CHAPTER XVI.

KRISHNARĀJA WODEYAR II, 1734-1766—(*contd.*)

The rights and wrongs of Trichinopoly: the significance of the Mysorean struggle for it—Circumstances leading to the struggle—The position in 1751—The role of Muhammad Alī—The position of the English and Nanjarāja—The deception on Nanjarāja and its results—The course of the struggle—The Truce of 1754 and the conduct of the French—The conquest of the South, a problem to the Indian Powers—The relative validity of the Nawāb's claims—The English attitude—The conduct of Pratāp Singh of Tanjore—Haidar's reaction to it—Murāri Rao's duplicity—His mockery of a mediation—His real object—His improper conduct—What it cost him eventually—A contemporary view of the Trichinopoly issue: Robert Orme—Orme and the negotiations—Saunders' proposed settlement—Wilks' review of the position—The conduct of the French, further noticed.

ENOUGH has been said[1] to show what the struggle for Trichinopoly really meant. It was, in fact, the last effort put forward by the Hindu kingdom of Mysore—as the true representative of imperial Vijayanagar—for the political independence of the South. With the defeat of Nanjarāja and his departure to Mysore, that attempt may be taken to have received its practical death-blow. Though Haidar Alī, as we have seen, adopted the policy of expansion in the South initiated by Nanjarāja and his

The rights and wrongs of Trichinopoly: the significance of the Mysorean struggle for it.

1. See *ante* Chapters VII & VIII.

predecessors, and though he prosecuted their aims and objectives, he may, perhaps, be taken to have been moved by other impulses as well. He might even have prosecuted the old aims and objectives purely from the point of view of an adventurer or even for the sole purpose of maintaining his own personal supremacy undisputed. Whatever the motives, that he did prosecute the aims and objectives of Nanjarāja is, as we have shown, to the credit of Nanjarāja and the impress that the latter's policy had left on Haidar. There are reasons to believe that the objectives of Nanjarāja and those of Haidar, in their initial stages at least, have been misunderstood by writers on the history of the period we are treating of. It is, therefore, necessary to pause a little here and clear the tangled web they have woven around themselves in this connection and show how they have deceived themselves into the comforting belief that the fight for Trichinopoly was a fight between the two rival Nawābs of the Karnātic and their protagonists, the English and the French on either side, in which Mysore came in as a secondary factor. That this is not so will have been evident from what has been set down in the preceding pages. Mysore had an inviolable claim to Trichinopoly, a claim which could not be set aside. Up to 1736, when the rule over the South was undisputably Hindu in character,[2] Trichinopoly formed part of the Nāyak

2. The alleged supremacy of the Mughal since 1693 over the Nāyak kingdom of Madura was only nominal. Chandā Sāhib's occupation of Trichinopoly in 1736 was the result of the attempt made in 1734 on behalf of the Nawāb of Arcot by his son Safdar Alī Khān and his nephew and confidential adviser Chandā Sāhib. Queen Mīnākshi's quarrel with Bangāru Tirumala, the father of her adopted son, gave the latter an opportunity to interfere. While Bangāru Tirumala ruled over Madura and Tinnevelly, Chandā Sāhib occupied Trichinopoly fort unmolested. But his occupation of the dependent country was so far ineffective that renewed attempts had to be made to get possession of it. The revolt of Muhammad Yusuf in 1763 and what preceded is the best proof of the non-conquest of those areas till then on the part of the Nawāb of Arcot.

kingdom of Madura. It was the chief stronghold of that kingdom in Tirumala Nāyaka's time (1623-1659) and it was in its hands until the death of Queen Mīnākshi, in whose reign it was first occupied on her behalf by Chandā Sāhib in 1734 and finally on his own in 1736.

Circumstances leading to the struggle.

Aurangzīb died in 1707. The Nizām claimed overlordship over the South as the Mughal's agent in or about 1713, when Kumr-ud-dīn Chin-Killich-Khān was nominated Nizām-ul-mulk with a nominal control over the Mughal possessions in Southern India. His deputies at Arcot claimed through his alleged right; while the Mughal's direct representative claimed through his alleged right of overlordship. But the fact was the South was never conquered either by the Mughal or the Nizām. In 1748, when the so-called disputed succession to the Nawābship of Arcot arose, the fight was as between the rival claimants and their objective was the establishment of the right to possession of the country which they could not so much as claim by virtue of any conquest or effectively occupy in a military sense and collect its revenue.[3] The English

3. The following is a succinct summary of the history pertaining to Trichinopoly and the country dependent on it :—

1559: Viśvanātha Nāyaka takes Trichinopoly.

1609-1623: Vīrappa Nāyaka first attaches Trichinopoly to Madura, the Tanjore king having exchanged it for Vullam.

1623-1659: Fortress of Trichinopoly becomes the chief stronghold of the Nāyak kingdom during Tirumala Nāyaka's time.

1734: Mīnākshi invites intervention of Dōst Alī, Nawāb of Arcot, in her dispute with Bangāru-Tirumala, father of her adopted son.

1736: Chandā Sāhib finally occupies the fort of Trichinopoly.

1741: Chandā Sāhib attacked by the Mahrattas; Chandā Sāhib taken prisoner; and Murāri occupies Trichinopoly till 1744.

1743-1744: Nizām-ul-mulk invades Trichinopoly; the Mahrattas vacate it; and Anwar-ud-dīn becomes Nawāb of Arcot.

1748-1749: The French ransom Chandā Sāhib and with Muzaffar Jang attack Anwar-ud-dīn and kill him at Āmbūr. Anwar-ud-dīn's son Muhammad Alī flees and occupies Trichinopoly.

1749-1751: Chandā Sāhib declared Nawāb of Arcot by the French

and the French, who had till then been but traders and had not put forth any pretensions to territory and had no military forces worth the name, saw an opportunity to better their own position—incidentally making money in their individual and personal interests, for private trade was allowed and illicit gains not discountenanced by the morals of the time—and began to interfere in the affairs of the local powers. They were probably influenced by the example of those who had endeavoured—before their very eyes—to carve out kingdoms for themselves. Śivāji was one of these. They had also seen how Chikkadēvarāja had built up a vast kingdom for himself and how he had extended his conquests to the extreme south as far as Madura. They saw too that trade and warfare were incompatible but that interference on one side or other was a primal necessity, if they were to exist at all. To exist or not to exist—that was the question for them. They openly acknowledged they were not principals in the war;

Before Chandā could invest Trichinopoly, Nāsir Jang enters the Karnātic with a powerful army. Muhammad Alī joins him but the French defeat them at Gingee in 1750, at which battle Nāsir Jang was killed, and Muzaffar proclaimed Nizām by the French. But he was killed and succeeded by Salābat Jang, his brother, in 1751. Muhammad Alī again occupies Trichinopoly.

1752: Chandā Sāhib delivered by the French to the Tanjoreans and put to death.

1752-1764: Subjugation of Madura and Tinnevelly by the English on behalf of Muhammad Alī, Nawāb of Arcot. Yusuf Khān's revolt suppressed in October 1764.

1781: First appointment of their own collector by the English to the area. It came about in this way: The *Treaty of Paris* in 1763 having put an end to French interference in the affairs of the Nawāb of Arcot, his Karnātic districts were left in the hands of renters, the Pāḷegārs of the South still continuing to yield but a very imperfect allegiance. In 1781, soon after the second war with Haidar Alī had commenced, it was arranged with Muhammad Alī, the Nawāb, who was quite unable to perform his engagements, to assign his revenues to the Company for a period of five years, one-sixth of the proceeds being reserved for his own expenses. The English Government at Madras accordingly appointed its own Collectors.

their replies to Nanjarāja demonstrate this to a fault. They frankly pleaded that they had no right to interfere in the disposal of territory, as they were prohibited by the Mughal from doing that. The position was acknowledged that they were traders and no more; and that their interference in behalf of their protege was in the capacity of friends and well-wishers, not as principals in the warfare—with a right to settle matters on the footing of their being principals—but as subsidiaries who had no right to interfere in the arbitrament of territorial affairs. Of course, the position assumed was a camouflage but it was a necessary step in the then position of affairs. This attitude showed that it was possible for the English and the French to maintain a pretended neutrality even while they were waging war as subsidiaries of the country powers.

The position in 1751.

It was in these circumstances and with these views that the war of the Karnātic was waged. The position in 1751 was briefly this: There was peace in Europe between England and France. But the English and the French, having espoused opposite sides, were at war in South India. Muhammad Alī was supported by the English as the rightful Nawāb, while Chandā Sāhib's candidature was put forward by the French. Muhammad Alī laid claim to all the country between the river Krishṇa and the Cape Comorin, the area originally under the sway of Vijayanagar. Actually he had really no territory under his control. He had thrown himself into Trichinopoly—with a view to eventualities. The whole of the *Subāh* of Arcot, including the Capital, was in Chandā Sāhib's hands and was dominated by the French. Tanjore, which had been taken by the Mahrattas in 1675, was independent, and Pratāp Singh, its ruler, was, as might be expected, against

Nanjarāja. Madura was in the hands of Ālam Khān, an adherent of Chandā Sāhib. Muhammad Alī's position at Trichinopoly was a precarious one. He was besieged by Chandā and the French force under Jacques Law.

The role of Muhammad Alī.

Landless, friendless, and destitute of men and money, Muhammed Alī looked to Nanjarāja in Mysore and the English at Madras for effective help. Nanjarāja's help was sought because he was the one man who had both men and money; he was at the head of the best organized State of the time in the South; that State had the prestige of an old hereditary monarchy still attached to it; and he was, besides, well-known for his ambitious expansionist aims in the South, the key to which was Trichinopoly. His forbears had fought for it and much money and many lives had been already sacrificed for it since the days of Chikkadēva. It cannot be that Muhammad Alī, cunning and astute as he was, did not count on the inordinate desire for power on the part of Nanjarāja and his brother Dēvarāja. He was in a desperate state. He had no more territory than Trichinopoly town at the time and even there he was probably not desired. And he made up his mind to offer Nanjarāja his own terms. When he did so, he was determined to cheat Nanjarāja of his dues when it came to fulfilment. He knew the English at Madras would not agree to his doing this, but he desired to take no risks with them. He kept the clause in the Treaty relating to the surrender of Trichinopoly and its dependencies a secret from them for the time being. The one feature of the character of Muhammad Alī, on which all who had anything to do with him agreed, was that he was always deliberate in his deception. He was so far deceptive in his character that he deceived friends and foes alike in the same determined manner. Nanjarāja took care to guard his position. He won over Murāri Rao, and

attached him to himself at great cost. Murāri was thus detached from the main Mahratta power and prevented from making common cause with Pratāp Singh of Tanjore, who, in this matter, was inimical to Nanjarāja's aims in the South. But he too proved treacherous in the end. True to his word, Nanjarāja kept the clause a profound secret. Even Murāri knew nothing of it. There is no reason to believe, as suggested by Orme,[4] that he "made the agreement by his (Murāri Rao's) advice." Murāri's aid was sought by Nanjarāja as the result of his agreement with Muhammad Alī; he was not the inspirer of the agreement. Nanjarāja required no one to offer any suggestion to him in this regard. It is possible, however, he found it impossible to conceal it from the sagacity of his subsidiary, especially in the later stages of the war. When Murāri came to know of it, he made up his mind to turn it to his own advantage at the proper time.[5] The English at Madras realised the enormity of the offence committed by Muhammad Alī only after the fall of Trichinopoly. The capture and death of Chandā Sāhib was the signal for Nanjarāja's demand for a fulfilment of Muhammad Alī's treaty with Mysore. The English at Madras knew nothing of the secret clause in the Treaty until the time came for its fulfilment. On the death of Chandā Sāhib, Major Lawrence sent 400 of the French prisoners of war to Fort St. David, brought up the rest with the military stores and artillery at Jambukēśvaram into Trichinopoly and completed all his other dispositions; and proposed to Muhammad Alī that he should move forthwith at the head of the confederate army into the Karnātic, where the news of his successes at Trichinopoly would help to reduce the other fortresses under the control of Chandā Sāhib and facilitate the

4. Orme, *Indostan*, I. 243.
5. *Ibid.*

establishment of his government over the province and help to raise the revenue due from it. Muhammad Alī pretended to acquiesce in this advice, but showed, what Orme calls, an " unaccountable backwardness " as often as he was pressed to put it into execution. The inconsistency in his conduct perplexed all but the select few who were acquainted with the clause. The English, indeed, had no conception of the difficulties which held him back, when, to their great astonishment, Nanjarāja explained the mystery by refusing to march until the city of Trichinopoly with all its dependencies was delivered up to him, for, that, he said, was the price that he had stipulated with Muhammad Alī for his assistance. Dissimulation being no longer of any service, Muhammad Alī confessed the truth when Major Lawrence demanded an explanation of it. He protested that his extreme distress alone had extorted a promise from him, which Nanjarāja himself, as he might very well have known, he said, was totally out of his power to perform ! Trichinopoly, he pleaded, was the great Mughal's, and himself only a Viceroy, appointed to govern it during the pleasure of that prince ; that the resigning of such an important place to the government of an Indian king would involve, he added, both himself and the English in continual wars with the whole Mughal Empire ! Firmly resolved on not parting with the place, he, in a word, proposed to amuse Nanjarāja with a further promise of delivering it up within two months ! By this time, he hoped, by collecting the so-called arrears of revenue due from the province of Arcot, to repay the expenses which Nanjarāja had incurred by assisting him. As immediate reparation—" a palliative", in the words of Orme[6]—" he proposed to give up the

6. *Ibid*, 244.

fort of Madurā with its dependencies, which included a very large district." These terms, he suggested to Major Lawrence, were, in his view, a full and ample recompense for all that Nanjarāja had done for him, more especially, he with consummate adroitness added, as the reduction of Chandā Sāhib's power had proved an essential advantage to the interests of Mysore as well as to his own! Major Lawrence was as surprized at this statement as anybody else in Trichinopoly.[7] His powers, however, being confined to the operations in the field, he reported matters to the Governor and Council at Madras and waited for instructions. Meanwhile, the Governor and Council at Madras had received simultaneously applications from both the parties, each setting forth, as might be expected, the subject in his own way.[8]

The position of the English and Nanjarāja.

Dupleix had been foiled but Muhammad Alī could not be saved from the results of his own duplicity. The difficulties of the English were mainly due to the character of their protege. When they came to know that Trichinopoly was the price for Mysore's assistance, about the middle of 1752,[9] they did not know what to say of it. They prudently determined not to interfere in the dispute, unless violence should be used against Muhammad Alī. Professing great friendship for Nanjarāja, they strenuously recommended to both parties an amicable adjustment of their differences. This suggestion failed to carry conviction to Nanjarāja's mind. He, with justice on his side, demanded fulfilment of the Treaty and very rightly refused all prevarication in the matter. He would not countenance

7. *Ibid.* Orme writes that "great therefore was the general surprise and anxiety when it (the secret clause in the Treaty) was made public" (*Ibid*).

8. *Ibid.*

9. See *ante* p. 133, f. n. 2.

the plea that Muhammad Alī was but the agent of the Mughal and as such had no right to dispose of the Mughal's territory. The English, his allies, were really aghast at his conduct, though they, as wise people, did not make public their views in the matter. They characterized it, in their solemn proceedings, as "a knavish and weak action: the former because he [Muhammad Alī] knew he had no right to do it; the latter because he must know that, though he procrastinated difficulties, yet he must, in the end, as it but too plainly appears, make a powerful enemy instead of a friend."[10] Of course, the English tried their utmost to reconcile the differences between Muhammad Alī and Nanjarāja in this matter. But they knew what a bad case they had to defend and what an impossible compromise to effect, when they pleaded that Nanjarāja would be committing a breach of faith if he deserted Muhammad Alī. Nanjarāja's taunt was effective to a degree: "The bad scent of the Nawab's behaviour," said he,[11] "is spread over the world to such a degree that you cannot discern the odour of our faith." Nanjarāja's attitude is understandable in the light of the bad faith of Muhammad Alī. The injustice committed by the English in supporting their untruthful ally could not be forgiven. Haidar, as we shall see, never forgot it.

The deception on Nanjarāja and its results.

The whole of Nanjarāja's subsequent conduct confirms the belief that he simply refused to be deceived. He determined to conquer Trichinopoly by means, fair or foul. The steps he took with this end in view were such that Lawrence, the English General, was compelled to place an English garrison in Trichinopoly for its

10. *Fort St. George Records, Mily. Cons.* (1753), *Consultation* dated 3rd January 1753.
11. *Ibid, Count. Corres.* (1753), *Letter* No. 48.

protection. At the same time the troops from Tanjore and Pudukotah left for their homes, with the result that the English position at Trichinopoly was still further weakened. Dupleix saw his opportunity in all these happenings, and, despite the sad fate that had overtaken his ally Chandā Sāhib, won over Nanjarāja and Murāri Rao, the Mahratta chief, to his own side. This done, he played a waiting game, for he had no military commander whom he could put forth against the veteran Lawrence. In any case, he thought he could starve out the garrison in the Trichinopoly fortress by preventing supplies of provisions and military stores to it. Lawrence, as we know, depended, for the existence of his army, entirely upon the safe arrival of his convoys, and this Dupleix planned, with the aid of Nanjarāja and Murāri Rao, to prevent in no uncertain manner. In this attempt, however, his arrangement miscarried, though Nanjarāja and his army did not lack in their endeavours.

The course of the struggle.

On the English side, the chief duty of bringing in the convoys safe fell to Muhammad Yusuf, who rendered splendid service to the English in this respect. Of him, Lawrence wrote in the highest terms of praise. "He never spares himself," he wrote once,[12] "but is out on all parties, and by his good intelligence brought in provisions to keep us in a moderate plenty we wanted, much to prolong the time till Mafuze Khan could join us." Orme, indeed, remarks that the lack of provisions was such that, on one occasion—12th May 1754—had not the convoy come through, Lawrence must next day have left the town to its fate, and withdrawn to Tanjore.[13] This would have meant nothing less than the defeat of the English arms and the success of Nanjarāja. It was

12. *Orme Mss.*, p. 78, No. 13.

13. Orme, *Indostan*, I. 357. See also *Mily. Cons.* (1754), *Consultation* dated 20th May 1754: *Letter* from Capt. Calliaud to Palk, dated May 12, 1754.

accordingly resolved upon to prevent Muhammad Yusuf being used by the English for this purpose. For accomplishing this end, it was decided upon to utilise the services of one Punniyappan, the interpreter in the English camp. The English being in difficulties for supplies, he suggested to Major Lawrence that if he were allowed to visit Nanjarāja, he might be able to bring about a suitable understanding with him. There being no reason to doubt his good faith, he was granted permission. Punniyappan went on his chosen errand. He saw Nanjarāja and suggested that the English would be forced to accept any terms he might offer if their supplies were effectually cut off by putting Yusuf Khān out of the way. Towards this end, he suggested that either Yusuf Khān should be waylaid and killed while on one of his expeditions or steps should be taken to induce the English to believe that he was a treacherous man and unworthy of their goodwill and trust. As the former course seemed impracticable, the latter seemed feasible of a trial. Punniyappan, the *Dubāsh* of Lawrence, arranged to carry out the nefarious project. He resolved upon dropping in the English camp—in such a manner that it can of certainty be discovered—a letter addressed to Yusuf Khān and one of his brother officers, suggesting that they were, in return for certain rewards, to betray Trichinopoly to the Mysoreans. The letter was written and dropped by an adherent of Punniyappan and was, by pre-arrangement, discovered by another in the English camp, and placed before Captain Calliaud. Captain Calliaud, on seeing it, placed Yusuf Khān and his brother officer in immediate arrest. An enquiry was ordered and it turned out that Yusuf Khān and his brother officer were absolutely innocent in the matter and that the letter had never come from the Mysorean camp. The *Dubāsh* was duly blown off from the muzzle of a cannon for his treachery and Yusuf Khān and his comrade set at liberty.

It should be said to the credit of Nanjarāja that he had nothing to do with this treacherous act of the *Dubāsh*. It was evidently a case of personal vengeance on the part of the *Dubāsh*, though he endeavoured, in its prosecution, to make a business of it by inducing Nanjarāja to become a party to it, evidently on false pretences.[14]

The Truce of 1754 and the conduct of the French.

Not long after—on August 2, 1754—Dupleix's supersession by M. Godeheu came off and negotiations for a treaty of peace between the English and French Companies followed. A suspension of arms was proclaimed on the 11th October 1754 and a conditional treaty was agreed to in January 1755. The departure of Saunders and Dupleix finally put an end to the war, while the arrival of M. Duval De Leyrit in succession to Dupleix at Pondicherry meant the annihilation of the hopes that Nanjarāja had built on French aid. The advance of the Nizām and the Mahrattas on Mysore added to the troubles of Nanjarāja and he had to hark back to his own country, his ambitions unrealised and his money and men wasted. What was often within his reach, the Fates had denied him. That was because he had denied to himself the active duty of prosecuting his aims in a manner that would have proved decisive to him and to his country. He lacked as much decision as character. No wonder he failed. The French cannot, however, be exculpated. They did not keep to their promise; they, in fact, were loth to take any action disadvantageous to their own aims and aspirations. As the sequel showed, they made their so-called help the cause for extortionate demands on Nanjarāja. Those demands were both unjust and immoral, especially in

14. For Calliaud's enquiry, see *Orme Mss.*, pp. 115-131, No. 13. The Madras Council refused to excuse such treachery: Council to Lawrence, 26th March 1754. See also Orme, *o.c.*, I. 348-350.

the light of the utter lack of sympathy they showed to Nanjarāja in the active prosecution of his thwarted claims. If Trichinopoly sealed the fate of Nanjarāja, it also sealed the fate of Dupleix and the French nation in India.

The conquest of the South, a problem to the Indian Powers.

The conquest of the South was never complete—either at the hands of Bijāpur and Gōlkoṇḍa or at the hands of the Mughal. The last hope of Mughal domination disappeared with the death of Aurangzīb in 1707. The death-blow he gave to the Southern Muhammadan States destroyed their ambitions as well. The Mahrattas first through Shāhji and then through Śivāji made repeated attempts but failed. Even earlier, Mysore also tried to establish its suzerainty and had nearly succeeded in the days of Chikkadēva. In the reign of Krishṇarāja II, the attempt was renewed by Nanjarāja at what seemed an opportune moment. The claims of the respective parties seemed to have been well understood at the time. Thus, as regards the claims of the rival Nawābs, it was that neither of them had any real claim to the South, not only because their own alleged master, the great Mughal, had not conquered it by his sword nor ruled it by virtue of the exercise of even nominal suzerainty over it, beyond touching the fringes of the South, but the South had never accepted such a suzerainty. Śivāji on the one side and Mysore on the other had disputed such exercise, time and again. The actual position thus was that in the prosecution of their independent aims, the Mahrattas and the Mysoreans were conscious of the fact that they were disputing the attempts of the Mughal in the South.

The relative validity of the Nawābs' claims.

When Aurangzīb died, the rival Nawābs put forward claims they could not really substantiate. Muhammad Alī's claim to the Nawābship was, as a matter of fact,

not acknowledged by the French until the *Treaty of Paris* in 1763. Both Muhammad Alī and Chandā Sāhib claimed to have received *firmans* conferring the Nawābship of Arcot from the great Mughal. But such *firmans* were easily forged and no importance seems ever to have been attached to the assertion of either of their claims during the very time they were being so vigorously put forward. Muhammad Alī's claim was based on a *firman* alleged to have been received from Delhi on the 24th March 1751, appointing him Nawāb of Arcot with power to rule over the South including the countries of Madura and Tinnevelly. The English at Madras were, however, quick to perceive a peculiarity about the *firmans* produced by Muhammad Alī. "It has been more than once observed", they recorded once in their minutes of consultation in 1754,[15] "during the course of this war, that whenever anything material has been on the carpet, the Nawab has always received, or pretended to receive, such letters from Court as might either divert us from our plan if disagreeable to him, or encourage us to pursue it, if it suited his purpose." Similarly, the claims of the Nizām as the representative

15. *Mily. Cons.* (1754), *Consultation* dated April 29, 1754. The alleged *firman* referred to in the text is dated 29th January 1750 and is appended to No. 26 of *Count. Corres.* (1751). The interested reader on this subject of patents will find a most illuminating account of a dispute between the English and the French deputies as to their origin and validity at the conference held at Sadras on 3rd January 1754 (Orme, *Indostan*, I. 337-341). The conference lasted for eleven days, when it broke up, leaving both parties more exasperated than ever. As the discussion between the English and the French in this connection throws interesting sidelights not only upon the *forged* character of both the originals and copies of these so-called patents of title for possession of vast tracts of territory in the South, but also on the manner in which these two foreign nations tried to secure possession of these areas to themselves, prejudicing the rights of third parties like Mysore, while pretending to help the local powers to settle their own differences, it will be found further dealt with at some length in Appendix V—(3) below.

(or agent) of the Mughal were of the most nebulous kind. The very fact that they were disputed shows that they were not recognised. What made them loom large was what made them make history. And that was the reason why they were at the time either supported or combated by the local representatives of foreign nations, the English and the French. These had settled in the South of India as traders and were at the time shedding off their trading habits and entering slowly and steadily, though unconsciously, into territorial matters, being dragged into the local quarrels; and later—fairly consciously and with well understood political aims—into territorial conquests with a view to consolidate their respective positions. Their individual national policies coloured their aims here. Whatever made for the success of one of these and the defeat of the other—their command of the sea, their home support and their steadiness in prosecuting their aims, contributed not a little towards the final result—there can be no question that it was their presence at the time in the country that helped Muhammad Alī to thwart Nanjarāja and cheat him of his lawful prize. But the English at Madras were still to learn of the true nature and character of their ally Muhammad Alī. They could not have had any idea of the extent either of his treachery or his ambition. It was to cost them many sanguinary wars and a few Governorships as well.

The English attitude.

If the English at Madras had insisted on Muhammad Alī fulfilling his treaty conditions, it would have been a different matter. But while they appreciated Nanjarāja's claim, they were loth to lose either their hold on Muhammad Alī in whose immediate vicinity—if not country—they not only lived but also traded, or the large sums of money they had lent him. They no doubt felt

that the Mysore King may make a good and virtuous ruler and under his rule, trade would flourish, while their accumulated debts would be guaranteed to them by his Daḷavāi Nanjarāja. Though such thoughts came to them now and again and though they even put them down in their debates and resolutions, still, they always preferred to play a waiting game. They went so far as to answer effectively Major Lawrence's objections to their view. But, as we have said, they would not make up their mind for a definitive Treaty with the King of Mysore. They knew such a treaty would prove something better than "the treaty on foot in Europe", which they characterized as one "not to be depended on."[16] An accommodation with the Daḷavāi, they realized, even if it did not end the war, would put it in their power "to wage it with advantage."[17] But the change of policy that followed Godeheu's arrival and the advantages it seemed to offer, made them change their views. The Truce was advantageous to Muhammad Alī also.[18] Muhammad Alī's debts had accumulated and the English were sure, with the Truce, to recover them. And unless Muhammad Alī was supported, in the changed circumstances, they could not hope to realize the huge amount involved. He could be treated as the *defacto* and the titular Nawāb of Arcot and used as a puppet to wage war in their own interests, if war was renewed. The Company could not, in any case, lose its money. That was the fundamental point with the English. Hence, despite the indefensible conduct of their ally, they had to stick to him. Moral considerations weigh but lightly in matters where money is the prime factor in arriving at a decision. The English as a nation of traders desired to protect themselves first before trying to

16. See *ante* Ch. VIII, pp. 171-172.
17. *Ibid*, 172.
18. *Ibid*, 175-176.

protect others, however just or equitable their cause. The mutual relations of the English and Muhammad Alī could only end, in the circumstances, in one way. And that was destined to be the supplanting of the one by the other. What Nanjarāja lost, the English gained. Trichinopoly, if it proved the grave of the French and the final extinguishment of Mysore's legitimate ambitions in the South, became the first milestone in the ultimate success of the English as a nation in India. Trichinopoly, even before Plassey, thus paved the way for the establishment of British power in India. And it was the discernment of Nanjarāja that attracted him to it, and however wrongly he might have prosecuted his aims, there can be no question that he showed the way to the English at Madras to recognize the fact that the captor of Trichinopoly would prove the ultimate victor of the South. Nanjarāja led the way in the struggle and bore the brunt of it in men and money and the English reaped the benefit.

The conduct of Pratāp Singh of Tanjore.

The rights and wrongs of the Trichinopoly affair do not, however, end with this. The parts played by Murāri Rao and Pratāp Singh of Tanjore remain yet to be considered. Pratāp Singh forgot the help that Mysore in 1739 had given to Saiyāji in connection with the embassy to Satāra for obtaining aid to maintain the Hindu cause in the South against the advancing Muhammadans. He had forgotten the invasion that followed, in 1740, the death of Nawāb Dōst Alī at Dāmalcheruvu, the taking of Trichinopoly and the capture of Chandā Sāhib as a prisoner of war in the following year. Whatever his differences with Chandā Sāhib may have been, his attitude towards Mysore was neither straight nor honourable to him. He proved himself a weakling and an opportunist throughout. He did not join the English readily or

help them with alacrity in the struggle at Trichinopoly. He but rendered moderate assistance in 1753. Towards the end of that year, when disappointed with the English, Nanjarāja sought French aid, and Murāri Rao had declared himself an ally of the French, Pratāp Singh had almost signed a treaty of alliance, when the news of the disastrous failure of the French attempt to storm Trichinopoly fort (November 1753) induced him to hesitate again. The French, tired of his procrastination, directed a Mahratta detachment to ravage his country. This was followed by another under the French, which attacked the eastern side of his kingdom. He had eventually to seek the aid of the English, who sent General Lawrence to his relief. Despite this, Murāri Rao had to be bought off by Pratāp Singh. Pratāp Singh, however, was not left unmolested for long. In 1758, when the renewal of hostilities began, he was besieged by the French, who demanded the payment of Rs. 46 lakhs alleged to be due on a bond executed by him in favour of Chandā Sāhib in 1749. Pratāp Singh, aided by the English, resisted the claim, and Lally, who had been sent to lay siege to Tanjore, raised it on the appearance of the English forces at Tanjore and the English fleet off Kāraikkal. But when, shortly after, Madras itself was besieged by the French, the most urgent English requests for help were left unheeded by him. He did not actually refuse help but steadily evaded giving it. And when the trouble was over, he was among the first to send felicitations to the English at Fort St. George on the escape they had had! He proved himself equally lax in rendering aid during the remainder of the war, though he professed friendship to the utmost. These instances of his opportunism are enough to show the true character of Pratāp Singh. He was neither sincere nor steadfast as an ally, and as a man of action, entirely weak,

Bent on his own personal safety, he took the best from both sides. The appeal of joint action, of co-operation for attaining an objective which might have meant good to the whole of Southern India, could not produce any impression on him. He failed to note what Muhammad Alī's friendship for him meant. He did not understand why Nanjarāja and the English parted company over the cession of Trichinopoly. Nor did he realize why Nanjarāja exhausted all his powers of persuasion in inducing him to join Mysore. As Orme, the contemporary historian, puts it, the Mysorean argument was that "if Trichinopoly should once be provided with a stock of provisions, it was not to be doubted but that the English and the Nabob would immediately turn their arms into the Carnatic".[19] The Mysorean was prophetic, indeed, in his argument. The possession of Trichinopoly meant the possession of the Karnātic. The whole course of subsequent history tended to confirm this view. After the occupation, the English embarked, at the instance of Muhammad Alī, on a policy of conquests in the Karnātic, often not counting the cost it meant even to themselves. But they knew, as financiers of Muhammad Alī and as traders, how to get back what they had invested on Muhammad Alī and his so-called interests. And they got it, as the events showed, with compound interest. But Pratāp Singh had reckoned without his host. Palk, the ambassador sent to Pratāp Singh to counteract Nanjarāja's endeavours and Dupleix's manouvres, understood how to bring him round. Sakkōji, his finance minister, who had stood out for neutrality, was dismissed and Mānakji, his rival, who had been out of favour for sometime, succeeded him, with the result that English influence once again became predominant at Tanjore. Thus Tanjore was induced into an alliance—

19. Orme, *o.c.*, I. 285.

after nearly a year of procrastination—with the English and Muhammad Alī, with results which can only be described as disastrous to itself. The immediate penalty it had to pay was an attack by its own kinsmen headed by Murāri Rao, which, as described above, shows the light in which the new alliance was viewed by him. The attack, though warded off by Mānakji, was in the nature of a remembrancer, but it failed to produce any impression on Pratāp Singh. The French also did not overlook the new combination and Chandā Sāhib's bond afforded them, as narrated above, the opportunity to attack Tanjore. They, no doubt, had eventually to withdraw but the moral of these attacks was not grasped by Pratāp Singh. Pratāp never could understand the mind of Muhammad Alī. Nor did he remember that the claim of "tribute" made by Muhammad Alī would mean the eventual extinction of his State. That claim was not long in the coming. First raised in 1762 and settled amicably by the mediation of the English, it cropped up in one form or another again and again. Though Pratāp Singh died in the meantime (in 1763), his successor reaped the full benefit of it. In 1771, in the reign of Tulsāji (1763-1787), the English attacked Tanjore and reduced it. The reasons adduced were non-payment of the "tribute" for two years; his unwillingness to help the allies against Haidar's invasion in 1769, during which Tanjore was exempted, in return for a bribe of Rs. 4 lakhs, from the general depradation effected; his friendly correspondence with Haidar and his own kinsmen, the Mahrattas; and finally, his invading (in 1771) the Marava country which was alleged to be under the protection of Muhammad Alī. Tanjore, instead of getting a reimbursement of its own expenses in the late war, thus got embroiled in the meshes of its own doubtful diplomacy. The English at Madras not only thought they were bound to act on

behalf of Muhammad Alī but also saw that an independent Tanjore, ready to co-operate with Haidar, would mean danger to themselves! Tanjore was taken and given to Muhammad Alī in 1773, the alleged requests for help from Haidar and the Mahrattas having proved vain. There was really no ground for the belief that Tulsāji was in league either with Haidar or the Mahrattas. Mill, in fact, suggests that the alleged correspondence with the Mahrattas was forged by Muhammad Alī's agents, and as for requests to Haidar for help, it was never proved, for it could not well be. Haidar had entered into a commercial treaty with the English at Bombay in 1770, and in 1772, after being defeated by the Mahrattas, had sought in vain the help of the English and the opportunity for wreaking his vengeance did not come to him till 1778. The English acted on suspicion and thus wronged a State that had been dragged into their friendship even against its own interests. The Court of Directors intervened, disapproved of the action of the Madras authorities both in 1771 and 1773, and ordered the restoration of Tanjore to its ruler. These orders were carried out, in 1776, much to the chagrin of Muhammad Alī, who had meanwhile fleeced the country to its bones. A fresh settlement was also arrived at, under which Tanjore passed under English protection. This made the Rāja the direct ally of the E. I. Company, while, not long after, the "tribute" payable to the Nawāb was also assigned to the English. Tulsāji died in 1787. His brother, Amar Singh, who succeeded him, and his nephew Sarabhōji, who later took his place, were both men deficient in character. Two new treaties were concluded with Tanjore, one with Amar Singh in 1787 and another with Sarabhōji in 1799. Under the latter, Tanjore passed to the English, Sarabhōji being provided with a pension. That was the sad fate that awaited it from the day Pratāp Singh mounted

the throne. Unlike Venkōji (Ēkōji) and his immediate successors, Pratāp Singh possessed no strength of character. His political weakness was to some extent due to the fact that he depended on popular suffrage—he having been placed on the throne "by the general concurrence of the principal men of the kingdom",[20] and, in endeavouring to conciliate his supporters, he lost greatly his own regal powers. He lacked both political insight and political courage. He was ever between two stools. The English treated him in the same manner they had treated Nanjarāja. In the guise of mediators, they helped to maintain Muhammad Alī at his cost. Tanjore had never actually been incorporated with the Karnātic treaties nor was it ever included in the so-called patents of the Mughal or the Nizām. The "tribute" claimed had really no legal basis to stand on. Yet, the English made Pratāp Singh believe in it; they even went to the extent of explaining to him the necessity and even the reasonableness of his contributing towards the repayment of the large expenditure incurred by Muhammad Alī, they themselves being the persons to be benefited by such reimbursement. Pratāp Singh could not see the utter illegality of the claim, he himself having kept at his own cost a large army in the field in aid of Muhammad Alī and his supporters the English, and he himself having met the cost of provisions supplied to the English camp at Trichinopoly. Without the aid of Tanjore, Trichinopoly could not by any means have been held in the interests of Muhammad Alī.[21]

20. *Report of Tanjore Commission* (1798) (Tanjore Collector's Press): The *Report* is dated 6th March 1799.

21. See, as to Tanjore's constitutional position *vis a vis* the Karnātic treaties, Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, V. 257, who holds it had not been incorporated with them. As to the temporary and casual character of Tanjore's dependence on the Nawāb of Arcot, see Mill, *History of British India*, II. 227; and as to the restoration of Tanjore by Lord Pigot, see Thornton, *History of the British Empire*

Haidar's reaction to it.

Nor did Haidar forget or forgive the remissness and unfriendliness of Pratāp Singh. He remembered how he had refused to join Nanjarāja in 1753 in the retaking of Trichinopoly; how he had, at the last moment, refused to sign the treaty of 1753; and how Mysore had lost Trichinopoly by want of co-operation on his part. In 1769, Tanjore had accordingly to purchase immunity from attack at the hands of Haidar by a payment of Rs. 4 lakhs. In the war which began in 1780—when Tanjore had become a protected state and a direct ally of the English—Haidar inflicted the worst horrors on Tanjore. Perhaps no part of South India then suffered as badly as Tanjore. The whole country was overrun by Haidar's troops, most of the important places being devastated beyond description. Neither a village, temple, nor a paddy field escaped the eyes of Haidar's hordes. Almost every structure of any note in the Tanjore country bears silent testimony to this day to the cruel hands laid on it. The English garrisons at Pattukottai and Tirukāṭṭupalli, about 10 miles north-west of Tanjore, were captured. Tanjore held out but Col. Braithwaite's force was, in 1782, annihilated to a man on the banks of the Coleroon.[22] Such was the vengeance that Haidar breathed against Pratāp Singh and his kingdom for the treachery he had played against Mysore at the hour of its need, that he treated the latter with the utmost cruelty. It cannot be said that Pratāp Singh did not deserve punishment for the trick he had played on Nanjarāja in 1753, but it is deplorable that he himself being dead, his fair country should have been chosen for

in India, II. 199-294. Thornton is justly critical of Warren Hastings' inaction in connection with the revolution that ended in Governor Pigot's illegal arrest and death.

22. The details of this action on the Coleroon will be found described below in the proper place.

vicarious satisfaction by Haidar. The devastation of the country was so complete, indeed, that the outturn of paddy in this area for 1781-82 and 1782-83 went down to less than a tenth of the normal. Vengeance, indeed, knew no bounds with Haidar, when he was in the mood to wreak it. The famine of 1781 from which Tanjore suffered is, perhaps, the worst one that that prosperous land has ever known. The picture drawn of its effects by the missionary Schwartz is a heart-rending one. "As the famine was so great and of so long continuance," he wrote,[23] "those who have been affected by it seemed beyond its reach. A vigorous and strong man is scarcely to be met with. In outward appearance, men are like wandering skeletons. . . . When it is considered that Haidar carried off so many thousands of people and that many thousands have died of want, it is not at all surprising to find desolated villages. . . . Such distress I never before witnessed and God grant, I never may again." Schwartz wrote these words in September 1783. Haidar's devastation occurred in May 1781. We can, therefore, imagine how terrible should have been the drain on the resources of the country which had such lasting effects—effects which are summed up to this day locally in the terrible and telling phrase "*Haidar Kalāpam.*"[24]

Murāri Rao's duplicity.

The part that Murāri Rao played in this affair cannot but be regarded as the darkest imaginable. Judging him even from the standpoint of the morals of his own time, he must be held to have been both ungrateful and treacherous to a degree. He was engaged by Nanjarāja with 6,000 of his troops to assist him in the cause he had, at Muhammad Alī's request,

23. Pearson, *Life of Schwartz*, I. 392-393.

24. Lit. Haidar's devastation; somewhat akin to the Kannaḍa phrase *Haidarana hāvaḷi*, which means the same thing.

made his own. Murāri Rao brought in 4,000 men, when Nanjarāja first assembled his forces at Karūr, while 2,000 more joined him under Basin Rao, when the conjoint forces reached Trichinopoly. He and his chiefs, Basin Rao, Innis Khān and Hari Singh, co-operated actively in the war. Dupleix, indeed, went so far as to ascribe to Murāri Rao and his men the successes the English had gained at Śrīrangam during 1751-1752.[25] But how much of that remark was based

25. Orme, *o.c.*, I. 247. The identity of Basin Rao (the "Basin-row" of Orme) is difficult to make out. He has been described as a "nephew" of Murāri Rao by Orme. According to the genealogy of the Ghōrpaḍe family, Murāi Rao had two nephews, sons of his half-brother Daulat Rao. These were Bahirji Rao and Śantāji Rao *alias* Subhanji Rao. Bahirji Rao succeeded to Gajēndragad and died in 1803, while Śantāji Rao *alias* Subhanji Rao died without issue, the date of his death being unknown. As Basin Rao died in April 1753, he could not have been the former. It is a question if he can be identified with Subhanji Rao *alias* Śantāji Rao. However this may be, Basin Rao, as noted in the text above, assisted Clive while besieged in Arcot, November 1751, and subsequently took part in the battle of Āruṇi with him, quitted him later and arrived with his troops at Trichinopoly, in accordance with the orders of his uncle, in December 1751. He was killed on April 1, 1753, while vigorously charging the English line (under Major Lawrence's command) near Trivaḍi (Tiruviḍi)—Orme, *o.c.*, I. 196, 197, 198, 205, 206, 279. As regards Innis Khān, he was the principal officer of Murāri Rao. He was a brave and active man. He arrived at Trichinopoly in 1751 with 500 Mahrattas and beat up 200 of Chandā Sāhib's cavalry. He cut off the French dragoons at Trichinopoly (1751) by a ruse, the action being over "in an instant." He accompanied Clive in April 1752 to Samiavaram and killed or took prisoners of war all the 700 French sepoys who came to attack it. He was, in August 1752, sent by Nanjarāja to join the French, but being too late to join in the battle of Bahur, he pretended to join Muhammad Alī and the English, with the hope of "getting money" from the former. In 1753, he was detached by Murāri Rao to reinforce the army at Śrīrangam with 3,000 Mahrattas. In February 1754, he took part, with his chief, in routing the English convoy and grenadiers, without waiting for the arrival of the French troops. A graphic account of this rout will be found in Orme (*o.c.*, I. 345), who describes it as "by far the severest blow which the English troops had suffered during the course of the war" (see Orme, *o.c.*, I. 204, 221, 261, 268, 269 and 344-345). Finally, as to Hari Singh ("Harrasing" of Orme), he was a Rajput soldier. He commanded the Mahrattas in the action of the 10th May 1753 at Śrīrangam. With his cavalry, sword in hand, he valiantly broke through the English line under Major Lawrence, but was repulsed. For a description of this action, in which the French troops

on a genuine appreciation of the "valour and activity" of Murāri Rao and his men, is doubtful. For Dupleix, as a farseeing man, had kept an eye on Murāri Rao during the whole course of the fight at Trichinopoly. Indeed, he had been in a way cultivating him. He had continually addressed letters to him and forwarded presents, both from himself and from his wife. In these letters, the English had been represented as "a plodding mercantile people, unacquainted with the art of war, and not fit to appear in the field, opposed to a nation of so martial a genius as the French."[26] But Murāri Rao was an astute man. He knew his interests and sided any side that promised to yield him pecuniary benefit. His opinion of the English was something very different from what Dupleix had tried to impose on him. When he first joined Nanjarāja in 1751, Clive, then being besieged by Razā Sāhib at Arcot, sent a messenger to inform Murāri Rao of his situation, and requested him to relieve him. The messenger, it is said, returned safely to the fort of Arcot, bringing a letter from Murāri Rao, in which he said that "he would not delay a moment to send a detachment of his troops to the assistance of such brave men as the defenders of Arcot, whose behaviour had now first convinced him that the English could fight."[27]

His mockery of a mediation.

Indeed, both Murāri Rao and Nanjarāja had been deeply impressed by Clive and they agreed to detach a part of their troops for co-operating with him.

under M. Astruc took part later, see Orme, *o.c.*, I. 283-285. The French were so well commanded that Lawrence, convinced that he could not dislodge the Mysore troops under Vīraṇṇa, the Mysore general, marched his troops into the plain and encamped at the Fakīr's Tope, which Vīraṇṇa had lately abandoned. Vīraṇṇa, the Mysore general, mentioned by Orme (*Ibid*, 285), may be identified with *Vīraṇṇarāj*, referred to at p. 125 *ante* as the officer who commanded the Mysore troops in the fight for Trichinopoly.

26. *Ibid*, 260.

27. *Ibid*, 192.

Though their first attempts to get into Arcot town were foiled, Basin Rao with a thousand men joined Clive and marched with him and took part in the fight at Āṛṇi and then proceeded to Trichinopoly. Not only that, when, in 1752, Lawrence agreed to the suggestion of dividing his forces, so that both the countries to the north of the Coleroon and to the south of the Cauvery may be protected adequately, he was told by Nanjarāja and Murāri Rao that "they would not take any detachment of their troops if they were to be commanded by any other person" but Clive,[28] an opinion which Lawrence had himself independently arrived at. Though Murāri Rao co-operated with Nanjarāja in the war and rendered valuable service during the course of the war—at Elimiserum, Samiavaram, Pichandar Kovil, etc.—when it at last came to meeting the demand of Nanjarāja, he behaved in a manner utterly treacherous to him. Having pretended to be impartial as between Muhammad Alī and Nanjarāja, and having been chosen, with equal confidence on both sides, to be the mediator between them, he came one evening into the city in great state, at the hour fixed, accompanied by two commissaries deputed by Nanjarāja. They all proceeded to Muhammad Alī's residence, where Captain Dalton, as commander of the English garrison, was present. He painted in vivid colours the distressful state of Muhammad Alī's affairs when Nanjarāja undertook his cause, at which time, though he claimed lordship over a country extending from the Pennār to Cape Comorin, he possessed no more of this vast territory than the ground enclosed by the walls of Trichinopoly, where he had been closely besieged by a much superior and implacable enemy. Having said thus much, he appealed

28. *Ibid*, 220.

to Muhammad Alī for the truth of what he asserted, and wound up by a formal demand for the delivery of the city and territory of Trichinopoly, agreeably to the solemn treaty he had made with Nanjarāja, which he—dramatically enough—produced, signed and sealed! Muhammad Alī, who had expected such a harangue, acknowledged openly the favors he had received, and said that he was resolved upon fulfilling his engagements; but, he added, that, being at the moment in possession of no other considerable fortified town, it was impossible to remove his family, which was very large. He, therefore, urged for time—until he could, he said, by reducing the Arcot province, get a proper place for the reception of his family. He ended by desiring a respite of two months, at the expiration of which he promised to send orders to his brother-in-law to deliver up the city. Murāri Rao highly commended this resolution; and after some other vague discourse, he signified his inclination to speak to Muhammad Alī in private, and desired, on that score, the commissaries to withdraw. As soon as they and the rest of the audience, with the sole exception of Captain Dalton, retired, Murāri Rao, changing his countenance from the solemnity of a negotiator to the smile of a courtier, told Muhammad Alī that he believed him endowed with too much sense to mind what he had said before those two stupid fellows, meaning the commissaries, whose retirement he had desired! "You must likewise," said he, "think that I too much discern merit to believe you have any intention of fulfilling the promise you have now made. How could you answer to the Great Mogul the giving up so considerable a part of his dominion to such insignificant people? It would be the highest absurdity to think of it. These, you may be assured, are my real sentiments, whatever my private interest may induce

me to say to the contrary in public."[29] Muhammad Alī was not a little delighted to find Murāri Rao in this disposition, for it was his resentment more than Nanjarāja's that he dreaded. And, as might be expected, he immediately made him a present of a draft on his treasury for Rs. 50,000, promising much more if he would reconcile matters, and get Nanjarāja not to insist on the letter of the Treaty. Murāri Rao readily assured Muhammad Alī that he would do this, though nothing was farther from his intention.

His real object.

As Robert Orme, the historian, has justly remarked,[30] Murāri Rao was in reality the most improper person that could have been chosen to adjust the difference that had arisen between Muhammad Alī and Nanjarāja. His objects were, first, by ingratiating himself with Muhammad Alī, to persuade him to admit a large body of his own troops into Trichinopoly city as the best means of deceiving Nanjarāja into the belief that he really intended to give it up according to his promise. Once this was agreed to by Muhammad Alī, he would have instructed his men to seize on any opportunity that might offer of seducing or overpowering the rest of the garrison. And if this iniquitous scheme succeeded, he intended to keep possession of the city, which, as we know, he had formerly governed for a time himself![31] If, perchance, there should be no chance for the realization of his plan, he determined to protract the dispute as long as possible by negotiations, during which period he was sure of being kept in pay by Nanjarāja, while he did not doubt, at the same time, that he possessed the address to get considerable presents from Muhammad Alī. If this double-dealing should be exhausted, he purposed to make Nanjarāja declare war, feeling sure that he had too great

29. *Ibid*, 246-247.
30. *Ibid*, 246.
31. In 1741. See *ante* p. 82.

an opinion of the Mahrattas to carry it on without continuing them in his service. The result showed that Muhammad Alī, cunning man that he was, understood the game of Murāri Rao. He would rather place his trust in Nanjarāja than in Murāri. As we have seen, Muhammad Alī realized that he could not even move out of the city—to join his English allies—for Nanjarāja had threatened to attack him if he showed any inclination to do so before settling the dispute that had arisen between them. He, therefore, made over to Nanjarāja the revenues of the island of Śrīrangam and several other adjoining districts, empowering him to collect them himself. He also promised to deliver up Trichinopoly at the end of two months, and in the meantime, he agreed to receive 700 men (200 according to one source) into the city, provided that they were his own men and not Mahrattas. That shows the inner convictions of Muhammad Alī. That he placed no reliance in Murāri Rao but tried to ward off a blow from him is clear from the terms he finally agreed to with Nanjaraja. But he was as much false to Nanjarāja as Murāri Rao had promised himself to be. Nanjarāja was not deceived by the promises of Muhammad Alī. He wanted to gain time as much as Muhammad Alī. Muhammad Alī thought that an immediate declaration of war would come in the way of the progress of the war in the Karnātic from which he expected some signal advantage, whilst Nanjarāja delayed to commence hostilities against him. Nanjarāja, on the other hand, wished for nothing so much as the departure of Muhammad Alī and the English battalion, that he might carry on his schemes to surprise Trichinopoly, which, he realised, their presence would render impossible. The excuses Nanjarāja offered when he was asked to move were understood as showing his intentions. To frustrate them, 200 Europeans with 1,500 sepoys were placed in garrison

in the city, under the command of Captain Dalton, who was instructed to oppose any surprise against it.

His improper conduct.

Murāri Rao's attempt to make as much as possible for himself at the expense of Nanjarāja was wholly wrong. His stipulations with Muhammad Alī showed clearly that he desired to get possession of Trichinopoly for himself, thus cheating Nanjarāja, who had employed him, of what was due to him. The fact that Muhammad Alī evaded him testifies to his intelligence and sagacity in seeing through the wily trick that was sought to be played on him. But that cannot excuse Murāri Rao from the blame attaching to him in this affair. His duty was plain. He was to have stood by Nanjarāja and asked for the carrying out of the Treaty. If Muhammad Alī failed to agree, he should have been made to know something of the consequences that would follow. But Murāri Rao's love for money and desire for a continuance of hostilities which brought him funds was so great that he had little regard for his own word or for the just interests of others. Nanjarāja's bargain for his help proved a bad one. Nor was Murāri Rao's conduct towards the close of the war any better. Here, again, he was found bargaining with both Nanjarāja and Muhammad Alī and making the most of the situation for himself. During the course of the war, Muhammad Alī had repeatedly induced Murāri Rao to return to his own country. But exorbitant demands on the one side and the scarcity for money on the other, had rendered it impossible for him to carry through the idea. In 1754, however, the position of Nanjarāja in regard to money was, perhaps, no better. Murāri Rao's demands being incessant, they could not be met. Murāri Rao began to tire of a war which brought him no money, and tried to seek a plausible pretext to break with Nanjarāja. He demanded the payment of his arrears, which, by the

account he made out, amounted to Rupees ten lakhs. Nanjarāja, having never refused to advance him money whenever he wanted it, suggested he had already overpaid him. Sharp altercations followed and Murāri Rao pretended to withdraw his troops, and retired to the north bank of the Coleroon, declaring not to return until his claims were met. Muhammad Alī, having heard of this, tried to get rid of Murāri Rao without any expense to himself. In this state of affairs, the march of Gaude Rao to Tirukkāṭṭupalli occurred. This march instantly suggested to Murāri Rao that if he could administer a severe blow to Gaude Rao's troops, it would surely induce the king of Tanjore, already terrified by the incursions of the Mysoreans and the French, to furnish money necessary to purchase his retreat. If disappointed in this expectation, Murāri Rao thought that he at least would have the satisfaction of taking vengeance for the severe blow he had sustained from Mānakji (Mānāji) earlier in the early part of 1754. The double motive of interest and revenge induced him to immediately cross the rivers of Coleroon and Cauvery in the night with 3,000 of his best troops. At day-break, he fell upon Gaude Rao's party so furiously that only 300 with their general escaped. The rest were either killed or taken prisoners. Immediately he wrote to Muhammad Alī, then just arrived at Tanjore, that if he would give him security for Rupees three lakhs, he would return to his own country and never more be an enemy either to him, the English, or the king of Tanjore. Muhammad Ali, having as usual no funds, applied, as Murāri Rao had foreseen, to the king of Tanjore. After many meetings, the king of Tanjore consented to meet the demand. The articles of a treaty were drawn up and signed, according to which Rs. 50,000 were to be paid to Murāri Rao as soon as he reached Valikondapuram,

to which place he had previously retired from Trichinopoly, a lakh more immediately he reached the pass of the western mountains, and the balance of Rs. 1½ lakhs when he reached his own country. While he was pushing through this faithless transaction with the enemies of Nanjarāja, whom he was pledged to support, he acquainted Nanjarāja of what he was doing. This he did, not because he wanted to behave as a truthful employee, but because he desired to get as much as he could from Nanjarāja before he finally left the scene. He suggested that if Nanjarāja would pay him his so-called arrears, he would return to his assistance. Only to be duped once again, Nanjarāja sent him Rs. 50,000, which was what he could spare at the moment. Immediately he received the sum, Murāri Rao, the wily man that he was, marched away with all his troops to Valikondapuram, and from there, shortly thereafter, to his own country.

What it cost him eventually.

It is difficult to find words of the right kind to characterize Murāri Rao's conduct in deserting his employer, an employer whom he had systematically deceived at every stage. To say that he behaved throughout treacherously would not be doing violence to truth. Not only did he foil the attempt of Nanjarāja to get justice but he also actively interfered and induced Mahammad Alī to break the treaty. This was the more reprehensible, when he had been chosen to act fairly as an arbitrator between the two parties. He betrayed Nanjarāja's cause, while all the time he was adding to his coffers through the liberality of his employer. The final act in the treacherous drama he enacted—his quitting the scene of war—after getting a fresh sum from Nanjarāja, all the while promising him to stay on in his employ, was in keeping with the rest of his character. Necessity may know no law;

nor religion, nor even common good faith. Murāri Rao in need was Murāri Rao at variance with truth. But there are no acts of treachery more strongly to be reprobated than those which lie hid under the pretence of duty even to oneself or under some profession of necessity. He forgot that forests have ears and fields have eyes, and men have memories, and that often treachery comes back roosting to him who practises it. Haidar, the servant and apt pupil of Nanjarāja, who took part in this war, including its last stages, remembered the part played by Murāri Rao in it and meted out punishment to him which finally ended both his career and life.[32]

A contemporary view of the Trichinopoly issue: Robert Orme.

How a contemporary viewed the attempt of Nanjarāja for the possession of Trichinopoly will be clear from the remarks offered by Robert Orme, the historian of the Karnātic War, who was then a Member of the Madras Council. Orme, indeed, thinks that it was a mistake on Nanjarāja's part to have tried to obtain possession of that great fortress-town. "It is difficult to find an example of a prince," he says, "conducting himself with more weakness than the Mysorean (Nanjarāja) in the course of this war: the Nabob (Muhammad Alī) procured his assistance by a promise which he never intended to perform." It is strange that Orme has not a word to say of the strange conduct of the English Council at Fort St. George. From what we have said above, it will have been clear that the Council did not seek to defend the immoral conduct of Muhammad Alī. Orme's further suggestion that the possession of Trichinopoly would have meant danger to Mysore is too transparently absurd to deserve any consideration. "Indeed," he says, "had the Mysorean been endowed with common sagacity, he might have foreseen that the

32. See below.

Robert Orme.

possession of Trichinopoly, the object of all his endeavours, would have been the greatest misfortune that could have happened to him, since it would certainly sooner or later have involved him in a war with the Mughal government, which probably would have ended in reducing the kingdom of Mysore itself, like the Carnatic, to be a province of the Empire." The fact that the trouble actually came from the Mahrattas and the Nizām in alliance with the French general Bussy and not from the Mughal shows how wide of the mark this criticism was, while the army of the Nizām at the time was such that Mysore by itself would have made short work of it. Orme did not realize the objective of Nanjarāja any more than he could appreciate the nature of the fraud practised on him by Muhammad Alī. The fact that it was deliberate made no impression on him. He was no doubt a dupe to the promises of Muhammad Alī as much as Dupleix, and of Murāri Rao also. But public morality as private morality had sunk so low at the time that the practice of such base frauds was felt to be a matter of no consequence. Here was the head of a friendly State which had treated solemnly the engagement it had entered into and had wasted three years of warfare in the interests of another at great pecuniary cost and had engaged an army of 20,000 men in his cause, and had rendered services to him that had given him a fresh start in his life, obliged to return to his country without receiving the country he had stipulated for, or even the least compensation for the enormous expenses—not to speak of losses in men and money—he had incurred, nor even any the smallest security for their reimbursement, for, as Orme himself was discerning enough to remark, what reliance he might place on the conditional treaty was little better than chimerical, since many unfortunate events might render that convention abortive.[33]

33. Orme, *o.c.*, I. 389. It is unnecessary to add that Orme was venal to a

Orme and the negotiations.

It is not a little remarkable that Orme should have expressed the view he did, especially when we remember that he had acted as the negotiator with Nanjarāja in arriving at a satisfactory solution of the differences between the Council at Fort St. George and Nanjarāja. The Council at Fort St. George at first thought that it would be best to negotiate through Major Lawrence. But the plain military officer he was, he excused himself on the plea of ill-health. He uniformly expressed his regret that the attempt had been made to keep Trichinopoly after promising to cede it, a position to which he would not accede. In February 1756, the Directors in England ordered the Council at Fort St. George to renew the negotiations on the basis of certain terms which might help to obtain an accommodation with Nanjarāja and help the Company to reimburse its coffers. They directed that Mr. Orme should be employed to conduct the negotiations. These proposals had been communicated to Muhammed Alī in 1754 and the belief that such communication had led to their failure, had suggested to the Directors an injunction of secrecy when they desired to renew the attempt. Indeed, the Council at Fort St. George went so far as to suggest, in their reply to the Court of Directors, that they deemed it imprudent to make any public advances to the Rāja of Mysore, because of the alarm it might unavoidably give to Muhammad Alī and the Rāja of Tanjore! Thus, to get over one difficult situation, they were ready to create another. To rectify the immorality of one transaction, they were not afraid of perpetrating another. They invested, in this view, Mr. Orme with the needed authority and thus armed with the prescribed authority, he began his negotiations with Berki (Barakki) Venkaṭa

degree in his transactions with Nawāb Muhammad Alī (see Love, *Vestiges*, II. 513-519).

Rao, the agent of Nanjarāja. The negotiations went on secretly for a long time, the results being reported confidentially from time to time to the Council at Fort St. George until October 1758, when evidently the negotiations broke off.[34]

Saunders' proposed settlement.

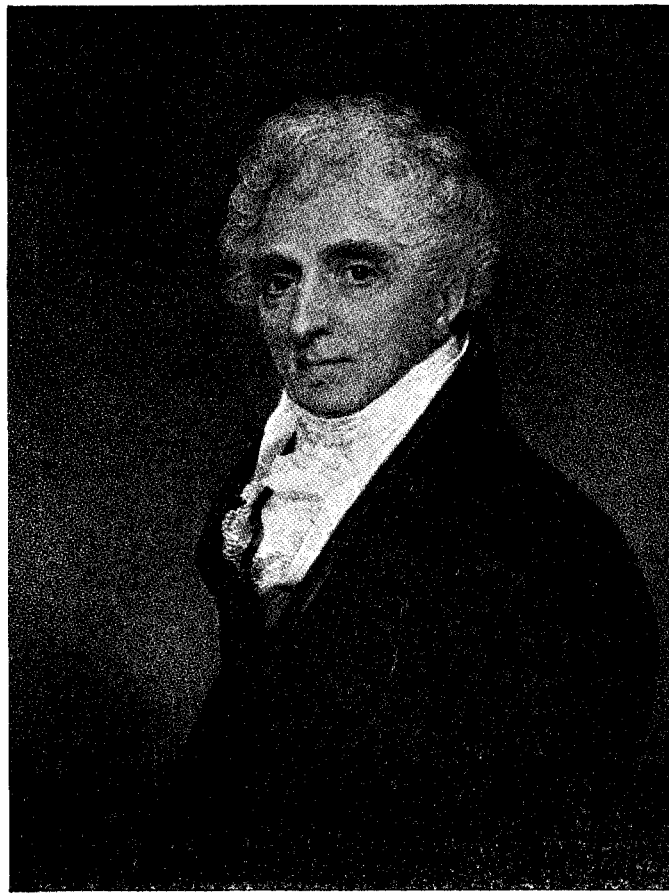
Orme knew more of the inequity of the position than he cared to acknowledge. The fact of the position was that the war had ruined the commercial prosperty of the Company. The war had been conducted at the expense of the English; it had meant an expenditure of 35 lakhs of pagodas for securing possession of Trichinopoly. Mr. Saunders, the Governor, saw that reimbursement of this sum was a paramount necessity. After considerable cogitation, he suggested to Nanjarāja an accomodation which was mainly intended to secure the recovery of this vast sum. If Muhammad Alī could not find this sum for the Company, he could be used to obtain it. He could be used as a pawn in the game. For that, his recognition as Nawāb was needed, for on him the Madras Council had staked their all. Accordingly, Saunders proposed to Nanjarāja that the Rāja of Mysore should renounce the French alliance and aid in the recognition of Muhammad Alī; he should prevail on Murāri Rao to do the same, and until such recognition was brought about, Nanjarāja was also to defray the expenses of his own and Murāri's army. He was also to give *sāhukār* security for the total amount expended by the Company in the war of Trichinopoly, that sum to be paid on the actual delivery of that place to Nanjarāja. Nanjarāja was to pay for that possession the *usual tribute*

34. See *General Letters from Fort St. George*, dated 20th November 1756; 28th February and 10th November 1757; 13th March and 10th October 1758. References are made in these *Letters* to proceedings of what are called "Private Committees," of which there is no trace either at the India Office or at Fort St. George. Of course, there is no reference to them, either direct or indirect, in Orme's *Indostan*, which goes up to 1761.

to the Nawāb of the Karnātic, whatever that phrase may mean. He was also to pay ten lakhs to Muhammad Alī, and to put him in possession of a fort and a district in Mysore yielding two lakhs a year. It is not clear whether this sum was to be paid in addition to or in extinction of the ten lakhs advanced to Muhammad Alī already by Nanjarāja. The English at Fort St. George were to be allowed the right of exclusive trade with Mysore, while they were to aid Nanjarāja in the *conquest* of Madura, Tinnevelly and other countries as far as Cape Comorin, so that Mysore's undisputed supremacy up to the extreme South of India may be established.[35] Mr. Saunders' aim was not only to get Nanjarāja to a settlement but also get the Rāja of Tanjore to accede to the terms agreed to between himself and Nanjarāja and thus to obtain a reciprocal guarantee of the Rājas of Mysore and Tanjore, of Muhammad Alī and of the English at Madras to an arrangement which might insure peace in the South and allow trade an uninterrupted course. But Mr. Saunders did not realize that both the time and circumstances of the hour were against him. The Court of Directors desired secrecy in the matter. They would not desire Muhammad Alī to know anything of it. Their fears as to that person's incapacity to either keep a secret or to appreciate its value were not by any means lacking in substance. But there can be no question that the morality of the proposal to carry on any negotiations with Nanjarāja behind the backs of Muhammad Alī or the Rāja of Tanjore was too much even to the contemporaries of the period. Apart from Saunders, who suggested the bringing in of these parties into the transaction and obtaining their approval to it,

35. Wilks remarks that this was "an obligation which would have involved them (the English) in a long, unprofitable and sanguinary warfare" (*o.c.*, I. 178). But he overlooks the fact that domination of the South was the very objective of Nanjarāja's warfare in the South, of which the occupation of Trichinopoly was to be but the prelude.

PLATE XV



Col. Mark Wilks.

there were evidently others in the Madras Council who took a similar line.[36]

Wilks' review of the position.

Wilks, reviewing the position as it developed towards the close of 1758, passes severe strictures on the indefensible attitude adopted by the Company in this affair. Viewing the general objects of the proposals put forward by Mr. Saunders to Nanjarāja, he says that "if they had been made and enforced at the period when the shameful fraud practised on Nunjeraj (Nanjarāja) was first discovered, the act would have claimed our admiration as the indignant resolve of a generous people, who acknowledged 'justice' alone 'as the standing policy of nations,' and spurned at association with dishonor. But after carrying on a long and sanguinary war ostensibly as auxiliaries in defence of that breach of treaty, to make these propositions as principals without the concurrence or the knowledge of Mohammed Alī (as proposed by the Court of Directors), materially changes the colour of the transaction; the slender praise of tardy conviction is not even claimed upon the record, and the whole is referred to that commanding plea of necessity and self-preservation, which so often overrules whatever of morals is mixed with political discussion."[37] That may sound severe as a castigation but it cannot be gainsaid that it was well merited. If the Governor and Council at Fort St. George tried to do some tardy justice to themselves, the Directors, who seemed to appreciate better the difficulty of dealing with a person like Muhammad Alī, seem to have prohibited them from doing it, not because they were actuated by a better standard of public morality but because they felt themselves drawn into a political position from which there was no possible extrication for themselves except by going down still

36. See *ante* Chs. VII & VIII.
37. Wilks, *o.c.*, I. 380-381.

further the Gadarene slopes. To go forward, they found, was as difficult as to go backward. And they found, like Macbeth, that going forward was better than going backward. With them, expediency was a virtue in itself.[38] While Wilks was thus justly critical of the wrong attitude taken by the Directors of the Company in defrauding Nanjarāja of Trichinopoly, it is not to be mistaken that he was not strong in his animadversions on Nanjarāja himself and his conduct of the war and of the stupid acts he perpetrated to gain possession of that city. There is hardly any doubt that he only covered himself with ridicule and disgrace by the mistaken steps he adopted to effect his objective. But that is not the same as saying that his objective itself was wrong or his help had not been useful or timely both to the English and to Muhammad Alī. That is where both these parties failed; Muhammad Alī grossly failed in making good his word and the English in making him keep his plighted word. Neither the pompous declarations of Nanjarrāja nor his blundering operations, nor even the wrongful attempts he made to secure his objective could excuse the wilful "fraud," which, in the opinion of Major Lawrence, had been practised on him.

The conduct of the French, further noticed.

As to the conduct of the French, the less said the better. Even before the date on which the terms of the truce were published—11th January 1755—it was clear to Nanjarāja that the French were not

38. In the negotiations at Madras, Nanjarāja's representative was Berki (Barakki) Venkaṭa Rao (see *ante* Ch. VIII. pp. 136, 144-145, 152, 161-180, etc.). According to Wilks (*o.c.*, I. 377, f.n.), he was in touch with an English officer named "*Klees*" in the *Pūrṇaiya Mss.* His identity is not ascertained. Wilks suggests it cannot be Clive, for he was away in England at the time. He may be identified with Mr. Cooke, who was appointed on a commission to negotiate (see *ante* p. 162). Wilks denies that Venkaṭa Rao was "forcibly detained" by the English as suggested by the French and Nanjarāja,

ready to carry out their obligations. He naturally treated them just as he had treated Muhammad Alī. If they desired to retire, they could, he said, do so and go back to Pondicherry. They could not, he said, bind him to the terms of their treaty. They had no right, he openly declared, to make any treaty with the English on his behalf. As a matter of fact, Nanjarāja had discovered, even before the truce was concluded between the French and the English, that the French were determined to keep Trichinopoly for themselves if they should succeed in taking it. Nanjarāja said that the French were as much for deceiving him of the fruits of his victory as the English had been. What is worse is that this statement applied as much to the conduct of Dupleix as to that of Bussy, who continued to fight the battles of Salābat Jang against the country powers. The truce, while it stipulated for the cessation of hostilities in the Karnātic, did not interfere with his status or the authority of his position in the Northern Circars, where he continued to wield the full power of the Nizām against everyone against whom he could turn his hand, to maintain his own position or to secure the pecuniary contribution which alone can help to sustain him in it. In the whole history of the career of that able French diplomat and general, there is no greater blot than the active aid he rendered in the spoliation of Mysore, immediately after the conclusion of the truce of 1755. But for the invasion of Mysore by Salābat Jang aided by Bussy to exact the so-called arrears of tribute due by it, a tribute that was immoral in its levy, illegal in its exaction, and inequitable in its incidence,[39] Nanjarāja

and adds that "it was a simple *invention* of Nunjeraj to justify his disavowing the acts of his agent" (l.c.). This is far from the actual fact (see *ante* p. 145, f.n. 76; 164, f.n. 25; and 174, f.n. 65). Venkaṭa Rao's detention is also referred to in *Sel. Pesh. Daft.*, Vol. XXVIII, *Letter* No. 96, cited in *ante* p. 145, f.n. 76 *supra*.

39. See Appendix V—(3), regarding "Tribute."

would not have been called off to Mysore. What he would have done at Trichinopoly by continuing there after the truce need not detain us for any length of time. For, as it was, he had to leave the island of Śrīrangam, the revenues of which had been formally given up to him by Muhammad Alī, to the French, though they had unjustly included him in the truce they had concluded with the English, without notice to him, and, as it seemed, against his will, and undoubtedly in open violation of the terms of the treaty concluded with him, and certainly against his country's interests. He had repudiated openly their right to do so and had declared he would carry on the war. And Bussy's act was openly disruptive of the Treaty the French had concluded with Mysore. They were, indeed, in strict alliance with Mysore, while they were also bound by treaty with Salābat Jang as well. But it is not clear that Bussy was bound to break the treaty with Mysore to fulfil the treaty with Salābat Jang, treating Mysore as his country's enemy for the purpose.[40] Bussy, indeed, felt consi-

40. Wilks contends, indeed, that he was so bound; a point on which even Bussy did not, as pointed out in the text above, feel personally clear, though he compromised with his conscience later (see Wilks, *o.c.*, I. 384-385). Orme says that Salābat Jang's claim for tribute was a "pretended" affair and that Bussy was in a "perplexity" inasmuch as Nanjarāja "well deserved" the services of the French for what he had done "in return for the expenses he had incurred in assisting them during the war of Trichnopoly," "while the French troops with M. Bussy were obliged to assist Salābat Jang against any powers whom he might think proper to treat as enemies, for it was on that condition, without any exception for the Mysoreans, that he had given the northern maritime provinces to the French Company" (Orme, *o.c.*, I. 404). Orme thus not only exculpates his own nation but also the French Commander. But his own previous narration of events from 1745 onwards up to 1755, marking the departure of Nanjarāja from Trichinopoly, suppresses material facts relating to the war, especially all that one had the right to know about the cession of Trichinopoly to Mysore under the secret clause of the Treaty. And yet Orme devotes the greater portion of his first volume (Madras Edition, pages 167 to 405) to the Epic of the Mysorean conquest of Trichinopoly. If the claim to the tribute was a "pretention" on the part of Salābat Jang, Bussy's duty seems to have been clear: to resist Salābat Jang's importunity. But it suited him to compromise with his conscience for

derably embarassed in the matter and tried in the first instance to get the money from Mysore without declaring war. But when he found Dēvarāja, the brother of Nanjarāja, unyielding, he declared war and exacted the vast sum of Rs. 55 lakhs from him, ruining the country and those who stood security for Dēvarāja as well. If the conduct of the English was immoral to a degree, the conduct of the French was worse; it was venal and contemptible in the extreme.

---

his own sake and for the sake of his nation. See further, on this head, note on M. Bussy, Appendix II—(7).