

manner that aptitude for command and great administrative capacity of which he had given unequivocal indications. This was not lost sight of by the Earl of Mornington, and it was fortunate for the country, as well as his illustrious relative, that patriotism no less than affection influenced his choice.

The Earl arrived in India with the most pacific intentions, and neither the Company nor the nation was disposed at the time to imperil the peace of the Peninsula. But, with all its aspirations for peace, the Indian Government was aware that its empire, though apparently enjoying profound repose, was really resting on a mine, which a spark might at any moment explode. It was the calm in the midst of the hurricane, ere the elements resume their awful conflict. Tippoo Sultan, the son and successor of Hyder Ali, burned to avenge the defeat of his father, and the humiliation it entailed on himself; and French emissaries were ever active in fomenting his resentment, and instigating him to new hostilities. Again and again the warning voice of the Earl of Mornington addressed him in a tone of paternal remonstrance, and besought him to desist. "It is impossible," his lordship writes, "that you should suppose me ignorant of the intercourse which subsists between you and the French, whom you know to be the enemies of the country, and to be now engaged in an unjust war with the British nation."

Tippoo replied that his "friendly heart was disposed to pay every regard to truth and justice, and to strengthen the foundations of concord between the two nations;" at the same time that, with characteristic treachery, he was actually engaged in negotiating an alliance with France, in the hope of obtaining assistance from that power in his meditated hostilities with the Company. Two of his emissaries were received publicly in the Isle of France, as his envoys to the French Government, and the Governor of the island issued a proclamation, with their cognizance and authority, stating that the Sultan would subsidize any French troops who would enter his service, and that he was fully prepared to declare war against England. This proclamation was forwarded to Calcutta, but though the evidence of Tippoo's treachery was now complete, and though a body of French troops had actually landed at Mangalore, and joined the Sultan's army, Lord Mornington still endeavoured to avert the impending rupture, and exhausted every persuasion to induce the Sultan to forbear. His magnanimity, however, was only regarded as weakness, and the moment at length arrived when negotiation became idle, and could no longer be carried on either with honour or profit.

The enemy about to be attacked was perhaps the most formidable that we have ever encountered in the East. His army was not a mere rabble, composed of undisciplined and

effeminate natives, but a well-disciplined force, trained in European tactics, formed of a warlike and intrepid people, and headed by experienced French officers. With these were joined an auxiliary force of French, and a powerful artillery, also directed by French officers, and well supplied with expert and practised gunners.

The force destined to oppose Tippoo was placed under the command of General, afterwards Lord Harris, and consisted of 30,000 men, of whom 4300 were Europeans, and 6500, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Dalrymple, the British auxiliaries in the service of the Nizam. This latter force was, with the addition of the 33rd Regiment, placed by desire of General Harris and the Nizam minister, under the command of Colonel Wellesley, and, pending active operations, that officer busied himself in improving its discipline and organization, and practising the men in all the manœuvres requisite in an Indian campaign. So successful were his efforts, that they excited universal admiration, and elicited from the Commander-in-Chief a general order, publicly expressing his approbation of Colonel Wellesley's arrangements.

On the 8th of March, 1799, General Harris passed the frontier, and encamped in the territories of the Sultan, who not slow to commence hostilities, crossed at another point into the dominions of the Company, and endeavoured to cut off the army of Bombay. The country was well adapted for operations of this character, inasmuch that, from the difficulties of the way, the eastern and western divisions of the British army could only communicate in an interval of several weeks. The roads were mere tracks, crossing vast plains, frequently impassable, or piercing narrow defiles, through which the baggage and heavy artillery were conveyed with prodigious labour, while the greatest caution was requisite in traversing the rocky mountain passes and dense jungles, which afforded such cover for a stealthy and treacherous enemy. Strong forts, constructed of solid stone, and surrounded by massive and lofty walls, commanded the line of march, and were reduced with great difficulty, while the rivers, swollen with rains, swept with the fury of torrents over the low country, and opposed additional barriers to an advance. Scorching suns, dews as copious as rains, incessant changes of temperature, and all the privations incident to protracted and fatiguing marches in a hostile and devastated territory, added to the difficulties of the undertaking, and rendered this the most trying of our Indian campaigns.

It is unnecessary to dwell on all the incidents of the war. Suffice it to say, that the Mysore Sultan, after vainly throwing every impediment in the way of the invaders, was driven into his stronghold of Seringapatam, where he stood at bay, like a tiger in his lair. While