

At this time a squadron arrived from Europe, which brought reinforcements to the French troops, who landed at Porto Novo. Since the defeat of Colonel Braithwaite, the English were no longer formidable in the south, and Sir Eyre Coote was too much occupied with Haider Aly, in the north, to be able to attack the French. The latter, therefore, advanced to Cuddalore, which they took in April, 1782, and sent a detachment to Haider Aly, who took possession of Permacoil.

No other event of importance took place, as the peace which had sheathed the swords of the belligerent powers in Europe, put an end to the war which had disturbed the Peninsula of India.

Haider Aly died in November, 1782: a cancer in his back, which had afflicted him for several years, finished the career of his bold and persevering ambition.

On the coast of Malabar the government of Bombay had levied a considerable body of troops, and given the command of them to Brigadier-General Mathews, who soon made himself master of Onor; and, on receiving the news that Haider was dead, proceeded to reduce Cundapore and Mangalore, the latter of which he took, after a feeble resistance. He then pushed on to the Bednor country, and possessed himself of the capital, which bears the same name.

The success of the English soon reached Tippoo Sultan, when he instantly quitted the Carnatic; and, on the 9th of April, appeared before Bednor, with a very considerable army, a large train of artillery, and a thousand French troops. The English General, whose force did not exceed two thousand men, found himself obliged to retire into the fort, which, though it was commanded by the surrounding heights, he maintained till the 27th, when he accepted the capitulation offered by Tippoo; who, instead of adhering to the articles of it, exercised a degree of barbarity towards the English prisoners which has no example.

Bednor being restored to his power, Tippoo conducted his army towards the Malabar coast, to recover the places which the English had taken, and he accordingly appeared before Mangalore, which was garrisoned with three thousand men, commanded by Colonel Campbell, a valiant and experienced officer, who defended it with equal skill and courage for several months. At length, however, it was reduced to the greatest distress; when, fortunately for the brave garrison, they were relieved by a general peace.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Extracts from the Correspondence of Baron Grant, during the Years 1755, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759.—Extracts from Instructions to General Lally and Count D'Acbe, &c.—Further Extracts of the History of India during the seven Years War.*

THE large body of materials already inserted in this Work, and the importance of those which are to follow, renders it absolutely necessary to abridge this correspondence.

## LETTER XIV.

Isle of France, December, 1755.

Baron Grant having, in the preceding year, lost his wife\* and his second son, it became an object of great importance to him to send his only remaining son† into the bosom of his family, at Vaux in Normandy: accordingly, in this letter, he enters into those details respecting him, which may be expected from such an excellent father as he was; and, at the same, recommends to his relations to make all the necessary preparations for his own return.

As his departure, however, did not take place till three years after, he enters into a detail of the works which he had erected, with M. David, the former Governor, in order to make lime from coral; as well as of his plantations of cotton, and the large forges established by M. David, in conjunction with the Count de Rostaing and M. Hermans, &c. &c. &c.

"M. Bouvet, the successor of M. David, this year quitted the Isle of France, and was succeeded by M. Mago, who began his government, by giving a general permission to cut wood, which threatened to injure that important object in the island."

\* Mademoiselle de Grenville.

† The Viscount de Vaux.

## LETTER XV.

In 1756.

He continues to speak of the same objects, and certain preparations for war.

## LETTER XVI.

Isle of France, 1757.

He announces the arrival of the French squadron at the Isle of France. The first vessels were commanded by M. de Soupîrs, and the main body of the squadron by the Count d'Aché, who conducted the Count de Lally to take upon him the government of the French establishments in the East Indies.

The principal part of the squadron, which was long and impatiently expected, at length arrived; and the principal articles of instruction for the two commanders in chief by sea and land are as follows:

*An Extract from General Lally's Instructions, given him by the French East India Company.\**

"The Sieur de Lally is authorised to destroy the fortifications of all maritime settlements which may be taken from the English; it may however be proper to except Vizagapatam, by reason of its being so nearly situated to Bemclipatana (a Dutch factory), which, in that case, would be enriched by the ruin of Vizagapatam: but as to that, as well as the demolishing all other places whatsoever, the Sieur de Lally is to consult the Governor and Superior Council of Pondicherry, and to have their opinion in writing: but notwithstanding, he is to destroy such places as he shall think proper, unless strong and sufficient arguments are made use of to the contrary: such, for example, as the Company's being apprehensive for some of their settlements, and that it would be then thought prudent and necessary to reserve the power of exchange, in case any of them should be lost. Nevertheless, if the Sieur de Lally should think it too hazardous to keep a place, or that he thought he could not do it without too much dividing or weakening his army; his Majesty then leaves it in his power to act as he may think proper for the good of the service.

"The Sieur de Lally is to allow of no English settlement being ransomed; as we

\* The three following articles were given to the Author by one of the Directors of the English East India Company.

may well remember that after the taking Madras, last war, the English Company, in their Council of the 14th of July, 1747, determined that all ransoms made in India should be annulled. In regard to the English troops, both officers and writers belonging to the Company, and to the inhabitants of that nation, the *Sieur de Lally* is to permit none of them to remain on the coast of Coromandel: he may, if he pleases, permit the inhabitants to go to England, and order them to be conducted in armed vessels to the Island of St. Helena. But as to the officers and writers belonging to the East India Company, as well as soldiers and sailors, he is to order them to be conducted as soon as possible to the Island of Bourbon, where it will be permitted for the soldiers and sailors to work for the inhabitants of that place, according to mutual agreement. Though the sending them to the French islands should be avoided as much as possible, to prevent their being acquainted with the coast, as well as the interior part of the island. It is by no means his Majesty's intention that the English officers, soldiers, and sailors should be ransomed, as none is to be delivered up but by exchange, man for man, according to their different ranks and stations.

“ If the exchange of prisoners should be by chance settled at home, between the two nations, of which proper notice will be given to the *Sieur de Lally*, and that the islands of France and Bourbon should have more prisoners than it would be convenient to provide for; in that case, it will be permitted to send a certain number to England, in a vessel armed for that purpose.

“ No English officers, soldiers, &c. are to be permitted to remain in a place after it is taken; neither are they to be suffered to retire to any other of their settlements. The *Sieur de Lally* is not in the least to deviate from the above instructions and regulations, unless there should be a capitulation which stipulates the contrary; in which case the *Sieur de Lally* is faithfully and honestly to adhere to the capitulation.

“ The whole of what has been said before concerns only the natives of England; but as they have in their settlements merchants from all nations, such as Moors, Armenians, Jews, Pattaners, &c. the *Sieur de Lally* is ordered to treat them with humanity, and to endeavour, by fair means, to engage them to retire to Pondicherry, or any other of the Company's acquisitions; assuring them at the same time, that they will be protected, and that the same liberty and privileges which they before possessed among the English will be granted them.

“ Among the recruits furnished to complete the regiments of Lorrain and Berry's,



there are three hundred men from Fisher's recruits, lately raised, and as it is feared there will be considerable desertions among these new recruits, the Sieur de Lally may, if he pleases, leave them on the Isle of France, where they will be safe from desertion, and replace them from the troops of that island.

*Remarks on a Memorial of the French East India Company, delivered to the Count D'Acbe, Chief d'Escadre, and commanding the Squadron destined to the East, towards the latter End of the Year 1756.*

Article 4th treats in general of dispositions to be made on the arrival of the ships at Mauritius; and observes, that there are two harbours, the one called Port Louis, or North-west, and the other South-east, Harbour. Port Louis is the principal, where the colony chiefly resides, and where the docks, magazines, and other conveniences for shipping are built; but the air of the south-east harbour is esteemed the most healthy, and on that account it is recommended to send all the sick sailors and soldiers on shore there, where it seems houses proper for hospitals are prepared. As soon as the sick shall be sufficiently recovered, it is recommended to let them march over land from the south-east harbour to the north-west, which is about fifty miles\* direct across the island; so that apparently there must be a particular road, which indeed is reasonable to conclude, from the residence of many planters on the south-east side.

The south-east harbour has two channels, through either of which ships may easily enter, but the greatest difficulty is getting out: however, the instructions say, that the ship of each division which carries in the sick may easily get out again through the north-east or south-east channel.

It is also observed, that as the north-west harbour of Mauritius is not large enough to contain all the vessels that may arrive there, together with those there before, and as the islands may not be able to furnish fresh provisions for so many people, there will be a necessity for sending out the ships already there, to the island of Madagascar, where the general rendezvous is appointed to be, after leaving the Mauritius.

\* There are no more than twenty-five miles between these two harbours, according to the exact observations of the Abbé de la Caille, made in the year 1753. This error proves that the French East India Company did not know at that time (1756) the true extent of the island.

Article 5th takes notice that Saint Mary's, near Madagascar, is a small island, and has one harbour, capable of containing seven or eight vessels: the French had sent thither a chief, an officer, and some soldiers, to get the necessary provisions for the sailors and troops.

Article 7th remarks, that it is probable the English squadron may then be at Trincomale Bay, either as a place of security against the French, or to carreen. In either case the commander of the French squadron is instructed to declare to the Dutch, that it is against the rules of a strict neutrality to receive and protect in their port the enemies of France; and that he has orders to pursue and take, or burn the enemy's ships wherever he shall meet them, which order he must obey, in spite of their opposition.

Article 8th points out the places where it is probable the English squadron may take shelter, and advises the taking or burning it in any port of India, though belonging to neutral powers, as Trincomale, Merguy, Acheen, or any other port, except in China or Bengal; where, they observe, it may not be prudent to commit any violence, lest their commerce suffer for infringing the protection the government may give to English ships.

Article 11th proposes, that, in case they arrive too late at the islands, to be on the Coromandel coast time enough to undertake any enterprize before the monsoon of 1757; to project any other operation which may not interfere with, or delay the operations on the coast of Coromandel early in 1758. Some ships are particularly recommended to be sent to Bencoolen to take that place, and the other settlements on Sumatra, from whence all the English and slaves are to be carried off to the Island of Bourbon.

Article 13th observes, that there is still in India a better understanding between the Dutch and English, than there is in Europe, to the prejudice of France; and, therefore, little regard ought to be paid to their flag, if any British subjects or effects are found with them.

*In another Instruction for Count D'Acbe, sent by D. L'Aguille, on the 8th of December, 1757, it is said,*

Article 4th, that should the operations on the river Bengal be attended with success, the conquered place may either be kept, or the fortifications, civil buildings, and warehouses utterly destroyed. Should the latter plan be resolved on, not a

factory ought to remain, nor an English inhabitant (even those born in the country) suffered to reside in the province. This resolution, they observe, is the most effectual means to establish their reputation on the Ganges. But they seem to recommend only the destruction of the new fort, and the preservation of old Calcutta, on condition of a ransom, and the observance of a strict neutrality in Bengal, for the future. This the French seem most desirous of, but insist on ready money for the ransom, and hostages for the performance of agreements, since the English have here publicly declared, they will abide by no treaty of ransom. His most Christian Majesty, in a letter of the 25th of January, 1757, to Count D'Aché, instructs him not to leave an Englishman in any place that shall be taken, but to send in cartel ships to St. Helena, or suffer to pass to England, all free merchants and inhabitants not in the Company's service: but to keep prisoners all civil servants, officers, and soldiers, and not set any at liberty, unless exchanged against those of equal rank. As to the prisoners, they are all to be sent to the Island of Bourbon, and there kept in deposit, till it may be thought proper to send them to France.

*Instructions given by the Directors of the East India Company to the Governor\* of the Isles of Mauritius and Bourbon, 24th of May, 1761.*

They first recommend the division of lands into small parcels among such as choose to become planters, and to let them each follow the bent of their genius, whether it be for tilling corn, breeding horses, bullocks, poultry, planting cotton or coffee trees: but for the advantage of refreshments for shipping, and to reduce the price of labour, they particularly recommend the breeding carriage and draught beasts of all kinds.

Their next attention is directed to cutting wood, which it seems was formerly supplied by contractors, who, on account of the easy conveyance, no doubt, cut that nearest the sea-shore. The Company considering this practice as prejudicial to the defence of the Island of Mauritius, whose shore is, in many places, guarded against descents by the woods, positively forbid the cutting any wood there in future, and say, "There are two places which require the most immediate attention; the first is the shore between the north-west bay and the Bay of the Tomb, (*Bay du Tombeau*), where it would be more preferable to abandon the making of lime, after the ancient custom, than to continue stripping the shore of wood in the neighbourhood of the port, which is defended by it. The second place is the country

adjacent to the south-east bay, where there is a considerable yard and work-shop for cutting wood; it must be absolutely forbidden (if it is not too late) to strip the sea-shore of its wood in the neighbourhood of that port, that it may not be rendered as defenceless as the north-west harbour. If the evil is begun it must be stopped. M. David has in that place a large carpenter's yard, managed by the *Sieur Rottier*."

Speaking of barracks in one of the articles, the Company says,

"At any rate, but particularly in that light which we regard the Island of Mauritius, whether it be to make it a receptacle of all the Company's military forces in India, or to lodge the recruits there a year or two, which are destined for the garrisons in India, that they may be disciplined; that their health may be preserved by the shortness of the passage, that they may at first be landed in an wholesome and temperate climate, where they may recover the fatigues of the voyage, and accustom themselves by degrees to the heat, instead of transporting them at once into the burning, and often unhealthy, parts, of India; or, lastly, with a view of having always at the Mauritius forces which may be sent to India on extraordinary occasions, when succour cannot be expedited from Europe, either through want of time to write for them, or prevention of their departure from France by enemies. It is certain, in all these points of view, equally favourable for the preservation of the settlements in India, and the good management of troops and money, that barracks are absolutely necessary at the Island of Mauritius. Frequent complaints have been made of the irregularities which the soldiers commit when dispersed, and at liberty in different houses: it is therefore impossible to prevent the licentiousness and unlucky accidents which happen, but by barracks. Hitherto we have had but a small garrison at the Island of Mauritius, when it becomes more numerous all the inconvenience attending licentious soldiers are more to be apprehended. It may be added, in favour of a numerous garrison at the Island of Mauritius, that it will be the readiest and cheapest method to people the island, and to form a militia on the spot, interested in its defence. At the end of a certain time, those who are willing to settle on the island may have their discharge, on condition that they shall form a company of militia, which shall assemble from time to time, and march when occasion requires. A good prison or guard-house is not less necessary to hold the Blacks, than barracks for the soldiers, in order to keep the Company's slaves under good management, shutting them up by night, and forming good posts on the sea-shore, and in the interior parts of the island. By means of a numerous garrison it is possible desertion may be



prevented, and the attempts of the Madagascar Blacks, which are turned freebooters, may be guarded against: these slaves may then be bought without hazard, and all agree they can be had cheaper and better, and are more intelligent and laborious, and sooner trained to all kind of work than those procured elsewhere. The inconvenience of too great a quantity of grain, and a scarcity, has been successively experienced at the Island of Mauritius: to remedy it, instructions have been sent, concerning the manner of preserving corn in Italy and Africa, with the form and dimensions of the pits which are there used. The last works of the Sieur Du Hamel, relative to stores, ventilators, and the construction of granaries, have also been sent out; you must inform yourself whether any of his methods have been tried, and endeavour to introduce those best adapted to the nature of the grain necessary to be kept."

The Company, thinking the good of the service required that an entire jurisdiction over the Blacks should be established, wrote to the Council at the islands to employ such means as were necessary to engage the inhabitants to make detachments against the Blacks; they were promised one hundred and forty livres for every freebooter whom they destroyed; but that recompence not proving a sufficient encouragement, M. Bouvett determined to offer a slave, at the Companys price, for every freebooter killed, which the inhabitants approve and the Company have confirmed.

## LETTER XVII.

*From M. de Miran to Baron Grant.*

Pondicherry, May 10, 1757.

Contains an account of the loss of Chandernagore, which surrendered to the English by capitulation on the 24th of March, in the same year.

## LETTER XVIII.

*From Baron Grant.*

Isle of France, Feb. 16, 1758.

He announces his departure, which took place in the same month, on board a ship belonging to St. Malo, named the Emerald.

Baron Grant was unfortunately taken prisoner in this voyage by three English ships, which took him into Jamaica. On leaving that island for England, he suffered new misfortunes from being shipwrecked, and with great difficulty and danger, and in the greatest distress, reached the island which he had so lately left. At length, however, he arrived in England, where he remained six weeks, when he returned to his estates at Vaux, in Normandy.

*Further Extracts of the History of India, during the seven Years War.*

The descendants of Tamerlane and the Moguls continued from the time of that great conqueror to govern India, after having been driven from Tartary and Persia. Aurengzebe was the last monarch who inherited the talents of his predecessors; for after his death a general degeneracy followed, and, as it commonly happens in great monarchies, the provinces which were the most remote from the seat of government, became independent of the Mogul. Formerly the governors of these provinces, who are called Nabobs, practised more than a mere nominal submission to the imperial authority, as such a conduct confirmed their power. One of these subordinate princes, the Nabob, or, as he is by some called, the Subah or Viceroy of Bengal, availed himself of some frivolous pretext, to besiege the English fort of Bengal. The place was bravely defended by Mr. Holwell; but on the 26th of June, 1756, it was taken by the Nabob. The immediate consequences of which are too well known to require any description of them in this place. The horrors and sufferings of the Black Hole have been already described by the able pen of Mr. Holwell, who had his portion of them, and from whose works they have been translated into the principal tongues of Europe.

The English arms, however, in India, soon took their revenge, and repaired their losses. Admiral Watson, in the beginning of the year 1756, attacked and destroyed the residence of Angria, the pirate, who had long been the declared enemy of the English. He then set sail from Madras with no more than three ships of the line, and having touched at the port of Balasore, entered the Ganges; where, by the capture of the fort of Busbudgia, he opened a passage to Calcutta, which he reduced in one day, as well as Huegly, another establishment above the Ganges. The Nabob assembled an army of ten thousand horse and twelve thousand infantry; but on the 5th of February, 1757, they were defeated by an handful of English, and the Nabob was obliged to conclude a treaty of peace, by which the English East India

Company was established in all its possessions and privileges, as well as an indemnification for every thing it had lost by the capture of Calcutta. As it was not supposed that this accommodation of the Nabob would last longer than it should suit his interests; and that he would break it as soon as he had concerted measures with the French for that purpose; the Admirals Watson and Pocock, with Colonel Clive, who commanded the land forces, attacked Chandernagore, the principal establishment of the French in this country, situated on the river, a little above Calcutta, which at length capitulated to their arms, on the 24th of March. Five hundred Europeans and seven hundred Blacks surrendered prisoners of war, with an hundred and eighty-three pieces of cannon, a considerable sum of money, and a large quantity of merchandize. The ferocious manners of the Nabob had even disgusted his own subjects; and as success is the only title of these chiefs to their possessions, Jaffier Aly Cawn, at that time one of the principal officers of his army, and among those who pretended to have a legal claim to the rank of Nabob, put himself at the head of a confederation against him, and demanded succour from the English.

Without examining the rights of the rival Nabobs, it is sufficient for us to mention, that the English agreed to assist Jaffier, with whom they entered into a treaty: Colonel Clive accordingly opened the campaign in his favour, while the Admiral, in order to augment the land forces as much as possible, undertook to supply a garrison for Chandernagore, and sent him also fifty sailors to act as cannoneers: while a vessel of twenty guns was placed above Huegly, to preserve a communication between the land and sea forces. In the mean time the Surajah assembled an army of twenty thousand men, which was attacked by Colonel Clive on the 22d of June, and entirely defeated. This event encouraged Jaffier Aly Cawn, who had remained inactive in the last battle, to make an open declaration of his pretensions to the character of Nabob; and, on the 26th of the same month, the English and his party marched to Maxadavad, the capital of Bengal, where Colonel Clive placed him on the throne of the Nabobs, and he received, in the character of Subahdar, the distinct homage of Bengal, Bachar, and Orixá. As to the Surajah Dowla, his rival, when abandoned by his officers, he fled from the field of battle, and, being made prisoner, was put to death, as may be naturally supposed, by order of the conqueror.

Thus the English, in thirteen days, gave a master to one of the richest, most extensive, as well as most populous kingdoms of the world. The new Nabob thought

that he could not give too ample marks of his gratitude to his friends, the English, he therefore concluded a perpetual alliance offensive and defensive with them. He augmented the limits of the Company's territory in India, and enlarged their privileges: he distributed six hundred thousand rupees to the soldiers and sailors, and at the same time indemnified the Company for the losses which they had sustained, by a payment of two millions sterling. Soon after these events Admiral Watson died, from the unwholesomeness of the climate. The French, in order to repair so many losses, equipped a new armament, under the command of M. D'Aché, officer of marine, and M. de Lally, who commanded the French land forces, which consisted of two thousand European troops. It appears to have been the opinion of the French, that this force would have been sufficient to have re-established their affairs, but they were mistaken; for though they took the fort and town of St. David, Admiral Pocock, who commanded the English squadron there, defeated them in two engagements, and cut off all communication between their army and ships. The truth is, that the French were not only discouraged and disunited, by their repeated disasters, but also wanted both provisions and money, as well as all military stores necessary for their operations.

As to the land forces, under the orders of M. Lally, their conduct was irregular to the last degree. Not having money sufficient, as we have already observed, to continue his operations, he requested a loan from an Indian potentate, called the King of Tanjour, and his demand being rejected, he besieged the capital of that prince, but without success. He then endeavoured to repair this disaster by seizing a Dutch ship, where he found a sufficient quantity of money to enable him to undertake the siege of Madras, or Fort St. George. The place was defended by Colonel Draper and Major Brereton, and M. Lally was obliged to raise the siege, after having employed two months in that vain enterprize. The remonstrances which he sent into France, on that occasion, describe the horror and distraction of his mind, and the kind of intelligence that prevailed between him and those he commanded; while the English not only gained every advantage over him, but also reduced the rich town of Surat, on the western side of the Peninsula of India. On the 16th of April, 1759, the English army began the campaign, under the command of Major Brereton, who made himself master of the important town and fortress of Congeveram; and at the same time Major Ford took by assault the town of Masulipatam: thus a border of eight hundred miles in length, along a trading



country, filled with manufactures, fell into the hands of the English; while the French commerce was confined to Pondicherry, and some places in that neighbourhood. The conquered country reached to the province of Bengal, from whence the French were entirely driven by Colonel Clive. These successes were in a small degree balanced by a failure of Major Brereton in endeavouring to dislodge M. Lally and his confederates from a very strong post that they occupied. This check, which happened in September, 1759, cost the English between three and four hundred men, killed and wounded, and encouraged M. Lally to make preparations for the siege of Trichinopoly; but Colonel Coote, on the 30th of November following, took Wandewash, one of the most important forts of that coast, and made the garrison prisoners of war. Ten days after, he possessed himself of Cosangoly, which the garrison were obliged to evacuate. These successes determined M. Lally to risk a decisive engagement, in order to retake Wandewash, which he besieged with two thousand Europeans and nine or ten thousand native soldiers. Colonel Coote arrived there most fortunately with his army, consisting of about seventeen hundred European, and three thousand Black troops, at the moment when M. Lally was about to enter by a breach he had made in the place. A battle immediately ensued, in which the French were put to the rout, with the loss of a thousand men left on the field of battle: several of the principal officers were also killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, and M. Lally retired to Pondicherry with the remains of his army. The loss of the English was about two hundred, and unfortunately Major Brereton was of the number. Colonel Coote did not delay a moment in pursuing the advantages he had acquired, and marched directly against Chitiput, which he took: he then laid siege to Arcot on the 8th of February, which is the capital of a large province of the same name: This place surrendered to him on the 10th, and he made three hundred Europeans prisoners of war.

The operations by sea in India were pursued with equal vigour, and crowned with equal success. On the 4th of September, 1759, an engagement took place between M. D'Aché and Admiral Pocock; when the French commander was obliged to retire. The English Admiral then directed his course to Pondicherry, and was joined there by Admiral Cornish. On the 6th of April following the fortress Karical, as well as several other places of less importance, surrendered to the English; so that the far greater part of the French forces in India was shut up in Pondicherry.

At length it was determined to lay siege to that place ; and its garrison consisted of fifteen hundred Europeans, when it was invested by Colonel Coote on the land side, and Admiral Stevens by sea. It was surrounded by several forts, which had occasioned great difficulty in former sieges, but were now easily taken, as the adjacent country was in the hands of the English. The rainy season approaching, and the known bravery of M. Lally rendered a regular siege impracticable ; it was determined therefore to block the place by sea and land. This blockade was supported by certain batteries, which were very advantageously placed, and, while they continually harassed the garrison, were insensibly extended towards the town, notwithstanding the rains had commenced.

These operations continued during seven months, the batteries being alternately destroyed and repaired : but amidst all these difficulties the English were encouraged by the distress of the garrison and inhabitants, who were reduced to feed on dogs, cats, elephants, and camels.

The French, in this situation, indulged the hope of relief from their fleet, and a violent storm on the 1st of June, 1761, cherished their expectations, as it destroyed four English ships of the line, and obliged the others to quit the blockade. The hopes, however, that had been indulged by the French garrison, and their brave commander, were of very short duration ; for, in four days after the storm, and before any relief could have been administered to the town, Admiral Stevens re-appeared and renewed the blockade with eleven ships of the line and a frigate ; at the same time a battery was erected within four hundred and fifty yards of the ramparts.

The garrison was now reduced to three days provision ; but this miserable situation made no impression on the mind of General Lally : he persisted in holding out, and pretended that as the English had failed in their engagements to him, it was impossible for him to enter into a treaty with them. At length, however, a signal for a cessation of arms being made, the principal of the Jesuits, with two lawyers, but without any apparent authority from the governor, were sent to treat with the English, and after some previous and necessary arrangements, the latter took possession of the place. Soon after, the settlement at Mahé, on the coast of Malabar was reduced ; so that the whole commerce of the vast Peninsula of India fell into the hands of the English.

We shall now proceed, before we finish the history of this war, to give an

account of the internal revolution in that country, which threatened to deprive the English of the fruits of their astonishing successes.

The most ancient branch of the family of Tamerlane being extinct, another which, had been driven from Bucharie into Persia, passed at length into India, where the veneration of the inhabitants for a descendant of Timur-beg, or Tamerlane, was so great, that he ascended the throne of his ancestors, under the name of the Great Mogul, or great conqueror; and for a considerable period, both he and his posterity were entirely surrounded with Mogul guards, and established a most absolute despotism over his Indian subjects. Though no difficulties were thrown in the way of their succession, the emperors, nevertheless, who had reigned since Aurengzebe, have always thought it necessary to represent themselves as the descendants of Timur-beg.

At the time which is the object of our present consideration, the Mahrattas formed the military force of India, and having deposed the last Great Mogul, his son, Sha Zaddah, assumed that title; though his authority was disputed by several provinces: but being assisted by Mr. Law, who was nephew of the person so well known for the Mississippi scheme, with about two hundred fugitive French, he made considerable progress in confirming his title. At length Law persuaded him to put himself at the head of eighty thousand men, and to march against the English in Bengal. They were met by twenty thousand native troops and five hundred English, under the command of General Carnac, who entirely defeated them, and made the young Mogul and Mr. Law both prisoners, on the same day that Pondicherry surrendered.

Fortune was equally favourable to the English in other parts of India. Jaffier Aly Cawn, who had been raised, as we have already mentioned, to the rank of Nabob of Bengal, became intoxicated with his power, which deprived him of the protection of the English, who compelled him to resign his government in favour of his son-in-law. The new Nabob confirmed and even increased the privileges of the English in Bengal; so that the Dutch became jealous of their power, and made a fruitless attempt to drive the English from that country.

During these events in India, Count D'Estaing, a French marine officer, with only two frigates, surpassed all his countrymen who were employed in the naval service in any other part of the globe. In October, 1759, he destroyed the English

settlement of Benderabassy, in the Persian Gulf; he afterwards reduced Bencoolen, in the Island of Sumatra, where the English carried on a considerable trade, and destroyed all their forts and establishments. This enterprising seaman at last fell into the hands of the English: he was afterwards employed by the government of his country in various and important services.



## CHAPTER XXV.

*Summary of the Life of Count de Lally.—Journal of his Expeditions in India.—  
Report of the Conquest of Pondicherry.—An Account of the Condemnation of  
M. Lally.*

THE Count de Lally was the son of a captain in the regiment of Dillon, who passed into France after the capitulation of Limerick, and a French lady of distinction. Soon after his birth, which was in 1699, he was entered, as was the custom in the French army, a private soldier in his company. He made very considerable progress in those sciences which formed a principal part of the education of the French nobility. Being the son of an officer of distinguished merit, it was natural for him to make military acquaintance; and being, by his mother's side, allied to some of the first families of France, he had more favourable opportunities than the generality of his companions, to form connections of the first class. These advantages, superadded to a fine person, advanced young Lally, at the age of nineteen years, to a company in the Irish brigade.

Though he was known to possess those qualities that form the soldier, he was equally qualified to succeed in civil employments; for at a period when young men are seldom more than equal to the inferior departments of the state, he was suddenly elevated to one of the most important situations that belong to political government. At the age of twenty-five he was sent by the court of France to negotiate some important affairs at the court of Russia, where his address and fidelity secured to him the confidence of the King his master, and won the esteem of the Czarina. On his return to France he was considered as one of the most distinguished men at Versailles, and was soon promoted to the rank of colonel of a regiment, in which he conducted himself with uncommon distinction wherever he was employed.

In the year 1745, when the young Pretender made a descent in Scotland, M. Lally came into England, under the pretext of claiming some lands which his father had possessed in Ireland, and to which he pretended to have a legal title: though, in fact, the real object of his errand was to serve the cause of the Pretender as a

spy; to assist him with his counsels, and to excite malcontents in the southern parts of Great Britain, by promises of money and other inducements. It is even said that he had some success in these dangerous attempts, when his plans were discovered to the Duke of Cumberland, who gave immediate orders for his arrest: but M. Lally was, by the kind interposition of the Prince of Wales, preserved from a prison, and permitted to return to France, in direct opposition to the sentiments of the Duke.

Such, however, was the obstinacy of M. de Lally, that he quitted England with great reluctance, though, as the expedition of the Pretender entirely failed, he had every reason to be thankful to providence for his escape. From that time till he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general and commander in chief in the East Indies, his life does not offer any circumstance that merits particular attention. As to his history in that part of the world, to the period of his death, we shall refer our readers to the following papers.

*Journal of Expeditions in India, under the Command of Count Lally.*

In the month of August, 1756, Count de Lally was appointed to the command of an expedition in India, to support which the court had destined six millions of livres, six battalions of troops, and three ships of war, which were to be joined by such as the Company could prepare for the occasion.

The Chevalier des Soupîrs, who was to command as major-general under him, set sail from L'Orient on the 30th of December following, with two millions of livres and two battalions.

On the 20th of February, 1757, the Count D'Aché set sail from Brest, with Count Lally, having two millions of livres, and two battalions, on board his squadron; but an accident which happened to one of their ships, in going out of the port, obliged him to return, and contrary winds detained him till the 2d of May.

The Count D'Aché was near a year on his passage, a circumstance which gave Admiral Stevens sufficient time to reach the coast of Coromandel; though he did not leave England till three months after the French squadron set sail from France. The Chevalier des Soupîrs waited some time at Mauritius, and disembarked at Pondicherry eight months before Count Lally arrived there. At this time the English could not bring a hundred men into the field, and he had two thousand. Madras was an open town, Fort St. David was in ruins, with a garrison of sixty invalids. Three weeks

would have been sufficient to have taken both these places, but the Chevalier des Soupîrs, who was entirely ignorant of the manner of carrying on war in that country, suffered himself to be influenced by M. de Leyrit, the Company's governor of Pondicherry, who kept him all this time in a state of inactivity, and at the expense of all the money which he had brought from Europe.

Six months previous to his arrival in India the English had driven the Company from all its settlements in Bengal, which were the most valuable of their possessions.

On the 25th of April, 1758, the Count D'Aché landed the Count de Lally at Pondicherry, with some of his principal officers, and several chests of money. On the following day, as he was preparing to cast anchor in the road of that place, he was surprised by the English squadron, and lost a vessel of 74 guns; but, availing himself of a favourable wind, he contrived to escape.

Within a few hours after he had disembarked, Count de Lally invested Cudalore, a place situated about five leagues from Pondicherry, and made himself master of it in three days: the garrison consisted of ten invalids. In a short time after he besieged Fort St. David, and entered into that place on the 2d of June, after seventeen days of open trenches. On the 10th of the same month the Count returned to Pondicherry; and, having determined to make an attack on Madras, he dispatched a vessel to Count D'Aché, who had retreated sixty leagues to the windward, with orders to return. M. de Leyrit at this time signified to Count de Lally, that he was not in a condition to subsist his troops for more than fifteen days, and that there was no other resource but to march them into the kingdom of Tanjore, which was about fifty leagues to the south of Pondicherry, to claim a debt due from the Rajah of that country. Thus he was obliged to seek for subsistence in Tanjore till the stormy season approached, which would oblige the two squadrons to take refuge in some distant ports.

The Rajah of Tanjore having refused the debt demanded of him, Count Lally marched towards his capital; and, in order to intimidate him, levelled five pieces of cannon against that place.

At this time he received an account that the English were marching, with a body of eight hundred men, against Pondicherry, and that the Chevalier des Soupîrs, who had not an equal force, was preparing to abandon the surrounding country: he accordingly evacuated Tanjore, after having levied four hundred and forty thousand livres in money, and lived, during two months, at the expense of the inhabitants.

On his approach to Pondicherry the English retired towards Madras. He now renewed his entreaties to Count D'Aché not to quit the coast; and, in order to induce him to remain there, made him an offer of half his army to recruit his squadron; but the latter, deaf to his entreaties and arguments, set sail for Madagascar on the 1st of September, which was the day after M. de Lally's return to Pondicherry.

He had sent also for M. M. de Bussy and Moracin, with the troops that they commanded; the one in the Decan, and the other at Masulipatnam. These officers brought with them but one-third of their forces, and on their arrival demanded a reinforcement of a thousand men, &c. But M. de Lally having received information that the English had made a descent in the neighbourhood of Masulipatnam, ordered M. Moracin to return thither, which he refused; and that place was afterwards surprised by the English.

M. de Lally, having remained at Arcot for five days, returned to Pondicherry, having refused the incredible offer of M. de Bussy, to give him four hundred thousand livres in three hours, if he would let him return with a body of troops into the Decan. The army was at this time without pay, though M. de Bussy had informed M. de Lally that he had two hundred and forty thousand livres at the service of the Company, if he would be responsible for them, which he absolutely refused, as he would have no commercial concern whatever with that body. M. de Lally, on his return to Pondicherry, renewed his design of attacking Madras during the absence of the English squadron; it was, however, opposed by M. de Leyrit, for want of funds to pay the army, and procure them subsistence: the other members of the council were of the same opinion; but four or five of them, with Count D'Estaing at their head, offered their plate, to the value of eighty thousand livres, as a contribution towards the enterprize. M. Bussy did not offer a single sol, and M. de Lally gave one hundred and forty thousand livres, which he had placed in the treasury.

In consequence of these aids he arrived in the plain of Madras on the 12th of December, 1758, and, after a few skirmishes, encamped there on the following day.

At a very early hour on the morning of the 14th, the black town was attacked by M. de Rillon, at the head of his regiment: and, in a very few hours, he made himself master of it, with little loss.

M. de Lequille, who commanded a squadron, had in the mean time arrived at



the Island of Mauritius with four ships of war, and three millions of livres, destined for the service of Pondicherry; and he was about to quit that island when, unfortunately, the Count D'Aché arrived there, and prevented him from proceeding. He also took upon himself to send to Pondicherry no more than one million of the money, by a small frigate, which anchored before that place on the 21st of December, 1758.

On the arrival of this money Count Lally determined to besiege Madras in form. He paid both his European and black troops a portion of what was due to them, and opened the trenches on the 6th of January, 1759. He attacked the town with two thousand seven hundred Europeans, but the black troops were of little use in a siege. The garrison consisted of five thousand men, sixteen hundred of which were regular troops, four hundred servants of the English Company, and three thousand Sepoys. The English army, that was in possession of the country, made four different attempts to raise the siege, but was as often repulsed with loss. Count de Lally had already made a breach, and was preparing an assault, when six English vessels, laden with all kinds of refreshments, and six hundred men of Colonel Draper's regiment, came to an anchor in the road, and determined Lally to retreat to Arcot.

Six weeks after the siege of Madras had been raised the English received another reinforcement of six hundred men from Europe, and immediately took the field against the Chevalier des Soupîrs, who abandoned to them the post of Conjeveram, and all the conquests that had been made on the left bank of the Paliar.

After an absence of thirteen months the Count D'Aché at length arrived at Pondicherry on the 17th of September, 1759, having had a third engagement with the English fleet, in which, as usual, he had been worsted. On that very day he wrote to M. de Lally, with an offer of four hundred thousand livres in piastres, and about as much more in diamonds, the produce of an English vessel which he had taken, in part of payment of the two millions he had stopped the year before at Mauritius, one of which would have secured the conquest of Madras. He also notified that he should set sail the following day for Madagascar. This unexpected message threw the whole colony into the greatest consternation. M. de Lally was so ill as not to be able to quit his house, but he sent a deputation of all his principal officers to engage him to suspend the execution of his design: nothing however that was said or done could avert his purpose. M. de Lally therefore assembled the council, who unanimously signed a protest against the sudden departure of

Count D'Aché, rendering him alone responsible for the loss of Pondicherry, and threatening to appeal to the justice of the king against his conduct. This protest was unanimously signed in the hall of the council in Fort Lewis, in Pondicherry, the 17th September, 1759, as follows: Lally, Duval de Leyrit, Renaut, Barthélemy, Chevalier des Soupîrs, Nichel Lally, Bussi, Du Bois, Cariere, Verdieres, Duré, Gaddeville, Du Passage, Beausset, Renaut, De la Selle, Guillart, Porcher, Père Dominique, capucin pretre de la paroisse de Nôtre Dame des Anges, F. S. Lavacer, superieur general des Jesuites Français dans les Indes, L. Rathon, superieur general des missions étrangères, Potier de Lorme, Duchatel, Audouart, Aimar, Combaut d'Autheuil, Goupil, Keisses, J. C. Bon, De Wilst, Banal, Rauily, Termelier, Saint Paul, J. B. Launay, Deshayes, Fischer, Du Laurent, Audoyer du Petit Val, D'Arcy, Medin, Dioré, Bertrand, Legris, Miran, Bourville, F. Nicolas, Du Plan, De Laval, Borée, De L'Arche, Boyelleau et Guellette.

M. D'Aché had already set sail, but the winds and currents, having driven him to the north, the protest overtook him at sea; in consequence of which he returned to Pondicherry, where he remained seven days, and once more departed for Madagascar; promising, however, to return at a very early period of the following year; but from that time, which comprehends a space of sixteen months, nothing more was heard of him.

M. de Lally, who had now recovered his health and strength, daily expected the arrival of Bassuletzingue, brother of Salubetzingue, sovereign of the whole country, with a body of twelve thousand men. This prince was not more than thirty-five leagues from the French army when he demanded an officer of distinction, and a detachment of European troops, to facilitate their junction, and M. de Bussy was accordingly sent on that service. The army was now assembled under the walls of Arcot, from whence the Indian batallion was detached, as it began to foment a second revolt, on account of the pay due to the soldiers, from the not being able to dispose of the diamonds. The absence of M. de Bussy, which did not require more than ten or twelve days, continued for two-and-forty; and the English, availing themselves of the impracticability of the French to begin the campaign without cavalry, made themselves masters of Wandewash.

Being disappointed of the arrival of Bassuletzingue, M. de Lally concluded, as soon as possible, in concert with M. de Leyrit, a treaty with a Mahratta chief, for a body of two thousand cavalry; which, joined to another of eighteen hundred

blacks, belonging to M. de Bussy, and bearing his name, he encamped opposite the English, from whom he was separated only by the sandy bed of the Poliar, which was then entirely dry. Having got possession of some magazines which were in rear of the English, the latter were prevented from keeping the field for some days. The French, therefore, fell suddenly on Wandewash; but, on the appearance of the English to relieve it, M. de Lally found himself obliged to retreat to Pondicherry, or to hazard a battle, and he determined on the latter: he accordingly attacked them, but was repulsed and beaten, on the 22d of January, 1760. The loss was nearly equal on both sides, and the only officer of rank who was taken prisoner was M. de Bussy. M. de Lally, who was now reduced to the necessity of defending, as long as possible, the passage to Pondicherry, encamped with his army about four leagues from that place, on the road which the English must take in their approaches to attack it.

Admiral Cornish appeared on the coast with four ships of the line from Europe, in about a month after this battle: on the 28th of February he came to an anchor in the road of Madras; and, on the 17th of March he appeared with his squadron before Pondicherry. In the mean time the English army gradually approached nearer to that place, while M. de Lally, in order, at the same time, to protect it from the attack of the fleet, and obstruct the march of the army, necessarily retired from one position to another, till at length he occupied an advantageous post on the march of the English, and about the distance of two leagues from the town.

While the English army was occupied in possessing itself of the small French posts to the north of Pondicherry, the squadron of Admiral Cornish attacked Karical on the south, which was defended by the same officer, in the Company's service, who had given up Chandernagore, after a very short bombardment. He soon surrendered the place, which wanted nothing, and was the only European fortification which the French Company possessed in India. In a short time after this operation the English took Valdore. At the same time M. de Lally maintained his post during three months, and thereby gained time sufficient to victual Pondicherry for half a year.

While M. de Lally held the English in check, he concluded a treaty with the chief of Mysore. The object of this treaty was to supply Pondicherry with provisions; but he did not fulfil the conditions of it, and accordingly gave up the fort of Thiagar, which was the stipulated price. In a few days after the departure of the Mysore people, M. de Lally determined to strike a great stroke, by attacking the

English on the night of the 2d of September. This enterprize accordingly took place, and failed. At length, after a siege of two months, and a very gallant defence by M. de Lally, Pondicherry surrendered to the English army, commanded by General Coote, on the 16th of January, 1761. M. de Lally requested to be sent to Cundalore, where he might have the advantage of being attended by French and English surgeons; but the Governor of Madras insisted on his being removed from that place, and sent his own palanquin to convey him thither.\*

The English batteries were not opened but a few weeks before the reduction, and though they were served with great skill, and were employed with extraordinary effect, the want of every necessary of life within the town was the most important circumstance in favour of the besiegers. The inhabitants had for some time subsisted on elephants, camels, and horses. It is well known that a dog had been sold for twenty-four rupees; and of this wretched provision they had not more than would have sustained them for one day, when the place surrendered.

*Extract from the Report of the Condemnation and Execution of the Count de Lally.*

In consequence of the very weighty conclusions which the Procureur General had given against the Count de Lally, he was removed, during the night of Sunday, the 4th of May, from the Basille to the prison of the Conciergerie, which communicates by several staircases with the different apartments belonging to the Court of Parliament. Though it was but one o'clock in the morning when he arrived at the Conciergerie, he refused to go to bed; and about seven he appeared before his judges. They ordered him to be divested of his red riband and cross, to which he submitted with the most perfect indifference; and he was then placed on the stool

\* Extract of a Letter, dated Fort St. George, Feb. 1, 1761.

"M. de Lally is arrived here; and, notwithstanding his melancholy condition, is as proud and haughty as ever. Genius, understanding, and military knowledge, obscured by very ferocious manners, and a perfect contempt for any one beneath the rank of a General, characterise this extraordinary man. When he quitted the citadel of Pondicherry, the officers and soldiers treated him with the most marked disapprobation and insult: while his Commissary, who attempted his justification, was instantly murdered; and the same fate would have awaited M. de Lally, if he had not retreated to the English camp. To have maintained, therefore, so long a siege amid the detestation of those whom he commanded, is a decided proof of his firmness, activity, and bravery."



to undergo a course of interrogation. At this moment, clasping his hands and lifting up his eyes, he exclaimed, "Is this the reward for forty years faithful service?" The interrogatory lasted six hours. At three in the afternoon it recommenced, and the Marquis de Bussy and Count D'Aché were successively confronted with him. They remained but a short time in the Court, and were reconducted by officers of justice. The sitting lasted till nine at night, when the Count was taken back to the Bastille, surrounded by guards, and several companies of the city watch.

The following day, at six in the morning, the judges began to give their opinions, and they were not concluded till four in the afternoon, when they pronounced an arret, which contained only a simple recital of the proceedings against him, and other persons accused of abuses and crimes in the East Indies, with their acquittal or condemnation, but without specifying the facts or reasons on which they were respectively founded. The sentence stated, that he had been accused and convicted of having betrayed the interests of the King and the India Company; of abusing his authority, and of exactions, &c. from the subjects of his Majesty, as well as the foreigners resident in Pondicherry; for the reparation of which, and other crimes, it was declared that he should be deprived of all his titles, honours, and dignities, and have his head separated from his body on a scaffold on the *Place de Grève*. His goods and property were also confiscated to the King, &c. &c. and the arm of the public executioner terminated the career of the Count de Lally.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

*Observations of Admiral Kempensfelt and M. de Rochon on the Isle of France, in 1758.*

IT was not till the year 1730 that the value of this island was known to the French, and that it became an object of importance. Five years before, this colony had been so neglected that not a single French vessel ever touched at it: but ships, engineers, and workmen were now sent to assist the inhabitants, and to forward the designs that the India Company had formed. With this view, great encouragement had also been given to the inhabitants of the Isle of Bourbon, to engage them to remove to the Isle of France. M. de la Bourdonnais was sent from France as Governor of the two islands. He was a person in every respect qualified to fulfil the duties of that station. It is indeed to his talents, indefatigable industry, and enterprising spirit, that the French India Company owes all the advantages it obtained from one of the most flourishing colonies and best harbours in India. The inhabitants which he found there had, till his arrival, lived in huts; they were ignorant, obstinate, and inured to idleness: those who came from the Island of Bourbon had been so long neglected by the Company, that they had thrown off all idea of dependence, and possessed those bad qualities that naturally result from such a situation. It required therefore great judgment and uncommon address in M. de la Bourdonnais to surmount these difficulties, by reducing these people to discipline and obedience, and introducing among them a spirit of industry, so necessary to the accomplishment of his designs. These rude people, debased by their indolent course of life, and banished, as it were, from their native country, murmured aloud when he ordered them to work, to cut down the wood, to cultivate the earth, to dig in the quarries, to saw planks, and to build houses. Nevertheless, the inhabitants increased, and though they had every reason to fear that they should be in want of subsistence, it was not without some difficulty that M. de la Bourdonnais could engage them to dig the ground, and plant the manioc or the cassada root, to prevent that disaster; as many of the slaves whom they had brought from Madagascar were actually starved.

The manioc is a root which grows on the banks of rivulets,\* and bears in the East Indies a large green leaf; it forms a very nutritious food for the slaves, but in a green state it is absolutely poison, and must be dried before it can be made into wholesome bread. M. de la Bourdonnais brought this root from Brazil,† and obliged every planter, or inhabitant that possessed land, to cultivate five thousand square feet of manioc for every slave; but they were, unfortunately, so habituated to idleness, and so disgusted with his authority, that they did every thing in their power to discredit this root, and oftentimes during the night poured boiling water upon the plants, to check their vegetation. At length, however, for what will not perseverance, talent, and amiable manners accomplish, they were convinced of its utility, and it is this root which now nourishes all the slaves in the island, where they are very numerous, and perform the severest labours.

The Isle of France having never been cultivated, it was very difficult, in the beginning, to till the ground, so as to furnish a sufficient quantity of provisions for the support of its people, and to victual the ships which touched there. Nevertheless, M. de la Bourdonnais attained these important objects in granting to the inhabitants a certain quantity of ground, which had not been cleared, and a proportionable number of slaves at the Company's expense; so that they were enabled to cut down the woods, to cultivate the ground, and to build houses, mills, &c. These various improvements, however, proceeded with a tardy pace; and, from a want of industry, or rather from a spirit of discontent in the people, it was some time before any sensible change took place in the face of the island.

M. de la Bourdonnais was the only person acquainted with the theory and practice of architecture; and having but very few workmen, he not only put a certain number of young people under their direction, but became himself their instructor; and as they advanced in this useful and necessary science, he put slaves under them, in the character of apprentices: but it is not to be conceived what trouble he had to compel the one to teach, and the other to learn: impeded, however, as he was with these and other difficulties, he contrived that wood should be cut, that stones should be dug and shaped; that houses should be built, that roads should be made, and that conveyances by water and wheel carriages should be

\* This officer seems to confound the manioc with the yam of St. Helena, as the former grows in a dry soil, and the latter requires a moist situation.

† Others say from St. Jago.

produced. He also imported horses, and taught oxen to submit to the yoke; he built a very convenient house for himself and his successors, magazines for the Company, an hospital of two stories, which contained five hundred beds, for the sick, and four windmills, with commodious granaries and quays. To these may be added an arsenal, batteries, barracks, shops for the different workmen employed in the canals, aqueducts, and a dockyard. In short, every thing is now seen in that island, which is calculated for the convenience and pleasure of the inhabitants.

The town and port on the north-west side of the island, which is the residence of the Governor and his Council, is situated in a valley surrounded with high mountains, and contains about five hundred houses. They are built of wood, which was in great plenty, as both the Islands of France and Bourbon were originally covered with it. These habitations are in general small, and have only one story with garrets; they are nevertheless disposed with great convenience: their foundation consists of rough stone and lime, about three feet above the surface of the earth, and serves as a platform for the upper part of the house; thus these dwellings are always dry, and as the wood never touches the ground, it is free from those inconveniences to which buildings are subject that are constructed with similar materials.

Wood, however, is now becoming rare, though there is still abundance of it, but as all the environs of the towns, villages, and plantations are in a state of culture, the forests may be said to have been removed to such a distance, that it would require great expense and immense labour to bring the timber from thence, and in many places it is altogether impracticable. The inhabitants, therefore, are already beginning to build with stone, which is in great plenty throughout the island; though it is very dear, as it requires a great number of slaves to dig, carry, and shape it; besides, as there are no European masons, except those who belong exclusively to the Company, who, being free men, demand from one to three dollars a day, stone buildings are very expensive.

The town is irregular, as it was originally begun without any settled plan, and every one was permitted to build according to the suggestions of his own fancy. The quays are very commodious, both for the loading and unloading of small vessels. The soft water, which comes from a river about a league from the town, is conducted thither by a canal to the foot of a high mountain, at the western extremity of the place, where the boats come under a large reservoir, and fill their barrels with the greatest facility.

Towards the middle of the town, there is a large space surrounded with a strong high stone wall, which contains the buildings appropriated to the slaves of the Company, as well as the public stables, &c. The inhabitants are not permitted to encroach upon this spot, as it is reserved by the Company for their future occasions.

The valley, in which the town is situated, is low and flat, covered with rocks and stones, which renders the streets and ways rough and uneven; but immediately round the buildings belonging to the Company, the ground is rendered very level. At the extremity of the valley, and at the foot of the mountains there is a considerable space of ground cleared of the stones, and covered with a grass plat: it is called the Field of Mars, as it is the place where the troops perform their exercise: it also contains a rope walk, and is the public promenade of the inhabitants.

The port is not large, and it has been rendered less by two ships which sunk almost in the middle of it.\* It is, however, still sufficient for the purposes of the Company. The entrance of it is narrow, and defended by two batteries on two low points of land, almost opposite each other: they were begun after the fleet, commanded by Admiral Boscawen, had appeared off the island, and have proved very expensive works to the Company, though they are not finished. M. Cossini, who was the engineer there, from the nature of the ground, met with infinite difficulties in forming a solid foundation. The ships are moored at two guns shot from the quay, and the smaller vessels close to them. There are several pontoons for the purpose of careening the vessels, and the workshops of the carpenters, rope makers, armourers, coopers, shipwrights, &c. are so near the port, that the artificers may be hailed from the ships.

In the harbour there are two rocks, or islets, on which are erected two stone windmills: there is also a small bason, or natural pond of salt water, where the turtles are kept which are brought from the Island of Rodriguez, about ninety leagues east south-east.

M. de la Bourdonnais had formed the design of a regular fortification on the most elevated part of the town, that is very well calculated for the purpose to which it would have been applied; but it was not completed. This spot is near the hospital, and commands the town, the high road, and a large and commodious bason, or small

\* The carcasses of thirty-four vessels have been numbered, which have at different times foundered in this port and its environs. (See pages 11 and 12.)

harbour, that communicates with the other, where inferior vessels might remain in perfect security; and if it were not for a small chain of coral rocks, that appear above the water in the middle of it, and which M. de la Bourdonnais had determined to extirpate, it would have sufficient depth for vessels of the greatest burthen.

The lime employed in building is made of white coral, which is in great abundance throughout the whole circumference of the island, and is of an excellent quality, after the stone has been washed in fresh water to discharge the saline matter, with which it is naturally and strongly impregnated.

Among the many other improvements that M. de la Bourdonnais had made in this island, there is a machine of his invention, by means of which the chaloupes and long-boats are lifted out of the water, and put in a situation to be speedily repaired, with very little trouble and expense. A vessel of an hundred tons, having become very leaky and incapable of service, at a moment when there was a great want of vessels, was brought to this machine, where her leaks were stopped, her bottom cleaned and repaired, and she herself set afloat in the space of an hour.

There are several kinds of wood in this island, but from their great distance, and the rocks, mountains, and rivers that intervene, it is almost impossible to bring them to the inhabited parts. Ebony is very common, as well as many other kinds, which are extremely hard; one, in particular, is of a reddish colour, and of a very close grain, which is called nattes, and is the timber commonly employed in buildings. I have seen some of the trees from forty to fifty feet long. This wood, however, is in general too heavy to be employed in the construction of ships, as M. de la Bourdonnais experienced when he built a ship in this port, called *l'Insulaire*; though some vessels have since been built, and employed between these two Islands and Madagascar, Pondicherry, &c.

About two or three miles to the west of the town, there is a considerable river, called *La Grand Rivière*, from whence the town and harbour are supplied with fresh water; and at the mouth of it a powder mill is at this time erecting. It would be very easy for an enemy to land at this place, as well as in others in different parts of the island. There are, indeed, some batteries with heavy cannon, and small magazines for ammunition near the shore, which, being almost covered with brush-wood, are not perceptible by an enemy; nevertheless, from their great extent, and distance from the harbour, they would require a large body of troops to defend them. There is guard-house on the summit of an high, steep mountain, at the



western extremity of the town, where a flag is hoisted when a vessel is discovered in the offing. There is another upon a still more elevated and distant point, which serves as a signal to the inhabitants of the country; so that by their means any intelligence is communicated to the whole island. When the island was menaced by the English admiral, previous to the siege of Pondicherry, M. de la Bourdonnais, with incredible difficulty, contrived to place some mortars on the first of these mountains.

There are scorpions in the Isle of France, but no wild beast of a dangerous nature. Its harbours, as well as the rivers and coasts, furnish abundance of fish, &c.

The island contains four parishes, and as many churches, and as the inhabitants increase, other parishes are marked out, and places of worship erected. The principal church, when finished, will be the largest, as well as the best, piece of architecture in the island. The Governor, besides his town house, has a villa in the country, called the Reduit, in the middle of a wood, guarded with some pieces of cannon, where there is a curious garden under the direction of M. Oblette, an experienced botanist. On the south-east coast of the island, there is another large harbour, which possesses a far more commodious entrance, but as the winds generally blow into it, it is seldom frequented from the difficulty of its outward passage: there is a small town near it, where the Company has a warehouse. The woods were formerly full of deer, but they have been so much destroyed, that their number at present is comparatively small, except in the impenetrable parts of the forest, where they retire for safety.

There are many high mountains, the most remarkable of which is called Peterbot, a name that was given it by the Dutch. It is of an extraordinary elevation, and its summit is generally covered with clouds. Many of the large rocks and stones, which are scattered about the country, are cleft in two at equal distances, from six to twelve inches, as if it had been the work of art, instead of some singular operation of nature. Beneath these rocks and stones rats are found in great numbers, which are very destructive to the plantations: however, the inhabitants are sufficiently encouraged in their labour, by constant demands for their productions, and the price that is paid for them. Hence it is, that the plantations are increasing in number, extent, and value; the wood is proportionably cleared, and the scene of cultivation enlarged and improved. The plantations require from thirty to two

hundred slaves, according to their extent; they are in general pleasantly situated near a rivulet, and decorated with hedges. The houses are built with wood, and at a small distance from them are villages of huts, which form the residence of the slaves: many of the planters are rich, and are continually improving their situation. In proportion as the inhabitants increase, the price of their productions advances, and having more than sufficient in the island for their domestic consumption, in grain, cattle, fowl, fruits, &c. they are able to supply the vessels which touch there, with refreshments.

The planters raise as large a quantity of live stock as they can, for which they have always a very beneficial sale. It is impossible for me to calculate the number of inhabitants with any degree of precision; but the island appeared to be very populous. The artisans and mechanics are very numerous; and when to these are added the sailors, who are continually coming and going, with the military forces, and the slaves, we may suppose a body of many thousand people. The slaves are brought from Gorée, an island on the coast of Guinea, from Madagascar, the eastern coast of Africa, and Bengal: the latter are generally preferred for home service. They are Gentoos, and of a docile character, therefore better qualified for domestic purposes than the others, who are of a robust form, and able to undergo the severer labours of tilling the ground. Many of these slaves are ingenious and easy to instruct, which their masters find it very advantageous, as they become artificers; some of whom are known to gain a dollar per day. In case of attack, many of these people may be armed without danger, particularly such as have been born in the island. When the fleet commanded by Admiral Boscawen threatened Pondicherry, a considerable body of them, natives of the Isles of France and Bourbon, voluntarily engaged in the public service, and were accordingly conveyed to Pondicherry, where they contributed very much to the preservation of that important fortress.

The women are handsome and very numerous, so that every artificer, workman, and soldier has a wife; they are very fruitful, which circumstance is imputed to the salubrity of the climate: they take a great deal of exercise, and are bold equestrians. The poorer classes of both sexes in the country, never have any covering to their feet.

The two most considerable establishments that M. de la Bourdonnais erected in this island, were the iron forges and sugar works; they cost very large sums, in mills, canals, and machines of various kinds, to advance them to that degree of

perfection, which they have now attained, particularly in the manufacture of iron : the sugar works are at Vilbague, and produce at this time sufficient sugar for the consumption of the two islands, as well as to supply the vessels which arrive there : I found it to be of a fine grain, as well as clear and strong : it is sold in the shops of the island at five sous the pound.

M. de la Bourdonnais and the Count de Rostaing, principal engineer, discovered an iron mine in one of their plantations, or at least that kind of earth from which iron is extracted in Europe : some pieces of it were sent to the Company, which, on being assayed, were found to produce a greater quantity of ore than common mines. Under the encouragement, therefore, of the Company, the mine was opened, and works, with all the accessory machines, were constructed ; workmen were also sent from Europe, and, after the usual obstacles which attend the commencement of great undertakings were surmounted, some bars of its manufacture were sent to France, to Mahé, Pondicherry, and Chandernagore, as samples, where they were very much approved. Some time after cannon and mortars were cast at these works, and I have seen some of them mounted on the ramparts of Pondicherry, and the batteries of the Isle of France, where they are considered by no means inferior to those which had been sent from Europe ; but so great was the consumption of wood in these works, that there was not sufficient quantity of it, in their neighbourhood, to last more than eight or ten years. This, and other causes, occasioned the proprietors to relax in their enterprize, and at length to discontinue it. Thus M. de la Bourdonnais has transformed a desert island into a flourishing colony, and I have every reason to believe, that the port will give the French a decided advantage over us in India ; the consequences of which, we do not appear to consider as they deserve. I sincerely wish that Admiral Boscawen had taken it, instead of making an unsuccessful attempt upon Pondicherry.\* It would then have been a very easy conquest, as it did not possess its present strength, and many of the inhabitants were discontented, and secretly wished for a change in their government.

Both men and women are strong and well made : they breathe an wholesome air, are in continual exercise, and are distinguished for their moderation and temperance. The women are remarkable for the beauty and elegance of their shape, in which they surpass those of old France.

\* Dr. Campbell represents the Isle of France, as one of the finest islands and most important places on the globe.

*Observations on the Isle of France, by M. Roobon.*

While the little French colony of the Isle of Bourbon enjoyed some degree of prosperity, that of the Dutch, established in the Isle of France, was in a state of distress and decay. I am at a loss to discover the reason, why the Dutch settled themselves in this island, which they named Mauritius; I only know, that they complained of the injury they had sustained, by the locusts and the rats, when they abandoned it, in 1712, to establish themselves at the Cape of Good Hope.

The inhabitants of the Isle of Bourbon, on the departure of the Dutch, were eager to possess themselves of the island they had left behind them, which is not more than thirty-four leagues from their own; the air is healthy, but though it is less fertile and extensive than the Isle of Bourbon, it possesses the advantage of having excellent ports, and of being to the windward.

In 1734, the French East India Company formed a resolution of establishing a considerable settlement in this island. The completion of this important object was intrusted to M. la Bourdonnais, who was born to command, because he knew how to insure obedience, and proved, in this remote part of the globe, that his skill and talents were equalled by the wisdom of his civil administration. To him, and him alone, the island is indebted for its aqueducts, its bridges, its hospitals, and principal magazines: in short, whatever exists at this day, in those islands, whether of public or private utility, may be considered as the work of that celebrated character. From his universal knowledge, persevering spirit, unerring judgment, and engaging manners, all his undertakings for the advantage of the colony, during an administration of twelve years, were attended with a prompt and successful issue.

It was to his sagacity, that the inhabitants are indebted for their principal settlement at the north-west port. A less enlightened understanding than his, would have preferred that to the south-east, because it is larger and more commodious, but this able navigator well knew the incalculable advantages of a port to the leeward.

The cultivation of grain is the most advantageous employment in the Isle of France; as the ground annually yields successive harvests of corn and maize. The manioc, a native of the Brazils, and naturalized by M. la Bourdonnais, is the principal food of the slaves. The continual demands of ships that put into the port of this island, have made the augmentation of cattle and sheep an important concern. The island produces an excellent grass, which springs up at the beginning of the



rainy season, and attains its full growth in the space of three months: the inhabitants avail themselves of this period to pasture their flocks; but no sooner is the vegetation completed, than a straw succeeds, which is too hard for the nourishment of animals. The flocks and herds then quit the savannahs, and seek the food that the forests afford them. This straw is so dry that the least spark sets it in a flame, which is so rapid that it is impossible to stop its progress. These conflagrations have sometimes consumed the adjoining woods.

When the Portuguese discovered this island, it was covered with wood to the very summits of the mountains; in short, it was one vast forest of fine trees. In the early period of its settlement the ground was cleared by the means of fire, and it would then have been a wise measure to have left small districts of wood at short distances from each other. The rains, which in the hot countries are so necessary to the fertility of the earth, very seldom fall upon those spots that are entirely cleared of trees, as it is the forests which attract the clouds, and draw the humidity from them; besides the cultivated grounds have no protection against violent winds.

The high mountains which border on the harbour, and defend it from the violence of the winds, have been cleared to their very summits, which are burnt up, and the vegetable earth is precipitated into the vallies. The large trees have been cut down or burnt, which, when the island was first inhabited, prevented these dangerous removals of the surface; so that the anchorage of the vessels is no longer protected from the high sea, and violent winds. A temporary advantage induced the first colonists to deprive the port of that security which it formerly possessed.

M. de Tromelin, a French officer, undertook to find a remedy for this evil, by which the port should be protected from hurricanes: and, when he obtained the necessary permission, he began to form canals, to convey the torrents from the mountains to the sea behind the island of Tonnelier, into a part where they occasion no injury. This able and experienced officer extended his views still farther, and contrived, by the application of gunpowder, to force a passage through a bank of coral, by which ships might enter into the bason, known by the name of Trou-fanfaron. It is three hundred fathoms in length, by sixty in breadth, but its mean depth did not exceed ten feet; it was therefore necessary to increase it to twenty-five, in order to render it capable of receiving vessels of large burden.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

*An Account of the Archipelagos and Sand-banks between the Maldivé Islands and the Isles of France and Bourbon, by M. Rochon.—Description of the Commora Isles by Spilberg, &c.*

THE Isles of France and Bourbon, &c. may be compared, for the beauty of the climate, and salubrity of the air, to the Fortunate Islands; but the former are separated from the Indian sea by an archipelago full of banks and rocks.

The ships which, on leaving the Isle of France for India, were forced, during the two monsoons, to take a long and indirect course, in order to avoid the archipelago to the northward of it; and, until it had been explored, it was dangerous for a squadron to attempt a more direct route. To the south of the Equinoctial line, from the eighth to the twenty-eighth degree of latitude, the winds are south-easterly throughout the year. From the eighth degree to the Line, the south-east monsoon begins in April, and continues till October, when the west monsoon succeeds it. To the north of the Line this arrangement of nature is reversed.

On leaving the Isle of France for India, in the fine season, the first place to be made is the most northerly point of Madagascar: and, proceeding from thence between the base of Patrum and the Amirantes, the Line is crossed in the fiftieth degree of longitude; and finding, on the northern side, the western monsoon, the Maldives are traversed between Kelloâ and Shullepar, where the vessel changes its course for Cochin: the rest of its navigation is along the coast.

Ships which set out from the Isle of France, in the bad season, for Pondicherry, are obliged to make a longer and much more indirect route; they bear away for the variable winds as far as the thirty-sixth degree of south latitude; and then direct their course so as to cross the Line in the eighty-fifth degree.

The principal points that M. Rochon has determined, are the Secheyles Isles, the base of Corgados, Salha de Mala, Diego Garcia Isle, and the Adu Isles.

Secheyles Isle has a very good harbour; it is situated in four degrees thirty-eight minutes south latitude, and fifty-three degrees fifteen minutes east longitude, from the meridian of Paris.

This island is covered with wood to the very summit of the mountains, and abounds with land and sea-turtle, of three hundred pounds weight. On determining the situation of it in 1769, by M. Rochon, the adjacent islands appeared to be inhabited only by enormous crocodiles; but since that time a small settlement has been made there, and the nutmeg and clove cultivated. In one of these islands, called Palm Island, is to be seen the tree which bears that well known fruit called the cocoa of the Maldives, or the sea-cocoa.

The circuit of Diego Garcia is twelve leagues, and is in the form of an horse-shoe; it is not a mile over in its broadest part, nevertheless the land is sufficiently elevated, so as to form a border and shelter to a bason capable of receiving the largest fleet: this bason is four leagues in length by one of mean width: this excellent harbour has two good entrances on the north side, and is situated in seven degrees fourteen minutes south latitude, and in sixty-eight degrees longitude, east of Paris.

Although this archipelago is covered with rocks, they are not as yet all known. The ancient maps of M. d'Après do not describe the whole of them. The collection of charts of the Isle of France are full of notes, written by M. Rochon, which shew that M. d'Après has confounded Artove with Agalega, and Corgados with St. Brandon, although there were among his papers the different plans of these islands and rocks, which contained many errors less obvious, but nevertheless of great importance.

The plan of Corgados had been taken by the boats Charles and Elizabeth, while that of St. Brandon is printed in the English pilot. These two dangerous rocks differ essentially both as to form and longitude; for they are fifty leagues distant from one another. Corgados is in the shape of a crescent, and St. Brandon forms an equilateral triangle; M. d'Après, confounding these two dangerous islets, has given them a mean position in his charts, because he had found them on the ancient charts in the same latitude; this position, however, is incorrect, and by no means ascertains the course that must be taken to avoid them. M. Rochon adds, on the memorable day when Venus passed over the sun's disk, in the month of June, 1769, "I could not observe the passage of that star, important as it was, though the weather was clear and serene, as the vessel in which I was embarked was in danger of shipwreck off Corgados: if we could not have doubled the easternmost point of this frightful rock we must have perished; I am therefore justified in resisting the general opinion of the charts of M. d'Après."

We cannot enter at present into a more minute detail of the archipelago which separates India from the Isle of France, though it is absolutely necessary to be well acquainted with it, in order to undertake the most direct course during either of the monsoons.

The following events, that happened in these seas, afford the consolatory information, that any unfortunate shipwrecked navigator, thrown on the arid coast or barren isles, may find from the fish and animals which frequent the shores, a certain subsistence.

The ship named the *Heureux* left the Isle of France on the 30th of August, 1769, being bound for Bengal, and most unexpectedly fell in with the islands of Jean de Nove. The captain determined to pass them to leeward, and to avoid, by this manœuvre, the surrounding dangers. As soon as he had doubled them he took his course north-east by north, with a view of shortening his passage by some days: he perceived that he ought not to neglect any means of accelerating his arrival in Bengal, because the season was very far advanced: but in this passage the vessel was cast at midnight, upon two shallows, which gave the crew no hopes of saving themselves. These shallows were surrounded by a chain of breakers, which increased their alarm. All their manœuvres appeared useless, and the vessel was upon the point of going to the bottom, when the captain ordered the anchor to be cast, in such a manner as to give him some hope of the vessels being shipwrecked in shoal-water. This manœuvre succeeded, and the crew were enabled to pass the remainder of the night in the shrouds: day-break, however, did not free them from this dreadful situation, but at half past six in the morning they had some glimmering of hope, as they perceived at a distance a small sand-bank: all the crew passed over to it in the boat which the captain had taken the precaution to hoist overboard before the fatal moment when his vessel was wrecked. But this sand-bank was nothing more than a flat shore, left bare by the sea at low tide. In this cruel dilemma the captain saw no other resource than to send his boat to the coast of Africa for assistance. These unfortunate people, eight hours after their departure, met with a rock in their way, which they called Providence Isle: this rock was not entirely barren, for they found in it fresh water, sea turtles, and cocoas. Nine of the boat's crew remained there, whilst two strong rowers attempted to gain the sand-bank where the rest of the ship's crew had taken refuge, in the expectation of receiving succour. Their hope, however, was lessening, as they saw the fatal term approach-

ing in which they would be swallowed up by the high tides. The boat was three days in getting there, and was too small to take them all on board; but this want was supplied by a raft from the wreck of the vessel. It possessed the dimensions requisite to contain the provisions and utensils which were necessary for the construction of a chaloupe. The raft was towed by the canoe to the Isle of Providence, and the shipwrecked people remained two months upon that rock, in order to construct a boat of five-and-twenty feet in length, in which they had the good fortune to reach Madagascar without any further accident. The Isle of Providence is  $9^{\circ} 5'$  latitude, and  $50^{\circ}$  longitude; and is north-north-west, and some degrees to the west of the Isle of France.

M. Moreau, Captain of the sloop *Favori*, dispatched from the Isle of France on the 9th of February, 1757, to Narrapore, on the 26th of March following fell in with the Adu Isles: from his observation the latitude was  $5^{\circ} 6'$  south, and according to his reckoning,  $76^{\circ}$  of longitude, to the east of Paris. He sent a boat on shore which he was obliged to abandon, being forced away by the currents. Six leagues to the south of these islands M. Moreau fell in with a bank, which had a good bottom. A narrative of what befel the party which were thus involuntarily deserted, and of their arrival at Cranganore, near Calicut, has already been given in a former part of this Volume.

The Isle de Sable was discovered in 1722, by the ship *la Diane*, Captain M. de la Feuillée. It is flat; and is not a quarter of a league in circumference: however, at the northern and southern points of it fresh water is to be found, at the depth of fifteen feet. The ship *l'Utile*, Captain M. de la Fargue, was shipwrecked here in 1761. The officers, and the ship's crew, which was for the most part composed of blacks, saved themselves upon this small island. They built, during their abode of six months there, a chaloupe out of the wreck of the vessel aboard of which the white people embarked. They fortunately reached the small island of St. Mary, near Madagascar, after a short passage. The blacks remained upon this rock in the fruitless expectation of receiving assistance from their companions; but they were left to perish there without a single attempt being made to rescue them from their melancholy situation. The corvette, the *Dauphin*, commanded by M. Tromelin, whose brother has been already mentioned with the distinction he deserves, on the 29th of September, 1776, fell in with the Isle de Sable, and, notwithstanding the dangers which threatened any approach to it, he had



the good fortune to take back to the Isle of France the sad remains of the crew of the Utile. Eighty Negroes, male and female, had perished from distress, or in attempting to save themselves on rafts, which they had constructed: seven Negro women had resisted, during fifteen years, all the rigours of the most cruel situation that imagination can form. The most elevated part of this shoal is fifteen feet above the level of the sea: it is six hundred fathom in length, and about three hundred in breadth. These deserted Negroes had constructed a hut with the remains of the vessel, and had covered it with the shells of turtle; while the feathers of birds, ingeniously interwoven by the women, served them for clothing. This island is one scene of sterility; nor has it any shelter from the fury of the sea in the tempestuous seasons. One of the seven females who had escaped the united pressure of hunger and despair, became in this deplorable situation, the mother of a child, who perished with her. They related, that they had seen five vessels which had made many unsuccessful attempts to land on the place of their dire captivity.

#### *The Commora Islands.*

As these islands make a part of the great Æthiopian Archipelago, we conceive that this is the proper place to mention them: and before we give their particular description, we shall present an extract from the Voyages of Spilberg, which will inform us of the reception the Dutch met with, when they first touched at them. On his arrival at the first of the Commora Islands, Spilberg sent a boat on shore to ascertain the disposition of the islanders, which returned with various kinds of refreshments, and with the assurance that the place might be approached in safety. On the following day an interpreter, with some of the inhabitants, brought provisions, for which they were paid; and on the 22d they came to an anchor in the road, where there was a good bottom in thirty fathom water.

Spilberg now ordered a large case of merchandize and some bars of iron to be carried into the house of the Prince, by way of security for the payment of what might be furnished for the service of the ships. In this island, which was named Mohilla, there was plenty of cattle but very little rice. The Prince was a man of considerable experience, having travelled in Arabia and other places: he spoke the Portuguese language with great fluency, and was extremely fond of music; he took great delight in hearing the flourish of trumpets, and it appeared even that he had heard the harpsicord and the harp, as he enquired whether those instruments



were on board any of the ships. His son paid a visit to Spilberg, with a great number of officers and two Turks, all superbly dressed in the Turkish fashion: he was received in a very respectful manner, and an handsome collation was prepared for him, but as it was a fast-day according to his religion, he declined partaking of it. The Admiral made him several presents for the Queen, his mother, as well as for himself, consisting of looking glasses, and necklaces of amber and crystal. The Queen immediately sent in return a bullock and several goats.

These mutual civilities inspired a mutual confidence, so that the Dutch visited the town at their ease, where they received the most hospitable attentions. They solicited their Admiral to comply with the desire of the King and the Queen, who had expressed an earnest wish to receive him on shore, as the latter had been induced to come from the furthest part of the island in the hope of seeing him. But the adventure of Rufisco was still in his mind, and made him deaf to their entreaties; though the King offered his son as an hostage: and to give him a further example of confidence, he proposed to pay him a visit on board his ship, and appointed the 5th of March for that purpose. He was accompanied by a great number of his people, all dressed in the Turkish fashion; and his visit proved, to all appearance, extremely satisfactory to him. He was acquainted with navigation; and when a globe and charts were brought to him, he distinguished very readily the principal places in the East Indies. It appeared from his observations, that he lately frequented the Red Sea, of which he had perfect knowledge. As the season of fasting was not yet passed, there were no other means of entertaining him but by musical instruments, and the discharge of artillery: he declared the utmost satisfaction at the desire which had been manifested to please him; and it is not easy to determine if any treacherous design was lurking behind his exterior deportment.

Two days after, Spilberg went on shore without giving him any previous notice, and on his arrival at the city, he, by chance, met the High Priest of the island, who pressed him to pay a visit to the king: he again begged to be excused at present, on pretext of the fast not being over; the principal pleasure of visiting being to eat and drink. The season of fasting being completed, he was solicited more than ever to go on shore, and take part in the festivities of the town: he, however, made other pretexts for his refusal; but although the King voluntarily came on board to congratulate Captain Speck on his joining the fleet with his ship, neither this politeness nor the renewed invitations of the Prince, could

overcome his resolution. In the meanwhile the ship's crew carried on their traffic without entertaining the least suspicion of any treachery: but, on the 31st of March, the chaloupe and a canoe having been ordered out with eight-and-twenty men, to take in water, they did not return as was usual, at sunset. In vain were signals fired and repeated; and the night passed without receiving any news of them. Next day a white flag was hoisted, and all the necessary precautions were taken to prevent a sudden attack: no body, however, appeared upon the shore, neither did any canoe come off, nor was any signal made to answer those of the fleet. So strange an event excited the greater alarm in the Admiral, as, after such a diminution of his forces, the crew that remained, half of whom were sick, was not sufficient to give any hopes of succeeding by violence. Although he had lost his chaloupe and canoe he could have landed some of his men near a suburb of about two hundred houses, called the *Fisber's Suburb*, and at least demand the reason of an event that confounded him. Confidence and friendship had reigned without interruption throughout their intercourse: nor had there arisen the least dispute between the Dutch and the Islanders. It was, however, to be feared, that those who landed might be detained like the rest, which would necessarily produce some acts of hostilities; they therefore got under way, and having stood into the bay, they made fresh signals of their preparations to depart. At last Spilberg, discouraged at so many useless endeavours, resolved to sail for the Isle of Anjouan, where the Queen, then sovereign of the four Commora Islands, ordinarily held her court: with this design he weighed anchor; but his surprise and grief were much increased when, having stood off both Anjouan and Mayotta, he found in the inhabitants the same obstinacy in not shewing themselves, and refusing to answer his signals, although they formerly brought their refreshments freely on board the fleet: prudence, however, would not allow him to land on the two islands. At last the discontents of the sick, and the impossibility of freeing the prisoners, caused him to call those who were in a condition to hear him, to witness that he had no reason to reproach himself for what had happened, and that the interest of his masters obliged him to continue his voyage. This resolution was universally approved, and they immediately set sail. The eight-and-twenty men who were thus abandoned, and among whom was the Admiral's secretary, were the healthiest and strongest persons of the fleet.

*Description of the Commora Islands.*

The Commora Islands, which are situated to the north-north-west of Madagascar, are five in number; the largest gives its name to all the rest, although the other four have each a particular name, which are Mohilla, Angaréja, Johanna and Mayotta.

Though the Island of Commora is the largest, it is, nevertheless, in every other respect, the least remarkable; it has no safe road for shipping, and the inhabitants are so barbarous and uncivilized, that Europeans have never ventured to make a long abode there: they are, in general, jealous of strangers, and have a particular aversion to the natives of Europe. It is said, that the cruelties which the Portuguese exercised the first time they landed there, are the cause of this suspicious disposition. The Island of Mohilla is of as little consequence as that of Commora; it is very seldom visited, not only on account of the inhospitable disposition of its people, but also from there not being any convenient spot for shipping.

All the islands, however, are extremely fertile, well stocked with cattle, sheep, hogs, and birds of different kinds; they produce likewise sweet and sour oranges, citrons, bananas, honey, sugar-canes, rice, ginger, cocoa nuts, &c.

The Isle of Angaréja is inhabited by Moors, who traffic with different parts of the continent, and several of the islands in the east, by means of their fruits and other productions of the island, bartering them for calicoes and other cotton manufactures. The bread used in these islands is made of the kernel of cocoa nuts, boiled or broiled, and covered with honey; their drink is palm wine, and a juice extracted from the sugar-cane, which they leave to ferment, or the milk of the cocoa-nut. They never let strangers see their women without a permission from their chiefs, or an order brought by the stranger himself; many of them speak and write the Arabic language with facility; and some even understand the Portuguese tongue; this advantage they derive from their trade in the Mozambique Straits, which they carry on in vessels of about forty tons. They build their houses with stone and lime, made from calcined oyster shells, with which they cover their walls and roofs: their windows are shaded by the leaves of the palm-tree, which protect them at the same time from the violence of the rain, and the excessive heat of the sun. The government of this isle is aristocratical, and is conducted by ten of its principal inhabitants.

The island of Mohilla is subject to a sultan, whose children share his authority as

viceroy over different districts of the island : they all take the title of sultan, though subordinate to the authority of their father ; and each of them has his guards, his crown, his sceptre, and all the other symbols of royalty, with a numerous court. The sultan never appears without being attended by twenty of the principal persons of the island : and, on these occasions, he is clad in a long robe of striped calico, which hangs from his shoulders to his feet, with a turban on his head. The people also generally wear long garments of a similar stuff ; they continually chew the areka or beetle nut, like the Indians of the East, to whom they bear a great resemblance in their manners and actions.

The Island of Johanna is the most frequented by, and best known to, Europeans ; who frequently touch there for refreshments, in their voyage to Bombay or the coast of Malabar. This island is in twelve degrees twenty minutes south latitude ; is thirty miles in length, fifteen in breadth, and about fourscore in circumference ; although certain parts of it are very mountainous, it is equally pleasant and fertile : the soil is naturally good, and its various rivers render it abundant in all the necessaries of life.

To give an idea of the beauty of this island we shall relate the account of an excursion made into the interior parts of it by Mr. Grose. It is as follows :—

“ We set out very early in the morning, with a design of penetrating about six miles into the country before the sun should incommode us, and it was no common undertaking, considering the mountainous surface that we had to pass. We had taken our fowling-pieces, in the hope of killing game if we could attain the summit of the mountains, whither they retire ; but, notwithstanding our utmost efforts to climb up them on our hands and knees, we found it impossible, and were obliged to content ourselves with the small birds that we found in the vallies, and on the hills whose ascent we had accomplished. We breakfasted on pine-apples, and the milk of cocoa-nuts served to assuage our thirst. Towards noon we arrived at a fine lake, on whose banks we sat down to make another repast, and to enjoy the natural cascades which fell from the rocks, and, by blending their several noises from their respective distances, produced a soft and agreeable kind of water-music.

“ The orange and lemon trees, bending beneath the weight of their fruit, dispersed a fragrance that embalmed the air : there were, also wild pine trees, which bore a fruit of thirteen inches in circumference, and of a more exquisite flavour than those I have since eaten in India : our guides also pointed out to us a great number of



guava trees, and particularly a tree whose fruit resembles our damson, which leave an agreeable flavour on the palate several minutes after it has been eaten : they all grow without any regularity or order, and receive no advantage from cultivation : some cover the tops of the mountains, others shade the water-falls, or thicken in the vallies ; the whole forming a terrestrial paradise, in comparison of which the finest gardens of France, with their statues and canals, their parterres and their fountains, exhibit but a poor and meagre scenery.

“ We quitted with regret this charming spot, after having admired its beauties, and which still added more to our pleasure, having nothing to fear from wild beasts, or poisonous animals. We then returned to our tent, well rewarded for the fatigue we had undergone in our excursion.”

This island produces several other kinds of fruit besides those already mentioned ; among which there is a remarkable kind of sweet orange ; it is about the size of a common lemon, but of a much more delicious taste than those that grow in Portugal. The principal domestic animals are cattle, sheep, and hogs ; the bullocks are of a moderate size, like those in the East Indies, and are remarkable for large fleshy excrescences on their backs : their flesh is very sweet, and the excrescence, when it has been well salted, eats like marrow : the natives prefer it to the tongue.

The woods abound with monkeys of different kinds, but there is no beast of prey, or venomous creatures : there are also two animals of the monkey kind, one is called the mongoo, and the other the mauaulo. The mongoo is of the size of a small cat, and its head resembles that of a fox ; its eyes are black, with a yellow circle round the pupil ; near the eyes the skin is black, and descends in a point to the nose, which is also black ; but there is a small white space between the eyes and the nose, which continues from the face to the ears ; the upper part of the head, the hinder parts, the tail, and the limbs, are of an ash colour, while the belly is white ; the hair has a tendency to wool ; the feet resemble those of a man, with flat nails, except one sharp talon on the hinder feet ; the tail of this animal is long, and its hair is thick and soft ; its actions resemble those of the monkey ; it lives on fruits and herbs, but, in general, will eat any thing, not excepting fish. There are several kinds of these, but they do not appear to differ, except in their colour. It is gentle in its nature, and has no apparent means of defending itself.

The mauaulo is of the size of a common cat, but its body and limbs are much



smaller; its tail is twice the length of that which nature has given to the cat; its snout is long, and resembles that of a fox: the iris of the eye is a brilliant yellow; its face and ears are white, but its nose is black; each eye is surrounded with a large circle of the same colour, and on the sides of the head and eyebrows there are long stiff hairs, resembling the whiskers of a cat, the crown and the hinder part of the head are of a dark ash colour, and the hair, in those parts, is longer than that of the face, but the hinder part and the sides have a slight tinge of red; the legs are of a light ash colour; the upper part of the feet is white; the fore feet resemble the human hand, with a thumb and flat nails, while the hinder ones are remarkable for the size of its principal toe, and the inside of them is covered with black hair: the skin in every part has the softness of velvet. This animal has two teats on the breast, which have the same position as in the monkey species: the tail is covered with fur, and decorated with large alternate rings of black and white: when it sleeps it rests its nose on its belly, brings all its feet together, as if it were sitting, and guards its head with its tail.

The black mauaulo is of the same size as that we have just described, is of the same gentle nature, and soon rendered familiar, though it has all the tricks and finesse of a monkey. Its head is like that of a fox, with a pointed snout; it eats in a sitting posture, and holds its food with its paws.

There are several species of fowl, and different kinds of game, but the inhabitants are so awkward in the use of nets and fowling-pieces, that they seldom kill any of them,

The sea abounds in different kinds of excellent fish, and the islanders are very skilful in taking them; they consist of the ray, the mullet, and a flat fish that resembles our turbot; but the most remarkable species is the peroquet fish, so named from the resemblance of its snout to the beak of that bird: it is about a foot long, and of a greenish colour, spotted with yellow: its fins are blue; its eyes, which are very lively, are of the same colour, with a yellow iris; the scales are large, and it has two rows of teeth, with which it contrives to open the muscles and oysters: its flesh is very firm, and of an excellent flavour.

The natives of this island are, in general, tall, robust, and well made, but the women are inferior to the men: they have, all of them, long black hair, piercing eyes, and their colour is between olive and black. The poor people live in huts made

with twigs, interwoven with, and covered by, a coat of strong grass : while the roof is protected by a kind of mat, made of the leaves of cocoa trees. The upper orders have houses built of stone, cemented with tempered clay.

Vegetables and milk form their principal food ; but instead of oil and vinegar for their sallad, they use a liquor which they extract from the cocoa-nut. Persons of rank are distinguished by the nails of their fingers, which they suffer to grow to an immoderate length ; they also paint them with the *alkana*, which produces an orange colour : this fruit is found on a particular kind of shrub, that grows in marshy places. They generally wear large knives attached to a belt which is fastened round their middle ; the handles of some of them are of silver and agate.

The lower ranks have no other dress than a piece of coarse cloth tied round their loins, with a sort of cap upon the head, made of any kind of stuff they can procure. Those of the rank above them wear a shirt with large sleeves, which hangs down upon a pair of drawers, and covers a waistcoat made of a thick or light stuff, according to the season : the higher orders wear turbans.

The women are clad in a kind of jacket and petticoat, with a loose robe, and when they go out, their face is covered with a veil : they are very careful in adorning their legs, their arms, and their ears ; they wear in the latter such a variety of baubles, in the form of pendants, that the lobes of them are drawn down to their shoulders ; their arms and wrists are decorated with a number of bracelets, made of glass, of iron, of copper, of tin, or of silver, according to their rank and fortune. They suffer their children, both male and female, to be naked till the age of seven or eight years, a custom very general among the people of the East ; they consider heat as more hurtful than cold, and are of opinion that a free access of air to every part of their bodies tends to strengthen them, and is much more favourable to their growth than if they were enveloped in clothes : thus, in their opinion, the infants and children are preserved from many maladies to which those are subject who are educated in a different manner. Health is the principal object with these people, and they have the good sense to consider it as the first blessing of life.

They are remarkable for their simplicity, obliging disposition, and hospitality, which often exceeds their means of indulging it : their manners preserve that natural appearance which proves that they have not yet been corrupted by the arts of the more civilized world.

The delightful temperature of their climate renders them indolent, and prone to

amorous indulgence. They often avail themselves of the liberty which their laws allow them, to divorce their wives on the slightest pretences, and from the mere love of variety; though they generally have two or three wives, and as many concubines as they can maintain. They will ask freely for what will give them pleasure; but they are by no means addicted to theft: they treat the English, in particular, with the greatest cordiality, from a principle of gratitude, for the essential assistance which they formerly received from them in their wars with the people of Mohilla: at the same time they are extremely jealous of all other European nations, especially of the Portuguese, with whose usurpations on the shores of the continent they are well acquainted. They trust, for their defence, to the inaccessible mountains in the interior parts of the island, and consider them as the impenetrable barriers which nature has given them.

Their tongue is a corrupt Arabic, blended with the language of Zanguebar, a part of the continent opposite to them, and from whence, it is probable, that the Com-mora Isles were originally peopled. The white people among them, who are generally of an elevated rank, enjoy a superior degree of consideration. They derive their colour from a connection with the Arabs and Europeans, with whom they were formerly more connected than they are at present: they have, indeed, adopted the jealousy of the Arabs, as well as their religion and manners; their religion is, nevertheless, a gross kind of Mahometanism, corrupted by the remains of their own ancient superstitions. They hate and fear the devil to such a degree that they sometimes burn him in effigy, as a mark of their detestation for that common enemy of the human race: they also believe very much in ghosts, and their fear of them is equal to their faith in them. In general, the religion and manners of the inhabitants of these several islands bear a strong resemblance to each other, and only differ in certain usages and customs.

There are seventy-three villages in this island, besides the town of Johanna, where the king resides: the inhabitants are supposed to amount to one hundred and thirty thousand; the town of Johanna contains about two hundred houses, the greatest part of which are inhabited by the principal personages of the country; they are built of stone, but are very low, except the king's palace, which is high and spacious: strangers are permitted a free entrance into the anti-chamber, but the other apartments are reserved for the royal family.

The title of King is given to the chief of this island: in fact, he possesses an

unlimited power over all his subjects, as well in religious as temporal concerns; he usually resides about nine miles from the town, and seldom comes there, excepting when European vessels arrive there; he is, on that occasion, accompanied by a numerous equipage, and seldom fails going on board, where he is entertained by the captain, and saluted at his arrival and departure by five guns. Of this circumstance he is very jealous, not only on account of the private satisfaction he receives from it, but moreover, because it is a mark of esteem and importance, which renders him the more respected by his subjects.

Every captain is obliged to obtain the king's permission before he can traffic with the inhabitants; to obtain which he has only to make him a small present of European manufactures.

"As soon as a vessel," says Mr. Grose, "has cast anchor in the road, it is immediately surrounded by a great number of canoes, which hasten to bring refreshments of all kinds. It is agreeable to see the confusion and eagerness of the rowers to get the first to the ship; when the sea is rather boisterous, it often happens that they are overset, but without danger of their lives, as they are excellent swimmers, and sustain no other loss than their small cargoes."

Some years ago the islanders, who used to come on board with refreshments for the crew, such as fresh cocoa-nuts, plantains, birds, fruits, &c. bartered them for handkerchiefs and millinery articles, glass bottles, pieces of iron, and every kind of ready-made clothes, without caring for money; but at present they have learned to know the value of coin; nor are they any longer so eager after trifles as they were formerly: they now insist on being paid in money, fire-arms, gunpowder, &c. for their goats and sheep.

Thus the most simple characters, when they come to communicate with the world, catch its habits, and learn its artifice.

The only private details we have of the isle of Mayotta, on which we can depend, is that of Commodore B. Francis Beaulieu, in an account of his expedition to the East Indies: he says, the island of Mayotta is low, cold, and damp; that it abounds with provisions and fruits, and is covered with verdure; but is not inhabited on the sea-shore. The tide, he says, carried him to the west, along the coast, to a spot where he perceived a vessel: he accordingly sent the long-boat, with ten marines, who brought back word that it was a vessel of forty tons, coming from La Mecca, and that the captain, taking them for Dutchmen, had sent all his merchandize ashore.



The captain of the vessel shewed him two letters, one of an English commander, named Martin, and the other of Captain Banner, by which they inform their countrymen, that they found many refreshments here, particularly in fruit; but had not been able to meet with any fresh water; and that linen and paper were much sought after by the inhabitants; but that great care was to be taken not to indispose them, as, with all their friendly appearance, they might do much harm. "The road being surrounded with rocks, the Arab captain advised me," (continues Commodore Bealieu) "not to approach the island without a pilot, I accordingly sent my boat on shore with him, and he returned in the afternoon with two of the inhabitants, who, before sunset, brought the vessel to an anchor in a place of security. I then sent back the Arab captain to his vessel, with the strongest assurances that we had no bad intentions, and of our friendly disposition: I charged him at the same time with a letter, written in Spanish, containing the same assurances to the king of the island.

"Soon after the king sent some of his principal favourites to assure us of his friendship, and of his inclination to furnish us with all the productions of the island which we might stand in need of: on which I sent him, as a present, a dagger with a silver handle, two fine knives, a ream of paper, and a looking-glass, which he received with great satisfaction, and in return sent me a kid and some fruits. At the same time I begged the Arab captain, who was then on shore, to buy me some provisions, promising to send him the necessary merchandize to be given in exchange. He answered, that the inhabitants of the island have such strange ideas, that they would not conclude any bargain of the value of a single real in a day, nor would buy one single yard of linen, without calling in all their relations and neighbours to fix upon the price they were to give for it. I was likewise informed, that a Portuguese India ship having been cast upon this island about three years ago, the inhabitants had supplied themselves so abundantly with European goods, that they were no longer of any value.

"The following day, I observed two vessels of the country, and made the captains come on board, who informed me that they came from the island of Mayotta, that they were laden with rice and dried fish, bound for Mombza. The next day they furnished us with as much rice, peas, and hung beef, as would serve us four months, which gave the greater satisfaction, as we could not buy any thing from the inhabitants without a considerable delay; besides, I began to suspect their sincerity,



for the day before, as we were employed in sounding, in order to cast anchor, some of them made us signs to come to a spot where we observed a long ridge of rocks; from whence I concluded that the profit they had gained by the shipwreck of the Portuguese India vessel, made them wish us to undergo the same fate. Finding afterwards, that the water was bad and brackish, we set sail again, and quitted this island.

We now return to the Isle of France.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*Excursion of M. St. Pierre in the Isle of France.—Description of the Cavern.—A Tour round the Island, &c.—Account of an Hermit.—Its Commerce, Agriculture, and State of Defence.—Observations on the Island, by the Abbé Raynal, and M. Munro, &c.*

As the following details will increase the local knowledge of the Isle of France, we think proper to insert them.

“ I had been, a long time before, invited by a planter on the Black river, called M. de Messin, to pay him a visit: he lives about seven leagues from Port Louis, and availing myself of his pirogua, which came every week to the port, I embarked about midnight. The pirogua is a kind of boat, made out of one piece of wood, with oars and sails. We were about nine persons in it.

“ About half past twelve at night we rowed out of the port: there was a strong swelling sea, which broke heavy upon the reefs; and we were often within the surf of the breakers, without perceiving it, as the night was very dark. The master informed me he could not continue his voyage before day-break; we therefore went on shore.

“ We had probably run about a league and an half when we came to a mooring, somewhat below the Little river. The Blacks carried me on shore upon their shoulders; after which they took two pieces of wood, one of the velvet tree, the other of bamboo, and lighted a fire by rubbing them together. This method is very ancient, the Romans made use of it, and Pliny says, there is nothing better for that purpose than ivy rubbed against laurel.

“ The men seated themselves round about the fire, smoking their pipes, which consisted of a kind of crucible, at the end of a thick reed: they passed them round to one another. I distributed some brandy among them, and laid myself down to sleep upon the sand, wrapped up in my cloke.

“ They awoke me again at five o'clock, in order to re-embark. Daylight having appeared, I saw the summit of the mountains covered with thick clouds, passing

rapidly along: the wind drove the thick fog into the vallies, the sea foamed, while the pirogua carried its two sails, and proceeded with great expedition.

“When we were upon that part of the coast called Flicq-en-flacq, about half a league from land, we were overtaken by a squall, which obliged us to strike our sails: we were to windward of the shore, which, being lined with rocks, it was impossible for us to approach. At length, however, after various difficulties, we got to the mouth of the Black river, where we disembarked, and were received by my friend with those attentions which indemnified me for the inconveniences I had suffered. His estate comprehends the whole of the valley which is watered by that river, and is very imperfectly represented on the chart of the Abbé de la Caille: he has omitted a branch of the mountain which is on the right bank, and is called the Morne du Tamarin; besides, the course of the river is not in a straight line: at a league from its mouth it turns to the left. That learned astronomer confined himself principally to the circuit of the island, and I have made some addition to the map, as laid down by him. The country about the Black river is abundant in every thing; game, deer, river and sea fish are in great plenty, the latter of which are easily taken: to these may be added, the land and sea turtle. This plantation is conducted with great order and regularity; the huts of the Negroes are ranged in a line, like the tents of a camp; and each of them has a little garden, in which he cultivates tobacco, &c. Sheep and the domestic fowls, are in great number: grasshoppers do a great deal of mischief to the plantations; and it is very difficult to transport any weighty articles to the town, as the roads are almost impassible by land, and the wind ever contrary by sea. After having reposed myself some days, I determined to return to the town by a circuitous way through the plains of Williams.

“I accordingly set off at two in the afternoon, in order to sleep at Palma, a plantation at the distance of three leagues, which belonged to M. Cossigni: the only way to it is along small paths among the rocks, I was consequently obliged to travel on foot. When I had passed the chain of mountains that stretches along the Black river, I found myself in a vast forest, of which no part had been cleared. The path conducted me to the only plantation in this quarter, and it passed close to the house. The master of it was at his door, without any covering to his legs, and the sleeves of his shirt tucked up: he was amusing himself with rubbing a monkey over with red mulberries, and was himself bedaubed with their

juice : he was an European, and had enjoyed a considerable fortune in France, which he had dissipated.

" In about half an hour I arrived on the banks of the Tamarin river, whose waters run with great noise and rapidity over a bed of rock. The Negro, who accompanied me as a guide, found a ford, over which he carried me on his shoulders. I saw before me the very lofty mountains of the *Trois Mamelles*, on the other side of which lay the plantation of Palma. Here, however, we lost our way, and after a variety of difficulties, and suffering the extremity of fatigue and thirst, we arrived towards midnight at Palma, where, in the absence of the master, we received every kind of attention from the overseer of this plantation. At an early hour in the morning I set forward to visit M. Jacob, who lived in the upper part of the plains of Williams. I passed along a large open road, and arrived, at an early hour, at the habitation of that gentleman.

" The air of this part of the island is much cooler than at the port, or the place which I had so lately quitted, and in the evening a fire was not unpleasant. This is the best cultivated quarter of the whole island, and is watered by several rivulets ; some of which flow through ravines of a frightful depth. In my return to the town, I passed by one, called *la rivière Profonde*, the road being close to the brink ; when I found myself in a state of elevation three hundred feet above its bed ; the sides are covered by five or six stages of large trees.

" As I descended towards the town I perceived the heat gradually renew itself, and the herbage insensibly lose its verdure, till I arrived at the port, where an universal aridity prevails."

#### *Description of the Cavern.*

Near the Great river there is a small establishment, consisting of an hospital and some magazines. There the aqueduct begins which brings water to the town, and on the top of a small rising ground, in the form of a sugar-loaf, is a kind of fort which defends the bay.

In about three quarters of a league on the other side of the river, to the westward, and in the midst of woods, is the mouth of the cavern. On entering the plain, it resembles the hole of a cellar, the vault of which is fallen in. Several roots of the Mapou hang perpendicularly down, and close up one part of the entrance.



In order to descend into this abyss you must first provide yourself with wax lights and flambeaux: when you have gone down a dozen steps on the rocks which form its mouth, you then find yourself in a vast subterranean place, the vaults of which are of black rock, in an elliptical form. It is about thirty feet wide, and twenty high; the bottom is very close, and is covered with a fine earth, which the rain-water has deposited there.

On each side of the cavern, round the upper part, is a kind of large bead and mouldings, which probably have been formed by the dripping of water in the rainy seasons. The natives think that it is the aperture of a volcano; it has, however, more the appearance of having been the bed of a subterraneous river. The vault is covered with a shining and dry varnish, formed by a kind of stony concretion which spreads itself over the projections, and in some parts of the floor: there is also ferruginous incrustations, which crackle beneath the feet like ice.

After a considerable length of passage, the ground becomes perfectly dry, except at about three hundred paces from the entrance, where the vault has fallen in, and the external water filters through the earth, and forms some humid spots.

From thence the vault continues lowering, till there is no proceeding but on the hands and feet: a stifling heat is found to prevail. There is a strange kind of plant found here, which is full of a milky juice: it resembles a root about the thickness of one's finger, and upwards of ten feet long, without branches or leaves, or the least appearance of having ever had any, although it is entire at the two extremities.

This cavern is capable of being formed into superb magazines, by building walls to prevent the water from entering into it.

*Dimensions of the Cavern, according to the Measurement of the Marquis  
D'Albergati.*

		Fathom.	Feet.
The ground is very dry in all this part of it: there are also several chinks which run along the whole breadth; the entrance is east-north-east	The first vault from the entrance	Height 3	2
		Breadth 5	0
		Length 22	0
The subterraneous passage turns to the north-east one quarter east; the ground is dry, and throughout this part is a kind of causeway or parapet about two and a half high, &c.	The second vault from the first turning	Height 2	5
		Breadth 4	0
		Length 68	2
The vault turns to the east-north-east, and two degrees thirty minutes north: at its extremity it has but four feet in height, but it rises again within a few fathoms: it is stony and damp, and some small petrefactions are observable in this part of it	Third vault from the second bend	Height 1	5
		Breadth 2	2
		Length 48	2
The parapets and mouldings continue on the sides; there is also a space of about fifty feet, filled with stones, detached from the vault; the passage continues in a straight line	Fourth vault	Height 3	0
		Breadth 4	3
		Length 58	2
It runs on to the north-west quarter north five degrees west	Fifth vault, third bend	Height 1	2
		Breadth 3	0
		Length 38	2
To the north-west quarter north two degrees thirty minutes	Sixth vault, fourth bend	Height 1	4
		Breadth 3	3
		Length 15	0
To the west quarter north two degrees thirty minutes.	Seventh vault, fifth bend	Height 1	4
		Breadth 2	4
		Length 26	4
To the west quarter south-west two degrees thirty minutes west	Eighth vault, Sixth bend	Height 1	5
		Breadth 3	0
		Length 15	0
To the north-west quarter north two degrees thirty minutes north	Ninth vault, Seventh bend	Height 1	1
		Breadth 5	0
		Length 28	2
M. de St. Pierre penetrated no farther.			
To the north-west three degrees thirty minutes west, you are obliged, for one-third of this vault, to crawl upon the belly; it was formerly of easier access	Tenth vault, Eighth bend	Height 2	0
		Breadth 3	0
		Length 16	4
At the end there are some moist places; and the vault threatens ruin in two or three parts	Eleventh vault	Height 0	2
		Breadth 1	4
		Length 6	0
The whole length			342 2

*Description of a Tour round the Island.\**

“ Standing along the coast, from Fort Blanc towards the left of the port, the sea opens upon a sandy low shore to the point of the battery *aux Sables*. The battery of Paulmi is also built there; it would be impossible to land upon this shore, because, at the distance of two musket-shots, nature has defended it by a ridge of rocks. From the battery of Paulmi, the coast is steep and perpendicular; the sea breaks upon it in such a manner, that it is impossible to land there. As to the plain, it is impracticable to cavalry and artillery, on account of the great number of stones with which it is covered. There are no trees here, but some mapus and velvet trees: the ruggedness finishes at the bay of the Little river, where there is a small battery.

“ Near this spot is a cotton mill, invented by M. de Seligny,† it is turned by water, and composed of a number of small metal cylinders placed parallel to one another: some children are employed to put the cotton between two of these cylinders, which passes and leaves the berry behind. This same mill likewise supplies a forge with wind, threshes the corn, and makes oil. Here M. de Seligny discovered a vein of pit-coal, the traces of an iron mine, and an earth proper for making crucibles: at the same time he perceived that the ashes of certain aquatic plants, where are a species of the nymphaea, burned with coal, produce glass of different colours.

“ By a pathway, which is only a gun-shot from the bank, you come to the river Belleisle, which is passed by a ford. At a quarter of a league from thence, the path leads through a wood to the plantation of M. de Chasal. This district, which is called the Plains of St. Pierre, is still more rocky than the rest of the journey.

“ The whole coast is very steep, from the Little river to the Plains of St. Pierre: the soil is stony, but very well calculated for the culture of cotton: the coffee that grows there is of a good quality, because the ground is dry: it is more abundant in moist situations, but diminishes in flavour. The river Dragon, which succeeds, is fordable, as well as that of Gallet, which comes next. The coast now ceases to be steep, and it is commodious walking along the sea-side, in a large plain which leads

\* The voyage of M. de St. Pierre in 1769.

† It was M. de Seligny who traced out a channel to the ship Neptune, which run aground in the hurricane of 1760; there were two iron rakes worked by two large wheels carried in boats, the effect of these wheels was increased by acting upon two levers supported by rafts.

to Tamarin Cove, which is about a quarter of a league broad. Nothing grows there, though cocoa trees might be planted with success: to the right there is a brook of indifferent water, which runs through the woods.

" There are various places which are no longer covered by the sea: large shells and fossils prove, that it has receded from this coast. Where the sea displays itself, beyond the reefs in the offing, there is a kind of hollow bottom, or natural covered way. Cannon might be placed there with great effect; but above all, roads are necessary, and there are none.

" About a league from the Black river, is the plantation of M. de Messino. From the Tamarin Cove to the *rivière Noire*, the sea beach is steep, and along the foot of the rocks there are abundance of crabs.

" The bottom of the Cove is sand, and vessels may land there. There is no battery on the sandy point to the right of the river Noire. By crossing the peninsula of the first Black river, which is covered with wood, stones, and long grass, you get to the shore; at low tide there are a great many oysters sticking to the rocks along the coast.

" After having passed the two *rivières Noires*, there is a brook that falls into the sea, facing a small island called Tamarin Islet. At low water it may be gained on foot, as well as the Islet of the Morne, where sometimes vessels ride during their quarantine.

" Here are blocks of ferruginous rock abounding in mineral; there is also a ridge of rocks which stretch out from the *rivière Noire*, as far as Morne Brabant, which is the most windward point of the island: there is a passage behind the Islet of Tamarin. From thence you arrive at the plantations of M. le Normand, situated on the sea-shore, and three leagues farther to Belle-ombre, in which M. Etienne has a concern, between which is the point of Corail. At the point *du Corail*, the sea enters the island between two chains of rocks formed into a peak: you must follow this chain, walking through broken paths, and clinging to the rocks. The most difficult is on the other side of the Cove, in doubling the point called the Cape: in stormy weather this passage is impracticable; the sea is here engulfed, and breaks in a dreadful manner. In calm weather small vessels enter into the Cove, at the bottom of which they take in a lading of wood. On the left bank of the river *des Citronniers*, vessels are built of about two hundred tons.

" From the plantation of M. le Normand, all this part is covered with a delightful



verdure, it is a savannah entirely clear of rock, and lies between the sea and the woods, which are very fine towards the point of St. Martin.

"Before you pass the Cape, there is a large bank of coral that rises to the height of fifteen feet, and forms a kind of reef, which the sea has abandoned: at the bottom of it is a long pool of water, which might be converted into a bason for small vessels. From the Morne Brabant there is an inclosure of breakers, which admit of no passage but opposite the rivers.

"Between the reefs and the coast, the water is very clear, and admits of seeing a forest of madreporæ of five or six feet high. They resemble trees, and some of them even bear flowers: different kinds of fish of every colour swim among the branches, and others are seen that inhabit the most beautiful shells.

"The post called Jacotet, is a place where the sea having penetrated inland, forms a round bay, in the middle of which is a triangular islet. This cove is surrounded with a hill which gives it the form of a bason, and it has no other opening but that towards the sea. At the extremity several rivulets pass over a fine sand into it, which come from a lake of fresh water that abounds with fish. Round the lake are several small hills, which rise behind each other in the form of an amphitheatre, and are crowned with tufts of trees in pyramidical and other pleasing shapes: behind and above them all, the palm trees rear their tufted heads. All this mass of verdure, which rises in the midst of the mossy ground, unites with the forest and a branch of the mountain which stretches on towards the Black river.

"There are sometimes troops of Maroon Negroes in the environs of Belle-ombre. In 1769, there was from two to three hundred of them, who choose a chief, whom they obey, on pain of death. They are forbidden to touch any thing in the plantations of the neighbourhood, or to go along the frequented rivers in search of fish, &c. In the night time, they descend to the sea in order to fish; in the day time, they hunt the deer in the interior of the forests, with dogs well trained for that purpose. When there is but one woman in the gang, she belongs to the chief; if there are several of them, they are in common: they put to death, it is said, the children that are born from them, in order that their cries may not discover them; they are occupied all the morning in casting lots to foretell the fate of the day.

"A very good port for small vessels might be formed at post Jacotet, by extracting some banks of coral from the bason. The arm of the sea near the savannah, serves for embarking. The whole of this part is the finest portion of the island;

nevertheless it is uncultivated, because it is difficult to keep up any communication with the principal place, both on account of the mountains in the interior, and the difficulty of returning by sea to windward of the port, by doubling Morne Brabant.

"The left bank of the savannah is more rugged than that of the right. The river des Anguilles is somewhat dangerous: the bed is full of rocks, and the current rapid: some springs of a ferruginous nature fall into it, which covers its waters with an oil of the colour of a pigeon's neck.

"The river du Poste runs with great noise over rocks: its waters are very transparent in dry weather, and it is fordable about a cannon-shot from the mouth of it.

"All the coast from the arm of the sea, near the savannah, is rugged and unapproachable. The rivers which fall into it are very much inclosed; so that it would be impossible to proceed on horseback: the march of an enemy, therefore, might be easily arrested, each river being of a frightful depth. It is, at the same time, one of the finest districts of the island.

"After an hour's walk this fine mossy verdure, which begins at the Morne Brabant, is soon no more, and is succeeded by a very rocky country, like the rest of the island: its grass, however, is a fine sort of dog-grass, proper for pasturage. The arm of the sea of Chalan is fordable, on a bank of sand, and penetrates inland by so narrow a passage, that it might be inclosed with grates, and made a large receptacle for fish.

"The rivers *de la Cbaux* and *des Creoles* are very deeply embanked; between them and the principal Port there are several plantations: the environs of this port, at about three quarters of a league from the river *des Creoles*, are covered with mango trees: the whole landscape is charming, as it is intersected by hills covered with plantations and groves of orange trees. The residence of the priests is about a league from the port, which is a kind of small town, containing about a dozen houses. The most remarkable edifices are a mill, in ruins, and the government house, which is not in a much better condition. Behind this little place is a large mountain, and before it is the sea, which forms a deep bay, two leagues in breadth, reckoning from the reefs which embrace its opening, and four leagues in length, from the point of the two Cocons to that of the *Diable*: it very often requires a month for vessels to come thither from Port Louis. The south-east part was first inhabited by the Dutch, as we have already observed, and one of their ancient edifices still remains,

which serves for a chapel. There are two entrances into this port, the one by the *Point du Diable*, and the other, which is the largest, on the side of an islet near the middle: there are batteries on these two places, and a third, called the Battery de la Reine, at the bottom of the bay. Whales frequently enter into this harbour, from the south, and might be easily harpooned. This coast is most abundant in fish, and the finest shells are collected on it. There are purple oysters at the mouth of the river *de la Chaux*, and a kind of crystallization in the bed of the river Sorbes, which is at no great distance from it.

"The air of the south-east port is of an agreeable freshness, the country beautiful and fertile, but the town is almost abandoned, the principal settlements being at Port Louis.

"The mouth of the *Grande rivière* is about four leagues from hence; it is somewhat larger than that which bears the same name near Port Louis. The shore is intersected with coves, where the mango trees flourish: it is probable that the seed of them was brought by the sea from some island more to windward. To the left there is a chain of high mountains covered with wood; while verdant hillocks are scattered over the face of the country. In this district a considerable number of cattle are bred; but though pleasing to the sight, it is fatiguing to the traveller.

"The *Point du Diable* is so named because the first navigators perceived, it is said, the needle to vary here, without being able to account for it. Two leagues from thence is a new house of stone, situated on a rising ground, and belonging to a rich planter, M. de la V——. The mouth of the *Grand rivière* is not navigable, on account of a sand-bank that runs across it, and a cascade which it forms about half a league up it.

"There is a redoubt of earth built upon the left bank, at the beginning of the road which leads to Flacq; where you here enter a fine grove of orange trees, near to which there is a plantation. The whole length of the shore is scattered with rocks.

"A quarter of a league beyond the *rivière Seche* is a path on the right, which leads towards the sea-shore, and to a lake of fresh water, where there is a post of thirty men. There the shore begins to be practicable; and there is a small arm of the sea of considerable depth: here and there the sand is scattered with stones till you meet a long meadow covered with dog-grass. All this part is dry and barren, the woods low and thin, and stretching to the distant mountains. This plain is three leagues

over, and does not wear the appearance of fertility: it spreads itself as far as a settlement called the four Cocoas, where there is no other water but that of a brackish well, dug in the rocks, which are full of iron ore.

"A path on the left leads to the woods, where the rocks re-appear. The river Flacq is crossed by planks, at about a quarter of a league from its mouth: the plantations here are numerous, and there is also a magazine situated on the left bank, and a post commanded by a captain.

"The quarter of Flacq is one of the best cultivated in the island, and produces large quantities of rice; there is a passage between the reefs which allow the gaulettes to take in their cargoes close to shore.

"Near the post *de Fayette*, almost the whole of the coast is covered with broken rocks and mango trees.

"The Cove *des Aigrettes*, a considerable arm of the sea, is fordable. At some distance from thence is the Cove *aux Requins*. Large beds of rock are seen here, pierced with a great number of round holes, a foot in diameter; some of which are of considerable depth. It may be presumed that the lava of some volcano, having formerly flowed down upon a part of the forest, had consumed the trees, and left the apertures empty which they had occupied.

"From the post of *Fayette* to the river *du Rempart* the flat country continues: this quarter is likewise well cultivated.

"Having passed the district and river called *la Poudre d'Or*, large woods succeed: the soil is good, but there is no water: beyond these is the river *des Citronniers*, and a plantation belonging to M. Gole: there are then four leagues of uninhabited country before you arrive at the *Pointe des Cannoniers*. In the district of *Pamplemousses* the ground appears to be exhausted, nor can it well be otherwise, as it has been cultivated during a period of thirty years, without being restored by manure. In the dry seasons the rivers *la Poudre d'Or*, *la Seche*, and *des Lantiers*, are fordable; but there is always a running stream of fresh water in their respective channels.

"The island contains three churches: the first is at *Port Louis*, the second at the *South-east Port*, and the third, which is the most commodious, is at *Pamplemousses*. A very handsome structure of this kind has been constructed at *Port Louis*, but it was raised to such an elevation that it was shaken by the hurricanes."

It was in the course of this tour that M. de St. Pierre met with an hermit, who gave the following account of his solitude.



"Though I do not behold, from my hermitage, which is embosomed in a forest, that multitude of objects which present themselves from this elevated situation, it is not without circumstances peculiarly interesting to one who, like myself, looks, for his best satisfactions, into the secret recesses of his own mind. The river, which flows before my door, takes its course in an undeviating direction through the woods, presenting to my view a long canal shaded with trees of every foliage. There are the ebony and cinnamon trees, with others of various name and figure, enriched and varied by tufts of palms, which rise above the rest, and whose tops resting, as it were, upon the summit of the wood, gives the appearance of one forest resting upon another. The creeping plants of divers kinds, form alternately arcades of flowers, and curtains of verdure. The groves dispense their aromatic odours; and, in the season of their flowers, the passenger bears on his garments their delightful perfume, long after he has quitted the shade of the trees on which they blow. At the close of summer, several kinds of foreign birds arrive, by an incomprehensible instinct, from distant and unknown regions, and over a vast extent of ocean, to collect the grain which is yielded by the vegetables of this island; while they enliven, by the splendour of their plumage, the foliage of the trees, which are embrowned by the sun. Among others, there are various kinds of parrots, and the blue pigeon, called here the Dutch pigeon. Monkies, which are the domiciliated inhabitants of the forest, amuse themselves among the dusky branches; sometimes they are suspended by the tail, and balance themselves in the air; at other times, they are seen leaping from branch to branch, with their young ones in their arms. Here the murderous gun has never alarmed these peaceful children of nature: here nothing is heard but the cries of joy, the warblings of birds, and the murmur of rivulets," &c.

*Commerce, Agriculture, and Defence of the Island.*

This colony imports its plate from China, its linen and clothes from the Indies, its slaves and cattle from Madagascar, a part of its provisions from the Cape of Good Hope, its money from Cadiz, and its administration from France.

M. la Bourdonnais wished to make it an entrepôt for our commerce, and the bulwark of our settlements in India.

It has been supposed that the commodities, cloths, linen, and manufactures of France, would have sufficed for the consumption of the island; and that the cottons of Normandy would be preferable to the linens of Bengal, for the slaves. It is cer-

tain that money alone ought to be the circulating medium, and not paper, in which nobody puts any confidence.

Of all foreign countries, Madagascar is the most necessary to its commerce, on account of its slaves and cattle.

If it was seriously intended to place the commerce of this island in a flourishing situation, it would be necessary to clear Port Louis from a number of hulls of vessels which choak up the bason, and the more so, as they are forming themselves into a kind of reef by the growth of the madrepore, with which they are overloaded, and in some measure petrified.

They who have great property in lands which may be easily cleared, particularly near the port, should be compelled to clear them.

Beasts of burthen ought likewise to be increased, especially asses, so useful in mountainous countries; an ass carrying double the load of a Negro.

It would be likewise necessary for the administration to consult husbandmen, as to the properest mode of cultivating the island.

There are a great many soldiers, to whom lands might be given to clear and cultivate; it would also be a politic measure to marry them. Had this plan been pursued, the whole island would have been in a connected state, and there would have been a nursery of Indian soldiers and sailors.

Nature has amply provided for the defence of the island, which is almost surrounded, at some distance from the shore, by a range of breakers: where this range is broken, the coast is formed of inaccessible rocks. In short, the island itself would be inaccessible were it not for some passages between the reefs, of which there are eleven, formed by the currents of the rivers, which are opposite to them.

The exterior defence of the island, therefore, consists in preventing all access to these openings: some might be shut up by floating chains, and others might be defended by batteries built on shore.

As a boat may be worked between the reefs and the shore, gun-boats might be used, to advance the fire when the passage is at too great a distance from the cannon on the coast.

Behind the reefs the shore is of easy access; but the accessible places might be rendered impracticable, as they are become at the extremity of the South-east Port: it is only necessary to plant mango trees to produce that effect. In those parts of the coast which is continually beaten by the waves, if there should be some beds of

rock that might render them accessible, as they are not very extensive, they might be defended by common walls, chevaux de frise, &c. On any small sandy spot mango trees might be planted, whose roots and branches would interweave in such a manner as to prevent any boats from landing; at the same time it is necessary to use some precaution in planting these trees, that they may not choak up places they were intended to preserve.

This isle is in a circular form, and each river coming from the centre may be considered as the rays of the circle. The banks on the side of the town might have their declivities increased by planting raquettes and bamboos, while the ground should be raised at the distance of three hundred fathom on the opposite side: thus the ground between the two rivulets would become a kind of fortification, and each of their channels would be a ditch not easily passed: an enemy would not be able to get to the town, but through a thousand difficulties. This system of defence is applicable to all islands of a small extent, where the streams always run from the centre to the circumference.

The two mountainous projections which embrace the town and Port Louis require no defence but towards the sea: a citadel might be constructed on the Isle of Tonneliers, whose batteries, placed in covered ways, would discharge a level fire. Mortars, which are so destructive to ships, might also be placed there. To the right and left, as far as the mountains, the ground might be strengthened by the lines of a fortification. Nature has already saved a part of that expense, to the right, and the river *des Lataniers* protects the front.

At the extremity of the bason, and behind the town, is a large piece of ground, where all the inhabitants of the town, and their slaves, might be assembled. The other side of the mountain is inaccessible, or might be easily made so:

There is also another very singular advantage in the most elevated part of the mountain, behind the town; as at the spot called *la Pouce*, there is a considerable space covered with large trees, from whence two or three small streams of very fine water issue forth. It is impossible to attain that height but by a very difficult path: several attempts have indeed been made, by employing gunpowder, to gain a communication by it into the interior part of the island; but the opposite side of these mountains presents a most frightful declivity, which Negroes and monkeys are alone capable of ascending. Four hundred men in this post, with a sufficient quantity of provisions, could never be reduced by force of arms, and the whole garrison