. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

" But whatever motives we have for recalling these officers, it appeared that there were amongst them so many sons\* cousins, or eleves of directors, and intimates of the members of the Council, that it was better to let them remain than to provoke an army of opponents against every act of administration, by depriving them of their emoluments. They continue, but their power is retrenched; and the way is paved for their gradual removal; and the Court of Directors have sufficient arguments furnished them to order their recall immediately." <sup>2</sup>

In June, 1772, Hastings set out with the Committee of Circuit to visit the different districts with the object of forming "an idea of the plan on which the settlement of the whole province will be formed." After careful consideration of the plans suggested, " the Government gave the preference to the farming system, under which they received offers for each *pergunnah*, whether made by the landholders, or by speculators, and adventurers; and those of the highest bidders were accepted, and engagements entered into with

<sup>1</sup> *The Making of British India* (Ramsay Muir), p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

them."<sup>1</sup> The engagements were, as stated, for five years. When the Zemindars were ousted, a subsistence allowance was granted to them out of the revenue, and "in order to secure the Inhabitants in the quiet Possession of the lands whilst they held them on terms of cultivation, and to prevent such Exactions as aforementioned in future, the Committee formed new Amulnamas or Leases, in which the claims upon the Ryotts were precisely and distinctly ascertained, and the Farmers restricted from making any further Demands, under the severest Penalties. To this end, and to prevent the Farmers from eluding this restriction, they were ordered to grant new Pottahs, or Deeds, to the Ryotts, the form of which was drawn out by the Committee and made public, specifying the conditions on which they were to hold their Land, the separate Heads or Articles of the Rents; and every encouragement was contained in them to cultivate the waste ground on a moderate and increasing Rent."<sup>2</sup>

The more regular administration of justice was also deliberated on by the Committee of Circuit. On August 15, 1772, they wrote to the Council at Fort William that from a variety of materials "we have endeavoured to form the Plan of a more complete, but more extensive, System of Judicature, by constituting Two Superior Courts at the Capital; the one composed of the United Magistracy of the Adawlut al Aalea, the Adawlut Dewannee,<sup>3</sup> and the Cazee (or Cazee's Office) for the Decision of Civil Causes; the other torresponding to the Phoujdaree, for the Trial of Criminal Cases. To prevent the Abuse of the Power vested in these Courts, and to give Authority to their Decrees, each, instead of a single Judge, is made to consist of several Members; and their Enquiries are to be conducted under the Inspection and Sanction of the Supreme Administration. To render the Distribution of Justice equal in every Part of the Province, similar, but inferior, Courts are also proposed for each separate District, to be accountable to the superior.

<sup>1</sup> Fifth Report, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Selections from the State Papers* (Warren Hastings), Appendix A, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> Adawlut al Aalea, the Adawlut Dewannee.

**The** usurped Power of the Officers of the Collections, and of the Creditor over the Persons of their Debtors, is abolished."<sup>1</sup> They add: "It has been our aim to render the access to Justice as easy as possible."<sup>1</sup> To give the people confidence in the new courts, and to enable the new tribunals to decide with certainty and despatch, Hastings caused a digest of the Hindu law to be prepared by ten of the most learned pundits in the province.

Early in 1774 the Directors, having sufficient arguments furnished them, ordered the withdrawal of the collectors and the substitution of some other plan for the temporary management of the collections. "It was therefore agreed that the provinces should be formed into six grand divisions, including the province of Behar as one, and each be placed under the charge of a chief and council, with similar powers to those which the collectors singly possessed in the smaller districts."<sup>2</sup> Hastings regarded the institution of Provincial Councils as a temporary expedient both useful and necessary, "but as a fixed and established regulation, I am apprehensive that it will be attended with consequences oppressive to the inhabitants, prejudicial to the revenue, and ruinous to the trade of the country."<sup>3</sup> Native Amils were substituted in the place of the British collectors. The administration of civil justice, which had been entrusted to the collectors, was transferred to the Amil,<sup>4</sup> "from whom an appeal, in all cases, lay to the provincial council of the division in which he was posted; and from the provincial council, an appeal lay, under certain restrictions, to the sudder dewanny court, or the governor in council."<sup>5</sup>

On October 26, 1774, the new Council appointed under Lord North's Regulation Act met for the first time, and then

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from the State Papers* (Warren Hastings), Appendix B, pp. 285-286.

<sup>2</sup> *Making of British India* (Muir), pp. 123-124.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124

<sup>4</sup> Amal (Amil from Amal, business authority), an officer of Government in the financial department, especially a collector of revenue on the part of the Government, or of the farmer of the revenue; also himself a farmer of, or contractor for, the revenue under the native system, and invested with supreme authority, both civil and military, in the districts which he farmed.

<sup>5</sup> Fifth Report, p. 8,

commenced the long and bitter conflict between Hastings and Francis, In April, 1777, the settlement of the land revenue, which had been made for five years, would expire. The future settlement now became a subject of acrimonious discussion in the council chamber. Francis wrote voluminous minutes for which John Shore supplied the local experience and technical knowledge, he the skill of a veteran controversialist and the venom of Junius. The experiment of Provincial Councils to supervise and to collect the revenue did not prove a financial success. On April 22, 1775, Hastings and Barwell proposed anew plan "for a future settlement of the revenue"; and they forwarded it to the court with a recommendation that it should be adopted at the expiration of the existing leases. According to Provision No. 1, "all new Taxes, which have been imposed upon the Ryots in any part of the Country, since the commencement of the Bengal year 1172 (or 1764-5) being the year in which the Company obtained the Duanny, be entirely abolished."<sup>1</sup>

"The abolition we conceive would be an immediate ease to the Ryots, would give life to industry, and would tend to lower again the prices of Bengal manufacturers."<sup>2</sup> The plan proposed that the revenue of each Zemindar do remain fixed during the life of each purchaser, and "that it be expressly stipulated that no attention shall be paid to any proposals for an annual increase." They strongly recommended that "the Revenue of every district should be settled with the Zegiindar, and for this reason we propose he should have a preference, if his terms are equal to what the Council judge to be the real value of the lands, even though other persons should be willing to give considerably more."<sup>3</sup> Francis and his two colleagues, Sir John Clavering and Colonel Monson, wrote minutes comparing the two plans of 1772 and 1776. On April 11 they wrote as follows:

"Since our arrival in this country, and during all our

<sup>1</sup> *Original Minutes of the Governor-General and Council of Fort William on the Settlement and Collection of the Revenues of Bengal, with a Plan of Settlement recommended to the Court of Directors in January, 1776, by Philip Franeis, Esq., p. 3.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid., p. 4.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid., p. 10.*

**debates** with our colleagues, we have not met with a circumstance that has filled us with greater astonishment than the terms and purport of the plan, proposed by the Governor-General and Mr. Barwell, for the new settlement of the provinces, at the expiration of the present leases. That gentlemen, who have contributed to subvert the constitution of this country, and the rights of the natives, should wish to revert to that Government they have so lately overset, and should so far forget themselves as to recommend the abolition of the very system, which they every day support, which the Governor-General has declared, in one of his late Minutes, to be still in his opinion, the best that could be adopted, and our disapprobation of which is constantly the subject of their censure, is only to be explained by themselves. This conduct in other persons, might appear inconsistent. In them, it is uniform, and consonant to that instability which characterises their government."<sup>x</sup>

In January, 1776, Francis, with the concurrence and approbation of his two colleagues, sent home a powerful minute in which he denounced the farming system, and painted a vivid picture of "the general decline of the country in its population, trade, manufactures, and cultivation," and he recommended as a cure for all these evils a perpetual settlement of the land revenue. He wrote : "In providing a relief to the country, I do not speak of a temporary remission left open to an arbitrary increase of demands on future improvements. The Jumma, once fixed, must be matter of public record. It must be permanent and unalterable; and the people must, if possible, be convinced that it is so. This condition must be fixed to the lands themselves, independent of any consideration of who may be the immediate or future proprietors. If there be any hidden wealth still existing, it **will** then be brought forth and employed in improving the **land**, because the proprietor will be satisfied he is labouring **for** himself."<sup>2</sup>

Before constructing a plan for the new settlement and fixing the rates for a length of time, Hastings proposed the

creation of an office for the collection of information regarding the accurate state of the real values of the lands. He considered " Many other points of inquiry will also be useful, to secure to the ryots the perpetual and undisturbed possession of their lands, and to guard them against arbitrary exactions. This is not to be done by proclamations or edicts, nor by indulgences to the zemindars and farmers. The former will not be obeyed, unless enforced by regulations so framed as to produce their own effect without requiring the hand of Government to interpose its support; and the latter, though it may feed the luxury of the zemindars, or the rapacity of the farmers, will prove no relief to the cultivator, whose welfare ought to be the immediate and primary care of Government." Francis criticised severely the plan in detail, and brought forward many trivial objections to it; but after his faithful colleague Monson died, Hastings became by the use of the casting vote supreme in the Council, and the office was established at the close of 1776. Experienced covenanted servants of the Company were appointed to superintend the newly created office, and a large number of native officers were sent into the country for the sole and express purpose of collecting such accounts and information as had reference to the business of this office.

In 1777 orders were sent to the native commissioners (Amins) to report with the information they had obtained to each of the Provincial Councils, to whom orders and instructions were issued for forming a new settlement. In July the same year instructions from the Court of Directors relative to the new settlement reached the Bengal Government. The court, having considered the plan of the Governor-General and Mr. Barwell on letting the land on leases for lives, and that of Mr. Francis for establishing a fixed invariable rent, " did for many weighty reasons, think it not then advisable to adopt either of these modes." They ordered that the lands should be let for one year on the most advantageous terms, but they should no longer be put up to auction. A preference should always be given to the Zemindar if he consents to engage for the

**amount of the farm settlement, or for such an amount as the Provincial Council might deem reasonable. The Zemindar need produce no security, for a stipulation was to be inserted in the lease that in case of their falling in arrears they should be liable to be dispossessed, and their Zemindarees or portions of them should be sold to make up the deficiency.** On the same principle, a settlement was made with the Zemindars for 1777 and the three following years (1778-1780).

On December 3, 1780, Philip Francis sailed from Calcutta, **and** landed at Dover on October 19, 1781. It was at the time when Indian affairs occupied to a very large degree the attention of the public and Parliament. A Select Committee, of which Burke was the most important member, had been appointed early in 1781 to consider the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; and in what manner these provinces might be governed with the greatest advantage. When news reached England that Hyder Ali had entered the Carnatic, destroyed an army, and driven Sir Hector Munro to the walls of Fort St. George, a Secret Committee was appointed for the purpose of enquiring into the causes of the war in the Carnatic, and into the state of the British possessions on the coast. Henry Dundas, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, was chairman, and in that capacity first acquired his knowledge of Indian affairs.

Francis, on reaching England, found that the time was favourable for renewing his campaign against his old antagonist Hastings, procuring his recall and succeeding to the long-coveted office of Governor of Bengal, which "i" believe," **lie** wrote, "is the first situation in the world attainable by a subject." He renewed his close intimacy with Burke, who was burning with hostility against Hastings, and he added fuel to the flame. Francis supplied in a large measure the material for the famous twelve reports which the Select Committee presented to the House of Commons. As to the Ninth Report, which is indeed a masterpiece of human wisdom, he wrote in 1791: "The fact is I wrote a very small part of it, and as to the composition, corrected the whole. On **memory only, and** speaking without book, I think I **can say with truth that there is not one material principle or**

**deduction in it which may not be fairly and honestly traced back to** some antecedent opinions **of** my own, dilated on **and** expanded by a superior power. In some respects I am the acorn. But, if you want to see the oak in **all** its beauty, dignity, and strength, read the ninth report, the sole undoubted property of the commanding master-mind **of** Edmund Burke."<sup>1</sup>

About April, 1782, Francis published *Original Minutes of the Governor-General and Council of Fort William on the Settlement and Collection of the REVENUES OF BENGAL, with a Plan of Settlement recommended to the Court of Directors in January, 1776, by Philip Francis, Esq.* The volume contains a short Introduction contrasting Hastings' and Barwell's plan for a future settlement of the revenue, dated April 22, 1775, and his own plan for a settlement, dated January 22, 1776. Francis, in this Introduction, exhibits the same egotism, the same combativeness, and the same subtle ability that marked him through life. He opens with the statement that he and his colleagues were appointed by Parliament **to** the Government of Bengal "to examine the principles on which the country was taxed, the mode of collecting the revenues, and the amount of the collections, compared with the ability of those who were to pay them."<sup>2</sup> As they obtained information on which they could depend, they communicated it to the Directors, with their opinion of what ought to be confirmed or corrected, or might be improve<sup>^</sup> in the administration. But he states with a sad note: "In this, as well as in other instances, their zeal and industry have been acknowledged and applauded; but it does not appear by any measures taken at home, that their representations have hitherto been seriously regarded. At this time, perhaps, when the state of India is again the object of a parliamentary inquiry, the representations **of** those gentlemen whom Parliament itself selected at home **and** appointed to the government of the country, may be revised and considered with more attention."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Francis Letters*, vol. ii., p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Francis's *Minutes*, Introduction, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

The subject of the papers now laid before the public, he remarks, is curious in itself, and ought to be interesting to the nation at large. We had an estate in Bengal, the greatest and the most improvable that ever belonged to any state. But "under a European Government Bengal cannot flourish. The utmost that should be attempted, because it is the utmost that can be done, is to palliate the effects, and to retard the progress of evils, which no human wisdom can perfectly remove."<sup>1</sup> This attainable purpose, he considers, can only be accomplished by a systematical plan of Government resolutely enforced from home and steadily adhered to abroad. But the idea of stability and permanence has not accompanied any of the institutions hitherto framed for Bengal. "In those which relate to the assessment and collection of the revenues, a real defence against innovations is the first and most essential point to be established."<sup>2</sup> In his *Plan for a Settlement of the Revenue*, a studied and powerful State Paper, Francis lays down the fundamental nature and character of the campaign he proposes. "The Jumma (assessment) once fixed must be a matter of public record. It must be permanent and unalterable, and the people must, if possible, be convinced that it is so. This condition must be fixed to the lands themselves, independent of any consideration of who may be the immediate or future proprietors. If there be any hidden wealth still existing, it will then be brought forth and employed in improving the land because the proprietor will be satisfied he is labouring for himself."<sup>3</sup>

It was Philip Francis who first started in England the < project of having a permanent revenue settlement in Bengal. The publication of his *Plan of Settlement* had a considerable effect on the minds of Fox and Dundas. On April 2, 1783,; the famous Ministry formed by the coalition of Fox with Lord North came into power, and Burke resumed the office of Paymaster of the Forces which he had filled under Lord Rockingham's brief administration. On April 14 Dundas brought in a Bill which proposed that the rights of the Zemindars and Ryots should be investigated. Dundas was,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*      <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

however, now in opposition, and the Bill was rejected. Still there was hardly a man in or out of power who did not consider that the Government of India wanted reforming. Burke, greatly assisted by Francis, began at once to construct an India Bill. On November 18, 1783, Fox moved for leave to bring in a Bill "for the better Government of our territorial possessions and dependencies in India." This measure, known as Fox's India Bill, was thrown out by the House of Lords, and the Ministry was dismissed by the King.

On December 23, 1783, the younger Pitt became Prime Minister, forming a Government, of which Dundas was Treasurer of the Navy. On January 14, 1784, Pitt moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the better government and management of the affairs of the East India Company. The Bill was brought in, passed through the earlier stages, and then on a division lost by eight votes. In March Parliament was dissolved, and two months later the Ministers were returned by a large majority. On July 2 Pitt introduced an India Bill very similar in its main provisions to the one which had been rejected. It was vigorously opposed by Fox and Burke, but the measure was carried by a large majority on August 13, 1784.<sup>1</sup> A striking provision of the Act declared that, "and whereas complaints have prevailed, that divers rajas, zemindars, and other native landholders have been unjustly deprived of their lands, jurisdictions, and privileges, or that the tribute, rents, and services required to be by them paid or performed for their possessions to the Company, are become grievous and oppressive; And whereas the principles of justice and the honour of this country require that such complaints should be forthwith enquired into and fully investigated, and if founded in truth effectually redressed: Be it therefore enacted, That the Court of Directors shall forthwith take the said matters into their serious consideration, and adopt such methods for enquiring into the truth of the complaints as they shall think best adapted for that purpose; and thereupon give orders to the several Governments and Presidencies in India, for effectually

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, pp, 16, 17.

redressing, in such manner as shall be consistent with justice, and the laws and customs of the country, all injuries and wrongs which the rajas, zemindars and other native landholders may have sustained, and for the settling, upon principles of moderation and justice according to the laws and constitution of India, the permanent rules by which their tributes, rents and services shall be in future rendered and paid to the Company."

In their memorable letter of April 12, 1786, the Court of Directors directed that settlement should be made in all practicable instances with the Zemindars. "With respect to the amount of the assessment, the Directors were of opinion that the information already obtained might be sufficient to enable their government in Bengal to fix it without having recourse to minute local scrutinies."<sup>1</sup> They suggested the average of former years' collections to be the guide on the present occasion. On this point they concluded their instructions with remarking that "a moderate jumma, or assessment, regularly and punctually collected, unites the consideration of our interest with the happiness of the natives and security of the landholders, more rationally, than any imperfect collection of an exaggerated jumma, to be enforced with severity and vexation."<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cornwallis, on his arrival in India, discovered that sufficient information had not been obtained to justify him in proceeding at once to make a settlement for the period of ten years. He therefore circulated interrogatories with regard to the question of usages, tenures, and rent, and he was closely studying the answers to these enquiries when he had to leave Calcutta to conduct the operations of war.

During his absence, Shore worked zealously at obtaining and sifting the materials that were necessary for framing a fresh settlement. On June 18, 1789, he issued his famous minute respecting the permanent settlement of the lands in the Bengal provinces. This able State Paper, with its appendices and propositions, occupies seventy closely-printed folio pages of the famous Fifth Report. At the close of his

1 Fifth Report, p. 20.

2 Ibid.

prodigious minute, Shore states the main principles upon which it is based.

"The leading principles upon which I shall ground my propositions for the ensuing settlement are two.

"The security of Government with respect to its revenues, and the security and protection of its subjects.

"The former will be best established by concluding a Permanent Settlement with the Zemindars or proprietors of the soil; the land, their property, is the security of the Government.

"The second must be ensured by carrying into practice, as far as possible, an acknowledged maximum of taxation. The tax which each individual is bound to pay ought to be certain, not arbitrary. The time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor and every other person.

"The settlement is then to be made for a period of ten years certain, but with a view to permanency."<sup>1</sup>

In a second minute, issued the same year, Shore objected to any definite undertaking to make the proposed settlement permanent. He pleaded for further enquiry and a fair trial of the ten years' settlement. Cornwallis replied in a minute dated September 18, 1789. He affirmed with considerable sophistry that the Court of Directors would never have held out "the flattering hopes of a permanent settlement, which alone, in my judgment, can make the country flourish and secure happiness to the body of inhabitants, unless they had been predetermined to confirm the perpetuity, if they found that their servants here had not failed in their duty, or betrayed the important trust that had been reposed on them."<sup>2</sup>

Pitt's India Act of 1784 directed that the Court of Directors shall forthwith "give orders to the several Governments and Presidencies in India, for effectually redressing, in such manner as shall be consistent with justice and the laws and customs of the country, all injuries and wrongs which the rajas, zemindars, and other native landholders may have sus-

<sup>1</sup> Dutt, *Economic History*, pp. 89-90.

\* *Selections*, p. 73.

tained, and for the settling, upon principles of moderation and justice, according to the laws and constitution of India, the permanent rules by which their tributes, rents, and services shall be in future rendered and paid to the Company."<sup>1</sup> Two years after, on April 12, 1786, the Court of Directors sent out a voluminous despatch to give effect to what it termed "the true spirit" and "the humane intentions of the Act." The despatch did not hold out "flattering hopes" to any particular class. (1) Rajas who had not lost the management of the ancient territories which they held rather as native rulers than as proprietors; (2) Native leaders who had established themselves under the title of Zemindars, Polygars, etc., in the control of tracts of country from which they paid a regular land revenue; (3) All other native landholders should alike have redress.

The Court was very careful not to define the exact status of any belonging to the second class. Cornwallis spoke of the Zemindars as "lords of the soil" and "owners of the land." He used these terms in the same sense as Shore did, in the Oriental and not the English sense. He only recognised that they possessed a limited and not an absolute proprietorship. His aim was to make the Zemindars into Lords of the Manor liable to pay a fixed moderate revenue to the state, and the rights and interests of the Ryots being protected, they would become customary tenants.<sup>2</sup> He lived in hope that the Zemindars, appreciating the value of a permanent settlement, would become landowners, applying themselves to the improvement of their large estates, and surrounded by thrifty and prosperous tenantry. Shore, who had a wide and intimate knowledge of the Zemindars, considered that only a few of the older Zemindars would become such landlords, and it would be a dangerous experiment to bestow on the majority permanence and security of tenure. Lord

\* "When the bill of 1784 was laid before the Directors, with the blanks filled up, it contained a clause which ordained that, to prevent future oppression, the Government were to be required, under the Act, to fix an unalterable tribute rent. This compulsory clause was omitted on a representation from the Directors"<sup>1</sup> (Auber, vol. ii., p. 89).

\* *British Rule in India.*

Cornwallis replied that it would be unwise to deny " the prudent landholders " the benefit of a permanent system, because the mismanagement of "proprietors of a contrary description " will not allow them to derive the same advantage from it. Lord Cornwallis stated that, although he was of opinion that the Zemindars had the best right to the soil, " but from being persuaded that nothing could be so ruinous to the public interest as that the land should be retained as the property of Government, I am also convinced that, failing the claim of right of the Zemindars, it would be necessary for the public good to grant a right of property in the soil to them, or to persons of their descriptions."<sup>1</sup>

" It is the most effectual mode for promoting the general improvement of the country which I look upon as the important object for our present consideration.

" I may safely assert that one-third of the Company's territory in Hindostan is now a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts. Will a ten years' lease induce any proprietor to clear away that jungle, and encourage the ryots to come and cultivate his lands, when at the end of that lease he must either submit to be taxed ad libitum for their newly cultivated land, or lose all hopes of deriving any benefit from his labour, for which perhaps by that time he will hardly be repayed ?"<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cornwallis was prepared to recognise and secure the position of the Bengal Zemindars as long as they proved themselves prudent landowners, and no longer. He considered it was " for the interest of the State that the landed property should fall into the hands of the most frugal and thrifty class of people who will improve their lands and protect the ryots, and thereby promote the general prosperity of the country.

" If there are men who will not follow this line of conduct when an opportunity is afforded them by the enactment of good laws, it surely is not consistent with justice, policy, or humanity, to say that the sooner their bad management

<sup>1</sup> *Selections*, p. 74.

a *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

obliges them to part with their property to the more industrious, the better for the State.

" It is immaterial to Government what individual possesses the land provided he cultivates it, protects the ryots, and pays the public revenue."<sup>1</sup>

His lordship proceeds to reply to Shore's doubt of its being expedient that the permanency should be declared at once by the important statement that he understood the word permanent to extend to the jumma (assessment) only, and not to the details of the settlement," for many regulations will certainly be hereafter necessary for the further security of the ryots in particular, and even of those talookdars, who, to my concern, must still remain in some degree of dependence on the zemindars; but these can only be made by Government occasionally, as abuses occur."<sup>2</sup> This, however, did not answer Shore's main argument that a ten years' settlement would reveal abuses, while a permanent settlement founded on insufficient knowledge would perpetuate them. Shore urged it in the most forcible terms that there was hardly sufficient data to justify a lease of seven years. If at the end of the fifth, sixth, or eighth year of the assessment the intricate relative rights of the Talookdars, Ryots, and Zemindars had been elucidated under the regulations which they were then discussing, the settlement might then be again extended to ten or twenty years. Then they would be able to discuss with some accurate information the question of a perpetual assessment. Shore had considerable experience of the intricacies of land tenure in Bengal, and he knew that the complex relationship of Ryot and Zemindar could not be converted into the relationship of an English landlord and [tenant, or the Zemindar forced to grant pottas (specification of rent) to the Ryot, and the Ryot signed receipts.

Lord Cornwallis replied with considerable dexterity to Shore's minute of December 21, 1789, in a long minute dated February 3, 1790. Two objections needed the special attention of the Governor-General. These were the ignor

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>a</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

ance and incapability of the majority of the Zemindars and the lack of experience on our part. He considered that the ignorance and incapability of the Zemindars, admitting that these defects did exist to the extent supposed, were to be attributed greatly to the system of collecting the public revenue for the land which had been prevalent in Bengal.

"If laws are enacted which secure to them the fruits of industry and economy, and at the same time leave them to experience the consequence of idleness and extravagance, they must either render themselves capable of transacting their own business or their necessities will oblige them to dispose of their lands to others who will cultivate and improve them. This I conceive to be the only effectual mode which this or any other Government could adopt to render the proprietors of the lands economical landlords and prudent trustees of the public interests."<sup>1</sup>

As regards experience, he remarked that twenty years had been employed in collecting, and, like their predecessors, they set out with seeking for, new information and they had been three years in collecting it. "Voluminous reports have been transmitted by the several collectors on every point which was deemed of importance. The object of these various arrangements has been to obtain an accurate knowledge of the value of the lands, and of the rules by which the Zemindars collect the rents from the ryots."<sup>2</sup>

Time soon revealed that they did not possess sufficient information to justify an act so important as a perpetual settlement. Lord Cornwallis knew that further enquiry into the various rights connected with the land would be a work of time, and his tenure of office was fast coming to a close, and his desire to pass a measure which he firmly believed would be of great service to the country would brook no delay. Lord Cornwallis's decision not to postpone a proclamation regarding the permanence of the settlement was influenced by a weighty reason, which is not mentioned in his *miyites*. "He had learned, from the past history of India, the evils resulting from the perpetual fluctuations of system

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

produced by changes in the component Members of the Administration: and he frankly avowed to Mr. Shore, that he would willingly have yielded his opinion, could security against the interposition of adverse influence have been furnished, by the continuance of the reins of Government either in his own hands or in those of Mr. Shore, till the expiration of the decennial term."<sup>1</sup>

At the close of his minute, Lord Cornwallis proposed, and it was carried, that the Board of Revenue be directed to proceed without delay to form the ten years' settlement in Bengal agreeably to the rules and prescriptions laid down, and "that the Board of Revenue be directed to notify to the landholders that the settlement, if approved by the Court of Directors, will become permanent, and no alteration take place at the expiration of the ten years."<sup>2</sup> Seven days after, Cornwallis's final minute regulations for the decennial settlement of Bengal were issued, but it was, however, not before November, 1791, that an amended and complete code of regulations for the conclusion of the decennial settlement was promulgated by the Bengal Government. Ample material was sent to the Court of Directors for them to come to a final decision on the measure, but as some of the most important members objected to perpetuity, the Court as a body shirked considering it. Dundas, a strong man, applied himself vigorously to solve the pressing difficulty. On September 17, 1792, he wrote to Lord Cornwallis as follows: "In your letter you allude to the important question of the decennial settlement, and I have the very great satisfaction to inform you that the same conveyance which carries this, carries out an approbation and confirmation of your sentiments on this subject. It has been longer delayed than I expected, but the delay was unavoidable. Knowing that the directors would not be induced to take it up, so as to consider it with any degree of attention, and knowing that some of the most leading ones among them held an opinion different both from your lordship and me on the subject of perpetuity, and feeling that there was much respect due to the opinion

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Tagmouthe*, vol. i., p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> *Selections*, p. 115.

and authority of Mr. Shore, I thought it indispensably necessary both that the measure must originate with the Board of Control and likewise that I should induce Mr. Pitt to become my partner in the final consideration of so important and controverted a measure. He accordingly agreed to shut himself up with me for ten days at Wimbledon, and attend to that business only. Charles Grant stayed with us a great part of the time. After a most minute and attentive consideration of the whole subject, I had the satisfaction to find Mr. Pitt entirely of the same opinion with us. We therefore settled a despatch upon the ideas we had formed and sent it down to the court of directors. What I expected happened; the subject was too large for the consideration of the directors in general, and the few who knew anything concerning it, understanding from me that Mr. Pitt and I were decided in our opinions, thought it best to acquiesce, so that they came to a resolution to adopt entirely the despatch as transmitted by me."

It was Charles Grant who drafted the General Orders, a copy of which was sent to the Court by the Board of Control and signed by Mr. Dundas as President.<sup>1</sup> They were adopted by the Court and forwarded to Bengal in the form of a despatch on September 19, 1792.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of the

<sup>1</sup> Charles Grant wrote to Lord William Bentinck, London, March 20, 1806, as follows: "Though I have never served in the Revenue Department, it has happened to me from my earliest residence in India to be connected with persons immediately engaged in, or particularly conversant with, the principal questions which were discussed in Bengal on systems and modes of Revenue Administration; and, when leaving that country in 1790, Lord Cornwallis commissioned me to explain and recommend as far as I could, to the authorities here the great measure of the Perpetual Settlement, which he had then brought forward, and which met considerable opposition at home, so that at length the Board of Control dictated the General Orders of September, 1792, sent out upon it, which Orders it fell to my lot to draw up" (Morris's *Life of Charles Grant*, pp. 170-171).

\* This was followed by another letter. The Secretary to the Board of Control wrote: "The revenue letter of last year was considered as the sequel of that which confirmed the decennial settlement and which was written (principally, I believe, by Mr. Pitt) on the plan of a report prepared by the Secretary, from the original records. . . . Particular parts of the letter are said to have been written by Mr. Dundas and some by Mr. C. Grant" (Kaye's *British India*, etc., p. 183).

following year they reached Calcutta, and on March 22, 1793, a proclamation was issued, the second and third articles of which are as follows:

ART. II. "The Marquis Cornwallis, knight of the most noble order of the garter, governor general in council, now notifies to all zemindars, independent talookdars, and other actual proprietors of land, in the provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, that he has been empowered by the honourable court of directors for the affairs of the East India Company, to declare the jumma which has been or may be assessed upon their lands under the regulations above mentioned, fixed for ever."

ART. III. "The governor general in council accordingly declares to the zemindars, independent talookdars, and other actual proprietors of land, with or on behalf of whom a settlement has been concluded under the regulations (21) above mentioned, that at the expiration of the term of the settlement, no alteration will be made in the assessment which they have respectively engaged to pay, but that they and their heirs and lawful successors will be allowed to hold their estates at such assessment for ever."

Lord Cornwallis, who, as Governor-General, with all the weight of his high office urged it; Dundas, the despot President of the Board of Control, who vigorously supported him; and Pitt, the Prime Minister, who consented to the measure, were answerable for the permanent settlement. They were guilty of an important financial mistake for giving away the Government rights over the soil to the Zemindar, reserving only from each estate an annual payment, which it solemnly bound itself never to increase. But they were not answerable for the many blunders owing to the hasty and careless mode in which the permanent settlement was in the first instance conducted. This important measure has been much discussed and much misapprehended. The original character and rights of the Zemindars have afforded much food for controversy. It is not possible within the compass of an introduction to enter into any minute discussion of these

questions. The Zemindars, it is admitted, were officials collecting the revenues for the Mogul Government, accounting to that Government for their receipts and remunerated by a percentage (generally 10 per cent.) of the collections. But there is no doubt that many of them were persons of hereditary influence and station in the country, and that their connection with their lands had in general been of a permanent character. "Our Government," Warren Hastings wrote, "has admitted the opinion of their rightful proprietorship of the lands." The permanent settlement confirmed that opinion, but the regulations of 1793 establishing that measure and the code of law which accompanied it had provisions incompatible with their being absolute proprietors. The rights of Talookdars and others who held lands under the Zemindars were recognised and protected as long as they paid the established assessment. The occupying tenant or Ryot had had bestowed on him fixity of tenure and fixity of rent. The Government demand, however, being now fixed in perpetuity, and claimable from the landlord only, the revenue officers had no longer any power of interposing in favour of the tenancy; and their rights were henceforth left for the protection of the Courts of Justice. "But the Courts of Justice could proceed only by regular suit on the complaint of the injured party. The poverty of the people, their passive character, and the extreme difficulty of proving by legal evidence before a distant tribunal what was customary have rendered this protection illusory; the rights of the Bengal ryot have (as have been said) passed away *sub silentio*, and they have become, to all intents and purposes, tenants at will." These facts are not adverted to for the purpose of casting blame on a generation long gone by, whose mistakes are sufficiently explained and excused by the short experience they had then had of India and the extreme difficulty which persons nurtured only in English ideas and institutions have in correctly apprehending a state of facts so entirely unlike anything which ever existed in England as the whole framework of Indian society presents. Since these words were written by John Stuart

Mill, protection was partially assured the Rydt by the Rent Law of 1859 and the Tenancy Law of 1885.

Concurrently with the permanent settlement Lord Corn\* wallis introduced a complete system of judiciary which in its main feature was due to Warren Hastings and a code of laws under the name of Regulations. The proclamation announcing the perpetual settlement became Regulation I. in the code. Guided by the chief principle, "where the power to redress oppressions, and functions that must always have a tendency to promote or screen the commission of them, are united in the same person, a strict adherence to the principles of justice cannot be expected, and still less can it be hoped that the people will feel a confidence of obtaining justice," Lord Cornwallis proceeded to abolish the Revenue Courts " and to withdraw from the Board of the Revenue and the collectors all judicial powers, thereby confining their duties and functions to the mere collection of the public dues, and to transfer the cognisance of the causes hitherto tried in these courts to the courts of justice."<sup>1</sup> They had been established in each collectorship, and were to be continued under the denomination of Zillah or District Court, " and the judge thereof is to have cognisance over civil causes of all descriptions that may arise in his jurisdiction, whether of the nature of those termed revenue causes, and hitherto tried in the Revenue Courts, or of the description of those which have been cognisable in the courts of Dewanny Adawlut."<sup>2</sup> A single judge, a covenanted civil servant of the Company, with native assessors to advise in matters of Hindu and Mahomedan law, presided in each of these courts. From the judge of a district or city council there was an appeal to one of the four Provincial Courts established at the cities of Patna, Dacca, Moorshedabad, and Calcutta. They were courts of revision and appeal; but they were also to a certain extent courts of primary jurisdiction. All decisions of the Provincial Courts of Appeal respecting personal or real property in causes exceeding certain amounts " were to be applicable " to the Governor-General in Council (as the minute dated March 6, 1793, states) " as a Court of Appeal in

<sup>1</sup> *Selections*, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the last resort in their capacity of a Court of Sudder Dewanny Adawlut."<sup>1</sup> In the last resort, however, an appeal lay to the Privy Council in all causes exceeding fifty thousand rupees. Each Provincial Court consisted of three judges, all covenanted servants, and three assessors were retained—a Kazi and Mufti, as the exponents of Mahomedan law, and the deliverance of the Fatwa or decision on a point of law referred to them and a Pundit, who performed a similar duty on questions of Hindu law.

The criminal administration was conducted on the same lines as the civil proceedings. The Zillah and city judges were appointed to act as magistrates within their respective jurisdictions. The judges of the Provincial Courts were constituted judges of circuit in their respective divisions; "the senior judge will go the circuit of one-half of the stations within their jurisdiction, whilst the other two perform the circuit of the remainder."<sup>2</sup> By this means two annual gaol deliveries were effected. "As to the cities, we have resolved that there shall be a gaol-delivery every month, excepting during the time that the judge may be upon the circuit in the districts."<sup>3</sup>

In the judicial arrangements of Lord Cornwallis, as in his revenue administration, experience disclosed many faults. The regulations or written law were declared in language which, judged by modern requirements, must be called popular. There was no official who had any training in drafting. The courts were greatly infected with technicalities of procedure calculated both to defeat justice and obstruct the access to it by needless delay and expense, but, according to the authority of John Stuart Mill, in a far less degree than the courts in England at the period. Lord Cornwallis has been severely criticised for attempting to administer justice wholly by European agency. But the foundations of the judicial system were primitive small debt courts established at convenient distances in every district. These

<sup>1</sup> Saclar Dewani adalat, the chief civil court ; Sadar Nezamat adalat, the chief criminal court.

<sup>3</sup> *Selections*, p. 126.

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*Ibid.*

courts were limited to determining causes regarding personal property from the value of fifty rupees downwards. Fifty rupees may seem to an English scribe a most trifling sum, but to the Bengal Ryot it represented a substantial amount. These courts were presided over by Native Commissioners, who were allowed no salary or establishment, but received as remuneration a fee calculated on the amount claimed. "They acted the part of arbitrators," says James Mill, "and their mode of procedure was summary, that of simple rational inquiry not distorted into labyrinth by technical forms. From their decision an appeal might be carried to the Zillah Court."<sup>1</sup> It was urgently necessary to appoint European covenanted officers as judges of the District Courts of first instance, owing to the widespread corruption which arose from the decline of the Mogul Government. It was difficult to find natives whose character, capacity, and good faith were such that these judgments on questions of fact might be taken as conclusive. A noble achievement of British rule is the creation of a judicial subordinate service which will compare favourably with any subordinate service in Europe. But it has been created by the slow product of experience and education.

The Cornwallis code, with its many imperfections, deserves to be commemorated for establishing in an Oriental land the supremacy of the law and of the law courts over all persons whatever, the foundation of all civil liberty.<sup>2</sup> "We have resolved," wrote the Governor-General in Council, to the Court of Directors on March 6, 1793, "that the collectors of revenue and their officers, and indeed all the officers of Government, shall be amenable to the courts for acts done in their official capacities, and that Government itself in cases in which it may be a party with its subjects in matters of property shall submit its rights to be tried in those courts under the existing laws and regulations," "thus embodying," says an English lawyer of considerable eminence, "one of the most valuable of our English principles: that every subject,

<sup>1</sup> Mill, vol. v., p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> Ross, vol. ii., p. 558.

however mean, has an absolute right, without any preliminary authorisation, to bring any functionary, however high, before the judges of the land for any wrong done."<sup>1</sup>

While Lord Cornwallis was introducing measures of reform in the internal administration of a great Eastern kingdom which affected the destinies of some millions, France began a war which affected the destinies of many millions in Europe, On February 1, 1793, she declared war against England and Holland. It was, however, not till June that despatches reached India informing the Government that we were at war with France. Chandernagore and sundry French factories in the Presidency of Bengal were occupied by the British with little delay. The Madras Government also promptly made preparations for the siege of Pondicherry. On July 11 Colonel Floyd with a large detachment of troops blockaded it on the land side, while the *Minerva*, thirty-eight gun frigate, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral the Hon. W. Cornwallis, assisted by three of the Company's ships—*Triton*, *Warley*, and *Royal Charlotte*—blockaded it effectually by sea. On July 25 Colonel Braithwaite assumed command of the besieging army, and five days later he summoned the Governor to surrender. He replied that he would defend the fort to the utmost. But this gallant resolve could not be carried out owing to the licentiousness and insubordination of the garrison. On August 23 a battery of fourteen-pounders opened fire within 600 yards of the fort. The drunken troops within began to menace their officers, and that evening brought an offer to capitulate. This offer was refused and surrender at discretion demanded. The next morning the British colours were again hoisted in Pondicherry.

On September 1, 1793, Lord Cornwallis wrote from Fort St. George to the Court: "As it was of great consequence for the public interest that Pondicherry should be reduced before the setting in of the north-east monsoon, I thought it prudent to adopt every means in my power to insure our success, and with that view I recommended that, in addition to the vigorous exertions of the Government of Fort

<sup>1</sup> *British Rule in India*, Lord Justice James, p. 93.

St. George, five companies of artillery and twelve companies of lascars should be sent from Bengal, to be ready to assist in the operations of the siege in case their services should prove to be necessary, I likewise resolved to repair to the Carnatic in person, as soon as I could procure a safe conveyance, not only to take a share in the last piece of service, which was likely to occur during the short remainder of my stay in India, but in order that I might be at hand to give the utmost energy that might be possible to our efforts in case Pondicherry should be reinforced, or other circumstances should arise to enable it to make a formidable resistance/<sup>1</sup> A large supply of rice and military stores were laded in "three country ships," and the artillery and lascars were embarked on the *Woodcote*. Owing to the monsoon, there was much difficulty and delay in dropping down the Hooghly, with its treacherous sand-banks dreaded by mariners of old. On August 13 Cornwallis, as he informs us, left Calcutta, and, owing to much stormy weather and contrary winds, it was not till September 7 that the *Woodcote*, with the Governor-General on board, anchored in the roadstead of Madras. Eleven days later he wrote to the Court: "As a ship of war cannot be spared to carry me to England, and no public reason renders it necessary to postpone any longer my resignation of the Supreme Government, it is my intention to take my passage in the *Swallow* packet, and to sail from hence early in the next month."

On or about October 10 Lord Cornwallis embarked on board the *Swallow* and sailed from Madras. On September 11, 1786, the same vessel had anchored in the Hooghly with Lord Cornwallis and his staff on board.

<sup>1</sup> Ross, vol. ii., pp. 224, 225.





