

CHAP. VI.

1740.

Adventures  
of scout sent  
to watch  
Mahrattas.

people living outside the ramparts were ordered, by beat of tom-tom, to come into the fort; and at 6 in the evening, all the gates were shut.

*Tuesday, 27th December 1740, or 16th Mārgazhi of Raudri.*—The following intelligence was made known this morning. It seems that yesterday half-a-dozen Mahratta horsemen were seen to the west of Cuddalore, and a scout was sent thence to observe their movements. Before, however, he could start on his mission, it looked as though the enemy were approaching the town. Thereupon, two shots were fired from the ramparts of Tiruppāpuliūr, and they fled. The scout was soon on their track. He was observed, and one of the horsemen gave chase, and struck at him with a sword. The scout carried a cudgel, and aiming a blow at his opponent, knocked the weapon from his grasp: he then went to Fort St. David, and reported the whole affair to the Governor there, who was pleased, and presented him with two yards of broad-cloth, seven pagodas, and twenty measures of rice. A little later, on the same day, a party of fifty or sixty Mahratta horsemen was seen by the garrison of Bāhūr hovering near that place: twenty or thirty musket shots fired at the horsemen put them to flight. The commanding officer came to Pondichery yesterday evening; and it is reported that the Mahrattas thereupon plundered the country around Bāhūr.

At 8 this morning, people came hurrying into Pondichery, bearing intelligence that the Mahrattas

His gallantry  
and  
escape.Mahrattas  
repulsed at  
Bahur.

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Mahrattas  
pillage  
Tennai.

had pillaged the houses at Tennal, and that their cavalry had advanced as far as Villianallūr, Ūshṭu tank, Arumpātai Pillai's choultry, and Ozhukarai, ill-treating and plundering the passers by. At 9, the Governor sent a detachment of soldiers to Ozhukarai; they being accompanied by Muttaiya Pillai, and fifty sepoys. The mounted men and sepoys who were in attendance on the Muhammadan visitors at Pondichery were also called out, and sent to Ozhukarai. Before they could arrive there, they learnt that the Mahrattas had gone to Vazhudāvūr. They thereupon returned, and reached Pondichery at 4 in the afternoon.

Small force  
sent to meet  
them.

The history of the Mahratta depredations, as contained in a letter written from Porto Novo, is as follows:—On the morning of Saturday, the 13th [24th December], 2,000 Mahratta horsemen started from Tiruvannāmalai, ostensibly to go to Trichinopoly. They rode due south as far as Tyāgadruḡ; then turned eastwards, and arrived at Vridhāchālam in the night. The distance between Tiruvannāmalai and Vridhāchālam is fifty miles. The detour made by them to the south was ten miles. They thus rode sixty miles in one day. The next morning, they left Vridhāchālam, and arrived at midday, at about eighteen Indian hours after sunrise, at Porto Novo, covering fifty miles, and thus completing the whole distance of 110 miles in a day and-a-half. The Mahratta freebooters occupied Chitrachāvadi, about two miles to the west of Porto Novo, and maltreated

Account of  
raid by  
Mahrattas.They cover  
110 miles in  
a day and-  
a-half.

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Outrages  
committed  
by them.

People flee  
from Porto  
Novo.

Capture of  
Negapatam.

beaten, and plundered of everything. Only a cubit length of cloth was given to them to cover their nakedness. Some were forced to hold the horses of their captors, whilst others were made to carry the spoils of the conquerors on their heads. In the meantime, the body of horse which had marched in the direction of the river bank caught sight of the boats, and forced those who had taken refuge in them to come out. The people were stripped, and robbed of everything; some were wounded, and others were soundly whipped. Some threw themselves into the river to make their escape, and twelve of these perished. The Mahrattas next hauled the craft which were laden with merchandise up to the bank, and seized their contents. Only one escaped their violence, and as luck would have it, it was that which carried my property. It was lying stranded a little way from the others; consequently, the goods were not captured, and the men in it were left unmolested. The 500 horsemen next rode to the Dutch factory, the gates of which were shut against them. Whilst this was going on, 500 of the 1,000 mounted troops who were engaged in pillaging the town appeared on the northern side of the factory, which was now surrounded by 1,000 men. Some of these occupied themselves in breaking in the wicket of the gate, and others threw rope-ladders over the tops of the buildings, and succeeding in climbing up, lowered themselves into them. The gate was now forced, and the whole of the Mahratta horse rushed

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Sack of the  
town.

Fate of  
those who  
took refuge  
on the  
boats.

Mahrattas  
attack the  
Dutch  
factory.

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1740.  
Captured.

Europeans  
made  
prisoners.

Released  
next  
morning.

Factory  
sacked.

Value of the  
plunder.

Arrival of  
*Comte de  
Toulouse*  
from  
Manilla.

into the factory. Every one there was seized, and stripped stark naked. Some received sword-cuts, and others were scourged with whips. They were each given two cubits length of cloth, and driven out of the fort. Deputy Governor Astruc, his wife and three daughters, and seven or eight Dutchmen, were made prisoners. The Mahrattas left the fort with their captives and spoil, some of the respectable inhabitants of the place being forced to serve as carriers; and at 6 in the evening they pitched their camp on a plain two miles outside of the town. Those who had been made to do duty as porters were then driven away, but the European captives were detained all night. They were released only the next morning, and were sent back to the factory in the custody of sixty horsemen. These men ransacked the place, and took whatever had escaped the marauders on the previous day. The value of the plunder of the factory may be estimated at 1,00,000 pagodas, and that of the town at 50,000, giving a total spoil of 1,50,000 pagodas. Such were the contents of the letter from Porto Novo.

*Friday, 30th December 1740, or 19th Mârgazhi of Raudri.*—This morning at 8, the French ship *Comte de Toulouse*, captain, M. Porte-barre, which had been to Manilla, reached the roadstead. She has on board 250 Acheen horses, bales of Indian hemp, sulphur . . . \*

\* Blank in the original.

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1741.  
New year's  
day.

Arrival of  
ship from  
Pegu.

Lading of a  
ship from  
Mergui.

Arrival of  
*Penthièvre*.

Arrival of  
ship with  
goods  
belonging  
to Imam  
Sâhib.

Ghulam  
Husain  
and Khan  
Bahadur  
arrive.

[*Sunday, 1st January 1741, or 21st Mârgazhi of Raudri.*—This was a feast day, on account of the new year.

*Sunday, 8th January 1741, or 28th Mârgazhi of Raudri.*—A ship . . . \* from Pegu arrived this morning at 10. Her commander is M. Puël. Her cargo consists of four horses, . . . \*

[*Monday*], *9th January 1741, or 29th Mârgazhi of Raudri.*—The following is the lading of a ship which arrived from Mergui:— . . . \*

*Tuesday, 10th January 1741, or 30th Mârgazhi of Raudri.*—The *Penthièvre*, captain, M. Dubois, came to an anchor here at 9 this morning, announcing her arrival by firing twenty-one guns. The salute was returned by the fort. Two hundred boxes containing silver were landed.

*Thursday, 12th January 1741, or 3rd Tai of Raudri.*—This forenoon at 11, a ship carrying certain property and goods belonging to Imam Sâhib put in here. He, however, is not on board.

*Saturday, 14th January 1741, or 5th Tai of Raudri.*—Mîr Ghulâm Husain and Khân Bahâdur arrived this evening at 5, from Arcot, in view to escort the undermentioned ladies to the fort at Vellore: viz., the widow of Nawâb Dôst 'Alî Khân, the wife of Nawâb Safdar 'Alî Khân, the widow of Hasan 'Alî Khân, the wife of Chandâ Sâhib, and other ladies of position. A party went out to

\* Blank in the original.