

But a pension of £90,000 annually which the Peishwa enjoyed from the East India Company was withheld from the Nana, and on that account he conceived an intense hostility to the English. His hatred for a time was well concealed by an apparent frank and friendly bearing ; and he was generally regarded, by Europeans, as an enlightened and hospitable Native nobleman. At the commencement of the outbreak, he expressed sympathy with the British and promised assistance : unfortunately his offer was accepted and the Treasury was placed under his protection. Having gained his object, he threw aside his mask, joined the Sepoys, raised the old Mahratta Standard, and immediately attacked the garrison.

The sufferings of the besieged were very great. Men, women, and children crowded together into the smallest space ; hot winds beating upon them as from a furnace ; deadly musketry playing upon them from every point, until the frail buildings of the garrison were riddled through and through ; no water but what could with great danger and difficulty be obtained ; with dead ones in their midst which could find no burial, but beneath the cover of night. Again and again the little band of soldiers sallied beyond their feeble ramparts, spiked the enemies' guns, and would have cut themselves a passage through the midst of overwhelming hordes ; but were restrained by pity for helpless women, and more helpless children, that must have been left in the hands of a cruel foe.

General Wheeler, in his extremity, was induced to listen to overtures of compromise. Nana swore an oath on the waters of the Ganges—the most sacred that Hindoo or Brahmin can utter—that, if the British would surrender the garrison, they should be safely conducted to Allahabad in boats provided for that purpose. The garrison was surrendered, but scarcely were the party seated in the boats when the signal was given for a general massacre. No detail of that