

there is such a one for each of the four ages. When the first spoke, the tides were swallowed up; when the second spoke, the stars fell; when the third spoke, the world trembled; but Madame is all these at once. I think she cares little for her husband's anger, but she is much alarmed lest he should give the management of affairs to some one else as she has publicly dishonoured him. There can be no other reason. The Shâstras say that a house or kingdom governed by women will surely fall. M. Dupleix has learnt this now by experience; and every one both within and without the town speaks openly of it. If God now checks her pride, those who dwell or visit here will live in peace; but if He does not, we shall learn that our evil days are not yet past.

The merchants received 10,000 rupees from Arcot at two o'clock to-day for to-morrow's pay. The Governor sent for me this evening and asked if the merchants had received any money. I said that I would pay what I had promised yesterday, and then went to the nut-godown. When M. Guillard went and asked the Governor about it, he told him to go to me, saying that I would pay it to-morrow. So M. Guillard came to the nut-godown and told me that the Governor had ordered him to get money for to-morrow's pay from me; and he asked whether I should be able to produce it. I sent him away, saying that I would give it to-morrow morning.

JULY 1748.

*Monday, July 1.*¹—I gave M. Legou this morning 4,000 Star pagodas and 20,000 rupees which I made ready last night, took a receipt, and returned. Then I went to the Governor and told him. M. Legou too came and told him what I had paid in.

The Governor then said that he was sure that he need not remind me about getting paddy, and that I must deliver 500 garse to the Company. I said I would do so.

Then 'Abd-ul-rahmân came and said, 'Malrâjâ's people have surrounded 'Alî Khân beyond Tiruviti and Panruti; but, as 'Alî Khân has 300 men, he is sure to disperse them, and return in safety.' The Governor then asked him in what order and by what road they had gone to Cuddalore. He replied, 'I do not know the road we took or where we went. We went where the spy told us, but, when we wanted him, they said that he was not to be found, and we went on without knowing where we were. When we could go no further, we ran into the wall. Some bruised themselves against it, others fell and got up again—that was what happened. But when we, guessing it to be the Cuddalore wall, scaled it with a ladder, a sentinel fired at us, and at once there followed a heavy fire from all sides, to which we replied. We then knelt down as we were ordered.

¹ 21st *Âsi*, *Vibhava*.

Some of the Europeans were exhausted and some drunk.¹ It was so dark, we could not see whether those near us were friends or foes. Some fired, supposing the enemy to be in front and on all sides. Then we all scattered. No one would have escaped from such a trap, if but fifty men had opened the gates and attacked us. But as God willed otherwise, as He favours you and you favour us, and as great glory still awaits you, they feared to come out of their walls.² As 'Abd-ul-rahmân thus vividly described what had happened, the Governor listened, and only said that it was the spy's doing. He then asked how many men were missing. 'Abd-ul-rahmân said that that could only be known when 'Alî Khân had returned. The Governor then rose, and, as he was going into his room, said, 'The pay of those who have been killed shall be given to their

¹ It was an invariable practice to serve the men with a dram and a biscuit before going into action.

² This version deserves to be compared with a curious letter written by Hyde Parker, an English officer, to Mole, Secretary at the India House (I.O. *Mis. Ltrs. Recd.* 1749-50, No. 7):—'The French came against us at Cuddalore where we had then only Captain de Morgan's and Captain Crompton's company with about 80 or 90 peons and sepoy's. When the French was near our walls, they marched directly for Porto Novo Gate and the Spur Point, that being very low and easy to be got over, even almost without scaling ladders; however they brought a number with them. They began their firing about 8 o'clock with firing by platoons very hotly, and at that time we had not 30 rounds a man, our ammunition being all ordered to be sent to the Fort some days before; and it was excessive dark. They had horsemen who rid round to see if they could find any place unmanned. . . . But what struck a terror into the French was, when the firing was hot at the Porto Novo Gate, our people by some mistake (though a lucky one) began firing all round Cuddalore, which put the French into great confusion, imagining we had all our force at Cuddalore. . . .'

families. Find out how many muskets and pistols have been lost. If those who have been killed have left no families, we need not trouble about them.' 'Abd-ul-rahmân then said, 'Five or six horses have been killed; but the rest will only be known on 'Alî Khân's return.' So saying, he took leave, and we went together to the nut-godown. There 'Abd-ul-rahmân repeated the whole story to me at ten times greater length, dwelling especially upon the spy's treachery. 'It was not the Commander's fault,' he said; 'Our people had had no food for three days, and, as soon as they took some liquor, they at once lost their senses, dropped their arms and fell down before the enemy. Could we have been worse off? Nearly all the detachment were in this state. It is plain that the enemy would have killed us all if we had stayed where we were. But, in spite of all, the enemy did not kill us; as good days still await us, we escaped. You can judge for yourself.' He added: 'Many fights have I seen and heard of; many battles have I fought; but never before have I seen men losing their senses at sight of the enemy and throwing away their arms in such a panic. As for the enemy, never have I seen men lose such a chance, or fear to open their gates for nearly two hours. But they feared us and kept inside. Never have I seen such a thing before! Has there ever been a kingdom ruled by a woman which was not ruined? But as by God's favour good fortune awaits us, our people escaped.' He

said this in the hearing of all, and then talked about other matters. I cannot write the scorn with which the officers and even the soldiers speak of the Governor for having left the management of affairs to his wife. I dare not write or even recollect it. Then he took leave and departed.

I cannot write all that M. de Mainville, and the other officers who took the field, say about M. Dupleix' entrusting state affairs to his wife. They accuse her of trying to make an end of them by treachery. I cannot write such things; nor have I written in detail, as the wise will understand. There is not a person in the European quarter, man or woman, who does not speak ill of the Governor. Many who were robbed by Akkal Nâyakkan's spies come and tell me that they have lost their coats, muskets, pistols, etc. I hear that little money, only a few clothes, but a good many muskets have been lost, and that Akkal Nâyakkan and the people of Tiruvêndipuram are much afraid that we shall lay the fault on them, and catch and punish them. [

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*Tuesday, July 2.*¹—When I went to the Governor's this morning, I heard that head-peon Savarimuttu the lame had been sent to bring the spy who pretended to guide our people to Cuddalore. He was to promise that the Governor would not punish him, and to say that he had done his

¹ 22nd *Āni*, *Vibhava*.

work as a spy well enough, that it was not his fault if the troops behaved imprudently and fled, and that if he refused to come the French would really believe he had betrayed them. Moreover Savarimuttu was to remind him that he had never promised that the English would open their gates for the French to walk in and hoist their flag without a blow, but had only said that he would guide them to Cuddalore which, if the English were off their guard, could be captured at once, or, even if they were on the alert, could be taken in a little time before reinforcements¹ could arrive; whereas, as soon as they reached the place and twenty or thirty shots were fired, the French fled, and so it could not be reckoned his fault. Savarimuttu, persuading him with these words, brought him this morning, and reported it to Madame Dupleix who spoke favourably of the matter to her husband. The Governor is telling the Europeans that it was all M. de Mainville's fault, for he is afraid that, if he lays the blame upon the spy, he will be despised for having trusted matters to his wife; and it is even said now that a Topass misreported to M. de Mainville the spy's directions and that was how our people were betrayed. The spy is said to have told the Topass that it was not the right time for an attack, but the Topass told M. de Mainville just the opposite, and that was why

¹ I.e., from Fort St. David, about a mile distant.