

Reason to believe, that the French and Hyder would march immediately to attack it: I therefore moved the Army towards it with all possible Dispatch, in full Persuasion that our Enemies would have met me there, and tried a decisive Action: But I arrived there without receiving the smallest Opposition; apprehending, however, lest the Enemy might be in Doubt about my Desire of bringing them to Action, and convinced that they would not seek for me in the Neighbourhood of Vandiwash, where I could receive them to so great Advantage, I determined to advance towards them. I accordingly made Two Marches in the direct Road to the Ground, on which we had observed them, from the Hill of Vandiwash, to be encamped; but on my Approach they fell back, and both by my Intelligence, and by what I could discover from the Heights in the Neighbourhood of our Camp, they took up their Station on the Red Hills. This was a Position in itself so strong, and could, by an Army of such Magnitude as Hyder's, supported by an European Force far exceeding the Numbers in my Army, be occupied to so great Advantage, that I judged it expedient to lay my Intelligence and Sentiments before the Two next Officers in Command, Major-General Stuart and Colonel Lang, that I might have the Benefit of their Opinions on a Matter of such momentous Importance, and on the Issue of which depended the Whole of the British Interests in India.

Upon a Reference to the Council of War, which was held on this Occasion, the Idea I suggested of drawing the Enemy from their strong Post, by moving in a Direction, which would effectually check Hyder's Supplies, and alarm him for the Safety of his Grand Magazine of Arnee, was unanimously approved.

In Conformity to that Plan, we accordingly marched on the 30th, and, on the 1st of June, encamped at the Distance of about Five Miles from Arnee. That Day I received Intelligence that Hyder, on hearing of the Route we had taken, marched immediately, and that the Advance of his Army had arrived the preceding Evening at Dessoor, distant from us about Twenty-five Miles, and in the high Road towards us. I was thereby satisfied, that the Effect I had in View had taken Place, and ordered a proper Place to be reconnoitred for posting the Baggage, in case I should either have found it advisable to go and meet the Enemy, or to receive them on the Ground I had occupied. In the Middle of the Night of the 1st, or rather early in Morning of the 2d, Intelligence was brought me, that Hyder had come to Chittiput, distant from us about Eleven Miles. The Army was then under Orders of March to proceed nearer Arnee, which, I was encouraged to hope, might prove an easy Acquisition, and which, by the large Stock of Provisions it contained, added to the extreme Fitness of its Situation, opened to us no less a Prospect than the total Expulsion of the Enemy from the Carnatic. In my then Position, with Hyder's Army on the one Side, and an Object of such Magnitude on the other, it became a Point of Deliberation, which was the most eligible Line of Conduct to be adopted: To persevere in my original Intention of threatening Arnee, (which Hyder had most undoubtedly come to cover) and thereby bring on an Action, or to advance and engage the Enemy, I preferred the former, as promised the most certain Issue, upon the Mind of Hyder, whose sole View evidently was to save his Grand Magazine: It was equal to him, whether he accomplished that, by diverting our Attention from it, or by giving us Battle. But it is reasonable to imagine, that if he succeeded on the former Grounds, he would hardly, after having suffered Four Defeats, put any Thing to Risk on the latter. We accordingly therefore commenced our March towards Arnee, contiguous to which the Advance of our Army had arrived, and we had begun to mark out the Ground for our Encampment, when a distant Cannonade opened on our Rear, and which was the first Annunciation I had of Hyder's having approached so near us, in Force. His coming upon us, thus suddenly, proceeds from his being able to cover the March of his Line of Infantry,

generally been the Companions of our Movements, during the whole of the War, were never to be considered as any positive Proof of his Army being at Hand.

Every Dispatch was used in making the necessary Dispositions for repelling the Attack, and coming to Action. Our Line was then in a low Situation, with high and commanding Ground all round, which as the Enemy had got Possession of, our different Manœuvres were performed under every Disadvantage, and exposed to a heavy though distant Cannonade. It was not until near Mid-day that we had reduced the Enemy's various Attacks into one settled Point, so as to advance upon them with Effect, and with a Prospect of Advantage; but so soon as that was accomplished, we pushed on and they gave Way: We pursued them till the Evening was far advanced, taking from them in their Retreat One Gun, Five Tumbrils, and Two Carts loaded with Ammunition.

I remained at this advanced Station to the last Moment the State of my Provisions would admit of; and when obliged to fall back for my Supplies, I endeavoured to do it with all the Credit possible, by again seeking for Hyder, who by my Intelligence, had encamped with his Army contiguous to a Road by which we might march. He retreated before me with Precipitation, although in Possession of Ground which he could have disputed our approach towards with great Advantage. We pursued our March the succeeding Day, by the same Road on which he had retreated, but found that he had turned off and crossed the Country towards Arnee. On the 8th of June, when encamped in the Neighbourhood of Trivatore, and where we had halted a Day to refresh both the Troops and the Cattle, of which they stood greatly in need, having suffered severely both by Sickness and Fatigue, our Grand Guard was most unfortunately drawn into an Ambuscade composed of about Six Thousand of Hyder's chosen Horse, and totally cut off before any Support could be afforded.

It is with Pleasure I acquaint you, that the Establishment of Peace with the Mahrattas is in the fairest Way towards being happily accomplished, as, on the 17th of May last, Articles of a Treaty of Peace, and perpetual Friendship and Alliance, between the English and the Mahrattas, were agreed to and executed by Mahdeo Scindia, on the Part of the latter, and by Mr. David Anderson, (deputed by the Governor General and Council) on the Part of the former, subject however to the Approval and Ratification of their respective Governments, before they should become final. In as far as depends upon us I believe every Part has been confirmed; but as yet I have not heard of the Conditions, having received the Seal and Signature of the Peshwa, and the Attestations of the Dependent Members of the Poona State.

The only important Movement of the Army, which happened between the Action of the 2d of June until this present Time, was the Relief of the Garrison of Villore, which was performed between the 7th and 21st of August; the Army having marched in that Period near 200 Miles, and threw into the Place Provisions sufficient to maintain the Garrison to the 1st of March next.

I am concerned to acquaint your Lordships with the Fall of Trincomale, which by our Intelligence was surrendered to the French Force under Monsieur Suffrein on the 31st ult. by Capitulation. My Orders were to defend it to the last. Our Squadron had an Action with the French Squadron off the Place on the 3d Instant, in which the last suffered most; but our Fleet found it necessary to come to these Roads, where it arrived the 9th Instant, and is now refitting, and intends proceeding to Bombay the Middle of next Month. The Minerva Store Ship, and the Major and Nottingham Indiamen belonging to Sir Richard Bickerton's Fleet, are arrived; the two latter having on board Lieutenant Colonel Adams, with two Companies of His Majesty's 101st Regiment, and Colonel Reibold, with two Companies of His Majesty's Electoral Troops. They have all of them arrived extremely healthy, and have suffered very little indeed by the Voyage.