

CHAPTER VIII.

The principal political actors of the period—Madhava Rao bought off by Haidar—Nizam Ali and the English—Haidar and Nizam Ali against the English—Fate of Nanjaraj—Nizam Ali concludes peace with the English.

Before we proceed to sketch the events connected with the first war waged by Haidar against the English, it is desirable to know, so far as is necessary for the purposes of our narrative, the motives that actuated the minds of the principal actors in the political field in Southern India at this period. By the treaty of Paris concluded in February 1763 and the termination of the Seven Years' War in Europe, the English and the French had agreed to a mutual restoration of the territories conquered or acquired during the war in Southern India and the Deccan and had also recognised Muhammad Ali as the lawful Nawab of the Carnatic, though his elder brother Mohabat Khan with better claims was living at the time. Salabat Jung the fourth Nizam had been deposed and imprisoned by Nizam Ali his younger brother in 1761 and the latter was acknowledged in the same treaty as Subadar of the Deccan. Muhammad Ali's ambition was roused by this recognition of himself as Nawab of the Carnatic and he began to put forward extravagant claims to other parts of Southern India and even the Deccan. Haidar Ali's fears were thereby awakened and he thought it advisable to secure the friendship of Nizam Ali for a joint retaliation against Muhammad Ali. Mohabat Khan who, as we have already seen, had entered Haidar's service was sent to Hyderabad for the purpose of negotiating an alliance with Nizam Ali.

Nizam Ali also had grievances of his own against the English. Clive on receiving from the Mughal Emperor the Dewani of Bengal in 1765 had at the same time solicited and procured the grant of the Northern Circars without any reference to Nizam Ali. The Madras Government however in taking possession of this part of the country thought it prudent to conciliate Nizam Ali by sending a proposal to him in November 1766 agreeing to hold this territory as a free gift from and a tributary dependency under the *de facto*

Nizam. In the political turmoil that prevailed in this period in India, the Hindus, the Mahomedans, the French and the English, all attempted to rest their several claims, according to Wilks, on the shadow of a political patent from the powerless Mughal Emperor at Delhi instead of resting them on grounds of their own superior strength. It was also agreed between Nizam Ali and the Madras Government that an English auxiliary force, indefinite both in its strength and as to its employment, was to be at the disposal of the former. At this time Peshwa Madhava Rao also had plans of his own regarding Mysore and it was believed that there was a compact between him and Nizam Ali about this matter.

Muhammad Ali was secretly meditating the displacement of both Haidar and Nizam Ali and these were meditating a counterplot for deposing him. Nizam Ali moved to the south ostensibly to co-operate with the Mahrattas, but really entertaining the option according to circumstances of employing the English force against Haidar or of directing Haidar's force against the English and Muhammad Ali. Nizam Ali started a full month later than Madhava Rao and effected a junction with the English auxiliary troops under Colonel Joseph Smith. By the time this combined army reached the Thungabhadra, intelligence reached Nizam Ali that the return of Madhava Rao had been purchased by Haidar by stipulating to pay a large sum of money. Nizam Ali however continued his march to demand the fulfilment of Haidar's promise to make an immediate payment of 20 lakhs of rupees with a tribute of 6 lakhs annually. Haidar however after his adjustment with Madhava Rao maintained silence regarding the payment of any money and incited Nizam Ali to join him in retaliation against the English and Muhammad Ali. Nizam Ali's troops continued to advance towards the camp of Madhava Rao near Kolar in the hope of sharing in his spoils or of prevailing on him to persevere in the original project of the war. On learning through his agent that the Mahrattas were not disposed to give him any share of the money received from Haidar and that they had finally moved northwards on their march to Poona from the vicinity of Kolar on the 11th of May 1768, Nizam Ali marched on the same day towards

Bangalore. The English auxiliary troops were forced to halt at Devanhalli on account of the rains which ensued.

Colonel Smith whose acute mind long suspected inimical combinations against the English finding Nizam Ali on entering Mysore treating it as a friendly country reported his suspicions to his own Government at Madras. The Madras Government thereupon gave Colonel Smith the option of returning to the lower country whenever he deemed that the occasion for so doing arose. The English commander then pressed Rukmdowla, the minister of Nizam Ali, to offer some satisfactory explanation as to the real intentions of his master. But Rukmdowla put him off by declaring that he and his master were engaged in an important negotiation with Haidar, the success of which depended on the union of the English troops and pressing him with entreaties to join Nizam Ali's camp at Bangalore.

In the meanwhile Nizam Ali encamped on the plains near Chennapatna, while Haidar Ali with his troops was at Maddur, twelve miles from there. Nizam Ali was anxious to meet Haidar but the latter deputed his son Tippu and the meeting is thus described by Kirmani: "When the Nizam raised his tent in the plain of Chennapatna, he sent for the Nawab to visit him; but although the Nawab also with his army and artillery had encamped eastward of Maddur (a short distance from Chennapatna), still as he considered that his meeting with the Nizam should be deferred to another time, he sent his son Tippu with a well appointed force and with some of his important officers. Five elephants and ten beautiful horses were sent as presents. When Tippu arrived near the Nizam's tent, his bodyguard sounded the drums. Nizam Ali ascending a balcony on his tent saw and admired the pomp and parade of Tippu's cavalry escort as well as the discipline and order of his troops. The Nizam after that received Tippu with a great show of kindness and having gained his heart by honied words and phrases consulted him on the feasibility of chastising Muhammad Ali and the English and then sent him away with the present of a khillat and the shawls which he himself was wearing. Tippu then

returned to his father and on his arrival related with exact minuteness every word spoken by the Nizam on this occasion. Agreeing in the objects and wishes of the Nizam, the Nawab Bahadur marched on with his army and the Nizam giving the English their dismissal sent them off."

Before we proceed to other events, reference may be here made as a mere incident to the fate that overtook Dalavoy Nanjaraj, the former patron of Haidar. It will be remembered that on Haidar becoming supreme dictator or in the official parlance of the time Sarvadhikari in 1761 Nanjaraj was granted a jahagir yielding a lakh of pagodas and had been allowed to reside at Mysore in comparative dignity and honour with a body of troops. Haidar now discovered that Nanjaraj had been carrying on secret intrigues with Madhava Rao and Nizam Ali for reviving his own former authority. Haidar therefore thought it necessary to suppress such activities on the part of Nanjaraj and on the pretence of having to consult him on serious affairs of State invited him to Seringapatam. Nanjaraj however entertained his own suspicions but he was assured that no danger was meant. On the arrival of Nanjaraj at Seringapatam, his guards were seized, his jahagir resumed and he was thenceforth treated as a State prisoner and was furnished only with the mere necessaries of life. It may here well be said of Haidar, of what Napoleon said of himself, that his hand of iron was not at the extremity of his arm but it was immediately connected with his head. We hear no more of Nanjaraj and we may leave him here to brood over his miseries during the remainder of his life till 1773, in which year he died.

Now turning to the political events of the period, the Madras Government in spite of Colonel Joseph Smith's warnings continued to place faith in the honesty of Nizam Ali's intentions. Haidar's preparations for war against the English now having been completed, the combined armies of Mysore and Hyderabad began their march to descend to the country below the Ghauts on the 28th August 1767.

Haidar at first contented himself with harassing the English by intercepting all supplies, but being urged on by the Nizam, their joint

forces attacked Smith near the fort of Changama, where however they were repulsed with considerable loss. Colonel Smith after his first encounter with Haidar proceeded to Tiruvannamale to furnish himself with ammunition and provisions. Haidar and Nizam Ali proceeded on their march towards Tiruvannamale encamped at a short distance from this place, where a hard contest ensued on the 26th September 1767. The combined armies could not maintain their ground and had to change their position. At this time an incident occurred which is worth mentioning. It was the invariable practice of Nizam Ali to be accompanied in the field by his favourite wives with all the splendid appendages of rank. He was on horseback when Haidar approached and his line of elephants carrying the women was at no great distance in the rear. A retreat having been settled, order was given to turn back. But a female voice which was no other than that of Nizam Ali's wife boldly replied that her elephant had not been accustomed so to turn back but that it always followed the flag of the Empire. "The loss of several elephants was the consequence" says Wilks, "of this demur, for the chivalrous damsel would not allow hers to move until the standard had passed her in its retreat, though the English shots fell thick among those that followed in her train." Nizam Ali was disheartened at this reverse and though a short time before had answered the remonstrances of Haidar with a declaration that he would prefer a death like that of Nasir Jung to a dishonourable flight, was now at full speed with a select body of his cavalry in the western direction and did not stop till he was fairly through the pass of Singarpetta, leaving to the minister and commander-in-chief Rukmdowla the task of directing the immediate retreat of his other troops.

On Haidar now mainly devolved the burden of leading not only his own army but also the remainder of Nizam Ali's troops to a safe place. Colonel Smith finding that some confusion prevailed in Haidar's camp before his army could begin the retreat planned a night attack on his camp and entrusted its execution to one of his officers Major Fitzgerald. Haidar however was too wary a person to be caught in any trap. One of his own spies who had enlisted himself as a guide to Major Fitzgerald's detachment having secretly

apprised Haidar of the coming attack, put Major Fitzgerald on a wrong scent by informing him that to approach Haidar's camp the detachment had to cross a morass which involved some difficulty. The pseudo-guide accordingly led the English party to where the morass was situated and Major Fitzgerald finding the morass not only difficult but impossible to cross was forced to adopt a more circuitous route, with the result that time was wasted and he thought it prudent to return to his camp without delivering the intended attack.

At daybreak the confederate army began its retreat and was observed to cover the ground as far as the eye could reach. Haidar could not however on account of the inefficient equipment of Nizam Ali's troops quicken the pace of the march and in consequence a number of his guns, together with several of Nizam Ali's, fell into the hands of the English. On this occasion Haidar was attended by a splendid retinue which consisted of 300 select men on foot clothed in scarlet and armed with lances twisted round from bottom to top with thin plates of silver in a spiral form. Tippu who was now about seventeen years old and who had been entrusted with a nominal command under the guidance of Ghazi Khan, his military preceptor, was at the time plundering the country-houses of the members of the Government of Madras and on hearing of his father's retreat from Tiruvannamale made a precipitous march to join him.

Nizam Ali assembled his army at Kaveripatnam in Baramahal and Haidar sometime after established his headquarters at the same place. Considerable mutual recriminations were exchanged between the two confederate chiefs for the failure that overtook them at Tiruvannamale and they remained for over a month without seeing each other or devising any plans for the future. At last the gloom wore away and ostentatious interviews came to be exchanged. At one of these, Haidar placed his guest on a seat composed of bags of coined silver amounting to a lakh of rupees covered with embroidered cushions, all of which the attendants were desired to carry away with other presents according to the established etiquette in similar cases.

Though some successes were subsequently achieved against the English, the confederates at this time each for his own reason wished to conclude peace with the English. The Bengal Government had in order to cause a diversion in favour of the English in the south sent a detachment from the Circars towards Hyderabad and this detachment was already in possession of Warungal in the Nizam's dominions. Nizam Ali fearing the safety of his own capital and seeing the unpromising nature of his confederacy with Haidar sent secret overtures to the English commander-in-chief for concluding peace. Haidar being apprised by the men of his Intelligence Branch of these overtures and bearing in mind the treacherous conduct of Nizam Ali towards his brother Salabat Jung pretended to accept the wisdom of Nizam Ali's move and at last in February 1768 peace was concluded between Nizam Ali and the Madras Government and the former left for his own country.