tions by resuming, two hours after his men had fallen back, a strong musketry-fire from the houses near the fort. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon he asked leave to bury his dead. This rite concluded, he resumed at 4 o'clock the musketry-fire, and continued it till 2 o'clock in the morning. It then suddenly ceased. Under cover of this fire he had raised the siege and marched in the direction of Vélúr (Vellore).

Thus ended the memorable siege of Arkát—a siege unique till then in the history of sieges, never surpassed, and rarely equalled, for the display of energy, of foresight, of courage on the part of the defenders. To find a parallel to it in India the reader has to cast his eyes forward for the space of more than a century till they rest upon Lakhnao and 1857. The cases are in many points very similar. In both, a small garrison was beleaguered by overpowering numbers; in both, successful defence appeared to the besiegers impossible; in both, the vicinity of houses greatly interfered with the defenders; in both, defences had to be thrown up under the fire of the enemy; in both, the defending sepoys showed loyalty to their European master. But there the parallel ends. Slight and insufficient as were the defences of Arkát, they were magnificent when compared with the low walls of the beleaguered Residency. If the garrison of the latter exceeded in number the defenders of Arkát, so also did the assailants. In the case of Lakhnao, too, a small European garrison was defending itself against an army in revolt, against a nation in arms; but in 1751 it was simply a duel

between two native claimants, the cause of one of whom had been espoused by the English. No national feeling had been evoked, no caste hatred had been inspired.

In 1857 the English fought for their own hand, and all India knew it. In 1751 they fought avowedly for the native prince of whom they were the tributaries. Splendid, then, as was the defence of Arkát, magnificent and far-reaching as were its results, it was yet to be surpassed, a century later, by another noble achievement performed by scions of the same race in another province of the same empire. That second achievement proved at least this, that a century's progress in arts and science had in no respect caused the race of the defenders of Arkát to degenerate.

To return. As the morning of the 25th November broke, Clive discovered that the siege was raised, that his enemy had disappeared. He at once marched into their abandoned camp and found there four guns, four mortars, and a large quantity of ammunition. There, too, he met, marching towards the fort, Captain Kilpatrick's relieving detachment of a hundred and fifty Europeans and four guns. His joy was immense. It was not caused, indeed, by the fact of his own safety and the safety of his men: it may be taken for certain that that consideration never for a moment occupied him. His mind took a far wider range. The repulse of Ríza Sáhib had changed the fate of the Karnátak: it had sealed the fate of Chanda Sáhib: it had inverted the position of the European auxiliaries of that prince and of those of

Muhammad Ali. It may, perhaps, be doubted whether the dream which had inspired the actions of Dupleix—the dream of domination in Southern India—entered at this moment into the brain of Clive: but it can only be a doubt. It is certain that his genius, now thoroughly roused, saw all the possibilities before him. His prompt action, and the action of the Government which he inspired, showed how thoroughly he and they understood the altered circumstances of the case. Time and fortune were to show how far it would be expedient to use those circumstances for the benefit of the nation, whose children, the actual masters of the situation, yet technically occupied only the position of being the auxiliaries of a native pretender to the government of the Karnátak!

But his joy was immense. After a siege of fifty days he had beaten back a *native force largely out*-numbering, aided by a European force greatly superior to, his own. Though in that siege he had lost forty-five Europeans and thirty sepoys killed, and though a considerably greater number had been wounded, his casualties had been more than supplied on the very morrow of the repulse. His enemy, abandoned by his tributaries, had fallen back with a largely diminished force, baffled and humiliated, upon Vélúr. This at least was certain: he had North Arkát in his hands. With North Arkát in his hands, what hope, what vestige of a chance would remain for Chanda Sáhib, besieged as he would be, in his turn, before Trichinápalli?

The immediate action of Clive proved how

thoroughly he had comprehended the situation. Ríza Sáhib had fallen back on the 15th. On the 19th, Clive having made everything secure in Arkát, left that place in charge of Kilpatrick, and marched out at the head of two hundred Europeans, seven hundred sepoys, and three guns. Taking Tímari, the little fort which before the siege had baffled him, he returned towards Arkát to await the arrival of the thousand Maráthá horsemen promised him by Murári Ráo. These in their march to join him had been roughly treated by Ríza Sáhib, and, their object being plunder rather than glory, they showed themselves when they did arrive little amenable to the purely military considerations which influenced the movements of the English leader. It is probable, indeed, that Clive would have found it impossible to induce them to march against Ríza Sáhib for the simple purpose of inflicting upon that prince a defeat not to be followed by plunder. But just at the critical moment, when the last persuasions of Clive had failed, certain information reached the camp of his allies that Ríza Sáhib, in the expectation of being reinforced on the way by a party from Pondichery, was marching on A'rní. Rumour, too, added that the troops who composed the reinforcements were bringing with them large sums of money. This rumour effected a complete revolution in the minds of the Maráthás. They were now as eager, as before they had been disinclined, for an attack.

A'rní lies seventeen miles south of Arkát, twenty south of Vélúr. An army marching upon it from

Vélúr must then expose its flank to a force encamped near Arkát. Clive saw, then, his opportunity. Taking advantage of the favourable disposition of the Maráthás he gave orders to march at once. But many of his allies had departed on plundering expeditions. The endeavour to recall them caused much regrettable delay. Even when Clive was able to set out, but three-fifths of the Maráthá horsemen had returned to their colours. The consequence of the delay was that Ríza Sáhib met his reinforcements; and when Clive, after a forced march of twenty miles, approached A'rní, he came in sight of the enemy composed of three hundred Europeans, two thousand horsemen, and two thousand five hundred sepoys, with four field-pieces, just preparing to cross the river which runs to the north of that place. The enemy caught sight of Clive at the same moment, and their leader, noting the considerable superiority of his force, turned at once to meet him.

The superiority in numbers was considerable. Clive had under him two hundred Europeans, seven hundred sepoys, six hundred Maráthá horse, and three guns. The odds against him were more than three to one. But Clive was the successful defender of Arkát! That one fact gave him a prestige which more than counterbalanced the great superiority of numbers. There has been a fashion recently amongst some classes to sneer at prestige. Prestige works on soldiers as the reputation of a lofty sense of honour works on a man, or purity of soul and elevation of thought on a woman!

Clive did not decline the combat. The ground seemed to him advantageous to receive an enemy. He occupied an open ground flanked on the right by a village, on the left by a grove of palm-trees, there being a space of about three hundred yards between the two; in his front were rice-fields, very swampy at that time of the year and impracticable for guns. The fields were crossed, however, by a causeway which led to the village on his right.

That village was thus the key of the position. In it Clive posted his sepoys, in the palm-grove on his left the Maráthá horsemen, whilst he drew up the Europeans and guns on the open ground between the two.

His dispositions had just been completed when the enemy came on. Their cavalry, interspersed with whom were infantry, advanced against the grove, whilst the French troops, about fifteen hundred sepoys, and the artillery, marched along the causeway against the village.

The cavalry in the grove was first engaged. The contest here was for a long time even. The Maráthás, however, failed, in spite of repeated charges, to stop the enemy's advance, and it is probable that they would have been forced to fall back but for the movements in the centre and on the right. Whilst the combat on the left was yet doubtful, the enemy had begun the movement against the village on the English right which was to decide the battle.

The march of a considerable body of men along a narrow causeway, the end of which formed almost an acute angle with a plain bearing on its surface

hostile guns, was not a movement to be undertaken without considerable risk. And yet that was the movement to which Ríza Sáhib and his French auxiliaries committed themselves. Clive used it as a great captain always will use such an opportunity. He concentrated on the long spun-out line of the enemy the fire of his guns. The effect was decisive. The enemy's infantry, their long flank exposed to the artillery fire, hesitated, halted, then, a few only excepted, fell back in confusion, and, quitting the causeway, formed up in the rice-fields fronting the plain, almost touching with their right as they did so the grove where the cavalry were still fighting. Their guns, however, still remained on the causeway, protected by a few Frenchmen and natives. This was the crisis of the battle. Clive instantly turned it to his advantage. Sending two of his guns and some fifty Europeans to the grove to support the Maráthá cavalry, now hard pressed and alarmed by the advance, as they regarded it, of the enemy's infantry, he directed a similar number of his Europeans to join the sepoys in the village, then to dash on to the causeway and charge the enemy's guns. This movement decided the day. On the first appearance of the column on the causeway the enemy hastened to fall back with their guns. Their example was followed by the infantry in the rice-fields, and theirs, again, by the cavalry attacking the grove, already dispirited by the execution made by the two English field-pieces. Clive, not satisfied with a mere repulse, used all his efforts to convert it into a rout. Whilst the Maráthá cavalry

followed the enemy, he, traversing the causeway, pursued them with relentless vigour with his infantry. At three places they made a stand, but at each in vain. Night alone put a stop to the pursuit. The result was a fit sequel to the defence of Arkát. It proved that Clive was as much to be feared in the field as behind defences. The battle was gained, too, with but little loss. Whilst fifty Frenchmen and three times that number of natives were killed or wounded, Clive lost only eight sepoys and not a single European. About fifty of his Maráthá allies were killed or disabled.

The effect of the victory was, I have said, a fit sequel to the defence of Arkát. Whilst the latter had placed the northern province of that name at the mercy of Clive, the victory of Arní virtually gave him possession. It not only caused Ríza Sáhib's army to disperse, it induced many of his soldiers to enlist in the ranks of the victors. The pursuit, continued the following day by the Maráthás, secured for those marauding warriors the military chest they had coveted; whilst the Governor of Arní, though he refused to admit the victors within the walls of his fort, agreed to hold it for Muhammad Ali, and surrendered, nominally for his use, the effects, the elephants, and the horses of his rival.

Ríza Sáhib's army having dispersed, Clive moved with celerity on Kánchipuram (Conjeveram), the strong pagoda of which had been seized during the siege of Arkát by a French garrison of thirty Europeans and three hundred sepoys, who still held it.

The place was very strong, but the enemy had no guns. Clive blockaded it till two 18-pounders should arrive from Madras; these soon caused the walls, strong as they were, to crumble; and the enemy, seeing the impossibility of a long resistance, evacuated the place in the night.

This result obtained, Clive, placing a strong garrison in Arkát, returned to Madras and thence to Fort St. David. The business in the northern province had been so effectually done that it behoved him now to see how the blow could be made to affect Trichinápalli. The defence of Arkát and the combat of A'rní, however much they might have affected the *morale* and caused to diminish the energies of the besiegers of that place, had not yet forced them to relax their hold. Something more was required, and what that "something" should be must be concerted with Mr. Saunders. Meanwhile North Arkát was, he believed, fairly secure. But, considerable as was the knowledge which Clive had acquired of the modes of warfare of the natives of India, he had not at that time fully comprehended them. He had yet to learn how it was possible that the army of an enemy might be defeated in the field, and in consequence be completely dispersed; how apparent tranquillity would at once reign over the surface, previously greatly agitated; how it might seem possible to dispense safely with the presence of the chief who had gained that victory and made that pacification; and how, notwithstanding, on the morrow of his departure, though he might depart almost unattended,

armies would rise out of the ground, and the tranquillity of the province be again terribly disturbed.

Before I relate how that experience came to Clive, I must ask the reader to return for a moment to Trichinápalli, and see how the actors before and in that place had been affected by the events which had happened in the province of North Arkát.

CHAPTER VI.

Kávéripák and Trichinápalli.

The action taken by Clive in marching upon and capturing Arkát, whilst it had surprised and vexed, had not disconcerted the great Governor of Pondichery. Recognising the genius which had inspired it, Dupleix yet saw, and saw most clearly, that if the instruments at his disposal would only execute with all possible vigour the plans he had given them, the chances were still greatly in his favour. It was by pressing the siege of Trichinápalli that he could neutralise, and more than neutralise, the efforts of Clive in North Arkát. Trichinápalli once conquered, the losses sustained in that province would be restored almost of themselves. Far, then, from allowing the action of Clive to disturb him, Dupleix did not permit it to alter a single plan. Feeling that Trichinápalli was the decisive point, he sent thither more European reinforcements and a battering train, at the same time that he urged upon his general, Law, and upon Chanda Sáhib, the pressing necessity of bending all their energies to

capture Trichinápalli, without allowing the state of North Arkát or any other consideration whatever to interfere with that most important object.

These orders display the genius of the man who issued them; his mastery of the situation, his clear perception, his wonderful prescience. Thenceforth it was a duel between the two great rivals, a duel in which the Englishman possessed this great advantage, that whilst he could himself set in action the thoughts which his brain had conceived, the Frenchman was compelled to use instruments often incapable of carrying out his plans; whilst Clive could trust to himself, Dupleix could not depend upon others.

So it happened now. It had not been in consultation with him that Chanda Sáhib had detached a large portion of his force to besiege Clive in Arkát. His letters and messages had alike borne this refrain: "Take Trichinápalli, then you can suppress this daring Englishman." But when Chanda Sáhib, urged by his fears, did weaken himself to retake Arkát, Dupleix had sent a small body of Europeans to aid the detached force, in the hope that, so strengthened, it might detain Clive sufficiently long in the northern province to allow, meanwhile, of the capture of Trichinápalli. Whilst so acting, however, he pressed alike upon Law and Chanda Sáhib the absolute necessity of doing all in their power to hasten the fall of that place. To bring about that result no risk would be too great. For him, then, if only his orders were obeyed, it was possible to hope everything: the chances were still enormously in his favour. The one

essential was a hand which could carry out his well-conceived plans. But he did not possess that hand. Law, of Lauriston, who commanded before Trichinápalli, was a brave man. His services at the defence of Pondichery, when that place was besieged by Boscawen, had been so distinguished that it was permissible to hope everything from him as a commander in the field. But he was not fit for independent command. He was one of that unhappy type of men who, greatly superior in intellect to the ordinary run of their fellows, mar the best-laid schemes by their inability to arrive at a decision. Law held the mental balance between so many courses that he generally ended by allowing matters to drift, or by carrying out a plan which he knew to be defective. His hesitations, his doubts, his mental perplexities, made him—a brave and clever man—a most incapable commander, the one of all others the most unfit to carry out the plans of Dupleix.

And yet the splendid administrative ability of that great man had given him opportunity upon opportunity to carry out those plans. Dupleix could not bestow upon him the mental force to say "I will," but he had given him everything else. Law stood before Trichinápalli at the head of a European force such as, till then, had never been seen in India. He had nearly nine hundred trained French soldiers, and two thousand disciplined sepoys. Encamped beside him, and virtually subject to his orders, was the army of Chanda Sáhib, nearly twenty thousand strong, and abounding in horsemen. He had, moreover, a park

of fifty guns, many of them of a large calibre. Within Trichinápalli were the few soldiers of Coppe and the personal adherents of Muhammad Ali. Without its walls, encamped between them and the besiegers, was the English force led by Gingen—dispirited men led by a dispirited captain. Against such a force Law had but to dare—in order to gain Trichinápalli. One attack would have annihilated Gingen, and with the defeat of Gingen the place, pressed vigorously, must fall. Law, however, though urged on all sides, by Chanda Sáhib as well as by Dupleix, did not dare. At a moment when prompt action was necessary, he, unable to decide how to attack, contented himself with maintaining a rigorous blockade.

This inactivity was fatal to him. Muhammad Ali had, in the early part of the year, by a promise to cede to the ruler of Maisúr Trichinápalli and all its dependencies as far as Cape Kumárin—a promise which he had no intention of carrying out—secured the active co-operation of the Dalwai of that kingdom, Nanjíráj Urs. That prince had now arrived in the vicinity of the place at the head of an army of five thousand cavalry and ten thousand infantry. With the exception of a small portion of its component parts, a thousand strong, commanded by Haidar Naik, subsequently known to the world as the famous Haidar Ali, this army was in no respect formidable. But every week's delay, adding to the prestige of Clive, brought other enemies of the French into the field. The Rájá of Tanjúr sent five thou-

sand men under his general Morají; the Poligár—better known as the Tondiman Rájá—sent seven hundred to co-operate with the army of the Dalwai. A little later in the same year a party, smaller in number but more formidable from the character of its leader, Yúnas Khán—a partisan serving under Murári Ráo—joined the army formed to harass the besiegers.

Still, up to the end of 1751, neither the allies of the besieged nor the besiegers had effected great things. There had been skirmishes, in which losses of life had occurred and prisoners had been taken on both sides. In one of those skirmishes Cope had been mortally wounded, and his death and the repulse of the party he commanded had rendered Gingen more than ever unwilling to engage in hazardous enterprises. Though entreated by his allies outside to attack the besiegers, that officer, feeling that though an attack might succeed, it might fail, and that its failure would entail the loss of Trichinápalli, wisely declined the risk. The French were conducting their attack with so little vigour, the fire of their cannon produced results so slight, that he felt he could wait until the authorities at Fort St. David should be able to make a diversion in his favour. Such a diversion he might expect, in the ordinary course of events, in the beginning of 1752.

Reasoning on the supposition that events would take their ordinary course, Gingen reasoned correctly. In December 1751 Clive had returned to Fort St. David; the annual provision of troops from England

might be expected soon to arrive there; and there seemed every expectation that early in 1752 Clive would set out at the head of a force to measure his strength with the French besiegers of Trichinápalli. But in war the unforeseen often happens. Dupleix had watched with the keenest anxiety alike the movements of Clive and the inaction of Law before Trichinápalli. He had received with incredulity, with despair, even with agony, the excuses furnished by the latter for his unenterprising conduct—these excuses being always accompanied by the assurance that in a very few weeks the want of supplies for the garrison must force a surrender. It can well be imagined how that despair and that agony increased when the month of December verged towards its close, and Dupleix heard that Clive had returned to Fort St. David and was making preparations for an expedition which must upset all the calculations of Law and ruin all his plans. But in this crisis the Frenchman showed himself to be the great man he really was. He had one card left, but it was a trump card. He played it. Ríza Sáhib, after his defeat at A'rní, had fled to Pondichery. His name had still influence in North Arkát. That province having been evacuated by Clive, would Ríza Sáhib, with a force newly equipped, endeavour to recover all that had been lost? To such a question made to a man still smarting under all the insult of defeat, there could be but one answer. Whilst, then, Clive, at Fort St. David, was making preparations for a Trichinápalli campaign, Ríza Sáhib, at Pondichery,

was plotting an insurrection in the province Clive had but just quitted. The necessity of suppressing this at once would, argued Dupleix, give one more chance to Law, and this chance he would use all his endeavours to compel him to turn to the best advantage.

The insurrection broke out, opportunely, in January 1752. Well planned, it went very near to achieving a decisive success. Ríza Sáhib, with some four thousand native troops, supported by four hundred French auxiliaries, marched on Punamallí, took it, then, after ravaging the country near Madras, seized on the fortified pagoda of Kánchipuram (Conjeveram). From this advantageous point he threatened alike Arkát and Madras. Dupleix was anxious that he should crown his work by making a dash at the latter. Had the French troops possessed a Clive as their leader, this bold stroke would have been attempted, and would have succeeded. But the allied force was a body without a head. It wanted the impulse of a firm direction. It did everything except attack Madras. It burned down the houses ouside the fort, it levied contributions within the Company's territories, it carried terror to the very coast; but it did not strike the one blow which might have changed the fortunes of the campaign.

Still it effected much. It so far answered the purpose of Dupleix that it procured time for Law, it forced Clive to divert his thoughts and intentions from Trichinápalli to the province of North Arkát.

Clive, in fact, was at Fort St. David making

preparations for a decisive campaign against the French besiegers of Trichinápalli, to be undertaken as soon as the annual supply of troops should arrive from England. Ríza Sáhib's burst into the province of Arkát, took him entirely by surprise. For a moment it seemed to disconcert him. He had not an available man at Fort St. David. An enterprising enemy could in a few weeks more than destroy his work of the previous autumn. But the feeling of depression, if it existed at all, was but momentary. Clive felt, as all great men on trying occasions always do feel, that, small as were his resources, he was there to give them a force and a vitality more than sufficient to neutralise the numerical superiority of his enemy. He had eighty men in Madras; a hundred, sent for from Bengal, might arrive at any moment; and he had two hundred in Arkát. A little time, a little want of energy on the part of the enemy, and the game was still his own.

We have seen how the enemy played that game for him. Had they attacked and taken Madras, had they even recovered Arkát, it would have required much precious time even for Clive to redeem the position. But when he saw them do everything but strike, he felt he had them. He had given them nearly a whole month, and they had wasted it!

Clive reached Madras early in February, and pending the arrival of the garrison of Arkát, which he had summoned to his aid, at once began to levy native troops. A fortnight later, the 20th, the hundred men expected from Bengal arrived. With these, the

eighty men forming the garrison of Madras, and about eight hundred sepoys he took the field (22nd February), and effected a junction the same day with the Arkát garrison. This junction raised his force to a strength of three hundred and eighty Europeans, thirteen hundred sepoys, and six field-pieces. At the head of these he marched in the direction of Vendalúr, where, he had learned, the enemy had established a fortified camp.

The enemy were somewhat stronger in numbers. They had four hundred Europeans, two thousand sepoys, two thousand five hundred horsemen, and twelve field-pieces. But the knowledge that Clive was in the field more than neutralised the effect of their superiority. Some days before his arrival they had, indeed, taken up a position at Vendalúr, some twenty-five miles from Madras, and having strongly fortified it, had begun to ravage the country in the vicinity of the latter. Well served by spies, they heard on the 21st that Clive was about to march against them. They did not stay to meet him, but, with a pre-arranged plan to re-unite at Kánchipuram, they dispersed, to delude their foe, in different directions.

Clive had hoped to surprise the enemy at Vendalúr. Before he had marched half way, however, he learned that they had quitted that place, in what direction he could not learn. He, therefore, continued his march, and reaching Vendalúr, sent to search for the information which he could not obtain on the spot. After a few hours' halt there he learned that the enemy had rallied their forces at Kánchipuram, and had started

thence in a westerly direction. Strongly suspecting that their object was Arkát, he marched with all speed on Kánchipuram.

Arriving there he could gain no certain tidings. He proceeded, however, to summon the fortified pagoda. This place which, well garrisoned, might have caused him considerable trouble, had been left under the guard of three hundred sepoys. These mercenary soldiers cared little whether Chanda Sáhib or Muhammad Ali, still less whether the English or the French, gained the upper hand, and they surrendered at the first summons. Still he could gain no certain information regarding the enemy. They were well served, for every new report contradicted its predecessor.

At last, as the shades of evening began to fall, he received information upon which he could rely. The enemy were at Arkát. Clive could not follow immediately. His men had marched forty-five miles and required rest. A few hours later, however, he started on the Arkát road. On his way he received intelligence that the enemy had attempted that fortress, had failed, and had then quitted the place with precipitation—in what direction no one knew. This intelligence only confirmed him in his resolve to cover with all speed the twenty-seven miles which separate Kánchipuram from Arkát.

He had marched sixteen miles, and the sun was sinking low in the horizon when the town of Kávéripák came in sight. His men, not suspecting the proximity of danger, were marching in loose

order, when suddenly from the right of the road, at a distance of about two hundred and fifty yards, there opened upon them a fire from a battery of nine guns.

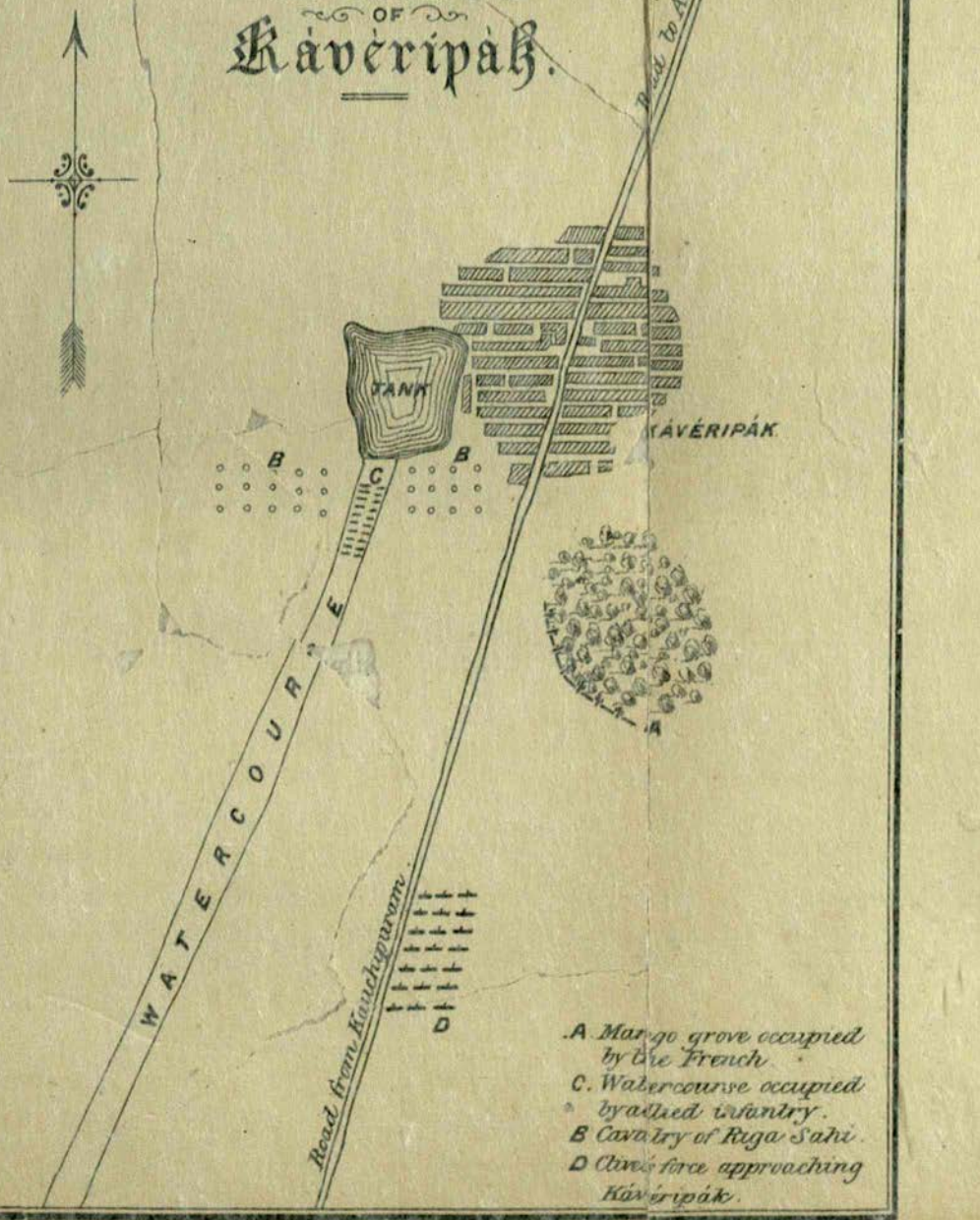
Clive, equally taken by surprise, at once halted his men, whilst he took a hasty survey of the field. He saw at a glance that the whole allied force of Ríza Sáhib and the French were before him. Their guns were posted in a thick grove of mango-trees, with a ditch and bank in front of it; from the grove, right across the road to a water-course, which ran almost parallel to the road to the left of it, he saw the enemy's cavalry even then extending, covering, as they did so, the movement of the French infantry in the direction of that water-course, with the evident design of ascending it, and by means of it taking his own men in flank. Clive took in all this, I say, at a glance, and he set to work to meet the danger on the moment. Taken by surprise, whilst the shades of evening, in a country where twilight is unknown, were deepening every moment, he could not help recognising that the enemy's position was an excellent one, and that the chances were enormously in their favour. The occasion was one, however, especially calculated to draw out the resources of a man of genius, to prove that in times of enormous difficulty and danger it is possible for the brain of one man to neutralise the advantages given by superior numbers, by a strong position, and by surprise. More than any previous act of his life, the conduct of Clive on this day stamped him as a man gifted by nature to lead his fellows. The

quality was born with him, as it has been born with every great soldier—for it is one impossible to acquire.

Clive made his brief survey in far less time than it has taken to record his action. His mind was made up on the moment. He moved the greater part of his infantry into the watercourse to the left of the road, there to be sheltered from the enemy's fire; he caused his baggage, which was close in rear of his column, to fall back half a mile under the protection of forty men and one gun; at the same time he moved to his left another forty Europeans, two hundred sepoys, and two guns to check the advance of the enemy's horsemen, who appeared to be extending to the left of and beyond the watercourse; the remainder of his guns, three in number, he drew up on the right of his new position and answered with them the fire from the grove. These dispositions were made under an artillery fire which at times was very effective, and under threats of attack from the enemy's cavalry.

Hardly had they been completed when the French infantry were observed marching up the watercourse in a column of six men in width. The English advanced to meet them in the same formation. Neither side seemed to care, however, to risk the chances of the bayonet; the French because, probably, they were aware that the events outside the watercourse were working in their favour and would decide the day; the English because they were inferior in numbers and a check would have meant total defeat.

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF Kávéripák.



A. Mango grove occupied by the French.
C. Watercourse occupied by allied infantry.
B Cavalry of Raja Sahi.
D Clive's force approaching Kávéripák.

The two rival columns, then, having an open space of eighty to a hundred yards between them, carried on for two hours, by the light of the moon, a musketry fire, more or less murderous in its effects.

Whilst this indecisive action was being pursued inside the watercourse, outside it events were taking very much the turn which the commander of the French infantry had anticipated. Granting, he had reasoned, that the contest inside were equal, he had, outside it, two great points in his favour, an enormous cavalry and superiority of guns. Clive, indeed, laboured under the disadvantage of having no cavalry at all. These two causes, then, were working against him during the two hours of which I have spoken. The enemy's cavalry were making repeated charges alike against the infantry opposed to them and on the party guarding the baggage; whilst the fire from the French guns, during the same period, had been so effective that many of the English gunners had been killed or disabled. It is true that the enemy's cavalry attacks had been till then repulsed, but with the cessation of the English artillery-fire they would gain heart, and, then, all would be over.

After two hours' fighting, then, things looked very desperate indeed. Prudence, writes the contemporary historian, Mr. Orme, counselled a retreat. Prudence may have so counselled, but in that case it was that bastard prudence, the bane of weak and worn-out natures, the disregard of which gained for Napoleon his victories in 1796, and the too great regard to which prevented Borodino from being decisive and

entailed all the horrors of the retreat from Russia. I have no doubt whatever but that, in making that assertion regarding prudence, Mr. Orme correctly interpreted the feeling of many men serving at that moment under Clive. But though the European experience of warfare against Asiatics was small in those days, Clive must have felt instinctively, as he certainly felt after long consideration on a subsequent occasion, that no third course was open to him. He must conquer, or he must die—there, where he stood. The stake was enormous. Defeat meant the loss of Madras left without a garrison, of Trichinápalli already at its last gasp, the supremacy of the French, the virtual extinction of his own countrymen in Southern India.

And yet, at 10 o'clock on that eventful evening (23rd February), Clive felt that unless he could capture the enemy's guns that great stake was lost. He resolved to make the attempt. It was impossible, he knew well, to assail the enemy's battery in front, for it was posted in a grove covered on two sides by a ditch and bank. But the enemy, in their confidence, might have left the approaches to it from the rear unguarded. This was a point to be ascertained. He sent, then, a sergeant at the head of a few sepoys on this mission. The sergeant returned with the happy intelligence that the approaches were entirely unguarded. It was then, Clive felt, not death but victory. Drawing from the watercourse the greater part of his Europeans, two hundred in number, and four hundred sepoys, he started to lead them,

the sergeant as the guide, to execute the decisive manœuvre. His departure from the watercourse produced, however, an effect upon the men stationed there which had almost proved fatal. Already greatly discouraged, they suddenly ceased firing and made every preparation for flight. Some even quitted the field. The sudden cessation of firing revealed to Clive, as if by intuition, its cause. He made over the command of the turning party to Lieutenant Keene, and returned, only just in time to reanimate his men. Keene, left to himself, leading his men with great prudence, succeeded in entering the grove from the rear. Halting at a distance of thirty yards from the guns, he poured a volley on the enemy serving and supporting them. The surprise was complete, the effect electric. Without returning a shot the enemy abandoned their guns and fled.

The victory was now gained: sixty Frenchmen surrendered as prisoners: Ríza Sáhib's army dispersed. The fruits of it were, on the face of it, nine guns, three mortars, and the field of battle: in reality, predominance in Southern India. It was the fight at Kávéripák, more even than the defence of Arkát, which secured for the English that predominance. Small comparatively as were the numbers engaged, it was, in very deed, one of the decisive battles of the world. Defeat would have entailed the entire destruction of Clive's army. On its result depended whether France or England should exercise paramount influence in the country between the Vindhayan range and Cape Kumárin. The victory at Kávéripák

decided that question. It made certain the relief of Trichinápalli. It gave the English a position which, threatened more than once during the thirty years which followed, they never lost.

In other respects the battle is worthy of study. It displays, more than any of his previous encounters, the character of Clive as a commander in the field. Granted that he was surprised. On that point I will only say that a general, unprovided with horsemen, compelled to make forced marches for a great purpose, opposed to an enemy commanding a numerous cavalry, can scarcely avoid a surprise such as that. But mark his readiness, his coolness, his calm courage, his clear head, his decision, his nerve. On that 23rd February Clive displayed every quality of a great commander. He justified the opinion recorded of him by one who knew him well, Major Stringer Lawrence:—"A man of undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and a presence of mind which never left him in the greatest danger." In fine, to quote from the same high authority, "born a soldier, without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession," Clive proved on that field his title to take rank among the great captains of the age.

The battle of Kávéripák cost the English the lives of forty Europeans and thirty sepoys. Many more were wounded. The enemy lost in killed fifty Europeans and not less than three hundred sepoys.

The day following the battle Clive took possession of the fort of Kávéripák and marched thence to

Arkát. On the 25th, when proceeding towards Vélúr, he received a despatch from Fort St. David directing him to return thither with all his troops, with the view of being employed for the relief of Trichinápalli, the English garrison of which was reported to be in the last stage of destitution. It would have been difficult, it may even be said impossible, for Clive to obey this order, had he not first disposed of Ríza Sáhib and the French. As it was, he at once changed the direction of his march, and destroying *en route* a rising town erected by Dupleix to commemorate the victory of De la Touche, reached Fort St. David on the 11th March.

A halt of three days at Fort St. David sufficed to complete the preparations for the new campaign. His force strengthened and re-equipped, Clive was about to set out. The 15th, however, witnessed the arrival from England of Major Stringer Lawrence, the very capable officer of whom I have already spoken. Upon him, as the senior military officer in the Presidency, the direction of so important an expedition naturally devolved. Two days later, then, he took the command from Clive and started for Trichinápalli.

The force, consisting of four hundred Europeans, eleven hundred sipáhís, with eight field-pieces, was escorting a large quantity of stores, and it was important that these should reach Trichinápalli with as little delay as possible. It would seem that many of the officers, fresh from England, felt extremely disinclined to submit without a murmur to the position, second in that detachment only to that of the

commander, given to a civilian such as had been Clive, and who now bore only a local commission. In his memoirs Lawrence makes pointed allusion to the "spirit of division which had unhappily crept in among his officers and caused many opportunities to be lost": to the practice of "some people to term his (Clive's) previous success fortunate and lucky." It was not so with Major Lawrence himself. His previous experience of Clive had satisfied him that his abilities were of the highest order, that he was a man to be entirely depended upon. Events were soon to silence the detractions of envy, to justify the confidence of Lawrence.

On the 26th March the force arrived within eighteen miles of Trichinápalli. It was met here by an artillery officer detached from the garrison, bearing the information that the enemy had posted a strong force at the fort of Koiládi, within cannon-shot of the road Lawrence would have to traverse the following day. Before I follow his movements it is well that I should return for a moment to the position of the besiegers and the besieged.

It seemed in very deed that the policy of Dupleix, baffled in North Arkát by the defeat of Kávéripák, was about to triumph at Trichinápalli. But for that ever-glorious achievement of Clive it must have triumphed. Trichinápalli, indeed, was at its last gasp. The English garrison was dispirited and starving; Muhammad Ali and his partisans were in despair; the Dalwai of Maisúr and Murári Ráo, the outside allies of the besieged, had become so

disgusted with the aspect of affairs within the place, that whilst the former could be held to the alliance only by assignments of territory, the latter meditated defection and had already begun to treat with Chanda Sáhib.

Such was the state of the affairs of the defenders of Trichinápalli and their allies when Lawrence and Clive set out from Fort St. David. In the camp of the besiegers a far different feeling prevailed. Law was confident that his measures, characterised as they had been by complete want of enterprise, were about to be crowned with success. His confidence was not shared by the illustrious ruler of Pondichery. Dupleix had watched with an eager and anxious eye the events of the preceding three months. The hopes, which had risen very high when the sudden reappearance in arms of Ríza Sáhib had enticed Clive and the only available English troops to the province of North Arkát, had been dashed to the ground by the defeat of Kávéripák. Dupleix had noticed with dismay, almost with despair, that Law had taken no advantage of the interval of two months and a half which the rising of Ríza Sáhib had given him, that he still pursued his plodding course of a blockade without risk. Vainly had Dupleix urged him to thrust home, to bring matters to an immediate issue. In reply Law had pleaded prudence. Certainly in the sense in which Mr. Orme used that word, when he declared that prudence counselled Clive to retreat from the field of Kávéripák, Law was prudent. But whilst the imprudence of Clive gained him a decisive

victory, the prudence of Law lost a whole army and a great cause. But, in sober truth, to apply the word prudence to such conduct is an abuse of terms. Prudence is always daring. It was daring that saved Clive; it was the want of daring that ruined Law!

When Dupleix found that the interval of two months and a half had been thrown away by his general, and that Lawrence and Clive were about to attempt an expedition which, if successful, would thwart all his plans and dissipate all his hopes, he sent to Law the most positive and stringent orders. He directed him to leave a few of his troops only to maintain the blockade before Trichinápalli, and, massing the remainder, to fall upon and attack the force led by Lawrence, encumbered, as it was, with a large convoy. Not content with these stringent orders he sent him full details of the English force, and even indicated the plan by the following of which success would be certain. He pointed out further that the approach of Lawrence's force would be the crisis of the campaign, and that his success meant absolute ruin to French interests in India.

Unhappily, there was a want of grasp about Law which rendered him incapable of taking in a comprehensive plan, still less capable of arranging its several details so as to act with one single purpose to accomplish a definite end. Let the reader mark how he carried out the very clear instructions he had received. He had been furnished with full details of the numbers and composition of the English force, told to maintain only a few men to mask

Trichinápalli, whilst, massing the remainder, he should fall upon Lawrence. These orders were clear, definite, and precise. It would be difficult not to understand them. But Law, nevertheless, did not carry them out. Bastard prudence whispered to him that the leaving of only a few men before Trichinápalli whilst he should march with the remainder against Lawrence, would expose those few men to the danger of a sortie from the garrison. Under the influence of this whisper he acted in direct contradiction to his orders. He sent two hundred and fifty Europeans and from three hundred to four hundred sipáhís to check the certain advance of the adventurous Lawrence, at the head of four hundred Europeans and eleven hundred sipáhís, whilst, inactive in camp and facing the unadventurous Gingen, he maintained a force of more than six hundred Europeans, and native levies to be counted by thousands! This detachment of two hundred and fifty Europeans and three to four hundred natives, proceeded to occupy Koiládi.

It was of the presence of that detachment at Koiládi that Major Lawrence had been informed on reaching a point eighteen miles from Trichinápalli on the 6th April. In itself the position was good, and had it been held in force by an energetic commander, Lawrence would have been greatly embarrassed. His advance would necessarily take him between two branches of the Kávéri. Of these the upper branch was defended by Koiládi on its northern bank, and was thus unassailable. Between

the northern and the southern banks was a distance, at this point, of less than half a mile. It will thus be seen that had Law massed his forces at Koiládi, he could not only have barred the road to the English, but, encumbered as they were with a large convoy, have probably crushed them. Halting, however, between two opinions, he had, as we have seen, sent thither a force which could annoy, but which could effect nothing decisive.

Lawrence had been thoroughly informed by the officer sent to meet him of the commanding position of Koiládi. Anxious regarding his convoy, he caused a large portion of it to enter the fort near which he was encamped—the fort of Trikatápalli belonging to the Rájá of Tanjúr. With the remainder, consisting principally of ammunition and stores, urgently required at Trichinápalli, he thought it might be possible to take a route which would be far from the guns of Koiládi. He sent his guides, therefore, to find such a route, and they returned during the night with a favourable report.

Early on the morning of the 7th April, Lawrence set out. But by some mischance his guides led him by the very path he had wished to avoid, and brought him before he was aware of it, within reach of the fire of Koiládi. From this false position Lawrence extricated himself with great skill. Ordering up his guns from the rear, and supporting them by a hundred Europeans under Clive, he replied by a general cannonade to the guns of the fort. Under cover of that cannonade, he moved his men and

convoy slowly, inclining to the left, and continuing the movement till he was beyond reach of the enemy's fire. He then halted till his guns should rejoin him. His loss was slight. On the guns coming up he pursued his march until he had arrived within ten miles of Trichinápalli.

Thus had Law's system of halting between two opinions produced its logical result. He had still time, however, to repair his fault. Ten miles yet lay between the enemy's relieving force and Trichinápalli. He could yet mass his outlying detachments, and attack Lawrence before Lawrence could reach that town. It was his last chance, and he was resolved to try it. No sooner had he heard that the English had passed Koiládi in safety, than he sent messengers calling in his various detachments.

Yet even then he showed no vigour. Instead of marching to meet his enemy, before he should be reinforced, he resolved to take up a position in which he might or might not be attacked. He drew up his men, then, so as to cover the line from the Kávéri to the inaccessible rock of Elmiseram, the French rock forming the centre of his position. This position barred one road, but not every road, to an advancing enemy.

Lawrence, ignorant of these movements, began his march early on the morning of the 28th March. Before the day had broken he was joined by a hundred Europeans and fifty dragoons from the garrison. These informed Lawrence that Elmiseram was occupied by the French, but that by marching on a point

to the south-west of it—the sugar-loaf rock—he would not only turn their position, but open communication with the garrison. Lawrence acted accordingly. He moved towards the sugar-loaf rock; on his way thither he was joined by two hundred Europeans and four hundred sipáhís under Captain Dalton, and by the Maráthá cavalry under Murári Ráo. At noon he halted and directed his men to prepare their food.

Again had he foiled Law. But that was not enough. It was written in the destiny of that man that he should do everything at the wrong moment. Having failed to attack Lawrence before he had been reinforced, he resolved to assail him after Lawrence had effected a junction with the garrison of Trichinápalli. Scarcely had Lawrence effected that junction when a messenger reached him with the intelligence that the French were advancing in force against him; that their artillery-fire had already put to flight the Maráthá cavalry.

It was noon. The heat of a Trichinápalli sun in April is always scorching. It was especially trying to men who, having just arrived off a long march, were about to prepare their breakfasts. But there was no help for it—the attack must be met. Lawrence at once despatched Clive to reconnoitre. Clive observed the entire force of the enemy drawn up, the whole of their infantry in the centre, supporting the guns, twenty-two in number, and flanked by large bodies of cavalry. In front almost of their centre, and nearer to them than to the English, was a large

caravansarai or native inn, flanked by stone buildings. Clive saw at a glance that these buildings were the key of the position. Held by the enemy with their twenty-two guns, the English would fight at a great disadvantage. Held by the English, on the other hand, their possession would more than neutralise the enemy's superiority in artillery fire. Yet they were within reach of the French. Surely they would not miss such a chance. But when, observing closely, Clive could discover no symptom of a movement on the part of the enemy, he galloped back and obtained permission to act. Placing himself at the head of the first division of artillery, supported by the grenadiers, he advanced with all speed and seized the caravansarai. That movement decided the day. Clive had thrust a wedge into the centre of the enemy's line. After a severe cannonade which lasted half an hour, and during which the English had all the advantage of the cover afforded by the caravansarai and its buildings, the French fell back, having lost forty Europeans and three hundred natives. The loss of the English amounted to twenty-one. Their native allies had been but little engaged. The next day Lawrence marched into Trichinápalli.

The two days' work I have recorded produced the most important consequences. It took all the heart out of the French commander. Depressed, anxious, and nervous, he thought now only of retreat. An attempt on the part of the English to surprise Chanda Sáhib, fortuitously converted into an attack on Elmiseram came to complete his perplexity. The

next day, the 12th April, after destroying the supplies destined for the siege of Trichinápalli, Law, abandoning the greater part of his baggage, crossed the Kávéri and retreated within Shríangham. For some reason which cannot be divined, he did not withdraw the small French garrison of Elmiseram.

The retreat of the French into Shríangham brought new conceptions into the brain of the conqueror of Arkát. To seize Elmiseram was an idea which would have occurred to any ordinary mind. But Clive's conceptions soared far higher, higher even than those of Lawrence. The ideas of Lawrence were confined by the contemplation of that which was immediately before him. He has left upon record that he considered Law's retreat into Shríangham a "prudent" act—that is, an act inspired by a prudent regard for French interests. Not so thought Clive. In retiring into the island of Shríangham the French had, he saw, entered an island invested by enemies on three sides, on the south, the east, and the west. What could they do if they were to be invested likewise on the northern side? A force detached from Lawrence's army would ensure that result. The more he looked at the idea the more feasible it seemed. Three conditions only were requisite to ensure success. The first, that the army south of Shríangham should be firmly commanded; the second that the leader of the expeditionary force should be a man of tried capacity; the third that the commander of the French force should be a man not given to enterprise. There were three men on the spot, Lawrence, Clive, and Law,

eminently capable of fulfilling all three conditions. Impressed with this conviction, Clive made the proposal to Lawrence.

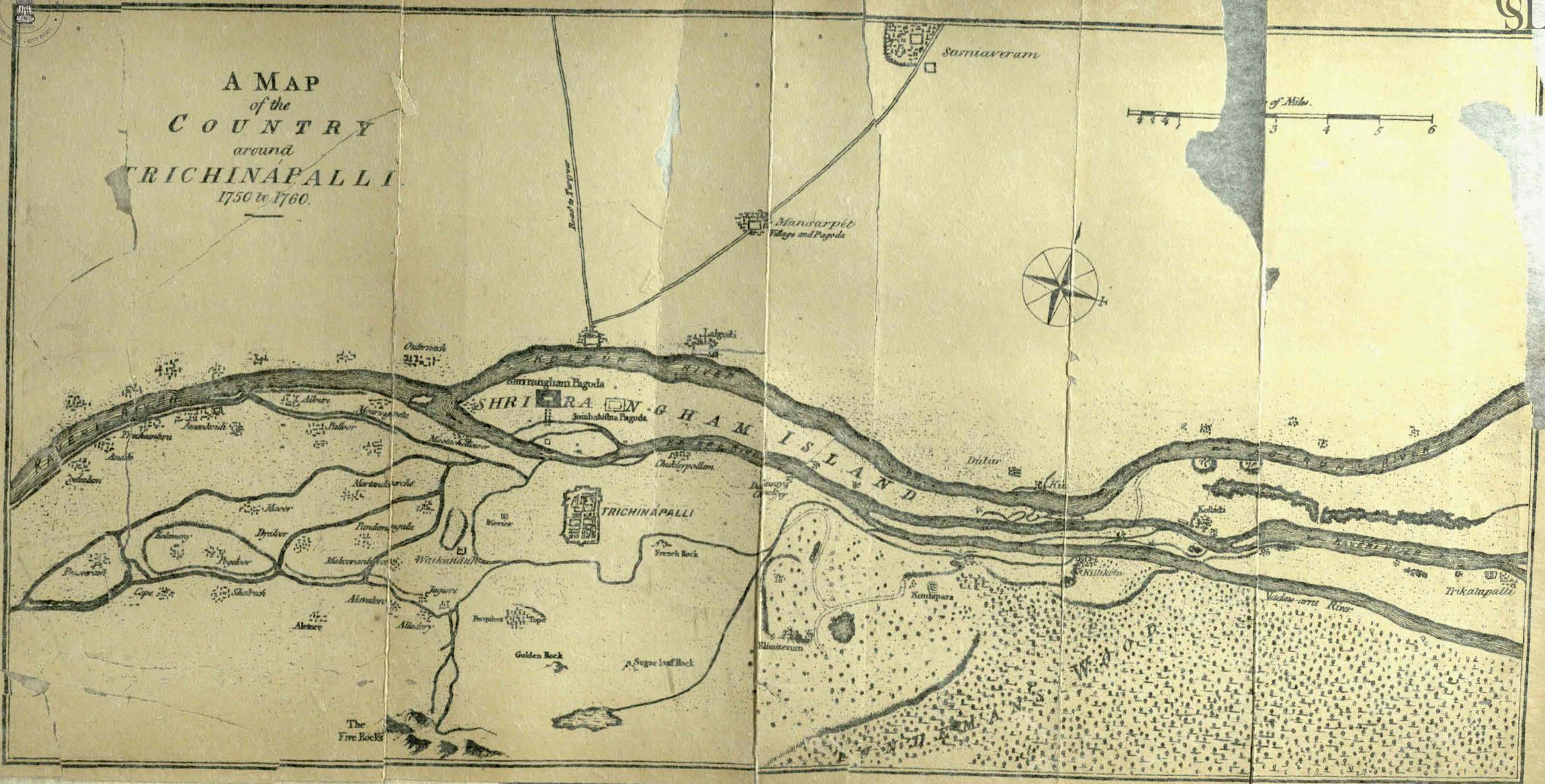
Lawrence recognised its force on the moment. Two difficulties only presented themselves to his mind. The first had reference to the second of the conditions of which I have spoken. He was about to incur a great risk—the risk of dividing his force in the presence of an enemy numerically equal to the whole, and of so separating the parts that the enemy at any moment could fall on either. It was essential, under such circumstances, that both the divided parts should be under the command of a capable general. For one of the two parts he could provide in his own person. But for the other? It is true Clive was serving under his orders, but he was serving as the junior of his rank, and of that rank there were many, some of whom possessed claims which it was not easy to pass over. That was the first difficulty. The second referred to the possibility of inducing the native allies of Muhammad Ali to co-operate in the movement.

It is a striking testimony to the impression which the character and achievements of Clive had produced on men who, whilst they are, as a rule, peculiarly susceptible to individual influence, never take for granted the superiority of others, that the second difficulty removed the first. When Lawrence laid his plan before Muhammad Ali and his allies, the Dalwai of Maisúr and Murári Ráo, those chieftains made one stipulation, and one only, as essential to their consent to it. That stipulation was that the detached

party should be commanded by the officer who had defended Arkát, who had subsequently beaten the baffled besiegers at A'rní, and who had practically decided the campaign by his victory at Kávéripák. They insisted upon having Clive and no other.

Every difficulty having been thus removed, Clive was detached on the night of the 6th April with a force composed of four hundred Europeans and seven hundred trained sipáhís, three thousand Maráthá cavalry commanded by Yúnas Khán, and a thousand Tanjúr cavalry, with eight pieces of artillery, two of which were battering cannon, to carry out his designs. Descending the Kávéri, he crossed the island at a point three miles to the east of Law's encamping ground, to a village on the north bank of the Kolrún, called Samiaveram, about nine miles due north of the island of Shrírangham, and commanding the approaches to the northern bank from the north and the east. He at once strengthened the defences of this village so as to make it secure against a *coup-de-main*.

His preparations had not been made at all too soon. Dupleix, utterly disgusted with Law, had resolved to supersede him. Of the only two men to whom he could entrust the command, de Bussy and d'Auteuil, the former held an important post at the court of the Súbahdár of the Dakhan, and could not be recalled. D'Auteuil, then, gouty as he was, was the only resource. That d'Auteuil, who had more than once failed him before, was a man fit to carry out his daring schemes, Dupleix certainly did not believe. But Law had failed so miserably, had shown himself so utterly


A MAP
of the
COUNTRY
around
TRICHINAPALLI
1750 to 1760.
Samiaveram
of Miles.
3
4
5
6
Road to Tanjore
Mansarpét
Village and Pagoda
Lalgudi
Outerreach
KOLRUN RIVER
Shrirangham Pagoda
SHRI RA N·GHAM ISLAND
Jombakistna Pagoda
Alburé
Pulloor
Mootachellinoor
Amankoidi
Chukleypollam
Dular
TRICHINAPALLI
Maoor
Dyaloor
Pandamangala
Pogeloor
Waikanauh
Warrior
French Rock
Cope
Shabrech
Alevalore
Jaguré
Aletore
Alladory
Tope
Golden Rock
Sugar loaf Rock
Rhimiserum
Kombipara
Kutikota
Koladi
Trikatapalli
The
Fire Rocks

incompetent, that any change must be for the better. Dupleix, ther had, on the 10th April, despatched d'Auteuil at the head of a hundred and twenty Europeans and five hundred sipáhís, with four pieces, and a large convoy of provisions and stores, to take the command at Shríraugham, and restore the aspect of affairs.

D'Auteuil, following the route he had taken the previous year—the route through Valkonda—reached Utatúr on the 14th April, just one week after Clive had occupied Samiaveram. Here he learned the exact state of affairs; how Law was cooped up in Shríraugham, and how at Samiaveram there lay a superior for capable of preventing all communication with that island.

The intelligence did not dishearten d'Auteuil. The distance between Utatúr and Samiaveram is fifteen miles, and Samiaveram lay on his direct road. But as yet Clive had received no intelligence of his approach. It might be possible for him to make an oblique march to the Kolrún, which should avoid Samiaveram. He might be able at the same time to persuade Law to make a diversion in his favour. At all events he would attempt it. As a preliminary he at once despatched messengers to Law to warn him of his intended action.

Meanwhile, Clive had not been idle. The reader will recollect that when, in 1751, Captain Gingen's force retired before the French into Shríraugham, it had taken post, before crossing the Kolrún, at the fortified pagoda of Paichandah, on the north bank of

the Kolrún, and forming the principal gateway into the island. The importance to a force cooped up in Shríangham of holding such a place cannot be overestimated. Were that gate lost, all would be lost.

Second only in importance to Paichandah was the pagoda of Mansúrpét, about midway on the high road between it and Samiaveram. This place was important, because it commanded a view of the country for miles on every side. It was a post of supreme consequence to Law. In the hands of an enemy it would be an eye to see and a hand to strike.

A third place, scarcely ranking even after Mansúrpét, was Lálgudi, a mud fort on the northern bank of the Kolrún, about two miles to the east of Paichandah, and constituting, as it were, an alternative gate into and out of the island. The fact of it not being connected with the high road rendered it of somewhat less value than the other. Still it was a place which Law was bound to hold at all hazards.

Conscious of the value of these places, Law had occupied them—but with small detachments only. Clive noting this, and rating them at their true importance, stormed Mansúrpét the second day after he had crossed the river: the day following he attacked and stormed Lálgudi.

By these operations Clive had rendered extremely difficult the task of d'Auteuil, acting, be it remembered, with a force far inferior to his own. But d'Auteuil, trusting that Law would respond to the messages he had sent him, marched from Utatúr on the afternoon of the 14th, and took, not the road which leads to

Samiaveram, but another, bearing westward, in the direction of the head of the island. It happened, however, that Clive had captured one of his messengers, and, rendered thus aware of his plans, had set out at the same time to meet him.

D'Auteuil, well served by his intelligence department, had not marched many miles before he received warning of Clive's movement. It being no part of his aim to fight a pitched battle in the open, he promptly retraced his steps to Utatúr. Clive, learning this, and not wishing to be drawn into a siege when a more numerous enemy lay within a few miles of him, returned to Samiaveram.

Meanwhile another opportunity had been offered to Law. From one of the messagers sent by d'Auteuil he had heard of the latter's intended march; from his scouts he received information of Clive's movements. Here was a chance. He still held Paichandah. To debouch by that place with his force and with Chanda Sáhib's army; to fall upon the ill-protected Samiaveram, or to take Clive's army in the rear—this was a conception the prompt execution of which might yet atone for many faults and redeem the fortunes of the campaign!

Again, some glimmering of the course he ought to adopt flickered through the brain of Law. Again, he could not brace himself to efficient execution. Instead of using the only means which presented a chance of success—of moving out with his whole force—he detached eighty Europeans, of whom forty were deserters from the English ranks, and seven

hundred sipáhís, to carry out a scheme upon the successful execution of which depended, not only the triumph of his cause, but the very safety of his army!

It was midnight (14th April). Only one hour had elapsed since Clive had returned to Samiaveram. His English soldiers there occupied two pagodas, a greater and a lesser, about a quarter of a mile distant the one from the other; around these lay the sipáhís, and beyond again the Maráthás. Clive himself and his officers used the caravansarai behind the lesser pagoda. The whole camp, the sentinels alone excepted, slept as men sleep after a fatiguing march made under the April sun of Southern India. At that hour, and under such circumstances within Samiaveram, Law's detachment stealthily approached the place. The name of the commander is not given in any of the French memoirs, but, whatever it may have been, he who bore it was certainly a man of daring and determination. He had been told that he would find Samiaveram poorly guarded, as Clive had marched out of it to meet d'Auteuil. But as he neared the place a spy brought him the information that Clive and his army had returned. Had the commander been other than a daring and determined man this information would have led him to retrace his steps. It only inspired his bold spirit with the hope of accomplishing results greater than those which, till then, had lain before him. He pressed on, then, still stealthily and resolutely, till he came within the challenge of the native sentinels. Here his deserters stood him in good stead. The officer

who commanded them, an Irishman, stepped forward and said that he had been sent by Major Lawrence to support Clive. As the other English-speaking soldiers pressed up at the same moment, the sentinel and his native officer were completely taken in, and the latter even sent one of his men to conduct the party to the English quarter of the camp. They marched through lines of sleeping Maráthás and sleeping sipáhís till they reached the lesser pagoda. Here they were again challenged. Their reply was a volley into the pagoda, another into the caravansarai containing Clive and his officers, followed by their entrance into the pagoda and then bayoneting every man whom they met.

It was this volley which awoke Clive from his midnight sleep. The situation was extremely critical. For aught he knew at the moment he might have the whole army of Law reinforced by that of d'Auteuil upon him. But in that emergency his brain was as clear and his judgment as cool as it was when he had marched that morning towards Utatúr. He saw at a glance that the lesser pagoda and the caravansarai were the objects of attack, and that the greater pagoda had been neglected. He ran at once to that pagoda, got the men there, who had already taken the alarm, under arms as quickly as possible, and returned with two hundred of them to the caravansarai. On arriving there he found a large body of sipáhís drawn up with their backs to the caravansarai, and firing at random in the direction apparently of the enemy's camp. Believing them to be his own men, he drew

up his European troops within twenty yards of their rear, and going then amongst the sipáhís, upbraided some for their panic, and, striking others, ordered them to cease fire. But the sipáhís were not his own men, they were the French sipáhís who had attacked his camp; and one of the native officers recognising Clive to be an Englishman, attacked and wounded him with his sword. Clive, still under the delusion that they were his own men, replied to the attack, and, exasperated at what he conceived to be the man's insolence, drove him before him to the gate of the lesser pagoda. Here, to his complete surprise, he was accosted by six Frenchmen. In a moment he realised his position; in the same moment he had taken his resolution. In reply to the Frenchmen, who had summoned him to surrender, he stated with the utmost composure, that, far from surrendering, he had come to offer them terms; that if they would look around they would see that their case was hopeless, that they were surrounded by his whole army, and that his men were determined to give no quarter if resistance were made. The firmness with which these words were uttered, and the calm demeanour of the speaker, made so great an impression, that whilst three of the Frenchmen ran within the pagoda to convey the intelligence to the commander, the other three surrendered their arms on the spot. Clive then hastened to the caravansarai to act with his Europeans against the sipáhís whom he now knew to be enemies; but these latter, scenting the danger, had marched away, and, passing unmolested through the camp by

favour of the darkness and general turmoil, had gained the road to Paichandah.

Meanwhile, confusion and uncertainty still reigned rampant within the camp. On the one side, Clive would not believe that such a daring attempt would have been made unless it had been supported by the whole French allied force; on the other, the French who had taken the lesser pagoda were extremely disquieted by the message from Clive carried to them by their three comrades. The confusion which prevailed on both sides was illustrated by a singular incident. The French commander, who had massed his Europeans within the lesser pagoda, wishing to ascertain the exact state of affairs outside it, detached eight of his most intelligent men on this errand. This small party fell in with a body of English troops, and were taken prisoners. The English commander made them over to a sergeant's party with directions that they should be lodged in the lesser pagoda, of the capture of which he had not heard. The sergeant took the eight men and the three who had surrendered to Clive, and made them over to their own countrymen! But, stranger still, these latter had so lost their heads, that they made no attempt to detain the sergeant and his party!

Clive had ascertained, pretty well, by this time, that the only place held by the enemy was the lesser pagoda. He could not, however, divest his mind of the idea that that which ought to have happened had happened, and that the whole force of the enemy was in the vicinity waiting for the coming dawn to storm

the place. Were this assumption to prove correct he would be terribly incommoded by having an enemy at the same time in his very midst. He determined, then, to storm the lesser pagoda without delay. It was a difficult task, as the pagoda was very strong and the entrance to it so small that it admitted only two men abreast. He led his men, however, to attack it, but the defence was so desperate that, after losing one officer and fifteen men, he drew off the remainder, and resolved to suspend his attack till daybreak.

Meanwhile, the French commander, knowing he was unsupported, and feeling he was in a trap from which there was no escape, except by sheer daring, had resolved not to wait for a renewal of the onslaught. As soon as the day broke, then, he sallied forth at the head of his men. But the English, who were on the watch, received him with a volley so well directed that twelve of his men were killed on the spot; the rest ran back into the pagoda. Clive, wishing now to terminate the contest, advanced to the gateway and entered the porch to offer terms. Faint from the loss of blood caused by the wounds he had received, he stood with his back to the wall of the porch, leaning, as he stooped forward, on the shoulders of two sergeants who accompanied him. To meet his request for a parley, there presented himself the commander of the deserters, the Irishman of whom I have already spoken. This man, conscious probably of the fate in store for him as a deserter, replied to the advances of Clive by abusive language, then, suddenly

levelling his musket discharged it at him point blank. The ball missed Clive, but it traversed the bodies of the two sergeants and wounded them mortally. The incident was, however, decisive. The senior French officer, infuriated at the conduct of his Irish comrade, stepped forward at once to disavow the act, and stating, that whilst up to that time he had been prepared to defend the post to the last extremity on account of the deserters alone, yet that the conduct of their leader absolved him from that obligation, offered to surrender with his whole force. The offer was accepted. With the surrender terminated the affair within Samiaveram.

Without it one other event remains to be recorded. As soon as it was daylight Clive had sent orders to Yúnas Khán to pursue the French sipáhís who had passed out of camp in the darkness. These orders were so promptly and so effectually carried out, that, it is said, not a single sipáhí returned to the banks of the Kolrún. The Maráthás declared that they killed every one of them, and though this was probably an exaggeration, the slaughter must have been very great.

The English themselves suffered very great losses —how great it is impossible to say—for on this occasion, and on this occasion only, there is no contemporary record of casualties. Considering that the occupants of the lesser pagoda, who exceeded a hundred in number, were surprised, and that many of them were bayoneted before they could recover from their surprise; considering, moreover, the number of

those who suffered in the assault, it may be concluded that Clive lost very nearly one-fourth of his effective Europeans.

With respect to the blame which rests upon his shoulders for the surprise, I may remark, that whilst, of contemporary writers, Major Lawrence and Mr. Orme record the incident without imputing negligence to Clive, Caffarelli speaks of it as a shameful surprise, that is, a surprise shameful to Clive. I think Caffarelli is wrong. Clive took every possible precaution; he had returned only an hour before the surprise was attempted; he had seen nothing to excite any suspicion that an enemy was in the neighbourhood; he had taken care that the sentries were duly posted. Those sentries were deceived by a stratagem, and on them, and not on Clive, must be the shame, if there were any, of the surprise. As to Clive's conduct after he had realised the actual position, I can only repeat here what I have recorded elsewhere, that never did he vindicate more completely his title to be a leader of men than on that eventful night. He, and he alone, caused the surprise to recoil on the heads of those who had attempted it.

In one respect Fortune favoured him. He had three narrow escapes of his life. The second and third I have already recorded. The first occurred in this wise. When the French fired their first volley Clive was sleeping in the caravansarai, with a box at his feet and his servant close to him. The volley shattered the box and killed the servant!

For some days after this attempt but little occurred on the north bank of the Kolrún. D'Auteuil remained quiet at Utatúr waiting for an opportunity; Law remained quiet at Shríangham waiting for d'Auteuil. Lawrence determined at last to disturb this tranquillity. Unwilling to expose Samiaveram to the chances of a second surprise whilst Clive should be absent on such a service, he directed him to remain watching the enemy in the island whilst he himself should despatch a force to deal with the French at Utatúr.

Having ensured perfect security on his own side by capturing Koiládi, the last place there which held out for the French, Lawrence sent Dalton with a hundred and fifty Europeans, four hundred sipáhís, five hundred Maráthás, and four field-pieces, to beat up d'Auteuil (9th May). Dalton profited by the dismay which recent events had, he well knew, caused amongst the French. Marching on Utatúr, he displayed his troops in such a manner as to induce d'Auteuil to believe that Clive's whole force was marching against him. Impressed with this idea, d'Auteuil quitted Utatúr in the night, and, abandoning all his stores, made a hasty and disorganising retreat upon Valkonda. Dalton then marched to Samiaveram and placed his troops at the disposal of Clive. To avoid disputes regarding rank, he offered to serve as a volunteer under his orders.

Meanwhile, Law had acted as Lawrence had believed it possible he might act should Clive march against d'Auteuil. Observing from the watchtowers of Shríangham the march of Dalton towards Utatúr, and imagining that it was Clive and his whole force,

he had promptly done that then, which, if vigorously executed on the previous occasion, would have ruined the English—he had crossed the Kolrún with his whole force. He was soon undeceived. Clive was not the man to be twice taken in by the same guile. From the heights of the pagoda of Mansúrpét his scouts had watched all the movements of the enemy. Resolving, if possible, to finish the campaign at a blow, Clive marched to meet him, and Law had scarcely entered Paichandah when he learned that the English were within a mile of him.

This was the last chance which Fortune, so often disdained, gave to Law. He rejected that chance also. Well had it been for him had no Paichandah been at hand to cover his return to the island. Well had it been for him if he had found himself cut off from the river when he received intimation of the presence of the English. At least, then, he would have fallen fighting. Nay, if numbers count for anything, he had a great chance of victory. But he was cowed, cowed by the success of the enemy who had beaten him without fighting. Waiting, then, for the shades of evening to fall, he recrossed the river, only a few days later to surrender—again without fighting.

The end was now approaching. On the 15th of May Clive captured Paichandah. Having thus completely shut up Law in the island, and made his surrender a matter of certainty, he marched to Valkonda to give the finishing stroke to d'Auteuil. He conceived it to be just possible that an energetic commander in d'Auteuil's position might yet effect

a diversion in Law's favour, more especially as he had received information that d'Auteuil had marched from Valkonda, and in the direction of the Kolrún.

Believing that d'Auteuil would necessarily pass Utatúr, Clive marched on that place, arrived there just before nightfall, and waited for his enemy. The enemy did not appear. On the very rumour that Clive had left the banks of the Kolrún in search of him, d'Auteuil had made a hasty retreat to Valkonda. Clive, who had previously gained over the commandant of that place, followed d'Auteuil thither, and forced him, placed, as it were, between two fires, to surrender with his whole force (29th May).

Three days later Law followed his example. The surrender of d'Auteuil had deprived him of his last hope. Despair did not give him the daring which would have impelled a man of a nobler stamp to cut his way out. With the seven or eight hundred Europeans, the two thousand sipáhís, and the three thousand or four thousand native levies who still remained true to Chanda Sáhib, he might easily have taken advantage of a long dark night to cross the Kávéri and fall upon Lawrence's troops, greatly inferior to his own. Having overpowered them, he could have cut his way to Kárikál. In vain did Chanda Sáhib press this course upon him; decisive action was not for a man like Law. Waiting for a chance which never came, and an accident which never presented itself, he hesitated, and was lost.

He was hesitating still, yet not daring to act, when the arrival in the English camp of a battering train

decided him. He then agreed to surrender. He tried hard to save the life of the prince of whom he was only the auxiliary, and that life was promised him. The promise was not kept. Chanda Sáhib was stabbed to the heart a few hours after he had given himself up. Before this atrocious deed had been perpetrated thirty-five French officers, seven hundred and eighty-five French soldiers bearing arms, besides sixty sick and wounded, and two thousand French sipáhís had surrendered themselves to the English commander (1st June). The island was then taken possession of. The contest for the Núwábship of the Karnátak had been decided in favour of the candidate supported by the English. In bringing about that result "it is difficult to determine," to quote the words of Mr. Orme, "whether the English conducted themselves with more ability and spirit, or the French with more irresolution and ignorance, after Major Lawrence and Captain Clive arrived at Trichinápalli."

With the disappearance of his rival began the real difficulties of Muhammad Ali and his native allies, difficulties which in a very few weeks greatly neutralised the effect of the French surrender, and caused, eventually, the renewal of the struggle. The native chiefs, in a word, disputed over the spoil. So bitter was the strife that although the French had surrendered on the 1st June, it was not until the 28th of the same month that Muhammad Ali was able to quit Trichinápalli, and even then he was forced to beg the English to leave there two hundred of their

own men and fifteen hundred of their trained sipáhís to protect the fortress against his own allies of Maisúr and Tanjúr and Gutti, with whom he had failed to keep faith.

The remainder of the English force accompanied Muhammad Ali in his march from Trichinápalli towards Fort St. David. Tiruvádi, a small fort thirteen miles from that place, was, of all the places on their route, alone occupied by a French garrison. The sipáhís who composed it surrendered at the first summons. Lawrence then quitted the force for Fort St. David, to seek there the repose which the fatigues and exposure of the campaign had rendered necessary. Clive, incited by similar reasons, proceeded at the same time to Madras, which, in consequence of orders from England, had again become the seat of the English administration in southern India.

Clive had not been many days at the Presidency before, in spite of his failing health, his services were again called in requisition. Two strongholds, in dangerous vicinity to Madras, Kovilam (Covelong) and Chengalpatt, were occupied by French garrisons. It seemed to Mr. Saunders very desirable that these should be reduced before the reinforcements from Pondichery, then daily expected, should arrive. It happened opportunely that Madras had just welcomed two hundred recruits from England; Mr. Saunders had, likewise, recently enlisted five hundred sipáhís. At the head of these raw and inexperienced troops, who had scarcely seen even a parade-ground, Clive was despatched (10th September) to reduce the two

strongholds I have mentioned. He took with him two 24-pounders.

Kovilam lies on the sea-coast, twenty-one miles south of Madras. It was then a walled fort, flanked by round towers, mounting thirty guns, but without a ditch. It was garrisoned by fifty French soldiers and three hundred sipáhís. Clive arrived within two miles of it the evening of the day following that of his departure from Madras. The next morning the garrison, in a sally, killed one of his officers, and so alarmed the raw troops the officer was leading, that they fled in confusion. "They would, indeed," says Mr. Orme, "have fled as far as Madras, but that Clive, meeting them, forced them, sword in hand, and not without violence, to return."

The siege, which Clive at once laid to the place, was a good schooling for his soldiers. They caused him, however, an infinity of trouble, for they took fright on every alarm. "An unlucky shot," says Mr. Orme, "which struck the rock, and with the splinters it made killed and wounded fourteen men, frightened the whole so much, that it was some time before they would venture to expose themselves again." Be it remembered that these men were simply recruits, the boy-soldiers of the present day!

With such material at his disposal, fighting against stone walls manned by trained soldiers, many a commander would have despaired. But not only did Clive not despair, but, when he received information that a considerable force of the enemy was marching from Chengalpatt to force him to raise the

siege, he marched with half his force to offer them battle! His daring received its just reward. The relieving force retired with precipitation. The next day, too, he was relieved from all anxiety regarding Kovilam. Probably his raw material would never have taken the place. But the attitude assumed by Clive had cowed the French commander. It is tolerably certain that this man was a very poor specimen of the profession, caring more for his own comfort than the honour and glory of his country, for on the fourth day of the siege he offered to capitulate, "on condition that he might carry away his own effects." Those effects, Clive discovered the next day, consisted of turkeys and snuff!

The place had surrendered only just in time, for the next morning the enemy from Chengalpatt arriving on the spot, ignorant of the surrender, almost effected a surprise of the English camp. As it was, thanks to the care of the French commandant for his effects, they were completely surprised themselves, and compelled to flee, after suffering very severe losses, back to Chengalpatt.

Clive followed them up very closely, and at once laid siege to the fort, which had the reputation of being the strongest in that part of the country. It was very strong, was well garrisoned, and well provisioned. Well defended, it might have held out for an indefinite time. But its commandant, likewise, was deficient in the true qualities of a soldier. After a siege of four days a breach had been made in the outer and inner wall. The place was still not only

defensible, but virtually proof against assault. But, in spite of this, again did the daring of Clive assert itself over the weaker nature of his opponent. His threatening attitude induced the latter to offer to surrender on condition of being allowed to retire with his garrison to Pondichery. Clive agreed, and took possession of the place the next day (31st October).

These expeditions, causing as they did great exposure, had not improved the health of Clive. From Chengalpatt, then, he returned to Madras, again to rest. Very shortly after his arrival there he married Miss Maskelyne, the sister of one of his earliest friends. Shortly after his marriage, finding his health still continued to deteriorate, he took the resolution of revisiting Europe. Having been granted leave for this purpose, he sailed from Madras, with his bride, in February 1753.

What a different position was his to that which he had occupied nine short years before! The unknown and friendless writer had, in the interval, laid the foundations of an empire! He could not yet claim this honour; he could only assert that he had thwarted the aspirations of his country's enemies, and prevented French domination in Southern India. But he had, in reality, accomplished a great deal more than that. By his achievements at Arkát, at Kávéripák, and before Trichinápalli, he had convinced the princes and people of India not only that the English could fight, but that they could fight better than the race which till then had chained their admiration, better than the French. As soon as this conviction had dawned upon

them, the longing for the support of the stronger, which is a characteristic of the races of India, was transferred to the countrymen of Clive. The idea that they must prevail became from that time, by a process gradual and yet certain, an article of faith in Southern India. Whenever, in the years that followed, that article of faith came to be questioned—and it was questioned occasionally—the action of the successors of Clive caused it to be re-asserted, to gain deeper and more stable foundation. But to Clive is due the planting of the seed. His action during the second moiety of those nine years brought, for the first time, English supremacy in Southern India within the range of practical politics. Such a result could, at the close of 1752, be talked of as, at least, something more than possible. All that had been accomplished—the conquest of the central Karnátak, the defeat of Chanda Sáhib, the collapse of the French, had been virtually, even actually, accomplished by the English; and in that work Clive had been the main author—his had been the brain to conceive, his the firm heart to dare—his the steady hand to execute. He had accomplished much in those nine years. He was to do more in the seven that were to follow!

CHAPTER VII.

England; Gheriah; Madras.

The reputation of Clive had preceded him to his native land. The wild scapegrace of eighteen returned a hero at twenty-seven. No disparagement had been too bitter for him then, no compliment was too marked for him now. The Court of Directors had, indeed, been so justly terrified by the early successes of Dupleix, by the "all but" triumph of his ambitious designs, that they were at the moment disposed to express all their gratitude, and to bestow all their favours on the man whose genius had converted defeat into victory, despondency into triumph. Clive had scarcely set foot in England before the incense, so grateful to a man when offered by his country to mark that country's sense of the services he had endeavoured to render her, impregnated the very air he breathed. The Court of Directors entertained him at a semi-royal public dinner. They presented him with a diamond-hilted sword of the value of five hundred guineas. They solicited his advice with a deference which is

only manifested by city men towards one whose merits have already forced themselves to the loftiest place in public approval.

The adulation offered was such as might have turned the head of many a man. Clive conducted himself, however, in a manner which even increased the feeling of the public in his favour. Neither in his private nor his public utterances did he ever forget the obligations under which he felt himself to the men who had given him the opportunities without which he would still have languished an obscure writer in Madras—Major Lawrence and Governor Saunders. So far, indeed, did he carry his sense of the obligations he owed to the former, that when the Court voted him the sword of which I have spoken, to mark their sense of his military services in the Karnátak, Clive refused to accept it unless a similar compliment were paid to his old friend and commander.

Fortunes in those times were acquired in India much more easily than they are in the present day, and it surprised no one to learn that Clive had returned to England with a very handsome income. It is not necessary to scan too closely the means by which that fortune had been acquired. It certainly was not derived from savings from his scanty pay, nor wholly from prize-money, properly so called. The fact that in those days it was considered perfectly legitimate to accept presents from native princes, as a mark of their sense of services rendered, is sufficient to account for the accumulations he had made. Clive had rendered great services to Muhammad Ali

and to others, and it was in those days considered as most natural that the native prince should show his gratitude in the only manner in which he could display it. Nor can the most censorious blame Clive for accepting a present, considered in those days a legitimate offering; the refusal of which would have been regarded as an insult.

Having this fortune, and having no occupation, it is not to be wondered at that a man possessing the active brain of Clive should be anxious to serve his country in Parliament. He had arrived in England at a time when the Whig party was supreme. But that party was a house divided against itself, one section of it being led by the Duke of Newcastle, the other by Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland. Clive attached himself to the latter, and, after a desperate contest, was returned, by Lord Sandwich's interest, for the borough of St. Michael. The return was disputed. Heard before a Committee of the whole House, the case was decided in Clive's favour; but when the resolution was reported to the House itself, the Duke of Newcastle had sufficient influence to have it reversed by a narrow majority, and Clive was unseated.

Meanwhile he had been living at a rate which even his fair income did not warrant. He had, moreover, lessened that income by redeeming the debt with which his father's estate had been encumbered, and by placing his father and mother in a position beyond the reach of the storms of fortune. This contested election came to reduce still further his fortune.

What was he to do? Europe was at peace. His active, restless, and ambitious mind—the mind, be it always remembered, of a born ruler of men, and, as such, requiring power, the exercise of rule, as its daily sustenance—could not vegetate in a country village. It is not to be wondered at, it was indeed most natural that, under these circumstances, Clive should again eventually seek employment in the country where he had won his renown.

In the search for position Clive spent his two first years in England. Meanwhile, the circumstances of Southern India were undergoing, during the same period, a marked change. After various vicissitudes Fortune had begun once more to smile on the ambitious views of Dupleix. For, although his troops had been again and again foiled in their attempt to storm Trichinápalli, his influence was supreme in the Dakhan, and the important territory known as the Northern Sirkars, comprising the districts now known as Ganjam, Vishákpatanam, Rájámahendri, Machhlípatanam, and Guntur, had been ceded to France. It may, indeed, be said that towards the close of 1754 Dupleix had more than regained the position of which Clive had deprived him in 1752. For, though Trichinápalli held out, it was blockaded; the English forces were diminished so as to be no longer formidable; Murári Rao had joined, the rájás of Tanjúr and Maisúr were ready to join, the French. The situation of the English had become, in fact, so strained that Governor Saunders had agreed, at a conference between the agents of the two Powers, to concede,