

CHAPTER XXX.

Tippu's day-to-day administration.

Before proceeding further to the events which succeeded the funeral of Tippu, we may close his period with a short description of his day-to-day administration. On the day Seringapatam fell into the hands of the British, there was, as we have seen, considerable looting in the town and also conflagration on a large scale in various parts and Tippu's palace was no exception. In this conflagration many of the State papers preserved in the palace among his records also were destroyed. There were however some papers left, of which an English translation was published by Colonel Kirkpatric in 1811. The following extracts from this translation give a general idea of the daily administration of Tippu, though somewhat imperfect.

On a report being received from the Superintendent of the Elephant Stables at Nagar, Tippu replied on 17th February 1785—
“The humble address you sent us has passed under our view and the circumstances admitted therein are duly comprehended. You write that the Mutsaddies attached to you have adopted habits of ease and lounging in Nagar pretending that it is necessary for them to see and confer with the Talukdar, the consequence of which is that fifteen days are consumed in preparing the accounts of one and that nothing is done excepting at Nagar..... This representation has caused us the utmost surprise. Whenever the Mutsaddies belonging to your department cease to yield you proper obedience, you must give them a severe flogging.....”

In a letter dated 21st February 1785 to Muhammad Ghayas Khan, Tippu wrote—“Your letter of the 5th of February has been received and the whole of its contents are comprehended. The fixed or regulated money is ready. Whenever the chiefs of that place (Poona) demand it, bankers' bills to the amount shall be forwarded. Representations of the contumacious conduct of the Zemindar of Nergund were frequently transmitted by us in the course of last year to Noor Muhammad Khan, who, no doubt, must

have communicated the same to all the chiefs there (Poona). If a petty Zemindar and a subject of our government, like this, may not be punished, how shall our authority be maintained? The justice of this argument was admitted even by Rao Rasta. Thus the chastisement of this Zemindar became necessary. If he is brought to reason from thence (i.e., by the Mahratta chiefs), it will be well; otherwise he will be exterminated. Let the Gumastha of Appaji Rao receive a monthly stipend of four pagodas. You must not admit the Brahmins to a participation in the conduct of any secret negotiation. You and Noor Muhammad Khan alone are jointly to transact all such affairs. If the chiefs of that place forgetting our past favours should despatch an army to the assistance of the Zemindar of Nergund, what will it signify? We have, under the divine blessing, sent a strong force to reduce Nergund and are in no fear of its suffering any misfortune from their army."

In a letter dated 27th February to Turbiyat Ali Khan and Raja Ramchander, Tippu wrote—"Your letter has been received. You write that the European formerly taken prisoner in the Payeenghat and whose original allowance of two fanams a day had been in consequence of his misbehaviour reduced to one being skilled in mortar practice, you propose converting him to the faith and wished for our orders on the subject. It is known. Admitting the aforesaid to the honour of Islamism, you will continue to pay him as before two fanams a day. Let him also be employed in firing at the flag. We have ourselves, however, brought the mortar practice to that degree of perfection that children of ten and eleven years of age are taught to hit the point of a spear. You may, as you propose, engage a sweeper at the monthly wages of ten or twelve fanams and employ him in sweeping out the Rung-Mahal and the public halls of the Dewany and Ehsham."

On the 3rd March 1785 the Daroga of the Dewany Cutcherry of Gutti reported that he had advanced the bazaar price of the Kurg pagodas by 1 fanam and four annas and issued them at that rate. Tippu ordered its being raised by only 1 fanam and issued it at that rate to the servants of the State.

*Letter to Muhammad Ghayas and Noor Muhammad Khan,
dated 7th April 1785.*

“You must not communicate in writing to Rao Rasta every proposition you may have to make to him or to transmit to him copies of our despatches to you. On such occasions, you have to send for Rao Rasta’s mutsaddi and make him commit to paper whatever may be proper to be written. By this means you will avoid pledging yourself under your own hand.”

Letter to Raja Ramchander, dated 10th April 1785.

“You write that wishing to marry your daughter and there being none of her caste in this country to contract her to, there is a necessity of sending for a proper person for the purpose from the Payeenghat; and you therefore solicit passports for the ingress and egress of parties whom it will be requisite to invite on the occasion according to the list which you have enclosed..... A passport for the persons who are to come from the Payeenghat to Bangalore on this occasion is enclosed. You will therefore send for some person of your caste and giving your daughter in marriage to him, detain him near you. Where is the necessity for sending him back to the Payeenghat? If this however should not be practicable, you must seek for one of your own caste in this country to betroth her to, when having found such a one you will celebrate their nuptials.”

Letter to Raja Ramchander, dated 29th April 1785.

“If the manufacturers of the district under you decline to weave the stuffs required, they may be compelled by menaces to prepare the number of cloths required, with the utmost expedition, agreeably to the pattern sent. If they still did not comply, they should be flogged.”

Letter to Mir Kamruddin and Burhanuddin, dated 1st May 1785.

“Two letters from you have passed under our view and the particulars therein stated are duly perceived. With respect to the war which you two are conducting in conjunction with three Siphadars, our desire is that acting in concert together you should pursue the object of chastising the enemy with the utmost vigour and sagacity and in an effectual and glorious manner. Accordingly

we have transmitted strict orders to this effect to the aforesaid Siphadars who will, in consequence, be obedient to you and cooperate on all occasions with you.

“What you say of the scarcity of grain in your army notwithstanding your having a Cotwal and so many Lambanies with you has astonished us. You must therefore denounce the heaviest threats against the said Cotwal and make him provide abundance of grain agreeably to your regulations on this head, to the end that your people may suffer no distress for that article.

“By the Divine favour your health is now re-established and it is consequently no longer proper that you should have a physician attending you or that you should take any more medicines. Let him therefore be sent back to Savanoor.

“After chastising the enemy in a signal manner and driving him to the other side of the Krishna, you will take up a position for the attack of Nergund.

“Your sending away your baggage is a proceeding in no respect proper. You must keep it with you. Indeed where is the great quantity of baggage belonging to you, seeing that you have nothing besides tents, pals and other such necessary articles?

“The cavalry attached to you have been very remiss in skirmishing and marauding and in having suffered the enemy to flee without making booty of any of their horses and finally to escape by the pass of Ramdoorg, although they might have taken numberless horses. It is well. You must now give the most peremptory orders to the Risaldars of cavalry to go forth on separate parties and exert themselves properly to make prize of the enemy's horses, the present being a favourable opportunity for getting together a great number of horses. Scouring likewise the enemy's country, they must seize on all the grain they can discover.”

Letter to Muhammad Ghayas at Poona, dated 1st May 1785.

“What you write regarding the variations of the temperature in your quarter is revealed. Our physicians have thoroughly

ascertained the proper mode of treating the disease in question. The first thing to be done is to draw off by bleeding all the corrupt humours, by which means an effectual improvement will be produced in the general constitution of the patient. The body of the diseased party being thus completely brought under subjection, the next step must be to expel from it every remaining seed of the distemper, administering in the meanwhile whatever medicines may be found necessary."

Letter to the Kazi of Nagar, dated 9th May 1785.

"Your letter has been received. You have written that nine Frenchmen, together with their captain, have embraced the faith and that the said captain humbly hoped to be honoured with the command of a Risala of Ahmedies. It is known : and our pleasure is that ten rupees be given to each of them and that they be all despatched under an escort to the Presence, where on their arrival the aforesaid captain shall receive the honour he solicits. Peremptory orders for the payment of the above stipends and for furnishing the necessary escort have been sent to the Killidar of Nagar."

Letter to Kamruddin, dated 17th May 1785.

"You write that the quantity of powder as well as of eighteen and twenty-four pounds shot with Burhanuddin's army is inadequate to the service going forward and request us to send orders to the Killidar of Dharwar to despatch a further supply of those articles. It is known. We have already written and now again write to say that all stores arriving from the taluks of the Sircar are to be divided equally between you and Burhanuddin.

"We enclose an order for the shot required to the Killidar of Dharwar, to whom you will forward it. On receiving this supply, deliver half of it to Burhanuddin. In like manner, take the half of all other supplies that arrive, and attacking Nergund from one side while Burhanuddin attacks it from the other, let the fortress be speedily reduced."

Letter to Muhammad Ushruf, dated 17th May 1785.

“Your letter accompanied by a statement of the receipts, disbursements and balances of the taluks of Gutti, Bellary and Ananthapur has been received and the particulars set forth therein are understood.

“You write that there are large balances outstanding in the taluks of the Sircar and particularly in Gutti and Bellary, where only a thousand pagodas have been collected notwithstanding four horsemen have been employed as Suzawuls (a kind of bailiffs employed to enforce payments due on account of revenue. They were maintained, while they were employed, at the expense of the defaulters); and you therefore desire that peremptory orders may be issued on the occasion from the Presence. You must scourge the defaulters severely and by this means speedily realise the dues of the Sircar.”

Letter to Muhammad Ghayas at Poona, dated 5th June 1785.

“Whenever letters are received from you, the proper answers to them are deliberated on and written accordingly. Thus in the present case our writing in the manner we have done to Rao Rasta was the result of expediency; and sometime hereafter the utility of the proceeding will appear.”

Letter to Muhammad Ghayas and Noor Muhammad who had reported against one Sadasiva a harkar, dated 9th June 1785.

“What question or debate therefore can arise with him and why should he be made privy to any secret affairs. You must require of him what it is his duty to perform and no other.”

Letter to Muhammad Ghayas, dated 18th June 1785.

“If they should allow Noor Muhammad Khan to depart, then you must despatch him hither and practising procrastination you will yourself remain behind for some time, writing us occasionally the news of that quarter. In the event however of their not giving the aforesaid Khan his audience of leave, you must both of you continue there; and continue by one means or another to amuse

them for a certain time and to deceive them by speeches calculated to flatter their selfish views or to work upon their avariciousness."

Letter to Munzoor Ali Khan attached to the Mughal Court of Shah Alum at Delhi, dated 23rd June 1785.

"Many Mussalmans are in the habit of carrying about their persons (in pockets and the like) for their convenience or to answer occasional calls gold mohurs and rupees. But inasmuch as the gold and silver coins stamped with the names of the rulers of the age contravene the prescriptions of our liturgy, I have on this account devised and coined and caused to be circulated a new and superior kind of gold mohur in which the names of God, of the Holy Prophet and of the august Prince of Sanctity and of Sages are introduced. Of this new coinage is my nuzur to His Majesty composed; and I have likewise sent in token of friendship twenty-five of the same sort of gold mohurs for your acceptance."

Letter to Sheik Ahmed, dated 28th June 1785.

"On your arrival here, you shall in all things experience our care and protection agreeably to your wishes and be appointed to the charge of the mercantile concerns. A proper place shall be assigned you for a factory and such advances of money be made to you as may be requisite for enabling you to carry on your trade advantageously, all the profits of which shall rest with you for a term of two years, during which time also we promise to grant you an exemption from all duties on your merchandise. Repair therefore to our Presence without fear or distrust."

Letter to Raja Ramchander, dated 2nd August 1785.

"You write that in conformity with our orders you have established shops on our behalf in every taluk under your authority and engaged in our service a shroff and accountant for conducting the concerns of each, but that in some districts the object of profit is completely frustrated, while in others the gains are so very small as to be inadequate even for the monthly pay of the shroffs and accountants, owing, as you say, to the more considerable towns where heretofore gold and silver bullion and specie to the amount of thousands of pagodas used to be brought for the purposes of traffic

being now forsaken by the traders, who taking alarm at the establishment of our shops or warehouses resort in consequence to other places; none but the poorer classes, in short, ever dealing with them and then only to the amount perhaps of six or seven fanams.

“It is known. Admitting that the profits, for instance, are only seven pagodas and that the expense on account of the shroff and accountants amount to ten, how long can this last or the dealers continue to carry their money and bullion to other places? They will finally come and make their purchases at our warehouses. You will therefore proceed to establish shroffs and accountants in every taluk according to the amount of its saleable produce.

“You suggest the establishment of banking-houses on the part of the Sircar and the appointment of a banker with a salary to superintend them. You also propose, with our permission, to open warehouses for the sale of cloths at Bangalore, Hoskote and other places..... There is no regulation issued by us that does not cost us in the framing of it the deliberation of five hundred years. This being the case, do you perform exactly what we order, neither exceeding our directions nor suggesting anything further from yourself.”

Letter to Mohiyuddin Ali Khan, dated 31st August 1785.

“It has been reported to us that you sit constantly at home without ever appearing at the cutcherry. This is not well. You must pass a proper portion of your time daily in the cutcherry and there diligently apply to the affairs of the Sircar, without suffering any one to come to you at your own house on public business....”

*Letter to Syed Muhammad, Killedar of Seringapatam,
dated 12th September 1785.*

“It has been reported to us that the mutsaddi of the Jyshee, Krishna Rao, has been bitten by a mad dog. We therefore wish to desire that you will give the aforesaid mutsaddi in particular charge to the physician Muhammad Baig who must administer to him the proper medicines in such cases and restore him to health. He must

also be told not to let the discharge from the wound stop but to keep it open for six months.”

Letter to Noor Muhammad Khan, dated 14th September 1785.

“We have, of late, repeatedly heard that Rao Rasta having sent for you, you declined waiting upon him on account of a dispute that had arisen respecting a woman belonging to some Mussalman, returning for answer to his message that if they would let the woman go you would attend him. This account has occasioned us the utmost surprise and astonishment. This is a domestic disturbance among the inhabitants of their own country. Where was the necessity of your interfering in this matter or your refusing to wait upon Rao Rasta when he sent for you, thereby throwing our affairs into confusion. It seems to us that old age must have produced this deviation in your conduct and rendered you thus unmindful of your lives and honour. It would have been most consonant to the state of the times and to the regard you owed to our interests, if considering their dissensions as beneficial to Islam you had secretly encouraged the Mussalmans in their proceedings, while you apparently looked on as unconcerned spectators, instead of interposing with such an extraordinary recommendation as you did and which was altogether unworthy of your understandings. When the Nazarenes seized upon hundreds of Mussalman women, where was the zeal for the support of Islamism, which you are now so desirous of manifesting there. For the future, it will be proper that you should never take any share in their domestic concerns but attend exclusively to whatever may promote the success of our affairs.....”

Letter to Gulam Haidar, dated 12th October 1785.

“You write for instructions with regard to the prices at which you should buy certain articles for use, in order that you may regulate your prices accordingly. Old age has certainly made havoc on your understanding; otherwise you would have known that the Mutsaddies here are not the proper persons to determine the market prices there. It is the Mutsaddies there and the instructions given to them on this head which should be referred

to on this occasion. Seek the necessary information from the Dewany Cutcherry and act accordingly."

Letter to the Imaum of Muscat, dated 11th November 1785.

"A Dow, the property of Rutnjeer and Jeevan Doss, merchants of Muscat, having in these days been dismasted in a storm, came into Byte Koal (Bhatkal). Although, in such cases, it is customary for the Prince or the ruler of the place where a ship happens to be wrecked to take possession of it and whatever it contains, yet as there is no distinction between the country of the Sircar and Muscat and as the above mentioned merchants declared themselves to be your subjects, the vessel in question, together with all the stores contained in it, has been restored to the aforesaid merchants and is accordingly now despatched to you along with this friendly epistle....."

Letter to Meer Kazim, Daroga or Commercial Consul at Muscat, dated 18th November 1785.

Juzeerah Diraz (Long Island) is in that quarter. Silk-worms and their eggs are produced there. We wish you to procure some of both and despatch them to us, together with five or six men acquainted with the proper mode of rearing them.

Letter to Meer Kazim, dated 25th November 1785.

"Having ascertained in what part of Long Island saffron is cultivated, engage two persons in our service and send them thither to purchase one or two maunds of seed, which when procured is to be despatched to us.

"You have still on hand, of former importation, both sandalwood and black pepper. You will now receive more of each. This stock you must not immediately expose to sale, but give out that you have received our orders to discontinue the sale thereof at Muscat and to despatch it to Juddah (where also we have a factory) and that you are in consequence about to do so. Having circulated this report, you must keep the goods by you, till the price of them advances twenty-five or thirty pagodas the candy, when you will sell them without further delay."

Letter to four Armenian merchants, dated 26th November 1785.

“We have lately learnt that you have it in contemplation to come with ships laden with merchandise to our ports for the purpose of trading and that you wish to sail under English or Portuguese colours and to obtain our special license for these purposes. We highly approve of your intention and desire you will repair in the utmost confidence with your merchandise either to the port of Mangalore or to the port of Calicut, where landing your goods, you shall in the first instance supply us at a fair price with such articles as we may want from the list of goods to be sent to us by you, after which you shall be at liberty to sell the remainder at your pleasure and to take your departure when you like. We have accordingly written and herewith enclose two Parwanas to the above effect, one of them to Urshud Beg Khan, the Foujdar of Calicut and the other to Gulam Haidar, the Amil of Mangalore, to either of which ports you may resort as you shall think proper.”

Letter to Mohiyuddin Ali Khan, dated 5th January 1786.

“You write that you have recently discovered a vein of lead the ore of which resembles that formerly found, that you have sent us seven pieces of it by the post and that you wish to be instructed whether to despatch the lead you may obtain by hired bullocks or wait the arrival of some persons from the Presence. You must collect the said lead in the fort of Sidhout. It is usual for a silver mine or silver-earth to be found under a lead mine. You must therefore send for the said earth and collect it together in the before mentioned place. Persons skilled in such earth will be shortly sent from the Presence to examine it.”

Letter to Gulam Ali Khan, dated 7th January 1786.

“The camphor tree has been recently discovered in this part of the Sircar’s country. We have sent two bottles of the essential oil made from it for your use. You must rub your feet with it and also take it inwardly in meat-broth, putting about a tola weight of it into a basin of broth. Inform us what benefit you may receive from the use of it.”

Letter to the Raja of Pegu, dated 22nd January 1786.

Tippu stated in the letter that he sent in token of friendship by the hands of two of his servants Muhammad Kasim and Muhammad Ibrahim a present for the Raja consisting of two horses and a Mehataby dress (a dress made of a particular kind of silver tissue). He further said that his view in sending those persons was for the opening of a commercial intercourse between the two States of Mysore and Pegu, whereby an exchange of the commodities of each might be established to the mutual convenience and advantage of both. Tippu next invited the Raja to communicate to his agents, as also from time to time by letter, what articles he might wish to be supplied with from his country, in order that the same might be forwarded to the Raja. Tippu further said that having heard that rubies of high value, of fine colour and of a superior kind were to be had in Pegu, he had in consequence directed his agents to purchase through the medium of the Raja's ministers a certain number of stones weighing each from ten to thirty fanams weight. A request also followed that the Raja would accordingly order his ministers to assist his agents in purchasing the rubies required at as cheap a price as possible.

Letter to Gulam Ali, dated 1st March 1786.

It is our wish to obtain possession of the port of Bussorah in farm. Consequently we are for several reasons well pleased at your taking the route of Bussorah while proceeding to Constantinople. Proceeding thither, you will examine into the state of things there and make every necessary enquiry respecting the port, where you will at the same time dispose of your merchandise. From thence you must repair straight to Nujuf where you must represent to the priests in charge of the holy shrine whether it would be agreeable to them to have an aqueduct brought to Nujuf from the Euphrates and if they signify their pleasure to that effect, we will in the following year send the necessary people and money for its construction."

Letter to Badru Zamuan Khan, dated 5th March 1786.

"What you write concerning the death of five hundred Coorgs from small-pox is understood. The whole country thereabouts is

covered with underwood. They must be kept where the climate may best agree with them."

Letter to Gulam Ahmed, Khaji of Nagar, dated 12th March 1786.

"We understand what you have represented regarding a certain Mussalman inhabitant of Luckwalli who was in the habit of worshipping images in the manner of the Hindus and whom you in consequence upon hearing of the matter seized together with his wife and children, despatching what money as well as gold and silver trinkets they possessed to the Cutcherry of the Ehsham and keeping them under a guard till you should receive our orders respecting them. You will deal with the aforesaid offender according to law and then let him go. In matters relating to our holy law, you are authorised to act as you think proper."

Letter to Gulam Munsoor, Amil of Silcotah, dated 5th May 1786.

"Your letter reporting that the Jamedar Syed Amin had beaten the Bukshy Nawaz Baig in such a manner as to occasion the death of the latter and that you had in consequence secured the aforesaid Jamedar by putting irons on his legs and arms. Our special retinue will arrive the day after to-morrow at Great Balapoor. Securing the murderer's arms and legs well in fetters, you must place him in a dooly and bring him along with yourself under a strong guard to the Presence."

Letter to Raja Ramchander, dated 1st November 1786.

"What you have represented regarding the flight of the ryots belonging to Great Balapoor on account of the increase of six or seven thousand pagodas produced in the revenue in consequence of our having fixed the exchange of the Royal Pagoda at 12 canteroi fanams, together with the excuse which you have offered for the ryots on the occasion is understood. Where is the hardship or difficulty in a ryot having to pay an additional fanam or two upon his rent, which is the most that can fall upon the individual, when the tax complained of is divided among the whole."

Letter to Turbiyat Ali Khan, dated 2nd December 1786.

"Your representation with regard to our not honouring your letters with regular or early answers is understood. That great

person (meaning Turbiyat Ali Khan) eats two or three times a day, sits at his ease and amuses himself with conversation. We on the other hand are occupied from morning to night with business. Whenever we have leisure, we attend to the answering of your despatches."

Letter to Monsieur Lally, dated 11th December 1786.

"You must allow no more than a single shop to be opened in your camp for the vending of spirituous liquours and over that you must place a guard for the purpose of preventing the sale of spirits to any but the Europeans belonging to you, it being a rule in our victorious army that no shop of this kind shall be permitted to be established.

Letter to Monsieur Cossigny, dated 29th December 1786.

"There is a book which comes from Europe and which treats of the thermometer wherein it is written that at certain stated times the quicksilver rises a certain number of degrees, and that if at such times a person afflicted with any one of certain stated disorders shall during a paroxysm of his complaint place his hand on the thermometer, the degree to which the quicksilver may in consequence ascend will indicate the state or height of such person's disorder. Get this book translated into Persian and send it to the Presence."

Letter to Shamsudeen Khan, dated 17th January 1787.

"In addition to the camels which were sometime ago sent to you for the conveyance hither of certain articles of our special camp equipage, we have now despatched fifty others for the purpose of bringing treasure. You must accordingly despatch the tents on the former and on the latter the treasure."

*Tippu's instructions to some of his spies—Gulam Ahmed,
Daroga of Harkars and Syed Ali, Daroga of Couriers
and Meer Baker, Daroga of the Paishkheema : Shama Naik,
Shaisa Naik and Sadasiva Naik.*

"You the above mentioned Harkar Naiks must during the period of one month at a time place spies throughout the whole fort

in the town of Ganjam and in the two camp huzars etc., and also over the gates of the great Meers' houses and by these means gain intelligence of every person who goes to the dwelling of another and of what people say and acquire knowledge of the true state of things. You three darogas must write the occurrences of everyday in three separate Persian reports with your own hands and you three Naiks must with your own hands three separate Kanada reports and bring and deliver them to the Presence. But first you must give intelligence to all persons that it is the order of the Presence that no one shall go to the house of another to converse but that whatever they may have to say must be communicated in their respective cutcherries. If notwithstanding this order any person should go to the house of another, you must upon his returning out of the same bring him that moment to the gate of the palace and report the circumstance to the Presence."

The following is a sample of a report by a spy, Muhammad Mukhdum, the son of Lala Meea—"Cherisher of the World! Health be unto you! Your slave as he was coming from the house of his brother happened to meet in the way with Gulam Haidar. Sitting down together, he told me that the household effects of Hussain Ali were about to be sent off that very day. I answered that I had heard the same thing but not from any authority to be depended upon. Now however that your slave has received the orders of the resplendent Presence for the purpose, he will be careful to obtain every possible information and to report to the sublime Presence such authentic intelligence as shall reach him."

*Letter to Urshud Baig Khan, Foujdar of Calicut,
dated 2nd February 1787.*

"You must give the most strict orders to all the merchants and other inhabitants of that place (Calicut) neither to buy any goods of the English factor who is come thither, nor sell grain or any other articles whatsoever to him. How long in this case will the above named remain? He will in the end despair of making either sales or purchases and depart from thence."