

Major-General, were sent down in the Juno for the Purpose of collecting Information upon particular Points, to be reported by them to his Lordship upon his Arrival at Madras.

We accordingly issued the necessary Orders to the Heads of Departments at the Presidency, directing that every Information should be given to the Gentlemen deputed from Bengal.

We lost no Time in communicating the Purport of the abovementioned Dispatches to Major-General Meadows; we also advised him of the Reinforcements expected from Bengal, consisting of His Majesty's 73d Regiment, 50 Matrosses of Artillery, 200 Land's, about 1400 Sepoys, and a complete Regiment of Cavalry.

Our next Advices from General Meadows stated, that after having marched seven Days successively, he was within fifteen Miles of Colonel Maxwell, to whom he had sent five Squadrons of Dragoons, and Orders to join him; and that Tippoo had declined an Engagement, not liking the judicious Position of Colonel Maxwell, nor the near Approach of the Grand Army.

General Meadows informed us that he had seen the Enemy two Days before, about twenty Miles distant, on his Return from Colonel Maxwell, pitching his Tents just as our Army had come to the Ground, after a long fatiguing March through the Pass of Tapoor: That three Guns having been fired as a Signal to Colonel Maxwell, the Enemy immediately decamped, and halted on the Ghauts by the Odeadgam Pass.

The General having in View the material Object of joining Colonel Maxwell, bent his Course direct to Caveripattam, and soon after formed the Junction; upon which he wrote to us, that having now an Army sufficient to secure his Convoys, and keep open his Communication with Palicaudcherry and Coimbatour, he meant forthwith to proceed up the Coveriporam Pass, and take Post at the Head of the Guzzelattaty, until the Battering Train, expected from Bombay, should join, and enable him to proceed to the Siege of Seringapatam.

The next Advices from the General stated, that pursuant to his intended Plan of Operations, he had moved towards the Coveriporam Pass, where, as he wrote to us in his last, he meant to have gone up; but that during the March he found the Enemy had retired back, from his apparently going up the Ghauts, and was upon his March before him.

The Intention of immediately ascending the Ghauts was therefore given up. The Enemy was rapidly pursued, and, after a very long March, the General got so near to him as to cannonade his Rear. A few of his best Horses were killed. But, as he moved (the General observed) so much lighter than our Army, and without such Swarms of Followers, he got down the Tapoor Pass, and continued his March before him towards Errood.

The General added, that he should march the next Day in pursuit of the Enemy, who he hoped would not be able to repass the Cavery unmolested. That the going up the Coveriporam Pass, and leaving the Enemy at the Bottom, would be attended with bad Consequences; and that he was far from despairing of driving him up, sooner or later, or bringing him to a general Action first, and following him up afterwards.

The next Letter from General Meadows was dated near Caroor, in which he gave us the following general Idea of the Army, its Situation and Destination: since its Junction with Colonel Maxwell.

"The Two Armies having joined, pursued the Enemy towards this Place (Caroor.) He is reported to have crossed the Cavery lower down. As he moves evidently lighter than us, and as his Intentions seem to be the detaining us below the Ghauts till he has gathered in the Crops, which I understand are just now cutting, and lodge them safely in his Forts, I think, and I think with some of the ablest Officers in the Army, the most determined Measure the likeliest to bring him to Action, and drive him out of this Country, is boldly to go up the Ghauts ourselves, which I mean to do by the Coveriporam Pass, and taking Post at the Head of the Guzzelattaty, and opening the Tumlercherry, preserve our Communication with Coimbatour, Palicaudcherry, and the other Coast."

The General imagined that he should be able to set out for Coveriporam Pass by the 8th of December at farthest; and expressed his Belief, that if he were once up the Ghauts the Enemy would fight or treat.

About this Time we received Intelligence from the Commanding Officer at Trichinopoly, that the Enemy had appeared in great Force in the Neighbourhood of that Place; and that there was Reason to believe, from the Preparations he was making, an Attack upon Trichinopoly was the Object in View.

The Enemy however, after remaining some Days encamped within Sight of the Fort, moved of a sudden to the Northward, having previously destroyed the Officers Quarters on the Island of Seringam, and burnt the surrounding Villages; and shortly after we received Intelligence that he had advanced as far as Tiagar, of which he threatened the Siege.

It appears that the sudden Movement of the Enemy from Trichinopoly was occasioned by the Approach of General Meadows, who informed us, in a Letter dated December 5, that some Circumstances, "such as the unusual swelling of the River, and the apparently setting in of the Monsoon, the daily expected Arrival of Lord Cornwallis, and some other Reasons, had determined him to proceed towards Trichinopoly, before he attempted the Execution of the Plan communicated in his last Letter; by which Means the Country would be cleared of the Enemy, the Facility of Lord Cornwallis's joining the Army ensured, and his Lordship enabled to pursue the War in the Manner judged by him most eligible; all which might be very uncertain, should the Army proceed without him." The General hoped that, for the above Reasons, beside some other Advantages of providing the Army with many Things in the Neighbourhood of Trichinopoly, of which, after Six Months in the Field they stood much in Need, we should approve the Suspension for a short Time of the Plan of Operations, which he had before reported to us as his Intention immediately to pursue.

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