

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME III.

VOLUME III opens with the 19th October 1746, and closes with the 14th March 1747.

It contains very interesting details regarding the agreement for the ransom of Madras, the chief signatories to which were de la Bourdonnais and the English Governor, Morse, and of the subsequent repudiation of the treaty by the authorities at Pondichery. A paragraph, pathetic in its brevity and substance, which occurs in the second chapter of the book, records the adieu to India of de la Bourdonnais, who, but for the childish quarrel between him and Dupleix, would undoubtedly have captured Fort St. David, as he did Madras, and have thus dealt a deadly blow to the position of the English in Hindustân.

The chief feature of the volume, however, is the graphic account given in it of the gallant and effective stroke dealt, with a disproportionately weak following, and without artillery, by Paradis—of whose alleged previous history an amusing account will be found in Chapter XLV—to the strong force well supplied with cannon, which Mahfuz Khân, the eldest son of the Nawâb of the Carnatic, sought to interpose between him and Fort St. George, to the relief of which, from an attempt at capture by the Muhammadans, he was advancing from Pondichery. This engagement will

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always be conspicuous in Indian history, not only for the promptitude and boldness with which the attack was delivered, but also as being the first occasion, as pointed out by Malleon, in his *The Decisive Battles of India*, on which the European trader assumed the position of a combatant, and as such, administered to an Indian chieftain, of the class whose every word had hitherto been to him a law, a decided defeat. The tale of the battle of Mylapore, as told in the Diary, forms attractive matter for any one acquainted with the scene of it and Southern India. Other points of interest mentioned, are the intrigues and negotiations which had for their object, on the one hand, obtaining from the French possession of Fort St. George, and, on the other, retaining it, and procuring the retirement of the troops of the two sons of the Nawâb of the Carnatic, which constituted not only a threat to Fort St. George, but also a danger to Pondichery; the attack made on Paradis when returning from the relief of Madras; and the utter failure of the first expedition sent from Pondichery, to attempt the seizure of Fort St. David.

The volume concludes with a description of how a second expedition, having the same object, and practically commanded by Paradis, though nominally under the direction of the incompetent de la Tour, who had been the leader of its abortive predecessor, was—when it had carried all before it, when every work had been captured, and when the storming

party had actually paraded for the purpose of assaulting Fort St. David, itself—compelled, by the appearance of a British fleet, to retire, spike the guns previously taken, and destroy much ammunition and stores; and was pursued, for a time, by troops which sallied from the fort. The story of these events is told in a very picturesque manner, the most striking figure in it being, to my mind, the French sentinel, who, standing on the flat roof of the recently captured garden house, and gazing seaward across the ever rolling surf of the Coromandel Coast, suddenly descries in the distance the hostile fleet and announces to those who are awaiting below the order to advance, the news which leads to their hasty and not very orderly retreat.

EXMOUTH, DEVON,
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J.F.P.