

Chapter VIII

POST-WAR DIPLOMACY (1792-98)



The Third Mysore War proved disastrous to Tipu. With half the kingdom gone and all his neighbours turned hostile, it was an uphill task for him to retrieve his prestige. Even survival seemed difficult. However, he had a brief spell of peace from 1792 to 1798, which he utilized in repairing the ravages of the war. He discharged promptly all his treaty obligations and gave no cause of offence either to the Company or to the Marathas. The Company's affairs were in the hands of a pacific Governor-General, Sir John Shore, who attempted to reconcile Tipu to his humbled condition, and even desired that Tipu should remain as a check against the ambitious Marathas, who inflicted a severe blow on the Nizam in 1795, and disturbed again the balance of power, which the English had always tried to retain in their own favour. The Nizam-Maratha War, the presence of a non-interventionist at the helm of Company's affairs, and



Sir John Shore

a dramatic shift in the power-politics of Europe with the rise of Napoleon, together with excessively careful husbanding of resources as well as shrewd diplomacy of Tipu pushed him again to the center of the stage, which alarmed Wellesley so much as to bring about his total destruction.

The first task of Tipu was to revamp the entire administration on efficient lines. The army, navy, commerce, trade and indeed every branch of internal economy was so thoroughly overhauled that within a short period, he wiped off the stains of his defeat. He was prompt in payment of the indemnity to the allies and in securing the release of his sons who were in Madras as hostages. The princes returned to Mysore

in March 1794 accompanied by Major Doveton, who was in charge of them until their return. Taking advantage of the allies' war on Mysore, some of the disgruntled chieftains had raised the banner of revolt, and they were all suppressed.

Relations with the English

Tipu's quick recovery from the effects of the war excited again the jealousy of Cornwallis, who thought that Tipu would never reconcile himself to his losses. Therefore, Cornwallis attempted to conclude a general treaty of guarantee against Tipu for the defence of the new acquisitions on the ground that he might venture to recover his lost territories. He invoked Article XIII of the Offensive and Defensive Alliance of 1790 by which if Tipu attacked or provoked any of the confederates, the other two should join in order to punish him, and he desired to give effect to this stipulation by concluding a definite Treaty of Guarantee consisting of ten articles. The intention of this Treaty was to keep alive the old hostile alliance against Tipu, to come quickly to the rescue of the confederate under attack by Tipu, to remain militarily prepared at all times to face Tipu, and to prevent any war material falling into the hands of Tipu¹. This indicates that despite Tipu's defeat, his dread had not subsided in the heart of the English.

1. Sec. Proc. 28 Dec. 1792.

Cornwallis asked Malet to obtain the consent of the Maratha to the proposed treaty². But the Marathas were in a different mood. Nana was shrewd enough to see through the game which was to remove one powerful rival at a time, and not all simultaneously. Therefore, at first he evaded the issue and finally rejected it. The Marathas had other designs, to reduce the Nizam and extort huge sums. The growing Anglo-Nizam friendship was resented by Nana, who turned down the Treaty, not outright, but by proposing such terms which were unacceptable to the English. Nana suggested that the English should recognize the Maratha right to chauth over Tipu³. Cornwallis regarded this as the extension of Maratha zone of influence over Mysore, and hence rejected it.

The Nizam responded it in a different way. He would accept the Treaty provided Kurnool was surrendered to him. Cornwallis would not provoke Tipu to another war so soon after the Treaty of Srirangapatna. It was not difficult for the English to snub the Nizam to see reason. He withdrew soon his condition and accepted the treaty proposals as very satisfactory to his interests. With the increasing hostile mood of the Marathas towards Hyderabad, the Nizam grew anxious for the speedy conclusion of the Treaty. He was rather eager for a closer alliance with the English, but Cornwallis was not in favour of excluding the Marathas. The negotiations dragged on for a year until dropped in despair. The failure of the Treaty was the first seed in the Anglo-Maratha rivalry. Nana never joined the English thereafter in any venture against any Indian power. The English waited until the elimination of Tipu to take on the Marathas.

With the advent of Sir John Shore Tipu's relations with the English improved to a great extent, as he was a non-interventionist. He adhered strictly to the restrictive clause of the 1793 Charter Act which stated, "To pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominions in India are declared to be measures repugnant to the wish, honour and policy of the nation"⁴. In the post-war phase the adjustment of boundaries of the ceded districts caused numerous disputes; the concerned parties blamed each other of unfair dealings. The English complained that Tipu had included in the English share certain villages which really belonged to the Raja of Travancore. As the division was effected on the basis of revenue, the demarcation of the boundaries caused confusion, as the parties were given villages on either side of the hills and rivers. Later it was found more convenient to exchange the bits to make the

2. PRC Vol. II, No. 145.

3. Malcolm, Pol. History of India, Vol. I, p. 121.

4. Ibid., p. 117.

share of both more compact, but in the process of negotiations bargaining was inevitable, which caused further confusion. The village of Venkatagiri was on the English side of the river belonging to Tipu, and Kaveripur was on Tipu's side belonging to the English, the mutual exchange of which would avoid difficulties, but the process of transfer was not easy. Besides, Tipu asserted that certain districts such as Wynad and Corrubala which really belonged to him had been unjustly retained by the English. This was a serious issue which dragged on until Wellesley's time.

In order to retain the advantageous position the English had gained in the war and at the same time not to offend Tipu needlessly, Sir John Shore framed a policy of four points. First, the Company was not to assert its own indisputable right over the two districts, Wynad and Corrubala, which might force a rupture with Tipu. Secondly, if Corrubala was occupied by Tipu's officer with his sanction, no opposition was to be made. Thirdly, if they proceeded beyond the limits of these two districts, the English should interfere and repel them. Lastly, if Tipu's officers committed predatory incursions without his knowledge, Tipu was to be informed of their conduct. Accordingly Bombay was asked not to offend Tipu by asserting Company's claims over the districts⁵. He confessed that the Company's claim over them was so weak that the Marathas and the Nizam would not support the English in case of a rupture. The Maratha jealousy was excited at the rapid growth of the British power, and the Nizam was estranged at their policy of neutrality at a time of impending Maratha attack on him. Tipu had permitted Raymond, a French in his service, to reorganise the French army on strong and disciplined lines. These factors compelled Sir John Shore to adopt a cautious policy towards Tipu.

Then followed the Nizam-Maratha war of 1795, which changed the poliics of the Deccan. The defeat of the Nizam, the humiliating conversion of Kurdla, the ascendancy of the Marathas, the neutrality of the English, the death of the young Peshwa, Madhava Rao II, the war of succession, and the rise of Baji Rao II and Daulat Rao Sindhia, all these helped Tipu to play an important part in the affairs of the Deccan. These events almost dissolved the old Triple Alliance of 1790 against him. At such a time the presence of a pacific Governor-General like Sir John Sore was helpful to Tipu. He declined to support the Nizam against Tipu over the question of Kurnool, and against the Marathas in their war. This gave an opportunity to Tipu to come closer to the Nizam as well as to the Marathas, and also to consolidate his power. He was not yet ready for confrontation against the English. Sir John Shore

5. Lettes to the Court, 15 May 1794, Sec. Gen. Para 27.



Baji Rao II

rightly observed, "The defalcation of his territories and the deprivation of his property will impose silence on the resentment and restraint upon his ambition"⁶. Even Sir John Shore was aware what was lurking at the back of Tipu's mind.

Very soon Sir John Shore had to revise his expectation that Tipu would remain peaceful. Rumours persisted that Imtiaz-du-Daulah, the nephew of the Nizam and highly influential in Hyderabad while Azim-ul-Umrah was a hostage in Poona, had supported Tipu's project of an alliance against the Company. Tipu's agents, Medina Saheb, Sakka Ram and Qadir Hussain Khan were employed for this

purpose⁷. Tipu expected the Dutch and the French would commence hostilities⁸. Captain Doveton also hinted at the possibility of Mysore-Maratha alliance⁹. Another source brought the disturbing news to the English that Tipu was in touch with Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan. It was also reported that Tipu had mobilized his forces, that he had constructed an inner rampart on the western and northern side of the fort of his capital, and that he had sent Abdulla Baig to Sindhia seeking his military aid¹⁰.

With the release of Azim-u-Umrah from Poona, who was a confirmed Anglophile, there was again a change in policies. The negotiations were broken off. The dismissed British detachment assumed its charge in Hyderabad. The rebellion of Alijah further increased the English influence in that court. The inconsistency of the Nizam's ministers, his ill-paid and inefficient army, his humiliating defeat at Kurda and the depletion of his treasury convinced even Sir John Shore of the absurdity of any Nizam-Tipu co-operation¹¹.

6. PRC, Vol. II, No. 223.

7. Sec. Gen. Letters to the Court, 31 Dec. 1796.

8. Ibid., 30 Sept. 1796, Para 27.

9. PRC, Vol. II, No. 250.

10. OR, 26 Sept. 1796, No 416; Mly. Sunday. Book, 9 Sept. 1796, Vol. 101, p. 44, Ibid., Vol. 102, p. 324.

11. Sec. proc. 28 Aug. 1796.

Tipu's efforts failed in the Maratha court as well owing to the highly disturbed state of their affairs. Since the death of Madhava Rao II in October 1795, Poona had been the scene of revolutions and counter revolutions. Intrigues and treacheries prevented any government from functioning for more than a few days. Nana was harassed from three sides, from Bajji Rao II, Daulat Rao Sindhia, and Sharja Rao. Rumours of Dutch and French assistance too proved baseless, and Sir John Shore thought them to have been "fabricated for the purpose of deception or with a view to derive importance or reward"¹². It should be remembered that even Sir John had not expected any change in Tipu's character or pursuits, and that his losses had only moderated his hostility which might at any time be excited to a just resentment of his wrongs he had suffered. In his minute Sir John observed, "The ambition of Tipu has more and stronger motives for action than that of the Marathas and the consolidation of our alliance with the latter is an object of importance to us"¹³.

Sir John did not like to remain unprepared for any eventuality. He took certain measures. He ordered the Company's troops to be dispatched to certain strategic points. He sent reinforcement from Bengal to Madras and instructed them to follow certain course of action. If Tipu dispatched a large body of troops that should to Malabar in deemed as the intention of war. A mere remonstrance of Tipu's hostile activities was not judged adequate, unless supported with a threat of war. If Tipu were to receive a large number of troops from outside war was to be declared. Thus, the policy of Sir John was to remain prepared for war, to watch Tipu's movements, to warn him with a threat of war in case he concentrated his forces near the Company's border, and to actually declare war if he received military aid from outside. Sir John observed, "We may assume it as an undeniable principle that to impose peace on our neighbours by strength of a military establishment, ready at all times for active or extensive exertion, is not only the wisest, but the most economic system"¹⁴.

Sir John took one more step. He sent a note to Tipu signed by all the three confederates expressing their concern over his mobilization of forces which would disturb the peace of the region¹⁵. Such a note was a message to Tipu that the old triple alliance had not been dissolved either by the revolutions in Poona or by his intrigues in Hyderabad. Tipu in reply expressed his great surprise and denied all the allegations¹⁶. He assured them of his peaceful intentions, and informed them that he was busy at the time celebrating the marriage of his seven sons.

12. Shore to Kirkpatrick, Pol. Proc. 8 May 1797.

13. Minutes of Sir John Shore, Sec. Proc. 18 Feb. 1795.

14. Ibid.

15. G.G. to Tipu, Sec. Lonst. 26 Sept. 1796

16. Tipu to G.G. OPR, 2 Dec. 1796.

Although the English were not convinced of his peaceful intentions, Sir John did not precipitate a war, and restrained the passion of those who wanted it, despite his personal view of Tipu which was "... subversion of the British power, as opposing the firmest barrier to his ambition, must naturally be the object which he has most in view"¹⁷. The reason why Sir John resisted the temptation to reduce Tipu was his hope that Tipu would wait "until events produce a disunion amongst the confederates and to foment it if he can"¹⁸.

Thus Tipu was still a terror to the English. They were apprehensive that his defeat might motivate him to more desperate ventures to recover his losses. Both Cornwallis and Sir John Shore never relaxed their vigilance on Tipu. They attempted to keep the confederacy of 1790 alive, but the political scene of the region had completely changed. The Nizam-Maratha war, the failure of the English to assist the Nizam, the revival of French influence at his court, the attempts of Tipu to improve his relations with his neighbours, the death of Madhava Rao II in Poona, and of Mahadaji Sindhia in Gwalior, the accession to power of Bajji Rao II in Poona and of Daulat Rao Sindhia in Gwalior, had all changed the political scene in the country. Tipu was not slow to draw full advantage from such a situation. Consequently, the English were again nervous that he would disturb the peace. They tried to revive the Treaty of 1790 in order to keep Tipu isolated, but both the Marathas and the Nizam did not fall into English trap. Nana knew that any alignment with the English was not in the best interest of the Marathas, and the Nizam too learned the same lesson, although the hard way, when his cry for aid at the hour of his need proved a cry in the wilderness. The advent of Sir John further helped Tipu to consolidate his power. Sir John was more interested in revenue settlement and in consolidating financial stability of the Company than in provoking costly wars. Very soon even Sir John realized that it was only a matter of time before Tipu would spring again a surprise. The English were aware that before 1790 he had only a political reason to eliminate the English from India, but he had now a personal reason as well. The humiliation he had suffered in the Third Mysore War would hardly be forgotten or forgiven. With renewed vigour, therefore, he was preparing again for a contest, although circumstances proved more disastrous now to his cause than before.

Relations with the Marathas (1792-98)

Tipu desired to remain peaceful with the Marathas. The nature of his relations with his Indian neighbours was quite different from that towards the English, whom

17. Sec. Proc. 18 Feb. 1795.

18. Ibid.

he regarded as very dangerous to Indian independence. Though the Marathas offended him by ravaging his country, by detaining his prisoners, and by demanding *Chauth* from him, he did not wish to break with them. But the Maratha-Nizam War diverted their attention, and he was relieved of his anxiety. It afforded him the opportunity to consolidate his power which he did in a short time. His position was changed after 1795, when the Marathas began to seek his alliance and the English dreaded his power.

Immediately after the Peace of 1792, the Marathas violated the terms of the Treaty and carried on large scale depredations on his country. Bhao committed such excesses that Cornwallis remarked, "I cannot help apprehending that he will commit many irregularities upon his march, for his corps has hitherto paid very little respect to the Treaty"¹⁹. The Marathas did not release Tipu's Governor of Dharwad, Badruz Zaman Khan who had surrendered the fort on capitulatory terms. There were a number of boundary disputes to be adjusted. According to the Treaty Tipu should have got the three taluks of Sira, Jamboti and Soopa but the Marathas had retained



Dharwad Fort

them for themselves. Tipu wanted these disputes to be settled by a commission, but the Marathas turned down the proposal. Likewise, Sonda ceded to Tipu in the Treaty was not surrendered by them. Badruz Zaman Khan was released only after repeated remonstrances by Cornwallis.

With the arrival of Sindhia in Poona, Maratha politics was completely changed. Tipu's differences with them were composed, and his relations with the Poona Court were vastly improved. Mahadji Sindhia, had come from the north in 1792 to assert his authority in the South. He was willing to join the English in the Third Mysore War on condition of British support to him to reduce the Rajputs. As the English did not encourage him in his design, being disappointed, he indulged in hostility against the English. He came down to Poona chiefly for two reasons, first, to force his mediation

19. PRC, Vol. III, No. 449.

on the allies, and thus entitle himself to the spoils of the war, and secondly, to secure the Peshwa's recognition to his conquests in the north. By the time he came to Poona, the Mysore War was all over, much earlier than he had expected.

But his arrival was favourable both to Tipu and the Nizam. As Sindhia was deprived of a share in the Mysore War, he was inclined to support Tipu. He grew jealous of the rapid growth of the British power after 1792, and desired to check it. In other words, he began to subscribe to Tipu's policy. He made little secret "of his opinion that Tipu ought to be supported as an instrument for restraining their dangerous aggrandizement"²⁰. P.E. Roberts observes, "Sindhia persuaded to Peshwa that a serious mistake had been made in supporting the British power against Tipu and urged a closer connection with him"²¹. With this intention he carried on friendly correspondence with Tipu²². He thought that Tipu's friendship was essential for Maratha designs against the Nizam.

The Nizam was also benefited by Sindhia's presence in Poona, where he acted as a barrier against Nana's aggressive designs on Hyderabad²³. It was rumoured that the Nizam had bribed Sindhia to secure his assistance²⁴. Nana's rivalry with Sindhia was steadily on the increase, and went to the extent of Nana approaching Cornwallis through Haripant for a British corps on the same terms as agreed to by the Nizam. Its purpose was "to reduce to obedience any dependent who might prove refractory"²⁵. As the aid was mainly directed against Sindhia, Cornwallis declined to grant it. Sindhia's jealousy was further excited, and he now began to support the Nizam. He offended the English also by demanding the *chauth* from Bengal through a letter of Shah Alam to Cornwallis. The English resented his action and viewed it as a hostile measure²⁶.

These significant changes in the Anglo-Maratha relations relieved Tipu of the fear of external danger. When Cornwallis proposed a Treaty of Guarantee, Nana rejected it on the ground that the Company was not willing to recognize the Maratha claim of *chauth* upon Tipu. Such a stipulation offended both Tipu and the English for different reasons. It failed not because Tipu protested against it, but because the English would not stand Maratha ascendancy. The English could see through Nana's

20. Wilks, Vol. II, p. 297.

21. P.E. Roberts. History of British India, p. 240.

22. Duff, Vol. II, p. 241.

23. PRC, Vol. II, No. 223.

24. Ibid.

25. Wilks, Vol. II, p. 296.

26. Sardesai, Vol. III, p. 291.

game of reducing British influence in the South, but this helped Tipu indirectly, when he had been surrounded on all sides by rivals. It frustrated the English efforts to revive the hostile alliance, and at the same time of Nana's intention to impose the chauth on him. The old alliance of 1790 was practically dissolved. Their internal dissension acted as a guarantee for Tipu's security.

When the Nizam-Maratha war broke out, Tipu felt partly avenged. He maintained strict neutrality in the war, and his relations remained friendly with both but his neutrality was taken more as an alliance with the Marathas. It was reported, "Tipu Sultan also had a hand in increasing the Maratha-Nizam tension"²⁷. The Nizam's reluctance to agree to the release of the Mysore princes, his designs on Kurnool and other border villages, his anxiety to conclude with the English a treaty of Guarantee against Tipu, and the English intrigues in the Hyderabad Court compelled Tipu to favour the Marathas.

With the outbreak of the Maratha-Nizam War, Tipu came into greater prominence. He became the balancing force in the power-politics of the region, as his participation on either side would be a decisive factor in beating the other. The English did not support the Nizam, thinking that Tipu might in that event join the Marathas, and that it might be difficult to resist the combined might of the two. They regretted that the Nizam pursued a wrong policy in offending Tipu by unjust demands. They wished that he should have won Tipu's support which would have helped him in averting the humiliating defeat²⁸. Kirkpatrick attempted to resolve the Nizam-Tipu differences soon after the Peace of 1792, but the insistence of the Nizam's minister to detain the princes until the settlement of all the disputes offended Tipu.

The Maratha-Nizam War of 1795 brought out clearly the complicated politics of the Deccan powers. In 1794 Nana was at the peak of his power. His long continuance in office, Tipu's defeat, Mahadji Sindhia's and Haripant's death had left him unchallenged in the Deccan. By the middle of 1794 his rivalry with the Nizam was deepened to a crisis. To avert a clash Nizam deputed Meer Alam to Poona to settle the disputes. The issue was payment of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*. The Nizam did not deny the claim but disputed the amount. The Marathas demanded full arrears, which the Nizam was unable to pay. He sought British assistance, but they turned Nelson's eye towards him. Sindhia who was at first inclined towards the Nizam

27. Ibid.

28. PRC, Vol. II, No. 217.

changed sides and joined Nana. Sindhia added one more demand to the list, the cession of Bidar, where his spiritual guide, the Muslim saint, Mansur Shah had his shrine²⁹. As neither party was willing for a compromise, the issue was decided by the battle of Kurdla, about 125 miles from Poona, on 12th March 1795, where the Nizam was defeated. He was forced to surrender a territory yielding 35 lakhs of rupees, besides the fort of Daulatabad, to pay an indemnity of three crores and durbar charges, and to send Azim-ul-Umrah as a hostage until the fulfillment of the terms. This war disturbed completely the arrangements of the Peace of 1792.

This war should have been a lesson to the Nizam to judge the value of his alliance with the English, but he learned no lesson from this experience. This war was again a flight between the English and the Marathas for the supremacy of the Deccan. Sindhia had come down to the south for checking the British influence. The Nizam's growing intimacy with the English was resented both by the Marathas and Tipu. The war brought out the faithlessness of the English. Cornwallis had repeatedly assured the Nizam that the English would never let down their ally. His letter of 7th July 1789 had specifically mentioned that the English were bound by their honour to protect the Nizam. Yet Sir John Shore denied help on the plea that they were verbal assurances and that the English were bound to protect him only against Tipu. Even this help against Tipu would be rendered only so long as the Triple Alliance remained in force, and "a war between two of the parties totally changes the relative situation of all"³⁰. The real reason for the English hesitancy to assist the Nizam was their apprehension that Tipu might join the Marathas, and in that event the English had to face single-handed the combined strength of two powerful states, for the Nizam's army was as good as useless. Sir John Shore confessed, "... the impending consequences ought to be much stronger than that apprehension of future evils from the subversion of the Nizam's power"³¹. In other words the English felt that their aid to the Nizam would result in greater injury to their interests than their betrayal of an ally. But the English prestige suffered much by this infidelity. The defeat of their ally was their own defeat. The Nizam was left alone because the English were apprehensive of "the greater evils attending a war with Tipu"³². The English contemplated joining the Marathas, for that would help them resist Tipu better. Tipu had become balancing force which prompted the English to remain neutral. His recovery was so complete that the English dreaded again his power.

29. Sardesai, Vol. III, p. 233.

30. Pol. Proc. 18 Feb. 1795.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid

Thus the war contributed to the promotion of Tipu's better relations with the Marathas. The old feuds, the boundary disputes and the border depredations were all buried. The English ascendancy gained in the Peace of 1792 was neutralized by the Maratha victory. Whereas all the three powers had to join to beat Tipu, the Marathas single-handed could crush a major power of the Deccan, thus signaling that the Marathas were one-up against the English. The Maratha prestige rose because Tipu was a threat to the English. He became an informal ally of the Marathas, and both aimed at checking the rapid growth of British influence.

But the battle of Kurdla was the last great victory of the Marathas, after which their power decidedly declined. Tipu's relations with them were further improved after the war. With the death of the Peshwa, Madhava Rao II, in October 1795 the Poona court plunged into a civil war. Tipu was at first willing to help Nana, but on further reflection, he decided to avoid the complications, Parashuram Bhao who bore inveterate hostility towards Tipu was in the opposite camp, which tempted Tipu at first to intervene in the dispute, but soon he was wise enough to revise the decision, and escaped from the limitless complications of the Poona Court. The English were afraid that he would join the party that was opposed to them, but he remained neutral³³.

Relations with the Nizam (1792-1798)

Just as Tipu's relations with the Marathas were strained in the beginning but improved later, his relations with the Nizam too were embittered at first, only to be improved later. As usual the boundary disputes, particularly the Kurnool question caused considerable difficulties. The reluctance of the Nizam to consent to the release of the princes added to the misgivings of Tipu. But the situation improved when the Nizam was disappointed in his expectation of aid from the English who deserted their ally in the hour of his need.

The question of Kurnool strained the relations. It was a small principality about 100 miles in length and 80 miles in breadth governed by Ranmash Khan. Haidar Ali had conquered it and had made it a tributary



Asaf Jah II

33. Letters to the Court, 29 Dec. 1796, para 39.

of Mysore in 1765. After 1792 a bitter controversy arose owing to the anxiety of both Tipu and the Nizam to secure the principality. Ever since Haidar had reduced it, it had paid tribute to Mysore. In the Treaty of Srirangapatna Tipu desired to transfer its tribute to the Nizam's share of indemnity, retaining Mysorean sovereignty over the territory. As the Nizam was not agreeable to this arrangement, and as he professed his own claim to Kurnool the matter was dropped at that time, and the whole of the territory was included in Tipu's share. Kennaway had assured Tipu that he would not be deprived of the place as well as the tribute³⁴.

When Tipu demanded the arrears of tribute from the Nawab, the Nizam intervened and prevented the payment on the ground that Tipu's claim to the place was unjust. The Nizam not only dissuaded the Nawab to pay the tribute but attempted to acquire the place by force. The Nizam's claim to the place was that he was once the Subedar of the Deccan, and that he had retained the suzerainty over the territory. He sought the English support for his claim and sent agents to Madras. He instigated the Nawab to detain Tipu's agents. But both the Madras authorities and the Nawab declined to oblige the Nizam. He thought of forcible occupation with the help of the British corps he possessed. But the Resident discouraged such a step, and refused the employment of the British corps. Cornwallis also refused to intervene in this case, as that might hasten Tipu's alliance with the Marathas. Even then the Nizam was not reconciled to its loss. He decided to secure the place even by paying the tribute himself to Tipu, which he did not consider improper³⁵. He proposed to pay the old arrears and also the current tribute. Tipu was inclined to accept this proposal but the Resident was not agreeable. He considered it highly derogatory to the dignity of the Nizam, and threatened to withdraw the English support if Tipu attacked him on the Kurnool issue. Cornwallis regarded that as a "degradation" of the worst sort³⁶.

The Nizam was wrong in this case. Kurnool had remained a Mysore principality since 1765. Suddenly the old claim that it was once under the Subedari of the Deccan did not hold water. Even Cornwallis did not appreciate the Nizam's contention, and observed, "Most of the great monarchies, now existing, were founded under the permission of his Providence by the power of the sword"³⁷. Even during the war Ranmast Khan had remained loyal to Tipu, and his action was resented by the allies.

34. PRC, Vol. III, No. 483.

35. Fraser, *Our Faithful Ally*, pp. 54-55.

36. Mly. Sundry, 12 April 1793, p. 229.

37. GG to the Nizam, Mly Sundry, 12 April 1793, Vol. 84, p. 229.

Ranmast Khan died in 1792 and a war of succession followed between his two sons, Azam Khan, the elder, and Alif Khan, the younger. The latter had been nominated by the old Nawab as his successor, and accordingly a will had been drawn, attested by the seal of the Qazi under the signature of Azam Khan and his followers. Ranmast Khan had also desired that the new Nawab should discharge the arrears of tribute to Tipu and pay it promptly in future³⁸. Tipu therefore supported Alif Khan, but the Nizam expounded the cause of Azam Khan. He decided to intervene in the war of succession and dispatch the British corps for the purpose³⁹. But Cornwallis refused to permit their deployment. Although the Treaty of 1768 entitled the Nizam to use this force, Cornwallis would not permit it because that would infringe the Peace of 1792. Moreover, the Nizam had been told, "Quarreling with Tipu in matters in which the Company could not feel justified in supporting him, he would run the utmost risk of sacrificing to pride and passion those substantial and glorious advantages which had been obtained by the Treaty of Peace"⁴⁰. The English flatly refused to support the Nizam in Kurnool case, Cornwallis wrote to the Nizam, "I request, therefore, your Highness to consider with what justice this right can now be contested or with what equity Tipu Sultan can now be called upon to produce the agreement of the Nawab of Kurnool. Tipu could justly complain of an infringement of the "Treaty if a demand was then made"⁴¹.

Being thus discouraged by Cornwallis, the Nizam changed his tactics and won over Alif Khan to his side. He instigated him not to pay tribute to Tipu, but send a vakil to Hyderabad to conclude some new arrangements. He drew up a treaty by which Kurnool was to acknowledge the Nizam's suzerainty, Alif Khan was to pay the *Paishekashi* of fifteen lakhs of rupees to him, and his elder brother was to get a jagir of sixty thousand rupees⁴². The English again denounced these arrangements and desired the dispute to be left to Tipu and the sons of Ranmast Khan. The Nizam was not willing and Meer Alam threatened Kennaway that unless the English fulfilled their old treaty terms of providing aid, the Nizam would isolate himself in case of a war with Tipu⁴³. Meanwhile Maratha hostility against the Nizam diverted the attention of the Nizam, and the Kurnool question lost its significance. The Kurnool vakil, Bandullah Khan, was dismissed from Hyderabad in October 1793 without concluding any agreement.

38. PRC, Vol. III, p. 494.

39. Mly. Sundry, 27 Dec. 1792, p. 138.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Fraser, p. 57.

43. Ibid.

Being betrayed by the Nizam, Alif Khan accepted Tipu's suzerainty and promised to pay the accumulated tribute of twenty lakhs. Tipu sent Gulab Khan to recover this amount, when the Nizam intervened again⁴⁴. The question of Kurnool continued to strain Tipu's relations with Hyderabad. While the English dissuaded the Nizam from active interference, they were equally keen on preventing its total annexation by Tipu. They desired he should merely collect the tribute. Cornwallis observed, "I should be sorry that Tipu should acquire any further rights of ascendancy in Kurnool than that of enforcing the payment of the established Paishkash"⁴⁵. The issue was raised again in 1797 when Azim-ul-Umrah suggested a Commission of the Confederates and Tipu to discuss the matter and settle the issue⁴⁶. When Tipu massed his troops near Gutti in 1796 to exact tribute, the Nizam seriously apprehended the move and suggested the dispatch of deputies to ascertain his real intentions⁴⁷. Threatened by this action of Tipu, the Nizam was willing to concede half of Tipu's claim to the tribute. The question was no longer the right of Tipu to the tribute, but the actual amount to be paid. The dispute was, however, never satisfactorily settled as long as Tipu lived.

Besides Kurnool border disputes also strained Tipu's relations with the Nizam. Both parties traded charges of depredations on the territories of each other. The Nizam refused the consent to the release of the princes until the settlement of the border disputes. This necessitated the appointment of Commissioners from both sides to enquire into the disputes. Tipu deputed Main Hussain and the Nizam sent Mohamed Amin Arab. This commission did some good work, as a result of which a few villages were mutually exchanged. But the disputes remained a sore point. The difficulty was the weak administrative machinery of the Nizam, which was not able to control refractory chiefs on the borders. When Tipu's officers enforced law and order, friction was inevitable. The Nizam was so dependent on Cornwallis for the safety of his dominions that he wrote to him on the eve of his departure to Europe, "His Lordship's going to Europe at this time is like a man smelling fire in his own house and anxious for his own safety quits the house and leaves the other inhabitants of it to extinguish the flame"⁴⁸. But Cornwallis did not expect any danger from Tipu, and attributed the tension to the ambition of the Nizam, who not having the capacity to consolidate his own kingdom, wanted its extension through the military might of the English.

44. Sec. Proc. 3 Dec. 1793.

45. Mly. Sund. 27 Dec. 1793.

46. OR, 28 Aug. 1797, No. 438.

47. Ibid., No. 439..

48. PRC, Vol. III, No. 505.

When Sir John Shore assumed office, he too held the same view that Tipu was not expected to perform more than the treaty obligations. He resented the Nizam's action of withholding the princes when Tipu had faithfully fulfilled all his obligations. The Nizam would provoke both Tipu and the Marathas, and he desired the English to come to his aid when he was in trouble. Even when the English hinted that they would not support him when he was in the wrong, he would not mend his ways. Only after repeated remonstrances he notified his consent to the release of the princes. His anxiety to conclude a Treaty of Guarantee against Tipu further estranged his relations with Tipu. When the Marathas refused to be a party to such a treaty, he pressed for a separate treaty between the English and himself. He argued that its actual conclusion would induce the Marathas also to join.

The Nizam came to his senses only after his war with the Marathas, when the English deserted him. Tipu's neutrality was a great relief to him. If Tipu too had jumped into the fray to recover his losses, the Nizam's position would have been miserable. Because of his neutrality and the English betrayal, the Nizam was willing to enter into an alliance with Tipu. The absence of Azim-ul-Umrah helped the negotiations. Imtiaz-ud-Daulah and Roy Rayan who were in charge of the Nizam's administration, sent Mohamed Amin to Tipu who responded favourably for an alliance, and dispatched in his turn Krishnaji Pundit to Hyderabad in August 1795. Krishnaji stayed with Roy Royan and the matter was kept a guarded secret⁴⁹. The Nizam at this time was greatly harassed by the rebellion of his son, Ali Jah, and by the Maratha demand of a huge indemnity of three crores. Immediately after his return from Kurdla, he dismissed the British corps under his service, and asked Raymond to raise a French army. A body of the French regular infantry was dispatched to Cuddapah, the English border. These actions of the Nizam estranged his relations with the English, but improved them with Tipu. Moreover, the threatening attitude of Sindhia towards Hyderabad prompted the Nizam to be very friendly with Tipu.

After the return of Krishnaji who gave Tipu a favourable report of the Nizam's intentions, Tipu sent another agent, Sakka Ram, to Hyderabad to negotiate an alliance⁵⁰. Tipu wrote to Roy Rayan, "Whatever you have written has been understood, on that point I am ready, but upon the following condition only that the understanding existing between your Sarkar and the English shall cease"⁵¹. Owing to the rebellion of Ali Jah these negotiations did not make much progress.

49. Fraser, p. 173.

50. Ibid., p. 155.

51. Quoted in Fraser, p. 180.

Another attempt was made in July 1796 when Meer Alam proposed a triple alliance of the Nizam, the English and Tipu, but neither the English nor Tipu would encourage such a thought. Tipu desired that a triple alliance of the Indian powers should be organized against the English. For this purpose he sent another embassy consisting of Qadir Hussain Khan and Syed Mohamed Madani to negotiate a permanent treaty of the three powers, Mysore, Hyderabad and Poona⁵². His agents expressed their master's eagerness that the Nizam should conclude his peace with the Marathas and all three should co-operate against the Company⁵³. But the Nizam did not encourage the embassy. He did not like to incur the displeasure of the English. His short-sightedness and selfishness could not see what was good in the long run. Moreover, he thought there was no danger to him from the Marathas as they were involved in their internal dissensions. Azim-ul-Umrah had been released, and he was busy in the politics of Poona. He managed not only to wipe off the stains of the Maratha conventions, but also to make the Nizam an influential factor in the Poona affairs. Meanwhile, the English influence steadily increased at the Hyderabad court. The dismissed British corps was back again in its place on the plea that Tipu had hostile designs on Kurnool. Raymond's troops sent to Cuddapah were promptly recalled. The English Subsidiary force was used to suppress the revolt of Ali Jah. The release and return of Azim-ul-Umrah gained the Company a powerful supporter. He smashed the intimacy that was growing between the Nizam and Tipu. The Nizam was never sincere in his advance of alliance with Tipu. It was only to relieve the Maratha pressure by gaining English support on the threat of his alignment with Tipu. He was more anxious to secure the Company's help than of Tipu. Tipu was also conscious of the difficulties for an agreement with the Nizam, who was old and sick. Therefore, his agents could do no more than just study the trends of events at the Hyderabad court.

Tipu's last hope of an alliance was centered on the success of the French party in Hyderabad. Raymond's force had been increased to 14,000 regular disciplined troops. Its two battalions of 1792 were increased to twenty three in 1797 with twelve field pieces. Besides his military position Raymond commanded political influence in the court. A large territory had been surrendered to him for the maintenance of his troops. Additions of land were frequently made. Sikandar Jah, the Paigah Party and Tipu's supporters favoured Raymond. The English army where desertions were quite common was not popular. Even a mutiny took place in their camp. The resources of the Nizam were passing into the hands of the French faction. Even Sir John Shore

52. OR, No. 167.

53. Fraser, pp. 208-9.

was apprehensive and imputed sinister motives to it. He protested to the Nizam against his decision to place a large force in the hands of the declared enemies of the English, and desired its dismissal. He suspected that Raymond would conspire with Tipu against the English. But even this hope of Tipu was shattered with the advent of Wellesley.

Thus the post-war relations of Tipu with the Marathas and the Nizam were characterized by stress and strain to start with, but by reconciliation and compromise as years rolled by. The after-math of the war caused disputes and controversies over the adjustment of borders and the implementation of the treaty terms. But soon events took a radical turn because of a few developments. Chief among them were the growing ascendancy of the Marathas, their strained relations with the Nizam, the English betrayed of the Nizam, the pacifist policy of Sir John Shore, the revival of the French party at Hyderabad, the increasing influence of Sindhia in the Poona court, the death of the Peshwa, and the consequent war of succession. All these factors gave Tipu an opportunity not only to remove the strains of war but also to play an effective role in the politics of the region. He used once again all his time and energy to build alliances for his set policy to reduce the colonials. He exerted his utmost to win over the Marathas and the Nizam for concerted action against the English. The increasing influence of the French both in Mysore and Hyderabad at a time of Napoleonic rise in Europe was a matter of great significance. Tipu desired steadily to build up a situation when all forces opposed to the English could join hands for a final show-down.

Relations with the French (1792-99)

Although the French were of little help to Tipu in both the Second and Third Mysore Wars, he continued to look upon them as potential allies who would support him in his struggle against the English. He maintained a French corps which was ever present and which formed a distinguished constituent of his army. He dispatched several embassies to France and urged for closer co-operation, but they disappointed him every time. In 1783 they concluded a separate peace with the English without consulting him. In 1786 despite his pleadings they remained neutral in the Mysore-Maratha War. In 1788 they turned down his offer of an alliance. In 1790 they declined to join him in his war against English. But every time Tipu overlooked their short-comings as he was conscious of their difficulties, and hoped that they would yet be able to help him later.

The French regretted that they were of no help to Tipu in the Third Mysore War, and that was because they were themselves in the throes of a great Revolution. When Tipu proposed to increase his French Corps to 1,800 men with 600 Europeans, they readily agreed⁵⁴. In 1792 they were keen to secure Tipu's aid as a fresh Anglo-French war was likely to break out. The Governor of Pondicherry instigated the French commander under Tipu to seize such a situation and recover his losses by joining the French⁵⁵. As Tipu had just concluded peace with the English, he paid no notice to such promptings. However, he expressed his desire to enter into a Treaty of co-operation if the National Convention in Paris would ratify it⁵⁶. His past experience of the French in India made him impose this condition. He demanded an aid of 10,000 men with proportion of artillery and ammunition, which should be placed under his command. After the conquest of British territories, the coastal area was to be ceded to the French, and the interior to Tipu⁵⁷. He contemplated the dispatch of a separate embassy to accomplish these objects⁵⁸. The French declined these proposals. De Fresne, the French Governor, would not even approve of Tipu's dispatch of an embassy. He wrote to the Minister of Marine in Paris, "I have infinitely blamed such an operation in 1787. It appears to me that nothing would be more embarrassing to us in Europe and more perplexing in India"⁵⁹. Tipu was disappointed and hence he watched with indifference, the capture of Pondicherry by the English on 23 August 1793, after the break-out of the Anglo-French War in Europe. He did not even reply to Chermont, the French commander, when he solicited his aid⁶⁰.

Tipu had not much to do with the French after their loss of Pondicherry in 1793. But the arrival of the captain of a private ship, in 1797 revived Tipu's interest in the French. His ship had been damaged in an engagement for the repair of which he touched the shore of Mangalore. He proceeded to Srirangapatna where he represented himself as the French envoy especially sent to inform Tipu of the presence of a big force in Mauritius which would be dispatched to him if he applied for it. Tipu believed in him and decided to ascertain the conditions on which the troops would be available. He consulted his ministers about the advisability of entering into negotiations with the French⁶¹. He himself was of the opinion not to let

54. Pondicherry Archives (PA) Mss, No. 1664

55. Ibid., No. 2140.

56. Ibid., No. 2200.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., No. 1807.

59. Ibid., No. 1807

60. Ibid., No. 2195.

61. Documents and State Papers, Published by Wellesley in 1799, Paper A, No.2.

the opportunity go without obtaining the force, for which purpose he desired to dispatch two confidential persons, who would ascertain the situation, and if things were favourable, would conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with the French⁶². His ministers doubted the reports of Ripaud and regarded him as an imposter. While they were convinced of the necessity of an alliance, they were not quite sure of an equal desire on the French side to join Tipu. Mohammed Raza and Purnaiah considered it dangerous to rely on the French premises. The Revenue Ministry was in favour of ascertaining the real facts in Mauritius and the Marine Ministry in favour of concluding a permanent alliance with them but the Commerce Ministry was loud in denouncing Ripaud. "This Ripaud that is come, God knows, what ass it is, whence it comes and for what purpose"⁶³. The Sultan was cautioned that some secret designs might be concealed behind such lavish promises.

Despite the adverse advice Tipu selected four confidants, Mirza Bakhar, Husain Ali Khan, Meer Ghulam Ali and Meer Yusuff Ali, to be sent as envoys to Mauritius. They carried his letters to the principal officers of the Isle and they were asked to conduct the business in the strictest secrecy. Besides their political mission they were charged with the duty of bringing a number of artisans and craftsmen like cannon-founders, ship-builders, glass-makers and other skilled persons. But the main purpose was political and military, to demand a force of thirty to forty thousand, a suitable fleet and the conclusion of a treaty. He undertook to bear the expenses of the troops. The Treaty of alliance he proposed was founded on "republican principles of sincerity and good faith". He wrote, "If you assist me, in a short time, not a single Englishman shall remain in India. We will purge India of their men. The springs which I have touched have put all India in motion, my friends are ready to fall upon the "English". But he struck a note of caution also, "Do not let my attachment to your nation expose me to the same calamity which I formerly suffered"⁶⁴.

Tipu stated that the situation in India was highly unfavourable to the English. The Nizam was old and after his death a war of succession would disturb Hyderabad. The prince who was to succeed was on Tipu's side. The distracted affairs of the Marathas, the probability of Zaman Shah's invasion, and the disturbance at Calicut afforded the French the best chance to strike at the English. He urged the French not to miss the chance, but co-operate with him. At the same time he warned them

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid., No. 7.

64. Ibid.

against making unfaithful promises. He suggested that Bombay would be ceded to them, but he would retain Goa⁶⁵.

The embassy was first dispatched to Mauritius from where they were to proceed to Paris as ambassadors to the French Executive Directory. Pernaud, another French, was entrusted with the cash but he absconded with the money and his fraud roused Tipu's suspicions resulting in the arrest of Ripaud. Moreover, the original embassy had to be cancelled owing to the outbreak of the monsoons, and the internal dissensions among the envoys. It was substituted by another two, Hussain Ali Khan and Muhammad Ibrahim. The restraints placed on Ripaud were removed, who along with the other two embarked for Mauritius on 5th December 1797, and landed on the island on 19th January 1798. Ripaud misbehaved with the envoys on the voyage, and seized Tipu's letters addressed to the French chiefs. He, however, returned them after being satisfied that there was nothing against him.

Contrary to their expectations, the envoys were received with great public honour and were conveyed to the Governor in State. One hundred and fifty guns were fired to announce their arrival. The Governor-General, General Malartic, himself came over to receive them, and their arrival remained no longer a secret. But the envoys were utterly disappointed to find that there was neither any force, nor was there any hope of its coming shortly. The French Governor expressed his regret that they were too late in their approach for help. An European force of 1000 men had been dispatched to Batavia, which could have been spared if Tipu had asked four months earlier. As for the conclusion of a Treaty, Malartic regretted that he was not vested with powers to enter into any such negotiations. He could at best only forward the letters to the Executive Directory in Paris, which he did. He sent another ship to the Isle of Bourbon to fetch any troops that might be there, but after 18 days it returned empty⁶⁶. Therefore he issued a proclamation requesting the citizens of the Isle to enlist themselves in the army of Tipu who, "only waits for the moment when the French shall come to his assistance to declare war against the English whom he ardently desires to expel from India"⁶⁷.

The envoys were greatly embarrassed to find this extraordinary proclamation which was contrary to the instructions of Tipu. They wrote to the Governor that Tipu needed a large force, and had been informed of its presence in the Island. Lest he should be disappointed the Governor was raising volunteers, whom the envoys

65. Ibid., Paper B, No. 3.

66. Ibid., Paper A, No. 18.

67. Martin, Martin, Wellesley Despatches, Vol. I.

refused to enlist. Malartic was displeased at their response. He wanted to fix before hand the salaries of those who desired to go. The Governor said, "The officers and volunteers who are to accompany you, shall not make a journey of five hundred leagues to ascertain what pay Tipu sultan may choose to fix for them"⁶⁸. Malartic's appeal resulted in the enlistment of only few volunteers, who were less than one hundred. They embarked on the frigate La Prenuese and landed at Mangalore on 26th April 1798. The party consisted of two Generals, 35 officers, 36 European soldiers, 22 coloured troops and four ship-builders, total being 99 in number.

The French Chiefs in their reply to Tipu's letters regretted deeply their inability to send any effective help. Descomber, a member of the Governing Body who had been in Pondicherry during 1792 appealed to Tipu to seek alliance within the country. He asked, "What is then the fatality which has divided the princes of Asia?" and himself answered it, "It is the dark policy of the English, their Machiavellian principles. There is still time to crush the ambitious nation but it is necessary that the Courts of Poona, the Subah of the Deccan, the Tartars, the Raja of Travancore should unite to attack, to overthrow and finally to expel those haughty English... The princes of India who took up arms against you were not sensible"⁶⁹. Malartic also urged Tipu to form a powerful confederacy of Indian powers against the English. He wrote, "Endeavour by every means in your power to point out to the Marathas their true interest by satisfying them that your enemies are in reality theirs"⁷⁰.

Thus, what Tipu got from the French was not military aid but political advice. This account of Tipu's endeavour to secure French aid is known to us through the English sources translated from Persian papers found in Tipu's palace after his fall on 4th May 1799. They were published by the orders of Wellesley in August 1799 which exhibited Tipu's uncompromising hostility towards the English. But it is difficult to ascertain the real motives of the French General in issuing such an extraordinary proclamation. This material is accepted by some scholars to be authentic, while a few others call it a pure and simple fabrication invented by the English to destroy Tipu. Among those who hold the latter view is Professor M.H. Khan, a modern historian of Tipu⁷¹. His arguments in favour of his contention are the absence of the indigenous sources to confirm the English account, the improbability of Tipu's belief on Ripaud and of his envoys leaking out the secrets of their mission, the doubts as to the authenticity of the proclamation, the improbability of an alliance with the

68. Documents and State Papers, No. 9-B.

69. Ibid., No. 14B.

70. Ibid., No. 15B.

71. M.H. Khan, History of Tipu Sultan, pp. 293-96.

French whose past record was so disappointing, and the military un-preparedness of Tipu. Tipu was ignorant, it is maintained, of all that passed in Mauritius except the dispatch of two peaceful merchants who were incidentally asked to enlist some soldiers for him. In response to this Malartic made an announcement calling the citizens to enlist in Tipu's service, but such a simple event was magnified to find an excuse to destroy Tipu. The merchants were transformed into ambassadors and their business was exaggerated to the task of concluding an offensive alliance with the French.

It should be admitted that it is not fair to call the whole affair a fabrication deliberately invented by Wellesley to overthrow Tipu. The absence of corroboratory evidence is not surprising as the entire matter was highly sensitive and of top secret nature, dug out from the palace only after Tipu's fall. The whole thing was seized by the English and not made available to others. As for the fact that Tipu could not have been deceived a second time by Ripaud after the fraud of Pernaud, it may be argued that Ripaud might have successfully convinced Tipu of the presence of troops. Even Malartic accepted the fact that only four months earlier 1000 soldiers were sent to Batavia. Ripaud might have exaggerated the figures, but there must have been some force at the time he left the Isles. Again, it was also a weakness of Tipu that he readily believed in such rumours as he consistently followed an anti-British policy. His response was always positive to any alliance against the English either from the Marathas or the Nizam or the French. As he was disappointed in forming an alliance either with the Marathas or the Nizam, he was quite willing to believe when it was reported that a large French force was available to him for mere asking. He was emotional in character with an obsession of antipathy towards the English.

Although the envoys were on a secret mission they could not help when the French authorities received them with great honour. Malartic was perhaps showing extra courtesy to them as the French had consistently disappointed Tipu in the past. The French hated the English as much as Tipu did, and it was their policy also to reduce their rivals by any means. Tipu was a good instrument to them for this job, and hence instead of sending the envoys empty handed, they wished to send at least a token aid. The treatment of the envoys with great respect and the issue of a Proclamation were calculated to excite the English jealousy.

We need not doubt the authenticity of the Proclamation. From the papers preserved in the Archives of Porte Louis, Mauritius, it appears that the Proclamation

was not a spurious one, but quite a genuine one. On request for a copy of it, it was furnished to the present author by the authorities of Mauritius. This copy gives the name of the printer in the end as Francis Nicolas Bolle and the place, north-west Porte, Isle of France. It could not have been a forgery as not even Mill doubts its authenticity. This Proclamation was first published along with a number of other documents and State papers of Tipu as early as August 1799, and Wellesley had neither the time nor the necessity to trample with the whole correspondence of Tipu at that time.

It is also not true that Tipu was unprepared for the war. The Madras Government wrote on 10th July 1798 to Bengal, "His resources are more prompt than our own and that a great part of his army is supposed to have long been in a state of field equipment"⁷². Nor was the time inopportune to recover his losses. The triple Alliance has been dissolved with the defeat of the Nizam at the hands of the Marathas. The confusion in Poona, the presence of a large French force under Raymond in Hyderabad, the threatening attitude of Sindhia towards the English, and the increasing intrigues of the French in every Indian court, particularly after the capture of Pondicherry encouraged Tipu to benefit by the situation. Even the Nizam was disenchanted in his trust on the British support. The Republic in Paris had approved the old policy of increasing the French forces in the armies of the various princes of India. The swift and the decisive victories of the French revolutionary forces in Europe were related to Tipu in an exaggerated manner, which raised his hopes. Witnessing the intense activity of the French, he could not resist the temptation to believe that a really large force might be available for transshipment to India. That Tipu was not reconciled to his losses was obvious from what Cornwallis had observed, "... his mind was breathing with all the rage of disappointed ambition and humiliated pride"⁷³.

But the motives of Malartic in issuing such a dangerous Proclamation were different. Wellesley thought it was the French jealousy and rivalry that prompted him to take the step. Another reason he gave was the anxiety of Malartic to get rid of the Island from the revolutionaries who would be willing to go to India to popularize their ideas⁷⁴. Mill attributes three reasons for the action. First, the whole transaction was a farce, a fabrication, and a "bundle of grass falsehoods" deliberately got up to precipitate the English into an Indian war. Secondly, it was the "act of a mad man

72. Martin, Vol. I, p. 190.

73. Ibid., No. 82.

74. Mill, p. 83.

making public a communication which it was so much in the interest of both the parties to keep in profound secrecy"⁷⁵. Thirdly, it was nothing but an act of "boasting and bragging folly with something of very small importance for its foundation"⁷⁶. Out of these Mill rejects the first two possibilities and supports the last one on the ground that Tipu exceeded all others in boasting and "might be regarded as a braggart even among Orientals". The French also suffered from the same weakness which was responsible for the entire transaction.

But Mill's arguments are not convincing, as Tipu had strictly enjoined secrecy. Moreover, Tipu's letters to the French chiefs acknowledged the English superiority and his inability to beat them, for which purpose alone European aid was needed. He does not indulge in self-praise and gives a fairly accurate picture of the relative importance of different powers. It was the inadvertent folly of Malartic who in his zeal to crush the English, abandoned all precautions and issued a rash statement. But it happened because the French mind at this time was in a high degree of excitability by the events of their revolution. Tipu had cautioned the French not to expose him to danger by making futile promises, but Malartic was not concerned with the consequences that might affect. The French were influenced at that time only by two aims, to universalize their ideas and to crush their rivals. Malartic thought that his Proclamation would serve both the purposes. He issued it in the name of the "French Republic, One and Invisible". He quoted the revolutionary slogans, "Liberty and Equality" at the top and the whole Proclamation breathed revolutionary and anti-English spirit. To involve the English in trouble, Tipu was regarded as one of the chief instruments. The arrival of the envoys offered them a chance, and they would not miss it to turn it to their advantage regardless of Tipu's interests.

Tipu also can not escape the blame. Having had the bitter experience with the French in the past, he yet chose to send the envoys. That was because he judged the situation of 1798 as propitious for striking a blow on the English. Both the Marathas and the Nizam were not on good terms with the English. The intended invasion of Zaman Shah would divert English attention to the north. The preparations of Napoleon at Toulon and his actual advance to Egypt caused apprehension to the English. The conclusion of peace in Europe afforded the French the opportunity of sparing troops for the east. Napoleon had written to Tipu from Cairo, "you have been already informed of my arrival on the borders of the sea, with

75. Ibid., p. 84.

76. Quoted in M.H. Khan, pp. 3076-7.

an invincible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England"⁷⁷. He desired that Tipu should send him a confidential person to inform him of the political situation in the country. Therefore only the premature disclosure of Tipu's plans upset all his programmes. Even after Tipu was convinced of the impending war with the English, he maintained his negotiations with the French and urged them to come to his help.

Relations with Afghanistan

Tipu contacted Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan, who ascended the throne in 1792. He was the grandson of Ahmed Shah Abdali, and like him a ruler of great military reputation. He meditated an attack on India to restore the power of the Mughals in Delhi with whom he had marital connections. Moreover, he desired to emulate his ancestors who had enriched themselves by invading India. He had an efficient and large army ready to march towards India. Even before the advent of Zaman Shah, Tipu was in touch with Kabul to secure assistance. He had written in 1790-91 to Timur Shah, father of Zaman Shah, and to the minister of the Court on the subject of Afghan co-operation with Mysore"⁷⁸.

The negotiations, however, increased in tempo with the accession of Zaman Shah, as both bore inveterate hostility towards English. In 1796 two ambassadors, Mir Habibullah and Muhammad Reza, were deputed to the Kabul court with valuable presents, elephants and friendly letters to induce the Shah to undertake his meditated invasion and to form a plan of cooperation with Tipu against the English. The ambassadors were also charged with the duty of giving publicity to Mysore products, wherever they went. They were instructed to look into the working of the Mysore factory at Kutch and to open a new at Karachi. Thus the purpose was both political and commercial.

The envoys urged Zaman Shah to assist Tipu by undertaking an expedition to India as the situation was highly favourable"⁷⁹. He was asked either to send a strong force or personally lead an expedition. If the



Zaman Shah

77. Beatson, Appendix No. VII, p. 188.

78. Martin, Vol. V, No. XV.

79. Martin, Vol. V, No. XV.

Shah himself could not lead, he was urged to instruct his commanders to join with the Rajputs and other chiefs of India in attacking the Deccan where Tipu would facilitate their task by engaging the attention of the English⁸⁰. Tipu himself addressed a letter to the Shah expressing his desire to appoint two permanent ambassadors at his court to pursue some confidential matters. Mulla Abdul Ghaffar Khan, one of the important ministers at Kabul, was also addressed by Tipu, and also to other dignitaries such as Gulam Muhammad Khan and Wafadar Khan.

In reply to Tipu's letters the Shah expressed his determination to proceed to India and permitted Mysore ambassadors to stay at his court. The Shah wrote, "We shall soon march with our conquering army to wage war so that the inhabitants of those regions may be restored to comfort and ease"⁸¹. Tipu replied to this letter on 30th January 1799 stating that the English were about to take up arms against him and that Wellesley had made no secret of his designs. He deputed the former ambassadors a second time, requesting the Shah to execute his plans immediately and divert the English attention⁸². A protracted correspondence between Afghanistan and Mysore followed, and both powers agreed on their common aims and objects. Wellesley observed, "The concert and correspondence subsisting between Tipu Sultan and Zaman Shah are now a matter of public notoriety"⁸³. He wrote to Dundas, "With respect to the views of Zaman Shah, the papers found in the palace of Srirangapatna have completely justified our opinion of Tipu's disposition to obtain the assistance of that Prince, and Zaman Shah's inclination to afford it"⁸⁴.

Tipu failed to secure Afghan aid. He had not pinned high hopes upon it, yet he had attempted to instigate the Shah to annoy the English. The Afghans also hated the English, as the Company was the chief obstacle in the way of their influence in India. Tipu was not seeking their direct aid but was merely wanting to divert British attention towards the north. The anxiety of the Shah to liberate Shah Alam from bondage made Tipu feel that the Afghan co-operation was possible. As late as 1798 Zaman Shah had actually advanced as far as Lahore but early in January 1799, he was compelled to beat a hasty retreat to Kabul owing to the outbreak of serious revolts on his western frontier. Wellesley had a hand in fomenting trouble on the borders of Iran-Afghanistan by dispatching a Shia from Moradabad to Iran, who excited Shia-Suni differences⁸⁵.

80. Ibid., No. XVI.

81. Ibid., No. XXV & XVII.

82. Sec. Desp. To Court, 27 Jan. 1800.

83. G.C. to Dundas, 5 March 1800, Martin, Vol. II, p. 226.

84. Persia Supplementary Papers, Martin, Vol. V, pp. 82-85.

85. M.H. Khan, pp. 306-7.

It is maintained by some historians that the danger of Zaman Shah's invasion was only a figment of Wellesley's imagination⁸⁶. But the actual march of the Shah in 1798, the excellent condition of his army, and the precedents of such Afghan invasions even during the life-time of Tipu, make it very difficult to believe that such a possibility never existed at all. The Shah himself had written a letter to Sir John Shore in June 1797, "It is our intention to visit Hindustan and at a proper season shall accordingly set out when we shall encourage friends and chastise enemies. We have, therefore, now deputed Ghoolam Ahmed Khan thither to ascertain who are our friends and who are our enemies, which we will communicate accordingly, let your mind be perfectly at ease and continue to walk in the path of allegiance and fidelity"⁸⁷. The Governor-General received another letter of more serious nature. Wellesley wrote to Dundas, "I have lately received a letter from Zaman Shah containing a declaration of his intention to invade Hindustan and a pre-emptory demand of the assistance of the Nabob Vazir (of Oudh) and of mine for the purpose of delivering Shah Alam from the hands of the Marathas, of restoring him to the throne of Delhi and of expelling the Marathas from their acquisitions on the North-Western frontiers of India"⁸⁸. The letter of Zaman Shah included a threat that the answer of Wellesley would determine whether he was to consider the English as his friends or foes.

The possibility of invasion was doubted on two grounds, first, inadequate resources of Afghanistan to support such a big expedition, and secondly the currency of such rumours for a long time. But these were not the real obstacles in the way of the Shah. If his resources were scanty, he could augment these by plundering the subjugated country. It was not an empty threat that he made frequently. In 1798 he actually marched as far as Lahore. Not even the Sikhs resisted his advance. Between Lahore and the Company's territories no one could stop him except Sindhia. But his absence in Poona and the confused situation in the Maratha capital rendered Sindhia's possessions in the north defenceless. The English rupture with Tipu would further facilitate Zaman Shah's task. If he were to proceed to Delhi "The glare of victory, the influence of religion and the allurements of plunder will draw to his standard numbers probably greater than have appeared united in one cause since the days of Aurangzeb"⁸⁹. The Rohillas, the Rajputs and the other discontented chiefs also would unite with him to liberate themselves either from the Marathas or

86. Zaman Shah to Sir John Shore, Martin, Vol. I, Appendix D, p. 670.

87. G.G. to Dundas, *Ibid.*, 6 July 1798, Vol. I, p. 89..

88. G.G. To Dundas, 6 July 1798, Appendix E, Vol. I.

89. Sec. Proc. 8 July 1798, Const. No. 32.

from the English. The presence of Sindhia in Poona would prevent the Marathas from joining the English as Sindhia was opposed to Nana's alliance with the Company.

This calamity was averted by timely action of Wellesley. He intimidated Sindhia that in case of an attack on the Maratha possessions in the north, the Company would co-operate with him to resist the invasion⁹⁰. He proposed a defensive treaty with Sindhia and instructed Colonel Collins to conclude it. Wellesley thought of a system of "defensive alliance against the approach of the Shah by entering into engagements, for that purpose, with whatever chief who should have succeeded to the largest portion of Sindhia's power"⁹¹. He instructed Collins to guard against Perron, the French commander in Sindhia's service, who might join Zaman Shah in the event of Sindhia's fall. Wellesley was further afraid of a general revolt in the whole of Oudh, if Zaman Shah were to enter into that territory.

Wellesley sent Zaman Shah's letter to Sindhia and cautioned him against the danger to his dominions. He threatened Sindhia that if he did not return to Delhi soon, the English would not defend the country abandoned by his own chief. Besides these arrangements, Wellesley approached the Sikhs, the Rajputs, the Rajas of Jodhpur and Jainagar soliciting their support against the Shah. Sindhia did not move from Poona. Wellesley observed, "It is impossible for me to judge with my confidence what his conduct is likely to be in the event of a rupture between the Company and Tipu Sultan"⁹². In October 1798 Wellesley received a report that "Gulam Muhammad, the Rohilla chief had returned to Rohilkhand with a mission from Zaman Shah and that he was exciting the Rohilla chiefs to rebel"⁹³.

Wellesley was meanwhile hatching yet another scheme to frustrate the Shah's designs. It was to prevent the Shah from leaving Afghanistan. The idea originated with Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay, which was accepted by Wellesley, who observed, "I concur with you in thinking that the services of the native agent you have appointed to reside at Bushire may be usefully employed for the purpose mentioned in that letter"⁹⁴. The native agent was a Shia from Moradabad, Mehdi Ali Khan, who was to be sent to the court of Baba Khan, the Persian Emperor, to excite the Shia-Sunni differences. He was to foment trouble on Zaman Shah's frontiers "so

90. G.G. to John Collins, 15 Sept. 1798, Martin, Vol. I, p. 260.

91. G.G. to Palmer, 8 July 1798, Ibid., p. 200.

92. G.G. to Dundas, 11 Octo. 1798, Ibid., p. 296.

93. G.G. to Duncan, 8 Oct. 1798, Ibid., p. 286.

94. Ibid.

that he might be compelled to relinquish his projected expedition or may recall him, should he have actually embarked on it"⁹⁵. The Persian Court was promised of arms and military stores. Wellesley pressurized Turkey also to induce the Persians to fall on Afghanistan. Wellesley observed, "It is my intention to suggest to His Majesty's minister at Constantinople the expediency of endeavouring to engage the Porte to concur with us in exciting the ruling power of Persia to such measures as may alarm Zaman Shah for the safety of his hereditary dominions and may recall him from the prosecution of his designs against the tranquility of India"⁹⁶. Zaman Shah's brother, Mahmud Shah, was made a useful instrument against his brother. As if all these arrangements were not enough, Wellesley desired to instigate the rulers of Sind, Multan and Khandahar to alarm Zaman Shah for the safety of his own possessions.

On 15th November 1798 Major-General Craig informed Wellesley that Zaman Shah was crossing Attock to invade India and that "little or no resistance would be made by the Sikhs and I fear as little is to be expected on the part of the Marathas"⁹⁷. The Shah was in Lahore on 10th December 1798 with a large army. The distracted State of the Sikhs and the absence of Sindhia in Poona increased the danger. Vazir Ali of Oudh who had suffered at the hands of Sir John Shore and had been replaced by Sadat Ali Khan was suspected to have conspired with Zaman Shah. He slew Mr. Cherry, English agent at Benares, and fled from Benares. Wellesley informed the court that a conspiracy had been hatched, not only for "restoring Vazir Ali to the throne of Oudh but also of favouring the invasion of Zaman Shah and of expelling the English nation from the province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa"⁹⁸. Shams-ud-Daulah, brother of the Nawab of Decca who addressed a letter to Zaman Shah through an agent called Sheik Ali was also a member of this secret league. He wrote, "If your Majesty's victorious standards shall be directed towards these parts for the establishment of religion and destruction of enemies, by God's assistance Your Majesty will in a short time and without difficulty conquer this country and annihilate your enemies. I hope your Majesty will be graciously pleased to number me among your attached slaves"⁹⁹.

But the precautions taken by Wellesley bore good fruit, and Zaman Shah was compelled to retire from Lahore on account of the revolts which disturbed his frontiers on the Persian side. These events show that the possibility of Zaman Shah's

95. G.G. to Duncan, 24 Oct. 1798, *Ibid.*, pp. 307-8.

96. Craig to G.G., 15 Nov. 1798, *Ibid.*, p. 346.

97. G.G. to the Secret Com. Of the Court of Directors, 22 April 1799, *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 535.

98. Valentia, *Voyages and Travels in India*, Vol. I, pp. 466-67.

99. Documents and State Papers, Paper C.

advance to Delhi was not imaginary, but real. Only the vigilance of Wellesley frustrated the Shah's designs.

Relations with Turkey

Tipu was in touch with Constantinople ever since his accession to the throne. In 1787 he had dispatched there an embassy to conclude a treaty of alliance, but it failed, as Turkey was harassed at that time by Russia. Britain had supported her then and hence Turkey was not prepared to alienate their sympathy by joining Tipu. In February 1799 under the shadow of the English threat, Tipu sent another embassy of two persons, Syed Ali Muhammad and Syed Nuruddin who had been earlier deputed to Mauritius with Hussain Ali Khan as the Secretary. Before this embassy set foot in Turkey, Tipu was overthrown in India by Wellesley.

Prior to the dispatch of this embassy, on 20th September 1798 Sultan Salim of Turkey had addressed a letter to Tipu which was delivered to Spencer Smith, the British ambassador at the Turkish court, who sent it to Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, to be forwarded to Tipu. But the letter was delivered through Lord Clive, the Governor of Madras with a covering letter of Wellesley. The Turkish Sultan traced in this letter the different circumstances which prompted Turkey to declare war on France. The Sultan mentioned that despite the close intimacy of Turkey with France, the latter had invaded, Egypt unprovoked, which was a flagrant breach of trust. Therefore Turkey expected Tipu also to look upon the French as the enemies of Islam. The Sultan said, "In a word, they are a nation whose deceitful intrigues and perfidious pursuits know no bounds, they are intent on nothing but on depriving people of their lives and properties and on persecuting religion, wherever their arms can reach"¹⁰⁰. The Turkish Sultan cautioned Tipu not to fall into the snare of the French whose policy he called treacherous, faithless and unscrupulous. He further informed that the English were aware of Tipu's contacts with the French. "Should it be true, as we bear, that an intimate connection has taken place between your court and that nation, we hope that by weighing present circumstances as well as every future inconvenience which would result from such a measure, your Majesty will beware against it"¹⁰¹. Tipu was warned not to harbour any hostile idea against the English. If there were any points of dispute with them, he offered to act as the mediator in settling them.

100. Ibid.

101. Kirmani, p. 240.

Tipu wrote another letter privately to Turkish Sultan which was full of hostility towards the English and sent it through ambassadors extraordinary. As the Sultan of Turkey had offered himself to resolve the differences, Tipu stated all points of Anglo-Mysore rivalry. He traced the rise of British power in India and said that they had built up their power by deceit, chicanery and insatiable rapine. He condemned the French also in equally strong terms. He attributed the cause of the Third Mysore War to his dispatch of an embassy to the Turkish Court in 1787. He asserted that the English would subjugate the whole of India and he had sent ambassadors to Constantinople on some important business. This letter was written on 10 February 1799, but before it reached its destiny, Wellesley had brought about Tipu's downfall.

The British were apprehensive of Tipu's extensive links with Afghanistan, Persia, Oman and the Ottoman Empire, which aimed at intensifying political, military and economic cooperation with those states. These ideas were considered too dangerous and revolutionary, which if implemented would undermine the British position in India. Hence, Wellesley took prompt action to crush Tipu.

Relation with Iran

Iran was yet another country with which Tipu had some contacts. In 1797 the Iranian prince having quarrelled with his father had arrived at Srirangapatna. Tipu received him with great honour and lodged him in the suburbs of Ganjam¹⁰². He visited Tipu frequently and at the time of his return Tipu proposed, "After you have made your arrangements regarding the capital of the Sultanate of Persia, it is my wish that you and I in concert with Zaman Shah should endeavour to regulate and put in order the countries of Hindustan and the Dekhan"¹⁰³. The Prince agreed to the proposal and promised to co-operate.

But Tipu was more anxious to promote commercial relations with Iran, knowing fully well its weakness on the military side. He desired to revive the old land-route for sending Indian commodities to Europe via Iran and Turkey. The construction of factories near the coast and the promotion of trade and industry would incidentally protect and preserve the independence of the eastern powers as they would be vigilant to safeguard their interests both on the sea and on land. Tipu desired that Iran should allow Mysore to have a few factories on its coast which would promote both commercial and political understanding between the two powers. He wrote a letter to this effect to the Shah of Iran. In return he extended the same privileges to

102. Ibid.

103. Mahmood Khan, *Sultanat-e-Khudad*, p. 556.

Iran which could import from India timber and other ship-building material. He sent his agent Nurullah to impress on the Shah the importance of political and commercial contacts¹⁰⁴. These contacts were resented by the English who excited Shia-Sunni differences to defeat Tipu's designs. His short reign allowed few of his ambitions to materialize.

Thus with Tipu's embassy to Mauritius begins the fifth and the final Act of the drama which began with his war against the English and was to end soon with his death in a war against the English. This entire period is packed with developments of extraordinary nature. An incident of an apparently insignificant character, namely the arrival of a French adventurer, Ripaud, to Tipu's court led to most unexpected results. Tipu was excited at the prospect of receiving French aid from Mauritius, where, he was told, 10,000 troops awaited for dispatch on mere asking. To a person whose life passion was the subversion of British power in India, it was too good a temptation to resist. He deliberated for long in taking the next step, consulted ministers, and sought their opinion, some of whom advised him not to venture on the project. Yet, he decided to try his luck. He was hoping the whole affair would remain a guarded secret but Malartic, the Governor of Mauritius for reasons best known to himself, publicly proclaimed Tipu's intentions to remove the English from India. Malartic was too much saturated with revolutionary ideas, and like Tipu he too must have been sentimental and emotional. The romantic idea of the revolution that France was the apostle of liberty and that she was the chosen instrument to universalize that concept must have prompted Malartic to indulge in needless propaganda. France had successfully implanted that idea in America and was hopeful that she could do the same in India too. Besides, on the political level there existed the Anglo-French rivalry which aimed at embroiling the English in global conflicts. Tipu appeared well suited for that purpose, and thus a minor affair was made much of.

Nothing would have happened if Sir John Shore had continued in office, or any one less aggressive than Wellesley had become Governor General. Wellesley's hatred of the French was perhaps equal in intensity to Tipu's hatred of the English. To the political animosity of Wellesley towards the French should be added a personal and psychological factor. It is said in his youth Wellesley had been disappointed in love with a French lady, and that he had vowed vengeance against them.

104. Ibid.

One more factor for the swift action of Wellsely was the meteoric rise of Napoleon, his bitter hostility against Britain, his mastery over a good part of Europe, his ambition like that of Alexander the Great to win fame and glory from the east, his actual departure from France and his campaigns in Egypt, together with his correspondence with Tipu, which electrified the English for quick action. If the French had been intoxicated by their revolutionary ideas of liberty, the English too had been fired with the intense passion of their national spirit. Therefore, the apparently small affair of the Malartic Proclamation, which brought to India just 99 persons, many of whom were mechanics, was blown up as a major cause for Tipu's destruction.

More fascinating is the account of Tipu's contact with Zaman Shah, and more bitter must have been Tipu's experience to find his hopes dashed to the ground right at a time when they had a good chance of success. Zaman Shah had actually moved from his capital and by December 1798 had come as far as Lahore. A conspiracy of several forces compelled him to beat a hasty retreat. Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, conceived of a plan of dispatching Mehdi Ali Khan, a Shia from Moradabad, to the court of Baba Khan, the Shia Emperor of Iran, in order to induce him to undertake rear action on Afghanistan. The threat to his home land compelled Zaman Shah to withdraw quickly from India. Few instances in history can match this resourcefulness of the English, who deserve to be rated as political geniuses. What might have happened if Zaman Shah had marched on Delhi is one of the most fascinating "ifs" of history. But what proved certain was that his sudden withdrawal saved the English from a disaster, and pushed Tipu to his tragic doom.



View of East India House (Company) -1817