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THE HISTORY
OF BRITISH INDIA,
BY
MILL & WILSON.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

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THE HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA.

BY JAMES MILL, ESQ.

FIFTH EDITION WITH NOTES AND CONTINUATION,

BY HORACE HAYMAN WILSON, M.A., F.R.S.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETIES OF PARIS, BOSTON AND CALCUTTA,
AND OF THE ORIENTAL SOCIETY OF GERMANY; OF THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, AND THE
IMPERIAL ACADEMIES OF VIENNA AND ST. PETERSBURGH; OF THE ROYAL ACADEMIES
OF BERLIN AND MUNICH, ETC., ETC.; AND HODEN PROFESSOR OF
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IN 1793, the termination of the period assigned to the exclusive privileges of the Company so nearly approached, that the question of renewing the charter, and of confirming or changing the present system of govern-

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ment, could no longer be deferred. People had now so generally acquired the habit of lifting their eyes to the management of national affairs; and equal treatment to all so forcibly recommended itself as the best rule of government, that the commercial and manufacturing population were impelled to make an effort, more than usually strong for the freedom of the Eastern trade. The principal places of manufacture and commerce in the kingdom; Liverpool, Glasgow, Paisley, Manchester, Norwich, Exeter: exhibited combinations of the merchants and manufacturers, who passed the strongest resolutions; importuned the ministers; petitioned the legislature; and desired to have an opportunity of proving how much the real policy of commerce was violated, and the wealth of the country kept down, by the monopoly of so large a field of trade as that unhappily consigned to the East India Company.

The Indian government was so organized, as now very well to answer ministerial purposes; it was therefore the study of ministers to preserve things as they were. The Board of Control and the Court of Directors cast, with some skill, the parts which they had respectively to perform. A committee of Directors was appointed, whose business it was to draw up reports upon the subject of the Eastern trade, and to answer the arguments of those by whom the freedom of that trade was advocated or claimed. Three such reports were exhibited. They were in the first instance referred to the Committee of the Privy Council relating to trade and plantations; and in the proper stage of the business were submitted to the House of Commons.

On the 25th of February, Mr. Dundas, in the House of Commons, made a display of the pecuniary state of the Company. Fortunately for the designs which were in agitation, the accounts of receipt and disbursement presented, just at that moment, a balance of a large amount, on the favourable side.¹ Of this circumstance, the greatest

¹ Mr. Tucker observes, "If I were called upon to point out the period when the Company's finances abroad were in the most prosperous state, I should probably fix on the year 1792-3, for we then possessed an annual surplus sufficient to liquidate the territorial debt in little more than three years. The territorial charge incurred in England was inconsiderable; our possessions were more compact and manageable, and more productive with reference to their



possible advantage was taken. Every thing which could be effected by the confident assertions, so potent in persuasion, of men of influence and power, was done, to captivate the general mind with a prospect of Indian prosperity; to generate a belief that a great fountain, whence a perennial stream of wealth would flow upon the British nation, was, by the wisdom of its rulers, secured to them in India. Estimates were formed, with all the airs of accuracy, or rather of moderation, by which it was made to appear, that the surplus, exhibited by the account of the year immediately passed, would, in future years, rather increase than diminish. And with profound solemnity an appropriation, as if for perpetuity, was proposed, of a large superabounding sum, which would, it was said, be annually received from India. The eyes of men were successfully dazzled: and when Mr. Dundas called out to them, "Will you stop the tide of so much prosperity for untried theories?" those who knew but little either about the theory or the practice of the case, that is, the greater number, were easily made to believe, that there was a great certainty of securing what they were told was the actual influx of wealth, if they persevered in the present course; a great danger of losing it, if they allowed themselves to be drawn, by delusive prospects, into another.

The friend of Mr. Dundas, and, as well from intellect, as from office, the advocate of his schemes, Mr. Bruce, the historiographer of the Company, says, "Upon no occasion, perhaps, have men's minds been less prepared for a decision, on a subject of such magnitude and importance."

extent; and the produce and manufactures of India being in great demand in the west, our remittances could be effected on advantageous terms in commodities produced by the labour of an industrious population." Review of the Financial Situation of the East India Company, in 1824, by Henry St. George Tucker, p. 29. The surplus revenue of 1792-3 was 1,858,000*l.*, exclusive of a further sum of 200,000*l.* received from Tippoo. In 1793-4 it was 1,119,000*l.*, and in 1794-5 it was 1,182,000*l.* In the following year it declined to 800,000*l.*, and in 1796-7 to 240,000*l.* In 1797-8 there was a deficit which continued to prevail for several years. *Ibid.* p. 13. The expectations suggested by the surplus of 1792-3 were therefore precipitately entertained, although, as has been sufficiently proved by subsequent events, the revenues of India, when carefully administered, have been always more than adequate to the expenses of the government in time of peace.—W.

¹ Report on the Negotiation between the Honourable East India Company and the Public, respecting the renewal of the Company's exclusive Privilege of Trade, for Twenty Years, from March, 1794. By John Bruce, Esq. M.P., F.R.S., Historiographer to the Honourable East India Company, p. 13.



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It is, indeed, true, that the people were deplorably ignorant of the history and management of their East India affairs ; and it was, on this account, the more easy to make them throw themselves, with blind confidence, upon the assertions of men, whose knowledge was presumed from their situation and pretensions.

An annual surplus of 1,239,241*l.* from the revenues and Commerce of India, after paying the Company's Indian charges of every description, was assumed. Of this magnificent sum, the following distribution was to be made. In the first place, as most due, it was proposed, that 500,000*l.* should be annually appropriated to liquidate the debt of the Company contracted in India. But in the next place, it was patriotically determined, that 500,000*l.* should be annually given to the nation, as a tribute from its Indian dominion. With regard to the remainder of the grand surplus, it was represented, by the Indian minister, as no more than equitable, that the meritorious proprietors of East India stock should not be forgotten. He recommended an increase of dividend from eight to ten per cent. By this, 10,000*l.* more of the annual surplus would be absorbed. A circumstance, which might have excited suspicion, but which appears to have been perfectly guiltless of any such disagreeable effect, was this ; that, amid all these promises of wealth, the Company was in want of pecuniary assistance ; and was to receive immediate authority for raising what was equivalent to a loan of 2,000,000*l.* It was not indeed to be called a loan. The name of a loan, associated with the idea of poverty, was at this time to be avoided. The Company were to be empowered to add 1,000,000*l.* to their capital stock, which, being subscribed, on the faith of a dividend of ten per cent., at 200 per cent., produced to the Company's treasury a sum of 2,000,000*l.* By this, it was said, the Company's bond debt in England would be reduced 1,500,000*l.* The dividend upon this new capital would exhaust 100,000*l.* more of the surplus revenue. Of the appropriation of the remainder, which, to show accuracy, and because even small sums are of great importance, was carried to the last degree of minuteness, it would here, however, be out of place to render any account.

After some affectation of discord between the Board of



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Control and the Court of Directors, Mr. Dundas having pretended in parliament to believe it possible that the Company might decline to petition for the renewal of their charter on the terms which the minister desired to impose, the petition of the Company was presented to the House of Commons, and taken into consideration on the 23rd of April.

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It was, to some of the opposing members, a source of complaint, when a measure, on which interests of so much importance depended, and about which so profound an ignorance prevailed, was to be considered and determined, that a committee, to collect and to communicate information, had not, as on former occasions, preceded the decision, for which a call upon the legislature was now about to be made. Such a committee, by which ministerial purposes were most likely at the present moment to be thwarted than served, the ministers represented as altogether unnecessary; because, there was no material circumstance, they asserted, relating to India, about which there was not sufficient information, in the valuable and numerous documents, which they had communicated to the House.

The speech of Mr. Dundas displayed and recommended the projected plan. In all the great and leading particulars, the scheme which had been introduced by Mr. Pitt's bill of 1784, and better adapted to ministerial or national purposes by the amendments or declarations of succeeding acts, remained without alteration.

The powers of the Board of Control, and of the Court of Directors, were established on the same footing, on which they had been placed by the declaratory act of 1788. The powers of the Governor-General and his Council, of whom was composed the supreme organ of government in India, with the powers of the Governors and Councils at the subordinate presidencies, remained as they had been established by the act of 1784, and the amending act of 1786. The monopoly of the Eastern trade was still secured to the Company. The appropriations recommended by Mr. Dundas, of a supposed surplus of revenue, were dressed in the formalities of law. The increase of dividend, and the increase of capital, were authorized. And the lease of the exclusive privileges was renewed for a term of twenty years.



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When the bill of Mr. Pitt entered the lists against that of Mr. Fox, the ground of patronage was the field of contention. On this it was, that, as the demerit of the one was to suffer defeat, the merit of the other was to be crowned with victory. On the part, therefore, of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and their party, was required, either the reality, or in place of the reality, the affectation, of a sort of horror at the enormity of increasing ministerial influence. To evade objections from this source, objections which they themselves had raised to such a height of importance, it was arranged, on the introduction of the plan, that no salary should be annexed to the duties of the Board of Control. These duties were to be executed by Members of His Majesty's Privy Council, who had good emoluments, on some other score, and so little to do for them, as to be very well paid for discharging the duties of the Board of Control into the bargain. This make-shift, unless it be contemplated in the light of a trick, to amuse the spectators till their attention relaxed, when paid functionaries of the usual sort might be quietly introduced, is a species of burlesque on legislation. To attach to one office a salary whose magnitude is out of all proportion to the duties; next to create another office, with ample duties but no salary; and then to jumble both sets of duties however heterogeneous, into one set of hands, exhibits a singular contrast with the rule of securing every service by its own appropriate reward; and paying no more for any service, than the performance of the service strictly demands. The time was now come, when the same aversion to patronage was not necessary to be displayed. It was therefore enacted, that a salary, to be paid by the Company, should be annexed to the office of certain of the Commissioners of the India Board; and that, in the appointment of those Commissioners, the circle of the Privy Council should no longer be the boundary of His Majesty's choice.

The second alteration regarded the Indian trade. As an expedient, for softening the opposition of the commercial bodies, it was devised, that the Company should afford annually not less than 3,000 tons of shipping, in which



private individuals might on their own account traffic with India, subject to the restriction of not exporting military stores, or importing piece goods, and subject also to the restriction of lodging imports in the Company's warehouses, and disposing of them at the Company's sales.

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In adducing motives for the approbation of these measures, Mr. Dundas was successful and unsuccessful : unsuccessful in offering any reasons which can now satisfy an enlightened inquirer, but completely successful in offering reasons which satisfied the bulk of his auditory. He began with what he knew to be a favourite topic for a British Parliament—the wisdom of contempt for theory. On this occasion, however, theory was treated by him with unusual lenity ; for though Mr. Dundas affirmed that the theories to which he was opposed did not hold true in the case for which he had to provide ; he was not very unwilling to allow that they held good in all other cases. The propositions, which Mr. Dundas here vilified by the name of theories, were two : the first, that the business of government, and the business of commerce, cannot, with advantage to the governed, be lodged in the same hands ; the second, that freedom is the life of commerce, and restraint and monopoly its bane. What argument did Mr. Dundas produce to show that these propositions did not hold true in the case of India ? India, said he, has hitherto been governed in contempt of them : *ergo*, they do not hold true in the case of India. Mr. Dundas, it is true, asserted also, that India had been governed *well* ; but “governed well,” in this case, means simply *governed*, and nothing more ; “governed,” somehow or other. As to the *quality* of the government, besides that it was the gratuitous and interested assumption, therefore worth nothing, of Mr. Dundas, what is the standard of comparison ? India had been governed well, as compared with what ? As compared with the highest state of advantage in which human nature is capable of being placed ? This is what Mr. Dundas himself would not have ventured, even in his boldest moments of affirmation, to state. As compared with the ancient Mogul government ? Was that the meaning of Mr. Dundas ? A mighty boast ! That the pride of British legislation should produce something not quite so



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bad as the despotism of barbarians. And this, even at that time, was a matter of doubt. It is, now, something more. If this, however, was the meaning, the logic of the ministers and of parliament, the one inventing, the other assenting, stood as follows: "India, in the hands of a civilized people, has been governed, not quite so badly, say the ministers, quite as badly, say other persons, as when it was under the despotism of barbarians. *Therefore*, it is true, that the union of commerce with government, and the monopoly of trade, are good things in India." This is a logic by which a man may be helped to a great variety of convenient conclusions. With Mr. Dundas, the Grand Vizir of Constantinople might say: The empire of the Sublime Porte is "governed well;" *ergo*, janissaries, and the bow-string, are excellent in the empire of the Sublime Porte. The above reasoning Mr. Dundas corroborated by an established parliamentary axiom, which he often found of unspeakable utility, that *all change in matters of government is bad*. Allow this, and it followed, with undeniable certainty, that all change in the government of India was bad. On the other hand, if the absolute and universal truth of that celebrated axiom should be susceptible of dispute, all the oratory which Mr. Dundas expended on the topic of change in general, falls, unsupported to the ground.

The particular change which his opponents contemplated, the removal of the government of India from the hands of a commercial corporation, would, he said, produce the following effects; it would retard the payment of the Company's debts; it would check the growing commerce between the two countries; and it would endanger the allegiance of India. He asked, if it would be wise to incur so much danger for a theory? With regard to the first two of these bare, unsupported assumptions, which ought to have passed for nothing, experience has provided the answer. The government has remained as Mr. Dundas desired, and the Company, so far from paying its debts, has enormously increased them; it has remained as Mr. Dundas desired, and the commerce, instead of increasing, has dwindled to a trifle. That in a well-ordered attempt to improve the mode of governing the people of India, there was any thing to weaken their allegiance, is so evi-



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ently untrue, that it is wonderful there should be a legislative assembly, in a civilized country, in which it could be asserted without derision and disgrace.

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"All this danger," said the Indian minister, "to be incurred for a theory?" First, Mr. Dundas's eagerness to escape from theory has not avoided the danger, but realized a great part of it. Secondly, when he treats the word *theory*; when all that class of politicians, to which he belonged, treat the word theory, with so much contempt, what is it they mean? *Thought*: all application of the thinking powers to the business of government, they call theory; every thing, in short, except mechanical trudging in a beaten track. In the present case, thought, applying the results of experience to the circumstances of India, endeavoured to foresee what mode of government would be attended with the happiest effects; but if ever thought, in consequence of this operation, recommends any thing different in government from that which actually exists, it is, by Mr. Dundas and his fellows, to receive the name of theory, and to be exploded. "All the good which now exists, will you sacrifice it to a theory?" When thought has accurately weighed the value of that which exists, and accurately weighed the value of that which may be got by a change; and, after all that is good and evil on both sides is maturely considered, pronounces deliberately that the second value is greater than the first; what is meant by asking, whether it is wise to sacrifice so much good to a theory? Is it not asking us whether it is wise to sacrifice the less good to the greater? In such cases the answer is, that it is wise, to sacrifice so much good to theory. It is only an abuse of language to express the facts in such inappropriate terms.

Mr. Dundas said, that no two persons agreed, in the substitutes which were proposed for the present plan. This, too, however ridiculous, is a standing argument against improvement. Yet it is not the question, whether few or many schemes are proposed; but whether any of them is good. It would be a strange maxim of government, that, where a great end is in view, and men have different opinions about the means, in that case all power of choice should be extinguished, and things must remain as they are. How numerous soever the opinions, it is



still the business of wisdom to inquire what is best ; and take the most effectual measures for carrying it into happy execution. It is worthy of particular regard, that almost all the general arguments of those who oppose the improvement of political institutions, may thus be traced up to one assumption ; viz. That the original condition of human beings, the brutal savage state, ought never to have been altered ; and that all those men who have laboured to make human nature what it is, ought to be condemned as wicked.

Among his other arguments, or more properly speaking his assertions, Mr. Dundas affirmed, that the surplus revenue in India could not be carried to England, which he affectedly called *realizing*, but by the Company's trade. There is nothing, it appears from experience, too absurd to pass for an argument in a aristocratical assembly. That neither money nor goods could be conveyed from India to England, except by the East India Company, was a proposition which it required no ordinary share of credulity to digest. Experience, moreover, has proved, what a knowledge of the theory of man would have foretold, that there would be no surplus revenue to bring.

Mr. Dundas made use of other assertions. He asserted, that free trade would produce colonization ; and that colonization would produce the loss of India. Unhappily, it is almost impossible to establish any considerable number of Europeans in India ; because the natives subsist upon so little, that the wages of labour are too low to enable Europeans to live. If it were possible, nothing would be of so much advantage, both to the people of India, and to the people of England.

As a weight to counterbalance the arguments of those who pleaded for the separation of the commerce from the government of India, and for the dissolution of the Company, Mr. Dundas delivered it as his old, and, after much time and experience, his present and confirmed opinion, that, if the patronage of India were added to the other sources of the influence of the crown, it would be sufficient to ensure to the crown a majority in both houses of parliament, and would destroy the substance of the constitution, through the medium of its forms. The patronage of India was transferred to the crown. It was the express



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purpose of the declaratory act of 1788, to place the government of India fully and completely in the hands of the ministers. Is the patronage of the Admiralty Board, the patronage of the Commander-in-Chief, or that of the Lord Chancellor, less ministerial patronage, because it is by these functionaries it is dispensed? Was it possible to give to ministers the unlimited power over the government of India, and not to give the benefit of the patronage along with it?

The two great crimes of which the government in India had been accused were; pillage of the natives, and wars of conquest. The present bill, Mr. Dundas asserted, would cure these evils. How? It had two expedients for that purpose: the land-tax was now fixed; and the Governor-General was responsible to parliament.

For annexing salaries to the Board of Control, and enabling his Majesty to make any body a Commissioner, little trouble in search of a reason seems to have been thought necessary. Without a salary, and without a choice of other persons than members of the Privy-Council, no body, said Mr. Dundas, could be got who would keep the office so long, or attend to its business so much, as to be capable of taking a useful part in its management. Nine years before, was this incapable of being foreseen? But foresight is theory. When the Commissioners of Control were first appointed, there were persons who had so much salary, and so little to do for it, that they would be very well paid for both services; viz., those of the India Board, and those attached to the salary, added together. After an additional salary was got for the India Commissioners, what was done with the surplus salary of those who had too much for the services which it was intended to pay? Was any of it taken away? No. Why? To this last question, no answer is required.

By allowing 3000 tons, for private trade, in the Company's ships, Mr. Dundas took credit for having done something considerable in favour of the manufacturers and merchants. The source of advantage in private trade would be found in the more expeditious and economical methods to which private interests would give birth. By subjecting the private trader to the delays and expenses



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BOOK VI. of the Company, Mr. Dundas cut off the possibility of advantage; and the merchants declined to occupy the unprofitable channel which he had opened.

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In every one of the particular objects which this bill pretended to have in view; the enlargement of British commerce, the extinction of debt, and the prevention of conquest; its failure, on experience, has proved to be complete.

It encountered very little opposition till its third reading in the lower house. On that occasion it was furiously assaulted by Mr. Fox. The House of Commons, he observed, had, in the year 1780, proclaimed their solemn opinion, that, "the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." In defiance of this alarming declaration, in violation of the solemn protestations with which the nation were amused, upon the first introduction of the present system of Indian government, a new lot of influence was avowedly created. This was little. The mighty mass of evil existed in the influence which was warehoused for ministerial use with the Court of Directors. This was the most dangerous patronage at the disposal of the Crown. Why? because it was irresponsible. "Is it," said Mr. Fox, "to be placed in the hands of those who really have the power over it? No! it is to be given to their agents and dependants; whose responsibility, from the nature of their situation, it is absurd to speak of.—It has been asserted," he cried "that the patronage of India consists in the appointment of a few writers. If there is a man in this House! if there is a man in this country! if there is one man in the British territory in India! who can believe this assertion, I wish him joy of his credulity! I ask any man, who is not insane,—in whom, if this bill shall pass into a law, will the whole of the patronage of India be invested? Will not the Company and their Directors be the mere tools of the minister? Who appointed Lord Cornwallis? Who Sir John Shore? The clear effect of the measure is to give to the minister all the power, and screen him from all responsibility."¹

Mr. Pitt answered: by complaining that his opponent had deferred to the last stage the statement of his objec-

¹ Parliamentary Debates, 24th May, 1793.



ANSWER OF PITT.

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CHAP. VII.

1793.

tions; and by endeavouring to show, that the appointment of writers to India, who begin as clerks, and rise by seniority to places of importance, could not greatly increase the influence of ministers, even if their power over Directors were as complete as the argument of the opposition supposed. This, however, was not to deny, that ministers possessed all the influence created by the patronage of India; a fact which, at this time, Mr. Pitt did not affect to dispute: it was only to assert, that this influence, when it was got, was of inconsiderable importance. This was to contradict his own arguments against the bill of Mr. Fox; and to recant every assertion by which he had successfully covered it with odium. It was also to contradict the principal argument by which Mr. Dundas had defended the propriety of continuing the government of India in the hands of a commercial company. But it did not subvert the truth, that a mass of wealth equivalent to all the lucrative offices in India, ready to be employed by the Crown, in purchasing the co-operation of those who were appointed to check it, would contribute largely to convert the checking into a confederate body; and to establish a fatal union of King and parliament upon the ruin of the people.

The views of the parties who demanded, on this occasion, a change in the management of Indian affairs, are too nearly the same with the views, which have already been discussed, of preceding parties, to require any particular examination. The merchants petitioned chiefly for freedom of trade. On what grounds of reason, has been, as far as compatible with the nature of the present undertaking, already disclosed. The political change which most of the complaining parties appeared to contemplate, was the transfer of the details of government from the Court of Directors to his Majesty's ministers. On what ground, it appears to me, that the transfer of power which has already been made from the Court of Directors to his Majesty's ministers is not an improvement, and, by parity of reason, that any further transfer would not be an improvement, has been seen in my explanation of the nature of the instrument for the good government of India, which was provided by Mr. Pitt, in the Board of Control.

To communicate the whole of the impression, made



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BOOK VI. upon a mind, which has taken a survey of the government
CHAP. VII. of India, by the East India Company, more completely

1793.

through the whole field of its action, than was ever taken before, and which has not spared to bring forward into the same light the unfavourable and the favourable points, it may be necessary to state, and this I conceive to be the most convenient occasion for stating, That, in regard to *intention*, I know no government, either in past or present times, that can be placed equally high with that of the East India Company; That I can hardly point out an occasion on which the schemes they have adopted, and even the particular measures they pursued, were not by themselves considered as conducive to the welfare of the people whom they governed; That I know no government which has on all occasions shown so much of a disposition to make sacrifices of its own interests to the interests of the people whom it governed, and which has, in fact, made so many and such important sacrifices: That, if the East India Company have been so little successful in ameliorating the practical operation of their government, it has been owing chiefly to the disadvantage of their situation, distant a voyage of several months from the scene of action, and to that imperfect knowledge which was common to them with almost all their countrymen: But that they have never erred so much, as when, distrusting their own knowledge, they have followed the directions of men whom they unhappily thought wiser than themselves, viz. practical Statesmen, and Lawyers; And that, lastly, in the highly important point of the servants, or subordinate agents of government, there is nothing in the world to be compared with the East India Company, whose servants, as a body, have not only exhibited a portion of talent which forms a contrast with that of the ill-chosen instruments of other governments: but have, except in some remarkable instances, as that of the loan transactions with the Nabob of Arcot, maintained a virtue, which, under the temptations of their situation, is worthy of the highest applause.

For the immediate successor of Lord Cornwallis, choice was made of Mr. Shore, a civil servant of the Company, whose knowledge of the revenue system of India was held in peculiar esteem. Pacific habits, and skill in revenue,



VIEWS OF THE PETITIONING PARTIES.

were possibly regarded as means abundantly necessary for realizing those pecuniary promises, which had been so loudly and confidently made to both the parliament and the people of England.

BOOK VI.
CHAP. VII.

1793.

About the same time that Mr. Shore, dignified for his new station with the title of Sir John Shore, succeeded to the substantial power of the government of Bengal, its nominal sovereign, the Nabob Mubarek ud Dowla, died, after a life of thirty-seven years, and a reign of twenty-three. He left twelve sons and thirteen daughters, and was succeeded by his eldest son Uzeez ud Dowla, who was solemnly proclaimed at Calcutta on the 28th of September.

The first important circumstance which solicited the attention of the new Governor-General, was the appearance of an approaching rupture between two of the late confederates; the Nizam, and the Mahrattas. The views, upon one another, of these two states, had undergone no permanent alteration from the union to which the desire of sharing in the spoils of Tippoo had given a temporary existence. Intervening circumstances had nearly matured into act their inimical designs.

The treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between the English, the Nizam, and Mahrattas, included a mutual guarantee against the common object of their hatred and apprehensions, the sovereign of Mysore. This guarantee Lord Cornwallis appears to have thought of great importance for English security. It follows, that he must have expected greater benefit from the co-operation of the Nizam and Mahrattas, in case of an attack, than mischief from entanglement in the wars to which the turbulent politics of these native states would certainly give occasion. The mode in which the contracting parties were to act, in accomplishing the objects of the guarantee, was left, in the treaty concluded previously to the war, to be settled by subsequent regulation. So much had the Governor-General this affair of the guarantee at heart, that he endeavoured, as soon after the war as possible, to secure it by an express treaty devoted to that particular object. It was, however, to be an extraordinary treaty; for Lord Cornwallis, not being altogether without foresight of the evils likely to abound from an obligation to take a



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BOOK VI. part in the wars which the Nizam and Mahrattas might
CHAP. VII. kindle, was for inserting an article, by which the allies
1793. were not to assist one another, except, just when they
pleased; or, as he chose to express it, "until they were
convinced that the party requiring assistance had justice
on his side, and all measures of conciliation had proved
fruitless."¹

A draught of a treaty, to this effect, was transmitted to the courts of Hyderabad and Poonah. The Nizam, though fully sensible that the English alone stood between him and destruction, was yet encouraged to the hope of drawing his profit out of the eagerness for this treaty which the Governor-General displayed. A dispute had already sprung up between him and Tippoo Sultan. The Nabob of Kernoul was the dependant of the Nizam. On that chief Tippoo was urging claims which the Nizam contested. When solicited on the subject of the treaty, the Nizam demanded, as the price of his consent, the support of the English in the affair with Tippoo. This behaviour, the English, who knew their advantages, treated as a crime; and expressed so much of anger, that the Nizam was eager to redeem his offence by unlimited complaisance.

As the power of the Mahrattas was different, so was their temper. The Poonah Councils were still governed by Nana Furnavese, who now despairing of assistance from the English to support him against the designs of Sindia, opposed to the importunities of the Governor-General on the subject of his treaty, evasion and delay. At last the Mahratta minister produced a sketch of a treaty of guarantee to which he expressed his willingness to accede, but involving terms, the acceptance of which, it is probable, he did not expect. Among these was an engagement for realizing the claims of chout upon the the dominions of Tippoo.

The Mahrattas were jealous of the enlarged, and growing power of the English. They were impatient to reap the spoils of the feeble Nizam; an acquisition, to which they

¹ Letter from Governor-General to the Resident at Poonah, dated 7th August, 1792. Colonel Wilkes says, on this occasion, "The policy of his Mahratta allies was in direct and systematic opposition to every thing explicit and definite in its connexion with other powers." In this way, it might be supposed, that this was a clause exactly to suit them.



SITUATION OF THE NIZAM.

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CHAP. VII.

1794.

regarded the connexion of that prince with the English as the only obstruction. Sindia, whose power had been so greatly increased, now exerted a decisive influence on the Mahratta councils, and entertained designs of future grandeur with which the ascendancy, or rather the existence, of the English in India was altogether incompatible. He was not solicitous to disguise his hatred of the connexion between them and the Nizam; or the satisfaction with which he regarded the power of Tippoo, as a counterpoise to the still more formidable power of the English.

After a negotiation of more than a year, the accession of the Mahrattas to the union so fondly projected by Lord Cornwallis, was regarded as hopeless. The Nizam, who saw in their aversion to the proposed engagements, a design of holding themselves at liberty to fall upon him, was kindled to an ardent pursuit of the guarantee; and urged upon the English government the propriety of concluding the treaty singly with him; as it could be no reason, because a third party swerved from its engagements, that the other two should abandon theirs.¹ It entered, however, into the policy of Sir John Shore, to avoid whatever could excite the jealousy of the Mahrattas: the English government, accordingly, declared its satisfaction with the verbal acquiescence of the Nizam; and on the part of the Mahrattas, with a promise, incidentally given, that they would act agreeably to existing treaties.

The Nizam became at last so much impressed with the prospect of the dangers around him, that on the 1st of January, 1794, Sir John Kennaway, the English Resident at Hyderabad, described him to the Governor-General, as prepared to form, with the English, engagements, which would render them masters of his country for ever; and urged the wisdom of not allowing so favourable an opportunity to escape.²

¹ Sir John Malcolm thinks this good reasoning, p. 142.

² See his despatch to the Governor-General, dated Hyderabad, 1st Jan. 1794. The words of Sir John Malcolm, reporting and applauding this advice, are worthy of insertion. "In this [the despatch in question] the Resident states his conviction, that the circumstances in which the court of Hyderabad was then placed, and the character of those by whom it was ruled, were such, as gave us an opportunity, which it was wise and politic to use, to establish an influence and power in its councils, which would enable us to command its future exertions, and benefit from its resources under any events that could occur." Sketch, &c., p. 144. The opinion of two such distinguished functionaries of the Company, so thoroughly conversant in the politics of India,

1794.

The course into which the Mahrattas had been guided by impulse of the circumstances in which they were placed, very highly favoured the extension of the dominion, by gradual encroachments upon their slothful and improvident governments of India. Enabled from the nature of their country, and their state of society, to exercise with advantage a continual war of depredation against the surrounding states, they were often bribed to forbearance, by those who could find no other security against their ravages. The terms of this agreement came at last to be fixed, at a fourth part of the revenues of the country which they consented to spare. This was an opening, at which the stronger party generally found the means of introducing whatever was required for the final subjugation of the country. The fourth part of the revenues was always a disputed sum; and as the Mahrattas endeavoured to make it appear to be greater than it really was, the government of the country endeavoured to make it less. Nothing is ever paid by an Indian government, so long as it can help it; least of all, an odious tribute. The Mahratta chout therefore was seldom paid, except by the terror of a Mahratta army; and by consequence it was almost always in arrear. Under the pretension of security against imposition and delay in the receipt of the chout, the Mahrattas as often as possible insisted upon sending their own officers into the country to collect it. This gave them a power of interference in every measure of the government, and the support of a body of partisans, who, exercising the powers of Indian tax-gatherers, were masters of the property, and to a great degree of the person of every man subject to their exactions.

The dominions of the Nizam had long sustained the Mahratta chout; and previous to the connexion which was formed between the Hyderabad government and Lord Cornwallis, the Mahrattas exercised so great an authority in his country, that the minister of the Nizam was more attentive to the wishes of the Mahrattas than the com-

respecting the real import of those engagements, by which the native Princes accepted the Company's troops as the instrument of their defence, is more instructive as throwing light upon the hypocrisy of preceding, than the plain dealing of subsequent times.



mands of his master. During the necessity of exertion against Tippoo, and the union formed for his subjugation, the Mahrattas had yielded to a temporary relaxation of their influence over the country of the Nizam. But they now intended to resume it with improvements; and a long arrear of chout afforded the pretext for interference.

The English government offered its mediation. The ready acceptance of the Nizam was not a matter of doubt. The Mahrattas employed evasion; and as soon as they were convinced that the interposition of the Governor-General would certainly not be with arms, they treated his mediating propositions with frigid indifference.

A circumstance, calculated to alarm the English government, occurred. Tippoo Sultan had an army in the field, and either intended, or under terror was suspected of intending, a confederacy with the Mahrattas for the subjugation of the Nizam. The question was, what course it now behoved the English government to pursue.

By the treaty of alliance, the Nizam, it might be urged, was entitled to the assistance of the English against Tippoo; and so little were they released from their engagements, by the infidelity of the Mahrattas, that they were rather bound to compel them to fulfil the conditions of a treaty, of which the parties were implied guarantees. Besides, the Nizam had declared, that his accession to the alliance against Tippoo was founded, not upon any confidence which he could place in Mahratta, but on that alone which he reposed in English faith: receiving him into the alliance upon this declaration was a virtual pledge, that the protection to which he looked from the English, was not to depend upon that security which he expressly rejected: to make it depend upon that security was, therefore, a breach of engagement. At the time when the Nizam, confiding in the security of English protection, took part with the English, the value attached to his alliance was such, that it would have been purchased with eagerness at the expense of an engagement offensive and defensive with himself. Would the Nizam, being attacked by Tippoo, have been entitled to assistance from the English, if defended by the Mahrattas? And was his title less, when about to be attacked by Tippoo, with the Mahrattas conjoined? Such a disappointment in hopes, on which he



BOOK VI. had staked the very existence of his throne, could not do
CHAP. VII. less than ensure to the English the enmity of the Nizam.
1794. Nor could the English abandon him, without the appearance at once of weakness and infidelity; without descending from that high station in which they now over-awed the princes of India, as well by the terror of their arms, as the purity of their faith.

Considerations presented themselves of an opposite tendency. If the co-operation of all the parties in a treaty were necessary to the attainment of its end, and the defection of any one of them rendered the attainment of the end no longer possible, the defection of one dissolved, of course, the obligation of all. Again, the treaty of alliance between the English, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas, bound the parties not to assist the enemies of one another. In the case, therefore, of a war between any two of the parties, the third could not interfere. In such a case, the neutrality of the third party was that which the terms of the treaty expressly required. If the friendship of the Nizam would be lost, if the opinion which prevailed of English power, and of the tenacity of English engagements, should endure a slight and temporary diminution, war was beyond comparison a greater evil. It was impossible for any body to suppose that a war against Tippoo and the Mahrattas would be easily sustained. And as the revenue of the Company was confessedly unequal to the expenditure of war, a protracted contest was to be regarded as pregnant with ruin. Even the destruction of the Nizam could not be considered as adding to the dangers of the English; since, after subverting that power, the Mahrattas and Tippoo were much more likely to make war upon one another, than to combine their arms for an attack upon the British state. Finally, by the act of parliament the Company's servants were clearly prohibited from interfering in the quarrels of the native princes, and from taking up arms against them, unless to oppose an actual invasion of the British provinces.

By these considerations, the mind of the Governor-General was determined; and he purposed to leave the Nizam to his fate. That such a determination was contrary to the expectations upon which the Nizam was induced to enter into the alliance, expectations which for



NATURE OF THE POLICY.

that purpose he was encouraged to entertain, there seems no reason to doubt. The difficulties of the Governor-General, and the disappointment of the Nizam, were created by the looseness of the treaty. Two obvious cases, the authors of that treaty had not been able to foresee; First, if one of the three contracting parties were attacked by Tippoo, and one of the two who in that case were bound to assist should decline; Secondly, if one of the three were attacked, and one of the two, who ought to assist, instead of assisting, should join the aggressor. There was nothing in the treaty which determined what was to be done by the third party in either of those cases.

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CHAP. VII.

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If Tippoo had attacked the English, and the Mahrattas had either not assisted, or joined in the attack, it may be strongly suspected that the English, in that case, would not have held the Nizam released from his engagement.

The opinion has also been urged, and it is not without probability, that, by declaring themselves bound to protect the Nizam, the English would not have involved themselves in the calamities of war, but would have prevented hostilities by the terror of their interference.¹

When once the English have thoroughly imbibed the dread of an enemy, Tippoo, or any other; that dread, after the cause of it is weakened, or, peradventure, wholly removed, continues for a long time to warp their policy. In the opinion of the Governor-General, great danger still impended over the Company by the existence of Tippoo. The Nizam he regarded as too weak; the Mahrattas alone as sufficiently powerful to yield a counterpoise to that detested sovereign: his policy, therefore, was to retain, at some cost, the friendship of the Mahrattas; and for this purpose not to grudge the sacrifice of the Nizam.

He was relieved from a portion of his difficulties by the assurance that, if Tippoo had entertained the project of an attack upon the Nizam, it was now laid aside. In the dispute between the Nizam and Mahrattas, the treaty, he thought, created, certainly, no obligation to interfere.

In the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, an obligation existed, which cannot fail to be considered as a little extraordinary. He seems to say, for it is seldom that a rhetorical

¹ This opinion is given with confidence by Sir John Malcolm.



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BOOK VI. writer is entirely free from ambiguity, that the native
CHAP. VII. powers, by joining the English in any war in which they
1794. were engaged, established a right, which nothing but their
own misconduct could ever forfeit, to their friendship, and
to protection against any power to whom by that conduct
they might have given offence.¹ He adduces Lord Corn-
wallis as a party to this speculation ; who, "in his letter,
under date the 28th of February, 1790, to the Resident at
Poonah, declared, that the Mahratta state, by acting against
Tippoo in concert with the British government, became
entitled, in reason and equity, to a defensive alliance
against that prince, even though no previous engagement
existed." If this proposition means anything real, and if
assistance in war creates an obligation to assistance in
return, except an obligation of which the party obliged is
alone to judge ; in other words, an obligation binding him
only when agreeable, that is, no obligation at all : the re-
ceipt of assistance in war is a snare, which carries ruin in
its consequences, and ought for ever to be shunned.² One

¹ Sketch, &c., p. 167.

² This is a conclusion not necessarily resulting from the premises. Undoubt-
edly assistance in war against a common enemy constitutes in equity and reason
a claim to assistance on a like occasion. It is possible that there may be
counteracting claims by which the obligation may be overruled, but the impos-
sibility of fulfilling an obligation is no argument against its reasonableness or
justice. In the view here taken of this transaction, the most material points
are omitted. The grounds which the Nizam had to look to the British Govern-
ment for protection, and the policy of affording it to him. The letter of the
treaty was not violated by withholding aid from the Nizam against the Mah-
rattas singly and conjointly with Tippoo, but unquestionably the spirit was
departed from. It was formed to maintain the integrity of the Hyderabad
state against the aggression of a more powerful neighbour, and it mattered not
whence the danger came : the Nizam equally required protection and had been
led to expect it. The Mahrattas neither needed nor asked for protection. After
the war was over the same expectation was kept alive by the negotiations set
on foot by Lord Cornwallis for a continuation of a guarantee treaty with the
Nizam and the Mahrattas. The Nizam had also some reason to expect favour
from the English, as a return for his cession of Guntoor and adjustment of the
arrears of Peshcush. It was also politic to provide for his protection. There
was nothing to fear from him, whilst his position and resources were calculated
to be of eminent advantage to the English in any future collision with Tippoo
and the Mahrattas, of whose hostile feelings and more formidable power there
could be no uncertainty. On the other hand, there seem to have been diffi-
culties in the way of affording him protection, which are not noticed in the
text, and which were not alluded to by the Governor-General. Captain Duff
observes, that whatever might have been the apparent advantage of the Gover-
nor-General's interference, if it had enabled Nizam Ally to effect his evasive
purpose, it must have been recorded as an injustice to the Mahrattas." *Mahr.*
Hist. iii. 109. The demands of the Mahrattas for the Chout, during a series of
years, were not altogether unfounded. It appears also, that they were not
only met with evasion but with insult and defiance ; and that the court of
Hyderabad provoked the contest. In such a state of things the interference of
the British authority must have been confined to mediation, and would prob-
ably have been of little effect. It does not seem however to have been very



WAR BETWEEN THE NIZAM AND MAHRATTAS.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. VII.

1795.

little consequence, in the present instance, it would appear that Sir John Malcolm overlooked. The Nizam and Mahrattas were about to go to war. The English had received assistance from both of them: the English were therefore bound to lend assistance to both of them:—that is, to send one body of English troops to fight against another.

Before hostilities commenced between the Subahdar and the Mahrattas, Mahdajee Sindiah died. The power of this chief, and his ascendancy in the Mahratta confederacy, had lately been so great, that his death was expected to produce considerable changes; and the Resident at Poonah thought it probable that the opportunity might be so improved, as to effect an adjustment between the Nizam and Mahrattas. The Governor-General, however, would not risk offence to the Poonah government, by any sort of interference more forcible than words; and the successor of Mahdajee Sindiah, his nephew Doulut Rao, soon assembled his army from the remotest parts of his dominions, and obtained an ascendancy at once in the Poonah councils, and in the confederacy which was forming against the dominions of the Nizam.

The Nizam was the party in danger, but the first in the field. He advanced to Beder, if not with a view to actual aggression, at least with a view to interfere in the internal affairs of the Mahratta government, a considerable time before the movement of the Mahratta armies. Early in March, 1795, the advanced corps of the Mahratta army, under the command of Doulut Rao Sindiah, approached; and the Nizam advanced from Beder to meet him. A general action took place. Both armies were thrown into some confusion, and neither obtained any considerable advantage. But the women of the Nizam were frightened; and under their influence he retreated from the scene of action during the night. He sought protection in the small fort of Kurdla, where the Mahrattas had the advantage of terminating the war without another blow. The fort is completely surrounded by hills, except at one particular spot. The Mahrattas took possession of this out-

strenuously attempted, and the selfish motives which alone were urged for the desertion of the Nizam, were not creditable to the character of the government for generosity or justice.—W.



BOOK VI. let, by which they completely shut up the Nizam, and cut
CHAP. VII. him off from supplies. After remaining some weeks in
1795. this miserable situation, he found himself at the mercy of
his enemy, and concluded a peace on such terms as they
were pleased to dictate. The particulars of the treaty
were not fully made known; but, beside establishing all
their former claims, the Mahrattas compelled him to cede
to them a country of thirty-five lacs' revenue, including
the celebrated fort of Doulutabad; to pay three crores of
rupees, one-third immediately, the rest by instalments of
twenty lacs per annum; and to give up, as a hostage for
the performance of these conditions, his minister Azeem
ul Omrah, whose abilities had for some time been the
great support of his throne; who was the zealous friend
of the English connexion; and a firm opponent of the
Mahrattas.¹

No part of the conduct of the English had more offended
the Nizam, than the refusal to permit his two battalions
of British troops to accompany him to the war. As the
Mahrattas were the great source from which he apprehended
danger, an expensive force, which could not be employed
against the Mahrattas, was a loss, rather than advantage.
He, therefore, shortly after his return to Hyderabad, intimated
his desire to dispense with the service of the English battalions;
and they marched to the territories of the Company.

The Subahdar of the Deccan had never, from the time
of Bussy, been without French officers in his service. In
the confederate war against Tippoo, he had two battalions
of regular infantry, officered by Frenchmen, and commanded
by a gentleman of the name of Raymond, who began his
military career in India, at an early age, in the disastrous
campaigns of Lally. At first his establishment amounted to
no more than three hundred men; and he hired their arms
from a merchant of his own country, at the rate of eight annas²
a month. By his services and address, he rapidly increased
the favour and liberalities of

¹ The dispersion of the Nizam's army was the result of a panic which occurred in the course of the night, and it was then that Nizam Ali took refuge within the fort of Kurdla. In this he was shut up, not some weeks, but two days, when he was compelled to submit to the conditions specified in the text. Mahr. Hist. 3, 113.—W.

² 1s. 3d.



THE ENGLISH JEALOUS OF THE FRENCH CORPS.

BOOK VI.
CHAP. VII.

1795.

the Subahdar ; of which he availed himself for the augmentation and equipment of his corps. It had received great accessions both to its numbers and appointments, since the peace of Seringapatam ; and the English Resident reported, probably with great exaggeration, that twenty-three battalions of this description, with twelve field-pieces, accompanied the Nizam in his campaign against the Mahrattas.

After the return of that Prince to his capital, he ordered new levies of this corps ; and assigned a portion of territory for its regular payment. The expostulations of the British Resident, and his intimations that so much encouragement of the French portended serious changes in his relations with the English, were but little regarded.

A part of this corps was sent to occupy the districts of Kurpah, and Cummum. These districts lay upon the frontier of the Company's possessions ; and the Governor-General took the alarm. "The measure itself," he remarked,¹ "had a suspicious not to say criminal appearance ;" and he directed "the strongest representations to be made, to induce the Nizam to recall the detachment of Monsieur Raymond." In case of refusal, the resident was even instructed to threaten him with the march of a body of English troops to his frontier. The apprehensions of the English government were increased by some French officers, prisoners at Madras, who were detected in a project of escape, and suspected of a design to join M. Raymond.

Whether the Nizam could have been led on to risk the displeasure of the English, or whether the knowledge of his defenceless condition would soon have brought him back to court their support, sufficient time was not afforded to try. On the 28th of June, his eldest son Ali Jah fled from the capital, and placed himself in open rebellion ; when his fears were so vehemently excited, that he applied himself with the utmost eagerness to recover the friendship of the English. He agreed to the recall of Raymond's corps from the district of Kurpah ; and warmly solicited the return of the subsidiary force. The battalions were ordered to join him with the greatest possible expedition ;

¹ In his Minute, 15th June, 1795.



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HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA.

BOOK VI. but before they were able to arrive, an action had taken
CHAP. VII. place, in which Ali Jah was made prisoner. He did not
1795. long survive his captivity.¹ The Nizam, however, enjoyed
but a few months' tranquillity, when another member of
his family revolted, at the head of a large body of troops.
In quelling this rebellion, and recovering the fort of
Rachore, which the insurgents had occupied, the English
battalions had an opportunity of rendering conspicuous
service.

The Nizam, though brought again to a sufficient sense
of his dependance upon the English, could not help re-
flecting that from them he had nothing to expect in seek-
ing the means of his defence against that insatiate neigh-
bour, whom nothing less than his ruin would content ;
nor could he forbear turning with particular favour to that
body of his troops, on whom, in contending with the Mah-
rattas, his principal dependance must rest. The value of
M. Raymond's corps had risen in his estimation by the
activity which it had displayed in the reduction of Ali
Jah. Its numbers and appointments were increased ;
additional lands for its support were assigned to its com-
mander ; and arsenals and foundries were established for
its equipment. The abilities of M. Raymond qualified him
to improve the favourable sentiments of his prince ; the
discipline and equipment of his corps were carried to the
highest perfection, of which his circumstances would ad-
mit ; and his connexions with the principal officers of the
government were industriously cultivated and enlarged.
He was not anxious to avoid those little displays, by which
the fears and hatred of the English were most likely to be
inflamed. The colours of the French republic were borne
by his battalions ; and the cap of liberty was engraved on
their buttons. While a detachment of this corps was sta-
tioned on the frontier of the Company's territories, a par-
tial mutiny was raised in a battalion of Madras sepoys.
It was ascribed, of course, to the intrigues of the abomi-
nable French officers. Whether this was, or was not the
fact ; two native commissioned officers, with a number of
men, went over to the French.

¹ According to Capt. Grant, Ali Jah, unable to face his father, put an end
to his existence by poison before he reached the capital. Mahr. Hist. 3, 119.—
W.

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ENGLISH RELATIONS AFFECTED.

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BOOK VI.
CHAP. VII.
1795.

It was by no means without jealousy and apprehension, that the English government beheld the progress of a French interest in the councils of the Nizam. That Prince declared his readiness to dismiss the rival corps, provided the English subsidiary force was so increased, and its service so regulated, as to render it available for his defence. This, however, the desire of standing fair with the Mahrattas dissuaded, and a succedaneum was devised. It was thought expedient to encourage the entrance of English adventurers into the service of the Nizam, who might form a rival corps to counterbalance the French. But the English were less qualified than the French for this species of adventure; there was no man to be found whose abilities and address could balance those of M. Raymond; and this project totally failed.

An event, in the meantime, occurred, which materially affected the politics of this part of India. On the 27th of October, 1795, happened the death of the young Peshwa, Madhoo Row;¹ and introduced the most serious divisions among the Mahratta chiefs. Nanah Furnavese desired to place upon the vacant throne an infant whom he could use as a tool. Bajee Rao, undoubted heir, the son of Ragoba, was supported by the influence of Sindiah. In these circumstances, Nanah Furnavese was anxious to strengthen himself by the alliance of the Nizam. He released Azeem ul Omrah, opened a negotiation with that minister on behalf of his master; and concluded a treaty, by which all the cessions extorted at Kurdla were resigned. In the meantime, Sindiah hastened to Poonah, with an army which his rival was unable to oppose; and Bajee Row was placed upon the musnud of Poonah. The treaty with the minister of the Nizam was, of course, annulled; but a new one was concluded, by which the Nizam was required to make good only one-fourth of the cessions and payments which had been fixed by the convention of Kurdla.²

¹ Madhoo Row, the Peishwa, although in his twenty-first year, was kept by Nana Furnavese, in a state of rigid control which preyed upon his spirits, so that a fixed melancholy seized on his mind, and on the morning of the 20th of October, 1795, he deliberately threw himself from a terrace in the palace, by which he was so much hurt that he died of the injuries he received, two days afterwards. Mahr. Hist. 3, 126.—W.

² These transactions are very differently related by Capt. Grant. The minister of the Nizam was released, not by Nana Furnavese, but by Parashram



The intercourse with Tippoo, during the administration of Sir John Shore, was bounded by the execution of the treaty of Seringapatam. When the sons of Tippoo were restored,¹ the officer who conducted them was empowered to make overtures towards a more amicable connection, provided a favourable disposition appeared on the part of the Sultan. But the pride of that Prince was too much wounded to consort with friendship; and on this occasion, the tyrant, as the English called him, disdained to practise hypocrisy. He received the officer with frigid civility.

Though Lord Cornwallis, upon taking the reins of the Company's government, had agreed with the Nabob of Oude, that the government of his country should be divided into two parts, of which the one, namely the business of defence, and all transactions with foreign states, should belong to the Company, and the other, namely, the internal administration, including the collection of the revenue, the coercion of the people, and the distribution of justice, should, without interference or control, belong to himself; the English rulers had, nevertheless, observed the extraordinary vices of his government with great solicitude, as leading necessarily to that desolation of the country, with which the payment of the Company's subsidy would soon be incompatible. On the visit of Lord Cornwallis to Lucknow, in the first year of his administration, "I cannot," he said, "express how much I was concerned, during my short residence at the capital of the Vizir, and my progress through his dominions, to be witness of the disordered state of his finances and government, and of the desolated

Bhao the minister of Poenah, with Sindiah's concurrence, the payment of whose troops by a sum of money to be paid by the Nizam, was the main inducement to the liberation of his minister. In the subsequent intrigues by which Bajee Rao was made Peishwa, in opposition to Parashram Bhao, the Nizam took part with Nanah Farnavese, in consequence of which the treaty of Mhar was formed. By this the Nizam engaged to aid Nana Farnavese with a considerable force, and in return, the Mahratta relinquished the territory ceded by the treaty of Kurdia, the bills which had been granted for the money payments then extorted, and acknowledged the claims of the Nizam to certain districts near Delhi. All contested points were mutually abandoned, and the Mahratta claims were to be settled, in future, annually. The Chouth of the Subah of Beder being considered the private property of the Peishwa, Nana confined himself to a promise of recommending that it should be given up when Bajee Rao was restored to his authority. Mahr. Hist. 3, 142. Note.—W.

¹ 29th March, 1794.



EFFECTS OF MISGOVERNMENT IN OUDE.

appearance of the country.”¹ The Directors, with an extraordinary candour, declared, that the vices of the native government were not the only cause of this desolation; that for a great part of it the vices of their own administration were justly accountable. “Under a system,” they say, “defective in almost every part of it, and the abuses which arose out of that system, the present unfortunate state of the country may, in our opinion, be fairly attributed to a combination of causes. Among these is a claim which is now very wisely relinquished, of right of pre-emption, and of exemptions from duties, in the province of Oude; made, and exercised, by contractors employed in providing the investment; and which in the opinion of Lord Cornwallis, has essentially contributed to its ruin. The immense drain of specie from that country of late years, amounting, from September, 1783, to February, 1794, to the enormous sum of two crores and thirty-nine lacs of rupees, exclusive of what may have been sent down to Calcutta to answer the bills drawn for the payment of the troops, and on private account, stands foremost in our opinion, among the causes that have operated so much to its prejudice.”² Though the Directors saw but imperfectly the mode in which connexion with their government had been ruinous to Oude, they had the merit of tracing in a general way, the relation between cause and effect.³

In the year 1792, died Hyder Beg Khan, the minister. As the Nabob was a cipher in the hands of his minister, and the minister was a mere instrument in the hands of the Company, this was an event which deeply interested the Company's government. The Nabob appointed a person of the name of Hossein Reza Khan, who had enjoyed the principal share of his confidence even in the time of the deceased minister, to execute provisionally the duties of the vacant office. As this person, however, was

¹ Letter from Lord Cornwallis, dated, “On the Ganges, 16th Nov. 1787;” Papers relating to India, printed by the House of Commons in 1806, No 2. p. 4. In the same letter his Lordship says, the Nabob, “urged, as apologies—that whilst he was not certain of the extent of our demands upon him, he had no real interest in being economical in his expences; and that while we interfered in the internal management of his affairs, his own authority, and that of his ministers, were despised by his own subjects.”

² Political Letter to the Gov.-Gen. 8th April, 1789; printed papers, ut supra, p. 5.

³ The mystery is explained in a subsequent page.

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but little acquainted with the business of revenue, Raja Tickait Roy, to whom that business was confided under Hyder Beg, was placed at the head of the financial department. The final election remained till the pleasure of the Governor-General should be known; who satisfied of the inclination of both the men to rely upon the English government, and not acquainted with any persons who were better qualified, signified his approbation of the choice of the Nabob; and, on condition of their good behaviour, gave to the new ministers assurance of his support. The influence of the new ministers was still less able than that of their predecessors to limit either the expenses of the Vizir, or the ruinous exactions upon the people which those expenses, the English subsidy, and the extortions of the tax-gatherers imposed. In the month of January, 1793, Lord Cornwallis thought it necessary to write to the Vizir a solemn letter of expostulation and advice. "On my return," said he, "from the war in the Deccan, I had the mortification to find that, after a period of five years, the evils which prevailed at the beginning of that time had increased; that your finances had fallen into a worse state by an enormous accumulated debt; that the same oppressions continue to be exercised by rapacious and overgrown aumils towards the ryots; and that not only the subjects and merchants of your own dominions, but those residing under the Company's protection suffered many exactions contrary to the commercial treaty from the custom-house officers from Zemindars, Aumils, and others."

The Governor-General then proceeded to pen advices, which, though they were lost upon a sensual and profligate prince, will not be lost upon the people of England. "As in a state," said he, "the evils that are practised, by the lower class of men, are to be attributed to the example held out to them by their superiors, and to their connivance, or to their weak government; so am I obliged to represent, that all the oppressions and extortions committed by the Aumils on the peasantry, take their source in the connivance and irregularities of the administration of Lucknow."

His meaning, as he himself explains it, is, That an expensive government is, by the very nature of things, an



unjust and oppressive government; and that expense, when it proceeds to a certain pitch, is the cause, not of misery alone, but of ruin and desolation. "Though the Company's subsidy," said he, "is at present paid up with regularity, yet I cannot risk my reputation, nor neglect my duty, by remaining a silent spectator of evils which will, in the end, and perhaps that end is not very remote, render abortive even your Excellency's earnest desire that the subsidy should be punctually paid. Thus, I recommend economy in your own household disbursements, as the first measure, whence all other corrections are to take place.—I do not neglect the dignity of your station: nor am I actuated by views for the Company's subsidy only. Your dignity does not flow from a splendid retinue; and unnecessary establishment of household servants, elephants, sumptuous ceremonies, and other circumstances of similar nature: But from a just and wise administration of your government and finances."¹

BOOK VI.

CHAP. VII.

1795.

Just before the departure of Lord Cornwallis the new ministers repaired to Calcutta; in order more fully to explain the deplorable state in which the government and population of the country were placed, and to pray for counsel and support in conducting the affairs of a prodigal government and an impoverished people. The Governor-General, before leaving India, addressed to the Vizir another letter, of great length, from Madras. In this he repeats, that the effects of an expensive government are two, First, the oppression and misery of the people; and secondly, the fall of the government itself. "It is well known," says he; "not only throughout Hindustan, but to all Europe, that the revenues of your Excellency's dominions are diminished beyond all conjecture.—Does not this consideration alarm your Excellency?—Can any thing but ruin result from such circumstances? Are not these facts a decisive proof of tyranny, extortion, and mismanagement, in the Aumils? And, what must be the situation of the ryots who are placed under such people?—But your Excellency knows, that the prayers of the oppressed are attended to by the Almighty; and often call down his vengeance upon their oppressors.—History

¹ Letter from Lord Cornwallis to the Vizir, dated 29th Jan. 1793; printed papers *ut supra*, p. 11—13.

1795.

confirms the observation, by exhibiting innumerable examples of monarchies overturned, and families effaced from the earth, by a violation of justice in the sovereign, or neglect in him to enforce its laws."

He continues; "The evils flowing from this source would have been less felt, if, in proportion as the revenues declined, a diminution of expenses had taken place. But profusion, in fact, was the cause of the first evil; and the continuance of it increased its magnitude."

He adds, "All the world concurs in 'encomiums upon the dignity and splendour which adorned the court of your illustrious father; but his splendour did not arise from the gaudiness of equipage, from frivolous dissipation, or from profuse expenditure. He well knew, that the best ornament of sovereignty is justice: that due economy is the source of order and dignity: that the true splendour of a court is derived from equity and wisdom."

"If," says he, "the information which I have received of the state of the country be true, the disorders exceed all bounds, and all description. The consequence is, that the revenues are collected, without system, by force of arms; that the Aumils (revenue agents) are left to plunder uncontrouled; and the ryots have no security from oppression, nor means of redress for injustice exercised upon them."

In May, 1794, Sir John Shore, in his letter to the Resident at Lucknow, said; "It has long been my anxious wish, no less than that of my predecessor, the Marquis Cornwallis, to prevail upon the Nabob Vizir to arrange the internal administration of his country, and establish it upon principles calculated to promote the happiness of his subjects and the permanency of his own authority. I cannot, therefore, observe, without regret, that his excellency does not appear to have adopted any measures for this purpose, in consequence of the letter addressed to him by Marquis Cornwallis from Madras, and which I delivered to his ministers in Calcutta, with the most serious recommendation to them to use their utmost exertions in giving effect to the advice and recommendations of his Lordship."

Fyzoolah Khan, the Rohilla chief, to whom the district

¹ Printed papers, ut supra, p. 16, 17, 19.

² Ibid. p. 14.



of Rampore had been preserved, at the time when the rest of his nation were exterminated from the country to which they had given their name, died, at an advanced age, in 1794, leaving the country over which he had ruled, in a high state of cultivation and prosperity. The succession went to Mohammed Ali, his eldest son, who was duly confirmed by the Vizir, and acknowledged by the principal Rohilla chiefs. His younger brother Gholaum Mohammed, an ambitious man, contrived in a little time to get him into his power; when he put him to death; and sent a large present to the Vizir, with a promise of augmented tribute, if he were confirmed in the government of Rampore. Though the murdered prince left a son, in a state of nonage, the Vizir was by no means disinclined to the proposition of Gholaum Mohammed.¹ It was, however, a proceeding of too much importance to be concluded without the permission of the British government; and that was refused. The British troops, under Sir Robert Abercromby, joined by such forces as the Vizir could afford, were ordered to march against the usurper, and treat him as a rebel. It was the purpose of the Governor-General, to wrest the country entirely from the family of Fyzoollah Khan, notwithstanding the rights of the son of Mohammed Ali, guaranteed by the British government;² and notwithstanding the rights of the people of the Country happy under the frugal government of the Rohilla chief, menaced with misery and ruin under the exactions of the Vizir, to which, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, the British ruler was about to condemn them. The rapidity of Sir Robert Abercromby anticipated the arrival of the instructions which were forwarded to this effect. A battle was fought at Bitowrah, in which, after making a partial impression upon the British line, the Rohillas were defeated. Negotiation followed, and an

¹ It may be doubted if there is sufficient authority for this insinuation. According to Mustajab Khan, Mohammed Ali was not put to death until after the Vizir's interference in his favour. "A letter having been received from the Nawab Vizir, requiring Gholam Mohammed to send his brother to Lucknow without delay, and threatening vengeance if the order were not obeyed, the conspirators decided on putting Mohammed Ali to death, and accordingly Ahmed Khan shot him while he slept." It was then asserted that he had destroyed himself, but the story was not credited, and Asoph ud Dowlah, with his forces, attended by Mr. Cherry, immediately marched from Lucknow. Life of Hafez Rehmet Khan, 134.—W.

² Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Political History of India, p. 195.



1795.

arrangement was made. The treasures of the late prince, Fyzoollah Khan, were given up to the Vizir. And a jaghire of ten lacs of revenue, under the express guarantee of the English government, was granted to Ahmed Ali, the son of Mohammed Ali.

The retrograde movement was uninterrupted in the Nabob's affairs. "The exigences of his government," as we are informed by the Directors, "were supplied by loans, on terms increasing in proportion to the sums demanded, and the discharge of one debt was effected, not from the revenue, but by contracting another of an increasing interest." The ministers Hussein Reza Khan, and Raja Tickait Roy, had become odious to him, by opposing obstructions to his will: and he accused them of the embarrassments which had grown upon him during their administration. His desire was to make Raja Jeeo Loll his minister; who had been one of his intimates for several years, and professed absolute subserviency. The aversion of the English government to this minion was not unknown. The Nabob therefore was advised to assume the appearance of acting as his own minister; while the business and power, in reality, passed into the hands of Jeeo Loll.

The English troops, employed in the country of the Vizir, were always on the increase. Instead of the single brigade, which Hastings had pronounced sufficient, even the two brigades, for which Lord Cornwallis had made provision, in the subsidy of fifty lacs, were now exceeded. In their dispatch of the 22nd of April, 1796, the Directors commanded the two regiments of native cavalry, serving under the Presidency of Bengal, to be augmented to four; and, "in order to relieve the Company from a considerable part of the expense, they directed that every possible effort should be made to induce the Vizir to disband his own useless cavalry, and to apply a part of the sums expended in their support to defraying a part of the charges which the Company incurred by the proposed augmentation."² With this proposition, the Vizir, at first, would by no means comply. And in March, 1797,

¹ Collection of Treaties and Engagements with the Native Princes and States of Asia, &c. printed for the East India Company in 1812, p. 150—161.

² Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 28.



DEATH OF THE VIZIR.

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the Governor-General paid a visit to Lucknow, for the "two avowed objects," as he himself expressed it, "of inducing the Vizir to establish a reform in his administration, and to pay part of the new cavalry establishment, which he had already peremptorily refused. The influence of the British ruler was not entirely without success; an agreement was obtained from the wretched Vizir to add to his former subsidy the expense of one European and one native regiment of English cavalry, provided the annual amount should not exceed five and a half lacs of rupees; and Tuffuzel Hussein Khan, a man in whose probity and talents the Governor-General placed great reliance, was appointed minister.¹

BOOK VI.

CHAP. VII

1797.

Only a few months elapsed, when, after a short illness, the Vizir expired. The eldest of his brothers was Saadut Ali, who, in fear of intrigues, had been compelled to reside on a pension at Benares. To the succession of Mirza Ali, the eldest son of Asoph ud Dowla, Saadut Ali offered objections, asserting that neither he, nor any other of the reputed children of the late Vizir, was really his offspring; and he urged his own pretensions to the vacant throne. The arbiter in this great dispute was the Governor-General. The acknowledgement of the late Vizir who had treated Mirza Ali as his son and successor; the undoubted principle of the Moslem law, which renders that acknowledgment a valid title; the acquiescence of the Begums, the wife and mother of Asoph ud Dowla; the concurrence of the capital; and the danger of admitting reports on the filiation of princes to decide the question of their succession, swayed the mind of the Governor-General; and Mirza Ali, commonly known by the name of Vizir Ali, was placed on the musnud, and recognized by the English government as Nabob of Oude.

The young sovereign had not long enjoyed his power and dignity, when complaints were received by the Governor-General, both respecting his title, and respecting his conduct. The situation of affairs appeared to require the presence of the English ruler; and he began his journey to Lucknow. Upon his arrival, he found a scene of intrigue of extraordinary activity, and extraordinary complication. The elder Begum, having interfered with the

¹ Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 28.

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conduct of the Nabob, had been urged to return to Byza-
bad ; and animosity succeeded to friendship. Almas Ali
Khan, who had been an object of distrust to the British
government for many years, and forced to keep aloof from
public affairs, had so successfully employed his leisure, in
carrying on the business of renter, that a great proportion
of the country was now placed in his hands : and he was
the most powerful individual in the state. Upon her
quarrel with the Nabob, the Begum had resigned herself
to the councils of this man ; who advised an apparent
reconciliation with the Nabob. "On my arrival at Luck-
now," says the Governor-General, "the confederacy be-
tween the Nabob and Begum appeared indissoluble, and it
was the opinion of the minister that they could not be
disunited. The principal adviser of the Begum was Almas,
either directly, or through (her principal eunuch) Jewahur
Ali Khan. And Hossein Reza Khan, and Tickait Roy,
ranged under their banners. With the Nabob, his father-
in-law, Sherf Ali Khan, was supposed to have the most
influence. The object of all parties was to oppose the
English influence."

Presently the views of the actors began to disclose
themselves. And a malady which attacked the Nabob,
the measles, or small-pox, shortly after the arrival of the
Governor-General, afforded a favourable opportunity for
intrigue.—"I confess," says the Governor-General, "with-
out reserve, that I never was involved in a scene of more
perplexity and profligacy."

"On the 29th of December," (I still use the language
of the Governor-General's report,) "Almas, who had most
sedulously studied appearances, waited on the minister,
and entered into conferences with him which lasted several
days. He began with strong complaints of the conduct
of Vizir Ali, whom he designated by a most opprobrious
term. He spoke of him as spurious and profligate ; as a
man who would ruin the country by his vices and pro-
fusion. He mentioned the earnest wish of the Begum
and himself, that he should be deposed, and some one of
the sons of Suja ud Dowla, be placed on the musnud, ex-
cluding all the sons of Asoph ud Dowla, as spurious." The
same representations were successively repeated to the
Governor-General, and to the Governor-General in com-



pany with the Commander-in-Chief. Mirza Jungly, a brother of the late Nabob, younger than Saadut Ali, was the person whom the Begum and Almas combined in recommending. And "a large pecuniary sacrifice," says the Governor-General, "was promised, as a compensation for my acquiescence."—"Almas," he continues, "acts in the name of the Begum; and while he pretends to disavow, on her part, all wish to interfere in the administration, his propositions to me were directly calculated to place it in her power."

Great industry and skill had been employed in prepossessing the mind of the Governor-General with the most unfavourable opinion of the young Nabob, as a man between whose character and the interests of the English an irreconcilable contrariety was placed. He was represented as extremely profuse in his expenditure, and therefore, likely to absorb the funds from which annual payments to the English might proceed; as of a violent, ungovernable will, and therefore unlikely to be obedient to the English; and finally, as altogether averse to the English, and likely to use his utmost endeavours to free himself from their yoke.

The belief of these representations, communicated to the Governor-General, appears to have decided the question. It prepared his mind for annexing weight to any evidence which might be preferred of the spuriousness of the man whom he wished not to reign. It was no objection to the legitimacy of the Nabob, that he was not the son of the Begum, who had no child; that he was the son of a female, menially employed in the zenana. He was acknowledged by Asoph ud Dowla as his son, and, according to the laws of the Moslems, that was enough. Tehseen Ali Khan, however, a confidential eunuch of the late Vizir, told the following story: that the mother of Vizir Ali had a husband of her own rank; was never confined to the zenana, but quitted it daily, as is customary with menials of the same description, and went to her husband's house; that Vizir Ali was not the son of the Nabob, but purchased of his mother for 500 rupees after his birth; that it was customary for the Nabob, having no progeny, to purchase women who were pregnant, and bring up their children as his own; and that this was the origin of

all the children who were now regarded as the offspring of Asoph ud Dowla.¹

1797.

In this statement, the only point of real importance was, whether Asoph ud Dowla was, or thought that he was, the father of the child produced by the mother of Vizir Ali. Tehseen Ali Khan said, that he was not, and did not know of her pregnancy till after the birth of the child. And upon this story, told privately to the Governor-General by Tehseen, who complained of having been treated with injustice by the Nabob, and who might have been suborned by his enemies; told without confrontation with the public, without confrontation with the Nabob, without cross examination, without counter evidence, without hearing anything the party affected might have to adduce in his behalf, without pushing the inquiry by examination of other persons to whom the secrets of the zenana might be known, and corroborated only by what he was told was the public opinion, did the Governor-General declare, that a man whom he had acknowledged as Nabob of Oude, and who succeeded to the throne with the apparent concurrence of all ranks, except the single voice of Saadut Ali, was not the son of the late Vizir, and ought to be displaced from the throne.

It is impossible to read the account¹ of this transaction, drawn up by the Governor-General, and not to be impressed with a conviction of his sincerity, and his desire to do justice. But it is easy also to perceive how much his understanding was bewildered; and impossible not to confess that he decided against the unfortunate Nabob the great question of a kingdom, upon evidence upon which a court of English law would not have decided against him a question of a few pounds."²

¹ Minute of Sir John Shore, detailing the measures which led to the deposition of Vizir Ali, &c., printed papers, *ut supra*, No. 1. p. 1.

² The tale of Tehseen, said the Governor-General, concurred with public opinion. But what knew the Governor-General about the public opinion of Oude, except what he was told? And what was he told, except by a few individuals who surrounded him; and who concurred, for their own purposes, in wishing Vizir Ali to be deposed? The utmost that can be said for the tale of Tehseen is, that it is not in itself incredible, or, perhaps, improbable. But that was not the question. The only question was, whether there was or was not evidence to establish the allegations. Undoubtedly his private conversation with the Governor-General, aided by what a few individuals told the Governor-General about public opinion—was not evidence sufficient to vest allegations with the character of facts.—M.

The corroborative evidence was not what the Governor-General was told by



SAADUT ALI PROCLAIMED.

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When the resolution of deposing Vizir Ali was taken, the choice of a successor was easily made. Saadut Ali was the eldest surviving son of Suja-ad-dowla ; and would not, as Mirza Jungly, become a tool in the hands of the Begum and Almas. When the treaty proposed by the Governor-General was communicated to Saadut Ali, it was not the time to dispute about terms. He gave his consent to every particular. He then proceeded to Cawnpore ; from which he was escorted by a large body of European troops to Lucknow. The military force of the country was almost wholly English. The Nabob was, therefore, completely helpless ; and Saadut Ali was proclaimed, without opposition, on the 21st of January, 1798.

BOOK VI.
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The terms, to which he had at first assented, were somewhat modified after he came to the throne. It was finally established, that the annual subsidy should be raised to seventy-six lacs of rupees, and that the fort of Allahabad should be made over to the English. It was also arranged that the regular amount of the English forces stationed in Oude should be 10,000 men, including all descriptions ; that, if at any time the amount should exceed 13,000 men, the expense of all the troops above that number should be defrayed by the Nabob ; if it should fall below 8000 a proportional reduction should be made. The Nabob further agreed, to pay twelve lacs of rupees to the English, as compensation money, for the expense of placing him on the musnud ; and not, without their consent, to hold communication with any foreign state, to employ no Europeans in his service, or to permit any to settle in his dominions. Finally he agreed to allow a lac and a half of rupees as an annual pension to the deposed Vizir Ali, who was removed to Benares ; and to afford a suitable maintenance to the rest of the reputed children of his brother the deceased Nabob.”¹

The transaction had one attractive feature ; that of gain

disinterested persons to be the public opinion only, but it was their own belief and conviction. Various individuals were consulted, of whom many were impartial witnesses, and they concurred in the opinion of the public, the accuracy of which is never questioned in India. There is no doubt that Vizir Ali was not the son of Asoph-ad-dowla, and his maintenance on the throne would have been the perpetuation of an act of great injustice to Sadat Ali. See Minute of Governor General, printed in the 1st Vol. of the Asiatic Register.—W.

¹ Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 19—22.—Collection of Treaties, ut supra, p. 177.



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to the Company : and it received the most cordial approbation of the powers, ministerial and directorial, at home. The political letter to Bengal, dated 15th May, 1799, after a full commentary upon the proceedings, thus declares : "Having taken this general view of the subject, with a minute attention, however, to all the papers and proceedings, we are, upon the whole, decidedly of opinion, that the late Governor-General, Lord Teignmouth, in a most arduous situation, and under circumstances of such delicacy and embarrassment, conducted himself with great temper, impartiality, ability, and firmness ; and that he finished a long course of faithful services by planning and carrying into execution an arrangement, which not only redounds highly to his own honour, but which will also operate to the reciprocal advantage of the Company, and the Nabob Vizir."¹

On the 1st of August, 1792, Sir Charles Oakely succeeded General Medows, as Governor of Fort St. George, and President of the Council at Madras. Sir Charles remained in the government till the 7th of September, 1794, when Lord Hobart was placed at the head of the Carnatic Presidency. On the 13th of October, 1795, died, at the age of seventy-eight, the Nabob Mohammed Ali, Wala Jah ; and was succeeded by Omdut ul Omrah, his eldest son. From the date of the treaty, framed by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, the payments of the Nabob, being in the years of peace, had, through the agency of the money-lenders, been regular. But the country, made over to the cruel exactions of this description of men, had rapidly declined. The continued operation of the same causes threatened to extinguish the resources of the government ; and, though no attempt had been made to ameliorate the state of affairs during the life of Mohammed Ali, the succession of Omdut ul Omrah appeared to Lord Hobart to present a favourable opportunity for introducing those reforms of which the necessity had become so urgent.

On the 24th of the same month in which the Nabob died, the President deemed it expedient to place on record, by a Minute in Council, a description of the ruinous course into which affairs had proceeded, under the arrangement

¹ Printed Papers, *ut supra*, p. 31.



of 1792. The source of the evil was laid in "the usurious loans, which," says he, "it has long been the practice, principally among the European gentlemen of the Presidency, to make to the Durbar for mortgages upon the different provinces of the Carnatic." Some of the principal houses of business at Madras, said the Governor, or even some of the Company's servants, enter into an agreement with the Nabob for the payment of the sums which may have become due to the Company's treasury. They receive a mortgage upon a portion of the territory. To render this availing, they stipulate for the appointment of the manager of the territory. It is also requisite to establish an understanding with the military commanding officer of the district. And, then, the chain of power is complete. Then, the unhappy ryots are delivered over to the uncontrolled operations of men who have an interest in nothing but exacting the greatest sums in the shortest time, of men, "hardened by practice, and with consciences lulled to rest by the delusive opiate of interest upon interest."¹

It is not in the way of direct exaction alone, that the mischief was accomplished. "Another endeavour," says the President, "of those engaged in a concern of this nature is to enhance the price of grain by artificial means, lest the ordinary price of that article, the sole subsistence of the natives, should fail to answer the large advance of money, and the exorbitant advantage expected upon it, by the soukars," or subordinate money-lenders, to whose ruinous assistance the ryots were compelled to have recourse. "The means of effecting this purpose," continues the magistrate, "is easy; for the necessitous condition of the ryots compels them to dispose of their grain as soon as it comes into their possession, in order to satisfy the urgent demands upon them which I have already described: the purchasers of this grain monopolize it, until the demand advances the price. If, towards the expiration of the season, any part of the grain should yet remain on hand, the expedient is, to divide the whole quantity, in whatever condition it may be, among the inhabitants: and the people are compelled (in general

¹ Papers relating to the Affairs of the Carnatic, No. 2; printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1803.



the manufacturers) to take it at a valuation considerably above the market price."

Such was the general course of oppression. The modes were infinite. "The subject," says the indignant Governor, "is exhaustless."¹

"After this exposition, no comment," he cries, "can be required, to show that this species of government, if it deserves the name of government, contains the most grievous oppression of the people, the certain impoverishment of the country, and, consequently, the inevitable decay of revenue."

A fact is here very forcibly urged upon our attention, of which it is important to find the true explanation. Under their dependence upon the English government, it has been seen, that the people of Oude and the Carnatic two of the noblest portions of India, were, by misgovernment, plunged into a state of wretchedness, with which no other part of India, hardly any part of the earth, had anything to compare. In what manner did the dependence of the native states upon the English tend to produce those horrid effects? The difficulty of the answer is not very great. The oppressions of the native governments were limited by their weakness. When they received the use of English strength, their oppressions were limited by nothing, but the physical powers of the people to exist under oppression. So ill has the science of government been hitherto understood, that under all the governments which ever yet existed, except perhaps one or two, there is no regular and effective restraint upon bad government, except from the dread of the insurrection and rebellion of the people. In the governments of Asia, this produces no inconsiderable effects; as the frequent revolutions and changes of dynasty abundantly demon-

¹ "I should hesitate," he says, "to advance, if I was not supported by the authority of public record, that during a late scarcity of grain in the southern provinces, the *Manager* had the hardness to write a public complaint to the Company's collector, against the Polygars, for selling grain to the inhabitants.—Nor was the evil removed, without the interposition of this government, who by sending vessels loaded with grain, induced the monopolizers, from regard to their own interests, to restore their usual supplies to the market." He adds, "As the means of cultivation decrease, the price of grain is enhanced;—and it is a notorious, but inhuman maxim of eastern finances, [*Query, how much it differs from the principle of an English corn law*],—that a time of scarcity is more productive to the Sirkar than a time of plenty, owing to the price at which the diminished quantity is sold." Papers, ut supra.



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strate. When misery had produced disaffection, and disaffection had increased to a certain height, there was generally some popular leader who offered himself to the nation as an instrument of revenge, and cast the unworthy possessor from his throne. The progress, in general, was rapid and easy. When oppression produced a decline of revenue, the evident instability of the government deterred lenders; money became wanting to pay the troops; the troops first clamoured and then mutinied; the voice of the nation joined that of the army; a revolution took place; and commonly, for two or three generations, the new family governed comparatively well. Among the small sovereignties of India, misgovernment produced weakness, and weakness invited conquest. The misgovernment, for example, of the Carnatic and Oude, would infallibly have produced the conquest, of the one by Tippoo, and of the other by the Mahrattas: and as a prince was commonly strong, only because he governed well, to be conquered was among the happiest results which the people knew. Till, indeed, governments attain that high pitch of excellence, at which they really perform, in the best manner, and at the cheapest rate, the services of government to the people, all changes are, in general, for the good of the people. It is the stability of governments, which, before this state of excellence, human nature has to dread. Now, it is evident that when the uncontrollable force of a British army is lent to an Indian prince, his subjects are immediately placed without the pale of hope. The Prince is completely set above the only fears, which, in his situation, could operate as a restraint upon his disposition to oppress; that of insurrection, and that of being conquered. The source of almost all oppression, in Asiatic and European governments alike, is the rage of extorting more and more of their earnings from the people. This passion, instead of being abated by the connexion with the English, is prodigiously inflamed: when the tributary prince is carried to all the excesses of taxation, not only by his own rapacity, but the necessity of supplying the enormous demands of his European masters; and when his soldiers, as well as people, are kept in abject and hopeless subjection by the terror of European arms.

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The progress of this oppression produced in the English any determinate resolution of reform, only when the visible desolation of the country presented the prospect of a rapidly approaching moment, at which the English subsidy could no longer be found. We have seen what anticipations of this disastrous period the English rulers had already expressed with regard to Oude. The danger was still more imminent in the case of the Carnatic. "I cannot," says Lord Hobart, "but look with extreme anxiety to the nature of the security, provided by the treaty of 1792, for those resources on which the British interests on the coast of Coromandel materially depend. I cannot but see that the present system of collecting the revenues of the Carnatic manifestly invalidates that security: and that, whenever a failure may happen in the payment of his Highness's kists, we shall in vain have recourse to it for the recovery of the defalcation."

A palliative, if not a remedy, suggested itself, in the prohibition of loans to the Nabob by Europeans; because, "though the dealings of Soukars (native money-lenders) in the collection of revenue, were not of recent establishment, yet the terms of loans had never been carried to so usurious an extent as since the practice had been introduced among Europeans."

This, however, the Governor declared to be ineffectual. "The prohibitory orders hitherto published, have," he says, "all failed of their object. Because the evasion of them is easy to Europeans, through the agency of their native servant; and because the enormous profits which arise from those usurious loans, hold out an irresistible temptation to adventurers. To prohibit the intercourse of Europeans at the Durbar is ineffectual. Other channels of communication are open; and the superintendent of a usurious loan at Palamcotah conveys his demands to the ears of the Nabob with no less certainty than he who lives in the precincts of Chepauk. As long, therefore, as his Highness shall be so regardless of his true interests, as to deliver up his provinces, and his people, to public depredation, so long will there be found men, who, in the pursuit of extravagant advantages, will overleap the bounds of discretion and moral obligation."

In these circumstances, what is to be done? "So des-



perate a malady," said the President, "requires a remedy that shall reach its source. And I have no hesitation in stating my opinion, that there is no mode of eradicating the disease, but by removing the original cause; and placing those districts, which are pledged for the security of his kists, beyond the reach of his Highness's management;" in other words, assuming the collection of the revenue, and the whole of the internal government. And even this was a partial remedy; for though it might alleviate the distress of those particular districts, it left the remainder of the country to all the deplorable consequences of the misgovernment of the Nabob.

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The Governor describes, in a style instructive for other occasions, the tissue of interests by which radical reform was opposed. "The disposition," says he, "which his Highness has already evinced to oppose such an arrangement, leaves me no doubt of the real cause. It is not possible to calculate the extent and variety of interests which are involved in this one pursuit. And, though they are subdivided in every direction of the Carnatic, yet at the call of danger they all rally round a common centre. The great houses of business, who are the principal money-lenders at the Durbar, borrow from individuals, who, though not absolutely engaged in the loan itself, are partakers of the speculation in a remote degree, and feel, with no less sensibility than their principals, the approach of danger. *Similarity of interest makes a common cause*; and the great body of interest which is condensed upon this principle, is uniformly exerted to support his Highness in an inflexible resistance against a melioration of system, and to oppose a reformation which I consider essential to the national welfare." This representation is the more worthy of regard, as it is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to every government under the sun, in which there is need of reform.

On the day following the date of the Minute from which these particulars have been taken, the Governor of Fort St. George addressed a letter to the Governor-General in Council, in which he represents, that, in consequence of several communications which he had with Mr. Dundas, and with Lord Cornwallis, before leaving England, respect-

¹ See the Minute of Lord Hobart, printed papers, ut supra, p. 99—104.



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ing the necessity of a change in that state of things which was established by the treaty of 1792, he had opened a negotiation for that purpose with Omdut ul Omrah ; and that he had not communicated his intention to the Supreme Government, or waited for its concurrence, on account of the intrigues of those who, from personal interest, endeavoured to prevent the accomplishment of his object.

The first of the points which the Governor endeavoured to gain, was the transfer of the collections, including all the powers of internal government, in the districts pledged for the subsidy. The benefits would be ; to the Nabob, the saving of the exorbitant interest which the usurers received ; to the people, deliverance from extortion ; to the Company, security against the desolation of the country. The second point regarded the Southern Polygars. The right of collecting the tribute from the country of the Polygars had been yielded to the Company by the treaty of 1792, but the nominal right of sovereignty reserved to the Nabob. This proved a source of obstruction to the right ordering of the country ; and the Governor was desirous of seeing it resigned. In the third place, he endeavoured to obtain the cession of the forts in the Carnatic, which, according to an expression in the treaty of Cornwallis, were to be garrisoned by the troops of the Company.

To obtain the consent of the Nabob, Lord Hobart offered to relinquish certain claims, to the amount of thirty lacs of pagodas, or more. The influence of those who had opposite interests prevailed. "It has been with the deepest regret," said the Governor, "that I have found the Nabob unmoved by my entreaties and remonstrances upon this subject : not that he has been insensible to the justice and expediency of what I have proposed ; but, as he has candidly confessed at several interviews with me, that he has not the resolution to comply ; informing me that his native ministers and European advisers, so perplexed, plagued, and intimidated him, that he could not venture upon the measure, notwithstanding his conviction that he ought to do so."¹

¹ President's Minute in Council, 24th November, 1795. Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 104. Lord Hobart felt what reformers are sure to experience,



HOBART AND THE GOVERNOR'S DISPUTE.

The Members of the Supreme Government carried their expectations even further than the President of the Council of Madras ; for no sooner was the decease of the preceding Nabob known, than they sent to that Governor their instructions, dated the 28th of October, 1795, to endeavour to obtain the consent of Omdut ul Omrah to the cession of all his territories.

Upon the failure of his endeavours to obtain the concurrence of the Nabob, Lord Hobart intimated his intention, to assume the district of Tinivelly, for the liquidation of the debt termed the cavalry loan ; and to insist upon possession of the Carnatic forts. To this the Supreme Government objected, as an indirect mode of compelling the Nabob. They argued, that the treaty, in which that loan was not mentioned, gave no right to any assumption of territory for its liquidation ; and, although the treaty did say absolutely, and without any specification either of time or circumstances, that "all the forts in the Carnatic were to be garrisoned with the troops of the Company ;" as some case had not occurred which was specified in one of the negotiating letters of Lord Cornwallis, the Supreme Government contended that even this measure it was not lawful to enforce.

Lord Hobart was of opinion, that the Nabob had himself infringed the treaty, and thereby liberated the Company from its engagements, by granting assignments, which the treaty prohibited, upon the districts mortgaged for security of his annual payments : that self-preservation, threatened by the rapid desolation of the country, and the loss of resources which it implied, justified the Company in such interference as the necessity of the case required : and, above all, that the people of the Carnatic, to whom, beside the claims of humanity, it would be

wherever the interests opposed to reform continue to exist : "I am aware," said he, "of the numerous enemies who will start up against me, for the part I have taken. But I have a shield in the consciousness of an honest execution of my duty, which blunts their arrows, and which will ultimately render all their efforts impotent and unavailable.—I have forborne to bring forward the names of individuals, not because I am not able to do so, but because the subject is above personal considerations.—Let those who have amassed wealth, by such means, enjoy it as well as they can. Let it be my pride to have paid this tribute to suffering humanity, by deterring others from the commission of similar enormities." Ibid. The enemies of reform in India, and the enemies of reform in England, are of one and the same caste.



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infamous to suppose, that the Company had not, by sharing the fruits of their labour, contracted sacred obligations, ought not to be sacrificed in millions, to any obligations, to any one man, which it was possible to contract.

On this subject, the Supreme Government declared "that their principles were fairly at issue with those of the Governor of Fort St. George," and appealed to the authorities at home. That jealousy, which was so apt to arise between the heads of the two Presidencies, especially when the head of the Supreme was inferior in rank to the head of the subordinate government, appears on this occasion to have embittered the opposition of the Governor-General. In the address from the Supreme Government to the Court of Directors,¹ commenting upon the arguments of the Governor of Fort St. George, it is said; "On the language of declamation or intemperance we shall never animadvert, unless it becomes necessary to the support of the authority of the Supreme Government; leaving it, on this, as on former occasions, to the observation and notice of your Honourable Court." On this expression Lord Hobart remarked; "If I am not to defend my conduct, when attacked—attacked in terms, not indeed of intemperance and declamation, but of cool, deliberate censure and severity, impeaching my character, as a public servant, in a manner not possible to be misunderstood, I am placed in a situation wholly incompatible with a due regard to my own reputation."

As for the principles stated by the Supreme Government as in opposition to his, he remarked that they could only be useful, in as far as they afforded "rules sufficiently definite to refer to, when exigencies called for specific measures of government; but that principles, professedly admitting of deviation, fluctuating with circumstances, neither alluded to, nor enumerated, but to be estimated, as they arise, by the existing government—the propriety, or impropriety of that estimation to depend, not upon precedent, analogy, or any written law, but upon the subsequent opinion of the world—can never be productive of those beneficial effects, avowedly sought for by the Supreme Board." In this instance, the Governor of

¹ Letter from Lord Hobart to the Court of Directors; printed papers, at supra, p. 87—93.



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Fort St George saw clearly, and justly exposed, the futility of those loose and indefinite expressions of obligation, which are so fondly and frequently made use of by the half-informed persons at the heads of governments; expressions which are so effectual in misleading their understandings; but, at the same time, so fortunately adapted to enlarge the sphere of their arbitrary power.

Though, by the compound opposition of the Supreme Government, and of the powerful class of individuals whose profit depended upon the misgovernment of the country, no reform could be introduced, the war, which the progress of the French revolution brought on with the Dutch, provided for the Governor a sort of triumph, to which the enemies of reform, that is, of mankind, have seldom any objection. In 1795, an armament was fitted out at Madras, which, aided by a squadron of his Majesty's fleet under Admiral Ranier, completely reduced the settlements of the Dutch, on Ceylon, Malacca, Banda, and Amboyna, without any incident of sufficient importance to require a particular description. Their possessions on the Peninsula were likewise subdued; Cochin, after a great resistance. And their grand settlement at the Cape of Good Hope fell into the hands of the English, the same year. In 1797, preparation was made for expeditions against Mauritius, and the Spanish settlement of Manilla. The first division of the armament against Manilla had actually sailed to Penang, the port of rendezvous; when the accounts received of the treaty of Campo Formio, and the suspicions excited of Tippoo and the Mahrattas, frightened the government, after incurring the expense, into a renunciation of both enterprises.

In the beginning of the year 1798, Sir John Shore, who had been raised to the peerage, by the title of Lord Teignmouth, resigned the government of India, and sailed for England. Lord Clive, who was appointed to succeed Lord Hobart in December, 1797, arrived at Madras on the 21st of August, 1798.

CHAPTER VIII.

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Lord Mornington Governor-General.—Agents of Tippoo at the Isle of France.—Governor-General resolves on immediate War.—Import of the Circumstances.—Opinions in India.—Nizam Ali receives more English Troops and dismisses the French.—Unfruitful Negotiations at Poonah.—Progression of Governor-General's Demands.—War begins.—Plan of the Campaign.—March of the Army.—Siege of Seringapatam.—Alarming Situation of the British Army in regard to Food.—Seringapatam taken, and the Sultan killed.—Division and Settlement of the conquered Country.

WHEN the play of private interest is not instructive, either by the inferences which may be drawn from it, or by the consequences to which it leads, it escapes the curiosity of the historian, whose views are directed by utility alone. Whatever share ministerial intrigues may have had, in the fluctuations of council, which attended the choice of a new Governor-General, it is sufficient for us to relate, that after Lord Hobart was appointed, on the 23rd of October, 1793, to be Governor at Madras, he was nominated, on the 24th of December, in the same year, to succeed the Marquis Cornwallis, as Governor-General of India. That, enjoying honourable and affluent prospects at home, and at that time filling an office of high dignity and trust, Lord Hobart would not have left his country for less than the assurance of the highest place in India, was well understood. Ministerial volition, of course, was the origin of both the one appointment and the other. The administration, however, of Sir John Shore, who succeeded to the place of Governor-General, as senior member of the council, immediately upon the resignation of Lord Cornwallis, was not interrupted till the month of March, in the year 1797; when Lord Cornwallis was nominated a second time to fill the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. The appointment was announced to the different Presidencies in India; and a measure so extraordinary, seemed to declare that there was something extraordinary in the cause of it. Extraordinary as it was, it remained without effect. In the



month of October of the same year, it was notified to the different Presidencies, that the Earl of Mornington was appointed to be Governor-General, in lieu of Marquis Cornwallis. He was appointed, it was said, "under circumstances, and for reasons, of a peculiar nature." The Directors added, that "various circumstances had induced the Marquis to resign his appointments."¹ Such were the mysterious terms to which the actors thought fit to confine themselves.

The Earl of Mornington had recently distinguished himself by a brilliant speech in the House of Lords against Jacobinism, which recommended him to the ministry, as a personage both of good principles, and of good abilities. The breach of faith to Lord Hobart it was proposed to compensate, viz. by money; and that out of the Company's purse. A proposition was brought forward for bestowing upon him a pension of 1500*l.* per annum, and this, after being once rejected in the General Court, was, nevertheless, by the due application of influence, finally confirmed. The Directors, when pushed for their reasons, hinted, that the attempt of Lord Hobart to transfer to the Company the civil, as well as the military, government of the Carnatic, was, in some way, which they said it was delicate to explain, the cause which rendered it inexpedient that he should continue longer in India. "That attempt," they observed, "whether owing to the ardour of Lord Hobart, or some other cause, unfortunately failed. This failure involved his Lordship in an altercation with the Supreme Government; upon which the Court of Directors thought it right to support their Governor-General, and to recall Lord Hobart."²

Lord Mornington arrived at Calcutta on the 17th of May, 1798, carrying out with him a mind more than usually inflamed with the ministerial passions then burning in England; and in a state peculiarly apt to be seized both with dread and with hatred of any power that was French. He had possessed but little time for acquainting

¹ Public Letter to Fort St. George, 18th Oct. 1797. Papers relating to the Carnatic, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 10th August, 1803, 1, 244.

² Speech of the Chairman in the General Court, 6th Feb. 1798. See the Report of the Debate, in the Asiatic Annual Register, vol. i.

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himself with the complicated affairs of India,¹ when all his attention was attracted to a particular point. On the 8th of June, about three weeks after his arrival, a paper was received at Calcutta, which purported to be a proclamation issued by the Governor at the Isle of France. The paper imported, that two ambassadors had arrived from Tippoo Sultan, with letters addressed to the constituted authorities of the island, and despatches to be forwarded to the government of France; that the object of the embassy was, to propose an alliance offensive and defensive with the French; and to request a supply of troops for the purpose of a war against the English; a war, which, with an earnest desire to expel the said English from India, the Sultan was ready to commence, as soon as the French should arrive to assist him. The proclamation then invited the citizens to offer their services, on the liberal terms which the ambassadors of the Sultan were ready to offer.

This paper, which the Governor-General calls truly an "extraordinary publication," he was at first inclined to regard as a forgery; because, if a scheme, of the nature here described, were really entertained, it was so much the interest both of Tippoo and the French, to conceal, and an act of such contemptible folly to divulge it, that such a total want of all capacity for business was scarcely credible, on the part either of a man intrusted with the government of the Isle of France, or of men whom Tippoo would choose for a delicate and important commission.

The Governor-General, nevertheless, received so violent an impulse from the paper, that he despatched a copy of it, even on the following day, to General Harris, the Commander-in-Chief, on the coast of Coromandel, at that time occupying, temporarily, the station of Governor of Fort

¹ Lord Mornington had been one of the commissioners for the affairs of India since 1795, and was not new to them upon his appointment. On his arrival at the Cape of Good Hope in February, 1798, he found the despatches from the India governments on their way to England, which afforded him full information on the state of affairs in India. He had also an opportunity of communicating personally with Major Kirkpatrick, late Resident at Hyderabad. The period allowed him therefore for becoming acquainted with the objects to which his attention as Governor-General was likely to be directed, was not restricted to a few weeks after his arrival. See Despatches from the Marquess Wellesley, vol. i. Letter from the Cape,—W.



HOSTILE DESIGNS OF TIPPoo.

St. George. His doubts respecting the authenticity of the document were declared ; but General Harris was commanded "to consider, without delay, the means of assembling the army on the coast of Coromandel, if necessity should unfortunately require such a precaution."

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On the 18th of June a letter was received, written by the Earl of Macartney at the Cape of Good Hope, for the purpose of conveying to the Indian government intelligence, that such a proclamation had, in fact, been issued at the Isle of France. And about the same time several persons arrived at Calcutta, who had been present on the island, when the incident occurred. "A strict examination" of those, whom the Governor-General calls "the most respectable of those persons," was performed. If their information was to be relied upon, it appeared that toward the close of the month of January, 1798, two persons arrived at the Isle of France, by a ship from Mangalore ; that they were received with great demonstrations of respect, treated as ambassadors from Tippoo, and, during their stay on the island, entertained at the public expense ; that, without any previous rumour or notion on the island that aid was about to be given to that prince, or a war about to commence between him and the English, the proclamation in question, two days after their arrival, was fixed up, and circulated ; that the persons, thus treated as ambassadors, were so far from disowning the publication, that they ostentatiously held the same language, saw it publicly distributed by their agents at the place of their residence, and made promises in the name of the Sultan, according to its terms ; and that on the 7th of March they embarked on board the French frigate *La Preneuse*, accompanied by the men on whom the inducements held out by them had prevailed, to the amount of about two hundred including some officers.¹ From other sources the Go-

¹ This is the account which is given in the Governor-General's Letter to the Court of Directors, dated 20th March, 1799. In his minute, in the secret department, 12th of August, 1798, the following is the account. "The ambassadors aided and assisted in the levy of 150 officers and privates, for the service of Tippoo, under the terms, and for the purposes, stated in the proclamation. Few of the officers are of any experience, and the privates are the refuse of the democratic rabble of the island. Some of them are volunteers ; others were taken from the prisons, and compelled to embark. Several of them are Caffres, and people of half caste. With such of these troops as were volunteers, the ambassadors entered into several stipulations and engagements, in the name of Tippoo." In Tippoo's own letter to the French Directory, under date the 30th of August, 1798, he says he received only sixty soldiers.



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BOOK VI. verner-General was informed, that the French frigate
CHAP. VIII. arrived at Mangalore on the 26th of April; that both the
Frenchmen and the persons by whom they had been
brought, were received with great marks of satisfaction by
the Sultan, and that the principal part of the Frenchmen
were admitted into his service.

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That the Governor-General should have regarded these incidents as tokens of the hostile mind of Tippoo, was natural. The only material question relates to the nature of the impression on the mind of a wise man, which that inference was calculated to produce. That the mind of Tippoo, in regard to the English, was full of hatred, and the spirit of revenge, it needed no new incident to disclose, or to confirm. In fact, the peace of Seringapatam was concluded with him, under a perfect conviction that his mind was breathing all the rage of disappointed ambition and humiliated pride; and if the hostility of his sentiments had constituted a reason for war, in the opinion of the persons in India and Europe, who at that time composed the compound government of India, that peace would never have been made, as it was made, abroad; nor applauded, as it was applauded, at home. The basis on which the wisdom of that agreement rested, was the supposed soundness of the conclusion, that the power of Tippoo, far from able to resist the British when entire, was so little formidable when diminished to one half, that the hostility of his sentiments, however intense, and however certainly known, was a matter unworthy of particular regard, on the part of a people who declared all increase of territory unfavourable to their interests, and who, in the opposition of interest between Tippoo and the Marhattas, could not fail to behold a security against the most formidable of the enemies whom India could raise up.

The impression made upon the mind of the Governor-General, by the incidents of which the above is the account, appears to have been strong and agitating in the highest degree. "Under all these circumstances, an immediate attack," says he, "upon Tippoo Sultan, for the purpose of frustrating the execution of his unprovoked and unwarrantable projects of ambition and revenge, appeared to me to be demanded by the soundest maxims



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both of justice and policy.—Such was the tenor of my opinions as early as the 20th of June, 1798 ;” that is, only two days after any authentic information of the facts had been received. “I therefore,” continues he, “recorded my decided judgment, that it was necessary to assemble the armies on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar without delay, and I issued my final orders for this purpose on that day. I have no hesitation in declaring, that my original intention was — if circumstances would have admitted — to have attacked the Sultan instantly, and on both sides of his dominions, for the purpose of defeating his hostile preparations, and of anticipating their declared object. I was concerned, however, to learn, from persons most conversant in military details at Fort St. George, that the dispersed state of the army on the coast of Coromandel, and certain radical defects in its establishment would render the assembling a force equal to offensive movements against Tippoo, a much more tedious and difficult operation than I had apprehended.”¹

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Either the Governor-General condemned the policy of the treaty which was concluded by Lord Cornwallis, and highly applauded by the ministers, by the parliament, and by the people of England ; or, such was the change in circumstances, that the enmity of Tippoo, which was neither formidable, nor offered any reasonable prospect of being formidable, in 1792, had become intensely formidable in 1798 ; or, lastly, the mind of the Governor-General was in a state of inflammation, and decided upon suggestions totally different from a cool and accurate contemplation of the circumstances of the case.

No where, in his official correspondence, as he lays down the reasons of his conduct, does he state any disapprobation of the treaty of Seringapatam. It seems, therefore,

¹ Letter from Lord Mornington to the Court of Directors, dated 20th March 1799. Papers presented to the House of Commons relating to the late War in the East Indies with Tippoo Sultaun; ordered to be printed 26th Sept., 1799. “The necessarily dispersed state of the troops,” (says Col. Beaton, *View of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo Sultaun*, i. 15.) “would have been of less importance but for those radical defects, which have in a certain degree at all times existed. These proceed from a system of economy, which precludes the expense of establishing depôts of grain in different parts of our possessions, and of maintaining a fixed establishment of draught and carriage cattle ; without which no portion of the Madras army, however amply it might have been supplied with every other requisite for field operations, was in a condition to act with promptitude and effect.”



BOOK VI. a proper conclusion, that no disapprobation of it existed
CHAP. VIII. in his mind.

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Whether, in the circumstances of Tippoo or the English, there was any thing at that time, which rendered the inimical mind of Tippoo more alarming, than at the date of the peace, is the next point of rational inquiry. The English, unless we are to suppose that the government which they had established in India was too bad to admit of progression, must have advanced in all the elements of political power. They had enjoyed uninterrupted peace; they had taken possession, almost unresisted, of both the French and Dutch settlements in India; time had been given to improve their experience, and their institutions, and to reap the greatest possible fruit from the extensive districts which the partition of one half of Tippoo's former territories had added to their dominions. On the side of Tippoo no change could possibly have taken place, except by the exertions which he might have made to improve his revenues, and his army—revenues completely exhausted, and an army conquered and reduced—out of the resources of a country desolated in every quarter, by the ravages of war; and reduced to one half of that extent, over which the English had found it so easy to prevail.

It would be ridiculous, and at the same time the deepest imputation upon the English government, to suppose, that, intrinsically, the power of the English had not risen upon that of Tippoo, and rendered its preponderance still greater, during the interval of only six years which had elapsed since the pacification of Seringapatam. If then any danger to the English now accrued from Tippoo greater than the danger of 1792, it must be sought for in causes exterior to the condition and resources of the countries appertaining to each. The connexion with allies was the only circumstance from without, by which the power of either government was affected.

With respect to the English, it was, indeed, alleged that their allies, the Nizam and the Mahrattas, yielded a prospect rather of danger than of aid. This, however, was a circumstance which presented consequences of two different sorts. If the want of allies increased the causes of their dread of Tippoo, it rendered them less able to fight



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with him, and therefore increased the motives to peace. If they were perfectly able to fight with him, notwithstanding the want of allies, this very circumstance proved, that they had nothing to apprehend from remaining at peace. If it was alleged that they were able to fight now, but should not be able, after the lapse of some time, it implied that Tippoo's government was better than theirs, and would more readily increase his resources.

Besides ; it was not true, that the English were, to a considerable, if to any degree, less sure of auxiliary operations, than at the commencement, or any moment since the commencement of the peace. The Mahrattas, it was supposed, would stand aloof even if the Company were attacked. But in the first place, it was to be remembered, that as the Mahrattas dreaded nothing more than the increase of Tippoo's power, the natural conclusion was, that, if they saw the Company in any danger, they would be too strongly impressed with a sense of interest not to offer effectual assistance, and if at present they showed indifference to the dispute, or rather a jealousy of the English, the reason was, because they saw the English not likely, by suffering at the hand of Tippoo, to make Tippoo formidably strong, but much more likely, by crushing Tippoo, to raise their own power to a great and formidable height. It was also true, that at the moment when Lord Cornwallis concluded the treaty, a knowledge of the case was all that was necessary to convince any man, that hardly any dependence could, even then, be placed on assistance from the Mahrattas, in the event of a subsequent dispute ; and, in fact, every circumstance, to which a hope of the co-operation of that people against the aggressions of Tippoo could be attached in 1792, existed in equal force at the present hour, and was as likely to produce the desired effect.

The only source of jealousy which regarded the Nizam the second of the English allies, was the corps of sepoys commanded by Frenchmen. In the state of mind by which the Governor-General, and Englishmen of his intellectual and moral caste, were at that time distinguished, the very existence of a Frenchman was a cause of alarm : and a military corps, under the direction of Frenchmen,



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assumed the dreadful aspect of a most enormous evil. It was, at the same time, however, a circumstance perfectly known, that this evil, whatever it was, it depended upon the English themselves, by an act totally free from difficulty, completely to remove. The Nizam had already proposed to Sir John Shore the dismissal of the French officers in his service, and the abolition of the corps, provided the English troops in his pay were so increased, and their services so extended, as to enable them to defend him against the aggressions of the Mahrattas. The English themselves, indeed, were eager to hold forth, that the French officers, by the avidity with which they absorbed the powers of the state, had become odious to the Nizam, who was now alarmed at their daring encroachments, and eager for their destruction. In point of fact, it was found, that, as soon as the Governor-General proposed to agree to the conditions upon which the Nizam had already offered to dismiss the French, his assent was obtained, and this cause, if such it is to be deemed, of seeking the destruction of Tippoo, was speedily taken away. The truth is, that the English were, in the first place, stronger, intrinsically; and, in the next place, not weaker, on any rational ground of computation, in respect of allies, in the year 1798, than in the year 1792. If there was anything real, therefore, in the ground of alarm, it is not in the circumstances of the English, but in those of Tippoo, that it is to be found.

The revenue which it was possible for the very limited territory of the Sultan to yield, and the moderate army which that revenue could maintain, it is miserable to contemplate as having been a subject of alarm, to a people, possessing the resources of the English, and so many degrees advanced beyond their opponents in the art and science of war. Of course, it is in circumstances extrinsic to his dominions, if in any, that Tippoo can be regarded as having been formidable to the English, or as laying them under any obligation, beyond that which existed in 1792, to adopt extraordinary measures of self-defence. But of such circumstances one only can be named; and that is, his union with the French. To clear up, therefore, every difficulty in this question of policy, it only remains to inquire how much of danger was implied in



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the connexion which he had formed with that formidable people.

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Tippoo was by no means without a connexion with the French at the date of the treaty of Seringapatam. A French corps had formed a distinguished part of his army from the moment he ascended the throne. When that treaty was concluded, a war was impending between the English and the French ; and no man could have a doubt that Tippoo would gladly join the enemies of those whom he regarded as his inveterate foes, should those enemies think of carrying their arms to that distant part of the globe. With all these circumstances fully before him, Lord Cornwallis thought it wise to make peace. Had any new circumstance occurred, to make it wise in Lord Wellesley to come to the determination, which he says he had formed on the 20th of June, 1798, of attacking Tippoo immediately, if he had found it possible to assemble the troops? Two men had appeared at the Isle of France, and a proclamation had been issued by the Governor. From this, as far as then was known, only one of three inferences could rationally be drawn. Either that it set forth a number of falsehoods, for the purpose of precipitating the English into an Indian war. Or that it was the act of a madman making public a communication which it was so much the interest of both parties to keep in the profoundest secrecy. Or, which was by far the most probable supposition, that it was nothing but an act of boasting, bragging, folly, with something of very small importance for its foundation. Nothing was more likely than that Tippoo, seeing the increase which had taken place in the French corps in the service of other native powers, both in that of the Nizam, and that of the principal Mahratta power, was very desirous of increasing his own ; and might have sent agents to the Isle of France for the purpose of engaging both officers and men. It is well known, how much of boasting, and of exaggeration, enters into the verbal intercourse of the East ; it is well known, also, that Tippoo carried this weakness to excess, and might be regarded as a braggart even among orientals. It is still further known, that on nothing was he fonder of bragging, than his power in relation to the English, and the vengeance which, if provoked by them, he should one



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BOOK VI. day inflict. It was, therefore, not incredible, it was highly
CHAP. VIII. probable, that with a view to obtain a more favourable

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reception to his application for leave to enlist soldiers in the Isle of France, his agents were instructed to talk very high, to boast of his enmity to the English, and even his power, if well supported by the French, to expel them from India. Vapour of this kind was a thing too common in India to excite any particular regard. But it was not surprising, if it produced on the French Governor a very different effect. It was very well known, at the period when the Governor-General was called upon to deliberate or to decide without deliberation, upon the question of peace and war, that a high degree of excitability had, by the events of their revolution, been conveyed to the minds of Frenchmen; and they were almost as much disposed to the language of vanity and ostentation as the orientals themselves: and the only rational conclusion was, that the Governor, evidently a very ignorant and foolish man had been eager to adopt any occasion, however insignificant, of indulging his propensity for boasting, exaggeration and display; that the loose, hyperbolical talk of Indians had been held forth as the momentous language of a solemn negotiation; and that two agents for recruiting soldiers had been transformed into ambassadors, for the purpose of contracting an alliance, offensive and defensive, between the Sultan of Mysore, and the Republic of France.

But, even should we go so far as to allow the wisdom of supposing that Tippoo had made an overture of the most serious kind for an alliance offensive and defensive against the English, an important question is still to be asked. Did this, in the smallest degree, alter the circumstances of the English in regard to Tippoo? Was their danger, in any respect, increased? Would they have been perfectly safe to remain at peace, had not this overture been made? If so, in what respect did this overture increase the probability of evil? It may be affirmed, without any dread of refutation, that it produced no effect of that description whatsoever. In reality, the incident disclosed nothing with regard to the mind of Tippoo, which was not perfectly known, believed, and acted upon before; namely, his eager desire to do mischief to the English, and to



unite with any power that would embark in the same design, more especially with the French, whose power and hatred appeared to offer so great a resource. In fact, the incident made a disclosure, which might have been regarded as agreeable; that the connexion between Tippoo and the French was so trifling, and their mode of intercourse so very childish and absurd. It might have been expected, and it ought to have been beforehand supposed, that a perfect and regular channel of communication was opened between them and that their conjoint means of annoying the English had been well digested, and perfectly understood.

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But, if this incident disclosed nothing with regard to the minds of Tippoo and the French, except that they were less capable of doing mischief to the English, than might before have been reasonably expected, it can hardly be supposed, that an overture so loose, indefinite, full of negligence and mismanagement, could add any thing to the motives of the French for carrying hostilities to India, if their circumstances admitted so costly an experiment. And, lastly, if this overture intrinsically altered nothing, either in regard to the dangers of the English, or their knowledge of that danger, except by showing that it was less than they might have supposed, was there any thing (for that is the last hypothesis) in the state and condition of the French nation, at that particular time, which rendered it more likely they should now send an army to India, than at any period since the conclusion of the treaty of Seringapatam? During the two days between the 18th and the 20th of June, 1798, in which contracted space the Governor-General made up his mind, upon the strength of the incident in question, to attack the sovereign of Mysore instantly; it may be affirmed, that he had no rational ground for supposing it more likely that the French would then make war upon India, than it had been at any period since the war between them and England began. It evidently follows, that there was no reason for destroying Tippoo, at this particular moment, which had not existed at every moment since the commencement of the negotiation for peace.

Still, the character of the policy which was pursued by the Governor-General remains to be determined, by the



solution, not of the question whether more reason, than at any preceding period, existed for the destruction of the Sultan, but of the question, whether then sufficient reason existed as well as, if such where the coincidence, at any antecedent time. More obscurity rests upon this determination. If it be true, that the Governor-General ought to have been guided by the act of parliament, made and provided for the express regulation of his conduct, the answer is not doubtful. By that act, all augmentation of territory, and every act of war against an Indian prince, except for self-defence, in the case of actual hostilities, was declared to be contrary to the interest, and injurious to the honour of the British nation. It will be impossible to show, that the war into which the Governor-General was so eager to plunge, was a war of self-defence, except by such arguments as will show that no war which has a prospect of adding to the securities of a nation can ever be a war of a different sort. If it was proper in the Governor-General to treat the act of parliament with contempt; as the parliament itself soon after declared that it was, by thanking and applauding him for his flagrant violation of that act; and if the only question was, whether or not the British interests were to be promoted, or the contrary, by the ruin of this dreaded foe, the inquiry is more complicated. What was to be gained was abundantly obvious; it was the saving of the expense, which the maintenance of a force, sufficient to guard against any chance of evil from his malignity, would have required. This expense, if the war by good fortune had not been so very short, would not perhaps have equalled the interest of the money expended by the war. Had this been the fact, more would have been lost, it is evident, than gained, by the destruction of Tippoo; for as to the mere increase of dominion, independent of security, that, in the shape of a good, was not less violently renounced by Lord Mornington, than by the parliament, and by the nation at large. It was on this foundation, or otherwise it will be difficult to find one, on which, after conquering the dominions of Tippoo, instead of keeping the whole for the benefit of his country, he gave to others an important part, and even urged upon the the Mahrattas a portion which they refused. With regard to what was lost to the British interests by the destruc-



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tion of Tippoo (for even the power of Tippoo was an evil not without its good), it is much less easy to form any thing like a determinate opinion. While Tippoo existed, the Mahrattas might be confidently expected to be much more subservient to the English, on whom alone they depended for assistance against this their greatly dreaded foe, than they were likely to be after his destruction, when every source of apprehension was taken away. What amount of evil might be involved in thus relieving the Mahrattas from all dependence upon the English, cannot of course, be exactly defined. The English were able to chastise them when they thought chastisement requisite. A case might even be supposed, in which Tippoo instead of being an opponent, might have been a confederate of the Mahrattas against the English. This supposition, however, is obviously confined to one case, that in which the English, renouncing their pacific policy, should bring the Mahrattas into a greater dread of unprovoked evil from the English, than they lay under in regard to Tippoo. As affairs were actually situated, the effects of their emancipation from the dread of Tippoo soon began to appear; and the Governor-General found himself under the supposed necessity of checking their audacity by a war.

That the contemplation of the facts, made on other occasions, an impression, correspondent to the inferences which have here been drawn: made such an impression, at the time, on the minds of the most instructed men in India, there is a remarkable document to show. On the 24th of July, 1798, a meeting was held of the British inhabitants of Calcutta, on the subject of the voluntary contributions in support of the war against the French, contributions promoted with great zeal by all expectants and dependants on government, in every part of the British dominions. To this meeting great importance was attached; and all the persons highest in their consequence, and warmest in their aspirings, were forward, by the exhibition of their persons, and of their fervour, not to omit so easy an opportunity of establishing a new title of merit in the eyes of their superiors. In this splendid and numerous assembly, the Advocate-General, Mr. Burroughs, made the introductory address, at great length, and with

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the best of his eloquence. He introduced in it the following observations, which constitute an article of evidence, of some weight, in determining the questions which arise out of the circumstances of that important era. "Every man," he said, "at all acquainted with our situation, must know that in India we never before were so powerful and so unassailable, as at the present moment. We have an army infinitely stronger, in number and discipline, than we ever had before in India. We are without an enemy who can venture to attack us; and he would assert, that there was not a single native who would now even wish to attack us, unless, indeed, our old enemy Tippoo might have such a wish.¹

But that prince had received such a lesson in the last

¹ If any doubts could have been entertained of the implacable hostility of Tippoo, and his purposes to assail the English, whenever what he regarded a favourable moment should occur, they were dissipated by the mission to the Mauritius, and the proclamation of the French Governor, which however absurd and premature, was authentic evidence of the Sultan's feelings and designs. It would have been strange policy to have waited for the accomplishment of the latter; to have repeated the imbecility of the Madras government in the war with Hyder, and suffered Tippoo to devastate the Carnatic before a force could be organized to oppose him. Perpetual preparation for actual hostilities is a more expensive and anxious state than that of warfare. Active operations once commenced must have a termination. Arming against their probability is indefinite. It is argued in the text, that hostilities were inexpedient because Tippoo was weak. Was the British government then to wait till he should be strong; till the negotiations which he was publicly carrying on with France should have brought him the effective co-operation of the organized army of Raymond, or succours from France. The former would have been easy — the latter more practicable than the politicians of Calcutta imagined. The same chances that landed a large army in Egypt at this very period, in spite of the superiority and vigilance of our fleets, might have operated in sending to the Sultan a body of officers and men, by whose aid his resources would have been made powerfully to contribute to the annoyance and perils of our Indian empire. The co-operation of France, to an extent far beyond a handful of soldiers from the Isle of France, was held out to the Sultan, and formed part of the plan which led to the invasion of Egypt. A letter from Buonaparte to Tippoo, was well calculated to encourage him and to alarm the Government of India. There was also ground for apprehension in the threatening attitude of Zemaun Shah on the north-west of India; and, although the event was not a reasonable subject of doubt, yet hostilities were unavoidable, and they were prudently as well as boldly anticipated by the promptitude and determination of the Governor-General. The line of conduct which he adopted concurred entirely with that enjoined by the authorities in England, as soon as the information of Tippoo's proceedings reached them. A letter from the Secret Committee, of the 18th June, 1798, instructs the Governor-General, that if he should judge that Tippoo's designs are such as the French proclamation represents, and that he is making preparations to act hostily, it will be advisable not to wait for such an attack, but to take the most immediate and decisive measures to carry the war into the enemy's country. The circumstances described in the text prevented the previous fulfilment of their instructions, but there can be no doubt that when hostilities are, as they were in this instance, sooner or later unavoidable, sound policy, as well as common sense, prescribes that no time shall be granted to an enemy to render himself formidable. See the Wellesley Despatches, vol. I. p. 63, 83, 91, 295. App. 686.—W.



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Mysore war, as must deter him from any such enterprise again, even if he could have the aid of France in doing so. Any aid from Europe it was impossible he could have, considering the total want of ships in France, on which troops could be transmitted; and we know besides, that the English fleets maintained the entire dominion of the seas, and that our enemies were every day lamenting their inability to send one sail in safety from any of their ports, as they were all blocked up by the British navy. The French islands in India had thrown off all connexion with France, and instead of taking any part against us, must now look to us as friends, to protect them from any attempts which might be made on them by France."¹

Compelled reluctantly to abandon the design of immediately invading Mysore, the Governor-General, nevertheless, renewed his orders for assembling the army with the smallest possible delay. In the policy of this measure, the Madras council by no means concurred. Besides the length of time necessary for assembling the army, the expense, they said, would be so enormous; and so much danger would be unavoidably created of provoking hostilities with Tippoo, by vast preparations importing the design of war; that they could not think themselves justified, without a strong representation, in obeying the orders which they had received.² "Not discouraged," says the Governor-General, "by these suggestions and representations, I insisted on the immediate execution of my orders."³

During the interval which was required for assembling the army, the Governor-General found employment in negotiating with Nizam Ali the dismissal of the French officers, and the dissolution of their corps. His minister, to whom the business of the state was almost wholly committed, was a partisan of the English, and well disposed

¹ See a Report of the business of this meeting: Asiatic Annual Register, vol. I. Chronicle, p. 31.

² A review of the late War in Mysore, in a Letter from an officer in India. Published by M. Wood, Esq. M. P. Colonel, and late Chief Engineer, Bengal, p. 10. The Governor-General's Letter, ut supra, parag. 38.

³ Ibid. Colonel Beatson says (Views of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo, i. 4). "The apprehensions entertained from the designs of Tippoo Sultan were certainly, at that period, considerably increased by the bold and decided measures of preparation and defence, which the Marquis Wellesley judged proper to adopt, a very few weeks after he had taken charge of the supreme government of India."



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CHAP. VIII. British government would consent to replace them by a
1798. force adequate to the service which the French performed
in the protection of the country. The Nizam was not altogether blind to the dangers of placing himself in a state of helpless dependance upon a superior power : but, totally unequal as he knew that he was to the defence of himself against the Mahrattas, against the Sultan, or against the English, it was easy for the minister to convince him that he was safer in the hands of the English than of either of the other two. From the attainment of what he regarded as an object of unspeakable importance, the dissolution of a French corps in the service of the Nizam, Lord Mornington was far from allowing himself to be restrained by any dread of offending the Mahrattas ; the motive by which the mind of his predecessor had been swayed. His instructions were issued to the acting Resident at Hyderabad, on the 8th of July, to open a negotiation with the Nizam : and, on the 1st of September, a treaty was concluded, by which four battalions of British troops were added to the former two, and the British government was pledged for the protection of the Nizam against any unjust demands of the Mahrattas. The Nizam, on his part, engaged to disband the French corps in his service ; to deliver over its officers to the British government, whenever the whole of the British force should arrive in his capital ; and to raise the subsidy, which he paid for the maintenance of the British troops, from 57,713, to 2,01,425 rupees per month.

Though the force which the French officers commanded consisted, after all the alarm which it occasioned, of less than 14,000 men, it was necessary to take precautions against the chance of their resistance. Pending the negotiation, the additional troops destined for the service of the Nizam were collected in that part of the Company's territory which touched upon his frontier ; and, on the 10th of October, joined the two former battalions at Hyderabad. Fortunately for the schemes of the Governor-General, Raymond, whose talents and great influence might have been formidably exerted for the preservation of his power, had died a few months before ; and a struggle for ascendancy had introduced great animosity and dis-



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union into the corps. Not only the Nizam, but even the minister himself, wavered, however, and drew back, when the enterprise came to the verge of execution. In so little respect was this greatly dreaded corps really held by the British officer, who commanded the six subsidiary battalions, that he did not hesitate to take a decisive step. He declared his determination, unless the Nizam came to the immediate resolution of fulfilling his engagements, to make an attack on the French camp with his own forces, and proclaim the want of faith in the Nizam's government as the cause of all the consequences which might ensue. A proclamation was soon after sent to the French camp, announcing the discharge of the officers, and declaring it treason in the soldiers to obey them. The soldiers were already in a state approaching to mutiny. The disorders now proceeded to greater violence; and the officers were imprisoned by their men. In this helpless situation, the camp, which at the time did not contain above 11,000 men, the rest of the corps being on a distant detachment, was surrounded by the whole of the British battalions, and a strong body of the Nizam's horse. The men, upon a promise of their pay, and continuance of service, laid down their arms; and the arrest of the officers was accomplished without difficulty or danger. Notwithstanding the unfriendly passions which Frenchmen at this moment excited in the breast of the Governor-General, he was careful to ensure to the individuals who had fallen into his power, that generosity of treatment which a gallant mind is ever prompted to bestow. Their property, together with such arrears as were due to them by the Nizam, were secured to their use; they were conveyed to Calcutta, under every indulgence compatible with the security of their persons; and on their arrival in England, the Governor-General provided that they should not be treated as prisoners of war, but transported to their country without detention.¹

¹ Letter of the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, dated 21st Nov. 1798. Printed papers, at supra, p. 6. Malcolm's Sketch, p. 236—244. Beatson tells us (i. 50) that the secret was well kept; that the cause of sending the detachment from Guntoor to Hyderabad was not made known to the government of Madras; and that the intelligence of the annihilation of the French corps came by surprise upon the English of Calcutta and Madras. He tells us also, that their minds were in such a state as to regard the transaction as a perfect master-piece of policy.—M.

The secret was well kept, but it is not correct to say that it was not commu-



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The chances of good or evil from the Mahrattas, also, forced themselves upon the attention of the British government; and negotiations were carried on at Poonah, at the same time with those, which, at Hyderabad, were conducted to an issue deemed so exceedingly favourable. The negotiations, however, attempted with the Mahrattas, produced not equal results. The substance of the treaty negotiated at Hyderabad was communicated to the Peshwa, both before and after its conclusion. "And at both periods," says the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, "he expressed his entire approbation of the nature and tendency of the new engagements, as well in their operation upon the interests of the Mahratta empire, as upon those of the Nizam."¹ On the other hand, Sir John Malcolm says, "The measures taken at Hyderabad were regularly communicated to the Peshwa; but that prince, either influenced by his weak councillors, or acting under the control of Dowlut Rao Sindiah, obstinately continued to withhold his formal consent to any acknowledgment of the right of the British government to arbitrate in his disputes with the court of Hyderabad."² Of course, it may be said, the Governor-General knew best. It may also, however, with equal certainty be said, that he had the greatest temptation to lay on a colour; that if none except agreeable consequences were supposed to flow from his measures, the favour of his employers would be enhanced; that from this species of art, which had been amply practised by his predecessors, Lord Mornington must have been a man far superior to his predecessors to stand always exempt; and that of those expedients for a colour, the two letters which have just been quoted appear to present us with instances. In the first place, when mention is made of the time which would be required for assembling

to the Government of Madras, of which General Harris was temporarily the head. The intention was made known to him by a despatch in the secret department in July. Wellesley Despatches, i. 132. Nor is it true, that it was not known to any but the Government, for Munro, in a letter dated Sept. 1798, says, "The Nizam has, either of himself, or by the interference of the supreme government, conceived the design of breaking them (Raymond's force) altogether, or, at least, of disbanding all the corps that are suspected of being under French influence. A strong detachment has been formed at Guntur to march in case of necessity to Hyderabad. The sooner they move, the better; for no time ought to be lost in destroying this party, so hostile to our interests in the Deccan. Life i. 202.—W.

¹ Letter, *ut supra*, parag. 24.

² Malcolm's Sketch, p. 244.



FAILURE OF THE NEGOTIATION.

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...ing the army of the Carnatic, no mention whatsoever is made of the disapprobation expressed by the Madras council. In the next place, when the execution is described of the measures taken for the destruction of the French corps in the service of the Nizam, the reluctance exhibited by the Nizam, when the crisis arrived, is not only covered with silence, but with a language which implies uninterrupted alacrity and zeal. Beside the difficulty, in such a situation as that of Sir John Malcolm, of remaining long ignorant of such a general and important fact, the consequences also tally with his representation; for the efforts of the Governor-General to draw the Mahattas into an intimate connexion with him, totally failed. And again; as Sindiah, not the Peshwa, was at this time predominant over the Mahratta councils, the assent of the Peshwa had little value; and if presented to people ignorant of the state of the facts, as equivalent to that of the Mahratta power, was only calculated to produce deception. It seems to be affirmed, from private information, by Colonel Wilks, that both Sindiah and the Peshwa, under alarm at the symptoms of ambition which at this moment distinguished the movements of the British power, were actuated by favourable dispositions towards the sovereign of Mysore; but Sindiah was afraid to take a positive step, on account of his dominions in the North, which the English had an army ready to invade; and the Peshwa beside the imminent danger to which the hostility of the English would expose him, had no liberty to act but as Sindiah directed. The Governor-General, accordingly, when at last he found that assistance from the Mahrattas was not to be obtained, encouraged by the probability that he would receive no opposition, resolved to proceed in his warlike operations without them.¹

¹ Hist. Sketches, iii. 361—366.—M. We have now before us the whole of the instructions addressed by Lord Mornington to Col. Palmer, the Resident at Poonah, and are able to see how much of the statements on which the reflections in the text are founded, are accurate. The former are incorrect, the latter consequently, are inapplicable. The reduction of the French brigade was communicated to the court of Poonah only when it had actually taken place. Despatches, i. 112. The consent of the Peshwa to the measure was never asked, and could not therefore be withheld. What was proposed and not acceded to was, the establishment of a subsidiary force at Poonah. Beside the jealousy awakened by this proposition, the Peshwa was alarmed at the apparent intention of the British Government to compel the restoration of Nana Farnavese to his ministerial functions. Despatches, i. 118, 123, 252, &c. Although he shortly afterwards became reconciled to him. So Capt. Grant observes



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BOOK VI. On the 18th of June, the Secret Committee of the Court
CHAP. VIII. of Directors wrote from England to the Governor-General

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in Council, that they had just received from his Majesty's ministers information of a large armament which had sailed from Toulon on the 19th of the preceding month; and that amid the various conjectures respecting its destination, it was not conceived impossible that India might be the object of attack, by way of the Red Sea, or its coast, after conquest of Egypt; "or even," the Directors add, "by the Black Sea, or by Bussora. His Majesty's ministers," they continue, "have therefore informed us that immediate measures will be taken for a considerable augmentation of the European force in the East Indies: you may expect that not less than 4000 seasoned and disciplined troops, and perhaps a larger number, may be sent to the Company's settlements with all possible expedition, part of which will, we trust, reach India not many months after the receipt of this despatch."

It was not before the 18th of October, that the Governor-General first received authentic intelligence of the expedition from Toulon, and the invasion of Egypt; when his preparations against Tippoo were approaching maturity. The constituted authorities in England, under impression of the danger which the invasion of India by so great an army would produce, gave directions to the Governor-General, to make war upon Tippoo, if he appeared to be actually accumulating the means of seconding invasion by the French. They seem not to have regarded the proclamation at the Mauritius as satisfactory evidence of any such design; of which they express themselves in the following words: "We are unable to judge, whether this proclamation be in reality what its import declares to be; or intended merely as a feint, with a view to embroil us

"The sudden desire now evinced by the English to grant him a subsidiary force, (which he had before applied for in vain); their frequent recommendations to reëstate Nana Furnavese in the ministry, and to remove Sindiah from Poonah, led Bajee Rao, whose views and information were bounded by narrow limits, to suppose that the whole was a scheme of the detested Nana, the object most dreaded, and therefore uppermost in his mind. *Mahr. Hist.* iii. 169. And, although he ultimately was bribed by Tippoo, and persuaded by Sindiah to withhold his assistance, yet at this time he pledged himself faithfully to execute the conditions of subsisting engagements, and, on the prospect of a war with Tippoo, promised to afford him his aid. *Ibid.* 173.—W.

¹ Printed Papers, ut supra, No. 1.



with Tippoo." And they marked out unambiguous preparations for war, as the circumstances by which the judgment of their subordinates in India ought to be determined. "It is highly improbable," they say, "that Tippoo should have entered into any league with the French, without some apparent preparation, on his part, of a hostile nature, in furtherance of their designs. If such shall have been the case, it would be neither prudent nor politic to wait for actual hostilities on his part." Preparation for war, in the only sense which can here be applied, is such an augmentation, or such a disposition, of the instruments of war, as, to some considerable degree, is both unusual, and increases the danger of the suspecting state. That any such augmentation or disposition of the instruments of war had taken place on the part of Tippoo, no evidence was ever produced; while evidence to the contrary appears in abundance.¹ Even with the permission which the alarm of the French expedition extorted from the Directors, they thought proper to enjoin that in resorting to hostilities, "the utmost discretion" should be used; "that we may not," they say, "be involved in a war in India, without the most inevitable necessity."—That inevitable necessity existed, or any necessity at all, will not easily, after the first impartial exposition of the facts, be again alleged. The war might be advantageous, or it might be not advantageous. But the word must be used in an extraordinary sense, if it ever be denominated necessary.

¹ "It was supposed," (says Colonel Beatson, p. 57) "that Tippoo Sultan's army had suffered essentially, both in numbers and discipline, since the last war: his finances were in disorder: his councils were perplexed by discordant opinions; and his spirits dejected and broken by the disappointment of his hopes of French assistance; by the retreat of Zemaun Shah; by the failure of his intrigues at the courts of Poonah and Hyderabad; and by the unexampled vigour, alacrity, and extent of our military preparations." "Tippoo Sultan's field army" (he says p. 204) "was estimated at 47,470 fighting men."—M.

Col. Beatson argues only upon "supposition," but, notwithstanding the assertion of the text, there is specific evidence that the forces of Tippoo had been augmented, and were in such a position as rendered them capable of being directed at once to military aggression. The Sultan's whole force amounted to between 70 and 80,000 men; of these, about 30,000 were in Seringapatam, and its immediate environs; the whole were in a state of activity and efficiency, provided with guns, and baggage, and carriage cattle. Tippoo was, no doubt, induced to hesitate, by his disappointment as to the succour he expected from the French, but his intrigues at Poonah did not fail, and this was some consolation. See Abstract of the present State of Tippoo Sultan, by Capt. Malcolm, Wellesley Despatches, Appen. 651; also a paper of intelligence from Lord Clive, p. 361.—W.



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On the last day of October, that is, in less than a fortnight after he was informed of the invasion of Egypt, the Governor-General received intelligence of the destruction of the French fleet by Sir Horatio Nelson, at the mouth of the Nile. Notwithstanding this decisive event; "I did not," he says, "relax any part of the naval or military preparations which had been commenced under my orders;—being still uncertain of the fate of the French army in Egypt, and ignorant whether an additional force might not have been intended to co-operate with it in India, by the ordinary passage round the Cape of Good Hope."¹ The chance of the invasion of India, from either quarter, will not at the present moment be regarded as having been very great. It will not come up to the description of what constituted an "inevitable necessity" for going to war with Tippoo.

"The immaturity, however," says Sir John Malcolm, "of the Sultan's plans, formed, in Lord Wellesley's opinion, the strongest reason for an immediate attack upon his possessions: but the delay, which was likely to occur in assembling the army on the coast of Coromandel, which had been reduced to a very low establishment, and was in a very divided and unequipped state, obliged him to alter it; and he made no communication whatever to Tippoo Sultaun on the subject of his proceedings, till the military preparations, both at Madras and Bombay, were complete; and the alliance with the Nizam had not merely been restored, but rendered so efficient, as to secure the full application of the resources of that Prince in aid of the common cause."²

During all the time of these remarkable proceedings, it is singular that Tippoo was either without the means, or without the inclination, of making any considerable addition to his habitual state of equipment for war, and, with and appearance of insensibility to all that surrounded him, forbore even to remonstrate against the accumulation which was going forward of the instruments of his destruction.³ When the beginning of November arrived, the

¹ Printed papers, ut supra, No. 8.

² Malcolm's Sketch, p. 254.

³ The inertness of Tippoo, as has been shown in the last note, is an unfounded assertion. He was actively strengthening himself, both in his military arrangements, and by negotiation with the Mahrattas. The preparations



TIPPOO THREATENED.

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Governor-General thought the opportunity was now favourable to exhibit his complaints. On the 8th of that month, he addressed a letter to the Sultan, in which the expressions were conciliatory, rather than hostile, but in which he informs him of the connexion which he was aware had been formed between him and the French, "Whom you know," says he, "to be the inveterate enemies of the Company, and to be now engaged in an unjust war with the British nation." He then gives him a lecture on French principles; which will be appealed to hereafter as a monument of the times. "It appears not," he adds, "either necessary or proper, that I should any longer conceal from you the surprise and concern with which I perceived you disposed to involve yourself in all the ruinous consequences of a connexion, which threatens, not only to subvert the foundations of friendship between you and the Company, but to introduce, into the heart of your kingdom, the principles of anarchy and confusion; to shake your own authority; and to destroy the religion which you revere." On the disposition of the Company to preserve inviolate the obligations imposed by the relation of amity and peace, the Governor-General cited the remarkable instance which had recently occurred; of a district of country to which, though possessed by the Company, the Sultan laid claim, and of which, his right having been ascertained by arbiters mutually chosen, restitution had been made. As the result of these premises, the Governor-General proposed to send to him a British officer, whom he already knew, to communicate to him, on the part of the English, and of the Peshwa and Nizam, their allies, the plan which, in their opinion, was calculated "to remove all existing distrust and suspicion, and to establish peace and good understanding on the most durable foundations."¹

Of the terms which, at different periods, the Governor-General was disposed to allow Tippoo Sultaun, he himself has given a very instructive history, in his letter to the

against him, confined to the re-organization of the Madras army, were not of a nature to inspire any particular alarm, or to call for remonstrance; they were entirely defensive.—W.

¹ Letter from Lord Mornington to Tippoo Sultan, printed papers, ut supra, p. 24.—M. Despatches i. 326.—W.



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BOOK IV. Court of Directors, under date the 3rd of August, 1799.¹

CHAP. VIII. What was the extent of his views in relation to the attack which he was so eager to make, immediately after he first received intelligence of the foolish proclamation at the Isle of France, he has nowhere disclosed.² When he found the execution of this design impossible, and how much time it would require to put the army in a condition for action, he would, he says, have been "contented with any adjustment which offered a reasonable prospect of detaching Tippoo from his connexion with the French;" and that, "in the arrangement which then occurred to him, his views were limited to the establishment of permanent residents, on the part of the Company, and of the allies, at Seringapatam, to the dismissal of all the French then in the Sultaun's service, and to the perpetual exclusion of the French from his armies and dominions."

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Before preferring these demands, he first, however, deemed it politic to place the armies in a posture for action; and to take measures for lessening the chances of evil, as well as improving the chances of good, at the hands of the Nizam and the Mahrattas. The month of November had thus arrived before he was ready to make his first communication. But, at that time the French had invaded Egypt, which appeared to increase the dangers of the English dominion in India; on the other hand, the military preparations of the English were advancing to maturity on a great scale, the French party at Hyderabad was destroyed, the resources of the Nizam's country were, by the late arrangement, placed at the disposal of the Company's servants, and the English now had power to enforce whatever demands they might think proper to advance. The Governor-General, therefore, resolved not to content himself with the terms which, without having communicated them, he would have

¹ See the papers relating to East India Affairs, printed by order of the House of Commons in the year 1800.

² Non-acquaintance with documents is not equivalent to non-existence. Lord Mornington's views, in his proposed plan of immediate attack, were detailed by him to the authorities in England. His main object was to compel Tippoo to cede his territories in Malabar, so as to cut off his communication with the sea-coast and the French; to exact from him indemnification for the expenses of the armament, and to insist upon his receiving an English Resident at his capital. Letter to Dundas. Despatches, i. 82. To these terms he still adhered when the prospect of hostilities became more imminent, as is noticed in the text, and it is justly admitted that they were not extravagant.—W.



GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DEMANDS.

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thought sufficient for all necessary purposes before. If, however, the real ground of the war was not the love of conquest, which was so fervently disclaimed, but the chance of danger from the power of Tippoo, as was the grand pretence, the new degree of security which had accrued to the Company was a reason, not for war, but peace. The additional chance of invasion, by the presence in Egypt of the French, presented, as far as it went, a demand for additional security. But that chance was to be weighed, and its value ascertained. Except to an eye surrounded by the mists of ignorance or passion, which saw its object hideously enlarged, it could not appear to be great. Besides, as the British government would not long remain without a grand effort to expel the enemy from Egypt, the Company might have quietly rested on its guard, without incurring the mischievous expenditure, not to speak of any more of the detestable consequences of actual war, at least for a little time, till they understood what was the result of the measures adopted against the invaders of Egypt, and whether a few months would not set India free from any danger on account of the French. However, the terms, beyond which the Governor-General did not think as yet of proceeding, were not extravagant. Besides the conditions first meditated, he meant to demand the cession of Canara, a maritime province on the western coast, which appeared to facilitate the communication of Tippoo with the French; but to allow him an equivalent in some other quarter distant from the coast. This, then, in the opinion of the Governor-General, who now felt himself in a condition to enforce any demand, and whose apprehension from French invasion, and the rooted enmity of Tippoo, was then at its height, was all the security, as against Tippoo, which the British interests really required. If nothing followed to create occasion for more security, every addition which was made to the sacrifices exacted of the hated foe, was made either in the spirit of revenge, or from the love of conquest; for no other solution remains.

The Governor-General professes, and with all the marks of sincerity, his expectation to have been, that Tippoo, overawed by the discomfiture of the French fleet in Egypt, by the ascendancy of the English at Hyderabad,



BOOK VI. the strength of the English army, and an English fleet on
CHAP. VIII. the coast of Malabar, would accede to the terms which he

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meant to propose, and that the calamities of war might still be avoided. For the purpose of accelerating measures, whether of a pacific or hostile description, he thought it expedient to be near the scene, and in a letter dated the 10th of December, acquainted the Sultan with his intention of repairing shortly to Madras. He arrived on the 31st of the same month, and found waiting for him an answer from Tippoo.

In the letter of the Sultan, the expressions were not less pacific than those of the Governor-General. He declares the highest satisfaction at the naval victory gained on the coast of Egypt by the English over the French; the former of whom he describes as possessing almost every virtue, the latter every vice. The charge which had been urged by the Governor-General, of soliciting a hostile connexion with the French, he endeavours to answer thus; "In this Sircar (state) there is a mercantile tribe, who employ themselves in trading by sea and land. Their agents purchased a two-masted vessel, and having loaded her with rice, departed with a view to traffic. It happened that she went to the Mauritius, from whence forty persons, French, and of a dark colour, of whom ten or twelve were artificers, and the rest servants, came here in search of employment. Such as chose to take service were entertained, and the remainder departed beyond the confines of this Sircar: and the French, who are full of vice and deceit, have perhaps taken advantage of the departure of the ship to put about reports with the view to ruffle the minds of both Sircars." He then made protestation of his earnest desire to preserve and to strengthen the bands of peace between himself and the Company; described his own occupations as all in the highest degree pacific; and added, "In this case, the allusion to war in your friendly letter, and the following passage, namely, *that prudence required that both the Company and their allies should adopt certain measures of precaution and self-defence*, have given me the greatest surprise." As the proposition of sending to him a deputy, and opening a negotiation, appeared to imply, that new sacrifices were to be exacted of him, he appealed to the existing treaty,



TIPPOO'S LETTER DEEMED EVASIVE.

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as affording the proper and adequate adjustment of the rights and interests of the contracting parties; and said, "I cannot imagine that means more effectual than these can be adopted, for giving stability to the foundations of friendship and harmony, promoting the security of states, or the welfare and advantage of all parties."¹ This letter the Governor-General regarded as marked by prevarication and falsehood, in respect to his intercourse with the French; and by criminal evasion, in regard to the moderate and amicable proposition for opening a negotiation. He replied, accordingly, by a letter, dated the 9th of January, 1799, in which he described the embassy to the Isle of France; and explicitly declared, that the new engagements into which he affirmed that Tippoo had thus entered with the enemies of the allies, required a new arrangement for their security. He recommended that only one day should be taken to reply to this letter; intimating that dangerous consequences might result from a greater delay.² That time might not be wanting for the campaign before the commencement of the rains, was the motive which impelled the Governor-General to hasten; and, beside the established practice, and inveterate habits of Oriental courts, the same circumstance afforded a strong motive to the Sultan to make use of every expedient for delay.

The end of January approached, and an answer from the Sultan had not yet arrived. This was interpreted contempt and obstinacy. It is even assigned as proof of more determined enmity than was previously supposed. The army was now irresistible. "On these grounds," says the Governor-General, "towards the close of the month of January, 1799, my intention was to have required from Tippoo Sultaun, in addition to the terms already stated, the payment of a considerable sum of money, as an indemnification for the expense to which his hostile and treacherous conduct had subjected the allies."³

¹ Printed papers, ut supra, No. 8, inclosure, No. 4.

² Ibid. No. 5.—M. Despatches, i. 394. It is essential to remark, that the only topic on which an immediate reply is insisted on is Tippoo's consent to receive the English envoy.—W.

³ Letter from the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd August, 1799, ut supra.—M. On the 16th of January a letter was addressed by Lord Mornington to Tippoo Sultan, forwarding to him one from the Emperor of Turkey, "warning the Sultan against a connexion with the French,



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Before the 3rd of February, Lord Mornington received intelligence that Tippoo had had prepared two native vakeels, who, together with one of the French officers who had lately arrived from the Isle of France, were waiting at Tranquebar, to embark on a mission to the Executive Directory of France. This cannot be regarded as a very extraordinary proceeding in a prince who knew that a vast army had been levied against him before any complaint had been preferred, or so much as an explanation asked, of his conduct; and might by himself have been represented, with surely not less plausibility than, by the English, their preparations for attack, as a proceeding purely defensive, and imperiously called for by the dangers with which he was conspicuously threatened.¹ At this time, however, the Governor-General determined to suspend all negotiation, until the united forces of the Company and their allies should, to use his own expressions, "have made such an impression on the territories of Mysore, as might give full effect to our just representations."²

On the 3rd of February, his Lordship despatched his commands to General Harris, to enter the territory of Mysore, with the army which had been assembled at Velore, and to General Stuart to co-operate with the Bombay army from Malabar; while at the same time he gave intimation to the allied courts, and the British admiral on the coast, that he now considered the Company as at war with Tippoo Sultan.

Another addition was now made to the severity of the terms. From this time nothing less was to be exacted of the Sultan, than a cession of his maritime provinces in perpetuity to the English; an equal territory on their

and exhorting him to renounce all intercourse with them," offering also the mediation of the Porte in case of any disagreement between Tippoo and the English. Lord Mornington again urged upon Tippoo the reception of an ambassador "who will be empowered to conclude the definite arrangement of all differences" between the Sultan and the allies. The condition of an answer therefore "in one day," had not been insisted on. In fact, the proposition to send an ambassador had been thrice repeated, and as no answer had arrived by the 3rd of February, the objects of the Sultan could not be misunderstood. It was expressly in anticipation of this policy, and with a view to defeat it, that the Governor-General directed the first movements to be made. Despatches, I. 426.—W.

¹ It was at any rate a proof that he sought to repel these dangers by force, not avert them by conciliation.—W.

² Letter, 20th March, 1799, *ut supra*.



ARMY ASSEMBLED AGAINST TIPPoo.

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respective frontiers to each of the allies, amounting to about the fourth part of his dominions, and a crore and a half of rupees. But, in the second place, if any decisive advantage should be obtained in the field, or the war should be advanced to the opening of the batteries upon Seringapatam, the General was not to content himself with less than the cession of one whole half of the territories of which the Sultan was in possession at the commencement of the war, the relinquishment of all claim to any of the places on the frontiers of the Company and their allies, about which there was any dispute, and the payment of two crores of sicca rupees. The dismissal of all Europeans belonging to any country at war with the English, the renunciation of all connexion with the French, an engagement never to retain any individual of that nation in his service, or even to permit him to reside within his dominions, to receive at his court a permanent ambassador from each of the allies, to keep with each of them an ambassador of his own, and to give up certain forts and hostages as security for the execution of the treaty: these were articles common to this, with the former catalogue of terms.¹

On the 13th of February, the Governor-General received a letter from Tippoo, in which, after acknowledging the receipt of his letters, he desires, as he is going upon a hunting excursion, in which he frequently indulged, that he would send the deputy (about whom his friendly pen had repeatedly written), slightly attended. This consent, which was sufficiently cold and ungracious, the Governor-General describes, as reluctant and insidious; and he answered it by referring him to General Harris, to whom all his communications were now to be addressed. This answer was even transmitted through that General, who had orders to forward it to the Sultan on the same day on which the army should pass the frontier.

The army, now assembled at Velore, exceeded 20,000 men, whereof 2635 were cavalry, and 4381 Europeans: it was joined, before the commencement of its march, by the whole of the British detachment serving with the Nizam, 6500 strong, by almost an equal number of the

¹ Inclosures A. and B. of the Gov.-Gen.'s Letter to the Commander-in-Chief, dated 22nd January, 1799.—M. See also Despatches, i. 454.—W.



Nizam's infantry, including a portion of Sepoys lately commanded by the French, but now by British officers, and a large body of cavalry; "an army," than which, says the Governor-General, one "more completely appointed, more amply and liberally supplied in every department, or more perfect in its discipline, and in the acknowledged experience, ability, and zeal of its officers, never took the field in India." The army of the western coast, equal in excellence, assembled at Cananore, under General Stuart, amounted to 6420 fighting men, of whom 1617 were Europeans: and a force, described as considerable, but of which the amount is not specified, under Colonels Read and Brown, were to join or co-operate with the Commander-in-Chief from the southern districts of the Carnatic and Mysore. All this was directed against the chieftain of Mysore, who, six years before, was stripped of one half of his dominions; and left in possession of a territory yielding a revenue of little more than a crore of rupees, or one million sterling; while the revenue of the Anglo-Indian government alone, without speaking of that of its ally, exceeded nine millions. What a mass of talent the petty prince of a petty country must have been supposed to possess!

The army of Bombay, under the command of General Stuart, marched from Cananore on the 21st of February; it arrived at the head of the Poodicherrum Ghaut on the 25th of the same month; and took post at Seedapore and Seedasere, on the 2nd of March, where it both protected the large supplies which had been collected in the district of Coorg, and could readily communicate with the main army as it approached to Seringapatam. General Harris entered the Mysore territory on the 5th of March, and commenced his operations by the reduction of several forts upon the frontier; of which none made any considerable resistance; and some made no resistance at all.

At the time when the British General passed the

¹ "The victories of the Marquis Cornwallis (says Col. Beatson, i. 47) had greatly facilitated any future plan of operation against the power of Tippoo Sultan. By diminishing *his* resources, and increasing *our own*, they had produced a twofold effect. And the extension of our frontier, by the addition of the Barramaul and Salem districts, and a thorough knowledge of the defences of Seringapatam, and of the routes leading to that city, were considered at that moment as inestimable advantages."



THE BOMBAY ARMY ATTACKED.

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eastern frontier of Mysore, Tippoo was supposed to be encamped in the vicinity of Madoor, and was expected to move in the direction of Bangalore, for the purpose of opposing the progress of the army. Having succeeded in raising this expectation, he left his camp near Senapatam, on the 28th of February, taking with him the principal part of his army; and on the morning of the 5th of March, a large encampment was observed by General Stuart, forming between him and Periapatam, a town about seven miles distant from Seedasere. On the morning of the 6th, little intelligence was yet obtained of the amount of the enemy, or the meaning of their appearance; and General Hartley, the second in command, went forward to reconnoitre. From his hill of observation, at day-break, he perceived the whole of the hostile force in motion; the country, however, was covered with jungle; the atmosphere was hazy, and it was impossible to judge correctly either of their numbers or object. Between the hours of nine and ten, the enemy had penetrated with so much secrecy and expedition through the jungle, that they attacked the front and rear of the British advanced position at almost the same instant.

The nature of the country had induced General Stuart to place the army in several divisions. Three native battalions, under Colonel Montresor, were posted at Seedasere, to which another battalion was added, after the appearance of the enemy on the 5th: the main body of the army, with the park and provisions, remained at Seedapore and Ahmootenar, the first eight miles, the latter twelve, in rear of the advanced position. General Hartley remained to aid in repelling the attack. The best position of which the circumstances admitted, was assumed; and this body of Sepoys, though completely surrounded, and contending not only with a great disparity of numbers, but other unfavourable circumstances, defended themselves with such determined gallantry, that the Sultan's troops were unable to break them. The General hastened forward with the rest of the army, excepting the fourth corps, which, being posted at some distance in the rear, was intercepted by a column of the enemy, and unable to join. It was not till half-past two, however, that he arrived in sight of the division of the enemy which had penetrated to the rear. It

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withstood and answered a brisk fire of musquetry, for about half an hour; but then fled with precipitation through the jungles, to join the rest of the army to which it belonged. The General now advanced to join Montresor and his brave companions. The men had for more than six hours been engaged with a superior enemy; were spent with fatigue; and their ammunition was almost exhausted. The advance of the troops with the General was the signal for the enemy to intermit the attack, which till this time they had upheld in front; and at twenty minutes past three they were retiring in all directions. General Stuart, apprehending a return of the enemy, which might place them in his rear, and perhaps in possession of the great magazine of rice collected by the Coorg Raja,¹ deemed it of more importance to concentrate his army at Seedapore, than to maintain the position of Seedasere, which was chiefly useful, as the only spot from which the signals, concerted between the two armies, could be observed. The killed, wounded, and missing, according to the regimental returns, in the British army, were only 143. The loss of the enemy was no doubt considerable. Tippoo remained in his camp at Periapatam till the 11th, desiring, but afraid, to strike a second blow; and arrived at Seringapatam on the 14th, whence he hastened to meet the army approaching from the east.

So little, in truth, did the Governor-General respect the power of the Sultan, that the plan upon which he determined implied a confidence in the inability of that prince to offer almost any obstruction to the army which was sent to destroy him. It was planned, that it should not wait to reduce any of the intermediate forts between the frontier and the capital of the Sultan, or to form a clear line of communication, but march directly upon Seringapatam, and by a single blow terminate the contest.

The Governor-General, amid the talents for command which he possessed in a very unusual degree, displayed two qualities of primary importance: he has seldom been surpassed in the skill with which he made choice of his instruments: and having made choice of his instruments,

¹ The Raja accompanied General Stuart, and was present with him in the battle; which he described with vast admiration, in a letter to the Governor-General, quoted by Col. Wilks.



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he communicated to them, with full and unsparing hands, the powers which were necessary for the end they were employed to accomplish. General Harris was not only invested with unrestricted military powers, but was authorized to exert all the civil authority which would have belonged to the Governor-General himself, in his situation. His instructions embraced the two sets of terms, to which, in two events, the Governor-General determined, upon the march of the army, to elevate his demands. And he was further provided with a political and diplomatic commission. This was composed of the Honourable Colonel Wellesley, Lieutenant-Colonel Close, Lieutenant-Colonel Agnew, and Captain Macaulay as their secretary. The commission was not entitled to act, except in obedience to the orders of the General.¹

The army was not ready to make its first united movement on the enemy's ground before the 9th of March; within one day of the time which the Commander, in his orders to General Stuart, had described, as the latest moment at which he could with safety arrive at Seringapatam. The British army was overloaded with equipments: it carried an enormous train of battering cannon for the siege of Seringapatam; it required a prodigious mass of vehicles for the provisions and stores of a campaign to be carried on without an open line of communication; to all this was added the cumbrous baggage of the Nizam's army, a host of brinjaries, and the innumerable followers of the camp. No sufficient measures were prepared for the orderly movement of this vast, unwieldy machine. Colonel Wilks alleges that such measures were impossible. If so; either this was one of the most rash and hazardous expeditions that ever was undertaken; or the British leaders must have counted upon a wonderful inferiority, either of means or of understanding, on the part of their foe. Assuredly, had an enemy, with any thing like an adequate force, employed himself with any considerable degree of activity and skill, in making war upon the movement of this disorderly mass, which it was by no means possible to cover with the troops, it is hardly probable that he would not have retarded it till the commencement of the rains; and so

¹ For a full account of the objects of the commission. See Letter to General Harris, 22nd Feb. 1799. Despatches, i. 442.—W.



BOOK VI. harassed the infantry, and worn out the cavalry, that a
CHAP. VIII. great portion of the baggage, stores, and ammunition

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would have fallen into his hands. The great thing to be dreaded, in marching at once to Seringapatam, without regard to the communication behind, was famine. This evil was all but incurred; and nearly the whole of the draught and carriage bullocks died, though the arrival of the army was probably not retarded a single day by the efforts of the enemy.

So great was the confusion, even on the first day's march, that the army halted on the 11th, to see if a remedy could in any degree be applied. It moved on the 12th, but with so little improvement, that it halted again on the 13th.

From Bangalore, within sight of which, now dismantled, the army encamped on the 14th, there were three roads by which it could march upon Seringapatam. The expectation of the enemy was, that the British would occupy and repair Bangalore, form a line of communication in the same manner as before, and advance by the middle and shortest of the roads.

The confusion of the march was so great, that the British army halted a third time on the 15th; and destroyed as much of the mass of stores as it was supposed that by any possibility the exigencies of the service would allow. On the 18th, it again halted a fourth day; and "the loss of powder, shot, and other military stores, had already been so considerable, as to excite some degree of alarm, at this early period of the campaign."¹

Of the roads leading to Seringapatam, the Southern, by Kaunkanhully, was that selected for the advance of the British army; and so well had the design been disguised, that while the forage on the expected route had been completely destroyed, it was still preserved upon this. No memorable incident occurred from the time when the army entered the Kaunkanhully route on the 16th, till it reached the tanks at Achel, between Kaunkanhully and Sultanpet. These tanks were of so much importance, that "the destruction of them," says Colonel Wilks, "in 1791, had compelled Lord Cornwallis to make the longer march, the injurious effects of which, on his exhausted cattle,

¹ These are the words of two distinguished officers of the same army; Beaton, p. 65, and Wilks, iii. 407.



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were sensibly and severely felt during the remainder of the campaign." Of a similar destruction, that intelligent officer adds, "the consequences on this occasion would have been still more injurious than those experienced in 1791." It was by the merest accident, that this fatal event was prevented. A detachment sent forward on the night of the 21st, arrived not till the breaches were made in the embankment, and were just in time to save the total loss of the waters.

When the Sultan, after his return from the attack upon General Stuart, left his capital to meet the advancing army, he made his first movement on the middle road, but being soon made acquainted with its true direction, he deviated by his right to Malvilly, and encamped on the 18th, at the Madoor river, where he was joined by the two corps of his army, which had been left during his absence to hang upon the British line. "The southern road," says Colonel Wilks, "from this river, to the point where General Harris first entered it, presented numerous situations where the advance of the British army might have been obstructed, and at least materially delayed, by steady troops, without any risk of disaster to themselves." What is more remarkable, Tippoo, as we are told by the same high authority, "after examining and occupying the finest imaginable position for opposing the passage of the river in front, and placing beyond it a strong corps to operate at the same time on his enemy's right flank, from very advantageous ground, with an open rear and a secure retreat from both positions, abandoned the intention of giving battle on this ground;" and determined to fight on ground, about two miles from Malvilly, which, among other advantages gratuitously bestowed on his enemy, gave them, during the intended action, the most convenient cover for their unwieldy impediments."

The slow movement of the English brought them to the Madoor river on the 24th, where they learned the particulars of the march which had been made by the Sultan upon General Stuart; and on the evening of the 27th, on approaching the intended ground of encampment to the westward of Malvilly they espied the army of the Sultan, at a few miles' distance, drawn up on a height. As the first grand object of the General was, to carry his equip-

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BOOK VI. ments safe to the walls of Seringapatam, he determined
CHAP. VIII. neither to seek nor avoid an action. The advanced piquets,

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being sent to their aid, a general action came on. The British army under General Harris formed the right wing; the Nizam's army with the 33rd regiment, under Colonel Wellesley, formed the left. On the right wing, which had deployed into line, and begun to advance, an opening between two brigades, produced by the ground, tempted the Sultan. He advanced in person with a body of cavalry, till in the very act to charge. The effort was against the Europeans; coolly directed; and executed with so much spirit, that many of the horsemen fell on the bayonets. But it produced not so much as a momentary disorder in the ranks; and the line advancing in such a manner as to outflank the enemy's left, his guns were soon after withdrawn from the heights. The cushoons of the Sultan faced Colonel Wellesley with some steadiness, till within sixty yards, when, the 33rd regiment quickening step, they gave way; and Colonel Floyd, seizing the critical moment, charged them with his cavalry, and destroyed them to a man. The efficient state of the Sultan's equipments, and the deplorable state of the British, admitted not an idea of pursuit. The loss of the English was sixty-nine men, that of the Sultan, more than a thousand.

Immediately after this injudicious affair, the Sultan marched, with a design to place himself on the rear of General Harris, during the remainder of his march to Seringapatam. But he expected him to advance on the same road which had been taken by Lord Cornwallis in 1791. As it was anticipated that the forage on this road would be completely destroyed, the project had for some time been contemplated of crossing the Cavery at Sosilla, about fifteen miles east of Seringapatam, if the ford, upon examination, should appear to be practicable. The success was complete, and the battering train, with the last of the army, was over on the 30th, while the enemy was at a distance, looking for them in a different direction. This last disappointment struck a damp to the heart of the Sultan. Having received the whole of his principal officers, "We have arrived," said he, "at our last stage; what is your determination?" "To die along with you," was the



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unanimous reply.¹ It was the opinion of this meeting of Tippoo and his friends, that General Harris would not make his attack on the southern side of the fort, but would cross over into the island. The determination was, to meet him on his route, and find either victory or death. The Sultan and his friends took a most affecting leave, as if for the last time in this world, and all were bathed in tears. It was easy for the Sultan, whose equipments were in order, to anticipate the approach of the English. He crossed at the ford of Arakerry, and took up the intended position near the village of Chendgal. It was not, however, the intention of the English General to cross into the island; and when, instead of pointing to the fords, he made a circuit to the left, to avoid some inconvenient marching, and reach the ground occupied by General Abercromby in 1792, the Sultan, whose dispositions were not calculated for such a movement, ventured not to make opposition; and the English army took up its ground for the siege of the capital, on the 5th day of April, exactly one month after it passed the enemy's frontier; having advanced at the rate of not seven miles a day on enemy's ground, and not five miles a day from the commencement of its march.

A new line of intrenchments had been constructed on this side of the fort, which, reaching from the Dowlut Baug to the Periapatam bridge, and within six or seven hundred yards of the walls, avoided the fault of the redoubts in 1792, distant too far to be supported by the guns of the fort. Between these works and the river, the infantry of Tippoo was now encamped. To save the British camp from annoyance, and advance some posts, an attack was ordered the same evening under Colonels Wellesley and Shaw, on the part of the enemy, occupying a water-course in front. It failed, not without loss.² But

¹ Wilks, *ibid.* 414.

² This affair, of no great importance at the time, had risen into some interest by circumstances said to have been connected with it, and the celebrity of the first-named of the officers employed. As stated by Col. Gurwood, it was thus: "Both divisions marched a little after sunset. The darkness of the night was very unfavourable to their advance. Col. Shawe seized a ruined village within forty yards of the aqueduct. Colonel Wellesley, advancing at the same time with one wing of the 33rd regiment to attack the Tope, was, upon entering it, assailed on every side by a hot fire of musquetry and rockets. This circumstance, joined to the extreme darkness of the night, the badness of the ground, and the uncertainty of the enemy's position, were inducements to confine the operations to the object of causing a diversion to Col. Shaw's attack, and to postpone any further attempt until a more favourable opportunity should occur. Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington, i. 23. General Har-



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BOOK VI. next morning a force was sent, which the party of the
CHAP. VIII. enemy could not resist; and strong advanced posts were
1799. established within 1800 yards of the fort, with their left
on the river, and their right on Sultanpet.

On the 6th, General Floyd, with four regiments of cavalry, and the greater part of the left wing of the army, marched for the purpose of bringing on General Stuart; a proceeding, which the cavalry and part of the infantry of the Sultan marched at the same time to impede. The junction was made on the 14th; the active and well-conducted exertions of the Sultan's cavalry having produced no other effect than the necessity of a little more caution, and a little more time. And on the next day the Bombay army, having crossed the river to the north, occupied a ground in continuation of the line of General Harris, with a view particularly to the enfilade both of the face to be attacked, and the exterior trenches.

On the 9th, Tippoo, who had not before made any answer to the letter of the Governor-General, forwarded to him when the army crossed his frontier, sent to General Harris a letter, of which the following is a translation:

"The Governor-General, Lord Mornington, Bahauder, sent me a letter, copy of which is enclosed: you will understand it. I have adhered firmly to treaties: what then is the meaning of the advance of the English armies, and the occurrence of hostilities? Inform me.—What need I say more?"

The British commander replied in the following terms:
"10th April, 1799.

"Your letter, enclosing copies of the Governor-General's letter, has been received. For the advance of the English and allied armies, and for the actual hostilities, I refer you to the several letters of the Governor-

ris's account, from his private diary, runs thus: 6th April.—Remained under great anxiety until near twelve at night, from the fear our troops had fired on each other. Near twelve, Col. Wellesley came to my tent, in a good deal of agitation, to say that he had not carried the Tope. It proved that the 33rd, with which he attacked, got into confusion, and could not be formed, which was a great pity, as it must be particularly unpleasant to him. Life of Lord Harris, i. 295. On the following day the attack upon the Tope was renewed, under the command of Col. Wellesley, and the post was carried in less than twenty minutes. Ibid. 297.—W.



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General, which are sufficiently explanatory on the subject." BOOK VI.

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On the 16th was made an alarming discovery. The General, in his letter to Lord Mornington, dated the 18th, says: "On measuring the bags, to ascertain what rice they really contained, they were found so much diminished by loss or fraud, that eighteen days' provision, *for the fighting men, at half allowance*, is all that remains in camp. Our supplies must, therefore, arrive before the 6th of May, to save us from extreme distress."¹

On the 17th, operations of considerable importance, less difficult because simultaneous, were accomplished on both sides of the river. The enemy were dislodged from a ground commanding that which was intended for the approaches and batteries of General Stuart; the troops were established under a good cover within 1000 yards of the western angle of the fort; and while the enemy's attention was engaged with these operations, the bed of a water-course was seized on the southern side, which formed a parallel at an equal distance from the fort.

The state of the grain constituted now an object of the greatest solicitude, and every thing was to be done for the purpose of hastening the arrival of the two corps, which were expected to bring a supply from Coimbatore and Baramahl. To conduct them, General Floyd marched on the 19th toward the Caveriporam pass, with the whole of the regular cavalry, the whole of Nizam Ali's cavalry, and a brigade of infantry, followed by all the brinjaries, and all the superfluous followers of the camp.

The 20th produced several events. A battery opened from the northern bank on the enfilade of the southwestern face, and of the enemy's intrenchment on the southern side of the river. The enemy were dislodged

¹ In the Diary of General Harris the circumstances are thus recorded. "16th. I am sorry to add, that this day, on measuring our rice, to ascertain the exact quantity in store, we discovered, that, from loss or fraud, the bags were so extremely deficient, that only eighteen days' rice, at half allowance, is in camp for the fighting men. Unless Col. Reade's supplies arrive before the 6th of May, the army will be without provision. There is plenty in the Coorg country, but we have no means to convey or escort it hither; but I hope to be in Seringapatam before the end of the month. Life of Lord Harris, 315. The alarm of the General seems, however, to have been unnecessary. According to Munro, there was no want of grain in the camp, although the public stock was low. "The public grain of the army would only have lasted till the 7th, but a quantity sufficient to last fifteen days longer, was discovered in the possession of dealers who had brought it on for sale. Life of Munro, i. 212."