

## CHAPTER XVII.

**Tippu's succession to power—Recovery of Bednore and other places seized by the Bombay Army—Suppression of the plot against Tippu's authority at Seringapatam—Plenipotentiaries sent to Mangalore by the Madras Government for negotiating peace—Termination of war and conclusion of peace.**

Haidar, it will be remembered, died on the 7th December 1782. At the suggestion of Purnaiya who was minister of Commissariat at the time, the other ministers and high officers Muhammad Ali commandant, Badru Zumaun Khan, Mirza Khan, Ghazi Khan, Abu Muhammad Mirde and Krishna Rao who was in charge of Tosheekhane or treasury agreed to keep the death of Haidar secret till such time as was required for Tippu Sultan to arrive at the headquarters of the army. Tippu was at the time of his father's death encamped at Paniani in Malabar and Mirza Khan was commissioned to proceed with all speed on fleet camels and to apprise Tippu of the sad event. In the meanwhile, the daily affairs were conducted with the same regular routine as had been followed when Haidar was alive. The coffin containing Haidar's body was embalmed with essences and perfumes and despatched to Seringapatam as if it was a mere treasure-chest containing valuables. Tippu on receiving the news of his father's demise broke up his camp at Paniani and reached the army headquarters on the 2nd January 1783. Except for one officer who somehow became possessed of the intelligence of Haidar's death and attempted a rising in support of Kareem Sahib, the second son of Haidar, all were loyal and matters proceeded as if nothing unusual had ever happened. On the arrival of Tippu Sultan, he was received with every mark of respect and loyalty by the whole army including Kareem Sahib and by all the others. On assuming his father's powers, Tippu issued proclamations confirming in their old places all officers, promising also further advancement to them. It may be here stated that at the time of his succession to power, Tippu Sultan was in the 31st year of his age. The word 'Sultan,' it should be said, was not indicative of the position he now came to

hold but formed a part of his name. His mother Faku-nissa while Tippu was still in the womb made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the celebrated Mahomedan saint near Arcot by name Tippu Sultan Auliah and as it was supposed that by the blessing of that saint a son had been born, the name given to the child was Tippu Sultan. When the time arrived for his education, he was placed under proper tutors and was taught all those branches of learning which were usually imparted to persons born in respectable families.

Now to revert to the operations of the war. Tippu on his accession to power, possessing as he did great physical courage with a well trained army and enormous wealth, resolved to continue the war. When Tippu was at Paniani, the Bombay Government in order to slacken the pressure of the Mysore army on the Carnatic had directed General Mathews to attack Haidar's possessions on the West Coast. In accordance with these directions, Mathews possessed himself of various places including Mangalore and the port of Honavar where were five ships of war belonging to Mysore. Subsequently the Bombay Government receiving intelligence of the death of Haidar ordered Mathews to cease operations on the coast and to proceed inland into the Mysore territories and to capture Bednore. Accordingly Mathews landing at Kundapur proceeded at once towards Bednore overcoming all resistance on the way while ascending the Ghaut. When he was within fourteen miles of Bednore, he found that some of the outer fortifications had been abandoned and that Sheik Ayaz the Governor had retired into the fort with his men. Sheik Ayaz after reaching Bednore released a British prisoner by name Captain Donald Campbell and sent him to Mathews proposing to surrender the place. Mathews was not prepared for this piece of good fortune and on receiving Campbell's message, he moved forward and on reaching Bednore was readily admitted and was allowed to take command of the fort and its garrison without any formal treaty or capitulation on the 16th February 1783. The explanation for this strange conduct on the part of Ayaz is to be found in the estrangement that existed between him and Tippu. Sheik Ayaz, as we have already seen, had been entrusted with the Governorship of Chitaldrug by Haidar when the latter took possession of that place and from there had been

transferred to Bednore. Tippu bore a special grudge towards Ayaz as his father often upbraided him for his deficiencies as compared with Ayaz. On Tippu's assumption of power, Ayaz felt by no means secure in his place and an event occurred at this time which influenced him to abandon Tippu and to go over to the side of the English. Fearing that Tippu's wrath might be visited upon him any time, he was in the habit of taking special precautions for every letter that reached him being read to him in an isolated place where none others were present. While Mathews was ascending the Ghauts, Ayaz was at some distance arranging to offer resistance to the English General. At this time a letter arrived addressed to his second in command and the Brahmin clerk in the usual course innocently opened this letter also and read it. Ayaz found from the contents of the letter that immediately after his arrival at the army headquarters after his father's death Tippu had appointed Latif Ali Beg one of his commanders as Killedar of Bednore and had directed him to proceed to the place. Being however diffident as to whether Sheik Ayaz would readily submit to his supersession, Tippu had sent a separate letter to the second in command apprising him in advance of the step taken. The murder of the Brahmin clerk was the outcome of this action on the part of Tippu.

Latif Ali Beg on reaching Shimoga from Tippu's camp heard of the surrender of Bednore and of an English army marching from that place towards Ananthapur for its capture. His attempt to prevent the capture of this latter place proved fruitless and while he was waiting for reinforcements at some distance from the place received orders from Tippu to proceed to Mangalore as Tippu himself was going to Bednore to seek an explanation for the treachery of Ayaz. Tippu ascended the Ghauts and marching by the route of Devanhalli, Madhugiri, Sira and Chitaldrug reached the precincts of Bednore early in April 1783.

On hearing of Tippu's arrival, Sheik Ayaz left Bednore and precipitately fled to Bombay leaving Mathews to his own resources to defend the place. Tippu now divided his army into two columns and with the other column took Ananthapur. He then proceeded

to invest Bednore. The siege lasted eighteen days and the place became almost a heap of ruins. General Mathews and his men capitulated on the 30th April and were sent to Seringapatam as prisoners of war.

Another direction in which an attempt had been made by the British Government to put pressure upon Haidar, while he was alive, to relax his hold on the Carnatic was by giving encouragement to certain efforts made by some of the adherents of the old Hindu Royal family of Mysore for its rehabilitation in power. Before he proceeded to the West Coast to meet the diversion caused by the Bombay Government, Tippu had heard while at camp at Tiruvattur of an impending revolt against his authority at Seringapatam and had directed Muhammad Ali with an adequate number of troops to proceed thither for meeting that danger. It will be remembered that the rightful rulers of Mysore had never tamely acquiesced in their supersession and were ever watchful for opportunities to regain their power whether it was against Maranayaka or against the Dalavoyas and Haidar at later periods. Fortunately for the Mysore family, there lived during the time of Haidar and Tippu a lady of remarkable intelligence and courage, Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni, the widow of Immadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. She was a daughter of Katti Gopal Raj Urs whose name we have heard in connection with the claim of Mysore to the possession of the fort of Trichinopoly. A descendant of one of the ministers of Chikka Devaraja Wodeyar, Thirumala Rao by name, had in 1766 under the inspiration of Lakshmi Ammanni carried on some negotiations with Lord Piggot, then Governor of Madras, for help to dislodge Haidar from power but as Lord Piggot died shortly after, the negotiations did not proceed further. When Haidar became involved in the second war with the English, Thirumala Rao seizing the opportunity opened negotiations with John Sullivan, British Resident at the Court of Tanjore and through his medium concluded a treaty with the Company's Government on behalf of Lakshmi Ammanni which was signed on the 28th October 1782 only a little over a month before Haidar died. This treaty may be read even now, included as it is in Aitchison's collections of treaties, sannads and engagements compiled for the British Government.

In accordance with this treaty, Colonel Lang was despatched with an army and Thirumala Rao also accompanied him. The first place taken was Caroor, situated in the present Coimbatore district, on 2nd April 1783 and the Hindu colours of Mysore were hoisted on the ramparts of this frontier post and the management was committed to Thirumala Rao. Colonel Fullerton who had succeeded Lang captured Palaghat on 15th November 1783 and found it a convenient place of occupation inasmuch as it brought supplies from the Zamorin and his Nairs who were eager to be emancipated from their thraldom to Tipu and the place also afforded facilities for proceeding to Seringapatam by the pass of Gejjelhutti. Colonel Fullerton however was disappointed in his expectations as to the success of a revolt against Tipu at Seringapatam, as the plot had been discovered and some of the parties concerned in it had been visited with horrible punishments. There are no written documents of the period to trace accurately the history of this plot and we have mainly to depend on the accounts given by Wilks and by Kirmani in his biography of Tipu. According to Wilks, Thirumala Rao's accomplice to raise a revolt at Seringapatam was one Shamiah, a Srivaishnava Brahmin. During Haidar's time he had secured his favour and risen to be the head of the Anche Department which embraced within its sphere the functions of a secret police also. After the death of Haidar, Shamiah seems to have felt considerable diffidence regarding his own future and though as a matter of form he appeared loyal to Tipu and showed earnestness in his service, still as a matter of fact he secretly intrigued with Thirumala Rao hoping thereby to safeguard himself against any possible danger. On the night of the 23rd of July 1783 when the Killedar of the fort of Seringapatam was on his way home from the hall of business, an unknown individual stopped him on the way and whispered into his ears information about the plot which he had somehow obtained. The Killedar found that the execution of the plot had been fixed for the morning of the 24th of July which happened to be the pay-day of some of the troops who would as usual on such occasions be waiting at the cutcherry without arms and when the Killedar also would be there to superintend the distribution of the pay. The

treasury attendants, the corps of pioneers employed in moving the treasure, a body of jetties or professional wrestlers who had the guard of that part of the palace had all been bespoken to take part in the plot. The Killedar promptly arrested all the men concerned and ordered a considerable number of them to be immediately executed by being loosely tied to an elephant's foot and dragged in that state through the streets of the town. Tippu's orders were needed for the punishments of the ring-leaders and on their receipt Narasinga Rao who was the provincial head of the Anche at Coimbatore, Subbaraje Urs a descendant of Dalavoy Devaraj and the heads of the army battalions and of the jetty corps were also executed. Shamiah who at the time was with Tippu near Mangalore was sent in irons from there and was exposed in an iron cage to every contumely.

Kirmani gives a somewhat different account. According to him, Muhammad Ali who had been despatched by Tippu from the Ghaut of Changama to the capital, on arriving there encamped at the foot of the Karighat hill on the bank of the Kaveri river. From here he sent a message to the commandant of the fort who he was aware was in league with the conspirators that he wished permission to spend a night with the members of his family who were all in the fort and that the next morning according to the orders of the Sultan, he would proceed by the route of Coorg to Bednore. The Killedar is stated to have lent a willing ear to the deceiving words of the commandant and to have given orders to the guards of the fort permitting his admission. Muhammad Ali at night crossed the river and placed his men in ambush with directions that when he entered the fort and sounded his trumpet, they were all immediately to enter. Muhammad Ali entering the fort with fifty men sounded his trumpet, when all the guards were seized and his own men were substituted in their places. Muhammad Ali next proceeded to the houses of the Killedar and his fellow conspirators as well as to the houses of Anche Shamiah and his colleagues and they were dragged out of their beds and put in prison. The next morning with the sanction of the Sultan's mother, some of the rebels were blown from a gun

and the companions of Shamiah were impaled, while Shamiah himself was loaded with irons and confined in an iron cage.

Now returning to Colonel Fullerton. Not having known the upshot of the revolt at Seringapatam, he had made himself ready to march to that place, but on the 28th of November 1784 when he was at Coimbatore he received instructions from the English peace commissioners who were proceeding to Mangalore to negotiate a treaty with Tippu to stop all further operations, to restore all the places he had taken and to retire within the limits possessed by the British on the 26th July preceding.

Sir Iyre Coote's health had been shattered and he had returned to Bengal for rest and recoument of health, his place being taken by General Stuart. General Stuart however was not able to produce much impressison on the enemy. At this time information was received of the conclusion of peace between the French and the English in Europe. Lord Macarteny who was Govenner of Madras at this time also found himself unable to continue the war on account of financial and other difficulties. The peace concluded in Europe therefore afforded an occasion for him to open negotiations with Tippu for peace. Lord Macarteny accordingly addressed a letter to Tippu intimating the conclusion of peace between the English and the French in Europe and expressing readiness to enter into negotiations with him for terminating the war. It was not till October following that a reply was received to this communication and the distinguished diplomat Appaji Rao suggested that two plenipotentiaries might be deputed to the Sultan's Court to avoid frequent references for instruction. This suggestion was accepted and two commissioners were nominated, to whom a third was later added to avoid ties arising out of conflict of opinions between the two members. It was from these plenipotentiaries that Colonel Fullerton, as previously stated, received directions at Coimbatore on the 28th November to cease hostilities and to return to the limits of the previous July.

The commissioners had a long and tedious journey to perform before they were able to reach Tippu's camp at Mangalore. Tippu

kept the commissioners waiting for some time and at last on the 11th March 1784 signed a treaty which terminated the hostilities begun by Haidar four years ago, the treaty providing for a mutual release of prisoners and restoration of places taken during the war.