



ance to reinforce the army at Seringham, prevailed on him to detach 3000 of his Morattoes under the command of Innis Khan, and joined to them 300 Europeans and 1000 Sepoys.

As soon as these troops arrived, the enemy quitted Seringham, and crossing the Caveri, encamped on the plain three miles to the north of Facquire's Tope. Their force now consisted of 450 Europeans, 1500 well-trained Sepoys, 8000 Myfore horse, 3500 Morattoes, and two companies of Topasses with 1000 Sepoys in the service of the regent; the rest of whose infantry was 15,000 Peans, armed with matchlocks, swords, bows and arrows, pikes, clubs, and rockets; imperfect weapons worthy the rabble that bore them. Major Lawrence had only the 500 Europeans, and the 2000 Sepoys he brought with him from the coast; but 700 of these Sepoys were continually employed in the Polygar's country, to escort the convoys; his artillery were eight excellent six-pounders; of the Nabob's horse only 100 encamped with the English, the rest remaining under the walls, and peremptorily refusing to march until they were paid their arrears.

There are, about a mile to the south of Facquire's Tope, some high mountains called the five rocks, on the summit of which the Major always kept a strong guard of Sepoys: but he being obliged to go into the city for the recovery of his health, the officer who commanded during his absence neglected to continue this detachment. The enemy reconnoitring, and finding this post without defence, detached in the night a strong party to take possession of it; and early the next morning their whole army was discovered in motion, assembling under shelter of the five rocks, whilst their advanced cannon plunged into the English camp; whither the Major immediately returned, but found it impossible to regain the post: he however kept his ground until night, and then encamped about a quarter of a mile nearer the city, behind a small eminence which sheltered the troops from the enemy's artillery; they the next day quitted the camp to the north of Facquire's Tope, and encamped at the five rocks. Here they had it in their power intirely to cut off the supplies of provisions coming from the Polygar's country, and to intercept the detachment of 700 Sepoys sent



1753.

to escort them: at the same time the great superiority of their numbers, and the advantage of the ground they occupied, rendered an attack upon their camp impracticable: but it was evident that if they were not soon dislodged, neither the English army in the field, nor the garrison of the city, could subsist long; to augment the distress, a strong spirit of desertion arose amongst the soldiery. In these circumstances, even the most sanguine began to lose hope, and to apprehend that the city must be abandoned in order to save the troops from perishing by famine.

The Major had stationed a guard of 200 Sepoys, on a small rock situated about half a mile south-west of his camp, and nearly a mile north-east of the enemy's. Mr. Astruc soon discovered the importance of this post, which if he could get possession of, his artillery would easily oblige the English to decamp again, and retire under the walls of the city, where, still more frightened, they would probably be reduced in a very few days to the necessity of retreating to their settlements. He therefore resolved to attack the post, and marched early in the morning, on the 26th of June, with his grenadiers and a large body of Sepoys; but they meeting with more resistance than was expected, he ordered the whole army to move and support them. The Major, as soon as he found the rock attacked, ordered the picquet guard of the camp, consisting of 40 Europeans, to march and support his Sepoys: but afterwards observing the whole of the enemy's army in motion, he ordered all his troops to get under arms, and leaving 100 Europeans to take care of the camp, marched with the rest of his force, which, in Europeans did not exceed 300 battalion men, with 80 belonging to the artillery; and he had with him no more than 500 Sepoys; for the rest were at this time in the city endeavouring to procure rice, of which none had been sold in camp since the enemy appeared on the plain. With this small force he hastened, as fast as they could march, to reach the rock before the enemy's main body. But Mr. Astruc, with the party already engaged in the attack, perceiving his approach, made a vigorous effort, and before the Major had got half way, the Sepoys who defended the rock, were all either killed, or taken prisoners, and the French colours immediately hoisted. This obliged



1753.

obliged the Major to halt, and consider what was most adviseable to be done in this critical conjuncture, on which the fate of the whole war seemed to depend. There was little time for deliberation: for the French battalion were now arrived behind the rock, and their artillery from the right and left of it, were firing upon the English troops; the rock itself was covered by their Sepoys supported by their grenadiers; the whole Myfore army was drawn up in one great body at the distance of cannon-shot in the rear; the Morattoes were, as usual, flying about in small detachments, and making charges on the flanks and rear of the English battalion in order to intimidate and create confusion.

In such circumstances the officers unanimously agreed in opinion with their general, that it was safer to make a gallant push, than to retreat before such numbers of enemies: and the soldiers seeming much delighted at this opportunity of having what they called a fair knock at the French men on the plain, Major Lawrence took advantage of the good disposition of the whole, and giving due commendations to their spirit, ordered the grenadiers to attack the rock with fixed bayonets, whilst he himself, with the rest of the troops, wheeled round the foot of it to engage the French battalion. The soldiers received the orders with three huzza's, and the grenadiers setting out at a great rate, though at the same time keeping their ranks, paid no attention to the scattered fire they received from the rock, nor made a halt until they got to the top of it; whilst the enemy terrified at their intrepidity, descended as they were mounting, without daring to stand the shock of their onset. Some of the best Sepoys followed the grenadiers, and all together began a strong fire upon the French troops, drawn up within pistol shot below. In the mean time Mr. Astruc, perceiving that the right flank of his battalion would, if it remained drawn up facing the north, be exposed to the English troops, wheeling round the foot of the rock, changed his position, and drew up facing the west, in order to oppose them in front. But this movement exposed his right flank to the fire of the grenadiers and Sepoys from the rock; by which his troops had already suffered considerably, when the English battalion executing their evolution with great address, drew up at once directly opposite to the enemy, at the distance of 20 yards.

1753.

The French troops were struck with consternation upon seeing themselves thus daringly attacked in the midst of their numerous allies, by such a handful of men; and indeed a stranger, taking a view of the two armies from the top of one of the rocks on the plain, could scarcely have believed that the one ventured to dispute a province with the other.

Mr. Astruc exerted himself as a brave and active officer, and with difficulty prevailed on his men to keep their ranks with covered arms, until the English gave their fire, which falling in a well levelled discharge from the whole battalion, and seconded by a hot fire from the rock, together with a discharge of grape shot from the first field piece that came up, threw them into irreparable disorder; they ran away with the utmost precipitation, leaving three pieces of cannon, with some ammunition carts behind them. The Morattoes immediately made a gallant effort to cover their retreat by flinging themselves between, and some of the grenadiers, who had run forward to seize the field pieces, fell under their sabres. Animated by this success, they attacked the battalion, pushing in several charges up to the very bayonets, and endeavouring to cut down the men, who constantly received them with so much steadiness, that they were not able to throw a single platoon into disorder: at length having suffered much, and lost several of their best men by the incessant fire of the line, they desisted from their attacks, and retreated to the main body of the Mysoreans: amongst their dead was Ballapah, one of their principal officers, brother-in-law to Morari-row, a very gallant man, much esteemed by the English, who had often seen him exert himself with great bravery when fighting on their side: he had broke his sword in cutting down a grenadier, when another, who was loading his piece, and saw his comrade fall, shot both ball and ramrod through his body. In the mean time the French never halted until they got into the rear of the Mysore army, when their officers prevailed on them to get into order again, and drew them up in a line with their allies, from whence they fired their two remaining field pieces with great vivacity, although the shot did not reach above half way.

The



The Major remained three hours at the foot of the rock, in order to give them an opportunity of renewing the fight; but finding that they shewed no inclination to move towards him, he prepared to return to his camp, leaving them to take possession of the rock again at their peril; for since the loss of the 200 Sepoys that defended it in the beginning of the action, he did not think it prudent to expose another detachment to the same risque, at such a distance from his main body. The three guns with the prisoners were placed in the center, and the troops marching in platoons on each side, the artillery was distributed in the front, rear, and intervals of the column. The rear had scarcely got clear of the rock into the plain, when the whole of the enemy's cavalry set up their shout, and came furiously on, flourishing their swords as if they were resolved to exterminate at once the handful of men that opposed them. Whosoever has seen a body of ten thousand horse advancing on the full gallop all together, will acknowledge with the Mareschals Villars and Saxe that their appearance is tremendous, be their discipline or courage what it will; and such an onset would doubtless have disconcerted untried soldiers; but the enemy had to deal with Veterans equal to any who have done honour to the British nation; men convinced by repeated experience that a body of well-disciplined infantry would always prevail against irregular cavalry, let their numbers be ever so great. In this confidence they halted, and without the least emotion, waited for the enemy, who were suffered to come sufficiently near before the signal was given to the artillery officers: the cannonade then began from eight six pounders, loaded with grape, and was kept up at the rate of eight or ten shot in a minute from each piece, so well directed that every shot went amongst the croud, as was visible by the numbers that dropped: this soon stopped their career, and they stood a while like men astonished by the fall of thunder; but finding no intermission of the fire, and that the battalion and Sepoys reserved theirs with recovered arms, they went to the right about, and got out of reach as fast as they had come on, leaving the troops to return quietly to their camp.

Thus was Trichinopoly saved by a success, which astonished even those who had gained it; nor was the attempt, however desperate it might



1753.

might seem, justified by the success alone; for as the city would inevitably have fallen if the English had remained inactive, so the loss of it would have been hastened only a few days if they had been defeated; and major Lawrence undoubtedly acted with as much sagacity as spirit in risking every thing to gain a victory, on which alone depended the preservation of the great object of the war.

The enemy dispirited by their defeat, began to disagree amongst themselves; the Mysores and French reciprocally imputing their ill success to one another, and the Morattoes with great reason to both; their parties appeared less frequently on the plain in the day, and none ventured to patrol in the night: the English Sepoys in Tondeman's country availing themselves of this interval, quitted the woods, and joined the camp in the night, with a convoy of provisions which furnished a stock for fifty days. This necessary object being provided for, the Major determined to avoid coming again to a general engagement, before he was joined by some troops, which the arrival of the ships from Europe enabled the presidency to send into the field: they were ordered to march through the Tanjore country; and as a body of cavalry was still more necessary to enable the army to act with vigour against an enemy which had such numbers, he resolved to proceed without delay to Tanjore, in hopes that whilst he was waiting for the reinforcement, the appearance of the army and the reputation of their late success might determine the king to declare openly, and furnish the assistance of horse, of which the English stood so much in need. The presence of the Nabob, being thought necessary to facilitate the negotiation, he prepared to march with the army; but on the evening that he intended to quit the city, his discontented troops assembled in the outer court of the palace, and clamouring declared that they would not suffer him to move, before he had paid their arrears; in vain were arguments to convince this rabble, more insolent because they had never rendered any essential service, that his going to Tanjore was the only measure from which they could hope for a chance of receiving their pay: they remained inflexible, and threatened violence; upon which captain Dalton sent a messenger to the camp, from whence the grenadier company immediately marched into the city, where they were joined by 100 of the



1753.

garrison, and all together forcing their way into the palace, they got the Nabob into his palankeen, and escorted him to the camp surrounded by 200 Europeans with fixed bayonets; the malecontents not daring to offer him any outrage as he was passing, nor on the other hand was any injury offered to them: for notwithstanding such proceedings in more civilized nations rarely happen, and are justly esteemed mutiny and treason; yet in Indostan they are common accidents, and arise from such causes as render it difficult to ascertain whether the prince or his army is most in fault. The Nabob had certainly no money to pay his troops; so far from it that the English had now for two years furnished all the expence of their own troops in the field: but it is a maxim with every prince in India, let his wealth be ever so great, to keep his army in long arrears, for fear they should desert. This apprehension is perhaps not unjustly entertained of hirelings collected from every part of a despotick empire, and insensible of notions of attachment to the prince or cause they serve: but from hence the soldiery accustomed to excuses when dictated by no necessity, give no credit to those which are made to them, when there is a real impossibility of satisfying their demands; and a practice common to most of the princes of Indostan, concurs not a little to increase this mistrust in all who serve them: for on the one hand the vain notions in which they have been educated inspire them with such a love of outward show, and the enervating climate in which they are born renders them so incapable of resisting the impulses of fancy; and on the other the frequent reverses of fortune in this empire dictate so strongly the necessity of hoarding resources against the hour of calamity, that nothing is more common than to see a Nabob purchasing a jewel or ornament of great price, at the very time that he is in the greatest distress for money to answer the necessities of the government. Hence, instead of being shocked at the clamours of their soldiery, they are accustomed to live in expectation of them, and it is a maxim in their conduct to hear them with patience, unless the croud proceed to violence; but in order to prevent this they take care to attach to their interests some principal officers with such a number of the best troops as may serve on emergency to check the tumult, which is rarely headed by a man of distinction. But when his affairs become desperate

by

1753.

by the success of a superior enemy, the prince atones severely for his evasions, by a total defection of his army, or by suffering such outrages as the Nabob Mahomed-ally would in all probability have been exposed to, had he not been rescued in the manner we have described.

As soon as the Nabob arrived in the camp, major Lawrence began his march, and in order to avoid the enemy's cavalry struck into the thick woods, which skirt the plain of Trichinopoly to the south: the approach of the army seemed to determine the king of Tanjore to furnish the assistance they were coming to demand; and not to give him any unnecessary umbrage by proceeding abruptly to his capital, the Major resolved to halt for some time at a distance, and encamped at Conandercoile, a town in the woods half-way between Trichinopoly and Tanjore; where, at the expiration of ten days, he received advice from Mr. Palk, who had been deputed to the king, that he had prevailed upon him to declare openly, and that orders were given to Monack-jee the general to assemble the Tanjorine troops. On which the English army proceeded to Tanjore, where it was determined to remain until they were joined by the reinforcement expected from fort St. David.

Of all the Nabob's cavalry, no more than fifty accompanied him, the rest remained encamped under the walls of Trichinopoly, and a few days after the departure of the English army went in a body, and informed captain Dalton that they intended to go over to the enemy, with whom they had made their terms, desiring at the same time that he would not fire upon them as they were marching off. This, as he was very glad to get rid of such a dangerous incumbrance, he readily promised, and they went away unmolested at noon-day.

The enemy, having now no other immediate object, gave their whole attention to blockade the city, which they were in a condition to effect without much difficulty; for their superiority in Europeans deterred the garrison from venturing without the walls to interrupt their night patrols, as was their custom when they had only the Mysores and Morattoes to encounter. However captain Dalton took the precaution of undermining in a dark night the posts of Warriore and Weycondah, to the west of the city; the defences of Warriore were ruined, but the explosion failed at Weycondah.

The



The late supplies of provisions being entirely reserved for the use of the garrison, the inhabitants were left to provide for themselves, and rice was now sold in the market for half a crown the measure, about an English quart, which was fifteen times dearer than the common price; and fire-wood was scarcely to be procured at any rate. This scarcity soon obliged them to quit their habitations, and in less than a month this spacious city, which had formerly contained 400,000 persons, was left almost desolate; for the military people who remained in it, soldiers and artificers of all denominations, did not exceed 2000 men: Of these the Nabob's Peas, as being capable of no other service than to give an alarm, were posted between the outward and inward wall; their number was about 1000: the Sepoys, 600, were stationed round the ramparts, and the Europeans, about 200, were appointed, some to guard the gates, whilst the rest lay on their arms every night, in readiness to march to any quarter where the alarm might be given.

Vigilance supplied as much as possible the defect of numbers; nevertheless it was visible that the city, thus slenderly garrisoned, would run great risque if the enemy attempted a vigorous assault by night: nor were they entirely without such intentions; for the French prepared scaling ladders, and often sent parties to sound the depth of the ditch; but these were always discovered and beaten off before they could accomplish their design. In the mean time Mr. Dupleix strenuously importuned Mr. Brenier, who had succeeded Mr. Astruc in the command, to attempt an escalade at all events, and suggested to him a method of getting the information he wanted by sending one De Cattans an intelligent officer, as a deserter, into the town: the man was promised the command of a company, and thirty thousand rupees; for which he not only undertook to find out the proper spot where they should place their scaling ladders, but also to maintain a correspondence with the French prisoners, who were to break loose, and seize the arms of the guard, and attack the quarters of the English whilst the assault was made on the walls. He was admitted into the city, and said that he came to offer his service to the English, being disgusted by an unjust censure which had been cast on his conduct in the late battle at the golden rock: an over-strained affectation of frankness in his behaviour gave captain Dal-



1753.

ton some suspicions, and two spies were set to watch his actions, who at different times discovered him measuring the calibre of the guns, taking a survey of the works, and fathoming the height of the wall with a lead and line, after which he threw notes through the windows to the French prisoners. There was in the garison a French soldier whose fidelity to the English might be depended on; this man engaged to detect his countryman still more effectually, and suffered himself to be chastized in his sight by captain Dalton for some pretended neglect; after which he affected such a resentment for this treatment, that De Cattans gave him his entire confidence, offering him a great reward if he would assist in the execution of his plan. The soldier said he was not made for great enterprizes, but offered to desert the first night he should be on guard at the barrier, and to carry a letter, provided De Cattans would assure him of a pardon for having deserted from the French. This the other readily agreed to, and gave him a pardon in form signed with his name, to which he added the title "of plenipotentiary of the marquis Duplex." At the same time he delivered to him a letter for Mr. Brenier, which contained a full and exact description of the defences of the place, and some commendations on his own address in deceiving the English commandant, whom he described as a very young man, that placed more confidence in him than in any of his own officers. The soldier carried the letter to captain Dalton, who immediately caused De Cattans to be arrested; at first he denied the fact, but on seeing his own writing, desired that he might not suffer the disgrace of being hanged, but have the honour of being shot by a file of musketeers. He was told that his fate could not be decided before major Lawrence arrived; captain Dalton, however, desirous of drawing the enemy into a snare by the same means which they had employed against himself, promised the criminal to intercede for his pardon provided he would write a letter to Mr. Brenier, and prevail upon him to attempt an escalade at such a part as he, captain Dalton, should dictate; this De Cattans readily agreed to; the place fixed upon was Dalton's battery, on the west-side, not far from the northern angle, as being more accessible than any other from without; but the defences and



and retrenchments within were stronger than any where else. A black fellow undertook to carry the letter for eight rupees, and Mr. Brenier, giving him twenty, sent him back with a letter to De Cattans, promising to put his plan into execution, and desiring him to write frequently. In vain did the garrison watch several nights successively, hoping that the enemy would make the assault; but the various reports which they received of major Lawrence's arrival, kept them in such a continual bustle and alarm, that they could not spare a night for the execution of this enterprize, notwithstanding they appeared convinced of its practicability.

The Mysoreans finding that the explosion made at Weycondah, had done little damage, took possession of this post, and mounting two small pieces of cannon on the rampart, encamped 300 horse and some Peans under the walls; and as the garrison of Trichinopoly had not lately ventured into the field, those troops slept in perfect security without a single sentinel. Captain Dalton receiving intelligence of their negligence, resolved to beat up their quarters, and chusing a time when it was very dark, a party of 400 men, mostly Sepoys, marched up close to the tents, and made a general discharge amongst them before they were once challenged. The Sepoys got some horses and arms, and the whole party retreated out of reach before the enemy were sufficiently roused to do more than fire a few shot at random.

At length, after remaining a month closely blockaded, and obliged to be continually on their guard, the garrison received advice that the Major was approaching: he was joined by the Tanjorine army, consisting of 3000 horse, and 2000 matchlocks, under the command of Monackjee, as also by the expected reinforcement from fort St. David, of 170 Europeans and 300 Sepoys. On the 7th of August, the army arrived at Dalaway's choultry, situated close to the southern bank of the Caveri, six miles east of Trichinopoly, where they were detained the next day by the falling of a heavy rain, which rendered the country between the choultry and city impassable. This obliged them to strike to the south-west, and the 9th in the morning they continued their march, escorting a convoy of several thousand bullocks provided by the Nabob, and said to be laden with provisions; signals from the top of the



1753. rock in Trichinopoly, not only apprized them that the enemy were in motion, but likewise pointed out the dispositions they were making. Their cavalry in different parties extended from the French rock to the golden rock: at the sugar-loaf rock, as being the place where major Lawrence would first come within their reach, they kept their main body of Europeans and Sepoys, together with their artillery; and a detachment took possession of the golden rock. The major, when arrived about a mile south-east of the sugar-loaf, halted, and having considered the enemy's disposition, formed and ordered his march in consequence of it. To preserve the baggage and provisions from the enemy's fire, he determined not to attempt a passage through the posts they occupied; but to march round the golden rock, whilst the convoy with the Nabob and his retinue, escorted by the Tanjorine troops, moved on at some distance on the left flank of the Europeans and Sepoys. It was necessary at all events to drive the enemy from the golden rock, since their fire from hence might greatly incommode the line of march: but as a suspicion of the major's intentions to pass that way, would naturally induce them to reinforce this post, he resolved to divert their attention, by halting, and forming as if he intended to march directly and attack their main body at the sugar-loaf rock. This stratagem had the desired effect: monsieur Brenier, not an acute officer, recalled the greatest part of his detachment from the golden rock, and with much bustle got his troops in order to receive the major: who in the mean time detached the grenadiers and 800 Sepoys from the front of the line, ordering them to de-file behind the convoy which still proceeded on, and to march with all possible expedition and attack the golden rock. Mr. Brenier did not perceive this motion before it was too late to prevent the effect of it; he however instantly sent forward 1000 horse at full gallop to intercept the English party, and at the same time detached 300 Europeans to reinforce the guard at the rock. The cavalry soon came up with the English party, and endeavoured to retard their march by caracoling and galloping about as if they intended to charge; but the grenadiers did not suffer themselves to be amused by these motions, and fired hotly upon them without slackening their pace, nor made a halt until they had mounted



mounted the rock, drove the enemy down, and planted their colours on the top, which they accomplished before the enemy's party of infantry, marching from the sugar-loaf rock, had got half way: who seeing the post they were sent to reinforce lost, had not the heart to make a push to recover it; but halted, and taking shelter behind a bank, began to cannonade the grenadiers and Sepoys at the golden rock with four field pieces. By this time Mr. Brenier, with the rest of the French troops, had proceeded a little way from the sugar-loaf rock, to support his advanced party; but seeing them halt, he halted likewise. So that the main body of the English troops continued their march, and secured the possession of the golden rock without interruption: The Tanjorines soon after came up with the baggage, and were ordered to remain with it in the rear. The English artillery were now warmly employed against the cannon of the enemy's advanced party, of whom none but the artillery men were exposed, for the rest kept close behind the bank. The English battalion was drawn up in the open plain without shelter, and in this situation suffered considerably, whilst their artillery did little mischief to the enemy; however the shot that flew over the bank went amongst a large body of horse who were drawn up in the rear of the advanced party, and flung them into confusion; which captain Dalton observing, he sallied from the city with two field pieces, and the cavalry finding themselves between two fires, hurried out of reach, some to the east, and others to the west. In the mean time several of the English battalion were struck down, and major Lawrence observing that the enemy's main body made no motion to join the advanced party, determined to make a push, and drive these troops from the advantageous ground of which they had taken possession. The grenadiers, with 200 more Europeans, and 300 Sepoys, were ordered to march and attack them, whilst major Lawrence remained at the golden rock with the rest ready to support them if repulsed, or if successful, to join and pursue the advantage by driving the beaten party on the enemy's main body. The success of this attempt depending in a great measure on making the attack before the enemy's main body could move up to the succour of their party, the English for more expedition marched without any field pieces; but the artillery was notwithstanding not idle, for they fired

continually



1753. continually from the main body to deter the enemy's cavalry from attacking the flanks of the party as they marched. The officer appointed to lead the attack, instead of following his orders, which directed him to come to the push of bayonet without hesitation, sent word that he could not execute them without artillery, and that he was halted, waiting for it. Upon this major Lawrence instantly quitted the main body, and galloping up, put himself at the head of the party, and led them on. The troops, animated by his example, marched on with great spirit, keeping their order, notwithstanding they were galled by a very smart fire from the enemy's artillery, which killed several men, and amongst them captain Kirk, at the head of the grenadiers: these brave fellows, whom nothing during the war had ever staggered, could not see the death of the officer they loved without emotion. Captain Kilpatrick seeing them at a stand, immediately put himself at their head, and desired them, if they loved their captain as much as he valued his friend, to follow him, and revenge his death: roused in an instant by this spirited exhortation and example, they swore in their manner, that they would follow him to hell. In this temper they pushed on; and in order to prevent the enemy from retreating to their main body, marched to gain their right flank: the enemy had not the courage to stand the shock, but quitted the bank in great precipitation, and leaving three field pieces behind them, ran away towards Weycondah, exposed great part of the way to the fire of the two field pieces which captain Dalton had brought out of the city, every shot of which, for several discharges, took off two or three men. The enemy's main body now, when too late, began to move to the assistance of their party, but seeing them irretrievably defeated; and perceiving at the same time the main body of the English advancing from the golden rock, they lost courage, and without waiting to give or receive a fire, ran off in great confusion towards the five rocks, exposed to a severe cannonade from the rear division of the English artillery which had been left at the golden rock with the baggage; the Tanjore horse remained spectators of their flight without taking advantage of it, by falling on them sword in hand, which if they had done, few would have escaped; so that the loss which they sustained in Europeans did not exceed 100 men killed and wounded: of the

English



English battalion about 40 men were either killed or disabled, and on both sides, principally by cannon shot.

Monack-jee endeavoured to excuse his neglect by alledging that the solicitude of the Nabob and his commissaries for the safety of the convoy, made him unwilling to leave it exposed to the enemy's cavalry which hovered round in large bodies: but this was no good reason; for major Lawrence immediately on the enemy's retreat sent him orders to pursue, and the battalion were marching back to secure the convoy. As soon as the enemy were out of sight, the army with the convoy proceeded to the city, where on taking an account of the provisions before they were lodged in the magazines, it was found that the quantity did not exceed 300 bullock loads, and this not a little damaged: which, in weight not being more than 30,000 pounds, was scarcely sufficient to supply the Europeans and Sepoys ten days. It would be difficult to find an example of so great a negligence, in so essential a service, which had cost so much pains and risque, excepting in the irregular and indolent administration of a Moorish government in Indostan; and indeed the English themselves were much to blame for trusting this important charge entirely to the conduct of the Nabob and his officers, who had loaded the rest of the bullocks, for there were near 4000, with their own baggage and a heap of trumpery not worth the carriage.

The enemy removed their tents and baggage as soon as it was dark from the sugar-loaf rock to Weycondah, where they encamped all together in so strong a situation, protected by the fire of that post, that they could not be attacked with any prospect of success. The Mysoreans had always drawn their provisions from their own country; and as there was little probability of procuring plenty to the city whilst the enemy remained on the plain, the major, as soon as the troops were a little refreshed, marched out, and taking a circuit encamped at the five rocks, intending to intercept their convoys coming from the eastward, and thus retaliate the distresses which they had so often brought upon his army. At the same time Monack-jee, in order to secure the communication with Tanjore, undertook to reduce Elimiserum, where the enemy had left a garrison of 200 Sepoys and a few Europeans, who submitted to him after a little resistance.



1753.

Major Lawrence now ordered De Cattans to be hanged in sight of the enemy's advanced guards: he died with great resolution, but shewed much concern that he had endeavoured to betray captain Dalton, who had received him with so much hospitality and kindness. As the English had condescended to employ this delinquent against his own countrymen, after he was detected, his life ought to have been spared.

The enemy still remaining at Weycondah, major Lawrence made a motion towards them on the 23d, upon which they decamped in a hurry, and leaving part of their baggage, with a gun and some ammunition behind, made a disorderly retreat to Mootachellinoor, a strong post on the bank of the Caveri, which secured their communication with Seringham: the next day major Lawrence took possession of the ground they had abandoned with an intention to send forward some artillery near enough to cannonade them; but this design was unexpectedly frustrated, for the next day a reinforcement, equal to the whole of the English force, appeared on the bank of the Coleroon. It consisted of 3000 Morattoes, a great number of Peans, and some Topasses under the command of Morari-row, together with 400 Europeans, and 2000 Sepoys, with six guns.

Most of these Europeans arrived in the end of June from the island of Mauritius, where they had been disciplined; and Mr. Dupleix committed a great error in not sending them immediately, together with Morari-row's troops, to Trichinopoly; more especially as the signal defeat of the French and Mysoreans at the golden rock might have convinced him that they would hardly be able to prevent the English, when reinforced by the troops of Tanjore, from making their way good to the city with the convoy: but his vanity on this occasion confounded his good sense; for treating the battle of the golden rock as a trifling skirmish, and attributing the ill success of it to some pretended accidents common to the fortune of war, he seemed to disdain sending any further assistance to an army which he confidently asserted could not fail to overpower their enemies in a very few days; he therefore detained this force to make conquests in the Carnatic; but the wilful disposition of Morari-row frustrated in a great measure this design: for regarding no injunctions excepting those of the Mysorean, who was afraid to give him



1753.

him positive orders, the Morattoo traversed the province according to his own inclination, without keeping his force united, or acting in concert with the troops of Pondicherry. However Mr. Dupleix pursuing his plan as well as he was able, detached immediately after the capture of Chillambrum a large body of Sepoys, accompanied by some Morattoes, to attack the pagoda of Verdachellum; this force was led by one Hassan Ally, who had long been commander in chief of the French Sepoys, and had distinguished himself so much in this employment that the French king had honoured him with a gold medal in token of his services; this man was taken at Seringham with Mr. Law, and the English knowing his capacity kept him a close prisoner at fort St. David; from whence, however, he had lately contrived to escape, being carried through the the guards in a basket which they imagined to contain lumber. The garrison of Verdachellum consisted only of 50 Sepoys commanded by a serjeant, who surrendered after a slight resistance; from hence Hassan Ally, joined by 50 Europeans, proceeded to Trinomalee, where they found Morari-row with the greatest part of his force assisting, according to his promise, the troops of Vellore, who were laying close siege to the place. The army of the besiegers now amounted to 6000 cavalry, 5000 Sepoys, and 100 Europeans, including the 50 which Mortiz-ally kept in his own pay. The garrison, 1500 men, commanded by Barkatoola, a faithful servant to the Nabob, and a gallant officer, defended themselves with much bravery, making frequent sallies, and in one they surprized and beat up the quarters of the Morattoes, killing many of their horses; this loss, the most sensible that the Morattoes can feel, determined Morari-row to look out for easier conquests; and leaving the Phoufadar's troops to continue the siege as they could, he marched away, with an intention to lay siege to Palam Cotah, a fort in the neighbourhood of Chillambrum. Here he was joined by a party of 350 Europeans, who endeavoured to prevail on him to march with them and attack the English settlement of Devi Cotah, but Morari-row, apprehensive of the loss he might suffer in this attempt, refused to accompany them. On this difference they separated, the French marching towards the woods of Warior-pollam, in hopes of levying contribution from the Polygar; and the Morattoo to Trinomalee. Here, a few days after his



1753. arrival, he received letters from the regent informing him of his distress since his convoys from Mysore began to be intercepted, and desiring him in the most pressing terms to move immediately to Seringham with his whole force; and Mr. Dupleix informing him at the same time that he intended to send all the Europeans he could bring into the field, the Morattoe, calling in all his stragglers, hurried back to Chillambrum, which was appointed the place of general rendezvous; from hence the whole reinforcement proceeded by very expeditious marches to Trichinopoly, in sight of which they arrived on the 24th of August.

Their appearance at so critical a conjuncture did not fail to raise the enemy's spirits, who testified their joy by firing salutes and exhibiting fireworks for three days successively, at the same time making the necessary preparations for coming to the plains again; whilst the English and their allies saw themselves under the necessity of taking their measures to act again on the defensive, under the same disadvantages to which they had been constantly subject, excepting in the short interval since the last defeat of the enemy: but even in this interval they had not been able to get more provisions than sufficed for the daily consumption; for as their force was not sufficient to spare considerable escorts at a distance for the time necessary to collect large supplies, what they received came daily in small quantities, about 100 bullock loads at a time, which indeed had lately joined the camp without much difficulty. But it was evident that the enemy's detachments would now scour the plain again as usual; the Major therefore, to diminish the risk of his convoys coming from the eastward, quitted the neighbourhood of Weycondah as soon as their reinforcement appeared, and encamped on the same ground which he had formerly occupied a little to the north of the Pacquire's Tope. The enemy three days after quitted Mootachellinoor, and encamped at the five rocks, where their army covered a great extent of ground, for they had likewise been reinforced from Mysore. From the great superiority of their numbers, the Major expected that they would attack him in his camp, and ordered his men to sleep on their arms; but they contented themselves with following their former plan of intercepting the convoys. And the very next day, the 28th, near 3000 horse, Morattoes and Mysoreans, attacked an escort of 100 Europeans



Europeans with great vigour; but the men, accustomed to such encounters, preserved themselves and the convoy by not parting with their fire, although the enemy rode up several times to the very bayonets.

The presidency of Madras hearing of the reinforcement which Mr. Dupleix had sent to Seringham, determined to strengthen their own army with all the men that could be spared for the field, and sent them in one of the company's ships to Devi Cotah; and the Major, in order to facilitate the junction of these troops, as well as to protect his convoys, determined to encamp farther to the eastward; and sending off his baggage in the night, marched at day break the first of September over the plain in full view of the enemy, and pitched his camp at a little distance to the south-east of the French rock. This ground was well chosen, for the right flank was protected by some pieces of artillery mounted on the rock, which were flanked by the cannon of the city. The front of the camp was for the most part secured by a morass, and the rear by swamps and rice fields. The Tanjorines were exceedingly delighted with the security in which they here found themselves, for they had before began to droop with apprehensions of having their quarters beat up by the Morattoes; and Monack-jee exerting all his influence amongst his countrymen, prevailed on the merchants who dealt in rice, to bring frequent supplies of grain, although in small quantities. The enemy's scouts gave them such good intelligence of the approach of the convoys that few escaped unattacked, but being constantly supported by detachments of Europeans, they made their way good to the camp; not indeed without some loss, since it was impossible in the tumult to prevent the bullocks and cooleys from flinging down their loads and taking flight. However, what arrived was sufficient for the daily wants, but so little more, that if two or three convoys had been cut off, the army would have been obliged to have had recourse to the small stock which was laid up in the city. The enemy, as if determined to reduce them to this distress moved from the five rocks, and encamped at the sugar loaf, extending from hence to the golden rock. Here the regent and Morari-row having intelligence of the reinforcement of which the English were in expectation, pressing intreated the French to attack their camp before those troops arrived; but Mr. Asiruc declined the attempt, and

1753.

contented himself with waiting for less hazardous opportunities of diminishing their force: at length the English reinforcement arrived on the 19th of September, at Kelli Cotah, a fort 15 miles east of the city: and never perhaps had two armies remained 18 days in so extraordinary a situation, both encamped on the open plain without a bush on it, at about two miles distance from each other, so that with their glasses they could see one another sitting at dinner in their tents; and a cannon shot from the advanced posts might easily reach the opposite camp: but as the swamps in the rear of both the camps did not permit either to move farther back, both refrained from commencing a cannonade; the English desired nothing more than to keep their battalion unimpaired until the arrival of their reinforcement; but for this very reason the French ought to have taken all opportunities of diminishing their number. Major Lawrence now apprehending nothing so much, as that the enemy might send a large detachment to intercept his reinforcement, determined if possible to divert their attention by cannonading their camp; and the day in which the troops were ordered to march from Kelli Cotah, an eighteen pounder, sent from the city, was mounted about half a mile south-west of the French rock, on the bank of the water-course that intersects the plain, and early in the morning the 16th of September, it began to fire smartly; every shot was seen to strike amongst the tents of the French battalion, who after having bore the insult patiently for two hours, detached their three companies of grenadiers with a large body of their allies, horse and foot, to attack the party posted with the eighteen pounder; upon which motion the Major immediately threw a reinforcement into the watercourse of 250 Europeans, 800 Sepoys, and three field pieces under the command of captain Charles Campbell, who defended it so well that the enemy were obliged to desist from their attempt, and retreat to their camp, not without a considerable loss; for they had bore for some time a smart cannonade from five pieces of cannon upon the south-west cavalier of the city, as well as from the artillery at the watercourse. This repulse, seconded by a continuance of the fire from the 18 pounder, either deterred or diverted them during the rest of the day from giving attention to the reinforcement, who having continued their march without molestation, joined the



the camp in the evening. The whole consisted of 237 Europeans, with the captains Ridge and Calliaud, lately arrived from Europe, and 300 Sepoys. The junction of these troops inspired the army with as much joy as the doubtful expectation of their arrival had caused anxiety and solicitude; and to retaliate on the enemy the same marks of exultation which they had lately employed on a like occasion, the tidings were announced to them by a discharge of all the artillery in the camp and city.

There being now no more reinforcements to expect, and the vicinity of the enemy having greatly augmented the difficulties of getting provisions and fuel, major Lawrence, as soon as the troops just arrived were refreshed, determined to bring on a general battle, which if the enemy declined he resolved to attack them in their camp.

The tents and baggage were sent at night to remain under cover of the artillery of the city; from whence at the same time 100 Europeans, all who could be spared from the garrison, marched out and joined the army. Every thing being prepared, major Lawrence quitted the ground near the French rock, and at day break, the 20th of September, the army appeared at the Facquire's tope, and remained for some hours drawn up, offering the enemy battle; but they shewing no inclination to accept the defiance, the major sent for his tents again, and encamped upon the spot on which he was drawn up, resolving to attack their camp the next day: as the success of this desperate enterprize depended greatly on preventing the enemy from entertaining any suspicion of his intention, he cannonaded their camp, with an eighteen pounder, at different intervals during the rest of the day; hoping to make them believe that he purposed nothing more than to harrafs and incommode them. At night the tents were struck, and sent back again towards the city, and the whole army was ordered, after taking their rest in the open field, to be under arms at four in the morning.

The enemy's camp extended on each side of the sugar-loaf rock, but much farther to the west than to the east: most of the Morattoes were encamped to the east, the French quarters were close to the west of the rock, and beyond these the Mysoreans extended almost as far as the golden rock, occupying the ground for a considerable way behind the

two

1753.

two rocks. The rear of the camp was covered with thickets and rocky ground. The French had flung up an intrenchment in front of their own quarters, and intended to have continued it along the left flank to the west; but on this side had only finished a small part, separated about 300 yards from the western extremity of their intrenchment in front, which interval was left open without defences: the Morattoes had likewise flung up an intrenchment in their front to the east of the sugar loaf: at the golden rock, which commanded the left flank and the front of the ground on which the Mysores were encamped, the French had stationed an advanced guard of 100 Europeans, two companies of Topasses, and 600 Sepoys, with two pieces of cannon, under the command of a partizan of some reputation. Major Lawrence being apprized of these dispositions, projected his attack to take the utmost advantage of them. At the hour appointed the army quitted the Facquire's tope, and marched in profound silence towards the golden rock: the battalion consisting of 600 men formed the van in three equal divisions; the first was composed of the grenadier company of 100 men commanded by captain Kilpatrick, the picket of 40, by captain Calliaud, and two platoons, each of 30 men, under the command of captain Charles Campbell: the artillery, six field pieces, with 100 artillery men, were divided on the flanks of each division: 2000 Sepoys, in two lines, followed the Europeans: the Tanjorine cavalry were ordered to extend to the eastward, and to march even with the last line of Sepoys. The moon had hitherto been very bright; but a sudden cloud now obscured it so much, that the first division of the battalion came within pistol shot of the golden rock before they were discovered; and giving a very smart fire, mounted it in three places at once, whilst the enemy, who had barely time to snatch up their arms, hurried down after making one irregular discharge, and ran away to the camp with such precipitation, that they left their two field pieces, ready loaded with grape, undischarged. Animated by this success, the men called out with one voice to be led onto the grand camp, and the major availing himself of their alacrity, remained no longer at the rock than was necessary to break the carriages of the enemy's guns, and to form his troops again. Their disposition was now changed, the three divisions of Europeans were ordered



dered to march, as near as they could, in one line in front through the camp of the Mysoreans, in order to fall at once upon the left flank of the French quarters: the Sepoys were divided on each flank of the battalion, but at some distance in the rear. Had the camp, like those in Europe, been covered with tents, it would have been impossible to have penetrated through it in this order; but in an Indian army none but the men of rank can afford the expence of a tent, and the rest shelter themselves as they can in cabbins made of mats, so slight that they may be pushed down by the hand. The Tanjorine cavalry, intermixed with match-locks and peans, had halted during the attack of the golden rock, on the plain nearly opposite to the front of the French intrenchment, and they were now instructed to move directly up to it, in order to create what confusion they could with their fire arms and rockets. The battalion received the orders for continuing the march with loud huzza's, and the whole proceeded with the greatest confidence, as to a victory of which they were sure; the drums of the three divisions beating the grenadiers march, the gunners with their portfires lighted on the flanks, and the Sepoys sounding with no little energy all their various instruments of military music. This did not a little contribute to augment the consternation which the fugitives from the rock had spread amongst the Mysoreans, who were already taking flight, when the English entered their camp. The Europeans marched with fixed bayonets, and recovered arms, but the Sepoys kept up a smart fire upon the swarms that were taking flight on all sides. The French discovered by the fugitives which way the attack would fall, and drew up to oppose it, facing the west; the right of their battalion was behind the unfinished part of their intrenchment, and the rest extended towards the intrenchment they had thrown up in front; which their line, however, did not reach by a hundred yards; but a bank running at this distance parallel to that intrenchment, served to defend the left flank of their battalion. In this position they derived no advantage from that part of their works on which they had so much depended: to the left of their battalion was a body of 2000 Sepoys, who inclined to the left, intending to gain the flank of the English battalion, and the same number were designed to form their left wing; but these, by some mistake, in this scene of hurry

and



1753. and confusion, posted themselves on the sugar loaf rock. The English troops advancing were prevented by the interruptions which they met with in the Mysore camp from keeping up in a line; so that the first division had outmarched the second, and the second the third; however, as soon as they came nigh the enemy, whom they discovered by the portfires of their guns, the hindermost quickened their pace; but nevertheless the whole line was not completely formed before they came within twenty yards of the enemy, by which time the Sepoys to the right had advanced from the rear, in order to oppose those on the enemy's left: the artillery in the hurry could not keep up with the battalion. The French artillery had for some time fired with great vivacity, but most of the shot flew too high, and killed several of the flying Mysoreans. The action commenced just as the day began to dawn: Mr. Astruc, with indefatigable activity prevailed on his men to wait and receive the English fire before they gave theirs: amongst those who suffered in this onset was captain Kilpatrick, who commanded the division on the right; he fell desperately wounded; upon which captain Calliaud put himself at the head of the grenadiers, and took the command of the whole division; the French Sepoys on the left scarcely stood the first fire of the right wing of the English Sepoys, but took flight: which captain Calliaud perceiving, he wheeled instantly round with his division, and gaining the left flank of the intrenchment, behind which the left of the French battalion was posted, poured in a close fire upon them; and the grenadiers pushing on with their bayonets, drove them crowding upon their center: the whole line was already falling into confusion, when a well-levell'd discharge from the center and left of the English battalion in front compleated the rout, and they ran away in great disorder to gain the other side of the bank on their right, where Mr. Astruc endeavoured to rally them: but the grenadiers pursuing them closely, renewed the attack with their bayonets, and put them again to flight: every man now provided for his own safety, without any regard to order, running towards the golden rock, as this way was the only outlet not obstructed; but as soon as they got to some distance on the plain they dispersed and took various routs. The left wing of the English Sepoys had hitherto taken no share in the engagement, for by
I
keeping



1753.

keeping too much to the left of the battalion, they came to the outside of the French intrenchment, on the ground to which the Tanjorines were ordered to advance; however, as soon as they perceived the French battalion in confusion, they pushed on to the sugar loaf rock, and with much resolution attacked and dispersed the body of the enemy's Sepoys posted there, who from the beginning of the action had employed themselves in firing random shot indiscriminately upon friends and foes. The victory was now decided, and the English troops drew up on the French parade. A body of Morattoes were the only part of the Indian army which made any motions to draw off the attention of the English during the engagement; they seeing one of the field pieces left with a few men at a distance behind the rest, galloped up, and cutting down the men, got possession of it; but perceiving the battle lost, they did not venture to carry it off: nevertheless they did not immediately quit the camp, where they were soon after joined by several other bodies of cavalry, encouraged by their example: but the English artillery in a few rounds obliged them to retire again, and they followed the rest of the fugitives, who were retreating towards Seringham by the pass of Mootachillinour. It was some hours before the whole got into the island, for the throng consisted of 30,000 men of all sorts on foot, and 16,000 horse, besides a great number of oxen, camels, and elephants. The Tanjorines were ordered to set out in pursuit of the French troops, who were taking flight, dispersed on all sides over the plain; but they could not be prevailed on to quit the spoil of the camp, which they were very busy in plundering.

The tents, baggage, and ammunition of the French camp, together with eleven pieces of cannon, one an eighteen pounder, were taken, 100 of their battalion were either killed or wounded, and near 100 more, amongst whom was Mr. Astruc, with ten officers, were made prisoners: several were afterwards knocked on the head by the people in Tondeman's woods, 65 were taken straggling in the Tanjore country; and a detachment of Sepoys, sent out by captain Dalton from the city, brought in 21 of those who were making their way to the island by the pass of Chuckleyapolam: so that the whole of their loss was at least 300 Europeans, with their best officer; for such undoubtedly was Mr. Astruc:



1753.

it might have been much more, had the Tanjorines exerted themselves as they were ordered. Of the English about forty Europeans were killed and wounded.

This action was decided entirely by the musketry; for the English artillery were not brought into the engagement; and the French cannon were ill pointed, and irresolutely served, even before the conflict became hot and general; after which the event could not remain long in suspense between two bodies of men, whose dead fell within 20 yards of each other. There are few instances of a victory in which the sagacity and spirit of the general, as well as the resolution of the troops, are more to be admired. The French themselves confessed that they had no suspicion of the intentions to attack them; nor did chance interfere to subtract from the merit of this success: for major Lawrence, before he quitted his camp at the French rock, had predicted most of the events which concurred to produce it. The Nabob's standard was now planted in the enemy's camp; and the English flag, displayed on the top of the sugar-loaf rock, proclaimed the triumph of their arms to the country several miles round.

The Tanjorines, elated to excess, although they had contributed nothing more than their appearance in the field to gain the victory, proposed, immediately after the battle, to follow the enemy, and besiege them in Seringham; but major Lawrence paying no attention to this rhodomontade, moved with the army in the evening to lay siege to Weycondah.

This place, now a fort, was originally nothing more than a pagoda and choultry, situated on the top of a rock about 30 feet high. The rock was afterwards inclosed by a square stone wall, carried up as high as the top of the rock itself, and built thick enough to afford a rampart about five feet in breadth, besides a slender parapet, which has loop-holes to fire through: on the western side there is a gateway, the top of which communicates with the rampart: the enemy's garrison consisted chiefly of Sepoys. A watercourse served instead of a trench to shelter the English troops; who having cut embrasures through the bank about 400 yards from the wall, battered it with two eighteen pounders, and at the same time threw shells from a mortar and two cohorns. By the next evening the wall was beaten down, within 12 feet of the ground.



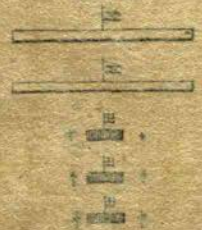
PLAN of the ATTACK of the French, Myfore & Murrattoe CAMPS by Major Lawrence, Sept. 21. 1754.

CSL

Explanation.

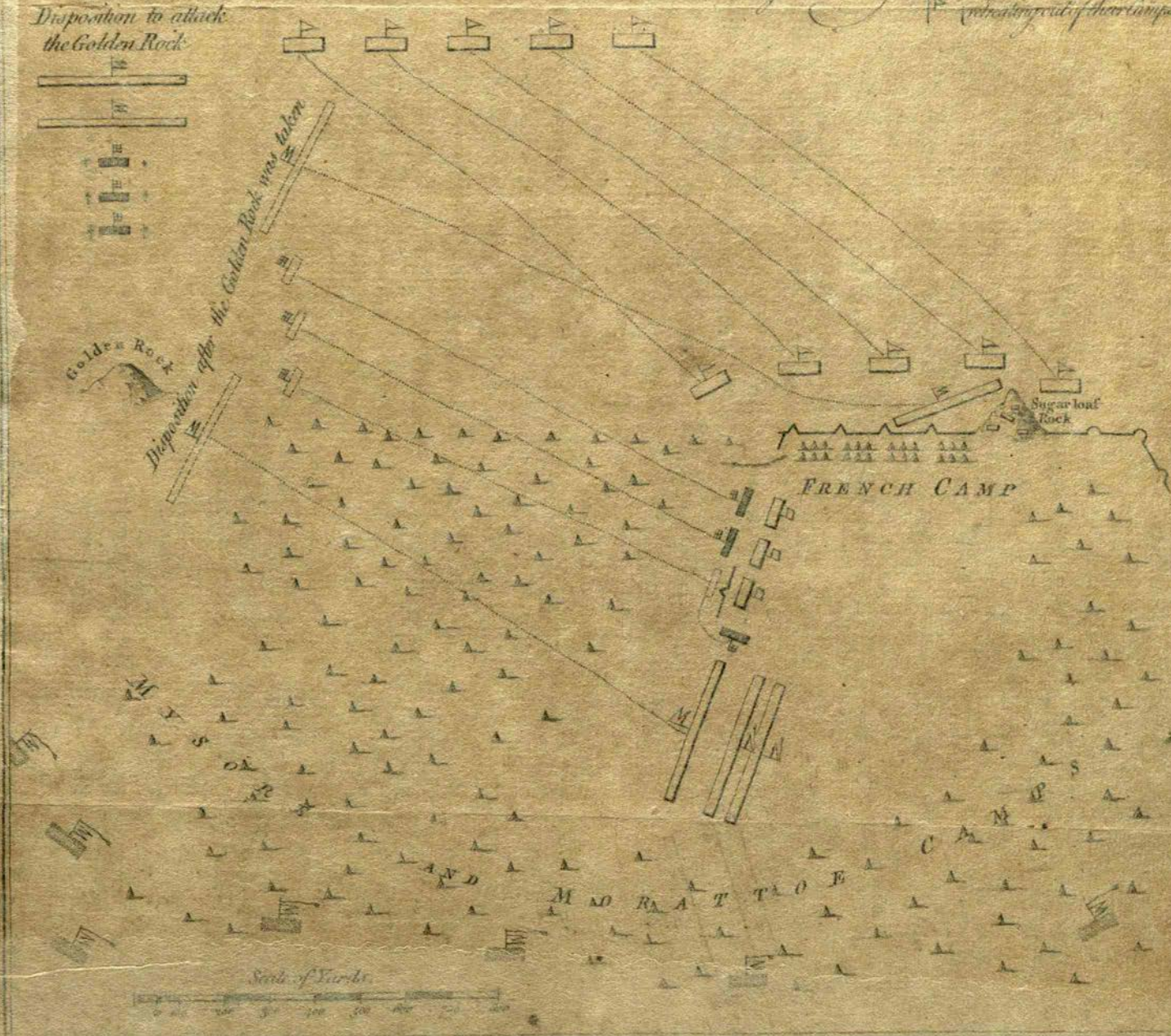
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| English Battalion. | French Battalion. |
| English Sepoys. | French Sepoys. |
| Tanjore Cavalry. | Myfore & Murrattoe Cavalry. |
| | Indicating out of their Camps. |

Disposition to attack the Golden Rock



Golden Rock

Disposition after the Golden Rock was taken



FRENCH CAMP

Sugar loaf Rock

MURRATTOE

Scale of Fathoms



Photo. by Major Lawrence



removed the most dangerous disturber of the Nabob's government in this part of the country, for he was a very brave and active man: there were several other chiefs of less consequence, who were constantly making inroads into the districts of Ponamallee, Chinglaput and Arcot, and gave frequent employment to the garrisons of these places; but they always retreated as soon as they heard that a detachment of Europeans was marching against them.

The enemy at Seringham seemed so little inclinable to take advantage of the absence of the English troops cantoned at Koiladdy, that they did not even send parties on the plain to prevent the country people from going daily with provisions to the market in Trichinopoly where the garrison were as well supplied and lived in as much tranquillity as if both sides had agreed in form to a cessation of hostilities: the enemy, however, convinced that the English would never have attempted to attack their camp at the sugar loaf rock if they had not been joined by the cavalry of Tanjore, determined to leave no means untried to deprive them of this resource in future. Accordingly the regent gave Succo-jee the king's minister and favourite a sum of money more considerable than the first bribe, and Mr. Dupléix sent a letter penned in the Malabar language by his wife, in which he threatened the king, that if he dared to give the Nabob and the English any more assistance, the Morattoes should lay waste his country with fire and sword, and that if this should not be sufficient to terrify him into a neutrality, he would bring down the Soubah Salabad-jing, with his whole army, from Golconda. The effect of these practices, both on the king and his minister, was soon visible; for Succo-jee taking advantage of the timorous and suspicious character of his master, prevailed on him to remove the general Monack-jee from the command of the army, by representing him as a man in such close connexion with the English, that he might probably from a reliance on their friendship, be induced to form projects dangerous even to the king himself; who, alarmed at the same time by the menaces of Dupléix, determined to preserve his country by breaking the promise he had made to the Nabob and major Lawrence, to send his troops to Koiladdy as soon as the rains were over. Having brought him thus far, the next step was to make him join the enemy; this like-

wife



1753.

wife Succo-jee undertook to effect, and the king it is said was on the point of signing the treaty, when a sudden and unexpected event stopped his hand.

In the beginning of November the French at Seringham received a reinforcement of 300 Europeans, 200 Topasses, and 1000 Sepoys, with some cannon; but instead of giving any sign that they had recovered their spirits by this increase of their strength, they determined to remain quiet until major Lawrence should be ready to quit Koiladdy, in hopes that the garrison of Trichinopoly would be lulled into security by seeing them remain inactive so long after the arrival of their reinforcement, and entertain no suspicion of the design they were meditating, when the time should come for carrying it into execution.

This design was nothing less than to storm the city of Trichinopoly in the night by surprise. The part which the French chose to make the assault upon was Dalton's battery, on the west side, near the north-west angle of the town, the same indicated by the letter which captain Dalton had prevailed on the spy De Cattans to write to the French commander Mr. Brenier; it had formerly been one part of the four gateways to this city. The entrance into an Indian fortification is through a large and complicated pile of building, projecting in the form of a parallelogram from the main rampart; and if the city has two walls, it projects beyond them both: this building consists of several continued terrasses which are of the same height as the main rampart, and communicate with it: the inward walls of these terrasses form the sides of an intricate passage, about twenty feet broad, which leads by various short turnings at right angles through the whole pile, to the principal gate that stands in the main rampart: for some space on each hand of Dalton's battery, the interval between the outward and inward wall of the city was much broader than any where else. Captain Dalton when intrusted with the command of the garrison, had converted that part of the gateway which projected beyond the outward wall into a solid battery, with embrasures; leaving the part between the two walls as it stood with its windings and terrasses: an interval was likewise left between the backside of the battery, and the terrace nearest to it, which lay parallel to each other; so that an enemy who had gained the battery could not get to the terrace



rafs without descending into the interjacent area, and then mounting the wall of the terrafs with scaling ladders: the battery, however, communicated with the rampart of the outward wall of the city, but being, as that was, only eighteen feet high, it was commanded by the terraffes behind it, as well as by the rampart of the inner wall, both of which were thirty feet high. Upon one of the inward cavaliers, south of the gateway, were planted two pieces of cannon, to plunge into the battery, and scour the interval between the two walls, as far as the terraffes of the gateway; and two other pieces mounted in the north-west angle of the inward rampart, commanded in like manner both the battery and the interval to the north of the terraffes. The French were, by De Cattan's letter, and by deserters, apprized of all these particulars, and notwithstanding the many difficulties they would have to formount in attempting to force their way into the town through this part of the fortifications, they preferred it to any other, because it was more accessible from without; for a rock level with the water almost choaked up the ditch in front of the battery.

On the 27th of November, at night, the greatest part of the enemy's army crossed the river: the Mysoreans and Morattoes were distributed in different parties round the city, with orders to approach to the counterescarp of the ditch, and divert the attention of the garrison during the principal and real attack, which was reserved for the French troops. Of this body 600 Europeans were appointed to escalade, whilst Mr. Maiflin, the commander, with the rest of the battalion, 200 men, and a large body of Sepoys, waited at the edge of the ditch, ready to follow the first party as soon as they should get into the town. At three in the morning the first party crossed the rock in the ditch, and, planting their scaling ladders, all of them mounted the battery without giving the least alarm to the garrison: for although the guard appointed for the battery consisted of fifty Sepoys, with their officers, and some European gunners, who were all present and alert when the rounds passed at midnight, most of them were now absent, and they who remained on the battery were fast asleep; these the French killed with their bayonets, intending not

1753.

to fire until they were fired upon: but this resolution was immediately after frustrated by an unforeseen accident; for some of them attempting to get to a flight counterwall which lines the backside of the battery, fell into a deep pit, which had been left in the body of the battery itself, contiguous to that wall: none but the most tried soldiers can refrain from firing upon any unexpected alarm in the night, and upon the screaming of those who were tumbling into the hole, several muskets were discharged. The French now concluding that they were discovered, imagined they might intimidate the garrison by shewing how far they were already successful, and turning two of the twelve pounders upon the battery against the town, discharged them together with a volley of small arms, their drums beating, and their soldiers shouting their usual military cry, "*vive le roy*." Fortunately the main guard, the barracks of the garrison, and the quarters of the officers were in the north part of the town, not more than 400 yards from the battery. Captain Kilpatrick, who commanded, remained so ill of the wounds he had received in the last engagement, that he was unable to remove from his bed; lieutenant Harrison, the next in command, came to him upon the alarm to receive his orders, which he gave with the usual calmness that distinguished his character on all occasions, directing lieutenant Harrison to march instantly with the piquet, reserve, and the Sepoys who were not already posted, to the place where the attack was made, and to order the rest of the garrison to repair to their respective alarm posts, with injunctions not to stir from them upon pain of death. The enemy having drawn up their scaling ladders into the battery, sent two parties down from it into the interval between the two walls: one of these parties carrying two petards, and conducted by a deserter, entered the passage which led through the terrasses, intending to get into the town by blowing open the gate which stands in the inward rampart: the other party carried the ladders, and were appointed to escalate; whilst the main body remained upon the battery, keeping up a constant fire upon the terrasses, and upon the inward rampart. But by this time the alarm was taken, and the cannon from each hand began to fire smartly into the interval between the two walls, and upon the battery. Lieutenant Harrison, with the main guard, was likewise arrived upon the rampart,



from whence the greatest part of them passed to the terrasses. The musketry of the assailants and defenders were now employed with great vivacity against each other, but with some uncertainty, having no other light to direct their aim except the frequent flashes of fire: notwithstanding the hurry and confusion, lieutenant Harrison had the presence of mind to station a platoon upon the rampart, directly above the gate, ordering them to keep a constant fire upon the passage immediately below, whether they saw any thing or not: nothing could be more sensible or fortunate than this precaution; for the platoon killed, without seeing them, the man who was to apply the first petard, as well as the deserter who conducted him, and both of them fell within ten yards of the gate. Those appointed to escalade, fixed their ladders on the south side of the terrasses, and a drummer, followed by an officer, had already mounted to the top, when a party of Sepoys came to this station, who killed the drummer, wounded and seized the officer, and then overturning the scaling ladders overset the men who were upon them: the ladders broke with the fall, and the assailants called for more; but found that the rest which they had brought were shattered and rendered useless by the grape-shot fired from the two pieces of cannon planted upon the cavalier: they soon after found that the man who was to manage the second petard was killed. Thus defeated in all their expectations they determined to retreat, and went up to the battery again, where the whole now resolved to make their escape; but this for the want of their ladders was no longer practicable, except by leaping down eighteen feet perpendicular, either upon the rock or into the water. Desperate as this attempt appeared near one hundred made the experiment; but what they suffered deterred the rest from following their example, who, in despair, turned and recommenced their fire from the battery upon the defenders. Lieutenant Harrison, with the greatest part of his Europeans, were assembled upon the terrass nearest the battery, and the two bodies, separated only by an interval of twenty feet, kept up a smart fire upon each other as fast as they could load: but the defenders had the advantage of firing under the cover of parapets from a situation twelve feet higher than the enemy upon the battery, who were totally exposed from head to foot, and were likewise taken

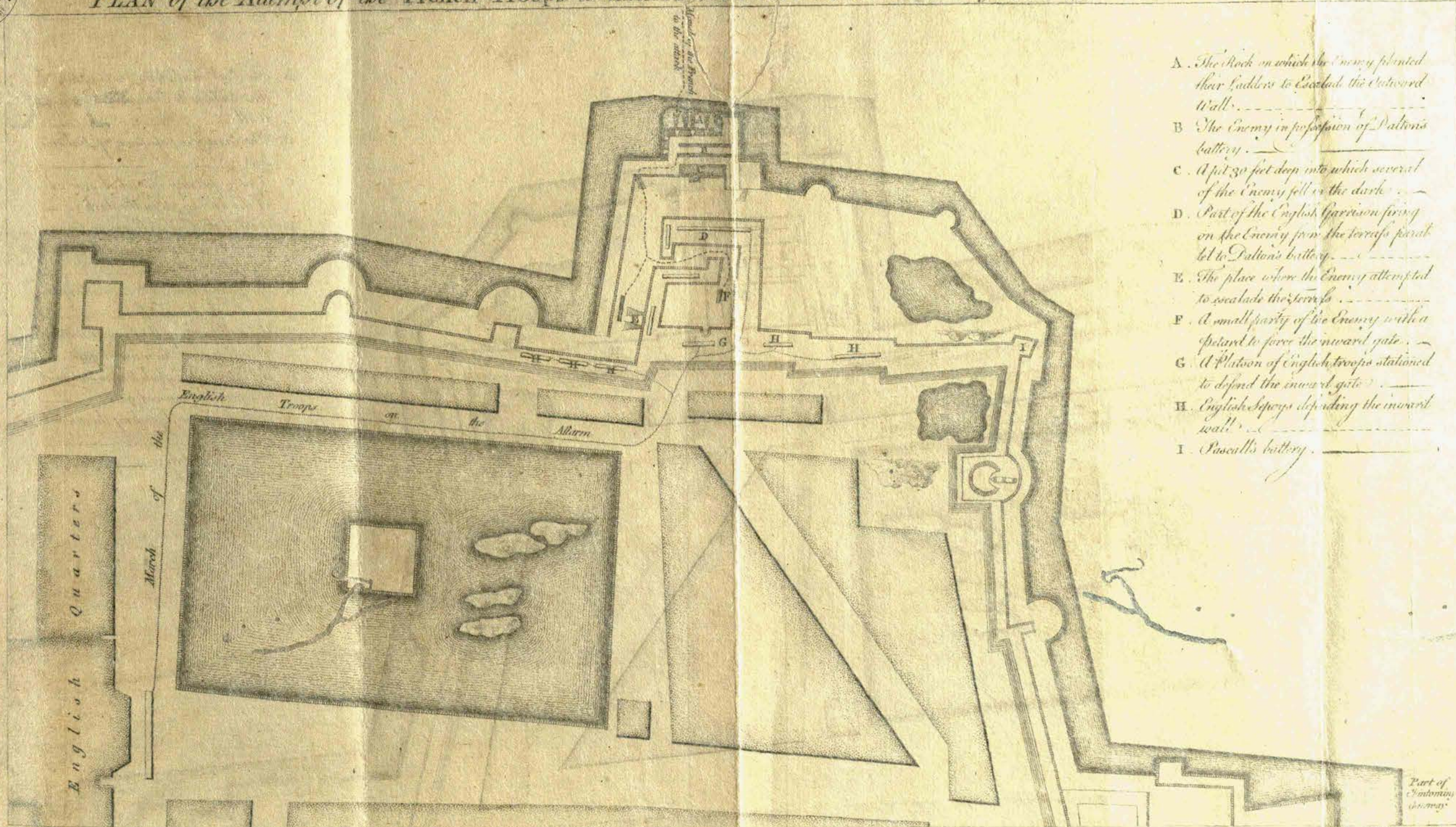


1753. on each flank by two pieces of cannon, as well as by the fire of some parties of Sepoys posted on the main rampart on each hand of the gateway. Thus galled, unable to retreat, and finding that resistance served only to expose them more, they desisted from firing, and every man endeavoured to shelter himself as he could; some in the embrasures of the battery, others behind a cavalier contiguous to it, and the rest in the interval between the two walls; the garrison, nevertheless, trusting to no appearances of security, continued to fire upon all such places in which they suspected them to be concealed. At length the day, long wished for by both sides, appeared; when the French, flinging down their arms, asked for quarter, which was immediately granted. The officers from the rampart ordered them to assemble in the interval between the two walls, from whence they were conducted, in small bodies at a time, by a party of Europeans into the city, through the gateway they had assaulted. Three hundred and sixty Europeans were thus made prisoners, of which number sixty-seven were wounded: thirty-seven were found killed upon the battery and in the rest of the works: those who escaped by leaping down were taken up by their own troops waiting on the outside of the ditch; but the French themselves confessed, that of the whole number, which was near one hundred, every man was much disabled; and some few were killed. Thus ended this assault, which after exposing the city of Tritchanopoly to the greatest risque it had run during the war, ended by impairing the French force more than any other event since the capture of Seringham: nevertheless we do not find that lieutenant Harrison received any recompence for his gallant and sensible conduct in this hazardous and important service: he died some time after, without being promoted from the rank in which he served when he saved the city.

The firing was heard by the outguards at Koiladdy, where the next evening a messenger arrived from the city, upon which major Lawrence immediately detached a party to reinforce the garrison, and prepared to follow with the rest of the army, but heavy rains prevented him from arriving before the 3d of December. In the mean time the enemy on the third night after the assault crossed the river again, with all the Mysore cavalry, eight thousand men, dismounted, who



PLAN of the Attempt of the French Troops to take TRICHINAPOLY by Escalade November 28 1753.





who had promised the regent to make a more successful attack upon the city; but finding the garrison alert they retreated without attempting any thing.

1753

The king of Tanjore, who, notwithstanding the alliance he was entering into with the French, knew nothing of their intentions to storm Tritchanopoly, was not a little astonished at the news, and the loss which they sustained in the attempt made him repent that he had shewn so much inclination to abandon the Nabob and the English: the French finding that their misfortune produced a change in the intentions which the king had began to entertain in their favour, determined to waste no more time in negotiating with him, but prepared to send a party of Morattoes to ravage his country. The king having intelligence of their design sent a body of troops under the command of his uncle Gauderow to Tricatapoly, a fort eighteen miles east of Tritchanopoly, where they were ordered to remain and punish the Morattoes: for this phrase, in the vain language of the princes of Indostan, is synonymous to fighting, and is not seldom made use of even by those who lose the battle. The king making a merit of this resolution to the Nabob, pretended that Gauderow only waited on the frontiers until the whole army was assembled, which would then immediately march to Tritchanopoly. Major Lawrence, willing to put the sincerity of this profession to the test, wrote to the king that his troops would be of little service whilst they were commanded by so unexperienced an officer as Gauderow, and desired that Monack-jee might be reinstated in the command, of which he was the only man in the kingdom capable. This commendation served to confirm those suspicions of the general which had been raised in the king's mind by the artifices of his minister; and major Lawrence being informed of the alarm which the king had taken from his remonstrances in Monack-jee's favour, resolved to make no farther mention of his name, lest the consequences should be fatal to him; but requested that the Tanjorine troops might join him without delay, even under the command of Gauderow. None however came; for the Morattoes having sent a small party to amuse Gauderow, their main body of 1500 men penetrated into the kingdom at the end of December



1753.

ember by another road, and as they had threatened began to lay the country waste with fire and sword.

This was the first motion which any of the enemy's parties had made since the assault of Trichanopoly: in the mean time several convoys were escorted from Tricatopoly to the English camp.

In the Carnatic the districts which acknowledged the Nabob had received no molestation from his enemies since the defeat of Mahomed Comaul at Tripetti, which happened in the month of September. The troops which Mr. Dupleix was able to send into the field from Pondicherry had lately been employed in besieging Palam Cotah, the same fort which they had refused to reduce for Morari-row. This place, with the circumjacent territory, is the only part in the Carnatic which does not depend on the Nabob of Arcot; it belongs to the Nabob of Cudapah. Examples of such sequestrations occur in every province of the Mogul empire, which amongst the rest of its feudal institutions allots to every Nabob a certain revenue arising from the product of lands, for his private expences: but as the basis of the Mogul government consists in regulations which deprive all its officers of any pretensions to real estates, and in obliging them to acknowledge that they hold nothing by any other title than the favour of the sovereign; the lands thus allotted to a Nabob are rarely situated in the province governed by himself, but are generally chosen in the most distant part of one of the neighbouring provinces; so that in this institution the Mogul's authority over all his officers appears in its utmost majesty; since the inhabitants of a province see the Nabob appointed to rule them, excluded from the right of appropriating to himself any part of the territory over which his jurisdiction, notwithstanding, extends. Hence likewise a perpetual source of disputes is established between the Nabobs of neighbouring provinces, who never fail to give one another reason to complain of violence committed in these sequestered lands. The Nabob of Cudapah applied to the presidency of Madras to assist the governor of Palam Cotah, on which they ordered a detachment of thirty Europeans, and two hundred Sepoys, to march from Devi Cotah and relieve the place. The detachment did not take the field before the enemy had made a practicable



Book IV.

HISTORY OF THE CARNATIC.

32
1753 SL

practicable breach which they intended to storm the next day: but lieutenant Frazer having concerted measures with the governor, contrived to introduce his party that very night, and the enemy at day break hearing English drums beating in the place, suspected what had happened, and immediately raised the siege.

The END of the FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK



B O O K V.

1753.

WHILST these events were passing in the southern parts of the Decan, others of great consequence to the interests of the French nation, happened at Golcondah, and in the northern provinces of the Soubahship.

Notwithstanding the death of Ghazi-o-din Khan, which happened in October 1752, the Morratoe generals, Ballagerow and Ragogi Bonfolo, continued the war against Sallabadjing and Mr. Buffy, who, as in the preceding year, marched westward towards the country of Ballagerow; he, as before, began to burn his own villages, and the Morattoe cavalry in several skirmishes, were repulsed with slaughter by the French troops and artillery. These losses soon induced Ballagerow to make proposals of peace, which was concluded about the middle of November at Calberga, a considerable town and fortress about 50 miles west of Beder; Sallabadjing giving up to Ballagerow several districts near Brampoor, in exchange for others in the neighbourhood of Aurengabad, which had been given to him by Ghazi-o-din Khan. As soon as this peace was ratified, Ballagerow returned with his part of the army to Poné, and Ragogi Bonfolo with his towards Nielur, the capital of his estates, about 150 miles north-east of Aurengabad, on the borders of the province of Berar.

Mr. Buffy having brought the Soubah's affairs to this state of apparent tranquility, asked and obtained the province of Condavir, adjoining to the territory of Masulipataam, of which the French company were already in possession; but Condavir was far less than the extent of his views, and he was meditating much greater requests, when they were interrupted by a renewal of hostilities with Ragogi Bonfolo, who resenting that Sallabadjing had not consented to several demands,



demands, which he preferred when Ballagerow was treating, loitered on the way until the other Morrattoe, whom he feared, was returned to his capital; and then, about three weeks after the separation, appeared again before Calberga, where the army of Sallabadjing still remained.

His cavalry, as usual, ruined the country, intercepted convoys, and attacked such parties as they could surprize with superior numbers, but avoided, as much as possible, any encounter with the French troops: which however they could not always escape; but were exposed several times to the French artillery, by which they suffered considerably. He nevertheless continued his depredations, and Mr. Buffy wishing, for the sake of his own views, to relieve Sallabadjing from all military operations, advised him to give Ragogi several districts in the neighbourhood of Berar, who on this cession retreated to his own country, about three weeks after he had recommenced hostilities. But these pacifications produced an effect contrary to that which Mr. Buffy had expected from them; for the cessions made to the Morattoes, had deprived many of Sallabadjing's officers of their pensions and employments, and consequently encreased their aversion to the influence which Mr. Buffy maintained in his councils. Shana-was Khan, the first promoter of this discontent, no longer appeared at the head of the faction; but another more dangerous opponent encouraged the disaffected, and thwarted Mr. Buffy: this was Seid Lascar Khan, the Duan, who under Nizam-al-muluck had held the post of captain-general of the Soubah's army, in which character he likewise accompanied Nazirjing into the Carnatic. From the opinion entertained of his abilities, both as a statesman and a soldier, it was believed that Nazir-jing would have escaped his fate, if he had not deprived himself of the counsels of this officer, by sending him to suppress some commotions at Aurungabad, soon after the army retired from Pondicherry to Arcot; he was at Aurungabad when Sallabadjing and Mr. Buffy arrived there, in the preceding year; and although he detested, more than any one, the favours which the Soubah conferred upon his European allies, he dissembled his sentiments so well, that Mr. Buffy believing him his friend, had persuaded Sallabadjing to



1253.

appoint him Duan, or Vizier; but as soon as Seid Lascar Khan, found himself well-established in this post, he threw off the mask, and on all occasions contradicted the inclinations of his prince, whenever he thought they were dictated by the influence of Mr. Buffy; and now more than ever, when he saw the extent of his demands for the French nation. It happened that in the beginning of the year 1753, a few days after the peace with Ragogi, Mr. Buffy fell dangerously ill at Calburga, and although his constitution surmounted the first attacks of his distemper, he remained much enfeebled; and his physician being convinced, that his recovery depended on a total relief from those continual and anxious occupations, to which Mr. Buffy could not refuse himself, whilst he remained either in the camp, or court of Sallabadjing, he advised him immediately to retire, and to sequester himself from all business at Masulipatnam, until he should be perfectly recovered. Accordingly, Mr. Buffy departed from the camp in January, but left all the French troops and Sepoys with Sallabadjing, who soon after his departure proceeded without interruption to Ayderabad. The officer who now commanded the French troops, had neither experience, nor capacity sufficient to penetrate and counteract the intrigues of a faction in a Moorish court; and the Duan resolved, during Mr. Buffy's absence, to break the union between these too powerful auxiliaries and his sovereign. This was no easy task; for Mr. Buffy had persuaded Salabadjing, a prince deficient both in personal courage and sagacity, that the French battalion were not only the principal support of his government against foreign enemies; but also the best security of his person and authority against intestine plots and commotions. The Duan therefore found it necessary to accustom him by degrees to the absence of these favourite troops: it was equally necessary to prevent them from entertaining any suspicion of this design, for they were too formidable to be removed abruptly; Mr. Buffy having joined to the battalion of Europeans, a body of 5000 Sepoys, paid by himself and acting entirely under his own orders. The Duan therefore neglected for some time to furnish the pay of the French army at the usual periods, pretending that several considerable districts at a distance from Ayderabad, had failed;



failed in the payment of their revenues to the treasury; and when the French officers, as he expected, complained loudly of their own distresses, he told them that he knew no other method of satisfying their demands, unless by sending them to collect the revenues of the Soubah from those who withheld them: this proposal they very readily accepted, expecting, from the custom of Indostan, that they should receive considerable presents, besides the sums which they were charged to levy. Still it would have been difficult to have obtained Sallabadjing's consent for their departure, had not their own misconduct convinced him that it was necessary for the peace of the city; where, since Mr. Buffy's departure, the discipline to which he had accustomed them was so much relaxed, that they daily committed disorders, for which, the persons aggrieved, were continually demanding justice at the gates of the palace.

As soon as the Duan had thus removed and separated the greatest part of the French troops, into several different parts of the country, he invented some pretext to persuade Sallabadjing, that it was necessary he should return without delay to Aurungabad; and even prevailed upon him, to permit no more than a small detachment of their European and Sepoys to accompany him. He then instructed the governor of Golconda, to furnish no pay to those who remained in the city, and to distress them by every other means, excepting open hostilities; and the same orders were given in the countries, to which the several detachments had been sent to collect their arrears. This treatment, so different from what the French had hitherto received, he thought would lead them, of their own accord, to ask their dismissal from a service, in which they should find that nothing more was to be got.

Accordingly, the soldiers and Sepoys disappointed of their pay, began to clamour and desert; but the French officers stood firm to their duty, and contributed their own money to appease their troops. This resource, however, was very inadequate to the necessity, and the danger encreasing every day, they wrote to Mr. Buffy, that his immediate return to Hyderabad, was the only means left to save the national affairs in the Decan. Mr. Buffy, not being yet recovered



1753. from his illness, hesitated; but was soon after determined by a peremptory letter from Mr. Dupleix, threatening to make him responsible for the consequences of his absence from the important command with which the nation had intrusted him with such unlimited confidence. He left Masulapattam about the end of June, having previously sent orders to all the detachments stationed abroad, to be at Hydrabad, about the time that he expected to arrive there himself. He arrived there on the 23d of July, and found all his troops assembled in the city; they were 500 Europeans and 4000 Sepoys. This force, and his own presence, imposed respect upon the governor, and all the other officers of Sallabadjing's administration. They immediately consented to furnish some money in part of the arrears, which the Duan had withheld with so much artifice, and Mr. Buffy out of his own stock, and by his credit with the bankers, procured more, which all together was sufficient to appease the troops; whom, nevertheless, in the first days after his arrival, he had with much difficulty been able to restrain from open tumult and violence in the city. But although the present distress was removed, yet no provision was made for the future; and from the late practices, every obstacle was still to be expected from the disposition of the Duan, who, at this very time, refused to furnish the pay and subsistence, of the small detachment which had accompanied Sallabadjing to Aurungabad. Mr. Buffy saw the only remedy; and determined to proceed with his whole force to that city, as soon as the rains should cease, which, in that part of the Decan, continue from the beginning of July to the end of September. The march from Golconda to Aurungabad is at least 300 miles: nevertheless, he found means from his own resources to make the necessary preparations, and left Golconda in the beginning of October.

Notwithstanding the evil disposition of Seid Lascar Khan, and his adherents, Mr. Buffy had several friends, who were men of importance in the court of Aurungabad; Sallabadjing himself was at this time very much in debt to his own army, and moreover, in apprehensions of another rupture with Ragogi the Morattoe; so that the boldness of Mr. Buffy's resolution, in marching uncalled for to Aurungabad,