Wednesday, 3rd August 1746, or 22nd Adi of Akshaya.—At noon to-day, M. de la Bourdonnais and the Governor M. Dupleix, were entertained by M. de la Villebagne, at his house. At about 8, they left in palanquins; that of M. de la Bourdonnais preceding that of M. Dupleix. As they passed out together through the sea-gate, the “Tambour-aux-champs” was beaten. They alighted at the custom-house, and there, as he was starting on an expedition against Commodore Peyton who commands the English fleet, M. de la Bourdonnais bade M. Dupleix farewell. A salute of twenty-one guns was then fired. The Governor accompanied M. de la Bourdonnais to the boat, embracing and kissing him before he embarked. When the boat with M. de la Bourdonnais on board pushed off from the shore, there was another salute of twenty-one guns. The Governor watched it until it had passed the outer surf, then returned to his house, and afterwards went out for a drive.

When M. Dupleix first disembarked, the “Tambour-aux-champs” was not beaten, and fifteen guns only were fired; but on the occasion of the landing of M. Dumas, he was honoured with a salute of twenty-one guns, and with the beating of the “Tambour-aux-champs.” That a similar honour was not accorded to M. Dupleix, was made the ground of a complaint, which has a long history. Some said that to make up for the previous shortcoming, the Governor had on this occasion caused a salute of twenty-one guns to be fired twice, and the “Tambour-aux-champs” to be beaten, and that with this motive he accompanied M. de la Bourdonnais to the boat, and remained on the beach until it had passed the outer surf. A few observed that his intention in acting as he did was to indicate that the beating of the “Tambour-aux-champs” was due only to his own presence on the occasion. When M. de la Bourdonnais actually started to embark on board his ship, no guns were fired. Some surmised that this must have been at his own desire, as he was proceeding, as it were, to his own residence. Others, again, thought that M. de la Bourdonnais must have declined the honour, as one more befitting the occasion of his victorious return. Each expressed the opinion which occurred to him.

M. de la Bourdonnais stated in the presence of all his officers that he was resolved to lead the fleet against Commodore Peyton, who is cruising off Trincomalee, where the English are building ships; and either capture his squadron, making him and his officers prisoners, or sink and destroy his opponents, or with his officers, meet a like fate at the hands of the English. The views of the Governor and those present were in accord with those
expressed by M. de la Bourdonnais. Every one is assured that either one or the other of these two things will happen; there is no other alternative.

Munitions of war, picaxes, spears, ladders, spades, baskets, etc., etc. were shipped on board the eight sail comprising the fleet of M. de la Bourdonnais. Having enumerated these, there is no need that I should say more. A word to the wise is sufficient. Sheep, bullocks, pigs, fowls, dried fish, bread, Colombo arrack, rice, dhill, ghee, oil, firewood, and other provisions, were all embarked in the ships, in quantities so enormous as to appear almost fabulous. There is possibly a risk that the terms "ocean of lies," and "mountain of lies" might be applied to my description. It was estimated that the fitting out of the nine vessels which came out for the war would cost a lakh of rupees, less 4,000 or 5,000. The lowest estimate was not, it would appear, below 80,000 or 85,000 rupees. The cost of the expedition may amount to more, but it cannot be less. In addition to provisions, money was shipped in boxes. The Admiral’s vessel, the Achilles, had on board Rs. 4,000 in specie, and each of the other seven ships Rs. 3,000. The men carried by the fleet numbered 3,300. Two hundred and forty soldiers, fifty East Indians, and a few officers were embarked at Pondicherry to replace those falling sick and dying. Two native masters were engaged to pilot the fleet to Trincomalee, on a salary of Rs. 23 per mensem each. They were taken before the Governor, who sent them on to M. de la Bourdonnais, by whom they were put on board his own ship. They expressed fears for their safety on the ground that they were to be employed on a man-of-war, but the Governor and M. de la Bourdonnais reassured them by saying that, in the event of an action, they would be ordered into the hold along with the priests and the ship’s doctor, and they moreover promised to give them a liberal reward in addition to their pay. Each ship was provided with two divers, four boatmen, and a catamaran. The duty of these men was to make soundings whilst the fleet was doubling the promontory of Ceylon, explore the estuaries of rivers, and report to the ships shoals and other dangers. The services of experienced hands were obtained because they were intimately acquainted with these seas, of which the French sailors have but little knowledge. The French say that when M. de la Bourdonnais bade the Governor farewell, he told him that they would rejoice after the fifteenth day from this, when he would bring Commodore Peyton as his prisoner, and that he would not now stand on much ceremony, but would take his departure at once. As the tide of fortune has turned in favour of the French, they will, without doubt, vanquish the English. Providence surely has willed it so; and it will certainly come to pass. When the vessels return, all will be delighted.

Thursday, 4th August 1746, or 23rd Adi of Abshaya.—This morning at 6, the son of Chandā Šāhīb, 22
the son of Badé Šāhib, and Asad Šāhib, the son-in-law of Ḥusain Šāhib, with many of attendants, went off in five boats—the first three in one furnished with seats, and the others in ordinary craft—to the ship Achille, which is that of the Admiral. As they stepped on board, the second captain came to meet and escort them. The deck was lined on either side by 250 soldiers, drums were beaten, pipes and trumpets were played, and the visitors were received with very great honours. M. de la Bourdonnais then advanced, embraced them, and conducted them to his quarters, where he led them into a cabin freshly decorated with gilt leaves and silk hangings, and seated them on chairs and sofas placed there. After they had exchanged some polite phrases, they talked for a while on general topics. They then witnessed some of the manœuvres of the seamen, such as the fastening and unfastening of ropes, and the unfurling of sails, which the men were directed to perform quickly. They were next shown round the deck, fore and aft, and afterwards inspected the cannon which were mounted there. They then once more entered the Admiral’s cabin, and resumed their seats. The son of Chandā Šāhib presented M. de la Bourdonnais with a dress of honour worth Rs. 110 or 120, and the son of Badé Šāhib gave him another. M. de la Bourdonnais in return made a present of a musket fitted with a bayonet, to the former, and of another musket to the latter.

Honours paid to Chandā Šāhib’s son, etc.

Both these weapons being of a costly description. On their way back he escorted them as far as the gangway, and there bade them farewell. As they descended the ship’s ladder, and entered the boat, a salvo of twenty-one guns was fired by each of the four ships in the roads. Then those on board taking off their hats, shouted thrice: “Long live the king.” Thus were the visitors highly honoured: they were deserving of the treatment which they received. The beating of drums continued, and the guard of honour remained drawn up, as long as they were on board; the latter was dismissed only after they had quitted the ship. The visitors then came ashore, and repaired to their respective abodes.

The fleet of M. de la Bourdonnais, consisting of eight ships, set sail at 11 this forenoon to seek the English at Callo, Colombo, Jaffna, and Trincomalee. When it stood out to sea, fifteen guns were fired by the Admiral only. The fort returned the salute.

Friday, 5th August 1746, or 24th Ajī of Akshaya.—I suggested to the Governor that Asad Šāhib should be supplied with provisions. He desired me to tell Arumpātai to send them, which did.

Saturday, 6th August 1746, or 25th Ajī of Akshaya.—This forenoon, about half-past 11, M. Dupleix, sent for me, furnished me with a list of goods to be manufactured for him, and desired that they should be supplied by the end of October next. I said: “Very good.” He again summoned me, and