

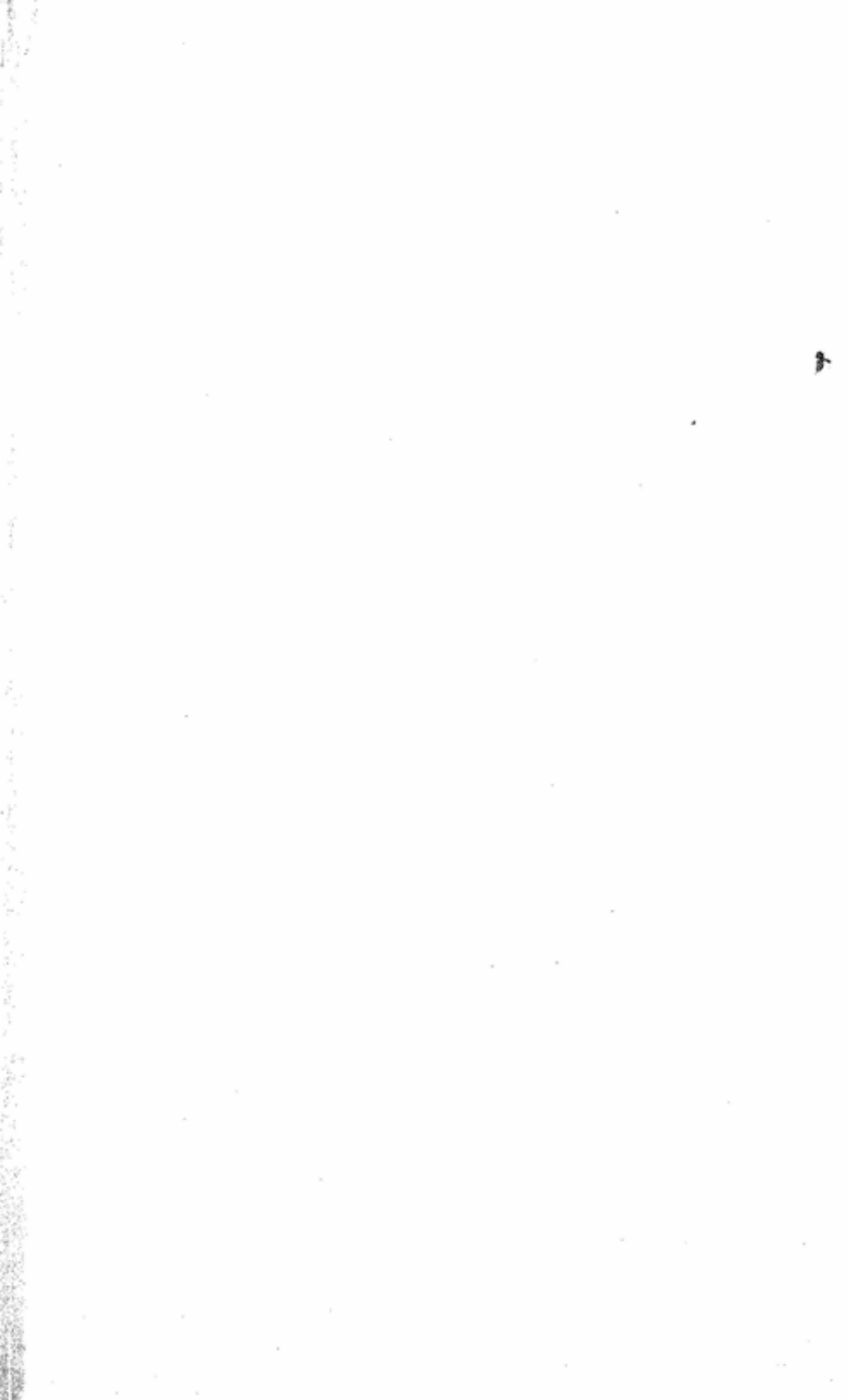
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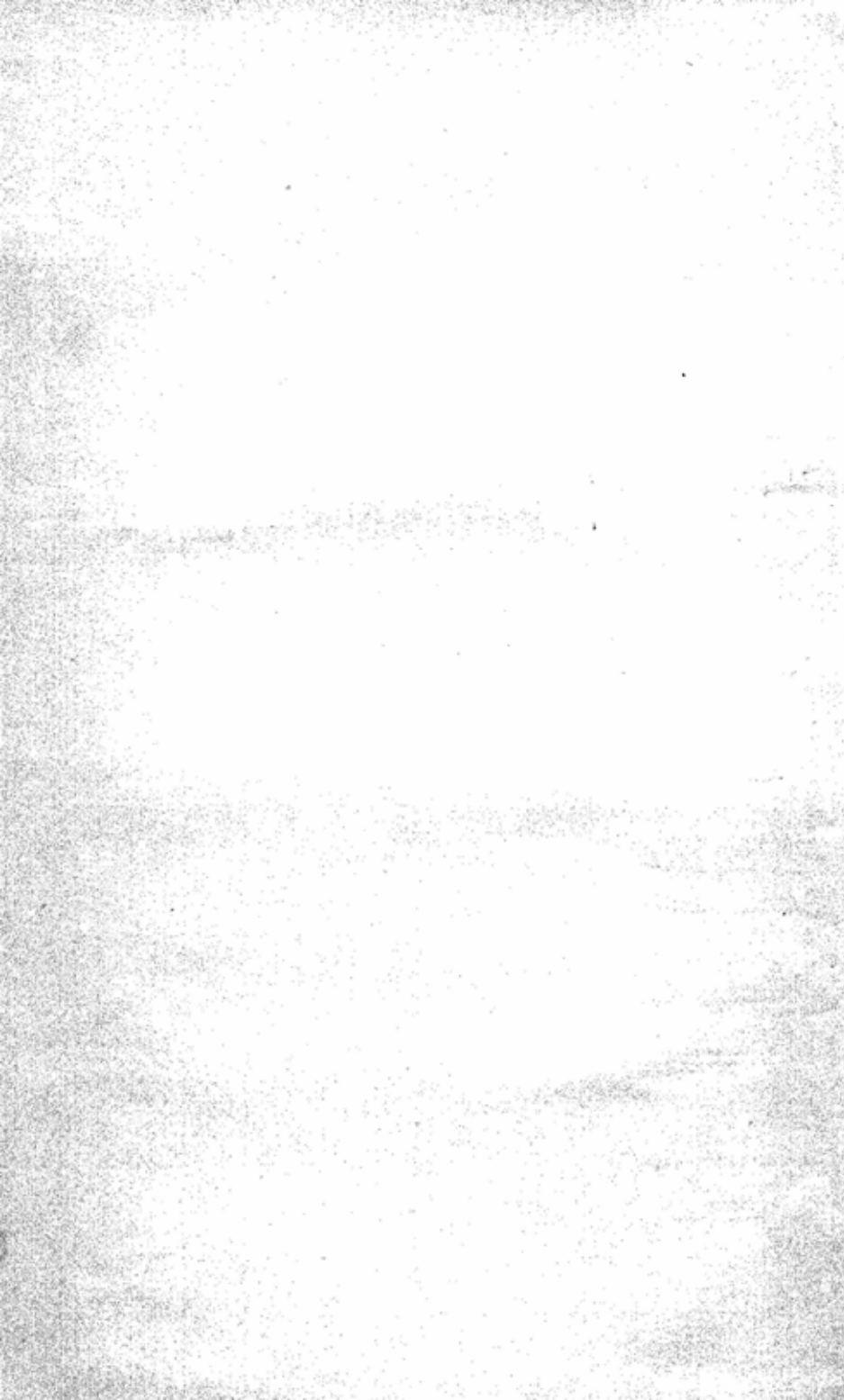
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THE NORRIS EMBASSY TO AURANGZIB

THE HONORABLE AMBASSY TO AIRLIFT



THE
NORRIS EMBASSY TO AURANGZIB
(1699—1702)

HARIHAR DAS

27782

condensed and rearranged

by

S. C. SARKAR

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Das



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To

Sir William Foster, C.I.E.

A tribute to that wide knowledge and deep interest which have contributed so effectively to illumine the historical records of the East India Company.

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PREFATORY NOTE

The present work is a belated embodiment of the conscientious research covering years of scholarly toil conducted by the late Mr. Harihar Das in England. It was put into typescript as early as the forties but death intervened before the author could give a finishing touch. The material ultimately reached his Indian relations, one of whom, Sri Satyajit Das, a young friend of mine, took up earnestly the task of publication. The well-known and enterprising firm of K. L. Mukhopadhyay has now undertaken the heavy burden of bringing out the book, and they asked me to prepare it for the press and, incidentally, to reduce the voluminous manuscript to somewhat more manageable proportions.

I have endeavoured to keep down what seemed to be necessary alterations to a minimum. It was thought advisable to shorten the title to the volume, and to insert brief captions at the top of each chapter. The body of the work has been also rearranged into two distinct Parts, which I have called 'The Background' and 'The Mission' respectively. In Part I, the material was condensed from about 170 typed pages to 85 only, and the original chapters II and III combined into one. The Family Tree at the end of Chapter I had to be recast entirely in keeping with the text. In Part II, the original matter could be kept practically intact, in spite of the omission of several passages. The author's synopses at the head of every chapter have been left out to save space. The foot-notes were re-numbered throughout serially, chapter by chapter, with only a very few necessary additions. In very many places, however, the text had to be rearranged into new paragraphs, to break the monotony of long passages and several corrections and changes in expression became unavoidable. Some dates had to be rendered into the reckoning by the modern calendar, and an attempt has also been made to make the spelling and the punctuation more uniform.

The embassy of Sir William Norris to Aurangzib is of course well-known to scholars and has been duly noticed by many of

them. It has been, however, never surveyed so comprehensively as in the present work, the most striking feature of which is the utilisation, with copious illuminating extracts, of the original Journals of the Ambassador in the Bodleian Library. It may be noted, nevertheless, that the narrative, while fully covering the story down to the First Audience with Aurangzib, has left unexplored the later stage of the protracted negotiations at Court, the return journey of the frustrated Ambassador, and his last days. To that extent, the work remains incomplete. Perhaps some scholar later on will continue the narrative and provide a sequel to the present volume, basing the study on the remaining volumes of the Journals which our author found in the custody of the Public Records Office, London, but which he did not draw upon exhaustively.

It has not been possible to check and verify the innumerable references, the great bulk of which is not available in this country. Any perusal of the text and the notes will however convince the reader of the thoroughness and sound scholarship of the author. It can only be added that the volume will substantially enrich the historical literature on the period under review, the last days of Aurangzib in the twilight condition when the sun of the Mughal Empire had in reality already set.

Jadavpur University

Calcutta

May 1, 1959

S. C. SARKAR

FOREWORD

by

The Right Honourable L. S. Amery, P. C., Hon. D.C.L.,
Secretary of State for India and Burma, 1940-1945

The story of the origins of the British Empire in India must always be a subject of unfailing interest to students of that amazing world phenomenon which Seeley summarized as the 'Expansion of England'. But, as Mr. Harihar Das points out in his Introduction, it is no less important a subject for every Indian scholar or statesman who wishes, not only to study the rich tapestry of all the centuries of India's history, but to find in that history both guidance and warning for the future. To that study his detailed, well-documented and erudite account of the Embassy of Sir William Norris to the Court of Aurangzib is a valuable contribution.

It is significant that the pioneers of research in the field of ancient Indian history, antiquities and philology were distinguished English, German and French Orientalists. They began their work about a century and a half ago, and their labours laid the foundation for the scientific study of that history as we know it today. In more recent years and particularly since the beginning of the present century, the output by Indian scholars in this domain as in all other departments of learning has been considerable, both in intrinsic merit and in quantity. The intellectual co-operation between the scholars of Europe and India has indeed been one of sympathy and good friendship. It is also interesting to note that some of the best contributions to the history of the Mughal period are again by British and Indian scholars.

The foundation of various learned societies and research institutes in different Provinces in India, as well as the History Congress, the Historical Records Commission, and the works of exploration and excavation by the Archaeological Survey of the

Government of India have greatly contributed to the progress of historical research. By introducing the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act in 1904, Lord Curzon did signal service to India. The impact of Western learning and culture as well as the birth of a new sense of national pride and responsibility have inspired her scholars in their efforts to resuscitate the cultural heritage of India.

The present volume has been written primarily as a work of reference for scholars and must be judged as such. But to at least one 'general reader', with no pretensions to scholarship, its perusal has given a most vivid picture of India and of the English in India on the eve of a great turning point in Indian history.

The actual story of an abortive and, in the sequel, unnecessary mission can be very briefly told. The long struggle between the original East India Company—usually referred to as the London or Old Company—in defence of its monopoly and the 'interlopers' or 'free traders' seemed to have ended in a complete victory for the Company in 1686. Its able and farseeing chief, Sir Josiah Child, had completely got the ear of James II, one of the original founders of the Hudson Bay Company and a firm believer in the policy of chartered monopoly. The 'Glorious Revolution' upset however all its high hopes and exposed the Company to all the odium of being essentially a Tory organisation. After years of discussion Parliament finally decided to supersede the London Company by a recently established competitor, the New or English Company, which was not only Whig, but was prepared to lend King William £2,000,000 for his wars. The Old Company was left with nothing but the three years' notice to which it was entitled under its charter, which was to come to an end on September 29, 1701.

The Old Company was, however, still much the best established on the spot with the best factories and the most extensive contacts with the Mughal Government and its local governors. Much might—and, indeed, did—happen in those three years, and the New Company was anxious to make progress while the going was good. It suggested to the King that it would be a good plan (for the costs of which the Company was prepared to pay) to

send a special Royal Ambassador to go out in state to the Court of the 'Great Mogul' in order to secure the most favourable conditions for English trade generally and, in particular, to make it clear to Aurangzib that it was the New Company which enjoyed Royal favour and that its rival was due to be wound up in the immediate future.

For this purpose King William chose Sir William Norris, then Member of Parliament for Liverpool, a man of good family (Mr. Das gives an interesting account of his antecedents), of high character and eminently reputable public service. On January 21, 1699, Sir William set sail from Portsmouth with all the ceremony and saluting that could emphasise his own importance and that of his mission, but not without warning that the Old Company meant to fight to the last. He was soon to discover that this was the case when, in September, on his way to the New Company's factory at Masulipatam, he anchored off Fort George, Madras, where Governor Thomas Pitt, the irascible grandfather of the great Chatham, let him know that he was not prepared to recognise his authority and that the Old Company would defend itself against any attempt to prejudice its interests—a promise most effectively fulfilled.

Norris had been directed to go to Masulipatam on the east coast of India with the idea that Aurangzib's Camp was more accessible from there. This turned out not to be the case. But apart from that he encountered every conceivable difficulty and delay from the local representatives of the Emperor and only very half-hearted support from those of the New Company on the spot. After nearly a year spent in futile negotiations he lost patience and set sail for Surat on the west coast spending four months of the year 1700 on the journey. At Surat things were made easier and he was at last able to start off at the end of January 1701 with a most imposing retinue and a substantial armed guard for protection against the ubiquitous Maratha raiders. After two and a half months on the march he reached the Emperor's Camp at Panhala. Here he was discouraged by the definitive news (in an overland despatch via Aleppo) that the Old Company had successfully secured a new Act of Parliament rescinding its termination and sanctioning its continuance as a separate corporation.

The poor Ambassador's ground was cut from under his feet even before he began his negotiations. He was now in the invidious position of being at one and the same time Ambassador and also the paid agent of only one of two equally recognised private Companies, a position which his opponents exploited to the full. Endless negotiation and much bribery secured for Norris three receptions by the Emperor at which he received every mark of personal favour in the shape of state robes and even of an elephant. But the real business made no progress. Everybody had to be bribed with presents, hard cash and, not least, strong drinks. Among all the Imperial retinue Norris only found one honest man, Yar Ali Beg, whom he described as "a pattern to all Ministers of State". Another, Inayat-ullah Khan, would also later on seem to have dealt honestly with the business. What made matters worse, the Old Company's arrangements for counter-bribery, helped by the most unscrupulous defamation, seem to have been much more effective than his own.

The promised Imperial *farmans* or rescripts were never actually secured, and the 'memorials' containing the items for whose final approval Norris had asked Ministers were, on translation, found to have been altered and to include provisions which he could not possibly accept. More particularly they included a demand for a guarantee that the New Company should be responsible for the suppression of all piracy. From Aurangzib's point of view this was not so unreasonable a demand, for the majority of the pirates who harassed both European and Indian traders in Indian waters were English. But the demand was impossible of fulfilment and Norris was not authorised to promise more than active operation by the King's ships against these pests.

After six exhausting and exasperating months, including a weary march to Wardhangar to follow the Emperor's shifting of camp, Norris' patience gave way. Without taking ceremonious leave and refusing all entreaties to prolong his stay at Court, he struck camp in November, 1701, and started his march. But after some days' journey he was detained near Brahmपुरi by the Mughal General, Firuz Jang. The latter's powerful intervention on Norris's behalf to secure the *farmans* also proved a failure.

After spending here two and a half months, Norris was at last honourably dismissed, though he had to pay a good sum of money to the Mughal General for this. He reached Surat about the middle of March, 1702. Here he was received discourteously, not only by the Old Company but also by the representatives of the New Company who no doubt felt that he had wasted their money—the embassy cost over £80,000—for nothing and treated him as if he had ceased to be Ambassador. With great difficulty he at last got a ship, having to borrow personally to cover expenses and having to pay his last bribe to secure the local Governor's permit to leave. During his stay in Mauritius he learnt that, under an award of Lord Godolphin's, terms for the amalgamation of the two rival Companies had been settled. So all his efforts—and for that matter the intrigues of his opponents—had been a work of supererogation. A week after leaving Mauritius he died at sea (1702).

Whether Norris was in any degree responsible for the failure of his mission may be open to discussion. A straight-forward Englishman, accustomed to deal with men of similar outlook and manners, he had to adjust himself to the etiquette, morals and customs of an utterly dissimilar world. It would be very surprising if he had not, on occasion, stood too rigidly upon the ceremonial which he had been told was essential in dealing with Orientals, or bribed too lavishly in one case or too meanly in another. His more experienced opponents, no doubt, invested their money more profitably in this highly technical business. The fact remains that his position, difficult in any case, became impossible from the moment that Parliament decided to keep the Old Company in being. With that disappeared the only colourable pretext for his combining the office of Ambassador with that of the New Company's paid representative. His letters and journals show him as a man of good sense and a shrewd judge of what he saw in his travels. Mr. Das has done well to give us so much of his descriptions and comments in full.

The real interest of Mr. Das' work, however, lies not in the story of a fruitless diplomatic and commercial errand as in the picture which it gives of the end of a phase in the history of India. It is a picture of the Mughal Empire on the eve of its dissolution,

still apparently intact, but showing everywhere the cracks and fissures which were soon to bring the whole fabric tumbling down in wreckage. We see the aged and avowedly ascetic Aurangzib in his Camp, with his immediate entourage of self-seeking, venal, luxury-loving and incompetent ministers, in the midst of a vast Army, utterly worthless from the fighting point of view, marching indefatigably backwards and forwards across the South-Western Deccan and Maharashtra, besieging Maratha forts which eventually get taken or are bribed to surrender, only to be reoccupied as soon as the Army has marched on elsewhere. Meanwhile the fabric of government, sustained only by an endless stream of Imperial letters and by the services of some 4,000 spies, becomes weaker everywhere. An alien government in the hands of Turks and Persians, with Persian as its official language, it has lost the hold, which the wise toleration of Akbar had secured, over the Hindu population as the result of Aurangzib's fanatical persecution of the Hindu religion and extrusion of the Hindus from all positions of responsibility. The façade is still there and actually covers a wider area of India than ever before, but end is near.

So, too, at the end of a hundred years of its existence we see the old East India Company and its competitors, English and foreign, still apparently occupying much the same position as at the beginning. The factories are still merely trading establishments for the transaction of business and the warehousing of goods under the general jurisdiction of the nearest local representative of the Emperor. But a transition to something very different is just beginning. In these very years the increasing lawlessness of the countryside is justifying the conversion of the factories into forts with their own small military establishments. Very soon the forts take in neighbouring villages whose rents help to cover local expenses. The nucleus of an administrative system and the idea of government begins to emerge. To send ambassadors to spend months waiting for an audience in the hope of a graciously helpful *farman* will no longer occur to anyone as worthwhile. Before long English and French establishments will be carrying on the War of the Austrian Succession, and then the Seven Years War, on the debris of the Mughal Empire. A bare fifty years will separate the death of Aurangzib from Clive's victory at

Plassey. The Mughal *avatar* in India ends and the British *raj* begins. Will it, too, end in the same anarchy and misery only to be replaced by yet a third alien domination? Or has it built so soundly that a new India can rise on its foundations, as England rose on the foundations laid by its Norman conquerors? It is for British and even more for Indian statesmanship to give the answer.

January, 1946

L. S. AMERY.

INTRODUCTION

by the Author

In producing this work, the author has been animated by a desire to illumine that obscure page of Indian history which concerns the embassy of Sir William Norris towards the end of the reign of Aurangzib, the last of the Great Mughals. Norris was sent to India as the representative both of King William III and also of the New or English East India Company. His mission covered over three years (1699-1702), a period which was pregnant with future consequences. It saw the beginning of the decline of the Mughal Empire and the union of the two rival Companies, which ultimately led to the establishment of British suzerainty in India. The history of those years forms a stirring period in the annals of the two Companies. Sir Thomas Roe's embassy to the Court of Jahangir, the first diplomatic mission sent under Royal authority to India, occurred at a time when the interests of English trade were as yet embryonic. The Mughal Empire was then rapidly growing and extending its supremacy in all directions. The English had then no settlement of importance, whereas the possessions of the Portuguese were numerous and considerable. The subject has been exhaustively treated, notably in the work of Sir William Foster, late Historiographer to the Secretary of State for India. But the mission, over eighty years later, of Sir William Norris to the Court of Aurangzib has not hitherto received from historical writers on India that attention which its importance demands.

John Bruce incorporated in his *Annals of the East India Company* a lengthy narrative of the embassy, compiled from the dormant mass of material then accessible amongst the Company's records at the East India House. He obviously devoted great care to the work, but appears nevertheless to have omitted to consult certain of those records, and particularly Sir William Norris' *Journals*, which contain a vivid account of the embassy. The chief merit of Bruce's work is that, as he had full access to

the Company's records, it is a storehouse of fairly accurate information. But, though indispensable for the early history of the East India Company, it is based entirely on the records of that Company, and is therefore bound to be one-sided. Bruce's usual perspicuity marked his summary of the documents, but their relative importance is not well brought out, the arrangement is defective, and repetitions are frequent. Nor was he an impartial historian. In his zeal for the Old Company he did not do justice to the New Company, and that defect alone warrants us in making a careful scrutiny of the facts presented in his *Annals*. It can hardly be considered a complete history, for, as an official of the Company, he might have inclined to the suppression of facts likely to give a handle to its enemies. Perhaps Ray and Oliver Strachey were not wide of the mark when they commented that : "Bruce's *Annals* is a dry and disappointing work ; it gives the Company's authorised version of such events as they thought it creditable to record, and so cannot be neglected ; but it is as prejudiced as Hamilton, without his racy charm, and preserves a stony silence, on almost all points of interest".¹

There are references to the embassy in Charles Stewart's *History of Bengal* ; and we also get glimpses of it in the extracts from the *Diary of William Hedges*, whose comments are invaluable though by no means exhaustive. Among others who have written on Norris' embassy, the names of the late Stanley Lane-Poole, Mr. P. E. Roberts, Mr. Beckles Willson, Sir Cornelius Neale Dalton, and Mr. Arnold Wright may be mentioned. The author of the excellent little book *Aurangzib* had not taken pains to contribute a really valuable article on the Norris mission to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, though homogeneity of style was usually a conspicuous feature in all Mr. Lane-Poole's historical works. Mr. Roberts' short narrative of the subject, in Sir W. W. Hunter's unfinished *History of British India*, is open to correction in some of its details, and his bibliography of the available records is inadequate. Mr. Beckles Willson has also included a short account of the embassy in his book *Ledger and Sword* etc. Sir Cornelius Neale Dalton in *The Life of Thomas Pitt* dealt with the subject in referring to the history of the New Company; and Mr. Arnold Wright has given a short but lucid account of it

in his book *Annesley of Surat and His Times*. It will be seen that, notwithstanding some of their good qualities, these contributions to the history of the period are all portions of general literary schemes, in which Sir William Norris' embassy ranks merely as an episode. Further, it may not be out of place to mention that most of the writers have put Bruce's *Annals* and Hedge's *Diary* under contribution, without fully realizing the value of the original records.

The present writer's aim is to give a complete account of the mission, bringing to bear upon the subject the fullest knowledge derived from MSS. records of the East India Company mainly preserved at the India Office and in other English archives presently to be described. The various *Factory Records* at the India Office, especially volumes 19 and 20, furnish the most valuable account of the embassy, except that contained in Sir William Norris' own *Journals*. These records, copies of the documents sent to England, consist of important letters on various matters. There are variations in the handwriting of these documents, different writers having been allotted to different sections. For example, one writer would copy the out-going and in-coming letters of a certain factory, another the consultations, and so on. The records entitled *Original Correspondence*—received by the Court of Directors at home from their servants in the East—have also afforded almost equally valuable material for the story of the embassy. The correspondence includes original documents, detached letters in the hand-writing of the authors, and general letters from the factories in the handwriting of clerks employed for the time being in the Secretary's office. The letters are very numerous and not chronologically arranged, nor are the sheets uniform in size. There are gaps occasioned by loss of documents in transit; by destruction of others thought to be useless; and by decay of the papers owing to insufficient care. They contain also duplicate copies of letters which are in existence in the *Factory Records*. The *MS. Letter Books* and the *Court Minutes* have been useful; the former contain copies of letters sent from England by the Court of Directors to their factors in India; while the latter throw light upon the situation at home, and the steps taken in connection therewith by the Court. The latter is indi-

cated by the nature of the resolutions passed. Besides these the author has consulted the many volumes of *Orme MSS. O.V.*, which are, however, of a fragmentary nature.

In pursuing our research in the archives of the British Museum, we find that while numerous references to the early history of the Norris family are contained in the *Harleian* and the *Cottonian MSS.*, records relating to the embassy are confined to two volumes. These are the *Additional MSS.* 22,843 and 31,302. The former is Vol. II of the Thomas Pitt Papers, which contain letters from the Governor to various chiefs of the Old Company's settlements, and give some idea of the intrigues between the rival Companies and the satirical comments on the Ambassador's actions so characteristic of the great 'interloper'. This volume, together with the whole set of Thomas Pitt Papers, was purchased by the British Museum authorities from J. Tomlinson on April 26, 1859. The latter MS. (31,302) is most important as it contains copies of the Ambassador's Commission, Instructions and Covenants, together with other useful documents relating to the embassy. This MS. was bought from C. Blaker, on December 11, 1880, with other manuscripts. Neither of these vendors appears to have been a dealer or a bookseller. These additional MSS. contain letters, copies of which are also to be found in the *Surat Factory Records* and *Original Correspondence*. Careful comparison therefore is necessary to avoid repetitions while the wording and language of the documents are often misleading, rendering close consideration very necessary. Perhaps Sir John Fortescue was right when, referring to the correspondence of the Company's servants of a still later period, he described it as "corrupt as the text of a chorus of Aeschylus".²

In the present work, the *Journals* of Sir William Norris have been for the first time utilised. The Ambassador mentioned in his Will, and in the declaration dictated on his deathbed to Thomas Harlowyn, his treasurer, that he had left six volumes in his own handwriting of "Journalls of transactions and observations from the time of his Excellency's leaving England to the 14th of September" [1702]. In view of this statement, two volumes of the *Journal* are still missing. Two of the four extant volumes are preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, among the manuscripts

of the *Rawlinson Collection* (C. 912 and C. 913), having been acquired by Dr. Rawlinson at Lord Halifax's sale in 1715. The first volume begins with Sir William's arrival at Porto Novo Road, September 12, 1699, and ends on May 1, 1700; the second volume begins on December 10, 1700, with his arrival at Surat, and ends on April 23, 1701, when he was at Panhala. The gap of rather more than seven months in the *Journal* covers the period while Sir William Norris was at Masulipatam, and includes the voyage to Surat. Another gap of nearly five months occupies the time between his arrival at Panhala and his being settled in camp at the Emperor's *leschar*. These blanks, however, do not altogether break the thread of the narrative, as these periods are covered by Sir William's letters to the Council at Surat and to the Court of Directors which contain detailed accounts of these months. Mr. Macray, who compiled the catalogue of the *Rawlinson MSS.*, notes that Rawlinson inserted a loose slip of paper saying, "Norris was not [the] author of this journal". This dubious assertion is open to criticism, for either Dr. Rawlinson did not find time to examine the volumes carefully, or possibly he could not read them on account of the illegible handwriting which requires the assistance of an expert palaeographer to decipher it.

The other two volumes of the *Journal* marked V, VI, (C.O. 77/50 & 51 preserved at the Public Record Office, London, cover the period of Sir William's negotiations at the Mughal Court, his return to Surat with transactions there, and his sailing for England. Of these, Vol. V commences September 26, 1701, when he was at his "Camp in the Emperours Leschar neare Macanatur" and ends on March 12, 1702 on his return to Surat; and Vol. VI commences on March 13, 1702 and ends on September 14, 1702. These volumes of journals are bound in vellum, and Vol. V bears on both sides the arms of the English East India Company. Nothing is known at the Public Record Office concerning the acquisition of these manuscripts. It may, however, be of interest to readers to learn that in the superseded printed list of Colonial Office records of 1876 a footnote to the East India Correspondence states that the two volumes in question, with others, "were received from the State Paper Office".

There is also a fragment of Sir William's *Journal* at the India Office (in Vol. O.C. 54) which records events from the time of his departure from England, on January 5, 1699 to the middle of March of the same year, whilst he was visiting the Cape de Verde Islands.

It is needless to point out that these journals possess great historical value. Not only do they give a full account of daily events and of matters concerning the embassy; they also contribute much to our knowledge of life at the Mughal Court. If the missing two volumes of the *Journals* could be traced they would no doubt materially add to the value of the records, but so far all attempts to discover them in any of the public archives of Great Britain have failed. It is difficult to conjecture at this distance of time how they disappeared. Sir William Foster pointed out in his *A Guide to the India Office Records* that in 1717 some of the "Company's packets and other papers were thrown on heaps in the Back Warehouse". Some more papers were destroyed during the years 1858-60 and also in 1867. It cannot now be ascertained whether those two volumes were included in this destruction of what probably were valuable records. The journals and other records of the East India Company are of first-rate importance so far as the business of the embassy was concerned, but are of secondary value for a comparative study of the Mughal period. The accounts given by the Company's servants and other European travellers rested on their own powers of observation, and the detachment of their impressions as foreign travellers constitutes the value of their reports, which are essential for a correct estimate of the Indian authorities of those days. It is by comparison and combination of such sources that a faithful picture can be obtained of important aspects of the state of India under Aurangzib.

Besides the authorities mentioned above, there exist family records, such as correspondence by different members of the Norris family and their friends, from which additional glimpses of the embassy can be obtained. These records, entitled *Norris Papers*, cover the period 1695-1709, and are now preserved in the Liverpool Public Library, in two volumes. These also supply references to the domestic politics of the day and local events of histori-

cal interest. They were described in an article by Mr. R. Stewart-Brown, M.A., F.S.A., in the *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury* (September 6, 1921). The collection has been calendared at his instance and transferred from the Town Clerk's Office to the Public Library. For over seventy years it had lain there unknown except for a selection published in 1846 by the Chetham Society (Vol. IX), under the editorship of Thomas Heywood, F.S.A., who remarked that "the Mss. here printed are a portion of a much larger collection made by several generations of the family of Norris of Speke". In fact, all the *Norris Papers*, as Mr. Stewart-Brown tells us, "cover a much wider field than would appear from a perusal of [the] Chetham Society's publication". Although only about six of the letters are from Sir William himself, there are many which refer to him in one way or another. Some are concerned with his election to Parliament, his movements abroad, his expected return to England, and litigation arising out of his death. Further information regarding Sir William has also been derived from Vol. IV of the *Liverpool Town Books*, of which only the first volume has so far been published.

In dealing with the East India Company's records, Sir William Norris' *Journals*, and the *Norris Papers*, mentioned above, much extraneous matter has been omitted. Any typical descriptions having historical value, apart from the actual negotiations, have been retained in the quaint and picturesque language of the original: place and personal names have been verified as far as possible with their correct and modern form. It has been found necessary in some instances, especially in the case of the *Norris Papers*, to complete within square brackets part of a name or word which has been lost owing to a rent or other cause. Undated letters have been dated, as far as possible, from consideration of their contents, the date being added within square brackets. The punctuation in these records is chaotic, the full stop being seldom used; it has therefore been supplied, to make the text more easily readable.

Some slight references bearing on Norris' embassy are to be found in one of the Persian Mss. of that period available in London. This has already been pointed out by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who has gathered together with unwearied sympathy and acute-

ness any materials serving to elucidate the time and reign of Aurangzib. He notes that there are in *Akhbarat-i-darbar-i-Muala*³ or MS. newsletters or bulletins of the daily darbar of the Emperor "occasional references to the English, such as the visit of Sir William Norris, but no narrative of the dealings and negotiations with them. On the whole, the references are too brief to be of much use to us".⁴ It is however clear that an account of the proceedings of Sir William's negotiations was in fact preserved in the Mughal's secretariat. This is evident not only from the contents of the English records, but also from a small number of Persian letters written by various Mughal officials and relating to the position of the two Companies which are preserved at the India Office. It is doubtful whether any substantial information on the subject will ever be gleaned either from the Mughal State Persian letters written by various Mughal officials and relating to official annals of Aurangzib's reign were not detailed expositions; and unofficial chronicles, though free from official censorship, were merely of a general character. Probably too, the writer of the latter did not consider Sir William's embassy of any diplomatic significance, as they from time to time witnessed or heard of the visits of other foreign representatives to the Mughal Court to obtain trading or other privileges. Yet this lack of information in Persian records hardly militates against the completeness of the present work; for, in spite of it, what has been gathered here from English archives appears to provide enough for an exhaustive study of the subject.

The spelling and accents of the names of the Mughal representatives and the various Indian terms of the period are based in the present work on the model of William Irvine's 'notes' attached to Manucci's *Storia do Mogor* and his *Later Mughals*. The accuracy and value of these 'notes' as well as of the bibliography appended to his works cannot be over-estimated. In fact Irvine's works mark a new era in the field of modern Indian historical research, a fact which has been amply attested by others.

We get glimpses of the embassy in writings of contemporaries, such as Manucci's *Storia do Mogor* and William Tillard's *Diary*. Their accounts are interesting and in many particulars they corroborate the accuracy of other authorities.

In the correspondence of the President of the Dutch East India Company and his Council at Masulipatam with the Governor and Council of the Coast of Coromandel residing at Nagapatam, also of the Dutch Commissioners on the Coast of Malabar and Hugli to the High Government at Batavia, occur allusions to the embassy, but these are of little material value. The reason for this may perhaps be that the Dutch were at that time not likely to be told anything of importance by the English; what they heard would be either commercial gossip, or items that had come out when the Mughal's ministers were trying to play the Dutch off against the English—probably diplomatic lies. This correspondence along with other principal letters and papers of the officials of the Company residing in India are included in the collection called *Overgekomen papieren van Indie* preserved at the Algemeen Rijksarchief at the Hague. These documents were transferred from the Record Office at Batavia. Many years ago transcripts were made of selected documents of special interest to England [not to India] up to the year 1699 from the archives at the Hague by Mr. Danvers of the India Office. Some of these are partially translated, and like *all* translations, need to be used carefully.

All the available MSS. records enumerated above have been thoroughly utilized, together with subsidiary authorities as indicated in the footnotes. It is not always possible for historical students to confine themselves to original documents at every step, and therefore subsidiary authorities have frequently been consulted. As Freeman truly observed: "Any knowledge of history which is good for anything must be founded on the mastery of original authorities; but it will not be founded on an attempt to master all original authorities. Every student must master some; no student can master all."

It now remains for the author to acknowledge his indebtedness to the editors of the *Asiatic Review*, the *Calcutta Review*, the *Journal of Indian History* and the *Indian Antiquary*, who have kindly published articles and excerpts on the embassy from time to time in their columns. Among those who have shown their interest and helped the writer by their encouragement and valuable assistance in the search for records at the India Office must be men-

tioned Sir William Foster and Miss L.M. Anesty. The writer also wishes to thank Mr. R. Stewart-Brown, M.A., F.S.A. of Liverpool for useful information regarding the Norris family, Miss L. Drueker who accurately transcribed some of the MSS. which required expert palaeographical knowledge, and last but not least the late Miss Mary E. R. Martin who most generously assisted in every possible way by her constant guidance and encouragement to the execution of the work.

H. DAS

NOTES

¹ P. ix of *Keigwin's Rebellion* (1683-4) ...by Ray & Oliver Strachey, Oxford, 1916.

² P. 20 of *The Writing of History*.

³ *Tod MS.*, Royal Asiatic Society, London.

⁴ *The Affairs of the English Factory at Surat, 1694-1700* (*Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings*, Vol. V). Robert Orme in his "notes" consulted some of these Persian MSS. referred to by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

HARIHAR DAS

(1892—1952?)

Mr. Harihar Das was born on November 2, 1892, at Sidhipasa in the district of Jessore, Bengal. He was the youngest son of the late J. C. Das, one of the leading lawyers of his day at Khulna and a man of considerable literary attainment. Mr. Das received his early education first at the Khulna Zilla School and later on at the City Collegiate School and Doveton College, Calcutta. His education during his boyhood was greatly hindered by the untimely death of his father, and it was entirely by his own effort that Mr. Das was able to shape his future career. In 1912, while still at school, he wrote a short memoir of the late Reverend Lal Behari Dey, which was published by the Christian Literature Society of Madras. In the following year he won the second place in the Bengal Bible Prize Examination and also gained distinction in two other Scripture Examinations.

Mr. Das was a voracious reader of English literature from his early youth, and this enabled him to take full advantage of his father's excellent library. During his student days he came into contact with the late Mr. Lalmohun Ghose, with whom he often discussed literary and political subjects. His admiration for the talented orator and leader of Indian national politics induced him to collect a good deal of material, with a view to compiling Mr. Ghose's life. Mr. Das also became friendly with the late Bishop Lefroy, Principal R. Gee of Bishop's College, Mr. P. C. Lyon, and Professor Monmohun Ghose, who all took much interest in his literary work, for which so great was his zeal in writing and collecting materials that it seriously handicapped his academic career.

Mr. Das went to England in July 1919 and joined the Faculty of Arts at University College, London, and for two years attended the lectures given at the School of Librarianship. He was the first Indian to take that course. During that time, for more than a

year, he was on the staff of the India Office Library as a voluntary worker, with the object of gaining practical experience in Librarianship. His services received suitable acknowledgment in the annual report of the then librarian, Dr. F. W. Thomas.

In 1920 Mr. Das was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, on the recommendation of the late Sir George Prothero. The following year his book, *Life and Letters of Toru Dutt*, was published by the Oxford University Press, and was well received in England, India, and America. Its literary merit was recognised by well-known men of letters including the Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, Mr. W. B. Yeats, Dr. A. C. Bradley, and others. H. R. H. the late Princess Victoria graciously accepted a presentation copy of the book from the author, who, on the strength of this publication, was admitted a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, on the recommendation of its President, the Marquess of Crewe.

Mr. Das went to Oxford in 1921, and was admitted to New College. He graduated in 1923, taking the degree of B. Litt., and then worked to qualify for a doctorate in history, which, however, he was not successful in obtaining. While at New College, Mr. Das came into intimate contact with the Warden, Dr. W. A. Spooner, and Mr. H. W. B. Joseph, who both took considerable interest in his academic studies. During his residence in Oxford he contributed regularly to various periodicals. A short memoir of the late Miss S. A. Bonnerjee was written by him for *Britain and India*, in December 1920, and his first article to the *Asiatic Review* was an appreciation of the life and career of the late Mr. T. W. Rolleston, the first secretary of the India Society. A continuous succession of reviews and articles followed, not only in the *Asiatic Review*, but also in the *Calcutta Review*, *Indian Antiquary*, *Journal of Indian History*, *Bengal Past and Present*, *Young Men of India*, and other magazines. In June, 1923, he wrote a critical review of Professor George Saintsbury's *A Scrap Book*, which was published in the *Oxford Magazine*. In the same year a tribute by Mr. Das to Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee on the Lytton controversy appeared in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. In 1924 the *Calcutta Review* published a long and valuable article from his pen on *The Early Indian Visitors to*

England. This was followed by a series of articles on *The Embassy of Sir William Norris to Aurangzib*, published in the *Calcutta Review* and in *The Journal of Indian History*. These articles represented many years of research work and revealed his historical scholarship. In April, 1929, a memoir of Dr. K. M. Banerjea appeared in *Bengal Past and Present* from his pen, and in the same year his essay on the *Mission of George Weldon and Navarro* was accepted by the *Indian Antiquary*. The latter essay was first submitted for the 'Alexander Prize Essay' competition of the Royal Historical Society, and Mr. Das was honourably mentioned by the examiners. He also contributed two short biographical sketches of Toru Dutt and Lalmohun Ghose to the 14th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. His essay on *Classical Tradition in Toru Dutt's Poetry*, published in the October (1931) number of the *Asiatic Review*, received the appreciation of such an eminent scholar as Professor Gilbert Murray. All these efforts conclusively proved Mr. Das's literary ability and scholarship covering a wide range of subjects.

During his long stay in England Mr. Das became a regular reader in the library of the British Museum, and besides he constantly consulted the archives at the Public Record Office, the India Office, and other libraries for his historical work on 'the embassy of Sir William Norris to Aurangzib'. A short stay in Dublin enabled him to inspect the library of that University. On another occasion he visited the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and during a short time spent in Scotland he was able to visit the various places of historical and literary interest in and around the Scottish capital. His travels on the Continent gave him the opportunity of seeing various institutions of interest in Paris, Berlin, Breslau and other centres of European learning.

S. DAS

Part I

THE BACKGROUND

1908

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CHAPTER I

Family History and Early Life

The Manor of Speke lies on the northern bank of the Mersey a few miles east of Liverpool. The surrounding district is wholly agricultural, and in olden days there was an extensive cider industry. Properly speaking, there is no village but only a few cottages near the modern church. Speke Hall is one of the most famous houses in the County of Lancaster and is surrounded by many acres of land, including gardens, orchards, plantations and pleasure grounds; these extend on one side to the river Mersey and beyond there is a beautiful view of the Cheshire hills and the Welsh mountains. The Hall is an outstanding example of 'black and white' architecture of which not many specimens now remain. The house is built about a rectangular court and was once surrounded by a broad moat. The latter has now been drained and filled in on the south side which faces the Mersey. On the north side is the main entrance, where the moat is crossed by a stone bridge. The building is of various dates; some parts may be as old as the fourteenth century, but the bulk of it belongs to the sixteenth. The general appearance is to-day probably much the same as it was in Elizabethan times.¹

The Lancashire family of Norris was of great distinction even from Plantagenet days, though the chequered history of the Speke property dates from a still earlier period, during which it was successively inherited by the Molyneuxes of Sefton and the Erneys of Chester. The founder of the Norris family appears to be one Hugh Le Noreis (i.e. the Norseman) to whom King John, before his accession to the Crown, gave the manor of Blackrod, near Bolton. The owners of Speke for over five hundred years were, it is supposed, a junior branch of his family, and their male line became extinct towards the middle of the eighteenth century. For one hundred and eighty-five years

thereafter the property was in other hands; it finally returned to a branch of the Norris family in our own time.

From the Speke family came another distinguished branch, the Norrises of Rycote. It would be difficult to name a single family which produced so many remarkable servants of the State as did the Rycote branch throughout the Tudor period. Henry Norris, to take an example, was a courtier and favourite of Henry VIII, who not only made him keeper of the Privy Purse, but also bestowed upon him various responsible positions. He lost that monarch's favour within six years after the death of Cardinal Wolsey, and was charged, on the scantiest evidence, with an intrigue with Anne Boleyn. No one believed him guilty, but as some one had to be made a victim for the sake of the King's plans, Norris lost his head in the Tower in 1536.

By way of amends for this injustice, his son Henry long enjoyed the favour of Elizabeth. As Sir Henry Norris of Rycote, he was Ambassador to France from 1566 to 1570 and afterwards, in 1572, was created Baron Norris. He and his wife were greatly favoured by the Queen, who twice visited them at Rycote. His services to the nation were further recognised by his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire in 1596. He died in 1601. His reputation was that of a man of discretion and peace, but his six sons were described as a "brood of spirited, martial men". This description they justified by various campaigns, notably in Ireland and the Netherlands.²

Of that "brood of spirited, martial men", Sir John Norris, the second son, proved the most successful commander sent by England to help William the Silent against Spain, and he also took a distinguished part in other wars of Elizabeth on the Continent.³ The last years of Norris' life were spent in Ireland in the endeavour to subdue the rebel chief O'Neill, who had been created Earl of Tyrone by Queen Elizabeth. Though Sir John Norris was ably seconded by one of his brothers, Sir Thomas,⁴ his partial failure to deal with Tyrone cost him Elizabeth's favour, and he died of a broken heart, it is said, in 1597. The Queen wrote to his mother, Lady Norris, a long letter of sympathy. This, which she addressed to "myne owne Crow(n)e", assured her "of our mynde that nature can have

stirred no more dolorious affection in you as a mother, for a deare sonne, then (the) gratefullnes and memory of his services paste hath wrought in us his Sovereigne apprehension of our misse of so worthy a servant".⁵ This was written from Richmond, September 22, 1597.

Another brother, Sir Edward Norris, during his military career in Holland, had the privilege of serving under Sir Philip Sidney. Fuller truly observed that "The Norrises were all *Martis pulli*, men of the sword, and never out of military employment."⁶ Sir Edward was afterwards made Governor of Ostend, where his administration proved a failure and incurred severe censure. His services were, however, so essential at a critical time that he was the recipient of a gracious letter from Queen Elizabeth, addressing him as "Ned", in which she assured him of her sympathy and encouragement in his difficult task. He finally returned to England in 1599 and died in 1603.⁷

His estates in Berkshire were inherited by his nephew Francis, who had succeeded his grandfather as Lord Norris in 1601. This Francis was a man of violent temper. He had a long quarrel with Lord Willoughby de Eresby which in 1615 led to a fight between their retainers. In the fight a man was killed and Norris was convicted of manslaughter, but was afterwards pardoned by the King. In 1621 he was created Earl of Berkshire and soon afterwards had a scuffle with Lord Scrope within the precincts of the House of Lords while the House was sitting. For this he was censured and sent to the Fleet prison, a humiliation which so grieved him that he retired to his seat in Oxfordshire. There, as the result of brooding over his downfall, he shot himself with a crossbow in 1623,⁸ leaving no issue.

One of the most prominent members of the original family⁹ of Speke was that Sir William Norris who was Lord of the Manor in the time of Henry VIII. It is said that his father, Henry Norris, fought in the battle of Flodden in 1513. The martial spirit of the Norrises of Speke was as conspicuous as that of the Rycote branch of the Norris family already mentioned. Sir William Norris was one of those members of leading county families whose services were requisitioned by their sovereign in times of national emergency. He took part in the Scottish

expedition to Edinburgh of the Earl of Hertford in 1544, and brought back as part of the spoil some printed folios and other trophies from Holyrood. These books are now preserved in the Athenaeum Library at Liverpool.¹⁰ In 1947 Sir William Norris, among others, also distinguished himself at the battle of Musselburgh, in which his son William was killed.

Sir William died in January, 1568,¹¹ and was succeeded by his son Edward, who was commemorated by an inscription at the Hall, of which he built a portion. His son Sir William was made a Knight of the Bath by James I at his coronation. His eldest son having died without children, he was succeeded by his second son William, who died in 1651. This William appears to have taken no part in the Civil War, but two at least of his sons fought on the King's side. One of these, Thomas Norris, his successor, had to compound for his offence with the victorious Parliament by a fine of £508. Thereafter he appears to have led a quiet and obscure life. His wife Katherine was the fourth daughter of Sir Henry Garraway.¹² They had a large family of seven sons and four daughters. His eldest son, Thomas, succeeded him in 1686. The second son, William Norris,¹³ the future Ambassador to the Mughal Court, was born in 1657 at Speke Hall, a year before the accession of Aurangzib.

William Norris was elected eighth into Westminster School in 1672, and remained a King's Scholar until 1675, when he became third of those elected into Cambridge. Other King's Scholars contemporary with him at school were Francis Atterbury, afterwards the well-known Jacobite Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester, and Lancelot Blackburne, afterwards Archbishop of York. He came to Westminster during the headmastership of the celebrated Dr. Richard Busby, which extended from 1638 to 1695. It was Busby's proud boast that he had educated most of the Bishops of his own later days. Among his more famous pupils had been Sir Christopher Wren, John Locke, John Dryden, Jonathan Trelawney (one of the famous Seven Bishops), Matthew Prior, Charles Montague, and Lord Halifax. Dr. Busby did perhaps more than any other to give to the public school system in England the form it possesses to-day. He did much also to induce the great English families to send their sons

to public schools rather than have them privately educated by tutors. He is remembered as the great flogging Head Master, equally feared and loved by his boys.

On leaving Westminster School, William Norris entered Trinity College, Cambridge, on June 25, 1675, with Mr. Boteler (Butler) as his tutor. He was matriculated in 1675 and was elected Scholar in 1676. William Norris was something of a poet and in 1677, while still an undergraduate, we find him contributing a poem in Greek to a volume entitled *Epithalamium*, addressed by the University to Charles II on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Mary to William of Orange. Norris graduated in 1678; was admitted a minor Fellow of Trinity College on October 3, 1681; became M.A. in 1682 and a major Fellow on July 7, 1682.¹⁴ He drew the emoluments of his Fellowship up to Christmas, 1690, but held no College office beyond acting as tutor to one man (John Taylor, admitted in 1687). In 1686-7 he became involved, as a delegate from the University, in a dispute with King James II. As the incident illustrates the times the story is here set forth.

On February 9, 1687, James, in a letter to the University of Cambridge, ordered the admission of one Alban Francis, a Benedictine monk, to the degree of Master of Arts without administration to him of the usual oaths. The King dispensed with the observance of the statutes on this occasion. The Duke of Albemarle, who was then Chancellor, being appealed to by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. John Peachell, advised the University to petition the King to revoke his mandate. Accordingly, the Congregation of the Senate on February 21 appointed Dr. Thomas Smoult, professor of Casuistical Divinity, on behalf of the 'Non-Regent' house, and Mr. Norris, Fellow of Trinity, on behalf of the 'Regents'. (At that time the Senate was divided into two 'houses'—the non-regents or seniors, and the regents or juniors). They were instructed to explain that the Senate believed that the admission of Mr. Francis without the usual oaths would be illegal and unsafe. Their representations appear to have had no effect, for a second royal mandate (read on March 11) was received. The Senate acted as before, and on April 9 the Vice-Chancellor and Senate were, by deputies, sum-

moned before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. They appeared accordingly to represent their case (William Norris on this occasion not being one of the deputies). Lord Chancellor Jeffreys presided over the Commission, and on May 7, 1687, judgment was given to the effect that an act of great disobedience to the King's commands had been committed. The Vice-Chancellor was thereupon deprived of his office.¹⁵

Norris, while still at Cambridge, wrote a Latin poem dealing with the elevation of the Princess Mary to the throne of England in 1689. It appears in a volume entitled *Musae Cantabrigienses*—poems addressed to William and Mary, on the Revolution, by members of the University of Cambridge. It is an ambitious production, and even tries to claim 'Dutch' William as a genuine Englishman!

On December 13, 1689, William Norris married Elizabeth Pollexfen of St. Clement Danes, widow of Nicholas Pollexfen, son of Henry Pollexfen of Holbeton, Devon,¹⁶ and previously of Isaac Meynell, son of Godfrey Meynell of Willington, Derbyshire.¹⁷ She was a daughter of Robert Read of Cheshunt. By her first husband she had a daughter, Elizabeth, who married first Robert Hale, and secondly, the Hon. Robert Cecil; and by the second, two sons named Nicholas and Read. Lady Norris was a woman of fashion, but illiterate. She was connected with Lord Ranelagh, whom the Tories so long tried to drive from office. Her death took place early in 1713 and she was buried on March 1 at St. Stephens, Walbrook.

Her husband had on November 7, 1694, been admitted a freeman of Liverpool, a privilege often bestowed on members of the family of Speke. It may not be out of place to mention here that, apart from the distinction of individual members of the family, the Norrises of Speke, on account of their high social position, were able to identify themselves, like other leading families of the County of Lancaster such as the Moores of Bank-hall, the Molyneuxes of Sefton, the Stanleys and the Crosses, with the civic and political affairs of Liverpool for several generations.

William Norris seems also to have done much to secure the Charter granted to Liverpool in September that year. "These

Charters were very far from giving universal satisfaction amongst the burgesses. They did not create any system of municipal representation analogous to the Parliamentary system of the country; but rendered the town council self-elected, leaving only a nominal control to the burgesses, in common hall assembled".¹⁸ At this time the name of Liverpool was becoming increasingly famous as a place affording business facilities. Indeed, it may be said that now, during the reign of William III, the commercial prosperity of the town had its real beginning. This period saw the inauguration of several enterprises all calculated to further the progress and importance of Liverpool, which "began more rapidly to advance in size, population and commerce". Most of those belonging to Norris' social rank were influential men, "amongst whom are divers eminent merchants and tradesmen, whose trade and traffic, especially into the West Indies, makes it famous, its situation affording in great plenty, and at reasonable rates than in most parts of England, such exported commodities as are proper for the West Indies".¹⁹

On November 1, 1695, William Norris succeeded Thomas, his elder brother, as member of Parliament for Liverpool. The following year, in a letter to this brother we have glimpses of contemporary events and also an account of a visit paid to the House of Commons by the Venetian Ambassador and his suite. The latter is plainly chronicled because he believes it will interest his predecessor.

William Norris was a Whig, and in 1696 spoke in favour of the bill of attainder brought against Sir John Fenwick, Bart., the Jacobite, for a share in the recent plot to assassinate the King. His main argument was set forth in the following sentences:—"that we are the Commons of England in Parliament assembled; and if so, Sir, we have a discretionary power to do whatsoever we see is for the good of the Kingdom; and if we are to be circumscribed by the rules of Westminster Hall, and we are to do nothing but what they would do, to what purpose do we sit here; if we are entrusted with this power, and may exert it, I think here is a fit occasion for you to exert this authority". This view prevailed; the bill was passed by 189 to 156 in the Commons and in the Upper House by 68 to 61. Fenwick was

beheaded on Tower Hill, January 28, 1697.²⁰

In July, 1698, Parliament was dissolved and a new one summoned for August. William Norris and William Clayton, one of the chief local merchants, were returned as members for Liverpool. They were desired in January, 1699, to procure an Act of Parliament to create Liverpool a parish by itself, apart from Walton of which it had hitherto formed a portion, "to erect a Church etc., and to agree with the Right Honourable the Earl of Macclesfield for the castle & appendages thereunto belonging". This Act was secured.²¹

In order to complete the story of Norris' Parliamentary career it will be as well at this point to relate the following incident which marks its close. He remained member for Liverpool till 1700, when a dissolution took place in December.²² He and Clayton were again elected. Sir Cleave More, Baronet, head of the oldest Liverpool family, was one of the opposing candidates and did not accept defeat passively. He petitioned the new Parliament, alleging that Richard Norris, the Mayor, had made use of "indirect practices" to secure the election of his brother who before this time had been created Baronet and sent to India (see *infra*). He complained that the said Mayor had threatened the ruin of many of the electors if they should vote for the petitioner; refused, as disqualified, several who wished to vote for him, but admitted others who, though not qualified, voted for Norris. Further, that he refused an inspection of the poll to petitioner's friends. It was asserted, therefore, that the sitting member had not obtained a majority of legal votes. It had also been advised that Sir William Norris was not eligible for re-election, as he had been absent in India for two years and was not likely to return during the present Parliament. A petition to the same effect was presented by a number of the freemen (electors). Both petitions were duly referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, but before a decision was given Parliament was again dissolved. This time Sir William Norris did not stand, Clayton, his former colleague, and Thomas Johnson being elected, apparently without opposition.²³

As already mentioned Norris had been created a Baronet. This had been done on December 3, 1698, with a view to giving

him rank suitable for a mission to India which he was now about to undertake. The title, it may be here mentioned, became extinct on October 10, 1702, barely four years later. The King, after setting forth his care for Ireland and especially for the prosperity of Ulster, including due provision of troops for its protection from enemies or sedition, and recalling how James I had instituted the order of Baronets as a dignity suitable for those who assisted to any special degree in this task, declares that he regards as worthy of this honour his beloved and faithful William Norris of Speke in Lancashire, Esquire, whom he is sending as his Ambassador to the Mughal Emperor (ad Mogulum Imperatorem). He, therefore, creates the said William Norris of Speke a Baronet, he being worthy on account of family, patrimony, position and good conduct, and in particular by his maintaining 30 foot soldiers "in our army" in Ireland for three years.²⁴ [The patent goes on, as is usual in such documents, to lay down the regulations that are to govern (a) descent of the dignity (limited to heirs male), (b) precedence and (c) other formal matters]. Norris was to be made a Knight immediately the letters patent were ready.²⁵

NOTES

¹ There is an interesting illustrated account of it by Mr. Herbert Winstanley in Vol. 71 of the *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*. See also *Country Life* for January 14 and 21, 1922; and *Victoria History of Lancashire*, Vol. III. Archibald Constable and Co. Limited, 1907.

² An imposing monument of Lord Norris with his wife and their six sons can be seen in St. Andrew's Chapel, Westminster Abbey. It bears no inscription. A full and accurate description of the monument is given in Vol. II, pp. 198-9 of *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter*, Westminster, by John Preston Neale and Edward Wedlake Brayley, 1823.

³ Correspondence relating to Sir John Norris' military operations in France and the Low Countries, and other matters, is preserved in the *Cottonian MSS*, British Museum.

⁴ The latter, in addition to his military career, had the reputation of being a man of letters, and he was "one of the Company to whom Spenser on a well-known occasion unfolded his project of the *Faerie Queen*". See Vol. XLI, pp. 142-3 of the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁸ See MS. E. Musaeo 18. There is another copy of this letter in MS. Rawl. D. 400, showing a number of variations, and having at the end, a memorandum by Thomas Hearne, saying that it gave a better text than the one he had printed, at the end of the *Life of Henry V* by Titus Livius, and was better in some respects but worse in others than a third copy whose readings he had noted in his edition of Camden's *Elizabeth*.

¹⁹ See Vol. II, p. 228 of *The History of the Worthies of England*....., by Thomas Fuller, new edition, 1811.

²⁰ See Vol. XLI, pp. 117-18, of *Dictionary of National Biography*. In the *Cottonian MSS.* (B.M.) there are letters addressed to Sir Thomas Bodley by Sir Edward Norris in which the latter protests against accusations of his maladministration at Ostend; other communications on the same subject are addressed to Queen Elizabeth by the Council of State of Holland.

²¹ Vol. XLI, p. 120 of *Dictionary of National Biography*; also Dugdale's *Baronage*.

²² In the *Harl. MS.* 1997, there is a "Genealogical Declaration" respecting the Norris family, written by Sir William Norris of Speke and dated June, 1563. It also contains an abstract of Speke charters and a further series of abstracts. A text of this document was published by John Gough Nichols. See pp. 363-373, Part X of *The Topographer and Genealogist*, September, 1847. Though the document is of some historical value, it nevertheless contains some inaccuracies, as pointed out by Mr. Nichols in his notes. Dr. Ormerod also discussed some mis-statements made by Sir William Norris in the "Genealogical Declaration". See p. 9 of *Miscellanea Palatina*, by George Ormerod, 1851.

²³ P. 35 of *Miscellanea Palatina*.

²⁴ P. 37, *Ibid.*

²⁵ Sir Henry Garraway was on the Committee of the East India Company from 1614-43. He became Deputy Governor of the Company in 1636 and held this office till 1639, when he was elected Lord Mayor of London. In 1640 he was knighted and became Governor of the East India Company (1641-1643). Owing to Royalist sympathies and opposition to Pym and his followers, he incurred considerable unpopularity. His death took place in July, 1646. See Vol. II of *The Aldermen of the City of London*, by A. B. Beaven, London, 1913.

²⁶ William's brothers were:—(a) Thomas, (b) John, (c) Henry, (d) Edward, (e) Jonathan, (f) Richard; see notes subjoined. Their sisters were Margaret, Ann, Katherine and Elizabeth.

(a) Thomas, mentioned in the text, was M.P. for Liverpool, 1689-90, 1690-5; was sent to the Convention Parliament of 1688, and the granting in 1695 by William III of a Charter, by which great benefits were secured to the town of Liverpool, was due chiefly to his efforts. He was a Whig, and in 1696 served as High Sheriff of Lancashire. He married Magdalene, second daughter of Sir Willoughby Aston. He died at Harrogate in June, 1700, and his only child Mary inherited ultimately the whole Speke property (1730).

(b) John. In the *Norris Papers*, (*Transactions of the Chetham Society*), Heywood says that John was at one time in the merchant service;

apparently he retired early and lived in Lancashire till his death, when he was still comparatively young. A few facts given by Heywood suggest that he was a wastrel and spendthrift. A somewhat confusing suggestion is made in *D.N.B.* to the effect that Admiral Sir John Norris was a brother to Sir William. It is true that Sir William had a brother John, who was, according to the Herald's *Visitation of Lancashire of 1664*, aged two years on September 23, 1664, when Thomas Norris of Speke attested that fact, (Sir) William being then aged six (*Chetham Soc.*, Vol. 85, Part II). Neither the Admiral's identity nor parentage can be properly traced, but it seems quite clear that he was not a son of old Thomas Norris of Speke and not, therefore, Sir William's brother. If he had been, he would have become heir to the estates, which had passed to a female heir long before his death in 1749. Ormerod's pedigree, *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (April 4, 1850; No. 6), declares that John died without issue, and there seems no reason to doubt this. *Le Neve Knights*, p. 491, does not prove the case at all.

(c) Henry, M.A., B.D., was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. He became a clergyman and Fellow of his College.

(d) Edward, also of Brasenose College, M.A., 1689; B.M., 1691; M.D., 1695. Practised in Chester. Fellow of the Royal Society, 1698. Went as Secretary to his brother William in India. He married Ann, daughter of Peter Gerrard, M.D. of Grewood. He had a son, named Thomas, and two daughters, Susanna and Catherine. He was M.P. for Liverpool, 1714-15. Became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1716. On his retirement he lived with his family at his ancestral home at Speke. His character was thus described by his wife on the Memorial Tablet in Garston Parish Church, Liverpool:—"He was of spirit gentle and courteous. His temper was sweet & easy, his mind serene & equal. His judgment was cool but his Heart warm with Affection to his friends, Benevolence to Mankind and zeal for the Glory of God". He died on July 22, 1726, and was buried in the chapel of Garston (St. Michael's).

(e) Jonathan, born at Childwall, February 1, 1667.

(f) Richard was Bailiff in Liverpool, 1695, Mayor, 1700 and M.P., 1708-10. He was Sheriff of Lancashire in 1718. He was active and prominent in the affairs of Liverpool, and was a close friend of Sir Thomas Johnson.

¹⁴ This means little more than that he had taken the Master's degree at the normal and statutory time.

¹⁵ See *The Cambridge Case*...., London, 1689. (British Museum Volume of Law Tracts 514. L. I. No. 24); also Vol. XI, p. 1340 of Howell's *State Trials*. *Dictionary of National Biography*: see under Francis, Alban. The degree was ultimately not given.

¹⁶ Vivian, *Visitations of Devon*, p. 601.

¹⁷ Glover, *Derbyshire*, Vol. II, p. 159.

¹⁸ Pp. 337-9 of the *History of the Commerce and Town of Liverpool*, by Thomas Baines.

¹⁹ P. 301 of Fox Bourne's *English Merchants*.

²⁰ Pp. 1088-5, Vol. V of Cobbett's *Parliamentary History of England*, printed by T. C. Hansard, London: also p. 177, Vol. III of Henry Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*. Macaulay gives a brilliant and exhaustive account of the trial in his *History of England*, Vol. VI.

²¹ L.T.B., Vol. IV, p. 829, and also pp. 342-3 of Touzeau's *Rise and Progress of Liverpool*.

²² Picton in his *Memorials of Liverpool* is in error in his account of the election. See Vol. I, p. 148.

²³ *Journals of the House of Commons*, Vol. XIII.

²⁴ The words about paying soldiers for Ireland are part of the regular formula and mean only that he paid a considerable sum into the Exchequer.

²⁵ Patent Roll 3398. 10 William III, Part I, No. 13. See also Vol. IV, pp. 176, 1665-1707 of G. E. Cokayne's *Complete Baronetage*, William Pollard & Co. Ltd., Exeter, 1904. The above is an abstract of the Letters Patent creating the Baronetcy, slightly paraphrased.

CHAPTER II

The 'Interlopers'

Sir William Norris's mission to the Court of the Emperor Aurangzib on behalf of the New or English East India Company was undertaken at a critical time as regards both the fortunes of the Mughal Empire and also the efforts that had been made by English merchants and traders for over a century to promote their commerce and to establish their position as residents in India. On the one hand, the Emperor's power was visibly declining, and on the other the position of the European traders had become insecure for many reasons, not the least important being their own rivalries, which led them to think as much of injuring one another as of promoting what should have been a common cause in obtaining trade facilities and privileges. It was not surprising, therefore, that the New Company, which had to justify the patronage of King William III as well as to recover the immense sum expended on its promotion, should have resolved to entrust its interests to so well qualified a representative as Sir William Norris, who would plead its cause before the Mughal Emperor and obtain from him as many favourable concessions as possible.

In the preceding period had arisen a body of private merchants engaged in clandestine trade and traffic with India. The East India Company's exhortations to stop such irregular trading proved of no avail. As a matter of fact the extension of its trade in the East attracted these 'interlopers', who were followed almost as a natural consequence by the advent of pirates. During the Civil War a number of influential merchant capitalists protested against the monopoly of the India trade, and claimed that "the trade in the East should either be organised on the Regulated system, under which each member of a trade guild or association might traffic on his own account, or that it should be thrown open to the nation". Thus the desire for 'the open door' in trade with India gained strength under the Commonwealth, and its principles began to be thought out and examined.

It became evident to Cromwell that the introduction of free trade between England and the East Indies would naturally destroy Dutch commerce in those regions and "throw the balance of the trade into the hands of the English", an idea which caused great alarm in Holland. No sooner had he opened free trade to the East Indies than the Dutch resolved to strengthen their position by securing new ports of commercial importance. These facts, together with the precarious condition of the Company owing to the loss of trade and other grievances, induced Cromwell to revert to the former plan of carrying on the trade on a joint-stock basis.¹ The Council of State was in accord with the Protector's scheme to recognise the claims of private merchants in issuing discriminating licences to enable them to trade in the East. This procedure undoubtedly pacified the private merchants for a time, but their agitation against the Company's trade monopoly revived later under the Restoration in a violent form, and led to legal proceedings between the Company and themselves.

It was some time before the Company recovered its former prosperity. Public attention was largely occupied with the Spanish War; and for the time being trade with the East Indies was little heeded. Royalist plots and Cromwell's Parliamentary difficulties caused general confusion and unrest; and thus, anxious as the Directors of the Company were to secure a new charter, there was a long delay before this was granted. In October, 1657, the new charter was received.² It re-established the Company on a basis similar to that of the charters of Elizabeth and James I with certain alterations and further concessions. Cromwell, by creating a permanent joint stock, re-affirmed the constitution of the Company on a solid foundation which proved a great stimulus to its steady progress. It is noteworthy that, though European politics were occupying the major portion of his attention, Cromwell in his last years was able to show an interest in the Company's affairs. Commenting on the Protector's administration of the time, Macaulay said: "Never had the national honour been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper."³

The interference of the private traders during Charles I's reign, and their increasing opposition to the Company, was already noticeable. In the reign of Charles II the Company's exclusive privileges and enormous profits aroused still greater jealousy and dissatisfaction amongst the numerous private merchants and others, who raised a great clamour and began to dispute the Company's trade monopoly in the East as well as to impugn the validity of its charter. The Company's authority in India was also defied by the interlopers,⁴ who had the support of influential private merchants in London. Some of these interlopers, as Sir William Foster pointed out, "were freemen of the Company and some were even prominent officials of that body".⁵ Many dissatisfied servants of the Company made common cause with the interlopers, and in India the latter were largely assisted by them. These interlopers took "advantage of the reaction in favour of royalty after the Restoration, and joined the side of the Court against the popular party to which the India Company belonged".⁶ These political struggles had an adverse influence upon Indian trade, and as a result some of the Directors endeavoured to increase the Company's membership by admitting outsiders; but these endeavours met with strenuous resistance from the majority of the Council, who were determined to uphold their rights of monopoly. This was not the only ground for attacks on the Company. It was accused of draining the country of bullion—there being no great demand for English goods—and of absorbing capital, sorely needed for home development. Its trade, it was represented, was of little value to the English manufacturing classes. The long and dangerous voyages to the East, moreover, employed ships and men who were thereby prevented from answering a call in any national emergency; besides which there was great loss both of life and material.

For the time being the efforts of the Company's adversaries came to nothing, as the Directors refused to listen to their claims for a share of the Indian trade. It was argued by a writer on behalf of the Company that the East India trade was most profitable and beneficial to England and best secured and improved on a joint-stock basis. The trade supplied the Exchequer with a substantial revenue in the form of customs, and largely increased

the national wealth, generally speaking. To protect the interests at stake it was necessary to construct a number of ships of such tonnage and strength that they could undertake the defence of the Kingdom in war. It was emphasised, too, that the Company had incurred heavy liabilities and run great risks, and that it had not merely secured freedom of trade, together with extensive privileges and immunities, from the Great Mughal and other princes, but was also obliged to maintain factories and fortresses for the protection of its employees, its property and its commerce.⁷

The leader of the party pledged to uphold the monopolistic policy of the Company was Sir Josiah Child,⁸ a man of "commanding personality, great wealth, and rare talents for business", whose influence on the Company's Committee was supreme. He hoped to retain its privileged position and the King's patronage against all adversaries. He carried on secret propaganda through the press to defend the Company's policy. In a treatise intended to vindicate the position of the Company, he maintained that of all England's foreign enterprises the East-India trade was the most closely linked with her national welfare. It was, therefore, of greater importance to her than to any other European nation, and upon it was based her position as mistress of the seas. He urged that the agitation against the existing Company was sinister and baseless. In November 1681, a petition to the King was brought forward through Child's influence, praying for a Royal proclamation against interlopers.

The champion of open trade within the Company was Thomas Papillon, who was for some years a Director. He warmly expounded the cause of open trade with India and fought to secure that object by enlisting on his side the aid of the law courts and of members of Parliament. He, therefore, advocated the reconstitution of the Company on a broader basis. His propagandist zeal was no less conspicuous than that of his opponent, Sir Josiah Child, for in 1680, "when interlopers becoming numerous and many desired that the trade should be thrown open, Papillon published a pamphlet strenuously maintaining that it could be pursued far better by an extensive joint-stock Company and his arguments were sound in support of his pamphlet."⁹ Papillon desired to close the old joint-stock system of the Com-

pany, and to open a subscription book for a new joint-stock in which outsiders might freely take part. This proposal was defeated by the opposition of Child's party. As a result Papillon and his adherents were thrown out of office at the next annual election. Sir Josiah Child now sought alliance with the chief men at Court. Papillon and his party put many obstacles in his way by further resistance within the Company; but they were ultimately defeated.

The plan framed by the interlopers to maintain their position as guardians of popular rights caused continual annoyance, loss of trade and serious financial injury to the Company. Its Directors maintained that they were perfectly within their own rights; having originated the trade with India, they should be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their enterprise. The interlopers drew up a petition to the King, which was rejected. The merchants and interlopers now felt that there was no chance of any reform being undertaken by the Company or of their obtaining royal patronage. They were nevertheless determined to pursue their object of destroying the Indian trade monopoly, and to use every lawful means in their power to secure that end. Indeed, they were determined both to deny and oppose the authority of the Crown. The contested issue was fought in the trial of Thomas Sandys, an interloper, before the Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys. It began in 1683 and lasted for several months, with the result that the legality of the Company's privileges was upheld against the claim of the interlopers.

Sir Josiah Child, now at the zenith of his authority in the Company, assured of royal support and strengthened by the decision of the Lord Chief Justice, resolved to take strong action against the interlopers. Unfortunately, the death of King Charles II on February 6, 1685, lost the Company a great patron, whose support was never more needed than at this crisis. Under the Governorship of Sir Josiah Child the monopoly of the Company was flourishing, and enormous fortunes were being made. It was alleged that no opportunity had been given to outside merchants, who were eager to join the Company in order to share its profits from the India trade, and that practically the whole stock was held by a limited number of its members. These grievances

proved the bone of contention in the long struggle that was to follow; both parties gave expression to their opinions of each other through numerous pamphlets. These profoundly influenced the public mind in favour of the urgent need for a change in the constitution of the Company. There were now added to the ranks of the malcontents the various traders who were affected by the Company's importation of printed calicoes and manufactured silks. Sir William Foster described the situation thus: "The battle was long and furious. The Company defended itself ably and at times unscrupulously; but the arguments of its opponents made a great impression, and public feeling was on the whole in favour of their claims".¹⁰

Notwithstanding the stringent measures against the interlopers, they continued to trade in India with the idea that the Company's charter was not legally binding on them unless the exclusive power of the Company had the sanction of an Act of Parliament. In India, Sir John Child relentlessly persecuted the interlopers, and their mutual recriminations not only handicapped the Company's commercial progress there, but injured its prestige in the eyes of the Mughal. As time went on some of the interlopers became pirates in the Eastern seas, a development to which reference will be made later. In their irregular trading, the interlopers not only received the support of the private merchants in London and the connivance of some of the Company's servants in India, but they were also encouraged by some of the Princes in India.

The accession of James II, on account of his well proved interest in naval affairs and his large holding of India stock, encouraged the London East India Company to rely on a continuation of the Royal protection, which would enable them to act more effectually against the interlopers; but owing to troubles at home, his brief reign proved to be for them a period of disappointment and depression. The activity of the interlopers increased, and the Company was at a loss to know how to deal with them. In Bengal, where they were most active, they had undoubtedly done much harm to the Company's trade. The Mughal authorities, unable to discriminate between the different representatives of the same European nation, had treated the interlopers with a certain measure of favour, and after they had purchased a *farmān* from

the Mughal Government they were allowed to trade without any restrictions. This was not very surprising seeing that the newcomers expressed their willingness to pay a higher rate of import duty up to 5 *per cent*. The Mughal authorities, therefore, considered themselves entitled to charge the London Company an increased rate of 3½ *per cent*, as compared with the previous rate of 2½ *per cent*. This the Company flatly refused to pay, declaring that it could not afford it, although it is not clear why this seemingly moderate rate should have been deemed exorbitant. The rivalry between the Company and the interlopers was rendered more acute by a move which certainly placed the former in an invidious light with the Mughal authorities.

While the Mughal officials were endeavouring to exact heavier duties from the Company's factors, the Company retorted by putting forward grievances on its own account. It declared that the Nawab of Bengal had for a long time past ignored its rights and maltreated its employees. Bribes had been extorted, the loading of ships interfered with, and, worst of all, its servants haled before the local courts. It was further alleged that the Mughal Emperor himself owed it no less a sum than £160,000, mostly on account of goods taken by force without payment, while there were also claims for excessive exaction of customs dues. These duplicated causes of friction produced a strained situation all round, and it is not surprising that it led to serious troubles. Before long the legitimate English traders grew impatient. The interlopers were like gnats, but the Mughal authorities were the more formidable adversaries. The situation has been well described in a quotation referred to by Sarkar thus: "Experience soon showed that treaties were of no avail against the lawlessness of the local officials. It was not that the Mughal Government would not protect the foreign merchants against oppression and wrong. It could not. Whatever control it had, it was gradually losing".¹¹

NOTES

¹ Vol. 456 D., pp. 395-397 of *Home Miscellaneous Series*, India Office.

² The charter in question cannot now be traced in the State archives.

³ P. 38 of *Literary and Historical Essays*, Oxford edition, 1913.

⁴ This was the favourite term of the Company's officials when describing the private traders in their official documents. A writer has truly remarked: "What the outside barbarian was to the celestial emperor, the independent British trader was to the East India Company". See *The Interloper in India* (*Calcutta Review*, December 1958)—an extremely well-written and comprehensive article.

⁵ P. 49 of *The English Factories in India, 1655-1660*, edited by Sir William Foster.

⁶ P. 306 of the *Calcutta Review*, December 1858.

⁷ *The East India Trade a most profitable trade to the Kingdom etc.* (presumably written by Sir Josiah Child), London, 1677; Vol. 485 of *India Office Tracts*.

⁸ Sir Josiah was a Director, and then became a Governor of the Company in London from 1681-1682; and again in 1686-1687. He was also Deputy Governor in 1688-1689. One writer truly observed that Child was unquestionably one of the cleverest merchants that London ever produced, and he possessed qualities which, in a larger sphere, would have gained him a world-wide reputation. See Vol. II, p. 228 of *A History of British India*, by Sir W. W. Hunter; and also p. 311 of the *Calcutta Review* (December 1858).

⁹ P. 80 of *Memoirs of Thomas Papillon*, by A.F.W. Papillon, Reading, 1887.

¹⁰ Vol. IV, p. 97 of *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (Foster's article on *The East India Company, 1600-1740*).

¹¹ Vol. V, p. 317 of *History of Aurangzib*, by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

CHAPTER III

The Old Company and the New

The accession of William and Mary brought new anxieties to the East India Company, who naturally supposed that the King would favour the Dutch East India Company. It never occurred to the Company that a rival, more dangerous to its interests than the Dutch, was about to spring up in England. On May 7, 1689, England declared war against France, and a treaty between King William and the States-General of Holland was concluded with the object of restricting the enemy's resources. King William, for financial reasons, now favoured the London Company; and this enabled it for the time being to deal more effectually with the interlopers, to whom little mercy was shown. The latter, in return, attempted to influence public opinion in England against the Company and to injure its exclusive interests, and in this they were largely successful.

The support given to the Company by both Charles II and James II had induced it to aim at sovereign power in India, and to deal with the Mughal and the Marathas on that footing. Despite the outcry of the interlopers and their supporters against the Company's monopoly, the Company was no less determined than the Dutch had been to carry out its policy of wielding "Sovereign power in India". It insisted emphatically on the absolute necessity of this; otherwise, it was declared, the Dutch would soon usurp the trade with India, as well as the command over the sea. This is made clear by a new declaration dated September 11, 1689, and sent to India by the Court of Directors for the guidance of the Bombay Council. It is in the following terms: "This increase of our Revenue is no less the subject of our care, & must always be yours, as much as our trade; 'tis that must maintain our force, when twenty accidents may interrupt our Trade, 'tis that must make us a nation in India, without that we are but as a great number of Interlopers, united by his Majesties Royall Charter, fit onely to trade, where no body of

power thinks it their interest to prevent us; & upon this accot it is that the wise Dutch in all their generall advices, which we have seen, write ten paragraphs concerning their government, their civill & military policy, warfare and the increase of their revenue, for one paragraph they write concerning Trade, & the last vizt. revenue, is the soul and life of all the rest, without that they could not subsist, notwithstanding they have the Spice Islands, Jappon and most of the Pepper Trade intirely to themselves".¹ The policy thus set forth was, however, frustrated by events consequent upon the Revolution and William's accession.

The position of the East India trade had become an acute subject of controversy throughout the country, especially in business circles, and it now assumed a violent political character. The interlopers and some of the influential private merchants, who had become a powerful and compact body, desired to see Sir Josiah Child's autocracy overthrown, in order that they might obtain part of the trade hitherto monopolized by the Company. Under the leadership of Thomas Papillon, they set on foot active propaganda which found expression in a number of pamphlets vigorously attacking the policy of the London Company, to which the latter replied in equally forceful language. The interlopers prayed for the abolition of the Company and asked that a charter might be granted to a new body. They further declared that the India trade ought to be open to all comers, and not vested in any one concern. The task to which the interlopers had set their hand proved no easy one; it was not until several months had passed that their efforts met with any success. Then the matter came before Parliament, and the House of Commons, impressed with the seriousness of the position, appointed a committee to examine the question. As a result, on January 16, 1690, a Committee of the House of Commons declared that "the best way to manage the East India trade is to have it in a new Company, and a new joint-stock, and this to be established by Act of Parliament; but the present Company to continue the trade, exclusive of all others, either interlopers, or permission ships, till it be established." King William, however, dissolved Parliament before any decisive steps could be taken. From this time onward the term interlopers cannot justly be applied to the oppo-

nents of the older Company. Two rival bodies came into existence; the London Company continued its business in Leadenhall Street, while the new Society had its headquarters at the Skinners' Hall in Dowgate. The new Society was supported by the Whigs, and the London Company by the Tories. The former was the more popular, though it had not the London Company's advantages of established position and financial strength.

In 1691 the struggle between the two parties again came before the House of Commons for decision; and the majority of the members made strenuous efforts to effect a compromise. In October the House resolved that the East Indies trade could best be carried on by a Joint Stock Company possessing exclusive privileges; and the question now was which of the two rivals should be that Company. Sir Josiah Child and his lieutenants rejected all proposals for a settlement, and tried to bring about their opponents' defeat by bribery. The Commons, finding it impossible to arrive at any solution, in February, 1692, addressed a petition to the King praying him to dissolve the London Company at three years' notice and to incorporate a new one on different conditions. The King referred the question to a Committee of the Privy Council. In November, 1692, the King informed the House of Commons that he could not dissolve the London Company without giving it three years' notice, during which time it could not be hindered from trading; nor could a new Company trade till the three years were expired. He, therefore, recommended the House to prepare a bill for the settlement of the disputes.

In 1693 the struggle was renewed with keener animosity than ever. It grew so bitter that the House of Commons passed a vote in favour of the termination of the London Company, and presented an address to the King praying him to "dissolve the present East India Company, according to the powers reserved in their charter, and to establish another Company for the better preserving the trade to this Kingdom, in such manner as His Majesty shall see fit". The Directors of the London Company offered strenuous opposition and insisted that its constitution could not be legally amended. Thus the matter was delayed till the next Parliamentary session. Macaulay gives a vivid account

of this great turning point of the struggle. He records how Child and his fellow Directors became seriously alarmed. They had inadvertently omitted to pay at the proper time a tax on their stock, lately imposed. This omission, by the strict letter of the law, actually rendered their charter forfeit, and public feeling ran so strongly against them that the Government would have been widely supported had they taken advantage of this. Child, as the leading spirit in the Company's councils, was now extremely unpopular. Fearing lest the interests under his care should suffer on his account, he kept discreetly out of the public notice, and his place was ostensibly taken by a "near kinsman, Sir Thomas Cook, one of the greatest merchants of London, and Member of Parliament for the borough of Colchester".²

Parliament was petitioned by the promoters of the new society to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the unpaid tax. So successfully however did the London Company plead its case that in spite of all opposition it obtained a new charter in October 1693, confirming the Stuart charters, subject to certain regulations to be framed by His Majesty. These regulations were embodied in a subsequent charter issued on November 11, 1693. In this their Majesties expressed their desire to render the East India trade more advantageous to the nation by inaugurating a joint-stock Company, which should continue for twenty-one years. It was also laid down that all persons paying their subscriptions should be admitted members of the said Company.³ The interlopers maintained that without Parliamentary sanction the charter was void; both sides presented petitions, and the matter was referred to a Parliamentary Committee. On January 19, 1694, the House of Commons resolved as a temporary measure that "all the subjects of England have equal right to trade to the East Indies, unless prohibited by Act of Parliament". The Company's enemies were naturally highly gratified; they were now able to quote Parliamentary authority as justification for trading in the prohibited area, though they met with continual obstruction from the London Company's employees. The writer of one article declared that "had monopoly triumphed, it would have been a triumph of prerogative over parliament, a retrograde step in the march of civil liberty".⁴

But this was not to be. The House of Commons having declared the India trade open to the whole nation, the King enlarged his recently-bestowed charter by letters patent containing regulations for the administration of the Company's internal affairs. Despite all the charters it possessed, its position during the year 1694 was as precarious as at any time in its history. Its enemies accused it of bribery, and named Sir Josiah Child as the person chiefly responsible. When he retired from the Company on political grounds, Sir Thomas Cook, his successor, was similarly attacked. Cook was sent to the Tower pending the satisfactory clearing-up of the whole question. In 1695 Parliament appointed a joint committee of both Houses to investigate the allegations of "divers indirect practices" against Cook and several others. An inspection of the Company's books disclosed colossal expenditures for several years past under the heading of "special service". This included the expenses connected with the last charter, to obtain which £170,000 appeared to have been spent in "bribing courtiers and members of Parliament".⁵ Among the recipients were certain high public officials including Thomas Osborne, Duke of Leeds, better known as the Earl of Danby. Of him Lord Macaulay remarked: "He was not a man whose character, if tried by any high standard of morality, would appear to merit approbation. He was greedy of wealth and honours, corrupt himself, and a corrupter of others".⁶ The House of Commons resolved to impeach Danby; but the absence of a vital witness prevented any further steps being taken. Danby stoutly affirmed his innocence, and was not removed from his office; but he never succeeded in effectually clearing himself or recovering his old position in the public esteem. It was even asserted at one time that King William himself had received £10,000, although it was claimed that the money was used for the public service. The London Company declared that its opponents might equally well have been accused of corruption. Such practices had apparently increased since the Revolution. Lord Halifax, writing from London to Lord Hyde on September 27, 1681, mentioned that the Company intended to give a "yearly present to the King of 10,000 l. and leave it to his pleasure whether he will accept it or no".⁷ Another writer tells us that they "expended great sums

of the Companies' money, which stands charg'd in their Books under the title of Secret services; besides the several 10,000 Guineas which they did present to the two late Kings."⁸ In spite, however, of such extensive bribery it was felt that the King could not be advised to renew the Company's powers without making some concessions to its opponents, and so the Directors reluctantly acquiesced in some very important modifications of their rights.

In the midst of the Company's difficulties, a new rival arose in an unexpected quarter. On June 26, 1695, the Scottish Parliament passed an Act empowering the King to incorporate a Scottish Company authorised to trade in Africa and the East Indies, and to extend its activities to America and the West Indies. The Company, alarmed, in 1696 again urgently demanded Parliamentary sanction for its own trade; but the new competition in the East never materialised. The Scottish Company's attempt to establish a settlement in Central America proved unsuccessful; and the representations of the London Company, and "other European nations interested in that commerce", caused the Act of 1695 to be repealed.⁹

At this period the Company was called upon to cope with a new and unexpected problem which not only imposed a severe strain on its resources, but involved it in bitter and long drawn-out controversies and disputes with the officers of the Mughal Emperor. This was the growth of piracy, which in Eastern waters dates from very early times and was alluded to by Pliny, Ptolemy and Marco Polo.¹⁰ The earliest European pirates were the Portuguese towards the end of the fifteenth century, and these were followed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Dutch and English adventurers. There were, too, Indian pirates on the Malabar sea-board, who possessed a chain of strongholds from Bombay to Cape Comorin; but their depredations were mainly confined to the coast. The opening years of the seventeenth century had been marked by a great development of naval activity. All the leading European nations had followed the example of Portugal and Spain in endeavouring to establish trade centres and naval stations along the coasts of Southern and Eastern Asia. There was keen competition between them, and

hostile collisions were not infrequent. Though the ships of Indian potentates and merchants were sometimes molested, they were usually given free passage, so far at least as any of the Europeans were concerned. Most of the European traders were aware that to obtain any success in their demands for favours from the Mughal Emperor or other potentates a good reputation was the first essential. This condition of things underwent, however, a great change towards the end of the seventeenth century.

The growth of piracy in these latter years, and the attendant outrages in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea of which Indian subjects of all ranks were the victims, imparted a new aspect to all efforts to promote trade between Europe and India, and darkened the prospect of success at the very moment when it seemed as if the difficulties attending such an undertaking had been overcome. After the union between the Dutch and the English, and more especially after the battle of La Hogue from which began the decline of France as a naval Power, there was a marked falling off in the supply of openings for naval men, and this decrease in employment was accentuated by the financial exhaustion felt by all the Powers as a consequence of the long wars. In such a situation it was not surprising that some of the bolder or more reckless spirits nurtured in warlike scenes should have turned pirates. Just as the trouble with the interlopers was beginning to die down a little, these new agents of mischief appeared upon the scene and for a time made the Indian Ocean the principal centre of their crimes. These men were not traders, they were the despoilers of those who carried on trade.

During the next few years the ceaseless depredations of the pirates in the Indian seas were a grave danger to the settlements and trading activities of the London East India Company. Colonel Biddulph tells us in his book that the greatest sufferers from piracy were the English, because the majority of the pirates were of English blood and pirate captains of other nationalities often flew the English flag. The Mughal officials, unable to discriminate, held the Company's servants responsible for these misdeeds. The Company was just as anxious as the Emperor himself to destroy the marauders, but did not possess the means of doing so. This fact perhaps has not been appreciated by

commentators on the early voyages of the Company. The Company's ships had means of self-defence in guns and gunners, but they were not really equipped for warlike purposes. Their range of action was strictly limited. They had no depots available for obtaining arms or ammunition. Moreover, they carried cargoes and were to receive others either at Surat or at Bombay. Their business was to reach their destination as speedily as possible and not to dally on the way. They were ordered not to chase pirates, but to avoid them. The pirates on the other hand were not embarrassed by any consideration of cargoes. They were equipped for war, and when they plundered their prizes they did not burden themselves with any heavy loot. Their attention was given to treasure, jewels, luxuries and such stores in the shape of food or ammunition as they might need. They sailed light in anticipation of fight or flight. But over and above these advantages they possessed others in the form of stations and depôts along the Coast of Madagascar and on St. Mary's Island. In these strong and secret lairs, acquired by formal conventions with the local chiefs, the pirates were secure against any attacks of the Company's vessels. Thus freed from molestation they could repair thither from the Red Sea, the Gulf of Persia and other regions with their booty to "refitt & refresh there". The pirates also obtained fresh supplies of ammunition and stores from New York, Rhode Island and other places.¹¹

There were many atrocious cases of piracy in the Indian waters subsequent to 1684, and the majority of the sufferers were Surat merchants. In September 1695, a notorious pirate named Henry Every¹² captured two vessels. One, the *Fath Muham-madi*, was a ship of considerable value, the property of Abd-ul-ghafur,¹³ who had suffered a similar loss a few years before; and the other, the *Gang-i-Sawai*, belonged to the Emperor himself. The latter was the largest ship in the port of Surat. She was commanded by Captain Muhammad Ibrahim and had been on her usual trip to Mokha, carrying the Emperor's "yearly present and pilgrims" and had "1,200 persons on board".¹⁴ On the return voyage, the ship was seized by pirates between Bombay and Daman, although fully armed with "eighty guns and four hundred muskets on board, besides other implements of war".

The pirates treated the women passengers, who included ladies of the highest rank, most barbarously and inflicted upon them the greatest indignities, so much so that several "threw themselves into the sea or slew themselves with daggers, the last piece of silver was sought out and carried on board the *Fancy*, the last jewel torn from the passengers and crew, and then the *Gang-i-Sawai* was left to find its way to Surat as it best could."¹⁵ The ship was reported to have had treasure aboard to the value of fifty-two *lacs* of rupees in silver and gold, the proceeds of the sale of Indian goods at Mokha and Jidda.¹⁶ The pirate crews are said to have received prize money amounting to about £ 1,000.¹⁷

When the news of the seizure and plundering of the *Gang-i-Sawai* reached Surat, there was an outburst of excitement and anger among the Mohammedan population. The local English were blamed for the outrage, and the Mughal Governor, Itimad Khān, was obliged to set guards over the Company's factory and warehouse to protect the English factors from molestation by the infuriated mobs. President Annesley and his colleagues were arrested, and all European trade in the port suspended. Annesley, and Sir John Gayer at Bombay, protested to the Governor and the Emperor, on which the Emperor demanded that the English, Dutch and French should scour the seas in pursuit of the pirates and provide a regular escort for the pilgrim ships making the trip to Mokha. Till this demand was satisfied, European trade would be stopped and the prisoners detained. Annesley offered to provide an escort for the conveying of pilgrim ships between Surat and Jidda ; the port was reopened and the prisoners released ; and for a time all went well. But the Company's servants soon found the task beyond their powers, partly owing to treachery among their own sailors—one of their ships turned pirate and the commander was killed by his own men.

Gayer and Annesley sent home strongly-worded appeals to the Governor and Committees of the Company, pointing out not only the peril to their own lives and liberty from the pirates, but also the danger of reprisals and loss of trade, seeing that "the odium is everywhere cast on ye English". The authorities at Fort St. George also wrote to the Court of Directors complaining of the piracies near Calicut. They declared that the pirates

came from New York and that the majority of them were Englishmen ; they emphasised the injury done by them to Indian merchants and the inevitable reaction against the English. Whereas, they wrote, the English had been generally respected in all parts of India "as the most civil & peaceable of all the Europe nations", they would now be regarded as pirates and robbers.¹⁸ The heads of the Company in London were not deaf to these complaints. As peace was now being made with France, they appealed to the Government to protect them against the pirates. They proposed that three men-of-war should be sent to St. Mary's and Cape Comorin whence they would sail along the Coasts of Malabar, Bombay and Surat, calling at the most frequented ports to seek further information about the pirates. Thence they could extend their operations to the Persian Gulf and as far as Mokha and other places in the Red Sea. Then, having exterminated the pirates in all these localities, they could return to England. Conditions of pardon and mercy were to be vested in the Commander of the Squadron.¹⁹

The four men-of-war which the Government sent to accompany Sir William Norris to India were the first squadron which had been seen in Indian waters capable of dealing with the pirates. But, as Bruce remarks, the rivalry between the London Company and the New Company was from the outset a hindrance to any effective action against the pirates. The squadron searched for pirates along the Malabar Coast and chased several of their ships. One of the men-of-war subsequently sailed for China, where she was wrecked. The other three proceeded to Madagascar and in May, 1700, destroyed the pirates' fort at St. Mary's and some of their ships. The pirates, on being shown the King's Commission, accepted the Royal pardon. After spending a few months on that coast, the ships sailed for the West Coast of Madagascar, where they were visited by the king of that country. The squadron started on its homeward voyage in January, 1701, leaving the Indian seas unprotected once more.²⁰

In February 1698, Captain William Kidd, 'The Grand Pirate',²¹ robbed a ship called the *Quedah Merchant*, bound from Bengal for Surat. The vessel had on board a cargo valued at

£ 30,000, of which a considerable portion belonged to Mukhlis Khān, one of the noblemen of the Court. A few months later, one of the best ships belonging to Husain Hamidan²² armed with fifty guns and manned by three hundred men "was taken off St. Johns by three pirates" on her voyage from Jidda.²³ Samuel Annesley thus describes the outrage, in a letter written to the Company on December 5, 1698 : "The town at newes of this was presently in great disorder, it was reported the villaines turned adrift in the ships boats, without Oars, sail or Provisions, 150 of the pilgrims, whom the Tide carryed to Baseen. The women passengers, about 60 were kept aboard, and inhumanely abused to avoid wch indignity five stabbed themselves. The Treasure Goods and Horses in the ship were computed to be worth 18,50000 Rups".²⁴ The pirate crews were said to have received £ 800 per man. Unfortunately for the English, the Governor, Itimad Khān, a man of indisputable probity, and a firm friend to the English died and had been succeeded by the corrupt and vindictive Amanat Khān in May 1697. On hearing of the latest outrage, the new Governor issued orders that no one should be permitted to leave the town, that no provisions should be taken to the English ships, and that all sea-borne traffic should be stopped. But he forbade attacks on the English factory, promising to forward the local complaints to the Emperor. The angry mob drew up a petition to the effect that "ye infidells had robbed killed etc. the true believers, and they would forbear all publick worship in their Musteels, till the King (Aurangzib) would order them satisfaction".

The Emperor commanded Nawab Asad Khān²⁵ to issue a *parwana*²⁶ to the Governor of Surat. In this document Aurangzib emphasised the losses inflicted on Indian merchants by the pirates ; pointed to the ineffectiveness of the English convoy ships in affording protection ; and ordered the Governor to bring pressure upon the English, Dutch and French to make them pay compensation to the Emperor's subjects. He declared that unless written guarantees were given that the piracies should stop, no more Englishmen, Dutchmen and Frenchmen would be allowed to dwell and trade in his dominions. Only the British Navy could give such a guarantee ; certainly the Company could

not. They were obliged to temporise in order to gain time. The Governor of Surat, acting on the Emperor's order, presented the three European nations with an ultimatum demanding compensation for the losses sustained from the pirates, and an undertaking to clear the seas and provide sufficient convoys for the pilgrim ships. The Mughal's subjects were forbidden to have any dealings with Europeans by proclamation accompanied by beat of drum throughout the city, and a guard was set over the factories. The Dutch and French were quick to come to terms with the Mughal authorities. Both paid sums of money to the Governor and signed guarantees for the safe navigation of the Gulf of Mokha and the Gulf of Persia respectively. Amaniāt Khān now demanded that the English should give similar security for the Southern Indian Seas, from the Coast of Coromandel and Bengal as far as Sumatra and Java. President Annesley and his Council asked for time to obtain instructions from Sir John Gayer at Bombay. Gayer, on being apprised of the seriousness of the situation, sailed for Suvali Bar with a small fleet and arrived there on January 11, 1699. He advised Annesley not to make the payment demanded by the Governor, and not to give the guarantee for the safety of the Southern Seas. He pointed out that the English had furnished convoys for two years and would willingly do so for a third year, and that England alone among the European nations concerned was sending men-of-war to extirpate the pirates. He declared himself quite ready to discuss the subject with the Mughal's representative. Nevertheless, he avoided a personal meeting with the Governor. The delay and hesitation on the part of the English in giving the required security made the Governor furious, and he immediately sent several hundred soldiers to blockade the factory, threatening the inmates with death. All the persons connected with the factory's operations, such as brokers and Indian servants, were arrested, publicly whipped and imprisoned. These strong measures caused Annesley to bring the whole question up for discussion at a general council, and it was decided that a guarantee should be given similar to those offered by the Dutch and the French.²⁷

Thus "the dull unthinking English" (as Sir Nicholas Waite called them in a letter to the Directors) undertook heavier respon-

sibilities than their European rivals.²⁸ The Portuguese, whose sea-borne trade had almost ceased to exist, were not included in the arrangement. Next, the Emperor demanded that the Europeans should recompense Husain Hamīdan and other merchants for the losses they had suffered. The Mughal Governor however explained to him that the European Companies at Surat could not be held liable for this, as the pirates were "hatmen of all nations", acknowledging the authority of no sovereign. Gayer and his colleagues trusted that the guarantee given by the English would satisfy Aurangzib. The Emperor was, they wrote, "very old wherein all his Ministers are become raving wolves' of wch he is sufficiently sensible, yet necessitated to rewd ye worst, wth ye greatest mark's of honor, as he doth frequently yt unparrallel'd vicious Govr of Surat". The ban on the English Company's trade was now temporarily removed. But their fortunes at Surat had reached their lowest ebb; their trade had been almost extinguished, and at this critical moment Annesley was replaced on May 13, 1698, by Stephen Colt, his junior in Council, as a result of various irregularities.

President Colt found himself at once confronted with the claims of Husain Hamid-an and other Indian merchants. Indeed, the settlement of these proved a great obstacle to the ultimate success of the embassy of Sir William Norris. Mukhlis Khān had already been compensated, which had enabled President Colt to stave off any additional claims and to soften the rigorous measures of the Governor by secretly bribing the subordinate Mughal officials. The discovery of these transactions made the London Company seem to the principal merchants of Surat to be themselves pirates, and also strengthened the demands of Husain Hamīdan. When Diyānat²⁹ Khān became Governor of Surat, the question of the claims was renewed. Sir John Gayer, from Bombay Castle, refuted the charge of piracy and appealed to the Emperor, as well as Diyānat Khān, not to believe the allegations without making full enquiry. He asked Diyānat Khān to use his authority to prevent any disturbance to the Company's trade at the port. The Emperor's orders, however, were imperative regarding the satisfaction of Husain Hamidān's claims. President Colt emphatically denied any responsibility for these,

as it was not possible for him to meet the demand without consulting the authorities in London. The upshot was the arrest and imprisonment of Sir John Gayer and others of the London Company.

The prospect of a settlement seemed remote on account of a strong representation made to the Emperor that in spite of repeated orders the Company had not yet discharged its debts. It was further complicated, at this juncture, by the fact that an English ship, supposed to belong to the London Company, had captured one of Abd-ul-ghafur's ships, sailing from Mokha, and three other ships carrying considerable sums of money. There was also the complaint of the Imāms³⁰ of Mokha, who had not yet received any reparation for their losses of goods and money in Husain Hamidān's ship, and as a reprisal had seized goods belonging to several Surat merchants. This action the Emperor regarded both as an affront and a reflection upon himself, and consequently cancelled his gift of a lakh of rupees to be distributed amongst the poor in Mecca.

Other events combined to aggravate the situation. The Company's servants at Bombay, as well as the Portuguese, had supplied the Marathas with ammunition, while the French and the Dutch had given them large sums of money. This prevented the Emperor's admiral Sīdi Yakub Khān from seizing the fortified castle belonging to the Marathas.³¹ These circumstances compelled the Emperor to issue a proclamation through the Grand Wazir, Asad Khān, that all the London Company's settlements should be seized and their trade stopped. It will be seen that nothing could have been more unfortunate for the embassy than these incidents. Sir William Norris himself expressed regret at the Emperor's action, declaring that although the London Company's servants fully deserved their fate, yet as a fellow-countryman and a Christian he was sincerely sorry for them.

In December, 1701, acting upon instructions, Diyānat Khān seized some of the Company's factors at Surat, forbade the entry of all provisions, and confiscated goods amounting to over Rs. 140,000. These were given to Adb-ul-ghafur as part of the compensation for losses incurred through the pirates. The claims of Husain Hāmidān had yet to be satisfied.³² In February,

1702, Prince Sultan Muhammad Azim-ush-Shan,³³ Viceroy of Bengal, attacked the Company's settlements at Patna, Rajmahal and Kasimbázár. But as the value of the property seized was not sufficient to satisfy the claims of the merchants, the Viceroy extended his operations to all the European factories. On the whole the Prince behaved tactfully and leniently towards the English. The embargo on all European trade in Bengal was soon afterwards withdrawn.³⁴ Acting on the same order of the Emperor, the Nawab Dā'ūd Khān³⁵ appeared with a large force near St. Thomé in the vicinity of Fort St. George, to the great consternation of the English. Governor Thomas Pitt had already received information of his approach through spies, and took prompt measures to defend the weak settlement. He protested against the charge of piracy, pointing out to Dā'ūd that the security-bond extorted from the three European nations at Surat did not apply to his own settlement. Nevertheless Dā'ūd besieged the fort for three months, inflicting great loss on the Company's trade and revenue. At first he demanded an exorbitant sum, but Governor Pitt agreed to pay him Rs. 20,000, and another Rs. 5,000 to Muhammad Sa'id, his dīwān, or revenue collector.³⁶ The siege was then raised, and full liberty to trade was granted as before. Dā'ūd on his part made reparation to the English for all damage done. It was not till August that the whole transaction was completed.

It seemed that the stringent measures taken by the English Government, in inflicting capital punishment on pirates in England and also in the Barbadoes and other plantations, did not have the effect of suppressing piracy, which continued without cessation till 1756. Commenting on this period, Sir Jadunath Sarkar suggested that : "All these troubles could have been avoided and an amicable settlement made with the Delhi Government if the European nations that traded in India could have come to some agreement with the Emperor as to their remuneration for policing the Indian Ocean and organised some concerted action against the pirates. But the escort-hire offered by the Emperor was too niggardly; the Dutch plotted against the English at the Court of the Surat Governor; the English themselves were a house divided against itself" The historian, as proof of the

Mughal's anxiety to secure the freedom of the ocean highway to Mecca and Medina, quotes a letter sent by the Mughal to his Secretary : "Let the Superintendent of Ordnance (*Mir Atash*) ask of the Feringis³⁷ of the artillery department, how the pirates can be chastised and the sea-route kept open for travellers to the Holy cities and for traders,—whether by friendliness and conciliation, or by force and battle. There is no union among the Feringis ; any of them are without a head or chieftain. Try to secure the support of one tribe among them, such as the French, who in consideration of their receiving a tenth of the custom-duty (of Surat) may agree to punish the hat-men pirates".³⁸

Under William III the British Government, had joined the Grand Alliance against France, but found it very difficult to procure the means for the prosecution of hostilities on the Continent, from which England had practically abstained for the better part of two centuries. Under these circumstances it was not surprising that the affairs of the London East India Co. were thrust into the background as much as possible and that its views and interests were prevented from attracting public attention. This state of things provided its rivals among private merchants and interlopers with the opportunity they had been seeking to undermine their privileged status. There was some warning of what was coming in 1696-7 when the Company failed to obtain Parliamentary sanction for its charter, and for the rights it had long held under it. Promoters of the proposed New Company started active propaganda against the monopolies enjoyed by the Old Company, and the latter retaliated with a number of pamphlets. Each side did its best to obtain the concessions desired. One clever pamphleteer on the Old Company's side quaintly argued : "The pulling down this Company to set up a New one, may be as successful, as it would be to grub up a flourishing well grown Orchard, in the strength and prime time of its bearing Fruit, to Plant a New Orchard in the same place, in hopes to have more and better cyder : whereas a New Plantation yields little Fruit and the worst cyder".³⁹ Some of these pamphlets were ingeniously written, and invariably issued by the adherents of both parties either anonymously or under a pseudonym.

The polemics between the contesting rivals continued without flagging, but in the year 1698 the private merchants took a definite step by renewing their application to Parliament. The London Company was still in existence, though no longer in possession of its exclusive privileges. The national resources were severely strained by the demand for money to finish the war with France. It was also rumoured that large sums were owing to the navy. The Government took advantage of the opportunity to announce that it had pressing need of a loan of £ 2,000,000, and that it would regard favourably the claims of those who provided that sum. On May 4, 1698, the London Company immediately offered a loan of £ 700,000 at 4 *per cent.*, a low rate of interest certainly; but the amount was insufficient for the needs of the Government. Notwithstanding the official attitude, the House of Commons showed its disposition to confirm the offer by granting the Company the exclusive trading rights which it claimed as the condition of its loan.

Faced with the prospect of failure the new Association, mobilising all its resources, offered to raise the sum of £ 2,000,000 required by the Government; on the other hand it fixed the interest at the higher rate of 8 *per cent.*, claiming at the same time the concession of exclusive rights to the Indian trade. This offer satisfied the needs of the Government, and those who made it were therefore assured of official support. A Bill was consequently introduced into Parliament in their favour, and it was strongly supported by "the dexterous and eloquent statesman" Charles Montagu. The London Company presented a petition against it, and was informed that if it would provide the necessary sum on the same terms as its opponents, its privileges would be confirmed and continued. It is not clear why the London Company declined this offer, but circumstances being what they were, it should have realised that the refusal entailed an inevitable defeat.

Although the London Company would not strain its resources by undertaking the large loan stipulated for by the King's Government, it made a strenuous fight in the House of Lords for the preservation of what were deemed its juridical rights

and position. It was represented by two of the most eminent counsels of the day, Sir Thomas Powis and Sir Bartholomew Shower, who expatiated on what the London Company had accomplished in increasing the wealth of the nation by developing the trade with India under the original charter several times confirmed and renewed. To this the opposing counsel responded that the Company's rights were held under a terminal condition of three years' notice, that it was *ultra vires* for the King to grant exclusive rights without the sanction of Parliament and that such rights being based on past and present expenditure of money would, if granted, have no moral sanction. The members of the new Association spared no pains to bring their case to a successful conclusion. The House of Commons had already voted in favour of the Bill by a large majority. The House of Lords, after a thorough discussion, did the same, and the royal assent was given to the Bill on July 5, 1698.⁴⁰

By this Act a corporation was created to which the King might grant a charter subject to sanction being given by the Legislature. Parliament had now established its right to supervise the terms governing the Indian trade, and from this time onward no important changes could be made in the Company's constitution without legislative sanction. The subscribers to the loan which was the foundation of the new arrangement were to form a corporate body under the style of the General Society. Every subscriber, whether an Englishman or a foreigner, was to be entitled to trade with India. They would thus be able to pursue their trade with the East Indies as laid down in the Act. At the same time the Old Company was to retain its right to trade with India for the next three years ending September 29, 1701. It was also laid down that the subscribers should nominate an Ambassador for India, to be sent there by the King; but the charge was to be met by the subscribers out of the duty of 5 per cent which under the Act was to be charged on the trade.⁴¹ Sir Richard Lodge observed that: "The act was a victorious assertion of parliamentary control over the royal right to charter exclusive Companies, but William was too eager to get the money to cavil at the accompanying sacrifice of power".⁴²

The next step was the appointment by His Majesty of Com-

missioners to receive subscriptions, and books were opened to that end at Mercers' Hall in Cheapside on Thursday, July 14, 1698, at 9 a.m. The list was closed on Saturday, July 16, when the whole amount had been subscribed. Twenty-four persons were appointed Trustees for the General Society and the same number chosen as Directors of the New Company.⁴³ The constitution was similar to that of the Old Company. There were many distinguished subscribers to the loan and among them some peers; the Commissioners of the Treasury, in order to encourage the public, placed a sum of £10,000 in the name of the King. Sir William Wilson Hunter, in his book, gives the impression that the King himself contributed this,⁴⁴ but the transaction was, in actual fact, between the Treasury and the Company. The Old Company, with astute foresight, invested through John Dubois £315,000, thus becoming the largest shareholder and most influential partner in the General Society. This stroke secured half the trade of India for the Old Company.

Thus the position of the two Companies presented a curious anomaly. The Old Company was suffering from trade losses and other drains on its funds; whilst the New Company had insufficient working capital on account of the State Loan having drained its resources. The Old Company, though in a bad way at home, was comparatively better placed than the rival concern. Its firmly established position in India enabled it to override the provisions of the Act by securing a larger share of the trade than it was entitled to claim. At the same time its proceedings were liable to be thwarted by the House of Commons, who naturally favoured the New Company. The latter was obliged to take measures to vindicate its financial stability because a "vigorous campaign was begun to bring it into discredit, especially by the depreciation of its stock in Exchange Alley". These persistent efforts to damage the credit of the New Company culminated in 1701, when agents of the Old Company engineered a run on the Bank of England, which had lent money to the former. By these means it was hoped to cripple or curtail the New Company's activities in India.⁴⁵

Some have imagined that the foundation of the New Company was a political move engineered by the Dutch with a view

to destroying English trade and influence in India. This suggestion will not bear critical examination, for although William III was a thorough-going Dutchman and thought little of promoting English interests except in so far as they tended to further his own ambitious policy on the Continent, he fully realised that the one sure way of endangering his own position would be to take steps calculated to revive the scarcely healed maritime and colonial strife between the two States which had been so recently united under his leadership. The naval co-operation of England was essential to the maintenance of his hold on the Channel, and his thoughts were concentrated on the recovery of his losses on land, confirmed in great part by the treaty of peace recently signed at Ryswyck.

On September 5, 1698, a Royal Charter was sealed in favour of the "General Society" which was incorporated under the name of *The English Company Trading to the East Indies*. It contained important clauses. The subscribers to the New Company were empowered to possess lands and to trade to the extent of their capital on a joint-stock basis. They were the only body privileged to trade in the East Indies except the Old Company, whose term was to expire on September 29, 1701. The New Company must maintain a minister of religion in all its factories in India, and also a chaplain on every ship of 500 tons. Such ministers were required to learn the Portuguese and the Indian languages. It was also stipulated that it should provide schoolmasters for all the garrisons and the chief factories. The Company's affairs were to be managed by a Court of twenty-four Directors, amongst whom were a few of the Old Company's servants. The government of the Company was entirely vested in them. A highly important provision contained in the Charter was that mentioned above—that a duty of five per cent on all Indian imports should be earmarked for the maintenance of Ambassadors appointed by the King on the nomination of the Company. The Company further received authority to control, govern and defend its own forts and factories as well as to appoint Governors and other officers; but the sovereign rights over those places were reserved for the King. It was empowered to establish Courts of Judicature in order to determine all causes civil or criminal

relating to trade and shipping, "according to the rules of equity and good conscience, and according to the Laws and Customs of Merchants", within the limits of the New English Company, as the Old Company had done.⁴⁶ The New Company was granted a Coat of Arms with the motto *Auspicio Regis et senatus Angliae*—a "clever intimation that the Company's privileges rested alike on a Royal Charter and an Act of Parliament".⁴⁷

In reviewing the position of the two Companies at this juncture, Mr. P. E. Roberts observed that "in truth, when the Government granted the New, or English, Company its charter, it adopted a characteristically English method of evading a difficulty. To give the exclusive trade in the East to one association, and at the same time to retain in existence another exercising rival powers, was not theoretically an ideal expedient, and yet it was perhaps the best practical solution of a complicated problem".⁴⁸

Within a few days of the granting of the charter, the New Company proposed to send an Ambassador to the Court of the Great Mughal and subsequently nominated William Norris, M.P., with whose commissions and instructions it is proposed to deal in a succeeding chapter.

The struggle between the two Companies in England continued till their final amalgamation in 1708, and provoked violent recriminations both in England and in India. It is interesting to note that an anonymous writer composed a poem entitled *An Elegy on the Death of the Old East-India Company*, which was published in London in 1699. It was evidently written out of propagandist zeal in order to advance the cause of the New Company, though the writer confessed that he had no personal interest in the New Company nor any animosity against the Old. He admitted that the great success attending the inauguration of the New Company, notwithstanding all opposition, was sufficient excuse to inspire the composition of the poem. He was even bold enough, now that the censorship had been abolished, to make a satirical attack on some members of Parliament connected with the Old Company with whose views and interests he was at variance. Considering the complete victory of the New Company over the Old, the writer expressed the opinion that it would have been a better policy if the two Companies had arrived at

some agreement before bringing their differences to the attention of Parliament. Today such an anonymous production would have provoked controversy in the press, but towards the end of the seventeenth century (probably from the lack of regular newspapers, as the first daily did not appear till 1702) it escaped criticism. There were, of course, few trained pens and few writers who could even compose a pamphlet "in a day or night" as did their Elizabethan predecessors. The poem is typical of the artificial taste of the time, which assumed acquaintance with the classics, and relied entirely on the rhyme and on studied antitheses for poetical effect. The writer of these verses pictures the arrival in India of the New Company's fleet, and describes this expedition as being led by the "patriot" who is to bring peace and to restore amicable relations. The Mughal Emperor grants the petition with such grace and readiness that it would seem as though grant preceded request :

"How the fam'd Prince whose pow'rfull scepter sways
Where-e'er the Eastern sun extends its Rays,
Shall rise with joy and Run to his Embrace,
Reading his Master's Honours in his Face,
As He with fresh Endearments Treats his guest,
And makes the grant precede his just request,
Preventing what he'll ask, by what he'll give,
His task too great, if only to receive.
Indians and English both alike shall share
The Monarch's Favour, and employ his care,
And Brittain's wise Ambassador obtain
Not only leave to Trade but almost reign.
Commerce shall spread it self along the coast,
And Norris shall regain what Child had lost.
These are the Truths the Tunefull God reveals,
And this the Man for whom he raptures feels,
Whose single worth might challenge all our lays,
And ever give employment to our Praise,
Should numbers follow, or should verse pursue,
The deeds which he has done and yet shall do,
But if he claims our wonder and esteem,
What should they have who made his worth our Theme?"

The news of the formation of the New Company and the sending of an Ambassador to the Mughal Court with men-of-war was conveyed in a letter, together with a copy of the Act of Parliament, sent to one Thomas Lucas by the *Shrewsbury Galley*, an interloping ship, which had arrived at Surat on April 7, 1699. This news created a sensation and was warmly welcomed there by the interlopers. Lucas at once communicated the news to the Mughal Governor, Amanat Khān, emphasizing the fact that the Old Company would only be permitted to stay in India till 29th September, 1701; and all merchants and other people were notified that their accounts with the Company must be settled within that limited time.⁴⁹ Lucas sent a copy of the Act, together with the contents of the letter, to President Stephen Colt and the Council of the Old Company, who had already, three months before, received an abstract of the Act from their masters in London.⁵⁰ The Governor summoned President Colt, together with certain of his colleagues and several well-known Indian merchants, to meet him in order to ascertain the truth about this new situation. Although the genuineness of the Act was admitted, Colt upheld his Company's right and privileges according to its terms. He further stated that he had received no orders from his own masters about acknowledging the authority of the New Company. The Governor brought various charges against the Old Company, including piracy. President Colt and his colleagues were publicly disgraced and obliged to give an undertaking not to leave the town without the Governor's knowledge.⁵¹

Great was the anxiety with which the proceedings of the New Company were regarded by the Court of the Old Company, but the latter faced the situation boldly, knowing that their charter would be valid for another three years. Further, as corporate subscribers to the General Society, they had a right to continue trading even after their own charter had lapsed. Already possessing forts and factories in India, they determined to carry on their trade even more vigorously than before. Nevertheless, they were apprehensive of the Ambassador's mission to India, and sent a memorial to Mr. James Vernon,⁵² praying for a copy of the instructions given to Sir William Norris, especially those portions of it which related to the petitioners' rights, interest and

estate in India.⁵³ But their request was refused since Vernon had no Royal order to that effect. The Court communicated to the President and Council at Fort St. George, as well as to other settlements in India, that the mission of the Ambassador was calculated to injure English trade in India, and that it was hoped that with the assistance of its own agents the design of the New Company might be frustrated. At the same time was intimated a desire to send out to India as a representative Dr. Charles D'Avenant,⁵⁴ a member of Parliament and a person of great ability and experience. He had been privy to all the transactions on behalf of the Old Company in relation to the new Act of Parliament as well as to most of the material affairs of the Company. Dr. D'Avenant would transact business in consultation with the Court of Directors and its representatives in India, but he was forbidden to meddle in the management of the Company's mercantile affairs. The Court hoped that its servants in all their main settlements would consult Dr. D'Avenant about the best method to be taken for the present and future interests regarding trade, forts, inheritances and revenue. It further expressed its intention of cancelling Dr. D'Avenant's departure for India, should the New Company withdraw the plan of sending the proposed embassy.⁵⁵ Eventually, however, the plan of sending D'Avenant was dropped. The Old Company's servants in India had received the news of the formation of the New Company with dismay but still hoped that the Act might be repealed. Governor Pitt of Fort St. George considered that the Act would involve confusion, danger and the loss of all their privileges in India, and assured the Directors that he and others would do all that was possible to promote and secure their interests.⁵⁶

The Court of the Old Company endeavoured to forestall its rivals by sending out to India "a large equipment and a proportionate stock", and warned its servants to be on their guard against the ships and agents of the New Company proceeding to the East Indies. It also impressed upon its employees the importance of purchasing and sending to Europe, with the least possible delay, such Indian goods as would command a ready sale. This would greatly raise the status of the Old Company in public estimation and settle the vexed question of their com-

mercial rivalry.⁵⁷ Professor Scott observed: "The Old Company, owing to its longer establishment in India, had the advantage of a larger share in the trade than the Act allowed, but it was subject to obstacles thrown in its way by the House of Commons in the interest of the New Company".⁵⁸ The Court also instructed Sir John Gayer to spare no expense and labour to secure a *farman* from the Mughal, which would not only advance its commercial position in India, but would help to frustrate the Ambassador's mission. It was found, however, that the acquisition of such a *farman* was not only impracticable but useless, considering the political condition of the country; it had however the effect of stimulating the New Company to strengthen its position.

At the time when Sir William Norris arrived in India, and during the immediately succeeding period, the factories were in a precarious condition owing to uncertainty in the situation of the two Companies both in India and at home. In addition to the question of piracy, there was added the great probability of civil war owing to Aurangzib's advanced age. There was also the Emperor's almost ceaseless warfare with the Marathas. Sir Jadunath Sarkar justly remarked that "disorder and lawlessness seemed to prevail everywhere. The Mughal Empire was held together only by the continued existence of the aged Emperor. He, surrounded by sycophants and nobles of his own creation, who had neither the courage to correct his errors nor the honesty to give disinterested advice, was drawing near the end of his days".

The state of affairs between the two Companies, their conflicting claims and clashing interests, have been explained in the preceding pages. Something has been said too about the position in India, where the alien Mughal dynasty had passed its zenith and was approaching its decline, which was destined to proceed rapidly. This exordium seemed necessary in order to explain the circumstances under which Sir William Norris was to attempt the discharge of his dual mission as King William's Ambassador and as the representative of the New Company, which, without the knowledge of the ruling powers in India, claimed to have acquired the sole and exclusive right of trading within their dominion so far as the English nation was concerned.

It soon became clear that the co-existence of the two Companies was detrimental to the national interest. The impossible position of the two Companies was eloquently expressed in a letter of the Court of Directors of the Old Company to the Agent and Council of Bengal, dated August 26, 1698, which declared that the "two East India Companies in England can no more subsist without destroying one [or the] other than two Kings at the same time regnant in ye same Kingdom".⁵⁹ They further predicted "a civill Battle between us and the New Company, and 2 or 3 years' strife must end the Controversy, for the old or the New must give way, Our joynts are too stiff to yield to our Juniors". They claimed to be as "veteran soldiers" in this warfare, and hoped that their servants abroad would do their part to secure their ultimate victory.⁶⁰ The only means by which both Companies could escape ruin was however to abolish all privileges and favours, and to take steps to effect a compromise.

The New or English Company, notwithstanding its charter, had difficulty in raising adequate funds for the conduct of their trade, and had tentatively suggested a compromise with the rival concern. At first the Old Company seemed reluctant to consider any proposals aiming at union, and continued to provoke its opponents in the House of Commons. Later on, however, it expressed a readiness to enter into a coalition for the joint maintenance of the Indian trade as Parliament might decide. It also represented to the King its claims and grievances. This proposal of the Old Company was brought up for examination at a General Court of Adventurers on January 13, 1699, and was referred to the Grand Committee of fifty-two. At a further meeting on February 7, it was resolved that seven members of the Old Company should be authorised to treat with seven of the New Company, and they met in the Skinners' Hall on March 22. While these preliminary negotiations were taking place, the Old Company on February 24, 1699, petitioned Parliament to pass an Act authorising it to continue as a corporation after September 29, 1701. Prolonged negotiations regarding the settlement of stock between the Companies continued almost to the end of the year. On December 22, 1699, at a meeting in Skinners' Hall, there was something like a deadlock, and the

parties separated without reaching agreement.⁶¹

The Old Company, in the meanwhile, obtained a great advantage. In April, 1700, it secured an Act of Parliament authorising it to continue as a corporation with a right to trade in the East Indies till the £2,000,000 should be redeemed by the State.⁶² This got over the difficulty that the Old Company would cease to be a corporate body when the period of grace elapsed. The Old Company was also granted a commission authorising it to try the pirates in India. Copies of the Act and the Commission were immediately entrusted to a special messenger who was sent by the overland route to Bombay.⁶³ Following on this Act, the King, while assuring the Company of his favour and protection, recommended that it should seriously consider the question of union. The Act created a serious problem, as it not only postponed the prospects of union, but threatened the success of Sir William Norris's mission at the very outset; for the distinction between the two Companies, based on the grants of the Crown and Parliament, would not be grasped in a remote country ruled by a despotic sovereign.

When the elections to the new Parliament took place, the supporters of each Company fought vehemently to promote its interests. Sir John Malcolm writes: "The great efforts of both were directed to the object of gaining power in the House of Commons; and in the general elections of 1700 each was detected in bribery and corruption. The Old Company corrupted members, and purchased voices; the other, seats. Thus, the one bribed the representatives, the other the constituents".⁶⁴

In December, 1700, the negotiations for union were resumed. Representatives of the two Companies met together in conference. Neither party was unwilling to come to an agreement. One writer thus describes one of the meetings of the conference: "This night there is a great meeting betwixt the Old and New Company about their uniting; and the chief point they stand upon now is, what valuation shall be put upon the dead stock of the new. They value it at 200,000 *l*, but the Old can't imagine how they can make it amount to so much, except they value Sir William Norris at one half".⁶⁵ The complicated business was discussed for nearly a year with Sir Basil Firebrace as mediator; but he was

unable to bring the conversations to a successful conclusion within the specified time.

The death of King William on March 8, 1702 and the accession of Queen Anne did not change the policy of the Government with regard to the position of the two Companies. Early in 1702 it became evident that the contest between them was proving a national disaster, and it was recognised that swift measures must be taken to bring about a settlement. At last, on April 27, 1702, the General Courts of the two Companies accepted the terms of union. It was fortunate that this happened before the outbreak of war with France and Spain, as the continuance of the rivalry of the Companies might have further complicated affairs in the East.

On July 22, 1702, there was issued an "Indenture Tripartite" between Queen Anne and the two East India Companies, providing for their fusion. The Old Company was to purchase as much of the English Company's capital stock as would make the two Companies' shares equal. Its £315,000 capital was to be combined immediately with the capital of the New English Company. The trade was to be carried on for the next seven years by a Joint Conference of the two Companies, consisting of twenty-four managers, twelve to be chosen from each Company, who would manage it in the name of the English Company. They were to continue in office till April, 1703. During the period of seven years the two Companies would remain separate entities, with their own governors and directors and holding their separate General Courts. Neither would be responsible for the other's debts except those contracted in respect of their united trade. The members of both Companies might transfer their shares, provided that the Companies were not, during the period of seven years, divested of their stock. The General Courts of both Companies, or the managers, were to have control of all forts, factories, etc., and their governors and officers to have liberty to build forts etc., and provide military forces. The English Company was to have power to coin money, with the permission of the Princes of the territories in which it operated, provided the money conformed to the standards of the Princes' Mints. The Old Company was to convey Bombay and St. Helena to the

English Company. A Protestant minister and schoolmaster were to be maintained at St. Helena, and a Protestant minister in every garrison or factory, and a chaplain in every ship of 500 tons; these must learn the Portuguese and Indian languages. On the termination of the period of seven years the New English Company would manage the whole trade to India according to its charter of September 5, 1698. The members of the Old Company would then become members of the English Company. The Old Company would surrender its charter and corporation, after which the English Company would be called *The United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies*.⁶⁶ This deed of agreement was followed on the same day, July 22, 1702, by the drawing up of an Indenture *Quinque Partite of Conveyance to Trustees of the Dead Stock of the two East-India Companies*. It contained in detail all the various provisions concerning the Dead Stock to be adjusted at the end of seven years, and laid down that both the Companies were to enjoy the profits, paying and discharging all expenses incidental to their Dead Stocks.

It may be added that this formal union turned out a failure, though the authorities in England appealed to their employees in India to behave in a conciliatory manner and to act for the benefit of both Companies. Nevertheless, the period from 1702 till the final amalgamation of the two Companies was a time of administrative irregularity and friction, owing to the rivalry between the concerns and the conflicting private interests of their servants in India. The despatches of the Court of Managers, and the appointments they made, showed that they recognised the superiority of the Old Company's servants to those of the New. The choices made in at least two of the three Presidencies exemplified this. Sir John Gayer was re-appointed Governor of Bombay, while Sir Nicholas Waite retained the subordinate position of President of Surat. But as Gayer was not yet released from prison, Waite was commissioned to take his place. Waite had been an uncompromising opponent of the union: but when he realised that it was inevitable he was magnanimous enough to assure the Court that he would "obliterate all past heats", and to hold amicable intercourse with Sir John Gayer and his Council. On the Coromandel Coast Thomas Pitt was unanimously chosen President

and Governor of Fort St. George at a salary of £200 a year.⁶⁷ He was a vigorous administrator and his Presidency was conspicuously well governed compared with the other two. In accepting the situation under the new régime Pitt addressed a characteristic letter to the Directors of the New Company. He applied to himself as an Englishman the famous saying of King William to the French plenipotentiary at Ryswick: "Twas my Fate and nott my choice that made mee your 'Enemy', and since you and My Masters are united, Itt shall bee my utmost Endeavours to purchase your Good Opinion and deserve your Friendship".⁶⁸ John⁶⁹ was appointed Governor of Fort St. David, and as the relations between the two Pitts were anything but good, the authorities in London made the settlement in certain respects independent of Fort St. George so long as John Pitt remained there. In Bengal the administration under the Rotation Government proved unwieldy. Sir Edward Littleton and John Beard presided over their respective Councils, and a third Council, consisting of senior servants belonging to both the Companies, was entrusted with the affairs of the United Trade.

Complete union could no longer be indefinitely postponed. The Earl of Godolphin, who was an "almost indispensable part of the machinery of the State", intervened on behalf of the Government, and brought pressure to bear upon the two Companies to settle their differences by an act of arbitration. They agreed to accept the award in respect of all matters under dispute. Accordingly the Earl, having heard the position of the two parties through the medium of their counsel, gave his award regarding the United Trade and Stock by Deed Poll on September 29, 1708. The completion of the Union was rendered legal by an Act of Parliament which received the Royal Assent on March 20, 1709. The Managers of the United Trade then assumed the title of *The United Company of Merchants of England, trading to the East Indies*. It may be conceded that the Union opened a new era in the commercial and political stabilisation of England's Eastern Empire.

NOTES

¹ P. 64 of *Letter Book No. 9*, India Office.

² Vol. V, p. 237 of *Macaulay's History of England*, edited by Professor C. H. Firth, Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.

* Pp. 150, 106, 109, 111 of Shaw's *Charters etc.*

* *The Interlopers in India*, (*Calcutta Review*, December, 1858).

* *The Somers Collection of Tracts*, Vol. XV, British Museum.

* Vol. I, p. 212 of Macaulay's *History of England*.

* Vol. I, p. 63 of *Hyde Correspondence*, (British Museum), edited by Samuel W. Singer, London, 1828.

* *Johnson Papers*, 22, 185 (British Museum).

* P. xxxix of *Oriental Commerce*, by William Milburn, London, 1813.

* Pp. 78-79 of *History of the Indian Navy, 1613-1863*, by Charles Rathbone Low, London, 1877.

* P. 329 of *Home Misc. Series*, Vol 36, India Office.

* Every's real name was Bridgman, and he was the son of a trading captain of Plymouth. He had served in the navy and in that capacity made several voyages to the West Indies. Every was an educated man, and during his piratical career in the Indian seas he only attacked the Indian ships. After amassing a large fortune he returned to England, and died in extreme poverty in Devonshire. See pp. 17-31 of *The Pirates of Malabar* by Colonel John Biddulph, London, 1907.

* He was the founder of the wealthy family of the Mullas of Surat where he had been a merchant for above forty years. His trading business was so flourishing that he used to send out yearly twenty sail of merchantmen. He died in 1718 and left a legacy of six *krors* of rupees (over six millions sterling), and after his death a portion of it was claimed by the Mughal. See Vol. IV, p. 453 of *Storia do Mogor*; Vol. I, Part I, p. 299 of *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*; Vol. I, pp. 147-201 of Alexander Hamilton's *Account of India and Persia*; also Orme MSS. O.V., Vol. 122, pp. 165-166.

* P. 329 of *Home Misc. Series*, Vol. 36.

* P. 27 of *The Pirates of Malabar* by Colonel John Biddulph.

* Vol. VII, pp. 350-355 of *The History of India*... by Sir H. M. Elliot, and Professor John Dowson, London, 1877. The loss of the ship and the real motive of piracy was accurately described by Khafi Khan.

* Articles on piracy in the *Indian Antiquary*, by S. C. Hill.

* Vol. 36, pp. 323-4 of *Home Miscellaneous Series*.

* Vol. 36, p. 228, *Ibid.*

* Log-Books 51-3886; *Hastings Adm* 51-3859; *Anglesey* 51-4114, *Lizard* 51-3886; *Harwich* 51-4215, P.R.O., London.

* Kidd and six others were tried for piracy and hanged in May 1701. See *The Famous Trials in History*, by Lord Birkenhead.

* A Turk by birth, and brother of the Sharif of Jidda.

* Orme MSS. O.V., Vol. 155.

* P. 450 of *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 36.

* Jamdat-ul-Mulk Asad Khan was a Persian by birth and connected by his marriage with a sister of the empress Mumtaz Mahal. He served for some time under Shahjahan. By his own perseverance and ability Asad Khan rose to high position during the reign of Aurangzib, winning the entire confidence of that Emperor, who made him *Deputy Wazir* in 1670 and *Grand Wazir* in 1676, which office he retained till Aurangzib's death in 1707. His services were further recognised by his being created *Amir-ul-Umara* by the Emperor in the 45th year of his reign. He played a prominent part

in dealing with the question of succession amongst Aurangzib's sons. His last years proved unhappy and he died at the advanced age of ninety-four in 1716. Asad Khan lived in great splendour, spending his money lavishly and maintaining a magnificent harem. See pp. 270-279 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*, No. 1373.

²² An order or written command sent by a higher official to his deputy; also a permit often issued by local officials to pass goods duty free, or to allow special rates according to established usage or royal commands.

²³ No. 6591 of O.C. 54, India Office.

²⁴ No. 6916 of O.C. 55—Part II.

²⁵ Mir, 'Abdul-I-Qadir Diyanat Khan had succeeded his brother, Amanat Khan the Second, as Governor of Surat in December 1699. According to *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Diyanat was "a man straight in conduct, weighty of speech, magnanimous and sedate. He was distinguished for honesty and truthfulness, and for soundness of judgment and prudence". He incurred the displeasure of the Emperor on account of his mismanagement of the port of Surat, and was therefore summoned to Court. Diyanat was subsequently made *diwan* of the Deccan, and died in 1714 or 1715. See pp. 472-475 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*.....translated by H. Beveridge.

²⁶ Spiritual heads, who were at the same time temporal rulers. The title is also given to priests of mosques or, in a metaphorical sense, to leaders of any system of theology and law.

²⁷ Vol. 7, pp. 22 of *Surat Factory Records*.

²⁸ In March 1704, Aurangzib set aside the agreement previously made with the three European nations regarding the security of the seas, and with the consent of the merchants cancelled their own claims. See Vol. III, p. 490 of *Storia do Mogor*.

²⁹ The Prince was the second son of Bahadur Shah and grandson of Aurangzib.

³⁰ Vol. III, pp. 506-507 of Bruce's *Annals*.

³¹ Da'ud joined the Mughal's service as a young man, was promoted to the rank of 4000 (horse) and received the title of Khan. He won distinction at the siege of Jinji, and was appointed Deputy Governor of the Karnatik and Jinji under Zulfiqar Khan, the *Subahdar* of the Deccan. Da'ud held various responsible positions, and was killed in 1715 in a battle outside Burhanpur. See Vol. IV, p. 263 of *Storia do Mogor*; also p. 459 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*.

³² P. 288 of *The Life of Thomas Pitt*, by Sir Cornelius N. Dalton.

³³ Europeans.

³⁴ See *Kalimat Letters*, translated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in the *Report of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, Vol. V, Calcutta, 1923.

³⁵ A pamphlet entitled *Some Considerations offered touching the East-India Affairs* (Bodleian Library, Oxford).

³⁶ Vol. III, p. 315 of *The History of King William the Third*, by Abel Boyer, London, 1702.

³⁷ See a letter from the Court of Directors of the Old Company to the President and Council at Fort St. George, preserved in *Home Series Misc.*, Vol. 803.

³⁸ P. 390 of *The History of England*, by Sir Richard Lodge, Longmans, Green and Co., 1910.

³⁹ *London Gazette*, July 11, 18, 25; August 8, 1698.

⁴⁴ P. 136 of *John Company*, by Sir William Foster; and also Vol. II, p. 318 of *A History of British India*, by Sir W. W. Hunter.

⁴⁵ Vol. I, pp. 366-67 of *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720* by W. R. Scott, Cambridge, 1912.

⁴⁶ Pp. 129-155 of *Shaw's Charters etc.*

⁴⁷ P. 27 of *Grigg's Relics of the East India Company.*

⁴⁸ Vol. II, p. 326 of *A History of British India*, by Sir W. W. Hunter. Mr. Roberts has contributed a chapter to Hunter's book, which gives a readable account of the conflict existing between the two Companies; but his narrative lacks the deep historical knowledge and the finely-edged literary style of Hunter.

⁴⁹ O. C. 55—Part I, No. 6633, India Office.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, No. 6639.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, Nos. 6640, 6649.

⁵² Vernon was Secretary of State from Dec. 1698 to Jan. 1702. He represented various constituencies in Parliament as a staunch Whig. He was made a Privy Councillor in 1697; and died on Jan. 31, 1727. See p. 183 of *The Secretaries of State*.....by Mark A. Thomson, Oxford, 1932; also Vol. LVIII, pp. 277-278 of *Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁵³ *Home Miscellaneous Series*, Vol. 36.

⁵⁴ Dr. D'Avenant was the eldest son of Sir William D'Avenant, "the Sweet Swan of Isis", who succeeded Ben Jonson as Poet Laureate in 1638. He became a Commissioner of Excise in 1683 and sat in Parliament during the reigns of James II and William III. Dr. D'Avenant was a distinguished political economist and wrote several valuable pamphlets and books on trade and other subjects. Under Queen Anne he was appointed Secretary to the Union with Scotland, and in 1705 Inspector General of Exports and Imports. He died on Nov. 6, 1714. See Vol. II, p. 398 of *Hyde Correspondence* (B.M.), edited by Samuel W. Singer; pp. 139, 154-5 of *Letter Book 10*, I.O.; and also Vol. XIV, p. 99 of *D.N.B.*

⁵⁵ Vol. 803, p. 564 of *Home Series Misc.*

⁵⁶ O. C. 54, No. 6616.

⁵⁷ Vol. III, pp. 261-2 of *Bruce's Annals.*

⁵⁸ Vol I, p. 366 of *Joint-Stock Companies* by W. R. Scott.

⁵⁹ P. 80 of *Fort St. George Despatches from England, 1696-1699.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ MS. Rawl. A. 302, Bodleian Library.

⁶² Vol. 456D of *Home Misc. Series.*

⁶³ P. xiv of *Charters Relating to the East India Company from 1600 to 1761*, by John Shaw, Madras, 1887.

⁶⁴ P. 30 of *Sketch of the Political History of India*, London, 1811.

⁶⁵ P. 434, 12th Report, Appendix, Part II of the Manuscripts of the Earl Cowper, Vol. II of *Historical Manuscripts Commission.*

⁶⁶ Pp. 157-199 of *Shaw's Charters.*

⁶⁷ Vol. 803 of *Home Series Misc.*

⁶⁸ Vol. III, p. lxxix of *Hedge's Diary.*

⁶⁹ See *Infra.*

CHAPTER IV

Agents of the New Company in India

Before the departure of Sir William Norris for India as Ambassador, the New Company appointed Presidents for two of its chief centres of trade, and the third was nominated shortly after he had sailed. The choice fell upon Edward Littleton for Bengal, John Pitt for Masulipatam, and Nicholas Waite for Surat. Probably the selection of these men was largely influenced by their previous experience of Indian affairs under the London or Old Company. The consular rank with which these new Presidents were endowed gave them power superior to that of the Old Company's Presidents. They would thus be enabled to exercise their authority over their trading settlements, the dealings with their own nationals, and the Mughal's subjects. In referring to their special position Sir Cornelius Neale Dalton not inaptly remarked: "The most important duties of an English Consul are to protect the interests of such of his countrymen as are resident in the foreign country to which he is accredited. But the great majority of the English residents in India were servants of the Old Company, the very persons whose interests these Consuls were being sent out to injure to the utmost of their power".¹ So this new authority was ignored by their rivals, and there was much opposition to their claims. They were, however, not wholly frustrated, and were of considerable utility to the Ambassador. The position of the New Company's President at Surat proved much more difficult than that of the others. At least one of the difficulties here arose from the fact that the Old Company's liabilities to the Indian merchants had remained unsettled even at the close of the embassy of Sir William Norris. It may be mentioned that the New Company also planned to extend its trading operations to the Far East and appointed Allen Catchpole, formerly in the Old Company's service, to be President and Consul for its proposed settlements in China.² Finding that it was impossible to establish satisfactory trading relations at

Chusan, Catchpoole finally left for Pulo Condore, where he and most of the English were murdered in 1705. The New Company's Chinese trade was consequently abandoned.³

In January 1699 Edward Littleton,⁴ who had been one of the first Directors of the New Company, was knighted and received his commission and instructions as President and Consul for the English in Bengal.

Sir William Norris was informed by Edward Littleton and his Council that, after serious consideration of the New Company's position in Bengal in its relations with the Mughal Government, they found that the constitution of that province, including Behar and Orissa, differed in its immunities, rights and privileges from any other part of the Mughal's dominions. They warned the Ambassador, therefore, that any delay or mistake in applying to the Court for the necessary privileges might have serious consequences for their settlements. They asked Sir William to procure an exclusive *farman* for that Presidency specifying certain concessions essential to their trading security, and further providing that their settlements should be exempt from duties and taxes. If that could not be obtained, then the annual *peshkash* of Rs. 3,000, as inserted in the *nishan* might be proposed; and if that was not accepted, the Ambassador should offer a still larger sum rather than agree to pay customs duty. If, after all, the Mughal still insisted on the payment of customs duty, he must secure that the rate should be 2 *per cent*, as at Surat. He was also asked to do his utmost to obtain the removal of the additional 1½ *per cent*. *jiziya* or "head money", and to secure unhindered passage for their goods. They requested that a mint might be established at Hugli customs free for the convenience of all their settlements, as it was hazardous and expensive to send their treasure to the mint at Rajmahal, which was not only a long way off, but was also unprotected.⁵

They sent one Muhammad Huriff as *Wakil* or agent with necessary papers to assist the Ambassador in conducting their business at the Court at a salary of Rs. 600 *per annum*. Huriff seems to have been well fitted for the task, having previously gained wide knowledge in all matters relating to the Old Company's affairs in Bengal for about forty years and being, further, "well

versed in the method of all Courts and Laws customes of ye country". No one had ever questioned his integrity or ability since he entered the New Company's service.⁶ But Huriff unfortunately died on his way to Court. Littleton and his Council recommended the Ambassador to send his letters and other business communications to them by the special *dak-choki*,⁷ which carried the Emperor's letters through his dominions in less than half the time taken by the ordinary *pattamars* or foot messengers.

On December 26, 1698, John Pitt⁸ received his commission and instructions as President of the New Company and Consul for the English at Masulipatam.

In conducting the business transactions of the New Company's settlements and assisting the Ambassador in his negotiations at Court, John Pitt found it incumbent to secure the services of able interpreters. He, therefore, took an early opportunity of writing to his old acquaintance Signor Niccolas Manucci,⁹ a man of linguistic ability and considerable commercial experience and well versed in the diplomatic intricacies of the Mughal Court. John Pitt invited Manucci to undertake on his own terms the duties of *dubash* or interpreter to the Ambassador.¹⁰ Although Consul Pitt was persistent in his request, Manucci courteously declined the offer on the ground of his infirmity and blindness. His refusal was really due solely to fear of offending Governor Pitt¹¹ of the Old Company. This was evident from the fact that a few months later he himself made an overture to John Pitt declaring that he was prepared to serve the New Company, provided he should receive 4000 pagodas in advance and permission to accept the position from Governor Pitt, it being left to the discretion of John Pitt to pay him any extra sum he might deserve on the conclusion of the business.¹²

Mr. James Ravenhill and Mr. Jeremiah Peachey, two dismissed servants of the Old Company, were next invited to undertake the post of interpreter, but would not accept it for fear of incurring the displeasure of Governor Pitt, nor, for that matter, were they suitable. Consul Pitt then asked one Kulla Venkatadri,¹³ who knew English well and had served the Old Company, and possessed great experience of that part of the country and much influence with the merchants at Fort St. George and

Masulipatam, to become chief interpreter at an annual salary of 150 pagodas. Venkatadri accepted the offer and was authorised to bring copies of the *nishans* and *farmans*, and especially a copy of the Golkonda *farman*,¹⁴ originally bestowed on the Old Company, which Consul Pitt himself had been unable to procure. The latter document was destined to be of great service to the Ambassador in negotiating with the Emperor. Such were the preliminary arrangements made by Consul Pitt prior to Sir William Norris' arrival at Masulipatam.

Nicholas Waite¹⁵ was knighted on April 2, 1699, and after receiving his commission and instructions from the King and the Company, sailed for India on board the *Montague*, commanded by Captain John Caulier. The Court of the Company expressly enjoined him to give the Ambassador all possible assistance; it hoped that a sum of £ 20,000 would cover the expenses of the embassy, but emphasised its desire for its expeditious conclusion even at considerably greater cost.¹⁶ Sir Nicholas arrived off Goa on December 23, 1699, and after reaching Bombay on January 11, immediately notified Sir John Gayer that King William had appointed him his Public Minister, and Consul-General for that part of India. He had, he said, been given the sole power of granting passports to the subjects of the Mughal Emperor and the Indian Princes; he was to determine all differences between English nationals, to take care to preserve the privileges which should be obtained by the Ambassador for the benefit of "such his subjects as are by ye late Act entitled to be protected in their Trade in these parts", and to secure the redressing of all their just grievances by the Mughal Government.¹⁷ Sir John Gayer and his Council promptly replied in a letter written from Bombay Castle that they had received no official communication from England of Sir Nicholas's appointment as the King's Consul. They also warned him that strict orders should be given to the New Company's servants at Surat not to hinder the Old Company's trade in any way before its legal termination on September 29, 1701.

Sir Nicholas, finding that he could make no impression on Gayer and his Council, sailed for Surat and arrived at Suali Bar on January 19, 1700. Waite was greatly alarmed at finding seven

Dutch men-of-war lying off the Bar. They were well-equipped with men and ammunition, and had arrived at Suali from Batavia with their Director. Their warlike appearance caused much consternation among the local merchants, and all trade was stopped at Surat. The Dutch Director had been treating with the Mughal Governor with a view to obtaining the liberty and freedom of trade guaranteed by their *farman*. He demanded the return of the security bond for the safety of the Red Sea from piracy, which had been extracted from the Dutch some time before, and the payment of the convoy charges owed by the late Governor. This threat came to nothing, as Diyānat Khān merely sent a letter of recommendation in their favour to the Emperor, though their Director was received in *darbar*¹⁸. Four French men-of-war arrived at the same time, ostensibly to demand their security paper, but they waited to see what success the Dutch might have before they moved in the matter. Sir Nicholas Waite prudently refrained from entangling himself with the Dutch in a joint demand for satisfaction from the Mughal. Sir William Norris, who had already arrived at Masulipatam, on hearing of the presence of the Dutch men-of-war at Surat, warned the English naval commander to remain aloof, pointing out that if he did not, his own mission as Ambassador would be made extremely difficult. The Dutch had for a time carried out their obligation to convoy the pilgrim ships to Mokha, at a financial loss. They attempted in vain for some years to obtain the annulment of their security bond, and demanded a fort between Surat and the mouth of the river.

Sir Nicholas stayed on board the *Montague* for several days and discussed urgent business matters with the New Company's staff as well as with others. He also constituted a Council. Then he formally notified his arrival and character, as well as that of the Ambassador, to Diyānat Khān, and to President Stephen Colt of the Old Company and his Council. In fact, his prompt attempts to exercise his powers as Consul did not tend to make matters easier for either of the two Companies. While still on board the *Montague*, Sir Nicholas ordered that pendants belonging to the *Bedford* and the *Frederick* should be hauled down and the St. George's or Old Company's flag at Suāli struck

as he could not allow it to fly in front of His Majesty's flag. President Colt and his colleagues refused to obey this order, protesting that Sir Nicholas had no jurisdiction over their factory, which was built on ground belonging to the Emperor by virtue of *farmans* granted them. They represented to Diyānat Khān that they were a distinct body, and that Sir Nicholas had therefore no legal authority to interfere with their affairs. Furthermore, the lowering of the flag would inevitably destroy the credit of the Old Company amongst local people, so that their trade would suffer. Thereupon Diyānat Khān cautioned Sir Nicholas Waite not to haul down the flag, saying that no commission from the King of England had any authority at Surat unless sanctioned by order of the Emperor. Regarding all this as an affront to his own official dignity, Sir Nicholas, after a heated correspondence with President Colt, resolved to use force, and accordingly ordered Captain Caulier to land with a large contingent of sailors and haul down St. George's flag from the rival factory. Diyānat Khān at once ordered the flag to be re-hoisted, declaring Waite's action to be an insult to the Emperor.¹⁹ Sir Nicholas retorted that Diyānat's action was an affront both to King William and to himself as his representative. President Colt, for his part, maintained that the flag, if hoisted upon a house or within a compound, was not the badge of supreme authority of the nation it represented, and that St. George's flag was the common sign used by Englishmen, and might be flown by merchants or others.

Waite however, was determined to assert his consular authority in spite of all opposition. He refused to give Colt and his Council a copy of his commission, though they ardently desired to have certain information as to its tenor. He insisted that all Englishmen in India were placed under his protection, and that he was empowered to redress their grievances against the Mughal's subjects and settle disputes among themselves; they were forbidden to bring such complaints to the Mughal Court during the Ambassador's stay in India. Sir Nicholas laid down very clearly that the New Company was in no way chargeable for the misdemeanours or debts of the Old. These debts for which all their real and personal estate stood chargeable should be paid before their determination.²⁰

Waite did not omit to communicate with Mulla Abd-ul-ghafur, "with whom ye merchants of this famous city of Suratt associate for Councill", and others, assuring them that it was his duty to preserve inviolate all such agreements made between King Williams' subjects and the merchants of Surat as shall be concluded by the Ambassador. He also wrote complimentary letters to Mir 'Ali Naqi,²¹ son of Diyānat Khān, and other local Mughal officials, asking them to give Rustamji Manackji²² their entire confidence on his appointment as chief broker to the New Company. These requests of Sir Nicholas were all favourably received. It was customary at that time that any one receiving an appointment should make a present to the official to whom he owed his new office. When therefore Rustamji was given the appointment, he presented Sir Nicholas Waite with the sum of Rs. 20,000. The money was spent in erecting suitable lodgings, together with warehouses and other buildings, for the New Company, and the Council wrote that "our house adjoining to the Wall and one of the city gates upon the river will in few years after have our Phirmaund dissipate said Expençe in cartage etc. beside the great security it will be upon any revolution in this Governmt when have the comand of such a gate".²³

It may easily be concluded that, as Rustamji was able to pay so large a sum, the emoluments attached to his post, besides sums derived from other sources, must have been very large. He was the first member of the Parsi community to secure such an appointment; this caused great jealousy amongst the local Brahmans, who had hitherto occupied all the chief posts in the business concerns of Surat. Sir Nicholas and his Council stated that it was notorious throughout the city that Rustamji was "the best master of business with the Governmt which could never have been carried with that secresy and expedition had a Baman (Brahman) been our Broker".²⁴

To facilitate the business and trade of the New Company's factory at Surat, Sir Nicholas solicited a *parwāna* from Diyānat Khān, and sent a draft of it through Rustamji for the Governor's approval. Sir Nicholas was anxious that Rustamji should insist upon all the articles of the proposed *parwāna* being conceded, and especially those referring to the honours, which should be

shown to King William's flag by the Dutch and the Old Company's servants on the occasion of his landing.

Sir Nicholas particularly desired the insertion in the document of a provision that all Englishwomen coming under his protection should be allowed to leave Surat at will, either for England or any other destination, after clearing their just debts; and that married women should not be held responsible for their husband's "misbehaviour". There was considerable difficulty in securing the *parwana* in every detail, though Rustamji constantly attended the Governor's *darbār*. Waite instructed Rustamji to use every means in his power, including handsome bribery of the Governor's son and subordinate officials. He asked him to tell the leading merchants of Surat that he (Sir Nicholas) would accept any terms that might hereafter be agreed upon between the Ambassador and the Mughal to secure the safety of their ships, provided Diyānat Khān granted the *parwāna*.

In spite of all the intrigues of the Old and other European Companies, Sir Nicholas obtained the *parwāna* as completely as could reasonably be expected about the middle of February 1700. It provided that the New Company's President and his factors should, with the owner's consent, be allowed to hire property in any part of Surat; and it exempted from customs duty any articles intended for his private use. Further, it gave the New Company's officials facilities for travelling and trading in various parts of the Mughal's dominions, ordered that their merchandise was not to be detained in the customs house, and freed them from all liabilities in respect of the Old Company. It also contained the proviso that Sir Nicholas should be honourably received in Surat, with all respect due to his rank. Sir Nicholas at once informed the Ambassador at Masulipatam of the concessions obtained in the *parwāna*. It was doubtless abundantly clear to him that the future prospects of the embassy depended on his own direction and efforts.

When all this essential business had been completed with the Mughal Governor, Sir Nicholas began to make arrangements for his state entry into Surat. He was particularly insistent about the punctilio to be observed on his landing, and desired that Diyānat Khān, accompanied by his son, should receive him at

Noquedah's Garden with all military honours. To this the Governor was unwilling to consent before verifying Sir Nicholas' commission, a copy of which was at once forwarded to him through Rustamji. On February 19, Sir Nicholas landed at the Garden, one mile from the city of Surat. The Old Company's servants and the Dutch had meanwhile endeavoured to persuade Diyānat Khān not to receive Sir Nicholas in person on the ground that he had not yet been granted the Emperor's *farman*, and to depute his son to receive him instead. Sir Nicholas, however, insisted that Diyanat Khan should show him greater honour than had been accorded to the Dutch representative. Diyānat, therefore, came himself to escort Sir Nicholas to his house. There were present captains of the squadron, together with two of his Majesty's Commissioners for pirates and several factors of the New Company, who unanimously confirmed the authority of Sir Nicholas' commission. King William's flag was carried before him, and trumpets and *palanquins* also formed part of the procession which passed through the curious and anxious crowd which thronged both sides of the road. None of the Old Company's servants were present, though most of the English residents in Surat attended the function. Sir Nicholas' commission was publicly read and acknowledged by Diyānat Khān and other Mughal officials. Diyānat then presented a horse and other gifts to Sir Nicholas, besides presents to his suite, and allowed him to hoist the King's flag on the New Company's factory. The Old Company's people spread a report that Sir Nicholas had secured this reception by bribing the Governor²⁵ with the sum of Rs. 15,000.

As soon as Sir Nicholas Waite had settled down at Surat in his quarters, he defined clearly the mission of the Ambassador, as well as his own powers, by issuing a proclamation under the New Company's seal to the inhabitants of Surat. This was posted at the customs house with the Governor's permission. It announced that the object of the Ambassador's mission was to obtain commercial privileges and to promote friendship and amity between the Mughal's subjects and those of the King of England. As 'Public Minister' and 'Consul General' for that part of India, Sir Nicholas would faithfully preserve all privileges obtained by

the Ambassador for the benefit of King William's English subjects, who were also entitled to his protection. At the same time it was declared that no English subject who had lent or intended to lend money upon bond, or who had made or would make contracts with any Mughal subject without the consent of the Ambassador, Sir Nicholas Waite or any other future minister, could hold them responsible for those liabilities. Further, no subjects of the King of England might grant to any Englishman or Mughal subject promises of protection without the permission of the Ambassador or Sir Nicholas. Such an offence, being illegal, would be punishable. In order to prevent misunderstandings between Europeans and Mughal subjects, all "sea-faring persons" were liable to severe punishment should they fail to report themselves at once to Sir Nicholas. If their integrity should be proved, they could either be employed in the service of their own country or be given liberty to sail with the King's allies under his protection.

Waite then communicated to the Emperor the formation of the New Company and the arrival of Sir William Norris in India. He represented that King William desired that all debts owing to the merchants and other inhabitants of Surat should be defrayed by the Old Company before its determination, as their servants had been sharers in and abettors of the piracies from which his subjects and the trade of his dominions had suffered.²⁶ He also encouraged the local merchants to draw up a petition for the Emperor accusing the Old Company of piracy. Waite does not seem to have realised that his tacit acknowledgment that the Old Company's servants were pirates reflected on the honour of King William and the whole English nation. He was asked by the merchants to represent their grievances to the Ambassador but advised Norris not to interfere with the Old Company's affairs. Later on he changed his mind and insisted that the Ambassador should submit the merchants' claims to the Emperor. He suggested that the Ambassador should support him in requesting King William to send out two or three frigates to India each year, which should fight the pirates under his direction.

Sir Nicholas then proceeded to inform the Emperor that he

had "brought twelve curious cannon order'd to be deliv'r'd by our serene King's Ambassador to yor Emperiall Majesty to be used in ye field for destroying of all yor Enemies wch are ready when have notice of sd Embassadrs arrival to be sent into your glorious Court". Even at this early stage, it was realised that, with the exception of the cannon, the presents would prove of little value at Court. Waite and his Council considered that no present would be really "esteemed that is not very noble fine and curious in its kind or ever brought into these parts of the world.". Within a few weeks the guns, King William's picture and the other State presents were despatched to the Emperor's camp under an escort of ten soldiers receiving £ 4 each a year, together with free board and clothing.²⁷ They were followed shortly after by six of the Company's writers, a surgeon, an interpreter of Jewish nationality named Issac Tobay, a Parsi and fourteen peons under the direction of the chaplain, Mr. Lawrence Hackett. On their arrival at Burhanpur, they suffered considerable hardship for want of funds to buy provisions; Mr. Hackett complained in a letter to Sir Nicholas that they "must have lived as bears in winter upon sucking our paws", and in consequence the soldiers threatened to desert. But soon afterwards Mr. Hackett received the necessary funds from Waite.

About the same time, with the consent of his Council, Sir Nicholas submitted to the Emperor a draft of a *farman* of twenty-one articles. He prayed that this might be granted to Sir William Norris, or, in the event of the Ambassador's experiencing any accident or for any reason not arriving at the Imperial Court, to Waite himself. This was done before Sir Nicholas could have received any authority from the Ambassador, although he sent him a copy of the draft of the *farman* as well as the letter addressed to the Emperor. The draft was based on the Dutch *farman*, because the Dutch had been enjoying greater immunities than the Old Company.

Waite and Council sought to justify their action in applying for the *farman* by pointing to the New Company's critical position and the delay in Sir William Norris's arrival at the Emperor's Court, which, they said, compelled them to take decisive steps to obtain a *farman* during the Emperor's life time.

They hoped that their action would not lessen the Ambassador's prestige, but would rather assist the embassy, and expressed the opinion to Norris that if a *farman* were procured for every Presidency before his arrival at Court, it would make it easier for him to obtain any fresh privileges he might be seeking. In reality Norris's negotiations at Court were in no way assisted, but handicapped by Waite's action, which was condemned as impudent by the Directors of the New Company in London.

On receiving Waite's letter, the Emperor commanded Diyānat Khān to examine the items of the desired *farman* and to treat the New Company civilly, showing them every favour. Further, Diyānat Khān must ensure the carrying out of the promises made by Sir Nicholas Waite, who had undertaken to guarantee the safety of the pilgrims' sea route to Mokha and also to make good losses sustained by the merchants in respect of ships and goods seized by the Old Company. This guarantee was communicated to the Emperor by Abdul Rahaman Khān, Chief Mufti²⁸ of the Court, on the report of the *Harkara*²⁹ Muhammad Baquir. Waite at first attempted to evade his promise, and categorically denied that he had ever given such securities. Soon afterwards however, he agreed to secure the sea route to Mokha and to pay such charges as might be fixed by negotiation between himself and the merchants. But Diyānat Khān rejected this offer, pointing out that the Dutch had already given a guarantee for the route to Mokha and that it was therefore unnecessary for the English to undertake this responsibility.

Diyānat Khān could not advise the Emperor to grant the *farman* until Sir Nicholas had consented to give a guarantee for the South Indian seas every other year alternately with the Old Company. Sir Nicholas objected to this proposal and urged that the Dutch should undertake the obligation, as they possessed both fortifications and a large fleet on the Southern Coast. He further pointed out that when the late Governor of Surat, Amanat Khān, wrote to King William stating that the Emperor would grant a *farman* to the New Company on its arrival at Surat, he made no mention of such a guarantee for the South Indian seas. Waite also pleaded that the Ambassador had not empowered him to make any agreement other than what he (Norris) should direct.

Diyānat Khān then threatened Sir Nicholas with imprisonment, on which he and his Council gave way and signed the security bond for the South Indian seas, hoping thereby speedily to obtain the *farman*. Although the Governor reported in its favour to the Emperor, it never received the royal signature, partly owing to obstruction and bribery by the Old Company.

A vehement and prolonged controversy had already taken place between Waite and Colt of the Old Company concerning their respective powers. The former charged Colt and his Council, among other things, with preventing the New Company from enjoying privileges it had already obtained, and impeding the despatch of presents and guns to the Emperor's Court. He also accused them of asserting that Sir William Norris was not commissioned as Ambassador and that the New Company was composed of interlopers, of making scurrilous reflections on King William himself, of designing attempts on his (Waite's) life, and of handsomely bribing Diyānat Khān, his son, and secretary in order to prejudice the interest of the New Company.

Sir John Gayer, who had hitherto been watching the situation of the Old Company's affairs with grave anxiety, now left his headquarters at Bombay for Surat, where he arrived on the *Tavistock* on November 23, 1700. His visit had the express object of settling the question of the merchants' claims, and the further and wider aim of counteracting the influence of Sir William Norris. Gayer represented to the Emperor that the Old Company had been trading for a long time at Surat, and had always observed the stipulations of the successive *farmans* granted by the Mughal Court. It had imported from England and other places goods and treasures worth crores of rupees, and regularly paid large custom dues into the Emperor's treasury, and its loyalty to him was unquestioned. He also declared that Sir William Norris was only a representative of the New Company, which was defraying his expenses, and that he had no authority from King William to interfere with the Old Company. Gayer soon came into conflict with Sir Nicholas Waite, to whom he strongly protested that he had no power over him (Gayer) or his subordinates. He reminded Waite of the authority conferred upon him and the privileges granted to the Old Company by

successive royal charters. Gayer, however, met with a rebuff, for Sir Nicholas pointed out that the Old Company could not delegate any sovereign power or royal commission equal to those conferred upon him by King William.

One night early in February 1701, Diyānat Khān sent his son with an escort of over 100 men and horse. They seized Sir John and Lady Gayer and several other members of the Old Company, and brought them ignominiously to the Governor's house. They were all confined together "in a little nasty hole where we all lay on the ground", and were threatened with the utmost severity. Sir John Gayer had no opportunity of escaping on board ship, and had been insufficiently guarded by his own men. Diyānat Khān held several councils at his house to which were summoned some of the Mughal officials, leading merchants and Sir Nicholas Waite and his colleagues of the New Company. Sir Nicholas disingenuously pleaded that there was no longer any need for Sir John Gayer to be kept in prison, as King William had directed the debts of the Old Company to be paid. The merchants urged Sir John and Lady Gayer's release, as their own trade was suffering because their ships could not safely sail without the Old Company's passports. Moreover, the stopping of trade would involve considerable loss to the Emperor's revenue through the non-payment of customs duty. There was also the probability that the Old Company's ships might carry out reprisals on the Mokha and Jidda fleets. Towards the end of February the prisoners were all released, though Gayer and Colt were placed under surveillance in their factory, and the merchants were permitted to resume their trade pending further orders from the Emperor. Diyānat Khān, after receiving large sums of money from the Old Company's servants, wrote to the Emperor requesting him to grant their complete liberty.³⁰

The arrest and its sequel were unanimously condemned by all the representatives of the Old Company's settlements in India. The Deputy Governor and Council of Bombay wrote:—"It was no small surprise and trouble to us to find the General with the rest of our Master's servants fallen into the hands of the barbarous and treacherous Moors."³¹ By this it cannot be expected but our affairs in these parts will greatly suffer till matters be regulated

at home between the two companies. We do sincerely and heartily wish that those false aspersions and malicious proceedings of the New Company's agents here to the prejudice of our Masters will meet with that reward and punishment which they justly deserve".³² They also complained that the order of imprisonment was procured by Sir Nicholas Waite, the *Harkara* of Surat and others. Governor Pitt, writing from Fort St. George to Mr. John Beard in Bengal, commented on the arrest as "the like I have not known, heard nor read of", and trusted that the Court of the Old Company would take some steps to avenge it. He also expressed the pious wish that the embassy of Sir William Norris might prove a failure. In a letter to President Colt, Pitt observed that the treatment meted out to Sir John Gayer reflected not only on Sir Nicholas, but also on the honour of the whole English nation. Notwithstanding Sir Nicholas' part in procuring the imprisonment, he at once informed the Ambassador, then on his way to Court, of what had happened to Sir John and Lady Gayer and others of the Old Company. He attributed that great dishonour to their own reckless disloyalty; but missed the opportunity of suggesting that Sir William Norris should intercede with the Emperor for their release. Although he tried to procure Lady Gayer's release, he warned the Ambassador that any interference on his part might seriously embarrass the embassy, and involve the New Company in the liabilities of the Old.³³ Sir William Norris evinced some concern about the affair. He declared that though he was sorry for the persons concerned, yet he considered that they justly deserved their confinement on account of their "base and unwarrantable action".³⁴

NOTES

¹ P. 146 of *The Life of Thomas Pitt*, Cambridge, 1915.

² Vol. I, p. 109 of *The East India Company trading to China*, by H. B. Morse, Clarendon Press, 1926.

³ Vol. II, p. cxii of *The Diary of Sir William Hedges*.

⁴ Littleton went out to India in 1671 as a factor of the London Company with a salary of £25 *per annum*. In 1679 he was promoted to be "Senior Merchant" at a salary of £40, and also made one of the Council at Hugli. He rose to be Chief of Kasimbazar, and was dismissed from the Company's service in 1682 for his infidelity. Littleton also mismanaged the New Company's affairs, and in consequence was deprived of his com-

mission in January 1705. He died in Calcutta on October 24, 1707. See p. 236, *Home Series Misc.* 803: Vol. II, p. 343 of *Hunter's A History of British India*; and Vol. II, p. 110 of *Diary and Consultation Book etc.* first series, edited by A. T. Pringle, Madras, 1894.

* 7069 of O. C. 56-I; also *Factory Records Misc.* 20, (letter dated 27th May 1700).

* 7069 of O. C. 56-1, India Office.

† This was an arrangement for despatching posts by means of horses and footmen stationed at every ten or twenty miles., (See *Hobson-Jobson*).

* Pitt was in the Old Company's service and a member of the Council of Fort St. George. He was also a Burgess of the Madras Corporation. John Pitt retired from the Company's service about 1696 after a period of honourable service. He died suddenly of apoplexy at Dharmpet near Masulipatam on May 8, 1703. His cousin Thomas Pitt was so vindictive and irreconcilable towards him that though he allowed his body to be buried at Fort St. George, he would not pay any respects to his corpse. John Pitt's widow, Sarah, died at Madras a few years afterwards. Their son, George Morton Pitt, through the influence of Thomas Pitt, was appointed Deputy Governor of Fort St. David in 1723 and became Governor of Fort St. George in 1730. See Vol. III, pp. xxiii, lxxii of *Hedge's Diary*; pp. 4, 21 of *Fort St. George Despatches to England, 1701-2 to 1710-11*; Vols. XII and XIII, p. 81 of *Letters from Fort St. George, 1703-1704*; *Diary and Consultation Book* of 1703.

* The life history of this unique European visitor to India may be read in detail in the Introduction to *Storia do Mogor*. Manucci was a Venetian by birth and came out to India in the time of Shahjehan. He was closely associated with that Emperor's eldest son, the unfortunate Prince Dara, and afterwards lived for many years at the Mughal Court. At the time when Manucci was invited to act as an interpreter, he had been living for some years in Madras, where he was practising as a physician. He was thoroughly acquainted with the customs of the people and spoke the Persian language "excellently well". For these reasons his help was often solicited by the Old Company in its negotiations with the Mughal officials. In recognition of his services, Governor Pitt and his Council, on January 14, 1712, "conceded to him in perpetuity his leasehold house and garden at Madras, situated outside the north-west corner of the then Black Town". See Vol. I, p. lxiv of *Storia*.

¹⁰ No. 6686 of O. C. 55—Part I.

¹¹ No. 6790, *Ibid*; also 6919, *Ibid*.

¹² Vol. II of *Hedge's Diary*.

¹³ Venkatadri was dismissed from the Old Company's service for various irregular transactions. He died in April 1700.

¹⁴ There is a copy of the translation of the King of Golkonda's *farman*, granted in 1675 to the English, authorising them to trade in his country. See Vol. 13, Part II of *Masulipatam Factory Records*.

¹⁵ Waite was formerly Agent of the London or Old Company at Bantam, and was dismissed by the Court.

¹⁶ O. C. 55—Part I; also p. 48 of *Letter Book XI*, India Office.

¹⁷ No. 6823 of O. C. 55—Part II; also *Bombay Factory Records*, Vol. 29.

¹⁸ A Court or Executive Council of the Government (see *Hobson-Jobson*).

¹⁹ No. 6840 of O. C. 55—Part II, India Office.

²⁰ No. 6841, *Ibid.*

²¹ He held the Diwanship of Bidar and later on that of Burhanpur. He died in 1729. See pp. 475-476 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*.

²² Rustamji was born of a Parsi family in 1660. He amassed a large fortune in the Company's service and in private enterprises. The suburb at Surat which he founded still bears his name, Rustapura. His philanthropic spirit prompted him to devote a large portion of his money to charitable objects. Rustamji died about 1721.

²³ No. 7032, O. C. 56-I, also No. 7222, O. C. 56-II, India Office.

²⁴ P. 23, O. C. 56-II, India Office.

²⁵ This statement seems contrary to the character given him by the authors of *Maasir-ul-Umara*. This was also apparent from the fact that shortly before he had refused the present offered by the Old Company's servants. All the same Diyanat was not entirely above corruption.

²⁶ *Surat Factory Records*, Vol. 99, India Office.

²⁷ No. 7073 of O. C. 56-I, India Office.

²⁸ The expounder of the Muslim law or the legal adviser to the *Qazi*.

²⁹ The *Mughal's* news-writer or public intelligencer.

³⁰ Sir John Gayer remained in partial captivity till 1709. On his return voyage to England about two years later, he was captured by a French squadron after an engagement near Cape Comorin and died of his wounds a few days afterwards.

³¹ The word was applied to the Muhammedans on the Indian Coasts by the Portuguese, and was later adopted by the Dutch and English. Among Europeans the term has been now out of use for many years. (*Hobson-Jobson*); also p. 199 of *The Dutch in Malabar*, by A. Galletti.

³² Vol. I., p. 123 of *Materials Towards a Statistical Account of the Town and Island of Bombay*, edited by J. M. Campbell, Bombay, 1893.

³³ Nos. 7427, 7430 of O.C. 56-IV.

³⁴ Nos. 7437, 7450, *Ibid.*

Part II

THE MISSION

CHAPTER I

Appointment of Norris as Ambassador to Aurangzib

On September 16, 1698, the Court of the New or the English Company finally decided to ask the King to send an Ambassador charged with a mission to the Mughal Court on its behalf, and on October 11, it agreed that Sir William Norris should be recommended as the most suitable person for the post. Several other candidates offered themselves, Col. Oxenden, Mr. Duncomb, and Lord Howard of Eserick; but the Directors "persisted in their former resolution of sending Wm. Norreys, Esq., member of Parliament for Liverpool."¹ The King approved the choice and ordered that "all possible expedition should be made in getting all things ready". The Court of Directors held a meeting to select a ship in which the Ambassador and his retinue should make the journey to India. Captain Warren, who was present, suggested that the *Breda* or the *New Windsor* would be the most suitable vessel for the purpose. The ships ultimately chosen were the *Harwich*,² *Anglesey*, *Hastings*, and *Lizard*, and Captain Warren was placed in command of the small squadron.

On December 29, 1698, a formal agreement was drawn up between the Company and Sir William Norris, who was described as "of Waddon in the County of Surry Bart". He promised to act in accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors in all matters pertaining to trade, and the Company agreed to pay him £ 500 immediately to enable him to procure clothes, linen and personal equipment. The latter was to be on a scale of considerable magnificence and was to include "300 men in liveries to attend him, all armed with fire arms".³ Forty pipes of wine were provided for the voyage. The Ambassador's salary was fixed at £ 2000 a year from the day of his leaving England till the date of his return to the country with the provision that after his mission was carried out he should leave India at the first convenient opportunity. As a mark of respect the Company pre-

sented him with a gold-hilted sword.⁴ It also provided for him an ample supply of silver plate, which he was directed to leave with the Company on his departure from India. He was asked to keep an exact account of his expenses, and also a journal of all "transactions, observations and proceedings" relating to his mission. He was requested to send two copies of this to the Company and its agents.

The Court also provided a suitable staff for the embassy and fixed the salaries of its members. Mr. Edward Norris, brother to the Ambassador, was appointed Secretary at a salary of £200 a year, with Mr. Thomas Thorowgood and Mr. Harlewyn as assistants at £100 a year each. The Accountant was one Adiel Mill. Mr. Edward Paget was nominated as Chaplain with a stipend of £100 and a further grant of £50 for the provision of mathematical instruments. Paget was also asked to keep a "journal" and to provide a copy for the Court of Directors. No trace of the chaplain's journal can be found in the Company's records, and it has been conjectured that he never wrote it. The following account of the chaplain's career, with the sidelights it appears to throw on his personality, may suggest an explanation of the non-existence of the stipulated journal. In any case it is sufficiently interesting to warrant its finding a place in these pages.

Edward Paget was admitted a sizar at Trinity College, Cambridge, in March 1672 and matriculated the same year. He became a scholar in 1676, took his B.A. degree in 1677, and was elected a Fellow of the College in 1679. He had the reputation of being a good mathematician. He became Master of Arts in 1680 and served as Tutor from 1680 to 1682, which year he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. In the summer of 1682 he took over the post of Mathematical Master at Christ's Hospital in succession to Dr. Wood at an annual salary of £100. Paget was an almost complete failure at Christ's Hospital. During a critical period of the school's history, when the administration was extremely lax, he failed to help his pupils when a stronger man would have responded to the exigencies of the situation. The year after his appointment to Christ's Hospital he obtained leave of absence" to go to sea to view the coast",

and apparently to study "navigations". The governing Committee treated him leniently and, when he represented that his salary did not include the teaching of a certain subject, allowed him an extra sum of "25 guineys". In 1689 he requested the services of an assistant, although the number of his pupils had not increased. In 1692, leave of absence was again granted him that he might travel to Flanders and Holland, and the following year he asked this favour yet a third time, on pretext that he was being sent on public service by the Dean of Winchester. The request was granted, but only on condition that he should make no further application of the kind. But the very next year he put forward an identical request—only to be definitely refused. Soon after this Paget fell ill. He resigned his appointment in February 1695, so that on recovering he was at liberty to travel anywhere he pleased. The secret of his appointment as chaplain to Sir William Norris is probably that he and the Ambassador were acquaintances, if not friends, at Trinity College, where they were practically contemporaries. Paget died at Ispahan, Persia, on the way home from India in 1702.⁵

The instructions given to Sir William Norris on his appointment by the King were dated December 31, 1698. His embarkation was to take effect at once, and on landing in India he was to proceed as quickly as possible to the Mughal's Court. He must take care to inform himself beforehand as to the procedure observed at the Court and "on all occasions to preserve the honor and dignity" of his character as Ambassador. He was to acquaint the Mughal immediately with the fact that a new "English Company trading to the East Indies" had been formed, and to request the granting of such settlements for its factories, and such immunities and privileges as might be necessary for the security and protection of the Company's agents and the redress of their grievances. All the privileges sought were to be at least equal to those enjoyed by other Europeans. He was further instructed to make it quite clear that the New Company was entirely distinct from the Old, had no concern with the Old Company's affairs and no liability for its debts. As to the Company's interests the Ambassador would be expected to act in accordance with the advice of the Directors at home.

The Ambassador's next task was to be to inform the Mughal of the efforts made by the English King to suppress piracy. He was to point out that the King had sent a squadron for this purpose and to say that as Captain Kidd, after being commissioned to suppress the pirates, had instead become one of them himself, the King's fleet had urgent instructions to capture him either in the East or West Indies. All goods taken by him from the Indian Princes were on his capture to be restored to them. Sir William was to report progress as opportunity offered, and to record particularly the "customs manners Policies and Interest" of the Great Mughal and other princes, for the King's information. On the conclusion of his mission he was to return in a man-of-war as early as possible.

The following is the full text of His Majesty's instructions :

"Instructions for our Trusty and well beloved Sr. William Norris Bart. whom Wee have appointed our Ambassador to the Great Mogull & other Princes in India. Given at our Court at Kensington the 31st day of December 1698, In the tenth year of our Raigne.

"Upon the receipt of these our Instructions and your other dispatches, you shall forthwith Embarq : with your Retinue on such of our shippes as are designed for suppressing the Pyrates in India. Wee having directions that they doe carry you to some Port of the greate Mogulls Dominions as may be most convenient for you.

"Being arrived there you shall repair with all convenient Expedition to the Court of the great Mogul, & having informed yourselfe of the manner to be observed in making your addresses to the Mogul and his Principall Ministers, you shall accordingly desire audiencies and present our Credentiaall Letters, taking care on all occasions to preserve the honor and dignity of your character.

"When you are admitted to make your application to the Mogull or his Ministers after having made them such Complements in our name as you shall think proper, you shall acquaint them with the Establishment of the generall Society & English Company trading to the East Indies in pursuance of the late Act of Parliament, you shall represent the mutuall advantages that

may hereby arise to our respective Subjects and Dominions, you shall doe all you can to protect all our Subjects and to procure them Redress in their Just Complaints & Grievances, and you shall perticularly endeavour to obtain such Settlements of Factories, Capitulations, Imunities and Priviledges for our Subjects of the said Generall Society & Company as may be necessary for their Security and protection in the carrying on and management of their Trade and Commerce. And if you find that any Priviledges Imunities or Advantages are granted in the Moguls Dominions to an other European Nations, which are not enjoyed by the English, You shall endeavour and Insist that his ma'ties Subjects may be allowed the same.

"You shall on all proper occasions make it knowne that as the new Compa. have no Interest or concerne in the Estate or Affairs of the old Company see they are not lyable to answer for any of their Debts.

"In all matters relateing to Trade and the Affaires of the Company, you shall comply with and observe such further Rules and directions as you shall from time to time receive from the Directors of the said Company.

"You shall acquaint the Mogul & his Ministers with the greate care Wee have taken to suppress the Pyrates in the East Indies having to this End having [sic] sent a Squadron of our Ships on purpose to those parts, and that such of the Pirates as have been taken within our Dominions have been brought to justice.

"You shall likewise acquaint them that Capt. Kidd Comander of a Shipp called the *Adventure Galley* having desired a Commission from Us to seize such Pyrates as he should meet with, Wee thought fitt to grant the same for the benefitt of our owne Subjects, and those of the Princes in Amity with Us, and for your better Information, Wee have directed that a Copy of the said Commission be herewith delivered to you But Wee were noe sooner informed that he himself had committed severall Pyracies, but in detestation of soe greate a Villany and being desirous to doe all that lyes in Us to suppress him and his wicked Associates, Wee Commanded our Shipp bound to the East Indies to make it their particular care & business to pursue the said

Adventure Galley and to seize the said Kidd and his Accomplices, and sent likewise Orders to the Comanders of our Shipps in the West Indies and to all the Goernours of our Plantations there to Seize and Secure him and the rest of the Pyrates in case they come into those Parts, that soe such Robbers and Comon Enemyes of all Nations may be punished with the utmost Severity And that Wee have likewise Ordered that all such Goods as shall bee taken from the said Kidd or any other of the Pyrates belonging to any of the Subjects of the Mogull or other Princes in India shall bee forthwith restored to the right Owners.

"After you have dispatched and finished the matters and affaires for which this Embassy is cheifly Intended, Wee leave you at liberty to return to England with our Men of Warr if they shall be then in India with the first convenient opportunity.

"You shall correspond and give an Account of your Proceedings as often as you can by the most safe Conveyances to Europe to one of our Principall Secretaryes of State and at your return you shall present to Us or our said Secretary of State a Perticular Relation of the Customes manners Policies and Interest of the Court of the greate Mogul and other Princes in those parts as may be proper for our knowledge and Information and of what you can propose to Us for the Interest and Advantage of Trade.

W.R."

Sir William Norris's commission as Ambassador was dated Kensington, January 1, 1699, the day following the date of the instructions quoted above. It expresses King William's desire to establish "a friendly and good understanding" with the Great Moghal and other Princes of India, for the benefit of his subjects trading in that country. Norris, therefore, was fully empowered not only to negotiate, but to "agree and conclude" with those Princes and their ministers all things necessary for the attainment of a good understanding, as well as for securing such "Capitulations, Priviledges and Imunities" for British traders as might conduce to their security and profitable trading in India. All the agreements so made would be ratified by the King.

The text of the commission was as follows :

"William the third by the grace of God, King of England

Scotland France & Ireland Defender of the Faith, To all to whome these present Letters shall come, Whereas Wee have determined to send an Ambassador to the greate Mogul and other Princes in India for the establishing a friendly & good understanding with the said Princes, and for promoteing the advantage & benefitt of our Subjects tradeing to those parts, Know you That Wee reposing speciall Trust & confidence in the fidelity & prudence of our Trusty and well beloved Sr William Norris Bart have nominated constituted & appointed and doe hereby nominate constitute & appoint him to be our said Ambassador Commissioner & Procurator, Giving and granting to him full Power and authority to conferr negotiate and treat in our name with the said Mogul and other Princes in India and their respective Ministers & Servants and to agree and conclude with them all such Matters and things as shall be necessary and convenient for establishing and confirming the said friendship and good understanding with the Princes aforesaid, and for procuring for our Subjects such Capitulations, Priviledges & Imunities and Settlements in their severall Dominions as may conduce to their Security and advantageous carrying on of their Trade & Commerce in those parts, and to doe and execute all other things which doe belong & appertain to the said Sr Wm. Norris as our Ambassador, Commissioner and Procurator, Promising by these Presents, and giving our Royall Word that Wee will ratify confirm and approve the same, and that Wee will truly perform All such things as shall be stipulated and agreed by him on our Part in the Matters aforesaid. Given at Our Palace at Kensington the First day of January, One Thousand six hundred ninety Eight⁶ in the Tenth year of our Reigne, Under our Hand and our great Seale of England.

Wm. R."

A third document given the Ambassador was a letter of introduction to the Great Mughal from his "loving friend", William III, whose style and titles fully set forth were apparently intended to impress the Emperor with a sense of his importance. They run as follows :—"King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland; the most Invincible and most mighty Defender of the Christian Faith against all kind of Idolatryes of all that live among the Christians and falsely profess the Name of the Holy Jesus". The

letter suitably and magniloquently compliments the "most mighty, most victorious and most renowned Emperour Aullem Gheir", on his conquests and widely extended dominions, and also on the protection given by him and his predecessors to the King's subjects trading in various parts of the Indian Empire. The English King it was pointed out, had done the same for strangers trading in his own Kingdoms. And desiring to establish lasting friendship and beneficial commerce between his own people and those of the Mughal, he had thought it well to establish a new Company to trade with India. With this object in view he was sending as Ambassador "a Person of greate Meritt and highly favoured" by him, to negotiate such privileges and immunities as would encourage his subjects trading there, such as were already enjoyed and such others as might be found necessary and convenient.

The King goes on to assure the Mughal that in his desire to protect the commerce of his own and the Mughal's subjects alike from the ravages of the pirates, he had sent a squadron of men-of-war to pursue and destroy them. The following is the letter itself :—

"William the Third, by the grace of Almighty God Creator of Heaven and Earth, King of England, Scotland France and Ireland, the most Invincible & most mighty Defender of the Christian Faith against all kind of Idolatryes of all that live among the Christians and falsely profess the Name of the holy Jesus.

"To the most mighty, most victorious and most renowned Emperour, Aullem Gheir, Conquerour of many Kingdoms King and Sovereigne Lord over all India and many other greate Territories and Dominions, and the most high exalted Prince in ample Honour and Dignity; sends kind salutations with Wishes of Health and all true Happiness.

"Most Noble and mighty Prince

"There is nothing more to be desired by all Wise and just Princes then the Advantage and prosperity of their respective Subjects and Dominions, and nothing conduceth more thereunto then the freedome of Commerce and Intercourse between different Nations and Countries; For which reason Wee have alwayes been ready not onely to give all Assistance & Encouragement to our owne Subjects and People, but likewise Protection and a

friendly Reception to all Strangers who are willing to come and traffick within our Dominions. The like Wee understand has been done by your Imperiall Majesty within your Territoryes and our Subjects have for many years under the protection of your Majestie and your Royall Predecessors sent out Shippes, and exercised Trade and Commerce with your Subjects in the severall Ports of your Empire.

"Now for the establishment of a Perpetuall Friendship and a kinde Correspondence, and beneficiall Commerce between both Nations ; We have thought fitt with the advice of our Nobles and great Men in Parliament assembled to establish a new Society and Company of our Subjects to Trade to your Dominions, which Wee are perswaded will very much redound to the mutuall benefit and Wellfare of our Kingdomes & People.

"And that your Imperiall Matie may bee made acquainted herewith Wee have resolved (according to the Custome observed amongst greate Princes and Emperours) to send to your Imperiall Court, as our Ambassadors, Our Trusty and well beloved Sr. William Norris, Barronett, one of our Councillors in Parliament, a Person of greate Meritt, and highly favoured by Us, whom Wee desire Yor matie kindly to receive in that quality, and to give entire Credit & beleife to what ever he shall represent to you in our Name ; And that Yor Matie will afford him Yor Favour and Countenance when he makes Application to you, or your Principall Ministers on behalf of our Subjects Tradeing in Yor Dominions, and that they may be Encouraged and Protected therein, Wee further desire Yor Imperiall Matie will grant & Confirm not onely all such Priviledges & Immunityes, which by virtue of antient Custome and Capitulation have hitherto been enjoyed by our Subjects tradeing to, & in Yor Dominions, but that you will grant them such other Additions of Yor Favour & Protection as shall at any time be found necessary & convenient for them ; Wherein Yor Matie will likewise doe what will be very acceptable to Us.

"And that nothing may be wanting on our part to protect and Secure Yor People and Merchants, as well as our owne in their Navigation against those Pirates & Comon Enemyes of all Nations, who wee hear have of late done much mischief in the

Seas of India, Wee have sent a Squadron of our Shippes of Warr on purpose to pursue and destroy them, and to inflict such Punishment on those they shall take, as such wicked and detestable Robbers doe justly deserve. Wee haveing already caused such of them as have been found in any of our Dominions, to be put to death.

"Wee have ordered our said Shippes of Warr to carry our Ambassador to your Dominions, and wee have Perticularly commanded them to treat all Your Maties Subjects & People they shall meet with at Sea with all the Regard and kindness that becomes good and loving Friends. And if in any thing Wee can render Yor Imperiall Matie further Marks of our Love and Friendship, Wee shall readily doe it, since it hath pleased Almighty God to Invest Us with greate Power and Authority, and to make our Name glorious among all the Kings and Princes our Neighbours. And soe we Conclude with repeating our Wishes of Health Peace and true happiness to Yor Royall Matie. Given at our Pallace at Kensington the First day of January, in the Tenth year of our Raigne.

Yor. Loving Friend

.... . William R."⁸

To obviate any delay that might arise from the Ambassador dying on his way to India, a similar but somewhat shorter letter was given to his brother Edward Norris, for delivery to the Mughal in case of necessity. The first paragraph of this short letter is identical with that of the letter given to Sir William and quoted above. Then it proceeds as follows:—

"Most Noble and mighty Prince

"When Wee determined in our Royall Minde to send our trusty & well beloved Sr. William Norris Bart as our Ambassador to your Imperial Matie for the establishing a mutuall love and friendship between Us and your Imperiall Matie and for procuring the benefitt and Advantage of our respective Subjects and Dominions, Wee thought it convenient at the same time to appoint another fitt Person in whose prudence and good Abilites Wee could confide to goe along with him as Secretary of the Embassy, and to succeed in the management of those Affaires, in case it

should please Almighty God to take out of this world the said Sr. William Norris before his arrivall at yor Imperiall Court or during his stay there, and having for this purpose made Choice of our Trusty and well beloved Edward Norris Esqr. one very well qualified and esteemed by Us, Wee write this to Yor Imperiall Matie to acquaint you therewith, and to desire you will kindly admitt the said Edward Norris into your Imperiall Presence. And that your Matie & your Ministers will give Creditt & beleif to what he shall represent to Yor Matie or to them in our Name, and that you will cause your said Ministers to discourse and negotiate with him upon all matters & in the same manner as if the said Sr. William Norris were living as may be necessary for the advantage of our said Subjects Tradeing with Yor Dominions & for the good and Welfare of our severall People Countries and Territories according to what Wee have more at large expressed in our Royall Letter, which Wee ordered our said Ambassador Sr. William Norris to deliver to Yor Imperiall Matie And which if it be not already don, Wee have Commanded the said Edward Norris to present to Yor Imperiall Majesty, together with this our Second Letter both signed with our Royal hand, and soe wee Wish your Imperiall Majesty all happiness and true felicity and Recomend you to the Protection of the Great Omnipotent God. Given at our Court at Kensington this First day of January 1698,⁹ In the Tenth year of our Raigne.

Your most loving Friend,
William R."

The English Company also gave Sir William detailed instructions to the effect that he and his retinue were to sail from Spithead before January 10, on four men-of-war bound for the East Indies under the command of Captain Thomas Warren. During the voyage Divine Service should be constantly performed by the Chaplain, Mr. Paget.¹⁰ On his arrival off the Coast of Coromandel, Norris was to proceed to Porto Novo in order to inform himself as to the position of affairs in India, make his arrival publicly known and proclaim the establishment of the New Company, after waiting a few days for the arrival of two of the Company's ships, the *London* and the *De Grave*. Should the

Great Mughal be near that place, the Ambassador must apply to the Government there to assist him in obtaining carriages for himself, his retinue, presents and baggage ; and, having, also with the assistance of the Government, secured a satisfactory interpreter, he was to proceed on his journey. If the Emperor were near the Kingdom of Golkonda, then he should proceed to Masulipatam, and if he were at Agra or Delhi, he must sail direct to Surat as soon as the season permitted and thence proceed to the Court. Meanwhile he was to inform himself regarding the affairs of the Old Company and take such steps as he thought necessary for the security of trade.

On coming to any place where the New Company had a factory the Ambassador was to consult the agents and act accordingly. If he should arrive at Surat in advance of the rest of the squadron he was to inform himself as to the customs of the country, and to make the acquaintance of any Englishman who might be there and whose assistance might prove valuable to the interests of the Company. He was, further, to acquire such knowledge of the language as would prevent his being misrepresented. In general, he was to make it clear to all the local authorities that the Company was a new one and in no way responsible for the Old Company's liabilities. The valuable presents entrusted to him for the Mughal, his son, grandsons, ministers and governors must be distributed according to his own best judgment.

On his arrival at the Mughal's Court Norris was immediately to seek an audience and present the King's letter, and declare that the Old Company's freedom to trade would terminate in September, 1701. He was to assure the Emperor of the New Company's intention to deal honestly with his subjects and endeavour to obtain *farmans* confirming all the privileges and freedom from customs and duties hitherto enjoyed by the English, and bestowing on them new privileges. He was empowered to pay Rs. 20,000¹¹ to secure exemption of the English from customs throughout the Mughal's dominions, and any additional sum the Company's President and Council at Surat might advise. If this general immunity from duties could not be obtained he was to request that the English should not pay customs at Broach or

other places, but only at Surat, and then not more than the two *per cent.* ordered by the Great Mughal in 1667. The English should not pay customs in Bengal or upon the Coast. No duty should be charged on silver, gold, diamonds, pearls, musk, ambergris,¹² bezoar,¹³ or any similar fine goods or jewels either at Surat or elsewhere; all goods to or from Surat might pass directly through the English house and not that of the customs; and horses and fine goods should not be liable to seizure on behalf of the Mughal himself or of any of the Princes.

The Ambassador was asked to inform the Emperor of the King's displeasure over the piracy in Indian waters, and to say that some pirates already captured had been executed, that four warships had been sent to suppress the remainder, and that his Majesty intended to protect in future all merchants trading in those seas. In the event of the Great Mughal's death, the King's letter was to be delivered to his successor, and the Ambassador was ordered to hold himself entirely aloof from all disputes regarding the succession. In everything he must act with an eye solely to the honour and success of the nation he represented and the prosperity of the Company. Should he die, his secretary, Edward Norris, was to take his place. The English Company impressed upon Norris that Dr. Davenant would endeavour to hamper his negotiations, and that he must appeal to the Emperor not to have confidence in any representative of the Old Company. It also asked him, if possible, to obtain permission for the establishment of mints at Hugli, Medapollam, or Masulipatam, and other places in the Mughal's dominions where the Presidents and Council might think these desirable; to maintain correspondence with the principal factories in India, and to keep them informed of his proceedings. As the trade of Bengal was of the highest importance to England, the Ambassador was to endeavour to secure exemption from customs duties in that Presidency. Failing that he should try to obtain confirmation of a privilege formerly granted whereby the English were to pay to the customs a maximum of Rs. 3,000 in any one year for the trade in general. Lastly, he was to call attention to the fact that the English had never paid customs in the Kingdom of Golkonda, and urge that although Golkonda was now part of the Mughal's dominions

this immunity ought to be preserved.

He also received more personal instructions to exercise the utmost economy in the discharge of his mission. The following list shews that the personnel of his entourage included a Steward and Master of the Horse, two *valets de chambre*, two pages, two cooks, two butlers, four footmen, seven trumpeters, etc., a bag-piper and kettledrummer, all at a yearly charge of £ 592 and hired by himself.

Names.	Stations.	Salaries.		
		£.	s.	d.
Mr. William Blackett	Steward & Master of the Horse.	40	—	—
John Davies	} Valetts de Chambres {	20	—	—
Monsr. Arnold		20	—	—
Wm. Roberts	} Pages {	20	—	—
John Herring		20	—	—
Wm. Falkingham	} Cooks {	30	—	—
Jeremiah Martin		30	—	—
Thomas Ettmar	} Butlers {	20	—	—
John Blenden		20	—	—
Jonathan Baxter	} Footmen {	12	—	—
James Clarke		12	—	—
Richard Francis		12	—	—
Edmund Parker		12	—	—
Christian Feltman	} Hautboys and double Courtell. £3 per month. {	36	—	—
Lewis Scott		36	—	—
Wm. Shirlock		36	—	—
John Cottrell		36	—	—

Names.	Stations.	Salaries.
		£ s. d.
Daniel Hopkins	} Trumpeters £3 per month. {	36 — —
Saml. Hopkins		36 — —
Wm. Prince		36 — —
Henry Lathum	} Bagpipers £3 per month. {	36 — —
William Bond.		36 — —

Norris's chief assistants also received precise instructions from the Court of Directors. Edward Norris, as Secretary, was directed to keep in touch with the chief factories, to be discreet and frugal, and to "take care you be not at any time induced to place Trust or Confidence in any which are in the Old Companies Interest. Since they certainly will whensoever they can either circumvent or betray you". He was also to take every opportunity to inform the Company of material occurrences, through Mr. George Vernon and Company, merchants at Aleppo. He should preserve good order amongst the retinue, insist on respectful behaviour to all women and to report accordingly to the Court of Directors. Edward Norris was also instructed regarding the use of the microscopes and telescopes. He was further requested to give some account of the islands touched at on that part of the passage beyond the Cape of Good Hope; and in particular to ascertain the most suitable place in Madagascar or on the coast of Mozambique for the establishment of a settlement to promote the traffic in Negroes.¹⁴ Further he was to find out what vendable commodities might be purchased in those places, such as dyeing woods, gold, gums, elephant's teeth and drugs.

Thomas Harlewyn was selected to be an assistant and member of the Ambassador's Council. He was instructed to "Keep the Cash for the Expenses of the said Embassy" and to present

his accounts to the Council to be audited and signed each month. Harlewyn was exhorted to show activity in the Company's interests and to act loyally towards the Ambassador and his Secretary. He was to succeed the latter in the event of his death. They also told him of the two crystal branches, intended for the Mughal, contained in chests marked No. 10 and 11; in these were also some spare branches, with two silver frames on which to fix them. These presents had been entrusted to the care of Captain Mathews of the *London*.

Thomas Thorowgood received similar instructions on his appointment as an assistant and a member of the Ambassador's Council. He was specially placed in charge of the presents for the Emperor. Thorowgood was considered "a man of letters and skilled in Languages", he had already made some progress in Portuguese, and was now asked to study the Persian and Indian languages that he might be better able to help the Ambassador in his negotiations at the Mughal Court.

Adiel Mill was charged to keep an exact account of all the expenditures of the embassy by way of "Journall and Ledger". Mr. William Blackett was chosen to be Steward and Master of the Horse, and Mr. John Sandiford to give clerical assistance to Mr. Mill and Mr. Blackett.¹⁵ The Court authorised not only Norris, but other members of the embassy also, to "bring or send to England from the East Indies any sort of goods and merchandizes whatsoever to the full amount of their Several and respective salaries paid in the East Indies".

The Court of Directors trusted that most of their presents would be highly acceptable to the Mughal, but asked their employees to let them know what further gifts would be most esteemed in order that they might supply these. In addition to the presents already mentioned there were 12 large brass cannons "finely wrought & cast by the King of England's pticular direction for a prsent for ye Empr" which cost £949.15.2. It may be noted that the Board of Ordnance, when asked by the Company to supply the artillery, suggested that it might possibly be dangerous to give such as a present to a foreigner, as it might in certain unforeseen circumstances be used against Englishmen. The other gifts were on a generous scale and included many valuable articles

of silver and gold. Those "from His Excellency" included a beautiful gold cabinet containing "201 Gold Moores" [Mohurs],¹⁶ and horses equipped with rich saddles and embroidered cloths.

In connection with all the above tangible "courtesies", it is interesting to note that Sir Godfrey Kneller, the "Principall Painter" to William III, received on January 5, 1699 a commission to paint a full-length portrait of the King, obviously intended as a special gift to the Mughal. Kneller was paid fifty pounds for this. At the same time an order was given to Mr. John Norris, "Joyner" to the Privy Chamber, for a "carv'd Gilt Frame" to be delivered to Sir William Norris; and in the following October he received fifty-three pounds, which sum included payment for three further frames.¹⁷

The King desired that the Ambassador should be provided with a crimson cloth of State, embroidered with the Royal Arms, a "great chair", two high stools, a footstool, two cushions trimmed with gold and silver fringe and a carpet of Turkey work: and for his chapel a "Bible of Imperial paper in two columes richly bound", prayer books, two surplices of fine holland, and other articles of ecclesiastical furnishing.¹⁸

Sir William took leave of the King on January 5, 1699. The Princess Anne, her husband Prince George and the young Duke of Gloucester were present at the Court. At the farewell audience the King paid his Ambassador the compliment of presenting him with his own portrait. Sir William also received from His Majesty's hands his ambassadorial commission, his instructions and the letter to the Great Mughal quoted above. Edward Norris was also present at the Court and received the substitute letter.

The Ambassador then proceeded to the City, where, at the Skinners Hall, he received his commission, credentials and instructions from the New English Company. These formalities completed, he left London in the afternoon for Portsmouth, where he arrived on January 7.

NOTES

¹⁶ Vol. IV, pp. 437-8 of *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs* from September 1678 to April 1714, by Narcissus Luttrell.

¹⁷ This ship, built in 1674 was of 989 tons, carried 66 guns and 400 men. The other three ships of the squadron were of smaller tonnage. See *MS.*

List of Naog., Feb. 1, 1701 (in Sergison Collection); also the *Diary of Henry Teonge*, edited by G. N. Manwaring.

⁸ See Vol. IV, p. 428 of *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, by Narcissus Luttrell.

⁹ In the Sir William Brown Museum, Liverpool, there is a long old sword in a worn decorated leather scabbard with cross hilt and knob of silver inscribed "This sword of State, carried before His Excellency Sir, Wm. Norris, of Speake, in his Embassy to the Great Mogul, was given as a memorial of his respect to this Corporation, Anno Domini 1702. John Cockshutt, Mayor". There is a reference to this sword in *Dawks's News-Letter* for December 3, 1698.

¹⁰ Part 1, Vol. III of *Alumni Cantabrigienses* and *Annals of Christ's Hospital*, by E. H. Pearce, London, 1908. Also, *History of the Royal Foundation of Christ's Hospital*, by the Rev. William Trollope.

¹¹ 1698 in accordance with the old calendar, 1699 according to the new.

¹² "Mundi expugnator". The full name and title of the Emperor was Abul Muzaffar Muhiy-u-din Muhammad Aurangzib Bahadur 'Alamgir Padishah-i-Ghazi.

¹³ The Court of Directors met on November 10, 1698 to debate and approve of the contents of this letter to the Great Mughal. Mr. Reyer was directed to write and illuminate this document which was also to be translated into Arabic and Persian. Among other expenses £16 was to be paid for writing and embellishing the King's letter to the Great Mughal and Sir William Norris his Commission. See *Court Book* 57. A, India Office.

¹⁴ 1699 according to the modern calendar.

¹⁵ The English East India Company from its very beginning did not neglect the ecclesiastical side of its duties. Three special prayers were drawn up dated December 2, 1698, one each to be used at home, at sea, and also in their factories abroad. The prayers were approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. They are concise and suitably composed for the different occasions. Copies of these prayers can be seen in the British Museum.

¹⁶ The sum estimated by the Court of Directors was based on a previous offer made some years ago by the *Shuba* of Golkonda, who offered for that sum to procure for the English freedom from all taxes in the Mughal's dominions. Unfortunately, at that time, there were no factors of importance at Masulipatam to welcome the proposal and the offer, therefore, fell to the ground. See p. 79 of *Rawl. C.* 912.

¹⁷ It is a fatty and inflammable substance, generally found on the sea coast in the tropics. All genuine ambergris can be perfectly dissolved by heat, and it is used in perfumery as well as for medicinal purposes in the East. See notes on ambergris in *Rawl. MS. A.* 334, Bodleian.

¹⁸ Bezoar or more correctly *bazahr* is a stone found in certain animals. There are several sorts and varieties which "have fine & thinn coate like an onyon, the thinner the coate the better the stone." See *Ibid*; also Yule and Burnell's *Hobson-Jobson*.

¹⁹ The East India Company from an early date employed slaves in their various settlements in St. Helena, India, and other places for their military, marine and other services, and a large number of them were procured from Madagascar. These slaves received humane treatment under the Company, and the Directors in London generally approved of the slave trade by their

agents. It may be noted that in 1662, the Guinea or African Company was designed to supply slaves for the West Indian sugar plantations. See Vol. II, pp. 255-260 of *Materials Towards a Statistical Account of the Town and Island of Bombay*; also p. 231 of the *Early Chartered Companies*, by George Causton and A. H. Keane, London, 1896.

¹⁵ *Additional MSS.* 31, 302, British Museum.

¹⁶ *Factory Records, Miscellaneous*, Vol. 20.

¹⁷ *Lord Chamberlain's Record* 5-152, pp. 148-9, 202, 217.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* Record 5-131, No. 17.

CHAPTER II

The Voyage to India

Ambassadorial missions were rare occurrences in the seventeenth century, and above all one destined to proceed to the Court of the Emperor of India, who was recognised at that time as one of the greatest of living potentates. The power and position of the Great Mughal were generally acknowledged, and there existed an as yet unsatisfied desire to learn more about the resources of his vast empire and thus to lay the foundation of commercial relations which seemed capable of unlimited expansion. Sir William Norris was, therefore, an object of great interest and much speculation to the English public. Invested with full powers as the Ambassador of the King, he was entitled to a respectful and ceremonious reception from all ranks of the official and administrative classes. At Portsmouth, preparations had been made to do him honour on his arrival. The captains and other officers of the men-of-war in the port went to meet him three miles outside the town and escorted him for the remainder of his journey. On his arrival at Portsmouth the garrison was drawn up to welcome him, and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired. Sir William was detained there for a few days waiting for a favourable wind, and took the opportunity afforded by this delay to entertain lavishly all the officers.¹ During his stay he received a warning from the Court of Directors that the Old Company was doing its utmost, by petition to the House of Commons, to prevent him from sailing. He was, therefore, directed to go aboard ship immediately with his retinue, and to lie off St. Helen's in the Isle of Wight, that he might be ready to leave before any countermand inspired by the Old Company could reach him.

On January 21, 1699, Sir William Norris embarked with befitting ceremonial, being accompanied to his barge by the captains of all the men-of-war, and by the commanders of the Portsmouth garrison. Again there was a salute of twenty-one guns from the castle and the warships at Spithead, and his flag was

hoisted on board the *Harwich*, one of the four ships of the squadron. The favourable wind with which they set sail on the following day soon changed, and this prevented the squadron from reaching Funchal, the capital of Madeira, before February 15.² As soon as the ships arrived, the Portuguese Governor sent an emissary to pay his compliments to Sir William and to bid him welcome to the island, an act of courtesy which was duly returned. The English Consul, Mr. Bolton, also came on board and invited Sir William to stay at his house during his visit. The Ambassador went to the Consul's house incognito in the afternoon and was cordially received. The fact that he went ashore incognito prevented the Governor from giving him an official welcome.

That evening, without losing any time, Sir William visited the Cathedral Church³ at Funchal and other places of interest. He described the Cathedral as "ye best & largest in ye Island dedicated to ye Virgin Mary" and as "handsome & well built some good carvinge & pictures about their Altars wch I think are 11 in number & gaudily adorn'd to make a shew wch ye priests were foolish enough to value themselves upon & urg'd us to take notice it is ye only Church I ever take notice had ye steeple att the East End".⁴

On February 16, Norris visited the Jesuit College dedicated to St. Sebastian, where he was handsomely entertained "wth all sorts of sweet meates & as good vines as ye Island afford". He complimented the Superior, Father White and also Father Harris, who were "very obliginge & Complaisant spoke English & were very free to shew us all yt was to be seen & soe produc'd some of their choicest Relicks att my Request beeing desirous to see as much as I could". They showed him what they affirmed to be portions of "ye very Crosse on wch our Saviour was crucifyd finely sett in Christall, another likewise of ye same but seemed not to soe much regard beeing not soe well sett & adorn'd, which they take care to bow ye knee to, & likewise some of ye blood of St. Xaver their Indian saint concerninge whom I had some discourse with them". Norris commented how "these thinges with severall others of ye like nature serve to arouse ye vulgar who are no where more ignorant than here, but I tooke ye 2 fathers to be men of more sense than to put any trust or confidence in such

things". Nor were his remarks on the preparations for a religious festival by the Jesuits entirely free from sarcasm. "They were", he writes, "adorning their Chappell against Shrove Sunday, it was ye young students business to dress our Lady as they calld it wch was others to dress up other Altars to make ym as gaudy and gay as possible & it [is] ye custome of ye fryers & ye reste against a great day to beg a hat for St. Antonius & a coate for St. Nicholas & truly I wonderd ye Jesuitts had not either begd or Bought a periwig for ye Image of our Saviour on ye Crosse on one of their greate Altars for though ye Image of ye Virgin was finely sett out ye other I found neglected soe could not forbear takinge notice of it first havinge never seen any Image of our Saviour wth a periwig on & nobody ever hade seen a more weather beaten & more scandalous one on a berbers pole in London wch however serv'd the Turn for Shrove Sunday for ye fathers had not afforded a better".⁵ Norris was invited to hear the music arranged for that Sunday afternoon in the College Chapel. In his opinion, though the music was the best the island could afford, it was "very indifferent either vocall or Instrumentall". He was given a place of honour near the Bishop, Don Joseph de Souza de Castello Aranco, and the Governor, Don Antonio George de Mello, of both of whom he writes in high terms: "The Governour who was much a gentleman & upon all occasions very Respectfull to ye English would not sitt down till I did & the Bishop was soe complaisant to urge it much, but in a Church in his own Diocesse I thought it not soe proper & excused it wch ye Bishop I suppose was not offended at. The Churchmen there as in all popish countrys naturally aspiringe to be upermost—he has very good character & is well spoken of by those who are not of his Religion wch are some few English merchants: He is a schollarr wch make him ye more Respected & better esteemd Learninge being almost as great a rarity amongst the priests as honesty amongst ye Laity".⁶ As a mark of further appreciation, Sir William sent his own musicians to play in the gallery of the Jesuits' College on Shrove Tuesday, and also in the Cathedral Church on another occasion, at the special request of the priests.

Norris seems to have been an unwearying investigator and

a keen observer of the condition of the different Catholic orders in the island. From the College he went to the Convent of Santa Clara,⁷ where he had a lively conversation with the nuns, to whom he made a present of snuff. He noticed the discontent of the nuns, visible in their faces, however much they pretended the contrary. This, he thought, might be attributed more to the climate than to their secluded life. Norris does not seem to have been favourably impressed by the appearance of the Portuguese ladies, of whom he saw many in the Jesuits' Chapel on Shrove Sunday, "where they all flock & up & down in ye streets goeing to Confession that never certainly was soe great a scarcity of good faces I did not see above 7 that were tolerable & ye rest very disagreeable as well in feature shape & dresse". He adds his opinion that an Englishman who expected to find more beautiful women in any other part of the world than his own would be much disappointed. He further considered that "providence has order'd it very well that ye men are soe exactly ffashiond to ye women for I thinke they are cut out finely for one another. The men are as meane in their appearance as ye women are disagreeable. I believe they have both sense enough to value strangers better then one another & ye women doe make attempts as often as they have opertunity to mend their breed wch may be seen in ye little children about ye streets who whilst they are younge are sometimes well featurd but degenerate as they grow up. If ye women had but good features they would never faile of good complections for are more exquisite in painting & doe it more artificially then ye few yt use it in England".⁸ Norris was invited by the nuns of Santa Clara to pay them another visit. This he was unable to do, but in order to oblige them, he sent his "sett musick" to entertain them on Shrove Tuesday, with which they were greatly delighted.

As the Ambassador had not yet paid an official visit to the Governor of Madeira, who had always been a friend to the English nation, the Consul advised Sir William to pay such a visit, which he assured him the Governor would greatly appreciate. The visit was paid on February 17; Sir William was received with all honour and respect, and did not fail to notice that the etiquette observed differed in some respects from that customary in

England.

The Governor came out of his Room of State to greet the visitor and made him enter first in order to put him in possession of it. Sir William sat down "in a greate chaire" placed in the middle of the room, and the Governor took a seat facing him. The interview lasted only a short time, and was entirely confined to general matters, such as the voyage and the fertility of the island. When Norris took his leave the Governor went out first and bade him farewell at the top of the staircase. The same afternoon the Governor sent his own guards to attend him. However grateful Sir William may have been for the compliment, he considered that the guard were of the same nature as "our black guard" when he first saw them drawn up at the Castle during his visit to the Governor. But he was surprised to find that they were "soe miserably Ragged & what made them looke worse their Rags were not uniforme but of different colours & their Armes as Rusty & as unfitt for service as ye men yt bore ym who indeed seemd well suited to ye equipage they bore & put ym altogether made a very comicall figure". Early next morning the Governor paid a return visit to the Ambassador at the Consul's house "with as much shew as he could muster up", without giving any previous notice.

The Superior of the Jesuits, Father White, accompanied by Father Harris, called in the name of his community to return the Ambassador's visit to their College. When they entertained him on Shrove Sunday, Father White had taken him aside and entreated a favour—the object of which Norris did not at first fully comprehend. Father White pointed out that the Governor had always been kind and obliging to the English, and that this had been urged against him as a fault, particularly with regard to a certain Mr. Grey, who had touched at the island on his way to Barbadoes. Father White begged Sir William to write to the Queen Dowager at Lisbon and inform her of the very respectful reception he had received from the Governor, which news "she would accept very kindly upon ye account of ye character I bore & befriend him wth her brother ye King". It is quite evident that the Jesuits had been induced by the Governor to prefer this request to Sir William; but the Ambassador, after mature consideration, did not

consider it worth his while to accede to it.

Norris says in his Journal that so much had already been written about Madeira and its inhabitants by other travellers on their way to India that his own account would be very short, but the apology was hardly necessary, for the information he gathered is by no means devoid of interest. He severely criticised the moral standard of the Portuguese inhabitants of the island. Their propensity to cheat on every possible occasion was brought to his notice by the daily complaints of his retinue, which caused him to remark that "Newgate cannot furnish out such a sett of exquisite pickpocketts as ye Portugeezes here". The most important produce of the island, Norris found, was wine, of which a great quantity was exported to Barbadoes and Jamaica. Though the wine was suitable for consumption in the locality, it was still more wholesome as a beverage in hot countries, so the Ambassador bought twenty pipes of it for his own use in India. A small amount of corn was grown on the top of the mountains, but there were plenty of fruits such as oranges, lemons, bananas and guavas "wch to outward appearance resembles a walnutt on ye Tree & has ye Tast [e] of a hop in England". He was astonished not to find any garden worth seeing in the island, in spite of its favourable situation, a circumstance which he attributed to the laziness of the inhabitants, who tenaciously followed the methods of their ancestors. Neither did they improve their houses and streets, which he conjectured might be owing to "a sort of policy to keep their streets soe very rugged & uneven wch may hinder their wives from walking up & down though trulye thinke they might venture without any great danger to strangers". The commerce of the island was in the hands of a few merchants, who were mostly English with the exception of the Jesuits who owned the best vineyards.⁹

The inhabitants were totally unfitted for business life, on account of their daily attendances at religious processions arranged by the priests whose object it was "to employ their minds & their time in observeinge those artifices and inventions they have contrivd on purpose to have them in subjection and keepe ym in ignorance". The continual tinkling of bells from the church towers sounded strangely in his ears, but of one religious obser-

vance he so entirely approved that he wished it could be sincerely practised all over the world. "Just att the shutting in of ye day", he wrote, "they have a Bell tolls in all ye Churches att wch time all ye people whether walkinge in ye streets or in their house upon any businesse whatsoever are uncoverd & thanke God for ye mercys of ye day wch ye tollinge of this bell putt ym in mind of wch otherwise it may be would be forgotten & neglected. Whilst I was walkinge homewards att this time all in ye streets stood uncovered for about a minutes space performd this necessary peice of Devotion & then as ye Custome is bid one another good night".¹⁰

Dealing with the question of crime, Norris noted as a most remarkable fact that since the island became inhabited two hundred years before, there had been only one execution either for murder or other capital crime. A stranger hearing this would naturally form a favourable opinion of the character of the inhabitants; but unfortunately, Norris found, in no place were murders more frequently committed than in Madeira. The explanation was that criminals escaped punishment by taking sanctuary in one of the churches or convents, where the ecclesiastics protected them out of "pretended Compassion & charity" but in reality to exercise their authority. Once the criminals had reached the sanctuary, the secular power could not touch them; there they remained until a licence from the King of Portugal was procured to enable them to go abroad, and in this way judicial procedure was barred. These facts as related by the Ambassador may remind the reader of the Cities of Refuge under the Mosaic Law. The one exceptional instance of the infliction of the death penalty was due to the criminal's poverty, he being unable to "gratify ye priests who will neither save body nor soule gratis". Norris observed that civil suits were rather more justly decided than criminal cases, provided that they did not involve any churchman or Portuguese citizen. Even if merchants quarrelled amongst themselves, there was no certainty that justice would be done them, owing chiefly to the fact that the office of judge was hereditary and that, however slight might be the judge's knowledge of the laws, customs and constitution of the country, and whatever travesties of justice he

might perpetrate, he could not be removed from his office. An appeal could, it is true, be made to Lisbon against the judge's decision, but there, as Norris satirically wrote, "ye Remedy is often worse yn ye Disease".

After his arrival at Funchal, the Ambassador despatched letters to the Court of Directors and others in London, telling them the warm welcome accorded him. He wrote to them again, as well as to the Mayor and Corporation of Liverpool, when he was *en route* for the Cape Verde Islands. At the same time the Directors sent instructions to Norris relating to matters connected with the embassy and the development of recent events concerning the two Companies. These letters, of course, were not received by Sir William till after his arrival in India. A letter¹¹ was sent to his brother, Thomas Norris of Speke, giving a short but vivid description of the island and its people, which runs as follows :—

Maderas Feb. 18th 1698 [9]

28th

Hon'd S'r

I hope this will find you in better health then when I left England, & if the Weather be soe pleasant with you as it is here where wee are it will conduce much to it. I arrivd here the 15th instant, & every day scince I came has been warmer then any weather I Remember in England last yeare. The springe is soe forward that the vines are in leafe, and what I wondred to see the people but now pruninge of them, which is contrary to our practice, who generally doe it att Xstmas [Christmas]. Soe I fancy it would be no hurt to learn, for the vines here beare very well, this little Island producinge 20000 pipes a yeare, which here is sold for 4 lb. per hogsheade & that accounted a very greate price. Peas & Beanes are just upon blossominge ; & Tuberosse & Jasmin full in flower, & the weather soe very pleasant & warme that I, who love to goe thick clad, can content my selfe with very thin Apparell. The Island is very fertile, but abounds in nothings soe much as Fryers & Jesuits, who exopt some few Jesuits are very ignorant themselves, but keepe the common people in the grossest ignorance imaginable & as greate subjection.¹² I have been to visitt all their convents, Churches &

Nunnerys, & had the prettyest entertainment given me oy the Jesiutts that ever I saw, composd of all sorts of delicious wines, sweetmeates such as I never tasted before, & oranges and Lemons Fresh pluckt from the Tree. The 2 Superiours of the College were English men who came afterwards & made me a visitt. The women of this Island have the character of beinge as kind or kinder then a man would wish them; I am informd by those that made the experement that it is a constant practise amongst the Portugeeze women to kisse like Christians & will take it for a greate afront if the men are not as cominge that way as themselves. Wee are just come att the frolicksome time, this beinge their Carnivall: I went to make a visit to the Nunnery & hearinge who I was came all flockinge to see & be seen. The English Consull,¹³ who speakes the language, was with me, att whose house my Brother & I are very nobly entertained. He speakinge Portugeeze, we held discourse with them for an houre & very divertinge they were; they were very inquisitive whether I was marryd, & when I asked them whether if I was not marryd I might hope to gett a wife out of the Nunnery they fell a shakinge their heades & saide it was too late, that was impossible now. They chid the Consull that he did not send them word sometime before to tell them I designd them a visitt, that they might have appeard in better order, & soe desird me to come again. There were severall had been handsome but very few that in my opinion were soe, nor are their faces or shapes comparable to the English, The Governour att my first arrivall sent the Captain of his Guardes to complement me & bid me welcome, which I returned by my Brother attended by my Secretary & Master of the Horse, which he took for such a peice of Respect showd him that he sent me word the Island & all that was in it were att my service. I thought to have been incognito all the while I stayd there but the Consull would needs perswade me to make a visitt to the Governour, he intimatinge his desire to see me, which could not be done unless I made the first visit & that it would be for the Honour of the Nation to appeare in some Grandeur. Soe accordingly I sent for all my Retinue on shoare & the Commodore & all the officers in the men-of-warr, the Consul & all the English in the Island came to goe alonge with me. Wee were all very

richly clad, though not in our best, & made such an appearance that the Portugezes never saw the like before. The Governour tooke it as a particular honour & respect to himselfe, & Returnd the Civility in all ways he could imagin in Returninge the visitt in the like manner the next day orderinge the Guards to stand to their Armes & salute me whenever I pass by, & complemented me with a company of Guardes to attend me, which I excusd, & has given order when I goe of to fire all the Guns round the Castle & has made me a present of what the Island offerd, Such as Rich wines fresh provisions sweetmeates oranages & lemmons & all sorts of sweet waters, which I return him in severall cases of fine pistolls & fine Guns, some white Bever Hatts & fine English stuffs, which is in greate esteem amongst them. Not knowinge when I should have another oportunity has been the occasion I have tyrd you now. The next place wee touch att will be the Cape de Verde Islands (on the Coast of Africk); if I can meet with any conveyance you shall heare from me thence & as often as I write to England. I thanke God wee are all well & in health, pray give my very humble service to my sister & all Freindes. I am Sir

Your most affectionate Brother

& very humble Servant,

Wm. Norris.

The Ambassador's short stay at Funchal had proved both enjoyable and instructive; and his departure was marked by friendly ceremonies on the part of the local authorities. On February 20, Sir William went in his barge with the flag hoisted, accompanied to the anchorage by the commanders in their respective barges. When he stepped into his barge, a salute was fired from all the guns of the Castle, an answering salute being given by the guns of the squadron. As soon as the Ambassador boarded the *Harwich*, the flag was immediately hoisted at the main topmast-head. He invited Mr. Bolton, the Consul, and some of the local English residents to dine with him on board. After dinner the King's health was drunk and a salute of seven guns was fired in his honour; as a compliment to the Governor, the health of the King of Portugal was also drunk and salutes

were fired by the guns of the squadron in honour of the King and the Governor, to which the guns of the Castle made answering salutes.

The squadron sailed on Ash Wednesday and passed the tropic on the 27th *en route* for the Cape Verde Islands, where it intended to replenish its stores of salt and water. On the morning of March 3, Boa Vista¹⁴ was sighted. It appeared to be "a Dry sandy Barren Island" having no trees or anything green. The inhabitants were chiefly banditti, who had fled from Portugal on account of various offences together with other reputedly dangerous people, so that it was not safe for anyone to land unguarded. Norris was equally observant of the various kinds of fish, sharks and porpoises seen on the voyage. The flying fish he described as "extraordinary good meate hardly soe bigg as a herringe" and tasted "almost like a whitinge but a little firmer". On another occasion, he had "a little diversion with some whales, Grampusses & Thrashers, ye whale who swims pretty high & kept up by a sword fish who plunges him underneath all ye while ye Thrasher lifts himselfe a good while out of ye water & falls down upon ye whale & sometimes ye fray does not end without ye Death of ye whale wch story I looke upon to be a fiction".¹⁵

The squadron anchored off the island of Maio on the following morning. It received a salute from the guns of several English merchantmen anchored near at hand, to which its own guns made reply. Soon after the masters of all the vessels came to pay their respects to Sir William. Later in the day, accompanied by the captains and several of his retinue, he visited the island, where "ye salt is gott wch is ye only thinge of any value or worth seeinge in ye Island. It is a large plaine about a mile longe & halfe a mile broad neare ye sea side, but a little dry sandy hill betwixt ye sea & it".¹⁶ From the local merchants he learnt that the salt water ran in from the sea into the plain once a month "every springe tide" by underground channels, and was calcinated by the heat of the sun. The salt thus produced was in his opinion "indeed of greatest grain & ye best I ever saw", and he therefore took the opportunity to obtain a few tons of it. The island did not produce anything else of value. The salt was not sold to the merchants, but any one could get it for himself,

and the only advantage the people derived was that they could bring it to the sea shore in bags laden on asses and barter it to merchants in return for clothes and coarse hats, which they valued more than the prime cost of the salt. A trifling sum was sufficient to procure a shipload of the salt, most of which was exported to Newfoundland for fish-curing to the great financial advantage of the merchants.

Apart from the plain in which the salt pits were situated, the rest of the island was "very sandy or rocky", though Norris observed "a very pleasant walke as even & longer then ye Mall in St. James's walke, but wants ye shade of trees not a tree groing on ye Island as I could see or heare of nothings but a cotton Bushes wch are in greate plenty". Not enough corn was grown in the island to last a week, nor did the inhabitants taste bread except when ships called to load salt. The scanty population subsisted almost entirely on fish; of this there was a large supply and of good quality. Brackish water was the only drink obtainable except when ships touched at the island, and Norris was told by one of the two resident priests that there was not enough bread and wine even for sacramental purposes. In his opinion the inhabitants were very civil and honest; they were not addicted to cheating or pilfering like those living in other islands, and being unacquainted with money had no desire to obtain it. The only things they begged from strangers were old clothes and other ordinary articles. Norris gave an old "morning gown" to one of the priests to make into a cassock. It surprised him to find a man possessing some education and a little learning ministering to such very poor people. He was almost persuaded to believe that the priest was there out of charity to "instruct these ignorant wretches in ye way to heaven"; but he soon discovered that he had been sent to the island as a punishment for crimes committed in another place. The contentment and peace in which the people lived amongst themselves impressed Norris very much. In their broken English they expressed to him their simple code of morality; "God gives you money riches & fine things God gives us content, God gives you fine ships & houses, God gives us his own house when we dy". Before leaving the island Norris entertained the Governor on board and gave him some small presents,

which greatly delighted him.

On March 10 the squadron anchored off Praia, in the island of Sao Thiago (St. Jago), the largest of the Cape Verde group, in order to take in fresh water and provisions. As soon as the Governor was informed of Sir William's arrival, he sent him a cordial message of welcome, though insisting that the squadron should fire a salute first in his honour, to which he would respond gun for gun. This was accordingly done. Norris records that the island had a large population and that the soil was fertile. At that time no rain had fallen for three years, and consequently the crop of corn was not so large as usual. The island contained a good number of bullocks, goats and turkeys; these the inhabitants bartered for old jackets, knives and other articles which they preferred to money. He was delighted to see on shore "a grove of cocoe trees", and for the first time he "tasted of ye soe celebrated fruit wch serves for soe many conveniencys of life". The tree furnished the inhabitants with fibre, from which they made their clothes and ropes. The leaves were used for covering their little houses, and were for this purpose superior to the thatch used in England.

The next day Norris visited the town of Sao Thiago,¹⁷ "pleasantly seituated wth ye sea on the side & very high mointain on ye other". He noted that the castle stood upon a high hill and was reputed to be strongly fortified with one hundred guns, but he surmised that there were not more than twentyfive or thirty guns mounted. On the same occasion Norris visited the Franciscan Convent, which stood "on ye side of a steep Hill overlooking ye Town & a pleasant Fountain of very good water runninge just att the entrance of their convent wch is a handsome gallery wth apartments on each hand for ye fathers who are all Portugeezes while of ye best aspect yt I had seen of yt nation"¹⁸ Norris collected valuable information regarding the locality from the friars, who were sixteen in number. He was given a warm welcome and entertained by them with fruit, sweetmeats and wine. The friars next day returned the visit, bringing with them "sallads" and other things, and Sir William acknowledged these in his turn with gifts of biscuits, fish, a case of spirits and varieties of wine, for which they sent him a grateful letter conveying the

best wishes of the whole fraternity for his safe voyage. He also visited the Governor, Don Antonio Salgado, who received him very courteously and conversed on matters relating to England and Portugal. Time did not allow him to visit the Bishop, Don Trevo Vittoriano Portuense,¹⁹ whose house was "ye best in ye Town", and who was considered a man of character and reputation. On leaving the town Norris was saluted by seven guns from the castle.

On the 13th, Sir William entertained the Governor of Praia and other members of his party on board the ship, and after dinner he went on shore, where he was met by the "ragged regiment and greeted by a salute of nine guns". Norris was unable to escape from the fulsome compliments showered upon him by the Governor, and even after his return to the ship he was pursued by him. It seemed that the Governor was so delighted with his entertainment that he wanted to accompany Norris to India rather than remain on the island. But the Ambassador perceived his real motive: "he had taken a particulare fancy to ye wine he had tastd of soe after havinge himself usd ye freedome I could not deny him he had much adoe to gett ashore His Brother & ye preist were ashamd of his behaviour & ye preist made him doe penance for he was taken notice to be droppinge his beades for 2 or 3 days successively."²⁰

Norris avoided any further meeting with the Governor, though he had occasion to send him a message and also, to his great alarm, to make a complaint against him to his superior, the Governor of Sao Thiago. One day, when Sir William was taking an afternoon walk on a high hill near the castle, a band of twenty horsemen rode up and rudely informed him that no strangers were allowed to walk too near the castle, doubtless because the Portuguese authorities did not wish strangers to discover the weakness of their defences. One of Sir William's pages was struck by one of the horsemen with the broken half of a pike. On returning to his ship the Ambassador sent his secretary to lodge a complaint and to ask whether the incident had taken place by the Governor's orders. He also demanded the punishment of the offender and threatened to fire "ye Castle about his eares" if that was not inflicted. The result was that the

Governor sent an abject apology, intimating that the man who struck the page should have his hand cut off. But Norris replied that the apology was sufficient in itself, and pressed the Governor to remit the execution of the sentence. On another occasion the Governor showed his arbitrary disposition by prohibiting the inhabitants from supplying provisions to Sir William's staff. About the same time another unfortunate incident occurred. A negro stole something from one of the sailors of the squadron, and on being pursued by him turned suddenly round, stabbed him in the back and made his escape. When complaint was made the Governor made a pretence of ordering the immediate arrest of the negro, but the Ambassador thought it desirable to report the matter direct to the Governor of Sao Thiago, who, having already heard of the incident, offered a full apology and assured Norris that the man would be duly punished with the penalty of death. On learning further that the Governor of Praia had refused to supply provisions to Sir William's staff, he reprimanded him sharply and sent the Ambassador a present of "a couple of fatt bullocks".

The exceptional fertility of the island seems to have made a great impression on Norris; he declares that it could produce in great abundance whatever the inhabitants cared to cultivate. For, all their vines, he observes, bore "ripe grapes thrice a yeare, once every 4 monthes soe yt they have ripe grapes all ye yeare round on some vines or other nay sometimes on ye same vine they havinge here. . . . blossome greene & ripe grapes on ye same vine all at once." Although the island was productive, Norris thought the people very lazy; they took no pains, he said, to cultivate the soil properly, but simply flicked the "corn" on the ground in June just before the rainy season, which generally lasted till September, the harvest being gathered during February and March. Norris laid in a good supply of tamarinds, and also tasted a fruit called "calisfera" of the same nature, though the tree was different in appearance from the tamarind.

Another feature of the island noticed by the Ambassador was the abundance of fish. The sailors of the squadron on one occasion brought on board 984, though a good many more were lost through the net breaking. It was here that Norris tasted

turtle for the first time and ate of it "dresst 3 severall ways boyld fryd & bakd & but yt I knew it to be fish should have taken ye boyld for veale ye fryd for Rabbit & ye bakd like a Giblett fry".

Before leaving Praia the ships were cleaned and a full supply of water taken on board. This was done so that they might make all possible speed and avoid calling at the Cape, for Sir William hoped with a fair wind to reach Don Mascarine or St. Marice [St. Marys], near Madagascar, which it was intended should be the next stopping place.²¹

Nothing of moment is recorded by the Ambassador after leaving Praia, except that a Council meeting²² was held on board the *Harwich* on March 23, 1699. The squadron crossed the Equator on April 9, and passed the Tropic of Capricorn exactly a fortnight later. Owing to the wind continuing southerly they had come near the coast of Brazil; then, it having shifted to the west, they had been carried directly towards the Cape of Good Hope, off which they arrived on June 5.²³

After a stormy voyage, the *Harwich*, the *Anglesey* and the *Hastings* dropped anchor in Table Bay, while the *Lizard* seems to have been driven round the Cape. The little squadron was saluted with seven guns by the Dutch Governor, Mynheer Adrian Vanderstell, which compliment was duly returned by the Commodore. Norris thought that "was a civility never shown to any before the French Ambassador to Siam".²⁴ The Governor entertained him in his garden, and sent him every day presents of venison, wild fowl, wine and such other produce as was available. The fort²⁵ was situated in the neighbourhood of the town; but neither Sir William nor his secretary were invited to visit it, as it was not the custom to allow any stranger to enter it. It may be mentioned here that the Dutch started their settlement at the Cape in 1652, with the intention of creating an outpost of their Eastern possessions for trading purposes, and not of founding a South African colony.²⁶ Before leaving the Cape on June 23, Norris received news that the notorious pirate Captain Kidd had lately been at St. Augustin's Bay, on the West coast of Madagascar. The Commodore immediately ordered the squadron to sail in that direction, but on arriving there about the middle of July, Norris discovered that Kidd had left some months previously

for the island of St. Thomas in the West Indies, with the plunder of several ships taken from that part.²⁷ The squadron, therefore, sailed for the Island of Johanna, one of the Comoro Islands, and arrived there on August 1. Norris was entertained by the Governor of the island, who in turn was also invited to visit the *Harwich*.

The voyage was resumed after a few days and according to the Ambassador's instructions the course was directed to Porto Novo,²⁸ which was reached on September 12, 1699.²⁹ Immediately on his arrival, Norris formally notified the local Mughal Governor, "an antient grave gentleman", regarding his mission and the formation of the New Company. The Governor was also informed that the King of England intended to extirpate the pirates from the Indian seas by means of the squadron, and to restore the goods taken from the Mughal subjects. Norris was informed that Aurangzib, with two of his sons, was then encamped near Bijapur, some way from Porto Novo, but not far from Masulipatam, but owing to the lack of conveyances at the place, it was not possible for him to travel to the Emperor's camp. Norris considered that Porto Novo was "a very meane place of little Trade or Resort ye Dutch have a small ffactory yt makes ye best appearance.....". The Governor sent him a present of fruit assuring him that if the New Company wished to have a settlement at Porto Novo, it should be allowed to have ground to build a factory free of charge. After Sir William had returned the compliment with a present of four fine English guns, the squadron set out for Masulipatam.

On the way Norris anchored at Fort St. George, where the sight of the squadron greatly alarmed Governor Thomas Pitt and his Council. They had already received peremptory instructions from the Old Company not to salute or take any notice of the Ambassador. Although the Council had endorsed the orders, Pitt himself could not altogether conceal his uneasiness at this want of respect to the English flag. Consequently, when the "merchantmen in ye Roade" fired salutes on Norris's arrival, the fort also fired 39 guns, to which the squadron returned "gun for gun". The fort again returned thanks with 31 guns.³⁰ Pitt, however, in order to save his position, afterwards pretended that the salutes of the fort were in reply to the salutes first fired by

the "merchantmen" and not in honour of the Ambassador, although he knew quite well that they were really intended for the latter. The fact that this was Pitt's attitude was ascertained from Mr. Richard Trenchfield,³¹ who came on board to interview Sir William, and informed him that Pitt had been much nettled at a message sent him by Consul John Pitt and also about the delivery of a paper to the Emperor through the Governor of Surat. Norris decisively explained to Trenchfield that he could not take any steps in the matter unless the grievances were brought to his notice in a "publick manner" as Ambassador of the King. He further assured him that he would be willing to protect and redress the grievances of all Englishmen, whether these were between themselves or between them and the Mughal subjects. Norris thought well to send his brother and Messrs. Harlewyn and Mill to reassure Pitt as to the real purpose of the mission, notifying him also of his rank and the position of the two Companies. It was further emphasised that the Old Company's debts should be discharged within the specified time, as had been authorised by the Act of Parliament. Pitt received the message with perfect outward courtesy, but during the conversation he showed himself in his true light, remarking that although the Ambassador was the King's representative, yet the New Company was paying all his expenses and his main object was to ruin the Old Company. He also explained clearly that he was not prepared to acknowledge the Ambassador's authority, and that, if he should do anything to its prejudice, the Old Company would defend itself. Nevertheless Pitt was astute enough to offer hospitality to the party, drinking the health of Sir William and his brother besides firing salutes. Norris considered that Pitt's return of "civility & passion" was due to "ye effect of hard drinkinge & an unsteady Temper". In the circumstances the Ambassador thought it prudent to make a speedy departure from Fort St. George, and when he left, the fort was silent, no salutes being fired.

Norris had evidently feared to land lest Pitt should not receive him with all due respect, and therefore he was unable to observe personally the conditions of the place. However, he gives in his *Journal* an authentic account of the fort on the authority of his secretary. It runs as follows :—"ffort St. George a

plattforme next ye waterside in ye middle of wch there is a Gate thro wch you passe before you come to ye ffort opposite to wch about 80 yards is ye Gate of ye ffort. It is a Square Redoubt ye Diameter about 120 yards a Rampier quite round it ye parapett but 2 ffoot thick ye wall perperdiculare: ye Number of Guns he [Secretary] could not nicely observe nor I learn ye truth from those I enquired of every one telling different numbers ye character Mr. Trenchfield gave me was yt it was crowded wth guns unfit for service standinge mostly on sea carriages wth requird 10 or 12 men to manage I beleive there may be 150 Guns ye place of no strength att all if compared wth European fortifications nor could stand out 5 days against 5000 men but perhaps is stronge enough to Repell any force ye Indians are able to bringe against & soe be sufficient security those yt were ashoare & in ye Gardens say they are very pleasant but I heare of little or no fruit nor any variety of trees & plants in it wch ye say soyle being soe very sandy will not beare or admitt of here is a very large Town & very great concourse of people to ye number of 150000 & not about 70 famillys of English ye others are Natives & Portugeezes, Armenians etc. ye Governour very absolute & arbitrary & but little Government or justice amongst ye English for it seemes when any of ye factours dy ye next to him yt can lay his hands on ye effects seizes all either they make no will or are not regarded if made for they seize as seize can: This is ye last settlement ye English have".³²

The squadron anchored near Masulipatam on September 20, 1699. Consul John Pitt and others of the New Company came on board to welcome the Ambassador, who must have rejoiced on finding himself among his own colleagues. One of his first cares was the provision of food and water for the crews, which he asked the Consul to procure. The next things discussed were the arrangements about his landing, and also the most convenient way of proceeding to the Mughal's Camp. It was decided that the Ambassador should occupy the Nawab's house, which, he described as "ye K. of Golcundas pallace when he fled into these parts pursud by ye Mogull before he was taken prisoner & lost his Kingdome wch was about 11 years since & is not only a very handsome stately & pleasant but a convenient house large enough

to Receive me & all my Retinue with greate ease to every Body it stands high & comands & over lookes ye whole Town".³³ Before leaving the ship, Norris presented Commodore Warren with 500 dollars as a gratuity for his signal kindness to himself and his suite, and also in recognition of his loyal services to the Company. On his own account Sir William bestowed upon him "a gold medall of ye D: of Lorains".

Meanwhile all possible arrangements were made by the "Governor in Chief" of the province for Norris's reception with great grandeur and every possible demonstration of friendship.³⁴ When the local Havaladar or Governor sent him cordial greetings of welcome through messengers, Norris promptly returned the compliment; he had, he wrote, "perceivd it to be ye fashion of ye country yt nobody comes to any person of Note upon any ground whatsoever empty handed soe whn they were brought into my presence before they delivered ye message they each of ym had a couple of lymes an orange wch they presented & it is looked upon as a marke of unkindnesse not receive all yt is offerd".³⁵

After a voyage of eight months, at about 10 o'clock in the morning of 25th September, Sir William Norris left the *Harwich* and was conveyed to the shore in his barge flying his flag attended by the commanders in their respective barges. He was at once given a salute by all the men-of-war and was received on landing by members of the Old and New Companies, the Dutch factors, and vast crowds of people from the town and the surrounding country who had assembled to witness the state entry. It was a unique concourse, unprecedented in the reception of an English representative in India, and the occasion was made a great festival. All the available guns in the town were fired in his honour, and country music was provided on an elaborate scale, though it sounded to Norris's English ears both "harsh and unmusicall". The Mughal Governor received the Ambassador with every mark of honour befitting his rank. After the formal reception was over the procession started.

Mr. William Tillard, a servant of the New Company, was then at Masulipatam and gives in his diary a graphic description of the occasion: "Ye 25th My Lord came ashore abt 10, in ye mornng, his retinue being ashore before to receive him. He made

a publick entry, he was met by ye Consull & ye rest of ye Factory upon ye bridge, also by Mr. Lovell³⁶ & ye other gentlemen of ye Old Compa Factory, ye Moor Gover mett his Excelcy in ye Banksel³⁷ wth his retinue, & from thence his Lordship went to his lodgings, ye Nawab's house, wth his retinue, as follows: first went betwn 40 & 50 Peons, then followed ye horseboys & a compa [of] soldiers, yn ye trumpets after yt my Lords pages, yn Mr. Browne in place of my Lords steward, his own being sick, & ye rest of my Lords assistants, as ye under-secretary, ye treasurer, ye 3 commisrs for Prizes; yn went Comodore Warren & 2 other comdrs of each side, [that is] to say, Capn Littleton on his right & Capn White on his left side, ye other Capn being not well & soe not ashore, then came his Excelcy my Lord Ambsar Wm. Norris, after him ye Consull Jno. Pitt, Esq., [the] Secretary of ye Embassy, Mr. Norris, my Lords Bror & then our Secd. Mr. Jno. Graham & Mr. Thos. Lovell, chief of ye Old Compa Servts in this place after yn myself with—Pitt ye parson of our Factory, after us Mr. Jno. Holden our Secretary & Mr. Nodham ye Old Compa Secd, also ye 3rd of sd Factory, yn went Mr. Hale & ye writers every-one in their sevl stations, & after yn some others from aboard ye ships *Harwich*, Capn Warren Comadre, *Angelsea*, Capn Littleton, *Hastings*, Capn Richd White, & *Lizard*, Capn Romsey".³⁸

As soon as Norris had arrived at his residence, he was greeted with a salute by a squad of marines. The Mughal Governor and the President of the Dutch Company sent him gifts of the best provisions obtainable in the town. He himself entertained his own countrymen only, for no Indian could join them on account of religious susceptibilities. The welcome was emphasized by the booming of the guns, and, as night advanced, by still greater splendour, for the squadron had arranged a grand exhibition of fireworks, which lasted for some hours much to the admiration of all the spectators. Sir William specially complimented Mr. Cook of the *Angelsea*, the designer of the set piece, which represented symbolically the King of England and his deputy: at the top was the Royal Crown with the Norris arms at the side, and between these was the motto "Vivat uterque"; below was the line "Hic Pater, Decus Hic Patriae" with the initials W. R. and W. N. underneath, and at the bottom of all—

Brittani Fama per Indos
 Sic Eat attonitos.

Norris was half ashamed to record this praise of himself, and added: "I hope those that know me doe not suspect me of soe much vanity as to thinke I deservd it". He very much appreciated the fireworks displayed by the Indians, nor was he less complimentary to the entertainment provided for him by "ye Rashbootes [Rajputs] playinge like ye old Roman Gladiatours had a greate deale of agility of body & exquisitely nimble but I beleive have little of ye courage though they are reckond ye most hardy & stronge of any cast [e] of ye Indians."³⁹ The Governor on his part was not lacking in the provision of novelties for the Ambassador's entertainment; he had sent "for my Diversion a Company of Dancinge women who are much prized & admird by every body & indeed are very nimble & active, but havinge heard soe much before hand what feates they could play I expected to see more then I saw."⁴⁰ Norris concludes that day's entry in his *Journal* with an allusion to a predecessor: "It was a little remarkable yt I should land ye same day of ye month on ye Coast of India as Sr Tho: Roe did who was ye only Ambasadour ever sent from England to these parts before Anno 1615 25th 7ber att Suratt he landed".⁴¹ Norris was indeed well received at Masulipatam, and this contrasted strongly with the indignities suffered by Sir Thomas Roe when he first landed at Surat.

In gratitude for all the kindnesses and consideration shown to him during a prolonged voyage, Norris entertained the commanders, the Commissioners for pirates and also other officers of the squadron at a farewell dinner. Although he rejoiced at his safe arrival in India, yet he expressed his great regret at parting with them. They remembered all their friends in England and hoped that they might live to meet one another again. The squadron finally sailed on September 30, 1699, in search of the pirates as already discussed in a previous chapter.

NOTES

¹ The newspapers of the day recorded Sir William's arrival at and departure from Portsmouth. See *The London Gazette*, January 12, 1699; *The Post Boy*, January 7, 12, 1699; *The Post Man*, January 24; *Dawk's News Letter*, January 14, 1699.

² Very few Englishmen had previously visited the island; a young squire from Cambridgeshire landed at Funchal on March 29, 1676. See p. 161 of *Madeira*, by Ellen M. Taylor, second ed., 1889.

³ The building of the Cathedral was begun in 1508 and the cost of its construction was borne by King Manoel. It is of stone and lavishly decorated. See p. 84 of *The Madeira Islands*, by Anthony J. D. Biddle, 1900; also pp. 101-2 of *Account of the Island of Madeira*, by Dr. N. C. Pitta, 1812.

⁴ O. C. 54, No. 6590, p. 2., India Office.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷ The Convent was founded in 1492 by Zargo's grand daughter, D. Constanca de Noronha. One writer recorded that in it "dwelt the beautiful nuns who are sung of in the verses of many poets". See p. 228 of Biddle's *The Madeira Islands*; also p. 52 of Taylor's *Madeira*.

⁸ O. C. 54, No. 6590, p. 4. India Office.

⁹ Vine culture was introduced into the island from Candia some time after 1425, but the exact date of its introduction is unknown. The Jesuits brought into cultivation some of the finest kinds of vine at a much later period, and their produce was considered to be the best. See p. 70 of Taylor's *Madeira*; also p. 81 of *Madeira, its Climate and Scenery*, by James Yate, Johnson, London, 1885.

¹⁰ O. C. 54, 6590, p. 17, I. O. Sir William was evidently referring to the evening Angelus.

¹¹ Vol. II of *The Norris Papers*, Liverpool Public Library. A copy of the letter with slight variations first appeared in *The Chetham Society's publication The Norris Papers* edited by Thomas Heywood.

¹² These remarks of Norris received further confirmation from Ovington, who had previously visited the island. The latter describes how the Jesuits conceal from "public notice all the enormities and irregularities of their Order, and all their failures, but what are legible in their ignorance, which was so remarkable, that scarce one in three of those I conversed with understood Latin". See p. 24 of *A Voyage to Surat in the year 1689*, London, 1696.

¹³ In a letter to Mr. John Gardner, Secretary to the New English Company, Norris commended the civility and respect paid to him by the Consul, Mr. Bolton. He also wrote in the *Journal* expressing a high opinion of the Consul's business qualities and of his clear understanding of the Portuguese character.

¹⁴ The discoverers of the island in the fifteenth century gave it the name of Sao Christovao. See Vol. V of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed.).

¹⁵ O. C. 54, 6590, p. 35, India Office.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 37.

¹⁷ Mr. Mill, one of the Ambassador's secretaries, sent an account of Sao Thiago in a letter to Mr. John Gardner, Secretary to the English East India Company, dated June 20, 1699. See O. C., 55 Part I, No. 6667, India Office.

¹⁸ O. C. 54, 6590, p. 51, India Office.

¹⁹ The Bishop's diocese extended over all the islands, and the Portuguese settlements on the Coast of Africa. See O. C. 55—Part I, No. 6667, India Office.

²⁰ O. C. 54, No. 6590, p. 57, India Office.

²¹ O. C. 54, No. 6590, India Office.

²² There were present the Ambassador, Dr. Edward Norris, Thomas Harlewyn and Thomas Thorowgood. Accounts of the expenditure from January 22 to March 19, were laid before the Council for His Excellency's approval. See Part I, Vol. 13, p. 3 of *Masulipatam Factory Records*.

²³ Luttrell was mistaken in recording that Norris arrived at the Cape of Good Hope on May 7. See Vol. IV, p. 575 of *Diary*.

²⁴ Dr. St. John in his despatch to King James II referred to the visit of the French Ambassador to Siam in 1687, accompanied by men-of-war, and the reception accorded to him. See pp. 90, 92-94 of the *Calcutta Review*, January, 1927.

²⁵ Mr. Mill, in describing the fort and Cape Town, wrote that "the streets are large regular & well built & composed of about 150 houses all thacht but very neat & well furnished after the Dutch manner: about a quarter of a mile to the Eastward of the towne is a fort built of Stone of 5 Bastions (in which they say is above 60 Gunns) planted with a dry ditch about it in which the Govr. resides....." See O. C. 55—Part I, No. 6667, India Office.

²⁶ Vol. IV, Part I, pp. 24, 32 of *A Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, by Sir Charles Lucas.

²⁷ Vol. 19 of *Factory Records, Miscellaneous*, India Office.

²⁸ The port is in the South Arcot District, Madras, where the Portuguese founded a settlement towards the latter part of the sixteenth century. The Mughal placed a *Faujdar* at Porto Novo, and gave it the name of *Muhammad Bandar* on the decline of the Portuguese power. The English had a factory there (1683), superintended by Captain William Alley, a famous interloper. It was subsequently transferred to Fort St. Davids. See Vol. XX, p. 214 of *Imperial Gazetteer of India*; Vol. I, p. 194 of Hamilton's *A New Account of the East Indies*, edited by Sir William Foster, 1930; also Vol. I, p. 3 of *MS. Rawl. C. 912*, Bodleian.

²⁹ Bruce stated that Norris arrived at Porto Novo on September 19, which is incorrect according to the *Ambassador's Journal*. See Vol. III of *Annals of the East India Company*; also p. 1 of *MS. Rawl. C. 912*.

³⁰ *Captains' Log*, No. 2 of *Adm.* 51-3859., P. R. O.

³¹ Trenchfield lived in the country for many years and seemed to Norris to be an "intelligent man", whose interest was identified with the Old Company on account of his long association with it. He was discharged from the Old Company's service in August 1688, and died in January 1699.

³² Pp. 11-12 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*, Bodleian.

³³ P. 53 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*, Bodleian. Regarding the location of the house Dr. Lanka Sundaram of Masulipatam writes:—"It is conclusive that the present dilapidated fort in Inuguduru, a *peta* of Masulipatam, is the one in which Norris was accommodated. It stands on a high ground, and that portions of the old walls are still to be seen even after the great cyclone of 1864, which practically swept the whole town away, supports this view. The remains of the old palace as well as the official buildings could still be identified".

³⁴ Norris wrote about this to James Vernon, Secretary of State, and also to the Court of Directors on September 23, 1699. See *Factory Records Misc.* Vol. 19, India Office.

³⁵ P. 14. of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁶ Mr. Thomas Lovell, Chief of the Old Company's local factory and his

colleagues, by attending the reception of the Ambassador, incurred the displeasure of Governor Pitt, who considered that they had thereby betrayed the interests of the Old Company.

³⁷ A warrenhouse or the office of the Port Authority. (*Hobson-Jobson*).

³⁸ P. 82 of *The Manuscripts of P. Edward Tillard, Historical Manuscripts Commission, fifteenth report*, Appendix, Part X.

³⁹ P. 16 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*, Bodleian.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Sir Thomas Roe actually landed on the 26th of September, 1615. See p. 29 of *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India*, by Sir William Foster, O. U. P., 1926.

CHAPTER III

Masulipatam : First Impressions.

Sir William Norris, when he set foot on Indian soil, found himself among a people wholly strange to him, of whose traditions and culture he was completely ignorant. Unlike modern ambassadors, he had no means of equipping himself in advance with much knowledge of the country and court to which he was delegated as his Sovereign's representative. Norris's early experiences indicated that the obstacles placed in his path both by the local Mughal representatives and by his own people were numerous and difficult to overcome. But while in the nature of things no rapid consummation was to be expected, there was nothing in his first experiences to prepare him for the wearisome postponements and delays that awaited him. Norris's protracted stay at Masulipatam gave him an insight into the enormous difficulties that awaited him. It also afforded him an opportunity of gathering valuable information on local conditions, the people and their manners and customs, religion, government, trade and other aspects of Indian life, as they were towards the end of the seventeenth century under Mughal administration. He was not without prejudice, but his impressions, so far as the people themselves were concerned, were unbiassed at least by race feeling or religious bigotry.

Not many European travellers have left us detailed accounts of the Mughal sea-port of Masulipatam and its environment, so that the additional information supplied by Sir William Norris has its own historical value. He considered Masulipatam to be the healthiest place on the Coast after Metopollam, and much more salubrious than those parts of the Coast on the Bay of Bengal, where the other settlements and factories were situated. At the same time he thought Masulipatam an unwholesome place of residence for Englishmen, particularly in November, when "ye Raines begin to be dryd up & ye Morasses wch almost encompass ye Town begin to be swampy in ye nature of a quagmire or Bogg wch infests ye Aire wth very ill unwholsome savours & damps".

Moreover, the low marshy situation and uncultivated condition of the country surrounding Masulipatam caused Europeans to suffer from fever and various other diseases.¹

In his short experience of the Indian climate, Norris had already realised how essential it was for Europeans to observe certain rules for the preservation of their health; these are well-known at the present day, but in his time had the appearance of novelty. On account of the great differences in the temperature prevailing in course of the day, it was most important to guard against chills which prevented natural perspiration, the want of which was likely to cause death. Norris suggested that "a good glas of sack & upon any indisposition Venice Treacle & Agoas stone seemes to be ye most proper cure & had ye best effect". Happily medical science has advanced so far since the days of Norris that such concoctions are no longer prescribed for European residents in India.

Notwithstanding its climatic drawbacks, the town possessed the advantage of being situated near the sea. Norris was relieved daily "wth a gentle sea breeze wch blows fresh & is perfectly distinguishable from ye Air is brought of ye morass whn ye wind comes yt way wch for ye Generality it does 16 hours in 24 wch is one occasion of ye unhealthfullness of ye place." He explained that it would be quite possible to drain the morass, which would not only make the place healthier, but would also increase the productivity of the soil.

The difficulty about putting the waste ground under cultivation, Norris found, was due to the insecurity of tenure, and to the fact that the land could not be claimed by the people, but by the "Mogull & under him ye Nabob".² Very few attempted to cultivate paddy, for the Nawab claimed "one Moyety of ye produce", which Norris thought "should incite ye Natives to a little industry beinge perhaps an easier way then sittinge att a hard Rack Rent, this might be an encouragemt but proves none". The people of the locality would starve if rice were not supplied from Bengal and other places. Norris recorded: "The Inhabitants here are mostly suplyd wth their Corn from Bengall in little vessells & flatt botomd boates & a greate deale of money gott by it, it bearinge soe much a higher Rate here then there, 40:50

hardly ever lesse, sometimes cent p cent gain'd wch trade some few of ye Town but mostly is supply'd ye English & Dutch & ye Inhabitants are always glad to have an English ship bringe Paddy for them, they know they shal [l] kindly usd & have it cheaper then if imported by any native & can afford to sell it cheaper, ye natives yt Trade payinge 5 p cent Custome wch ye English are exempted from & are free from all Customes & impositions att this place, not only for Corn but all other comoditys, upon account of an antient Phirmaund given to ye English in Generall some years scince by ye K. of Golconda, but since he has lost his Kingdome worth while to have it renewed by ye Mogull ye matter is connivd att yett by ye Nabob & Hawldar till ye successe of ye Embassy is known as to ye havinge ye old grants confirmed & new privileges granted".³

Another reason for the land lying waste was that all the cultivators belonged to one caste, and no one else could undertake agricultural work. If people did any work except that prescribed by their own caste, they were likely to lose the latter and "soe forced to a longe pilgrimage to Jagrenaut [Jagannath] their great pagod⁴ in Bengall. . . . to regaine it". The people could keep as many cattle in the meadows as they liked and no rent was charged for "ye ground lyinge free & greate herds to be seen feedinge on noble large but neglected meadows, no care taken either to enclose or cut dreins". The grass was not mown, but pulled up by men and women, who carried it in bundles upon their heads to the town. The women did various other kinds of work, such as cleaning, grinding the paddy and carrying wood. The oxen were used only as beasts of burden. The drinking of milk was restricted; and it was the grossest impropriety to kill a cow. Norris wondered that the town and its surrounding country had not suffered more often from pestilence and famine, seeing that so little had been accomplished in drainage and ploughing.

Norris did not fail to observe the varied natural phenomena of the Coromandel Coast. As he could not ascertain the exact nature of the monsoons from experienced mariners, factors or merchants, he observed it for himself. He discovered that the word monsoon applied indiscriminately—sometimes to the actual rains and sometimes to the trade winds. Norris writes in his

Journal : "some call ye Monsoon ye Raines yt fall att this season other give ye denomination of ye Monsoon to ye settled Trade wind yt blows duely halfe ye yeare one way & $\frac{1}{2}$ ye other." He experienced a variety of weather during October. In particular he describes one morning when the clear sun, fresh air and moderate warmth reminded him of April in England; but there were also storms of thunder, lightning, rain and wind. He also alludes to the fact that the people believed in the Brahmans' ability to forecast when the monsoon might be expected to break. The approach of winter filled Norris with hope of invigorating weather. In the middle of November he wrote: "It is now about ye depth of ye winter here but most pleasant serene warme weather, ye sun indeed hotter then I have felt it in ye midst of sumer in England these six yeares. Settled faire weather, no sign of winter by ye fall of leafe, but as florid & green as ever & here is wht I formely thought a fancy of ye poets: *perpetuum Ver*".⁵ In the second week of December he again described the weather with great minuteness: "This is ye Deade of winter here as well as in England, beinge within 3 days of ye winter solstice, & yet ye sun warmer now yn I remembred in 9 yeares in England in ye height of sumer & are glad of a refreshinge sea breeze. Indeed it is such weather as one would wish. Ye sun sets here exactly 28 minutes after 5 a clock att this time & when ye days are att longest in June setts 28 minutes after 6 soe ye wee never increase here above an houre".⁶

Norris had not yet realised what an Indian summer could be like. On March 17 he experienced for the first time what the local people called "ye Hott winds wch blew W.N.W. a very stronge Gale for ye most part & cominge all over a dry sandy land carrys this double Inconvenience wth it yt it is not only soe hott as if it came from ye mouth [sic] an oven, but Raises ye sands & brings cloudes of yt alonge wth it; to avoid each inconveniency wee shut up all our windows, for besides yt it is not well to be born I doe not looke upon it to be wholesome, though ye Inhabitants Reckon this as wholesome a time of ye yeare wth them as any but I doe not find it soe for severall of my Retinue are ill att this time & my selfe begins to be indisposd. The natives differ in their accounts of these winds some say they last

only 2 monthes, some 3, others affirme they have ym of & on for 4 monthes & say withall yt notwithstandinge ye winds come soe very hott yt they are scarce to be endurd, yet they never sweate all ye while till ye Return of ye coole breeze in ye eveninge & yn their pores open but for my own part I sweate as much or rather more all ye while ye hott wind blew then otherwise & find my selfe much fainter yn I was before, & had this experiment att dinner betwixt what they call the Hott winds & sea Breeze. There chanced to be a little Turn of wind from ye Hott to ye sea breeze wch came soe cold upon us all of ye sudden our bodys beings Heated by ye other suffocatinge wind yt it was not only colder yn pleasant but colder then could well be born either wth pleasure or safty it did not last 6 minutes but turnd to ye Hott wind again."⁷ Towards the end of the month Norris observed the return of the hot winds which were not blowing from "ye same quarter directly over land was not soe Troublesome nor soe hott (sic) much it came ye 4th day after ye full moon in wch time ye natives expect it, ye account they give of it yt its 3 or 4 days after ye new or full moon this Hott wind settis in yt ye utmost extremity of ye continuance of it is never above 5 days in ye compass of one moone rarely 4 days but 3 days for ye generality".⁸

Further accounts of the hot winds and their attendant effects were thus recorded by Norris on April 19th. "This day wch was 4 days before ye full of ye moon. The Hott winds sett in very violently & blew stronger then I have known it yet. It was soe stronge yt ye Syamess who had a vessell in ye Roade att anchor just laden to be gone in a day or 2 Roade out her Bow & ffoundred 2 men savd & about 12 lost in her".⁹ He goes on to observe that these winds are generally prevalent in that part of the country during the months of April, May and June, when they first set in the winds "blow stronge Round ye Compass in 6 houres & then comes to a settled land wind att W.S.W. & S.S.W. & is soe very suffocating hott yt it made us yt were not usd to it all very much out of order what makes ye wind soe hott & Irksome is ye large Tract of Dry sandy land it comes over & brings clouds of it alonge yt fill all ye pores, of yr body & choakes ye lungs wee use all art to keepe it out but it heates all ye Roomes like an oven. It was a greate mercy and providence to us yt at this

juncture of ye cominge in of the Hott Winds was attended with a very high springe Tide yt overflowd ye morass all Round us wch allayd & coold ye Winds as it came over before it reacht us, & stop ye cloudes of Dust I thinke otherwise few of us could have born [e] it".¹⁰

The population of Masulipatam and indeed of Golkonda was chiefly composed of 'Gentoos',¹¹ although the place had long been under the rule of a Muhammedan King. There were thirty or forty small mosques in the town, but they were not much frequented owing to the scanty population of the 'Moorees' or Muhammedans. In describing their characteristics Norris wrote: "The Moores & Gentoos both are in their nature very proude & Revengfull besides ye naturall antipathy they have against Xtians either as to eatinge drinkinge or conversinge it goes against ye Grain to shew ym any sort of Respect, wch they never doe but upon force or in hopes of Gain but if they expect never soe small a present will salame to ye Ground".¹²

It is noteworthy that the same numerical disproportion between the Hindus and Muhammedans existed later in the Nizam's dominions, which included a large part of the ancient Golkonda, but the relations between the two races are not so strained to-day as they were in the time of Aurangzib. Similar conditions were recently observable in the territories of some of the Hindu ruling Princes, where there are more Muhammedans than Hindus. Such a situation, however, does not appear to have caused the same communal disturbance as in British India in our times.

The Ambassador commented on the lack of martial spirit amongst the Hindu population of Masulipatam, which also applied in a lesser degree to the Muhammedans. He was, however, complimentary to one fighting race called 'Rashboote', who carried "a sword & buckler for shew & are nimble & expert in shewing tricks of activity & diversion, but I make no complement to my country att all when I attest yt 20000 English men well armed would beate all ye Mogulls army both Moores & Gentoos (for they are warlick much alike). Their discipline not much exceedinge their Courage & neither to be mentioned ye same day wth what England produces of both. They have one Art of Warr here as in other places, to protracte it for advantage of ye Cheife

Comanders, for they say ye Mogulls Army might in much a shorter time have conquerd this country but then they should have been layd aside as uselesse, having little more to doe but keepinge a Rajah or two in good order".¹³

It is well-known that the Rajputs were a source of great strength to the Mughal army, and commanded better pay than the other soldiers, but their loyalty was greatly impaired during the last years of Aurangzib's reign by his aggressive attitude towards them. Manucci from his personal knowledge testified to their proved chivalry, valour and fidelity, as well as their peculiar use of weapons in the battlefield.¹⁴ Lieut. Col. James Tod, writing from the point of view of an historian, appreciated the sterling qualities of that martial race still more than Manucci. He described how the Rajputs were brought up to value the art of fighting, and how even their recreations assumed a warlike character. The Rajput princes prized the numerous weapons contained in their armouries, and to them, and the soldiers under their command, military fame was dearer than any other earthly reward. Some of the great victories of the Mughal Emperors were due to their valour and prowess.¹⁵

In the year 1686¹⁶ a serious famine had occurred at Masulipatam and in the surrounding country. This was mentioned by Norris in his *Journal*. Thousands of people died of starvation and many families sold themselves to the Dutch for bread. The latter took advantage of the catastrophe and transported a large number of the famine-stricken people to Batavia and the Spice Islands, where they remained in a state of slavery. The famine was followed the next year by an outbreak of plague, which carried away most of the survivors, enfeebled by their privations. In consequence of those disasters, Norris pointed out, the town had never recovered its former importance, both its population and its trade being much diminished. The famine had caused a great increase in the prices of all provisions. Most of the factories had been removed or closed, except that belonging to the Dutch. But the most serious loss to the town was the disappearance of its artificers and other workmen, as well as the art of chintz, a famous product of Masulipatam. Norris had the satisfaction of knowing that the lost art was beginning to revive.

again. The town had already suffered from a fire in 1679, and later a flood caused great destruction among the beautiful and stately buildings for which it was noted. There were, at the time of Norris's residence, only six large houses suitable for the entertainment of any "Europeans of note and quality".

Amongst the local European factories, Norris considered that the Dutch¹⁷ factory was the only one kept in good repair. The members of the New English Company's factory had to content themselves with such accommodation as they could find till better quarters could be built. The French had only one representative, whose duty it was to communicate information regarding trade and business to their other factories. All of them flew their national flags, and Norris naturally chose the Union Jack for his own.

Norris was greatly impressed by the prudent management by the Dutch of their affairs not only at Masulipatam, but also in other parts of India. No one was given an office of high trust, such as President or Chief, unless he was a man of great ability, honesty and sincerity. The Governorship of the Cape and the Presidency of the settlement in Ceylon were usually bestowed by the Company itself in Holland. Most other offices relating to the Dutch East India Company were awarded by the General of Batavia, who, with his select council, had the chief management of their affairs. The Dutch in India never displaced an officer unless he was proved guilty of some serious offence. They generally summoned any officer suspected of improper dealings to Batavia; if he was found guilty they punished him severely, while if innocent he was allowed to return to his Government. When a Commissary General was sent to inspect the management of the several factories, and if one of the Chiefs was found guilty of improper practices, he was not dismissed or cashiered at once, for the Dutch did not like the Indians to see that any of their officers were in disgrace. If a Chief was to be displaced, he was allowed to keep the office of State and all attendants during his stay in the country till "one of their vessells come to fetch him of, and even then all ye ensignes of his office attend him to ye water side, soe ye Indians never see any of ye Dutch yt ever bore any office or post lessend or in disgrace, wch may be a good

method in all governments, but necessary here to preserve ye Aw ye natives naturally have for Europeans".¹⁸

The system of coinage at Masulipatam, as described by Norris, shows the extent of the Old Company's trade and the comparative value of its standard. Though his account is not very explicit, it yet affords some basis for a study of the currency then in existence under the Company. Norris writes: "The Coyn current in this place are pagodas,¹⁹ Rupees,²⁰ Cash²¹ and pice²² a pagoda generally is valued att 3 Rupees $\frac{1}{2}$ a rupee about 2s. 3d. sterlinge 46 Cash make a Rupee & 69 pice value of a Rupee. The Company are very much in ye right in givinge me instructions to procure a mint for ym in this place or Madapollam yt they may enjoy ye privilege of Coyninge themselves as ye old Company doe now att ffort St. George for hardly any one thinge can be more to their advantage, for att present it cost ym above 10th p cent att ye mints to Coyn their Dollars into Rupees wch in ye greate sums of money they exchange for the purchase of their goods is considerable: Their method is this: in every 48 in weight they take out 5 for themselves, as for example for 48 in Dollars, wch was 54 in number, they give you but 43 in Rupees in number 116: soe that there is losse by exchange 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ p cent wch they compute soe charge of Coynage 2 p cent Remaines to those who have ye benefitt of ye mint & difference of finess of silver 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ p cent soe likewise in Gold ye Coynage is considerable. In coyning Gold for 2 setts of Buttons both of ye same weight & value, viz. 40 pagodas, for ye first sett I bought a little wedge of gold just of ye same weight & finess wth ye 40 pagodas wch cost me 9 Rupees less: soe much charge of Coynage."²³

Not much has been written about the early coinage of the East India Company, and the circumstances under which its coinage was circulated were anomalous in character. At the time of its incorporation, the Company had its own peculiar coinage granted by Queen Elizabeth, which was successively confirmed by other monarchs of England. The Company was also authorised to establish mints in connection with the factories. The servants of the Company gradually found themselves placed in a peculiar position, for though they remained subjects of their own sovereign, they were also obliged to acknowledge the supremacy

of the Mughal and the Indian princes. In 1640, the Company obtained permission to coin money at Fort St. George from the Raja of Chandragiri, who allowed it to coin money with the stipulation that the coin should bear the effigy of that deity who was the object of his own worship. The same permission was extended to the Company when the power of the Raj had passed into the hands of the King of Golkonda, and the Company's money became current for all business transactions in that Kingdom.

In 1676, Charles II authorised the establishment of a mint at Bombay; and the President of the Surat factory was also directed to coin money to facilitate commercial transactions. These privileges were extended during the reign of James II, when the Company was allowed to coin at its different forts, and it was laid down that the coinage should be current in those places which were within the limits of the Company's charters. In 1691 a mint was established at Fort William. The constitution of the Company's mints gradually became irregular, and in 1693 Aurangzib demanded an explanation why the coins of the Company bore the name of King William III and not his own. The Company defended its position by affirming that it "had to purchase investments at places where the Mughal's money did not pass".²⁴ There was a large number of mints (*dar-ul-zarb*) established by Aurangzib throughout the provinces and controlled by experts, though Norris makes no allusion to them. The quality and workmanship of the coinages during the Mughal period were of a high standard; and though the silver and gold coinage of Aurangzib became monotonous in character, yet it maintained its intrinsic value. European travellers to India have borne ample witness to this. The coins issued by the Company did not, however, maintain the same standard and were merely copies of the Mughal currency, though singled out by bearing certain emblems. The currency of the East India Company varied in its size and value in the different presidencies until 1835, when the Company assumed control of all the mints within its territories and the coinage finally became the standard British Imperial currency.²⁵

While at Masulipatam the Ambassador had very little time at his disposal in which to visit and observe places of historic interest in the neighbourhood. Not only was he preparing for

the immediate business of the mission, but for a man occupying such a public position a certain amount of ceremonial was necessary when going about so that it was not always possible for him to obtain first-hand knowledge of the country and its people. But whenever an opportunity presented itself he made the best use of it. Norris described himself as "a sort of a State prisoner", and it was not till six weeks after his arrival at Masulipatam that he was able to make an expedition into the surrounding country for the sake of his health, after a long confinement indoors. He went out "privately in a palankeen dismissing all but necessary attendance & soe incognito stole a mouth full of Aire 3 miles of neare ye Dutch Garden, where a man att once enjoys privacy & more wholesome Aire then is in ye Town by reason ye Morass all round ye Town, beginninge now to be draind of ye water yt fell in ye Raines, is not only offensive to ye smell but causes unholosome vapours wch wind all this season carrys to ye Town ye ground of ye other side beinge free from yt inconvenience & as it is saide ye best cure for illnesse contracted by ye unholosome Aire of this place: wee went over a wooden bridge yt is built over ye morass, As neare as I could judge a full English mile longe and as broad as 2 palankeens might pass each other if by chance meet. Wee passd by ye English Garden as they calld it wch formerly, when there was a factory here some years scince, was cultivated but now lys neglected, where likewise is ye buryinge place for ye English & severall Tombs erected after ye manner of ye country for those that had payd their debt to nature here."²⁶

About a mile from the English burying-place was the Dutch cemetery,²⁷ where Norris found many more tombs and monuments than at the former place, for the Dutch had been longer at Masulipatam than the English. Amongst these tombs, he saw a very remarkable one, which was "born [e] up by 4 Trees (yt I suppose were plantd att first att ye 4 corners of ye Tomb) into ye Air att least 9 foot high & supported now by pillars yt it might not fall when ye Trees decay & no longer able to support ye weight". In the same cemetery there was buried a "Dutch Ambassadors²⁸ who was sent by the Generall of Batavia to ye Greate Mogull in ye yeare (1693) after he had performd his Embassy att his return he dyd att this place & has only a marble stone made after an

English manner with a Dutch inscription signifyinge who he was, he dyd in ye 45th year of his age wch beinge upon ye same arrant yt I was goeing And I not farr of his Age & now in ye same place was a proper lesson of mortality to me to make me thinke of my latter End".²⁹ After leaving the Dutch cemetery, Norris went a little further and paid a visit to a pretty country house belonging to the Dutch, and a small kitchen garden which contained enough to provide them with all sorts of "Greens & sallads wch spring up here in 24 houres after they are sown". He went to a fine green field not far from the garden, where a herd of cattle was feeding. Here for the first time Norris saw paddy growing, which resembled barley in appearance. But on closely observing the ground he concluded that the cultivator had not much skill in tillage, as the soil was rich enough to produce anything in abundance. By that time the sun was nearly setting and Norris returned to his quarters, as unostentatiously as he went out, much "refreshed with a mouthfull of fresh Air".³⁰

Towards the middle of December, Norris went out privately in his *palanquin* for the second time to a very pleasant green walk. He described this expedition thus: "I went out att 3 in ye afternon & returnd home about 6. I walkd about an hour from halfe an houre after 4 till halfe an houre after 5, & even att that time of night, when ye sun was just setting, it was so hott as was pleasant & could well be endurd without Roundells,³¹ wch is usd to keep of ye heate of ye sun in Travellinge & att noon much hotter yn any time of ye yeare in England; wee were diverted by a very fine course after an antilope by a lease of English Greyhounds, but our Dogs not beinge in breath & ye antilope havinge ye advantage of a qr of a mile start of ym ye Dogs could not catch him; they are very fleet creatures & Ran like a Doe".³²

Norris found the provisions at Masulipatam to be of good quality and variety, though dearer than formerly. He gives interesting details about his table, and says that he never failed to have less than "14 or 16 good dishes every day" for dinner and "6 dishes" for supper!

Norris highly enjoyed the variety of Indian fruits. Once, towards the end of March, he received from Golkonda a basket of "very large delicious Grapes", which he considered the best

fruit he had seen or tasted since his arrival in India. He remarked that though the grapes were probably gathered before they were ripe, their delicious flavour had survived the long journey of 300 miles. They were notwithstanding "far beyond" any grapes he ever tasted in England. How much more delicious still the grapes would have been if they were gathered ripe and fresh from the vines! Norris goes on to say that about that time of the year "their fruits begin to Ripen such as grapes, mangoes, pine aples & mangostines wch they say here is a fruit soe Rare & of yt delicacy yt ye few yt are, are generally sent to ye Mogull". Golkonda, in his opinion, was not only "ye largest & most populous City in these parts", but "ye Garden of this Coast", as all the choicest fruits come from that place. So during his stay at Masulipatam, Norris took care to have reports of all fruits in season from Golkonda once or twice a week. He found that the small quantity of fruit he had already consumed had refreshed him very much and cooled his blood, and given him sound sleep. On finding a grove of green mangoes, he ventured to have the fruit "codled & stewd like aples", which proved pleasant and harmless. He and his suite ate them at first with some caution, but finding that they produced no evil results, they partook freely of the fruit. As the mangoes were green they not only smelt but tasted much like "Turpentine" which only increased Norris's belief in their wholesomeness.³³

It was not until the middle of April that Norris was able to make another expedition in his *palankeen*. He went out about ten miles into the country and spent an hour enjoying the air in a garden before returning to Masulipatam in the evening. He described in his *Journal* how he had seen for the first time a regular plantation of mango trees, which were "equidistant in a Right line & make a very noble shade. It is a very spreading tree in yt quality likest to our English Lime trees; it bears a longe narrow & very strong leafe; ye ffruite wch in appearance is likest to a magnum bonum grows upon a longe stalke. This beinge about ye Time of their being Ripest I was in greate hopes of fillinge my belly, but ye Gardner could not procure us above one yt was eatable. It is not only a very delicious but when Through Ripe they say a very wholesome fruite & dangerous to be eaten other-

wise".³⁴

The beginning of Norris's stay at Masulipatam was marked by general sickness and the deaths of several members of his retinue, owing to bad water. The lack of good water, he explained, was due to the whole coast being so level and so low without any hills in the neighbourhood. There was, therefore, no such thing as clear running springs, so that the water was mainly "brackish & unholosome". All the water that was drunk by the English was "sent for 5 or 6 miles up in ye country & yt boyld wth spice before they will venter to drink it: ye best water sent for 9 miles".³⁵ On September 30, 1699, Mr. William Blackett, the steward, died to Norris's "greate greife", because he was so well acquainted with the Ambassador's private affairs. Blackett's funeral was conducted, Norris records, "wth all ye decency & solemnity imaginable att buryinge place peculiare for ye English about 2 miles out of Town, attended by all my Retinue & ye English factours in palanquins & by ye ordinary servants on foot in their Liverys only out of ye Town: many of ye moores & Gentoos were present att ye Grave to see ye manner of Christian buryinge & behaved ymselves wth yt strictnesse & nicety & decency as became ye occasion".³⁶ A suitable monument was ordered to be eretced to his memory. Two days later Norris lost another of his staff, the surgeon Mr. Nathaniel Cox. This was a serious blow, for there was no other medical expert to take his place except the surgeon to the factory, who was a "Bold daring Ignorant Man". The latter, unlike modern physicians, used desperate methods in his treatment which Norris feared had shortened the lives of his steward and surgeon, as well as many other unfortunate patients. Within the next few weeks followed the deaths of Luke Bright, the Reverend Philip Pitt, chaplain to the factory, who was a good linguist and had served the Company well in that capacity. Norris himself had remained immune from illnesses which had attacked members of his suite; in fact his health was as good then as it had been for many years past.

The Ambassador had received a number of visitors at his residence; among the first were Consul John Pitt and the members of his Council. He obtained from them the fullest information about the general position in the Mughal's dominions, and indi-

cations of the manner in which the interests of the New Company and his mission might best be advanced. From these men he could count upon sympathy and sincere co-operation in promoting what was their common interest. But there were others who came merely as a matter of formality to pay him their respects, and some who came to discuss matters of commercial interest relating to the New Company. There were also a few who came to spy upon him to ascertain his programme. Norris received them all with courtesy and an unruffled countenance.

The Mughal officials, including the Kotwal³⁷ or Provost Marshal of Masulipatam, did not come in person, but sent their complimentary greetings with suitable gifts. As an act of courtesy the Havaldar or Governor also conveyed to him a similar compliment when he was making a "small Toure about ye Town in his palankine attended wth some horse & 100 puons & soe to his country house". The leading Indian merchants of the town, not without an eye to business, visited Norris, bringing with them a variety of rich presents calculated to gratify him "according to custome in this country wch is never to come empty handed". The presents included some fine chintz, muslins and dimity, all local products. The merchants did not neglect the opportunity thus afforded them of discussing the chances of developing the trade of the Coast to the mutual advantage of themselves and the English; nor is it likely that they concealed their curiosity as to the scope and character of the New Company. Mr. Thomas Lovell visited the Ambassador with the avowed intention of ascertaining his attitude towards the Old Company. He seemed well-satisfied with the interview and expressed his desire to pay further visits. Not many weeks afterwards Norris discovered that Mr. Lovell had betrayed not only him, but also his fellow factors.

Nor was it to his own countrymen only that Norris was an object of suspicion. It appeared that an official from the Dutch factory at Golkonda had been sent to discover the nature of his errand, and Norris believed that he was being spied upon from other quarters as well. The Dutch were naturally apprehensive of any interference on the part of the New English Company with their trade both at Surat and on the Coromandel Coast; they were closely watching the development of the English mission and

hoping that it might miscarry.⁸⁸

One of the most important Indian visitors was one Haji Muhammad Sa'id who represented himself as the "cheife agent" for Masulipatam of Aurangzib's "eldest" son, Sultan Shah Alam, but he was afterwards discovered to be only a 'Moorish' merchant. He posed as a great friend of the New Company and offered his assistance to the Ambassador; but later Norris had reason to suspect that Sa'id was really acting in the interests of the Old Company. Norris conversed with him through an interpreter and considered Sa'id a man of great "adresse and understanding". The latter eagerly enquired about the Ambassador's credentials in order to find out whether he had really been sent by the King of England. Norris replied that "ye Kinge of Greate Brittaine my Mr beinge ye most potent warlike & victorious Prince in Europe was desirous of ye Amity allyance & freindship of Aurengzebe who was ye most powerfull warlicke & victorious prince of ye East". His sovereign had despatched a squadron to clear the Indian Coasts of the pirates, so that the grievances of the Mughal's subjects might be remedied and their trade conducted in peace. Sa'id assured him that the Emperor would be pleased to accept this declaration, and that immediate orders would be given for Norris's safe journey to the Court. He then proceeded to inquire as to the Ambassador's exact designations and titles, lest any details might be omitted in his communication to the Imperial Court announcing Norris's arrival. Commenting upon this, Norris wrote in his *Journal*: "there is no Nation under ye sun soe exact in ceremony & every punctilio as this". He described himself as "Ambassador extraordinary from William III, King of England, Scotland, France & Ireland", to Aurangzib. In writing the full designations of the Emperor, he omitted "ye Titles of His Dominions", leaving them to be filled in by Sa'id, as they were "always very particular in for a slip on yt account sometimes proves fatall". Norris was equally anxious not to omit any of the King of England's full titles, and although he had been advised by Consul John Pitt to leave out the word "France" for political reasons, he refused to do so.

Sa'id paid Norris more than one visit and endeavoured to maintain friendly relations with him. He proved himself a useful

person, who supplied Norris with interesting information regarding the Emperor, his sons and grandsons. Norris further learnt from him that the Mughal's army consisted of "200000 Horse & foot & ye charge 40 millions of Rupees wch at 2s. 6d. p Rup is but 5 millions sterlinge". He treated that statement as a piece of boasting, and not to be outdone replied that "ye K my mr. was att [war] for 10 yeares together till he brought his enemys to his own Termes. I understood yt ye mogull upon any exigency could hardly raise more wch I told him upon a greate pinch I beleived if it was for ye security of ye Kingdom of England yt sum might be doubled, wch made him stroke his beard; He tooke greate notice of ye Kinges picture in little yt hunge over ye chaire I satt in & was highly delighted wth fancying himselfe like it wch in Reality he was a little".⁴⁰

Sir William Norris cannot have failed to realise the great disparity in power and wealth between his own Sovereign and the Mughal Emperor, although for the moment he affected to ignore it. It must be admitted that the military ascendancy of Aurangzib was already on the decline, for the wars in the Deccan had proved a ceaseless drain on his resources of all kinds. But so far as mere numbers went his army was larger than that maintained by Shahjahan, although it never attained the size of the force kept up by Akbar. In Bernier's time the cavalry and infantry constituting Aurangzib's army exceeded the total given to Norris by Haji Muhammad Sa'id, but the statements of Manucci and Gemelli Careri show his figures to have been by no means exaggerated. The reduced efficiency of the army during Aurangzib's later years must be attributed to various adverse influences which led to a falling off in its discipline, and even in its loyalty. It must be remembered that the Mughal army was composed of many different elements and recruited from various nationalities, which could not be expected to serve the Emperor with the same devotion and constancy as Indian-born soldiers. As the force was in no sense a national one, the irregularity with which the troops received their pay was a constant source of discontent and trouble, often verging on open mutiny. This was specially so in the closing years of the reign. Aurangzib cannot be accused of maintaining too large a military establishment, for he had need of it to keep

the people in subjection, and his internal administration made this more difficult than ever before. The consequence was a very heavy drain on the Imperial Exchequer⁴¹, all the more felt because the days of profitable warfare had passed never to return. If a comparison is made between the Mughal army and the British forces in India, we find each composed of various elements. In one respect the British came to possess an immense advantage, for a large number of troops in the Indian Army were drawn from Great Britain, and it must not be overlooked that the pay of the British army is regular and assured and followed by pensions. Reckoning simply by totals, the military expenditure of Aurangzib, heavy as it was, does not compare unfavourably with the present budget for the Army of the Government of India. There is, however, another side of the question. The expenditure of the Mughal Emperors began and ended with the army, while with the British India Government a considerable proportion had to be assigned to subjects of general utility to the country with some benefit to the people.

As time went on Norris learnt many nice points of Indian etiquette and customs from Haji Muhammad Sa'id and other visitors. His description of these strongly impresses upon the reader the exacting formalities then prevailing in the country. He described the proper etiquette to be observed by the host on closing an interview with a person of rank, and how he had been directed by Consul John Pitt to end his conversation with Sa'id by calling for "some betle & offer him & yt was an Item of departure & for a greater complement & wch would be soe accepted desird me yt I would touch ye betle first & ye bottle of Rose water wth wch he was to wash his face as ye custome is. Soe as soone as ye plate of Betle was brought to me & I had taken one bunch in my hand, He immediately Rose out of his chaire & tooke it out of my hand wth great sign of satisfaction as likewise ye bottle of Rose water, wch he tooke it from me & imediately bedewd his face & beard wth greate shew of being delighted, & ye Consull as a farther marke of kindnesse & friendship tooke ye bottle of Rose water & pourd it all down his heade Neck & Bosom, and soe he went away highly delighted wth his Reception. It was soe hott att this time I could have almost wishd it had been ye

custome amongst us to be soe cooled".⁴² On another occasion, as a mark of special favour, Norris himself poured a little rose water into Sa'id's hand. The latter for his part did not fail to return his compliments to the Ambassador with a special present of sweetmeats "made by ye faire hands of a Persian Lady who was cheife in favour to Mahomett Seyd". Of these Norris naively remarked that "ye worst sort of sweetmeates in England much exceed ym".

As their intimacy grew Norris gradually became aware of Sa'id's real character, and began to consider him both "cunninge" and "designinge". He discovered that Sa'id's real object was to obtain a footing in the New Company's trading affairs at Masulipatam, not to speak of other motives. The Ambassador and the Council were afraid to admit him and avoided giving him an opportunity of pressing his claims. "Ye merchants" Norris wrote "are humble complyinge & subservient to ye factory, but if ever such a man as he, is brought in, it will be quite otherwise & ye ffactory will be slaves to ye merchants". He was convinced that Sa'id had systematically misled him from the first and that he was really working in the interests of the Old Company. Although Norris had no very high opinion of Sa'id, he seems to have liked his visits and valued his suggestions regarding his own immediate business. Sa'id, on the other hand, did his best to impress the Ambassador and his staff with his own social importance and influence with the local Mughal officials. Perhaps the latter reason weighed more than anything else with Norris in entertaining Haji Muhammad Sa'id.

Besides his Indian visitors, there were representatives of other nationalities who came to pay their respects to Sir William Norris from time to time, and from these he never failed to derive some information. He gives an interesting account of a "poore portugeeze padre"⁴³ as he would be thought, but I thinke has more of ye merchant yn ye preist in him, comes now [and] then to dinner, not knowinge where to be better provided; he has been a greate traveller over India & enquireinge into ye concerns att Goa, wch is ye finest settlement in India & belongs wholly to ye portugeezes, he told me ye Jesuitts had five convents⁴⁴ there & ther incomes soe large by begginge & merchandizinge yt it exeded ye Revennues

of ye K. of Portugall in India. Amongst severall other orders settled there, he informed me of one that was wholly new, havinge never heard of such an one in Europe, viz. De Sancta providentia founded by Cajetan ye Jesuite, & it is essentiall to their order to depend every day upon providence for their daily breade, takinge no thoughts for it att all & wholly against their constitution to have a days provision before hand: it is a plentiful place where they are soe I suppose want for nothing".⁴⁵

Norris's references to the Roman Catholic priests on the Malabar Coast and other parts of India, as will be seen later on, give an idea of the numerous orders then existing, but he evidently failed to distinguish accurately between the different communities. There were representatives of the Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, Capuchins, Augustinians, Theatines, Hospitallers, Carmelites and secular priests scattered over various parts of the Mughal Empire, and others outside it. These various orders carried on their work of evangelisation without any hindrance on the part of the East India Company; but the Jesuits, for political reasons, did not enjoy the same degree of confidence as the others. It seems curious that Norris's visitor should have emphasized the worldly prosperity of the Jesuits at Goa, and ignored their excellent qualities as missionaries. Though the canons of the Catholic Church forbade priests to engage in any kind of trade, it is difficult for an outsider to ascertain how far the Jesuits complied with those injunctions, for the accounts given by contemporary travellers in India appear to corroborate the 'padre's' assertions that they carried on a certain amount of trading.⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that it was during the reign of Akbar, and still more that of Jahangir, that the Jesuits exercised their greatest influence and obtained many favours; but unfortunately their influence greatly declined under Shahjahan and Aurangzib. This was due to the apathetic attitude of the Emperors towards Christianity, and partly to the gradual decay of the Portuguese power in India. Other reasons were the decline in the calibre of the personnel and the addiction of the Jesuits to worldly pursuits, as well as the jealousies and conflicts between the numerous orders, not to mention their indiscreet actions in religious and political matters, which caused friction between them and the local authorities.

Moreover, there was doubtless less evangelistic zeal amongst the missionaries of Southern India towards the end of the seventeenth century than there was in Northern India amongst men like Father Rodolfi Aquaviva, Father Jerome Xavier and Father Anthony Monserrate, and this was probably a further contributory cause of the decline of their influence.

Norris also had the pleasure of welcoming one of his own countrymen in the person of the Hon. Peregrine Berty, son of Lord Abingdon, who arrived at Masulipatam in January, 1700, on board the *Benjamin*. Norris invited him to his house to dinner with Captain Brown. Mr. Berty later on sailed for Fort St. George, where he was received by Governor Pitt, who describes him as "a very good sort of Gentleman, and has behaved himself very obliging".⁴⁷

NOTES

* ¹ The climatic condition of the place was recorded by two other European travellers of that time thus: "The Air is very healthy one half of the year, when the Northern winds blow constant: But the Southern winds, which blow the other half of the year, fill the country with distempers. We were there during this latter season, and felt the dismal effects of it". See p. 157 of *A Relation of two several voyages made into the East-Indies*, by Christopher Fryke and Christopher Schewitzer, London, 1700.

* The *Nawab* or more correctly *Nawwab*. The title was usually applied to the deputy of the Emperor, that is to say the Viceroy of a Mughal Province. Gradually it lost that distinctive meaning, and came to be used simply as a title, like *Amir*, but it usually implied that the holder of the title had a high administrative post. The principal Muslim ruling chiefs in India, however, bear the title in its original and correct meaning.

* Vol. I, p. 56 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*, Bodleian.

* The word signifies here a temple referring to the famous shrine at Puri, to which Hindu pilgrims go in thousands.

* Vol. I, p. 48 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

* Vol. I, p. 67, *Ibid.*

* *Ibid.*, p. 147.

* Vol. I, p. 148, *Ibid.*

* *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ A corruption of the Portuguese word *gentio*, meaning a 'gentile' or heathen. The Portuguese on their arrival in India applied it generally to the Telugu-speaking Hindu population of South India. The term is now obsolete among Europeans. (See *Hobson-Jobson*).

¹² Vol. I, p. 87 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

¹³ Vol. I, p. 55, *Ibid.*

¹⁴ See Vol. II, pp. 435, 437-8; Vol. III, p. 65 of *Storia do Mogor*.

¹⁵ Vol. I, p. 226; Vol. II, pp. 750-752 of *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*.....by Lieut. Col. James Tod, edited by William Crooke, Oxford University Press, 1920.

¹⁶ In the letters of the Company's servants of that date there are references to this great famine, in which they said the trade of the merchants suffered considerably as also their own business. Its effect was also mentioned by Dr. St. John in his despatch. See pp. 36, 43, Vol. IV of *Letters to Fort St. George, 1686-87*; also p. 91 of the *Calcutta Review* (January 1927).

¹⁷ The Dutch trade consisted especially of spice, and in addition to the goods invested they sent from Masulipatam yearly a considerable sum in ready money. The trade of the French was not considerable and that of the Portuguese was still less. See *O. C. 55-Part II*, No. 6954, India Office.

¹⁸ Vol. I, p. 141 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

¹⁹ In the opinion of eminent authorities, the word is of Portuguese origin, "derived from the pyramidal temple depicted on one side of it". There were several varieties of this coin both in gold and silver; but those issued by the East India Company were comparatively modern. For explanatory notes on the subject see Vol. III, p. 643 of *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency*, edited by C. D. Maclean.

²⁰ There were several varieties and standards of the silver coins called rupees. The origin of the Indian rupee may be traced back to very early times. Shir Shah introduced a new silver piece to which the name of *rupia* was given—a designation used alike by the Mughal Emperors, the Portuguese and the East India Company.

²¹ A small copper coin, 80 of which make a *fanam*, or 3d. sterling in those days. (*Hobson-Jobson*).

²² The word pice is the Indian *paisa*, which according to Steingass is of Persian origin. The value of the copper coin was quite indeterminate in the 17th century, and varied like the *cash*, both in time and place. During that period the copper coins were not tokens like the modern pice or the penny, but circulated on the basis of their value as copper. About that date, at Masulipatam, 3 pice were equal to 2 cash and 46 cash to Re 1. See p. 249 of *Rawl. MS. A. 302* on "coins, weights and measures of India", Bodleian.

²³ Vol. 1, p. 55 *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²⁴ Vol. II., pp. 555-6 of Elphinstone's *History of India*, quoted by Thurston.

²⁵ The chief authorities consulted by the writer on the subject are as follows:—*Tavernier's Travels in India*, 2nd edition, O. U.P., 1925; *Indo-Portuguese Numismatics*, by J. Gerson Da Cunha, 1880; the articles on *The Pagoda or Varaha Coins of Southern India*, by Major G. Bidie, *J.A.S.B.*, Vol. LII, Part I, 1883; *Coins of Southern India*, by Sir Walter Elliot, F.R.S., in the *International Numismata Orientalia*, Trubner & Co., 1886; *History of the Coinage of the Territories of the East India Company in the Indian Peninsula*, by Edgar Thurston, Madras, 1890; *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics*, by S. H. Hodivala, N. S. I., Calcutta, 1923.

²⁶ Vol. I, p. 43 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²⁷ The Dutch were very scrupulous about preserving their tombs. Some of these were artistically constructed in stones, skillfully carved and lavishly decorated with coats of arms and epitaphs. They presented a strong contrast

to the English tombs and monuments in India, as regards the solidity of their structure. See p. 44 of *Monumental Remains of the Dutch East India Company in the Presidency of Madras*, by Alexander Réa,—Madras 1897; also Vol. I, p. 53 of *List of The Antiquarian Remains in the Presidency of Madras*, by Robert Sewell, 1882.

²⁸ This was undoubtedly Johannes Baccherus, Second in Council under Hendrik Adriaen Van Rheede, the Dutch Commissary-General for North Coromandel, residing at Pulicat near Madras. Baccherus was sent as an envoy to the Mughal Court in 1688, with an imposing retinue and valuable presents. He secured a *farman* (dated October 24, 1698) attested by Wazir Asad Khan, confirming privileges already granted by the rulers of Golkonda and adding to it further valuable concessions for the Dutch settlements and trade on the coast. A report dated December 4, 1692, containing 1300 folios, together with other documents regarding the embassy and the Company's affairs, were sent by Baccherus to the Directors of the Company called "De Heeren Zeventien" in Holland. He was well-read and a good linguist. It was through his efforts that the fort of Negapatam was built which "cost 12 tons of gold". Baccherus died in 1693.

There is no reference to the envoy's tomb in the list of epitaphs compiled from the Dutch cemetery at Masulipatam. See Part I, p. 181; Part II, p. 165; Part III, p. 86 of *Open Ondergang Van Cormandel* by D. Havart; *Dutch Records*, 1st Series, Vol. LIV, No. MCDLXV, p. 9 (I.O.); Vol. II, pp. 283-86, 388 of *Storia do Mogor*; Vol. LVIII, p. 96 of the *Indian Antiquary*, 1929 (The Mission of Weldon and Navarro); *Overgekomen papieren van Indie*, 1693, Vols. 10 and 11, Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague; Vol. 174, p. 27 of *Orme MSS. O.V.*, I.O.; *Masulipatam Factory Records*, Vol. 16; p. 237 of *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments in Madras*, by J. J. Cotton, 1905.

²⁹ See Vol. I, p. 44 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

³⁰ See Vol. I, p. 44, *Ibid*.

³¹ The word is an Anglo-Indian term signifying a large decorated State Umbrella. It was generally used by men of position and carried by servants called roundelliers. See p. 316 of *Indian Antiquary*, (December, 1904). There are also some interesting notes about it in Vol. II, p. 269 of C. H. Tawney's *The Ocean of Story*, edited by N. M. Penzer.

³² Vol. I, p. 81 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

³³ Vol. I, p. 149, *Ibid*.

³⁴ Vol. I, p. 156, *Ibid*.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 13.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 21.

³⁷ See pp. 66-70 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration* for particulars of the duties of that officer. The word is Indo-Persian.

³⁸ P. 9, Series I, Vol. 56, No. MDLXXX, *Dutch Records*, India Office.

³⁹ Shah Alam was in fact the second son of Aurangzib, for his elder brother Sultan Muhammad died in 1676. Shah Alam ascended the throne as Emperor Bahadur Shah I, in 1707.

⁴⁰ Vol. I, p. 29 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

⁴¹ See pp. 216-220, 230 of Bernier's *Travels* (Oxford ed); Vol. II, p. 422, Vol. IV, p. 409 of *Storia do Mogor*; also pp. 12-27, 61 of *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*....by William Irvine, Luzac & Co., 1903.

⁴² Vol. I, p. 18 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

⁴³ The padre was clearly not a Jesuit; he may have been a Theatine, an Augustinian, or a secular priest. The late Rev. Father H. Hosten, S. J., in a communication to the present writer, wrote that in the ordinary course there could have been no Jesuit at Masulipatam in 1699; moreover, a Jesuit would not have exaggerated the wealth of his community at Goa as the padre did. The reference to Father Cajetan, a Theatine and not a Jesuit, proves that the padre was not a Jesuit. In 1640 the Theatines founded at Goa a house with an Oratory called *Nossa Senhora da Providencia*. Norris confused the name of the house with that of the Theatine Order which occupied it. The Theatines came to Masulipatam in 1645, and also lived in several small places along the Coast of Coromandel. They led a wretched existence, and many of them died young of hardship, exposure, illness and poverty. In 1693 the Theatine Churches in the Mylapore Diocese were entrusted to the care of the Augustinians; but to judge from Norris's account, some Theatines may still have lingered at Masulipatam in 1699.

⁴⁴ These were probably the "five houses" alluded to by Tavernier, viz. the College of St. Paul, the Seminary, the Monk' House, the Noviciate and the Bom Jesus. See Vol. I, p. 159 of *Travels in India*, second edition, edited by William Crooke, O.U.P., 1925.

⁴⁵ See Vol. I, pp. 49, of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

⁴⁶ Vol. II, p. 236 of *Travels in India*, by J. B. Tavernier, Oxford ed, 1925; also Vol. III, p. 280 of *Storio do Mogor*, edited by William Irvine.

⁴⁷ Vol. I, p. 122 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*; also Vol. III, p. lxii of *Hedge's Diary*.

CHAPTER IV

Aspects of Mughal Administration: Religion and Society

We may pause here for a while to consider some of the facts about the local Mughal representatives and their dealings with Norris recorded by him in his *Journal* and the side-lights he throws on various phases of local conditions. From the very beginning, and indeed throughout the whole of his stay in India, Norris showed himself hyper-sensitive regarding his position. This attitude on his part sometimes impressed the Mughal's officials; but his occasional indiscretions made him also unnecessary enemies and often excited opposition.

One day about the middle of October, the Faujdar of a neighbouring town, Petipoli, paid an official visit to Masulipatam. He was attended by some horsemen, five *palanquins* and about twenty or thirty peons. There were different opinions as to his capacity; "some gave him ye character of a sort of an Inspector" over the Havalдар of Masulipatam, whilst others held that he was "a sort of Receiver Generall" of the Emperor, come to collect the taxes. The Faujdar sent a complimentary message to the Ambassador, which was gracefully reciprocated. So far all was well, but the affair did not end as harmoniously as it had begun. It so happened that the Faujdar, accompanied by both the Havalдар and the Kotwal of the town, first paid a visit to the Chief of the Dutch factory, Mr. Bruyning Wildelandt. Norris chose to treat this as a slight to himself, and when the Faujdar and his party called later, the Ambassador refused to see them. His secretary informed the Faujdar that he should have visited the Ambassador before calling on the Chief of the Dutch factory. The Faujdar and his attendants, taken by surprise, looked at each other in silence. Then he, Faujdar, took his departure in great indignation at an unmerited rebuff. Norris, on the other hand, was convinced that he had acted properly in upholding his dignity and declared his belief that the incident would teach the Faujdar better manners. It cannot be supposed that the

Faujdar, conversant as he was with the etiquette observed at the most ceremonious Court in the world, had any intention of slighting Norris by visiting the Dutch Chief before him. It may very well have been done without due reflection, or because the Dutchman was an older resident in the town than Norris.

The Dutch Chief also seems to have been annoyed by the incident. For despite the fact that the English Ambassador represented the Dutchman's own Sovereign, he never paid his respects to him. The uncomfortable situation which Norris's behaviour had created was eased to some extent by the news that not only the Faujdar, the Havaladar, the Kotwal of the town, but also the Subahdar of the Province, Nawab Faqirulla Khan, were to be removed by order of the Imperial Government. It took some weeks, however, to compose the differences between the Faujdar and his subordinates on the one hand and the Ambassador on the other. The former realized that it was contrary to their interests to quarrel with an important person like Norris, for if the Emperor or his Ministers became aware of their conduct they would be called to account for it. Within a month the Kotwal sent a present to Sir William signifying his humble submission and declaring that "he himself had kept watch in person" for Norris's safety and security. The Kotwal continued to treat Norris with great civility, and let pass no opportunity of showing him some mark of respect and good-will. Having just then seen the "new Moon", the Kotwal sent his greetings to Norris, which was "a custome amongst ym that they doe not only salam all ye greate men neare ym att that time but even ye moone itselke upon its first appearance, a Remnant I suppose of ye Persian idolatry who worship both sun & moone & severall amongst them here yt hold any thinge of fire to be sacred".¹

Indeed, the Mughal officials were very punctilious in sending their greetings to the Ambassador on the occasion of religious and social functions. The Havaladar, or Governor, of the town sent greetings to Norris on a similar festival during the month of December, when flags were hung out and mosques lighted up, and performed "some sort of Devotion & distribute Rice to ye poore".² It is evident that the Mughals at that time observed

the ceremony of saluting the New Moon every month, instead of only after the fast of the month of Ramazan. In the evening on which the New Moon after the great fast is expected, all Muslim eyes look eagerly towards the Western sky after sunset, and if any one sees the New Moon he tells the others. In a Muslim State the local governor or official announces it by gun-fire or beat of drum or other means of proclamation, and people congratulate each other that the period of fasting is over. The following day is a day of rejoicing—the Id festival. It is not a peculiarly Mughal or Persian custom, as Norris surmised: it is one observed by all Muslims.

The removal from his post of the Nawab Faqirulla Khan had been contemplated for some time on account of his owing twenty-five *lakhs* of rupees to the Emperor. But he had obtained a temporary respite by remitting five *lakhs* and by sending "ye heades of 2 of ye Mogulls enemys in these parts", to the Emperor³ as well as by giving large presents to the chief Ministers at Court.⁴ The Nawab had to pay the Emperor every year to the "amount of 400000 English⁵ money & it may be gives a qr soe much at least if not $\frac{1}{2}$ for ye purchase of it, this Nabob's father had ye Governmt before him, who when he dyd, ye Mogull securd all he was worth for himselfe, put ye son in ye office of whom he requird wht was due to him from ye father & made him give money beside".⁶

Norris further explained the Mughal policy of government, which he had gathered from various sources. He noted that the free gift of "a Government, province or Kingdome" was hardly ever bestowed upon a Nawab by the Emperor, as they were always bought or sold. When such a province came up for sale, the Emperor demanded the immediate payment of the purchase money in addition to the assurance of an annual rent. The Nawab thereupon had to administer the government as best he could and raise what money was possible in order to recoup himself. The Emperor concerned himself no further with the business until another vacancy occurred.⁷ There were, however, some exceptions to this procedure, for some vassal kings and landowners enjoyed hereditary rights. Among these, Norris mentioned the Governor of "Darencoate" [Dharanikota] as one

of the very few instances of a nobleman succeeding to his property by inheritance. He wrote that the latter had "a sort of a Governmt yt is Hereditary to his family who have enjoyed it many yeares, & they say cannot be displaced of wch sort I thought there had been none & are I beleive but very few & though they pretend a sort of property it is hardly soe good as our *durante bene placito*".⁸

Norris's statement regarding the insecurity of land tenure under Aurangzib is generally in accord with that given by other European travellers; but he does not attempt to explain the reasons which led the Emperor to withhold hereditary rights from his nobles, and also placed other subjects entirely at his mercy.⁹

Events moved slowly at the Mughal Court, and though the Emperor had decided to displace Nawab Faquirulla Khan in favour of Nawab Mahdi Khan,¹⁰ it was some weeks before the latter was able to assume the reins of government. Norris naturally felt some anxiety as to the attitude the new Nawab would assume towards his mission. He resolved, however, to secure him to his interest "by a large present att his first cominge for there is no other way of procuringe either favour or justice in this Government but by such meanes, & justice is all I shall desire of him."¹¹ The purchase of favours became more open and extensive as time passed owing to the ever-increasing drain on the Imperial treasury through the constant warfare in the Deccan. Bribery was not an Eastern practice only, at that period it was quite prevalent also in Europe. More or less open bestowal of presents was part of the Mughal social etiquette of the day. The Emperor gave them as well as receiving them, and the custom prevailed through all the grades of the official hierarchy.

Various reports reached Norris about the movements of the new Nawab on which he could not implicitly rely. Early in December news was received that the Emperor had really appointed Nawab Mahdi Khan to "ye Governmt of This Kingdome & province of Golconda", and that he was on his way to Masulipatam. This was further confirmed by the information Norris had received through *pattamars* or runners from Golkonda. Nawab Mahdi Khan was there awaiting his formal commission from the Emperor, to

whom he had paid a large sum of money for the support of his Army. With reference to all the various reports regarding the appointment of Nawab Mahdi Khan, Norris observed that the irregularity in communicating State despatches from the Central Government to the Provinces rendered it difficult for the general public to become acquainted with its policy and political declarations. He writes: "Nothings of Truth can be gathered here from Reports nor is there any way of havinge news communicated from ye Court & Camp to other places. Ye people all over ye Government are industriously kept in ignorance of all State affairs; all manner of news from all different parts is Transmitted by ye severall voconovices¹² to ye Mogull, but no news ever sent back. There is no such thinge as any correspondence to be kept not even by the Nabobs to any cheife minister.¹³ Such a convenience as a post not beinge suffered all matters wth distant freinds & businesse by letter, is dispatcht by puons sent on purpose, wch is ye method I am forced to use to notify my arrivall as well to Suratt as Bengall, to either of wch places ye distance is att least 900 English miles; from Bengall I may expect an answer from ye Consull there by a sloop, now ye monsoon serves, wch will come in a weeke but from Suratt I can have no other Return but by ye same puons who will have travelled when they return 1800 English miles. I dispatched them away wth letters ye 23 of Sber & expect ym back ye beginninge of January; ye charge is not greate of sendinge such expresses for a pagoda¹⁴ a month is their hire if they continue in yt service here, & if you send any of ym abroad their travelinge charges is but 3 cash a day above their other allowance & for ye Generality are carefull of their businesse & Trusty enough to be relyd on".¹⁵

Before his arrival at Masulipatam, Nawab Mahdi Khan ordered that all the Brahmans employed by the local government should prepare their accounts in readiness for his inspection, and, further, that all payments to his predecessor should be discontinued. Norris's observations throw light not only on the class of people from which the staff of the revenue department was recruited, but also upon the character of the employees. In spite of Aurangzib's deep prejudice against the 'infidels', his government could not dispense with the assistance of the Brahmans in certain branches,

where education and acute intelligence were required, specially in the department of accounts.¹⁶ The same thing may be said of the Kayasthas, who had considerable influence in the Imperial and other Courts on account of their proficiency as "scribes and arithmeticians".¹⁷ Norris wrote "These Bramines are a sort of people yt have made themselves not only usefull but necessary to all Governments in India as well by their Cunnige as Industry. They have not only in grossd all sorts of learninge to their peculiar Cast [e], but even writinge Readinge & accounting, it beinge none of ye greate mens businesse in ye least to inspect their own Concerns but wholly trust & Rely on ye Bramines honesty for wht accounts they will give, not being able to contradict, & soe ye Bramines bring accounts accordingly sure of good acceptance because none but their own Cast [e] understand any thinge of ym, & are more Cunnige & sly to enrich themselves then any English Nobleman's steward. I shall have occasion to say more of ym hereafter only shall give this character of ym, yt they are as expert & cunninge in all ways of Gain as any sort of men in any Nation & I beleive could outwitt & over reach any Jews or European Brokers."¹⁸ Notwithstanding those innuendoes, Norris one day did enjoy a conversation with a learned Brahman about his religion and the Sanskrit language.

Nawab Mahdi Khan's arrival at Masulipatam was preceded by his representative or Diwan, an old man of about seventy, who came on December 23, escorted by 250 horsemen. He took possession of the town quietly without any obstruction on the part of the former regime. The Havaldar did not stay to make up his accounts with the Diwan, but left a considerable¹⁹ sum in charge of the Waki'ahnawis before joining his friend and superior Nawab Faqirulla Khan. The Diwan's position in his new sphere was insecure, and though he was received by numerous subordinate officials, the Waki'ahnawis of the place absented himself. The reason was that he considered his position superior to that of the Diwan, being an appointment held immediately from the Emperor. The power and responsibility attached to the office was indeed great, as Norris explained: "It behooves all Governours & officers whatsoever to stand upon Good Termes wth ye voconovis upon account he is ye only man yt can transmitt their behaviour

to ye Kinge for wch reason flackir ulla Chawn allowd him a constant pension of 500 Rup: a month".

In connection with the new regime a "reformation of manners" was to be inaugurated, involving the closing of houses where strong drink was sold and the expulsion of loose women. The new Kotwal of the town was ordered to carry out these regulations; if any 'Gentoo' were found guilty of disobeying them, a fine of ten rupees would be imposed and if unable to pay, he would be compelled to become a Muslim. Norris described the situation thus: "If Aurengzebe live 3 or 4 yeares longer by severitys usd in fininge & Taxinge ye gentoos above wht they are able to pay, will oblige most of ym to come over to his own Religion wch he uses all possible meanes to propogate. Though ye Gentoos to give ym their due livd strictly sober lives & not soe much given to frequent ye whores Cast [e] as ye moores, yet doe not approve these methods calling ym Inovations, but ye Mogull who is wholly devoted to Religion uses all methods to plant it, & have all under him strict observers of it. In these 3 monthes yt I have been here I have neither seen nor heard of any Drunkenesse disorder Riott or quarellinge in ye Town. It would be well if European City's would take example".²⁰

The promulgation of these new laws was, as Norris believed, simply an excuse to get money from "ye whores & Rack houses". He further emphasized the fact that the Government extracted as much money as possible from the traders and all other people under its jurisdiction, for "the higher authority squeezes ye Lower & ye Mogull squeezes all".

These generalisations about the attitude of the Emperor and his officials only show what hasty judgments Norris formed concerning the various ordinances enforced upon the people. Aurangzib throughout his reign strictly prohibited the consumption of intoxicants, which he considered contrary to the Islamic Law. He commanded the Kotwal to search out and to punish any person, whether Muslim or Hindu, guilty of selling intoxicating drinks, and also appointed an officer called Muhtasib, or Censor of Morals, in order to investigate the consumption of other alcoholic beverages. Nor did the Emperor omit to discourage 'undesirable' women from following their trade. Although it was true that the

provincial governors grew lax in carrying out these measures during the latter years of Aurangzib's reign, yet that does not prove that there was no moral weight in the prohibitions issued by the Emperor.²¹

The inhabitants of Masulipatam had made great preparations to welcome Nawab Mahdi Khan. Amongst Europeans, the Chief of the Dutch factory went out in person to receive him. Norris himself was in a dilemma as to his own course of action. He was anxious not to do anything derogatory to his position as Ambassador; at the same time he did not wish to offend the Nawab, who could embarrass the Company's affairs and even stop its trade. He finally decided to send his chief interpreter, Venkatadri, accompanied by an escort of "25 Rashbootes" to meet the Nawab (on December 28), with a present of "5 or 7 peices of Gold, it being customary to make a small present introductory of a greater & if in peices of Gold always [sic] odd number". Norris instructed Venkatadri to inform Nawab Mahdi Khan of his rank and mission, and also to convey his congratulations on the Nawab's appointment. The presents and the message were very courteously received by the Nawab, who in return sent his *salams*, or greetings to Norris. Venkatadri reported that the escort of men and horses belonging to the Nawab was in a poor and mean condition.

On January 1, 1700, Mahdi Khan left the Camp for his headquarters at Gudur,²² and signified his readiness to receive a formal deputation from the Ambassador. Accordingly Consul Pitt and Mr. Graham, second in charge of the factory, attended by Mr. Harlewyn and Mr. Mill, were sent in State to have an audience with the Nawab. They were accompanied by an imposing retinue, bearing in Norris's words "3 Coates Armes Richly drawn in Gold viz. ye Kings, mine, & ye Company's, mine & ye Company's carryd by one ye King's for ye greater State to be carryd by 2, & guarded by six Blunderbusses." The four Englishmen rode in *palanquins* followed by men carrying trumpets and country drums. In aranging the details of the procession, Norris had taken special care to include the musicians, having received secret intelligence, the night before, that the Nawab had forbidden the Dutch Chief to bring any country drums or trumpets with him. Norris gave strict orders to the Consul that he was on no

account to proceed to Gudur if the Nawab offered any opposition to the musical instruments. As a matter of fact, resistance was offered on the way by a messenger of the Nawab; but Consul Pitt insisted on his prerogative as representing the Ambassador.²³ The matter was finally settled and the procession was allowed to continue as arranged. Pitt was carefully instructed concerning the etiquette to be observed in complimenting the Nawab on behalf of the Ambassador on the new honour bestowed on him by the Mughal.

When Consul Pitt and his party arrived at the Nawab's house, they were conducted through a gate into a court, where they left their *palanquins*. They then passed through another gate guarded by Indian soldiers, to the place where the Nawab was sitting in State to receive them. It occupied a space of about "15 yards over & 7 brod" covered with carpets, and in front was a small tank containing a fountain. Nawab Mahdi Khan was seated in "ye midle havinge a Talagodah or large cushion behind him & before him a Gold plate & Large Gold Box to put Beetle in, & alsoe a large standish plated wth Gold & a Gold Ink case. His eldest son (an Omrah)²⁴ was seatd on his right hand, who had likewise a Gold Beetle Box before him, & a cymitar wth a Gold Hilt sett wth severall pretious stones, on ye Nabobs left hand sate another of his sons about 16 yeares of age & beyond him satt 8 others (moor merchants); Next ye Nabob's eldest son was left a space for ye Consull & those wth him to sitt & beyond yt sate ye Duan & ten others officers of ye Govermt & merchants. The Consull & other Gentlemen went up to ye Carpetts in their slippers where they putt ym of & went up before ye Nabob makinge a Bow wth their Hatts on wch was answerd by ye Nabob & his son by puttinge their hands on their Breasts".²⁵

The Consul and his party then took their seats; and the former, through an interpreter, informed the Nawab of Sir William's mission to the Mughal. Pitt requested the Nawab to grant his *parwana* for carrying on the New Company's trade within his Government till a *farman* could be procured from the Emperor. The Nawab received the message courteously and, after enquiring about the Ambassador's plans, promised to do all in his power to help him. Then Consul Pitt, in the name of the Ambassador,

presented the Nawab "wth a Curious watch wth persian characters & his eldest son wth a silver snuff Box". When all these formalities were concluded, and the Nawab had heard "my Lords Trumpetts sound severall times hee open'd his Gold Box and wth his owne hands" presented the Consul and the other members of his party "wth some Beetle". Then they withdrew from the Nawab's presence in the same manner as they had come.²⁶

The responsibility attaching to the exchange of courtesies with the Nawab was not ended with that audience, for Mahdi Khan decided to make a State entry into Masulipatam within the next few days. This news caused the Ambassador and his staff further anxieties as to their share in the reception. An incident now occurred which threw some light upon a superstition held alike by the Hindus and Muslims. The Nawab, before venturing to enter the town, "all ye while consultinge wth ye Bramines for a fortunate day, it seemes they all agreed ye 3 first days [of January] unlucky, but ye 4th a very lucky & prosperous day." Norris's comment was: "ye Generality of people Greate & small are soe ignorant & foolish as to beleive whatever ye Bramines tell them & depend upon it for certainty". In his opinion the Brahmins "themselves are none of ye wisest sort but cuninge enough however in this particular to leade ye Rest of ye people by ye noses & soe their pretended knowledge is very advantageous & bringes ym in greate profit".²⁷

Accordingly on January 4, this being considered an auspicious day, Nawab Mahdi Khan entered Masulipatam attended by an escort sitting on an elephant "wth a Canopy over his heade & appeared very grave & becominge wth a longe gray beard & Rich Turbant, his cloathes a fine chinz". His two sons followed, magnificently dressed and riding upon richly caparisoned horses. The cavalcade consisted of eight elephants, several camels, a large number of flags, and a motley crowd of about fifteen hundred soldiers both horse and foot, who "appear'd like a confus'd crowd of mobb, without either order, or discipline". Norris compared their marching with that of his own countrymen when "takinge ye feild to choose a knight of ye shire", and he was well satisfied that "50 English men well mountd would have dispersd ye whole Company Elephants & all & seizd ye Nabob".²⁸

Though the Nawab was anxious to make a favourable impression upon the local inhabitants by the grandeur of his entry, yet he had neglected to provide the necessary trappings for the elephants which figured in the procession. These animals had just been bought for Rs. 16,000. It was not till after his arrival that he sent to the English factory for some scarlet and green cloth, which was supplied free of charge. The Ambassador himself made elaborate arrangements for the Nawab's reception. As soon as he approached Norris's house, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired and the musicians began to play. Norris, wearing his hat, stood on a platform covered with a carpet at the end of the balcony, accompanied by his English retinue and the members of the New Company's factory. The Nawab was well pleased with the reception, and "turned his head twice or thrice" to look at the Ambassador.²⁹ He rewarded the English gunners with some money; and later on sent his special greetings to Norris, and presented him "wth Beetle" contained in a gold box and salver. He also sent his assurances that he would assist the mission to the best of his power. Norris returned his greetings with due ceremonial. It gave him great satisfaction to know that the Nawab had treated him with a greater mark of respect than he had accorded to the Dutch Chief. Mahdi Khan returned to Gudur after two hours. Thus the new regime began, but nevertheless the Nawab's position had proved to be insecure on account of the political condition of the country.

The good understanding hitherto maintained between the Ambassador and the Nawab soon became strained on account of the situation created by a party of *laskars* or Indian sailors. They were brought to England in the *Scarborough* shortly before Norris's departure for India. After being discharged and receiving their wages in full, they became destitute and had no means of returning to their country. The New Company's authorities decided to send them back to India free of charge in the same squadron with Norris, and gave them 40s. each, believing that these kindnesses would be well received in India, and might help to establish several new settlements and start fresh trade. On the voyage Norris saved their leader from being whipped for "some villany he had practis'd", as he did not wish to offend them in

any way, but have them landed in India full of gratitude for kindnesses received. He also gave them two dollars each. But, unfortunately, all this had an effect quite contrary to what was intended.

The day after Sir William's landing, the *laskars* went in a body to his house demanding a large sum of money which they considered due to them as representing several months' wages. But as neither Norris and Consul Pitt knew anything of their claims, and had no instructions in the matter from the Directors, the men were ordered to go away. They renewed their claims the next day, and Norris peremptorily asked them not to trouble him again; if they could show some evidence of what was due to them, it would, he said, be paid by the Consul. This did not satisfy them, and their leader came the following day to press their claims. The man was seized and soundly bastinadoed,⁸⁰ and threatened with a worse punishment if he came again. They then clamoured for the money to the Faujdar and other Mughal officials, who knowing that they had no justification for their demands, took no notice of their complaints.

Finally the *laskars* brought their complaint to Nawab Mahdi Khan, who was satisfied that there was no valid ground for their claims and ordered them to leave. The following day they appeared again in a body before the Nawab "in ffackires habitts wth ashes upon their Heades", demanding justice with still greater insistence. The Nawab could not now avoid taking cognizance of the matter; he referred it to the Qazi⁸¹ for a decision, and asked Norris to send a Vakil to affirm that there was nothing due to the men. Norris hesitated to do this, but sent Venkatadri to the Nawab to say that he expected justice from him. He repeated that he owed the *laskars* no money. On the other hand, if they had any demands on any other Englishman, he himself was the sole judge in the matter, and he would immediately order payment to their satisfaction. The Nawab asked that the Ambassador should send either a 'moorman' or 'Gentoo' to represent the case to the Qazi. Norris refused to do so, declaring that it was beneath his dignity and that he did not wish to be troubled any further with the business. As a result the Nawab detained Venkatadri, and threatened to keep him prisoner till Norris should

send someone to appear before the Qazi. Norris resented the affront. He protested that the Nawab's action was contrary to the law of all nations and a violation of the privileges of an Ambassador, and demanded Venkatadri's immediate release.

On receiving this message the Nawab "put both his hands to his head" and affirmed his ignorance of the affair, saying that if any such thing had happened it was not by his order, and that he would release Venkatadri at once. But the Nawab soon altered his mind and declared that according to the law of Aurangzib he had no choice but to detain him till an explanation was given to the Qazi. Fearing an armed attack from the Nawab, and hoping also to intimidate the Hindus and Muslims, "who" (as Norris thought) "dreaded nothing so much as fire-arms in Englishmen's hands", the Ambassador put the embassy in a state of defence. He ordered "2 or 3 chest of arms to be taken out", and muskets, fuzes, blunderbusses, powder and ball to be in readiness at a minute's warning. These preparations frightened the Indian servants, who were not allowed to go out of the embassy. They concluded that the situation was serious and that the Ambassador intended either to fire the town or to seize the Nawab. Several of them even sent their wives and women two or three miles out of town. The Nawab was greatly alarmed on hearing of these warlike preparations, and immediately released Venkatadri. Norris considered that the affair might have been easily settled if he had arranged to have 60 or 70 well-armed Englishmen who could have put the Nawab's force of 600 to flight, as they would never have stood one charge. Nawab Mahdi Khan possibly imagined that the English out-numbered his own force by five times. Norris's object was not to fight, but to obtain redress from the Nawab by the threat of fighting. But the Ambassador was not satisfied with the mere release of Venkatadri, and sent his Secretary Mr. Mills, accompanied by a cortege, to demand an apology. The Nawab expressed his regret for what he described as an error due to misunderstanding, and trusted that the Ambassador would take no further notice of the matter.³²

The impression produced by Norris's successful assertion of his diplomatic privileges was brief. Soon afterwards trouble broke out with another Mughal official, the Kotwal of Masulipatam,

who seized the Ambassador's drums, but restored them after being threatened by Norris. In order to appease Norris, he afterwards sent him a present of sweetmeats. This conduct of the Kotwal caused Norris to remark that the best way to "deale wth these people is to make them feare you for though they will doe much for gifts yet Threatninge seemes prevaile farther wth ym".³³

A few weeks afterwards the Kotwal seized and detained some of Norris's employees, but released them on demand with an apology for his ignorance. This evoked from Norris even sharper criticism of the general behaviour of the Mughal officials: "yt these Indian officers are ye most forward & Ready people in ye world to put an affront upon any European but ye most tardy & backward to stick to it & maintain it when they have done; it is want of consideration makes ym offer an affront & want of courage makes ym begg pardon & own themselves in ye wronge. The best & only way to deale wth Them is never to put up ye least slight or affront & it is but Resolvinge to have satisfaction & you may have it from ye highest of ym".³⁴

Norris's *Journal* throws an interesting light upon other aspects of Mughal rule. These afford some proof of the systematic oppression of the Hindus in the provinces, and also of Aurangzib's obstinate intolerance towards their religion. One morning during the middle of November, Norris was startled to hear that there was "like to be an insurrection of ye Gentoos occasiond by an officer arrivd att this place as he says wth authority from ye Mogull to raise a Tax on ye Gentoos in ye Nature of our poll Tax in England upon all ym yt wore ye longe lock behind (wch they all doe) ye man is to lay ye Tax as he thinkes every body can beare it & never failes to lay it high enough. He had assessd our money changer yesterday 15 Rupees wch made such a noise & send soe heavy yt all that workd in ye mint run away into ye country to avoid it & are Resolved to Sumon ye country in & serve this officer as ye Rasbootes³⁵ servd one of ye same Nature 4 yeare agoe wch was when he came to his house to gather ye money he killd him & nothings more was said of it wch is a dangerous precedent for this Tax gatherer. It is said to be ye Mogull's order yt those yt Refuse or are not able to pay this tax shall be obligd to Turn Moores,³⁶ wch I dare say if they were

put to ye Extremity severall of these poore ignorant people are soe well satisfyd in ye sort of worship they are born & bred in yt they would suffer death rather then Embrace Mahoumenatism, how much more ought wee who by God's good providence are brought up in ye light of ye Gospell & ye knowledge of Jesus Christ, how much more ought wee to be stedfast in our faith if it ever please God to bringe us to ye Tryall."³⁷

Norris discovered later that the tax-gatherer, finding he could not collect the taxes by fair means, attempted to do so by force and sought the assistance of the Havaladar of the town. The latter refused to help till he had received an order to do so from the Emperor or the Subahdar of the province. This caused an affray between the tax-gatherer's men and the servants of the Havaladar. Norris suspected that the tax-gatherer was really acting without any authority, otherwise the assistance he solicited could not have been refused. In the end the tax-gatherer was let off without any punishment or arrest, which only emphasized the weakness and inefficiency of the local Government. Many of these unauthorised tax-gatherers were in the habit of oppressing the people who could not discriminate between them and the genuine officials, and therefore hesitated to accede to their demands. Norris thus summed up the situation with perfect accuracy: "These poore Gentoos are miserably harrassd by ye Moorish Govermt ever Scince ye Mogull conquerd Golconda & tooke their Kinge prisoner who was one of their cast [e]³⁸ & usd ym kindly, but ye Mogull, who is a great bigott in his own Religion & an Abhorror of their superstition & Idolatry, has already destroyd most of their pagods only for quicknesse sake permitts Jugrenaut [Jagannath] wch is ye Cheife & most gainful & will in time bringe ym over to his own Religion though I beleive ye Gentoos are 50 for one of ye moores, but an Effeminate people".³⁹ The latter reflection was probably due to the fact, observed by Norris, that the Hindus were unarmed and that their principle for the most part was "not to kill". But he failed to understand the other reasons which handicapped the Hindus in any concerted action due to the caste system and their diversity of culture.⁴⁰

The same tax collector appeared again in March, but this time he was armed with proper authority "to fleece all ye poore

Gentoos, ye poorest of wch is assessd att a Rupee & $\frac{1}{2}$ & soe higher in proportion to wht they are judged worth; they begin all to hide themselves to eschape it". The Hindus in the Ambassador's service were excused from paying taxes, as well as those employed by other Europeans. This privilege had the effect of making the Hindus appreciate service with the Europeans.⁴¹

This was only one of many evidences of Aurangzib's political unwisdom and his shortsightedness in the administration of justice. The position of the Hindus under his rule became more insecure than it had been under his predecessors, and as citizens they were placed in a position of inferiority to the so-called "true-believers". Moreover, the governing power throughout the whole of his dominions was vested in the hands of Muslims. No wonder Mr. Carlyon observed that "the great Aurenzeeb was said by the Moors to be so wise and just as no prince hath been since Solomon, and by the Gentues the most cruel and tyrannical ruler that did ever oppress a nation for its sins".⁴²

Aurangzib was not the first Muslim ruler to enforce the *jizya* or poll-tax, for it had been levied during the rule of Firoz Shah Tughlak. It was withdrawn by Akbar,⁴³ who had the sagacity to perceive that no country could be well governed unless all its diverse elements were brought into harmony with each other. He made no marked distinction between the Hindus and Muslims in his Empire, and showed a personal interest in Hindu culture and religion which went far towards conciliating public opinion. All this is made evident in the records of his reign, particularly in Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*, which, in spite of its defects, is one of the most admirable and detailed accounts of a great Empire and ruler.

Aurangzib abandoned the wise practice of his great ancestor. He reimposed the hated poll-tax some years after his accession. Various reasons are alleged for this departure from justice and sound policy. It was said that he hoped by this measure to arrest the growing unity among the Hindus, and more particularly to promote the spreading among them of the creed of Islam. But probably the chief reason for this reversal of Mughal policy was the need of refilling the Treasury, which had become exhausted by the constant drain upon it from the campaigns in the Deccan.

No protest made by the Hindus, no advice from his own courtiers to withdraw the tax, could turn the autocratic ruler from his course. Nor was a powerful and appealing letter from his chief opponent Sivaji of any avail.

The levying of the tax was rendered more tyrannical by the exactions added to the nominal amount in their own interest by the collectors, who found in it an easy means of squeezing the taxpayers. Undoubtedly the imposition of the *jizya* alienated the Hindus from their ruler and brought home to them more clearly the fact that they were subject to an alien government. While Aurangzib thought only of his own needs, he was really compromising the future of his dynasty. He gave further cause of offence to his Hindu subjects by embarking upon a course of religious persecution. No motive for this has been discovered beyond the fact that the Emperor was a bigoted Muslim and, like many autocrats, convinced himself that he had only to order the conversion of the Hindus to bring it about. He could indeed order the destruction of their temples, which was begun as early as 1645, and continued till the end of his reign, but he could not make men change their religious beliefs and customs at his will. Historians are unanimous in their verdict that Aurangzib was largely responsible for the destruction of much of the architectural glories of Hindu India, which could never be replaced.⁴⁴

It may easily be concluded that the Emperor was hostile to the employment of Hindus in the public service. Very few of them were given high posts at the Court, made Governors of Provinces, or entrusted with important civil or military appointments. But when such a post was bestowed, the result did not always prove satisfactory. Norris shrewdly observed: "The Governour att Madapollam it seemes is a Gentoo wch is not usuall, ye Govermt for ye most part beinge lodgd in moores hands, & ye merchants seeme to like ye moorish Governours better beinge usually more obliginge Courteous & Civill yn ye Gentoo who when he getts in office is apt to be very haughty & Insolent; for beinge in Reality ye antient Inhabitants & possessours of Indostan they are a little of ye Humour of our Welsh men who beleivinge themselves to be ye true antient Brittaines, value themselves upon it & if ever they gett in Authority take care to exercise to ye height & thinke it is

their due to Lord it over those they have under their subjection".⁴⁵ Norris did not understand that a long period of alien rule had destroyed the patriotic instincts and sane outlook on life which made Hindu officials more zealous in demonstrating their attachment to the Emperor than those to whom such devotion came naturally. The English factors of the Old Company also had their own grievances against the same 'gentoo' Governor for on some pretext or other he threatened to search the factory, having at his command a force of 1500 men. Thenceforward the factory was guarded by two or three small guns, and the knowledge of this prevented the attack from being made, for the Indians, as Norris diagnosed, were "all in dreade of our fire armes". He also considered that it was not wise to present or sell guns or fire-arms to Indians, as the latter would soon learn how to use them!

Norris's reference in his *Journal* to the fate of Golkonda affords a glimpse of the aftermath of the conquest of that great Sultanate in the Deccan. That unjustifiable conquest, as already mentioned, only a year after the fall of the sister Kingdom of Bijapur, had alienated the loyalty of the Shia sect of the Muslims in the Deccan, and despite his military triumph Aurangzib had failed to make any solid progress towards the stabilization of his Empire. On the other hand, it seems more than probable that if he had won over the rulers of Bijapur and Golkonda to become his loyal vassals or allies, he might have turned on the Marathas with undiminished strength and dissolved the league they had formed under Sivaji.

Aurangzib's harsh treatment of the Sultan Abu'l Hasan was still fresh in the minds of his former subjects at the time of Sir William Norris's stay at Masulipatam. Although the Sultan's ministers had been oppressive the people had not forgotten the brave defence of his Kingdom nor the humiliations inflicted upon him by the conqueror. This is only one side of the sequel to the conquest of Golkonda, for Norris mentioned the rumours current that the ex-Sultan had escaped from Daulatabad fort⁴⁶ and that he was living *incognito* in the Ambassador's own residence with the object of being reinstated on the throne with Norris's connivance.⁴⁷ The people's joy was unconcealed, for they longed for the restoration of their Sultan, and hoped that the

new taxes would be abolished if he recovered the throne. It can easily be imagined that such rumours caused great popular excitement and alarmed the Governors of "Darencoate" and Masulipatam. They inquired privately into the true facts of the case. Some people believed that Norris was "ye K. of Golconda in Disguise of European Habit", and what further convinced them of this was that the Ambassador was hardly ever seen outside his house. The people believed that the King of Golkonda had now got enough forces and ammunition to take possession of his Kingdom. This supposition was entirely based on the fact that the English Company possessed sixty big guns and they had also forces at their disposal. Norris remarked that the majority of the people were so anxious to have their King restored that if he himself had either impersonated him or pretended that the King was living with him "ye Country would be ready enough to make any attempt they were able to Reinthrone him".⁴⁸

The Ambassador had a novel experience when he witnessed, early in December, the ceremonies attending a Muhammedan marriage. This gave him, for the first time, an idea of Oriental social observances. He records in his *Journal*: "ffor these 2 or 3 nights wee have been soe disturbd wth a weddinge that there has been no resting of nights for ye noise of their loud & untunable musick & people goinge in crowds to make merry after their fashion, it was a marriage of a good rich merchant a moore, to one of ye same quality yt had 500 pagodas to her fortune besides a greate deale of cloathes & houshold stuff carryd in procession wth her to her husbands house last night, wch I hope has ended ye jollity. They were marryd 3 days agoe but never consumate till The Bride be brought home to her husbands house Till when her freinds entertain & make their freinds welcome & when she is brought home it is wth great formality & always in ye night to make ye greater appearance & shew all ye musick yt could be picked up playinge before, & ye dancinge women dancinge, when they came by my house they stopd to play & dance & lett of some of their fire workes. It was about 3 a clock in ye morninge soe would not venter the catching cold to be a spectator of ye Cavalcade but contented my selfe wth ye account of it: first went all ye Bridegroome's freinds, then he handsomly clad in white

upon a statly horse surrounded wth greate company of Lighte musick & dancrs. As he went by ye tracke he alighted & went in but came out again presently, next followd a very handsome neate sicke bed ready made wth pillows supported on high by 8 or 10 slaves. Then followd ye Bride in Palankeen soe close covered yt she was not to be seen & a greate many women attendants after her wth all sort of utensiles for a House in their hands. But imediately after her palankeen was carryd by 6 people a very fine inlayd Ivory chest in wch was all ye Bride cloathes, & then abundance of people wth dishes finely coverd wch was an entertainment sent alonge wth her, ye Relations of both sides, freinds acquaintance & Gazers on ende a Great Cavalcade. It is ye Custome here never to bed ye Bride till she is brought home to her husbands house & whatever she was was before is certainly a slave ever after. Ye moors now & then gett portions with their wives & have liberty to marry as many as they can maintain, ye Gentoos marry but one & her they generally buy but little difference in their states of life both being kept mewd up & Deemd no better then servants or slaves to their husbands".⁴⁹

Of course the wedding customs of the Muhammedans in India have greatly changed since Norris's visit, but his comments are interesting, written as they were from a foreigner's point of view. His remarks on the domestic side of life—though somewhat coloured, for he had naturally no intimate knowledge of it—yet contain a certain amount of truth.

Not only did Norris transact official business with the Hindu members of his staff, but he also noted their religious and social customs very minutely. In these matters he received valuable information from Kulla Venkatadri. Norris's shrewd observations on the conduct and attitude of the Brahmans bring us face to face with some of the acute problems of our own time, which still await solution. He described how on one particular day one of his 'Dubasses', or interpreters, gave a feast and invited all his friends, as it was a solemn occasion not observed by them except at an interval of five or six years. Whilst the guests were busily eating, the interpreter and a Brahman retired to a private place for half-an-hour "to pray to wht pagode they thinke will most assist them. The prayers att this time were directed to

Augropetty a pagod neare ffort St. George & are always put up by ye Bramine, who upon this occasion gott 6 Cash for his paines, & ye intent of ye prayers is to beg a blessinge for ye man; yt makes ye feast & retaines him, as likewise for his whole family & prosperity in all their undertakings. This is reckond sufficient to be performd once in 6 yeares, & though ye devotion be very ill plact yet the intentions of ye poore ignorant man are very good who knows no better. The Gentoos rely wholly on ye Bramines as well for ye Truth as performance of all Religious Rites, never troublinge their heades about it, seldome or never soemuch as pray even to their own pagods but hire ye Bramine to doe it for ym & rest contented wth yt, wch peice of policy & severall others (as may be elsewhere related) ye Romish missionaries in former ages may have stole from ym & put in practise in Europe, for their artifices of squeezing money out of ye people on severall occasions beare very great Resemblance & have either learnt their Art here or taught it, but ye Bramines beinge much ye Antienter I rather beleive ye former".⁵⁰

Norris goes on to compare Hinduism with Christianity, and observes: "The account I have been yett able to gett in discoursinge wth their Learned Bramines about their Religion convinces me beyond all contradiction that Christianity was formerly planted here & you may most clearly Trace ye ffootsteps & very foundations of it in ye Traditions they give you of Their Religion, Length of Time havinge worn out both ye Truth & practise of it ye Gentoos beinge now universally given up to Idolatry though some of ye most understanding who have livd amongst ye English seeme to deny it & not to practise it. I shall take another occasion to Treat more largely on this Subject. But already I find it very evident yt In ye Gentoo Religion Christianity is to be Tracd & ye Jewish Religion in ye Moores Practise still retaining severall of their solemnitys particularly ye new moons & sabbaths"⁵¹

Norris learned from Venkatadri the 'Gentoo' method of taking an oath⁵² in giving evidence in Court in disputes concerning property between the Company and merchants, or between the merchants themselves. The most usual way was "ye fetchinge water from a pagode & puttinge in their hands wch they dranke

of wch was an asserveration yt what they saide was true, but this was not lookt upon soe solemn as another form they had, wch was ye party first went & washed himselfe in a River wth his cloathes on & came wth them wett to ye pagod wch he worshipt & walkd 3 times round it wch havinge done he went & put out a lamp yt stood burning wth in ye pagod & whatever he attested after this might be depended on for Truth, for they beleivd he would certainly be punished in Hell if he spoke false after useinge this solemnity".⁵³

Norris discovered, too, the advantage of employing Hindus in the Company's trading concerns. The factories at Masulipatam seldom, if ever, made contracts with any merchants for goods except 'Gentoos'. There was a good reason for this. The 'Moores' were not fair traders, and if the factories had dealings with them, and any complaint or difference arose between them and 'Moore' merchants, no justice could be obtained from a Mughal Governor against his co-religionists. On the other hand, they obtained justice readily in disputes with 'Gentoos'. The English factors had the Hindu merchants in their power, but if they were trading with the 'Moore' it would be quite a different state of affairs. For these reasons it was undesirable to admit any of the 'Moore' merchants to any part of their trade or money transactions. The merchants at Masulipatam, as in other places "borrow money & give considerable intrest 15. 20. 30. p. cent as their reputation is, but if any difference arises concerninge money for wch interest is pd ye Governour yt decides ye case expects 25 p. cent himselfe"⁵⁴

The rigour of the caste system with all its evils prevailing in those days may be deduced from Norris's observations. One night in the month of February he was alarmed by a fire which had broken out near his house and which might have involved the New Company's factory. He writes: "This Town has been consumd more yn once by fire, & ye Ill custome all ye poore people have of keepinge fire burninge all night in their little Thatcht Hutts to preserve ym from muscetos is very dangerous consideringe ye whole Town is as dry as Touchwood & if ever a fire should gett soe much a head as to lay hold on any of the ffactorys or larger houses it would be almost impossible to put

a stop to it if there were hands to attempt it, but ye people here are soe very silly & Tenacious of their customes yt not a man would give a helping hand to save his own house if it did not belonge to his cast [e] to do it".⁵⁵

The religious observances of the Rajputs in his *entourage* gave Norris an opportunity of seeing how scrupulously they kept one of their festivals. On the last day of February he writes : "This beinge a greate feast day celebrated by ye Rasboots on account of their God Comro⁵⁶ wch they say came into ye world this day, all ye Rasboots belonge to me sent to desire they might have liberty to keepe ye ffeestivall, wch I granted & ye cheife Rasboote wth some others in ye name of ye rest desird I would give ym leave to present me wth Betle wch beinge a thinge customary on ye like occasions I admitted & knew ye meaninge was to gett some money in wch likewise I gratifyd ym. Their way of feasting is duninge makinge a great noise & stupifying their senses wth Banga & opium⁵⁷ yt they are betwixt mad & drunke".⁵⁸

The Muhurram⁵⁹ fell a day or two later, and was celebrated by the Shia sect of the local Muslims. To Norris's amazement it passed off without any disturbance on the part of the Hindus and the other inhabitants. It showed that in that part of India at least there was little or no communal tension between the different religious bodies. In his quaint language Norris described how he was disturbed by the 'Moore's' observing "ye Death or funerall of Mahomett ye Grand Impostor". They carried "a Coffin finly deckt wth painted fflowers & after it a fine gilded pageant in ye Resemblance of a Tomb bedeckd likewise wth gilded flowers & very guawdy. These things they carryd in procession all night Longe & till 9 this morninge all through ye Town & to every Mosk, ye Moores all ye while beatinge their Breasts & numbling prayers, & att last repose it in some mosch & then after sun sett goe & feast for this is ye last day [March 2nd] of their long fast wch for 30 days they observe soe strictly to eate nothings till after sunsett. I thinke it is harde to judge whether ye Moores or Rashbootes or more Ridiculous in their ceremoneys ye Moores favour more of ye papists & this Ceremony. Like their exposinge ye Relicks off some saint. This I

thinke is observable yt there is not ye least clashinge or fallinge out amongst soe many different sect & Casts [castes] as there are in this Town. They live quietly & contented amongst one another, each sect & cast enjoyinge his superstition & performinge their Idolatrous worship without any disputes or molestation, & i see no liklyhood of their fallinge out unlesse ye Gentoos & Moores should chance to have a greate feast fall out ye same day & then they must fight it out as boys doe when different parishes meet in walkinge bounds. I heartily pity ym for their Ignorance & mistaken Devotion, but really they might teach Xstians this one Lesson who are of different opinions in some points To live quietly & peacably amongst themselves & not Teare one another in peices".⁶⁰

During this time various shows were provided for the entertainment of the Ambassador, who seems to have keenly appreciated them. Acrobatic and other feats have been common features of public entertainment from very early times in India, and are invariably performed with great skill and courage. Norris gives us a vivid picture of how one day he was "entertained wth mountebanks Rope dancers & ffeates of activity such as I had never seen ye like in England. What feates they showed upon ye Rope were different from ours & though new to us yet not soe surprizinge as our Rope dancing would be to them, but men dancinge & runninge wth a woman standinge on his heade & a child about 10 yeares old on hers both playinge wth their armes all ye while was difficult & pleasinge & severall other feates & Tricks very surprizing. A man placd a stick about a yard & $\frac{1}{2}$ high upon his heade wth but roome just for ye woman to sett one foot who stood soe holdinge her other ffoot behind her wth her hand as high as her shoulder, ye man runninge about all ye while. He placd likewise 5 large round earthen mugs yt would hold 2 Gallons a peice upon his head & ye same woman gott on top of ym all & ye man walkd one Turn wth ym but as much as he could doe for if both mugs & woman were not in a perpendicular line down they would come. The most dangerous featt of activity shewn was a young girl came about 10 years old first did climb up a Bamboo (erected on yt occasion) 26 yards high & upon ye very top of all wch was not neare soe broad as ye

palm of my hand hung by her breast one arme her feet turnd over severall times & savd her selfe by her feet only & when she came down by a slant Rope from ye Top came wth yt quicknesse yt if she had not been well caught had dashd her brains out".⁶¹

Norris was so much pleased with their performance that he gave them a gratuity of Rs. 50. But the local Government, on hearing of it, immediately sent to imprison them accusing them of being vagabonds and travelling about the country without permission. The object of it all was to "squeeze halfe" of what the acrobats had received before they could regain their liberty. No sooner would the mountebanks earn another sum, than on some other pretext half of it would again be demanded, while they "continue pennilesse".⁶²

NOTES

¹ Vol. I, pp. 25-27, 33, 42 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*, Bodleian.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³ The provincial Governors had the authority from the Mughal to seize rebels alive or dead or to send their heads to the Court. See Vol. II, p. 462 of *Storia do Mogor*.

⁴ The methods employed by the Mughal officials, especially in the Provinces, to secure and maintain their own position was in perfect accordance with the facts mentioned by Norris. Bernier had also shown how this system tended to demoralise the machinery of Mughal Government even in the earlier and more vigorous years of Aurangzib's reign. See pp. 230-31 of *Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire*, edited by Constable and Smith, O.U.P., 1916.

⁵ The annual rent for Golkonda assessed at that sum.

⁶ Vol. I, p. 24 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

⁷ Vol. I. p. 63, *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁹ Sarkar has fully discussed the whole escheat system on the authority of Mughal State Papers and other authentic documents, and his arguments outweigh some of the statements made by European travellers. Most of the nobles were either indebted to the State or "enjoyed the revenue of their jagirs, without clearing their account" during their life-time. The Emperor therefore found it necessary to escheat their property, and thus to clear their accounts. The system involved the heirs in much hardship and suffering, as it destroyed hereditary succession and prevented the accumulation of private capital. The nobles spent their money recklessly in their lifetime having no incentive to save, and feeling themselves to be the victims of an absolute power from which there was little or no prospect of redress. See pp. 162, 177 of *Mughal Administration*.

¹⁰ He was formerly the *Kotwal* of Delhi and rose to his new position largely through the influence of Sultan Shah Alam.

¹¹ Vol. I, p. 81 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

¹² *Waki' ahnawis*.

¹³ These remarks on the lack of official communications were based on a misconception of the true state of affairs. However irregular and protracted the actual transmission of documents and letters may have been, the Provincial Governors were expected to send their reports at certain intervals to the ministers at Court. See pp. 57, 64, 224, 236 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration*.

¹⁴ See *supra*.

¹⁵ Vol. I, pp. 68-69 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

¹⁶ The Muhammedan rulers of South India changed very little of the existing Hindu system of administration. Mr. Gordon Mackenzie stated that the "position held by the Brahmans as accountants in every village has given them immense influence for many centuries past". See p. 342 of *A Manual of the Kistna District*, Madras, 1883.

¹⁷ Vol. II., p. 449 of *Storia do Mogor*.

¹⁸ Vol. I, pp. 57-58 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

¹⁹ This sum, Norris mentioned, was derived from the salt trade which was in "greate plenty here & furnishes all ye country". Traders for the salt come from a long distance as far as Delhi. The salt works yielded a revenue of Rs. 300000 *per annum* of which the Nawab had a profit. See Vol. I, p. 88 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

²⁰ Vol. I, p. 84, *Ibid*.

²¹ Vol. II, pp. 5-9 of *Storia do Mogor*.

²² A town lying a few miles from Masulipatam and noted for its agricultural industry.

²³ That objection to instrumental music was probably due to the fact that the Emperor had forbidden it to be played while the provincial governors were holding *darbars*; but it evidently did not apply to foreigners. See p. 137 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration*.

²⁴ The word is an incorrect English form of "*Umara*", which is the plural of the Arabic word "*Amir*", which means chief, ruler, prince, or noble. In the Mughal Empire, as in most Muslim Courts, past and present, the collective body of noblemen and titled persons was called the "*Umara*". Individual members might obtain various titles, of which one might be that of an *Amir*. But "*Amir*" would be used vaguely like the title "Lord" in England, which can be applied indiscriminately to marquesses, earls, viscounts, or barons. The House of Lords in England is correctly translated "*Majlis-ul-Umara*."

²⁵ Vol. I, p. 94 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

²⁶ No. 6816 of *O.C. 55-Part. II*.

²⁷ Vol. I, p. 96 of *Rawl MS. C. 912*.

²⁸ Vol. I, p. 97, *Ibid*.

²⁹ Mr. Tillard, one of the New Company's servants, who was present on the occasion, stated that neither the Nawab nor the Ambassador took any notice of the other when the procession passed; otherwise his account corroborated Norris's own story. See p. 83 of *Fifteenth Report*, Appendix, Part X of *Historical Manuscripts Commission*.

³⁰ A form of punishment applied to the soles of the feet, but not now in common use in the Orient.

³¹ The word is originally Arabic, but is used in other Muslim languages. It denotes the person appointed by competent authority to decide all ques-

tions of civil and criminal law, especially religious law. He is supposed to be honest, learned, and scholarly. In a large city there might be several *Qazis*, each representing one of the different schools of Muslim law, which vary to some extent in their legal theory. The verdict given by the *Qazi* was final, and there was no appeal from it.

²² See Vol. I, pp. 112-118 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁵ *Rajputs*.

²⁶ William Tillard says of this tax-gatherer in his diary that he arrived to "raise a tax upon ye Gentues, bring wth him a piece of beef (yt whoso'er eat of ye beef should be freed frm ye tax". See p. 82 of *15th Report*, Appendix, Part X, *Hist. MSS. Commission*.

²⁷ Vol. I, p. 45 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²⁸ Norris surely meant Sultan Abu-l Hasan, the last of the Kutb Shahi dynasty of Golkonda, who was defeated and taken prisoner by Aurangzib in 1687. The fact that the Sultan was tolerant towards Hindu usages and appointed two Brahmins to the highest posts probably led Norris to believe that he was also a Hindu.

²⁹ Vol. I, pp. 45-46 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁰ This was aptly pointed out towards the end of the seventeenth century by the famous Italian traveller Dr. Gemelli Careri, when he wrote that "considering so great a number of sects, and such variety of manners, which makes it impracticable for them to be unanimous in Government, it is not to be thought strange that so small a number of Mahometans should subdue such a multitude of Gentiles; since divisions and discord have ever been the most efficient causes in the world to overthrow the greatest monarchies". See p. 245 of *A Voyage Round the World*, by Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri (*Churchill's Collection of Voyages and Travels*, 1732).

³¹ Vol. I, p. 145 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³² P. 39 of *In Furthest Ind, the Narrative of Mr. Edward Carlyon of the Honourable East India Company's Service*, edited by Sydney C. Grier, William Blackwood & Sons, London, 1894.

³³ Pp. 251, 346 of the *Oxford History of India*, by Vincent A. Smith.

³⁴ The subject of *jizya* has been exhaustively dealt with by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his book citing a list of valuable authorities. See Vol. III, pp. 251-253, 268-275, 285-289 of *History of Aurangzib*. He has also supplied a detailed list of Hindu temples destroyed by the Emperor. See *Ibid.* pp. 265-268; 280-285.

³⁵ Vol. I, p. 80 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁶ This fort is situated in the district of Aurangabad in Haiderabad State. It was originally in the possession of a Hindu Raja; but in 1294 Ala-ud-din Khilji captured it during his invasion of the Deccan. Possession of the fortress was successively acquired by the Bahmani dynasty, the Nizam Shahis, and the Mughals. In 1687 Abu-l Hasan was confined there by Aurangzib, where he died in 1702-3. It was built upon an isolated hill about 600 feet in height. The great skill of the original builders is shown in its design and the planning of the outer and inner line of defences, which made it one of the finest architectural structures in the Deccan. It has eight gates and contains ruins of palaces, temples, mosques, tombs, wells and gardens. See pp. 822-26 of *Gazetteer of Aurangabad*, 1884, Vol. XI, pp. 200-1 of the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*; also Vol. II, p. 308 of *Storia do Mogor*.

⁴⁷ Manuci referred to a plot of the Marathas in 1698 to circulate the false news that the King of Golkonda had escaped from the Daulatabad fortress and had taken refuge in the Maratha country. Probably these false rumours continued for some time, and the version given by Norris had its genesis in them. See Vol. III, p. 192 of *Storia do Mogor*.

⁴⁸ Vol. I, p. 73 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁴⁹ Vol. I, pp. 59-60, *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Vol. I, p. 76, *Ibid.* Dr. John Fryer showed a warm appreciation of the learning and culture of the Brahmans, and has given a penetrating account of them, but his description of that ancient caste lacks the shrewd perception both of their virtues and of their inherent defects which characterise Norris's remarks. See pp. 190-191 of Fryer's *A New Account of East India and Persia*, London, 1698.

⁵¹ Vol. I, p. 77 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁵² Oaths by the witnesses were recognised as a religious and social obligation in India, and as such it is still a conspicuous feature in the legal procedure. The ritual and rules varied in different parts of India with respective castes, and also the actual wording of the oaths differed according to the importance of the cases in dispute. But the predominant idea was the responsibility of the witness to God. In the manner of administering oaths among Hindus in ancient times there was a similarity to that of the Greeks and Romans. See pp. 306, 312 of *Hindu Law and Custom*, by Julius Jolly, translated by B. Ghosh, Calcutta, 1928; p. 224 of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, translated by R. Shamasastry, Bangalore, 1915; p. 128 of *Antiquities of India*, by L. D. Barnett; also Vol. IX, pp. 430-431, 433 of *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James R. Hastings, 1917.

⁵³ Vol. I, p. 66 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Vol. I, p. 138, *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ This might only be the feast of Kumara, the war god Skanda or Subramanya. Every Kritika coming once in 27 days is held sacred to him by several classes of people, and his actual birthday comes in *Jaishtha*, June-July, which is sometimes celebrated with extra grandeur as a festival in temples dedicated to this god.

⁵⁷ The pernicious practice of taking opium by the Rajputs, and its effect upon them greatly shocked Tod during his residence amongst them. See Vol. II, pp. 749-750 of *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, edited by William Crooke, 1920.

⁵⁸ Vol. I, p. 141, of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁵⁹ It is a festival observed by the Muslims, especially of the Shia sect, with great solemnities during the first ten days of the month of *Muhurram* to commemorate the martyrdom of Ali's son—Husain. The customs connected with the festival vary in different countries. The Persian celebration used to include a Passion Play representing events connected with the death of the martyr; also processions accompanied by a large concourse of people. The *Muhurram* is one of the sacred months, for which meditation and prayers are especially prescribed. See pp. 698-9, 711 of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (No. 47); also Vol. I, pp. xvii-xxiv of the *Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain*, by Colonel Sir Lewis Pelly, London, 1879.

⁶⁰ Vol. I, p. 143 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁶¹ Vol. I, p. 83, *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

CHAPTER V

First Preparations for the Journey Inland

The Ambassador's presence at Masulipatam had greatly encouraged and put new life into Consul Pitt and his colleagues. They had hitherto experienced much difficulty in their dealings with the local Mughal officials, because of the uncertainty of these officials' tenure of office. Norris hoped to start for Court within a few weeks, and preparations for his journey were begun in real earnest. Special care was given to the examination and checking of the presents brought from England for the Emperor and his ministers. But necessities such as tents, *palanquins*, furniture, horses, etc., had to be obtained from Golkonda and Fort St. George, and were therefore not readily procurable. Norris requested Consul Pitt and the New Company's representatives in other Presidencies to furnish him with all the necessary information regarding the privileges, immunities and freedom from custom dues already granted to the Old Company, and to indicate any further privileges which would, in their view, be of advantage to English trade in India.

The business of the embassy was considerably hindered by the lack of good interpreters, no member of Norris's staff being acquainted with Indian languages. It was realised that capable interpreters were absolutely essential not only for the transaction of business with the local Mughal officials, but also for the time when the actual negotiations would begin at Court. Venkatadri, who had been appointed interpreter, proved unsuitable, and no one else was competent to fill the post. Norris, therefore, suggested that two reliable Englishmen possessing a knowledge of Persian should check the statements made by the interpreters. Some of his staff applied themselves to the study of Arabic and Persian, but unfortunately without much success. Mr. Thorowgood, as Norris remarked, "with too close application to the Persian language has disordered his brains so far that he has made himself incapable of business, and unfit for conversation, and indeed is a

melancholy object". He attempted to commit suicide by leaping into a tank, and was ultimately sent home in the *De Grave*, his place being taken by Mr. Josiah Hale. The neglect of the study of Indian languages by English merchants had been pointed out by Mr. William Methwold as early as 1635,¹ nor can the merchants and civil servants of the present day be entirely acquitted of a similar neglect.

Meanwhile Norris communicated with the Wazir² Nawab Asad Khan, requesting him to notify the Emperor of his arrival, and to make application to the Faujdars through whose provinces he would pass on his way to Court for a safe conduct for himself and his retinue and for the presents for the Emperor. In doing so he thus adopted the diplomatic procedure usually observed in Europe of writing direct to the Prime Minister. But this was a mistake. He learned from Muhammad Sa'id that a letter sent to Asad Khan through ordinary peons would never be delivered, and was advised to send his letter by a person of some status, well-attended and provided with suitable presents. He was informed that there was "a person call'd ye Vancanoves³ or Register, whose businesse is to dispatch away all manner of news of moment or consequence to ye Mogull himselfe, to whose hands all yt he writes first comes is reckond authentick notice in this & all other cases". By these means the Ambassador's communication would reach the Emperor, and an answer might be received within twenty-five days. Norris compared this method with the manner of sending an express message in England, remarking how it was "ye spediest notice & not only ye usual but only way of havinge any thinge notifyd to ye Mogull himselfe, for ye intelligence beinge rold up put in ye hollow of a Banalon & seald up wth ye proper officers seale is not opend till brought to ye Mogull himselfe".⁴ Although Norris was influenced by Sa'id's advice, he could not entirely rely upon him, or even upon his own judgment. On his own initiative Sa'id informed a high official at Court of Norris' arrival, and in return for this he asked Norris for two hundred *pagodas*. This request elicited from Norris the rash comment that "ye whole contrivance in this Kingdome from ye Highest to ye lowest is to squeeze out of every body as much as they can & soe yt they gett any thing care not how scandalously

they come by it".⁵

After consulting John Pitt, Norris announced his arrival to the Emperor through the local Waki'ahnawis. He soon realised that the best method of accomplishing his business was by means of secret presents and bribes.⁶ It was absolutely necessary to propitiate the Mughal officials. He, therefore, took care to recompense handsomely the Waki'ahnawis, who as a convincing proof of his action gave him a copy of the letter he had written to the Emperor. Though the rank of this official was not a high one, he nevertheless had it in his power to prejudice the interests of superior officials, even of the governor of a province, in the Emperor's eyes. Norris described how "nothinge comes to ye Mogulls Eare but by infinite trouble except through his hands, who has ye sole liberty of writinge what he pleases & never opend or toucht by any Minister unless ye Cheife inteligencer till it comes to ye Mogull himselfe, soe yt it is in his power to force any storys against any Governour for wch he will be displaced before he knows his crime, & what is more by ye nature of his place is not answerable for his Intelligence if it proves false upon examination because he Insists he heard soe, & is a dangerous trust to be placd in a man's hands yt is not very carefull what he writes".⁷ Such an officer was essential to the Emperor for obtaining information from all parts of his vast dominion, especially with regard to the administrative actions of the provincial governors and other officials; but there was danger in relying solely upon reports which were not subjected to strict censorship. The nature of the Waki'ahnawis' reports sometimes depended upon the way in which the governors and their subordinates ingratiated themselves with him;⁸ and the inevitable result was inefficiency and corruption.

Amongst other items of business connected with the embassy, Norris discovered that it was not customary in India to seal official documents with a coat of arms, as in England. He therefore ordered a 'mulla'⁹ to make a seal in gold specifying his "character & Title" in Persian, thus :

"His Excellency Sr Wm Norris Barontt Ambassadour Extraordinary from ye Kinge of England, Scotland, ffrance & Ireland to salute Allum Gueir annoXsti 1699".

In the midst of his various occupations, Norris did not allow the 49th birthday of King William III to pass unnoticed, and this was duly celebrated on November 4, 1699. This was a touching tribute of loyalty to his sovereign, from one far away from England. Elaborate preparations were made to observe it "wth all ye pomp & joy imaginable", and invitations were sent to and accepted by all the Europeans at Masulipatam, including the members of the Old Company, the Dutch Company and some from the French and Portuguese factories. Care was taken not to exclude the important local Mughal officials and acquaintances from sharing in the general festivities, and Norris sent his chief interpreter to inform the Havalдар, the Waki'ahnawis, and also Muhammad Sa'id, begging them to associate themselves with the celebrations on that occasion. He writes: "This is ye usuall formality amongst these people when they keepe a day of rejoycinge they notify it to all their friends & acquaintance".¹⁰ They all returned a cordial assent to Norris's intimation and declared that they would make it a day of rejoicing. Norris would have liked to invite them to join in the banquet with the European community; but this was impossible, as they would "reckon it a defilinge to sitt att Table wth us soe was easd of ye ceremony & Trouble". He resolved to celebrate the occasion to some extent in conformity with Indian customs, and learning that the Mughal was accustomed to celebrate his birthday by distributing money, (which was considered a sure means of winning the heart of the people), he accordingly ordered his treasurer to "distribute to all ye Dubasses, peons, parriers, & cooleys a Rupee a peice & to inform them ye occasion, & ye Leader of each double & to my 2 Cheife Dubasses I orderd 12 new crown peices wth K.Wm's. heade to one, & 8 to ye other to keepe for a memorandum of his birthday, as soone as I came out I was salamd by all of ym, wch is ye way of returninge thanks & saluted wth Drums & Trum-petts, about 12 all those I invited came".¹¹

Norris provided for the entertainment of his guests "3 Tables spreade wth all sorts of varietyes yt could be procurd wth all sorts of European wines & Liquors¹² ye best of all sorts. Ye Company were well pleasd wth ye joyfull occasion & wth their entertainment. I had designd nobody to sitt att my Table but ye English & Dutch

who were of ye best sort, but a portuguize¹³ padre would intrude & seated himselfe early for feare nobody should aske him to sitt down. I perceived he tooke no health unkindly yt was drunke to him & resolvd to stay to see ye last of ye ceremony".¹⁴ Musical instruments, such as kettledrums, trumpets and hautboys were played during the entertainment.

At the conclusion of the banquet, the Ambassador and his guests solemnly drank King William's health, and a salute of 49 guns was fired in his honour. Then they wished long life to Aurangzib, observing the same formality in proposing the toast and firing a salute of the same number of guns. This mark of respect to the Emperor greatly pleased the Mughal Governor and other officials. Before leaving the banqueting hall, Norris "Threw out 3 or 4 handfull of silver" and had ordered his treasurer "to have 5,000 pice ready to be flunge out to ye poore people who swarmed under ye window". In order to give special significance to the occasion the royal arms of England, the Company's arms and those of the Ambassador himself "being Richly drawn on Silke were displayed upon ye ffront Balcony & ye Union fflag on ye Top of ye House". During the evening there was a display of English and Indian fireworks and illuminations. The local merchants came to offer their greetings and, according to custom, each brought a present of "gilded limes". In honour of the celebration, the Mughal Governor sent a present of sweetmeats to Norris, who returned thanks and gave a suitable gratuity to the messengers who brought it. With regard to the custom of giving such gratuities, Norris remarks that, in addition to squeezing the people, these governors possibly derive great advantage from making small presents in the hope of getting a valuable return.¹⁵

Not only was the birthday of a living sovereign duly celebrated, but Norris was extremely careful not to allow the birthday of Queen Elizabeth on November 17 to pass without some mark of respect. This he did not only from loyalty to her memory, but also because, as he naively remarked, it was "a day yt usd to be kept some yeares scince wth greate solemnity in England in memory of our Redemption from Popery & slavery". On this occasion he invited the heads of both the New and Old Companies'

factories to a dinner, at which the toast of "health & prosperity to Old England" was drunk.¹⁶

Early in February the birthday of Princess Anne was celebrated. Norris entertained all the English to dinner, and drank to the health of the Princess out of "a Gold Bowle". As she was 36 years old, he ordered a salute of that number of guns; but as that was an even number—"never fird by ye English", it was ordered that an extra gun be added, thus making it a salute of 37 guns.¹⁷ Again, on April 11, the anniversary of King William's coronation was observed in the same fashion, flags being hoisted, and the Consul and others of the New Company's factory being invited to dinner.¹⁸

Norris had now acquired some knowledge of the inner working of the Old Company and, in order to obtain a complete acquaintance with all its affairs before leaving Masulipatam for the Court, he discussed the subject with various experts on the spot. It gradually became clear to him that his authority in the new role of Royal Ambassador would not be accepted without a struggle by those who regarded his intrusion as an infringement of their rights. He endeavoured to prevent any high-handedness on the part of the Old Company's servants, and though he did not succeed in this, he nevertheless felt that he had defeated their underhand machinations. He consoled himself with the reflection that it "was perhaps happy for ye Company yt I came to this place havinge frustrated their villanous designes & kept ym in Aw & in some bounds".

In writing to Mr. James Vernon, he regretted that his own countrymen were his greatest enemies by working "underhand and setting these people on". He believed that the Old Company's servants were fully resolved to do all they could to sacrifice the nation's honour and even its trade to their own malice and revenge, without the least possibility of their reaping any advantage from it themselves.¹⁹ For this he laid the chief blame on the old Company's agents in India and on its Directors in London, but he hoped that with his appearance at the Mughal's camp their power to obstruct and delay would "vanish like clouds before the sun". He also reported to the authorities of the New Company the discourtesy shown by Thomas Pitt, who had described him

as "Ambassador to the Great Mogul", suppressing the name of the King, and thus insinuating that he was merely the agent of a private company and without public authority. It was foreseen that these subversive activities of the Old Company's servants would not only delay the Ambassador's negotiations at Court, but also increase the cost of the presents given to Mughal officials for the purpose of counteracting its influence.

Norris endeavoured to prevent the evils of private trading by the Old Company's factors, who, with the connivance of the faujdar, "farmes" several towns, paying rent to him. Thus they secured the opportunity of squeezing the inhabitants, who were completely at their mercy. He indignantly observed that wherever that practice was prevalent the poor Hindu and Muhammedan inhabitants suffered more than when they were governed by their own rulers.²⁰ He desired, therefore, that the factors of the New Company should refrain from such practices, as these would be likely to create bad feeling amongst the local people.

The Ambassador sternly warned Mr. Thomas Lovell and others of the Old Company not to approach any of the Mughal's officials regarding their own affairs till a *farman* had been granted. He insisted that all representations concerning the interests of English people should be made through him alone, and that whatever immunities and privileges were solicited should be for the benefit not of any particular Company, but of the English in general.

These regulations had the effect of further rousing the resentment of Governor Thomas Pitt, who ignored the Ambassador and strictly forbade his subordinates in the various settlements to make any application to him or Consul Pitt relating to the Old Company's affairs, or to allow them to interfere in any way with their business. The representatives of the Old Company paid little attention to Norris's exhortations, and it was discovered that some of those who visited him and assured their loyalty to him were the very people who were endeavouring to hinder the progress of the New Company. They intended to make the embassy abortive, or at least to delay Norris's audience with the Emperor. Their masters' interests were paramount in their mind, and they

had taken every precaution to increase their trade and strengthen their position.²¹

Governor Pitt, in Council, protested against Norris's interference. He reminded him that the Act of Parliament ordered the sum of 5 *per cent* to be levied on all goods for the maintenance of Ambassadors and Consuls, and that the Old Company was exempted from this till September 29, 1701. These would be elected by the Directors of the New Company, and sent to such Emperor or Prince in India as they pleased. After paying their expenses out of the 5 *per cent* levy, the balance was to be divided amongst the "adventurers". The Act, he claimed, did not contain any clause tending to hinder or restrain the Old Company's trade before the time specified, nor were its affairs in India to be under the control of the New Company's ambassadors, consuls or agents. The Old Company claimed to be the lawful proprietors of all the *farmans* and grants obtained at great expense for supporting its trade, and these could not possibly be maintained without correspondence with the Mughal Government. In the view of Governor Pitt and his colleagues, Norris's proceedings would not only destroy their Company, but might even prove fatal to their trade. These grievances would be represented in proper quarters, where justice should be obtained.²²

Not satisfied with making these protests, Governor Pitt communicated with Nawab Mahdi Khan Beg and the Havaldar of Masulipatam, soliciting their help and protection against the New Company's claims and promising suitable presents as an acknowledgment of their favours.²³ In this he was partially successful; he found these persons and the local officials as corrupt as he could wish them to be. He kept close watch on Norris's proceedings and employed spies to secure reliable news of what was happening. He applied to Mr. Lovell for assistance in this matter, writing: "methinks itt should not be difficult for you to have good information tho att some charges", a request which was repeated in other letters.²⁴ Pitt had already done some secret service in impeding the progress of Norris's preparations for his journey to Court, and was confident that the New Company's people could give no proof of his intrigues.²⁵ He was convinced that Norris would be unable to do anything to the prejudice of the Old Com-

pany, writing to Sir John Gayer that the Ambassador and the Consul were "upon the high rope though as yett they have gott nothing by it nor shall they if I can help it whilst I am here". The Court of Governors in London was also assured that neither he, Governor Pitt, nor his Council were alarmed at the powers which the Ambassador and Consul Pitt had arrogated to themselves. The Court in return expressed to Governor Pitt its appreciation of his loyalty to its cause and promised him its support.²⁶ Doubting the integrity of his colleagues,²⁷ and in order to strengthen the Old Company's factory at Masulipatam, Governor Pitt sent soldiers; but these found that their services were not required, and returned to Fort St. George.

The question of obtaining a *parwana* from the new Nawab Mahdi Khan Beg was again raised. Norris requested that the same freedom of trade and other immunities should be granted to the New Company as were enjoyed by the Old, until the *farman* could be secured from the Emperor. Any debts owing to the merchants by the Old Company should be cleared before he left Masulipatam.²⁸ Unfortunately, an unexpected demand from the Nawab's diwan for the payment of Rs. 50,000 as customs duty for goods imported by the New Company since its settlement on the Coast created difficulties. The claim was refused on the ground that the English had never paid any duty at Masulipatam. No governor had ever yet refused the English that privilege, as a right based upon *farmans*, *parwanas* and *nishans* granted by the King of Golkonda and various Mughal Governors to the Old Company, and, as Norris was about to proceed to Court to procure similar and other privileges for the New Company, if the diwan still insisted on his demands the matter should be represented to the Emperor. Norris angrily exclaimed: "Every body here is for squeezing all they can".

Though the Nawab prevented the weighing of any of the New Company's goods which did not bear his chop or seal, he was nevertheless prepared to grant it all privileges and freedom. But he could not understand why the Ambassador should trouble himself about the Old Company's affairs, seeing that it represented other interests. The Nawab was informed that all the English were under the Ambassador's protection and that the privileges

to be obtained were not exclusively for the interest of any particular body, but for the English in general.²⁹ Norris declared his belief that the demand for customs duty could not have been made by the Nawab, but must have come from some of his subordinate officials, instigated by the Old Company, and that the matter could be remedied only by granting the desired *parwana*.

The Nawab thereupon allowed the New Company's business to proceed as before, and asked Venkatadri what gratuity he (the Nawab) would receive on granting the *parwana*. Norris curtly refused to make any bargain, though he declared that for the Nawab's sake and for his own honour, a suitable acknowledgment should be made. He evidently thought that if the Nawab received any sum before granting the *parwana*, he would demand a still larger amount. Moreover, the Nawab's position as Governor was precarious, and Norris did not wish to run the risk of having to make a further present to a possible successor.³⁰ He expected that the Nawab would rely on his promise, and in consequence postponed making any payment to him. As a result of these dilatory negotiations, the Nawab continued to hamper the Company's activities, and Norris scornfully remarked: "Indeed these people from top to bottom are soe mercenary & usd to bargaines yt they have not ye least notion of Generosity". The *parwana* was finally secured from Nawab Mahdi Khan on payment of a considerable sum.

These transactions with the Mughal officials had been of use to Norris in many respects. In particular, they made him acquainted with their attitude and their dilatory method of conducting negotiations. He also discovered that all the diplomatic correspondence had suffered from mistakes in the translations from Persian into English and *vice versa*.

Early in December the Ambassador was disappointed to learn from a Persian merchant, who had lately arrived from the Camp, that the Emperor, in spite of his declining health, was continually on the march with his army from place to place in his various campaigns against the Marathas, whose depredations had spread throughout the Deccan.³¹ At that time he was commanding in person the assaults on the Maratha strongholds, whilst Zul'fiqar Khan³² was attacking the enemy in the open field. This caused

Norris some anxiety, as the length of time occupied by his journey to the Camp would interfere with his plans.

Still more discouraging was the information received from current reports brought back by the peons who had been sent to Golkonda that "ye Mogull and his army were brought to very great streights and hardships by pursuing ye Marattas too farr, yt ye Rajah⁸³ had gott him into such a noose, havings Invyron'd him with a 100000 horse and greate body of foot and stopt all passages and avenues to his Army, yt he must either be forced to fight his way through att greate disadvantage and soe hazard his Army yt way or else he starvd for want of provisions both for horse and man, both being Reportd to be soe scarce yt there was hardly subsistence for either 5 seer of Grasse sold for a Rupee wch is deare feedinge for horses, soe to support their spirits they say they allow their horses ye weight of 2 Rupees in opium for each horse Rice soe scarce in ye Camp yt it was not to be had for money. And whether ye Mogulls Army beinge in distresse and soe has dreind all round Golconda of their Rice, or whether some other occasion, want of Rain ill Crops or want of supply from other places, but these puons Report yt for ye same value yt you have 22 measures of Rice here you have but 6 att Golconda. These matters I have ordered to be farther enquired into, for if either ye Mogulls Army be in such distresse that it must either Run ye hazard of beinge lost or starv'd, it would be worth ye while to learn ye event before wee stirr from hence, as likewise to be well assur'd in wht condition ye country will be to supply us wth provision for men and cattell, for accordinge as they tell their story it will be very difficult. But there is no method here of gaininge intelligence; none comes to this place but comon Rumour wch canot be Relyd on and to send to Golconda to Inquire wee must be contended wth comon Reports there."⁸⁴

Notwithstanding all these uncertainties Norris continued to make every effort to secure Asad Khan's *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak* for convoying himself, with his retinue and equipage, safely through the territories of the several Faujdars to the Emperor's Camp. Imam Quli Beg,⁸⁵ a resident at Court, was requested to obtain the necessary *dastak* and to bring it to Masulipatam as soon as

possible before the hot season began. He was promised a suitable reward for his services, and was also assured by Consul Pitt that he would "be mightily pleas'd wth my Lord's temper and disposition wch is of such a nature yt will make ye Journey very short and Easie to you, and yourself inwardly content".³⁶ He was further requested to buy fifty camels for the transport service of the embassy, for which purpose Rs. 6,000 were sent, while a bill of exchange was forwarded to cover other incidental charges. Imam Quli promptly acceded to the request replying that the Ambassador's business would require a great deal of consideration and the bestowal of numerous presents. He promised to do his best to expedite the matter and to spare no effort to procure everything that was required. Accordingly various articles of value, to be given as presents, were sent to Asad Khan, Zul'fiqar Khan, and Imam Quli. Suave assurances were received from the latter that the preparations were being made out of friendship for the Ambassador, and glib promises were given that His Excellency would see the Emperor in due course and be escorted back to Masulipatam with his mission accomplished. The Emperor commanded Asad Khan to arrange for Norris's safe conduct to the Camp, and Imam Quli was commissioned to take the *hasb-ul hukm* and *dastak* to Masulipatam.

The arrival of these documents was now anxiously awaited, as Norris desired to set out for the Camp, about 800 miles distant on March 25, 1700, the first day of the new century, which it was hoped would be auspicious. The prospective journey would be like that of "a small army" carrying tents for encamping, and he expected to have "a pretty warm march of it with a perpendicular sun" overhead. He also wished to procure an equipage on a scale surpassing in magnificence and state that in which the Dutch or any other European Ambassador had yet appeared in India. But this was not to be, for early in the month he realised that much time had already elapsed and that there was no probability that everything would be in readiness within the next two months. Throughout he had been told that everything would be prepared by the middle of January, and he had relied entirely upon Consul Pitt to make the necessary arrangements. Norris knew that these delays could not be altogether avoided, as everything required had

to be sent for from places 300 miles distant.³⁷ He was, however, cheered by the arrival of "ye Gold Embroyderd furniture for one of my State palankeens was brought hither from Golconda wch lookes very rich but not to be compard to our English embroydery".³⁸ A "scrutiny" was taken of the large number of Indian servants who were to accompany him, and all but one of these were found eager to go. Norris considered that his early presence at the Camp was absolutely necessary in order to put a stop to the intrigues of the Old Company's servants at Court, if for no other reason.

As there was little likelihood of his being able to start even in May (the latest possible date on account of the rains in mid-June) Norris again consulted his Council about the steps which should be taken in order that the world might know why he had been detained at Masulipatam, and that the delay was due to no fault or failure on his part. A written memorandum was submitted to Consul Pitt, pointing out that the New Company's interests had already suffered and might be utterly ruined by any further delay. Norris also demanded a written statement showing the reasons for the delay which might be laid before the King and the Company. The Ambassador meant this as a threat and a reflection on the Consul, in whose hands the whole management of his journey had been left, and intended further to suggest that in view of the difficulty of obtaining provisions and the consequent loss of time, it would have been better for him not to have landed at Masulipatam.³⁹

But a still more serious defection now became apparent. Norris began to suspect that Consul Pitt and Venkatadri intended to impede his journey to Court and to frustrate the whole purpose of the embassy. He had been surprised for some weeks past, while the need for an early start was being continually urged, to find the Consul not only using arguments for prolonging his stay, but offering to give him a written statement in Council, that as matters now stood, it was not desirable that he should start on his journey, from the standpoint alike of the King's prestige and the Company's interest. Norris even suggested that Consul Pitt had been offered a large sum of money from Fort St. George to obstruct his mission. He declared that if the people employed

by the Consul had bestirred themselves, he would already have arrived at the Camp.⁴⁰ It was altogether inadvisable that he should await the arrival of Imam Quli, as there was no certainty that that official would come at all.

Similar allegations were made against Venkatadri, who was in charge of the greater part of the money, and to whom alone the duty of providing all supplies had been entrusted. He had acted for the last three months in such a way as to arouse suspicions that he had been "wel fed" from other hands to delay affairs. He was continually giving assurances that everything would be ready by such and such a time, but was obviously taking no real trouble about the matter; he was always shuffling and contradicting himself. Venkatadri had no doubt procured some necessaries for the journey from Golkonda, but he pretended that he could not obtain oxen and other things needful. It was discovered that all the servants of the embassy were more or less under his thumb, some of them disloyal and unreliable, and Norris ordered the dismissal of 70 peons. The upkeep of these servants for several months in expectation of his setting out had involved the Company in great expense.

This situation led to strained relations between Norris and Consul Pitt, whom he was instructed to consult in all matters relating to the Company. His accusations aroused the resentment of the Consul, who in return wrote to Norris in disrespectful terms. He declared that the Ambassador had seemed well pleased with the arrangements made so far for the welfare of the embassy, and that it was therefore surprising that he should now complain of undue delays in the preparations for his journey. It was admitted that Consul Pitt had advised Norris to land at Masulipatam which was nearer to the Emperor's Camp than Surat. The disadvantages of that plan had also been explained, seeing that it would be difficult to procure a suitable equipment at such a desolate place, while furthermore the Marathas were swarming in great numbers in the country, which was plunged into disorder and travelling was sometimes impossible. For these reasons Consul Pitt urged Norris to extend his stay, and the daily reports proved that all diligence for a quick dispatch was being made.

Consul Pitt affirmed that whatever promises had been made

to the Ambassador relating to the embassy were only provisional, and that they had been carried out to the best of his power. He and his colleagues deserved thanks rather than censure for their actions, for every measure had been taken to make Norris's start from Masulipatam an impressive ceremony; and, he pointed out, they could not hope to secure any advantage by impeding his journey. The Consul claimed that his sole aim had been to serve the King and his Ambassador, and asserted that he would have succeeded in the business if he had not had to deal with a man of Norris's temper.⁴¹ Pitt further vouched for Venkatadri's honesty, and added that in his own interest Venkatadri would not act against the Ambassador seeing that both he and his son were engaged as two of the New Company's merchants—a procedure not usual in the case of an interpreter.⁴² He concluded by warning Norris that neither man nor beast could well travel on account of the heat at that time of the year and the want of forage.

But none of these statements made any impression upon Norris, who repeated his allegations, and expressed surprise at the attitude of the Consul and his Council. Thus the breach between them grew wider and wider. Norris bore his disappointment with Christian resignation, writing: "Soe shall as in all duty bound expect wth patience God's apointed time, and whn his good providence sees best wch in all circumstances of my life has orderd all affaires to my advantage even beyond expectation and above my wishes, which I hope I shall never forgett to acknowledge & be thankfull for".⁴³

The Ambassador was equally disturbed by the long absence of any news from the Court, fearing, apparently, that his earlier letters had miscarried. His correspondence with the different presidencies was also suffering from the constant detention of *pattamars*, or runners, by the roving bands of Marathas. It took about two months for messengers to reach Masulipatam from Surat, and the receipt of important despatches was thus greatly retarded. Norris regretted that it had been his misfortune all along to have been without an interpreter upon whom he could rely in the least or in whom he could confide. Letters addressed to him from the Emperor's Camp were written in Persian so that he had to depend upon the Mulla to translate them into 'Gentoo',

while Venkatadri in his turn, at third hand, told Norris just what he thought it desirable he should know.

At last a message was received from Imam Quli Beg announcing that he was actually "upon ye road", and immediately there was a spasm of local activity. But Norris soon learned, to his great disappointment, that Imam Quli was unable to come on account of urgent business at Court, and that his son Medi Quli, who was "somewhat acquainted with the Customes and manners of the hatt men" was being sent to Masulipatam accompanied by a strong guard, with the *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak* for Norris's safe and free passage.⁴⁴ It was fully expected that Imam Quli would have come in person to escort him to Camp, according to the royal commands issued in Asad Khan's name. Norris took a very pessimistic view of this change, suspecting Imam Quli of deliberate obstructive tactics and treachery. The latter explained the delay in granting the necessary permits by the fact that Consul Pitt's letter soliciting them could not be submitted to the Emperor before the fast of Ramazan was over. There was also danger in travelling, as the roads were not safe owing to the constant warfare with the Marathas and the impossibility of proceeding without good convoys, which were difficult to obtain within so limited a time. The insufficiency of funds had also delayed the purchase of camels needed for the journey.⁴⁵

Finally Medi Quli Beg arrived on May 25 (1700) with the much expected *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak*. Norris, though still doubtful, hoped that everything would now go smoothly. He continued to make active preparations for the journey; the tents were pitched two miles outside the town, and he ordered all the presents, stores, baggage etc. to be taken there in readiness for the start as soon as the means of transport were ready. June was, therefore, fixed upon as the earliest date for it. But, contrary to all expectations, the Faujdar of Gudur and the Governor of Masulipatam positively refused to obey the Emperor's command to provide transport within their jurisdiction. Finding no alternative, Norris ordered the tents to be struck and everything brought back to Masulipatam. The conduct of the officials on this occasion was ascribed by Dr. Edward Norris to bribery on the part of Governor Thomas Pitt and manifest trea-

chery on the part of some others.

During the past few months Norris had been in regular correspondence with Sir Nicholas Waite, who, besides supplying him with the latest news from England, gave him information regarding the situation of the New Company's factory at Surat and the position of other European traders on the West Coast. He enquired from Waite as to the desirability of procuring the *farmans* for the three different factories, and urged the necessity of a meeting with him before beginning his negotiations at Court. If this should prove impossible, then Dr. Edward Norris or Mr. Harlewyn would be sent to Surat in his stead. Waite for his part was equally anxious to obtain the *farmans* as early as possible, for chaos would be likely to ensue upon the Emperor's death, and no *farman* would then be of any validity.

NOTES

¹ *The English Factories in India, 1634-1636*, edited by Sir William Foster.

² Prime Minister.

³ *Waki'ahnawis*.

⁴ Vol. I, pp. 28-29 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁶ Though the acceptance of bribes was considered immoral by the Islamic religious code, yet as Sarkar says "in Mughal India the receiving of presents and perquisites was considered legitimate". See Vol. V, p. 325 of *History of Aurangzib*.

⁷ Vol. I, p. 32 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁸ Bernier gives a very concise and informative account of the office of *Waki'ahnawis*. See p. 231 of *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, Oxford edition, 1916; *Scattergood Papers in the Indian Antiquary*, 1931; also pp. 72-75 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration* (2nd edition).

⁹ In a broader sense the word signifies a learned man, a doctor of law or theology. There is no priesthood in Islam, but the *Mullahs* perform all ceremonies and carry out the duties of a priesthood.

¹⁰ P. 40 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² The Company's servants always kept a fair quantity of European wines, for Consul Pitt and his Council requested the Directors to supply them yearly with good liquor, which was very dear and scarce in India. They also observed that the wine when "drank moderately helps digestion, forwards business and recruits spirits wch we are hourly loosing in these hot parts".

¹³ See *ante*.

¹⁴ Vol. I, pp. 40-41 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

¹⁵ Vol. I, p. 41, *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

¹⁹ *Factory Records Misc.*, Vol. 19.

²⁰ Vol. I, p. 75 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²¹ Pp. 281, 285 of *Orme MSS. O.V. 136*.

²² No. 6831 of *O.C. 55—Part II*.

²³ Nos. 6830, 6832 of, *Ibid.*

²⁴ Nos. 4, 15, 16 of *Addl. MS. 22*, 842, British Museum.

²⁵ P. lxiv of *Hedge's Diary*.

²⁶ The Governor's attitude was considered "ill-grounded" by Sir Streynsham Master, who suggested that if they made use of the embassy instead in "compounding and composing all their Debts and Depredations" they might not only have saved great sums, but also the amount expended in hindering the Ambassador. See Vol. II, p. clxix of *Hedge's Diary*.

²⁷ Thomas Lovell and Samuel Woolston were accused of various crimes against the Old Company's interest, which caused a heated controversy between the two Pitts. See Nos. 7189-7221 of *O.C. 56-II*; also Vol. III, p. lxxiii of *Hedge's Diary*.

²⁸ Norris also feared lest the Mughal's ministers would raise the question during his coming negotiations at Court, as to why the Governor of Fort St. George had sent the Danes of Trincomlar assistance in their war against the Mughal's subjects. See Vol. I, p. 10 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

²⁹ Vol. I, p. 123, *Ibid.*

³⁰ Vol. I, p. 104, *Ibid.*

³¹ Thomas Pitt, writing to a friend, described the prevailing condition thus: "This country has long been embroiled in wars between the Nabob who governs the province and the Morattoes, a sort of Pythagoreans who scour the country in vast numbers of horse, sometimes fifty or sixty thousand in a body".

³² He was the son of Asad Khan, and in the words of Grant Duff "although a corrupt, ambitious man, was an active commander, and now the only Moghul officer of whom the Mahrathas stood in any awe". See Vol. I, p. 297 of Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrathas*, edited by S. M. Edwardes, O.U.P., 1921.

³³ Presumably Raja Ram, brother of Sambhaji, who was closely pursued by Aurangzib during the campaign against the Maratha hill-forts, which occupied the rest of his life. The scarcity of provisions for the Mughal army in general occurred during the siege of Satara. See Vol. V, pp. 163-4 of Sarkar's *Aurangzib*.

³⁴ Vol. I, p. 150 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁵ Imam Quli had been brought up in Asad Khan's house from his boyhood, and had some influence with the *Wazir* and his secretary, which might have proved useful to Norris. He had also lived for some time in Madras. Once, some years earlier, he had accompanied Mr. Yale to the Emperor's Camp for the purpose of procuring some privileges for the Old

Company and had performed his duties well. See No. 7159 of O.C. 56-II; also Vol. I, p. 107 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁵ No. 6820 of O.C. 55—Part II.

³⁷ Vol. I, p. 142 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

³⁸ No. 6964 of O.C. 55—Part II.

³⁹ *Masulipatam Factory Records*, Vol. 13.

⁴⁰ Vol. I, p. 160 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁴¹ No. 7488 of O.C. 56—IV.

⁴² Vol. I, p. 162 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*.

⁴³ Vol. I, p. 168, *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Masulipatam Factory Records*, Vol. 13.

⁴⁵ The camels, horses, oxen and hackeries required for the journey cost a considerable sum, and they were subsequently disposed of by Consul Pitt. See Vol. II, p. 381 of *Storia do Mogor*.

CHAPTER VI

Change of Plans : Departure for Surat.

After so many disappointments it was not surprising that Norris's patience was completely exhausted, and that he thought it necessary to adopt a new plan. He had been obliged to act in accordance with the instructions of the Directors, who were naturally ignorant of the conditions prevailing on the Coromandel Coast. The reasonableness of the course they had proposed appeared at first to be supported by the information received from Consul Pitt that the Emperor was in the neighbourhood of Bijapur, which is nearer to Masulipatam than Surat, and the assurance that all necessities and transport for his journey to Court could be easily procured there.¹ But Norris now began to realise his mistake in choosing that place as a starting point for his journey through Golkonda; there was now also no possibility of reaching the Camp before the beginning of the rainy season. Moreover, not only did a postponement of his journey make the upkeep of his establishment more costly, but he might in the meantime fall into the hands of people who would throw his affairs into confusion and betray him at every step.

The departure from his original plan was further influenced by the advice of Sir Nicholas Waite and others of the New Company, who insisted that the Ambassador's delay was proving disastrous to their interests, affording as it did to their rivals fresh opportunities for mischief. They criticised the Directors' decision, and expressed the greatest regret that Norris had not been ordered to land at Surat. He would, they said, have received there better instructions regarding his negotiations at Court, which would thus have been completed more cheaply and with a saving of time. For other reasons too, the choice of Surat would have been preferable. Not only was it considered "the Eye of this great Empire", but its government was "coveted and generally managed by the most eminent persons". Furthermore, the Emperor's "expresses going out & returning every four days & exceed

not nine days in their journey"; and answers to letters might at all times be received from the Court in fourteen or fifteen days, the journey being an easy one except when the overflowing of the rivers during the rainy season, or other accidents impeded travelling. There was no time to lose, in their view, as the aged Emperor only sat in audience for a limited time, and this made important negotiations at Court rather dilatory, while their position would be precarious if Aurangzib died before the conclusion of the business.² Still more decisive was Sir Nicholas' offer to supply Norris with £30,000 according to the instruction of the Court of Directors, which sum would have been sufficient if he had come by way of Surat. Influenced by these considerations, Norris decided to sail for Surat, and hoped to set out thence for the Mughal's Camp.

There was no truth in the suggestion put forward by President Stephen Colt of the Old Company and others at Surat that Norris had had private orders to delay the embassy, as it would not otherwise have been necessary to stay so many months at Masulipatam, while that time might have allowed of a union between the two Companies which would have put the mission in a more advantageous and honourable position.

The Mughal officials, on learning Norris's decision, became alarmed, fearing that it might lead to disclosures of their own share in the hindrances that had caused it. This started a long correspondence between Norris and the various Mughal officials. Norris protested that he had already been detained some months at Masulipatam and that in spite of the Wazir Asad Khan's *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak*, as well as all his own persuasions, nothing tangible had yet been effected. The Faujdar of Gudur and the Governor of Masulipatam expressed their regret and insisted that he should travel by land. They assured him that everything would be provided for his journey, including an escort of some hundreds of horse. The Ambassador remained adamant, declaring that he could not possibly, out of consideration for his sovereign's honour and his own, suffer a second act of disobedience on their part, and that he had already informed the Emperor of his change of plan. The Governor of Masulipatam now affirmed that he had never refused to obey the Imperial commands or to

assist in any way what was demanded of him, and that he could supply as many oxen, coolies, hackeries and carts as might be required. Both the officials threatened to prevent him from travelling by sea, and to put a stop to the Company's business. They were, however, informed that he would go by sea whatever impediments were placed in his way, as it was contrary to the law and practice of all nations to stop an Ambassador, who was always free to go wherever he pleased.³ The whole affair and the conduct of these officials were reported to the Wazir Asad Khan and his son Zul'fiqar Khan.

As a result of these incidents, Norris received a flattering letter from Asad Khan requesting him to alter his plan of going to Surat by sea seeing that the Wazir had already informed the Emperor that the Ambassador had intended to travel by land. He closed his letter with the words : "Dear Brother give ear to me & come by land yt my word to ye King may not prove a Lye". Asad Khan, therefore, sent a second command to the Faujdar and the Governor to give all possible assistance to Norris's journey. He also informed Consul Pitt that it would be very unwise for the Ambassador to act contrary to his first plan. The Wazir further explained that Norris, having newly arrived from Europe, could not understand the customs of the country so well as people who had lived in India for some time, and urged him not to alter his plan. He urged that although the two officials had done wrong in not carrying out his orders, the Ambassador for his part should not lower himself and make his enemies rejoice. The Emperor removed great officers of State even for small faults, and there was no reason why the two officials should not receive such punishment as would deter others from acting in a similar way. Asad warned Norris that his action might so greatly displease the Emperor as to make him refuse the necessary *dastak* for the journey from Surat to the Camp.

Norris acknowledged Asad Khan's letter, expressing his appreciation of the Wazir's friendship and kindness, but explained that he had been forced to arrange to travel by sea owing to the repeated hindrances put in the way of his journey by land. The baggage and equipment had already been embarked, and he himself had gone on board before the receipt of the Wazir's letter.

With the suave courtesy of a skilled diplomat Norris added : "Your Highness will be more fully satisfied of the necessity I lay under of going to Surat, when I have the happiness to see you, which words cannot express how much I desire. The delays & disappointments I have met with here have been the more irksome because they kept me so long from the most noble, victorious & great Asad Chawn whose friendship I shall esteem dearer than my life".⁴

The domineering attitude assumed by Norris in his dealings with the Mughal officials was not approved of by Consul Pitt and his Council. They contended that the Ambassador should not have changed his plan of proceeding to Court direct from Masulipatam after the rains were ended, when assurances of assistance had been given by the Faujdar and other Mughal officials, and especially after he had received repeated requests from the Wazir Asad Khan. They adopted that view after they had unanimously resolved to transport the Ambassador with his retinue and baggage to Surat by the first available ship. They declared that Norris was lowering his position by choosing a merchantman rather than a man-of-war for his voyage to Surat. It was even suggested by others that his enemies had secretly instigated their agents to persuade him to act to his disadvantage, and that he ought not to have given credence to every plausible story repeated to him. But Norris paid no attention to any of these arguments, and remained fixed in his resolve.

At that time the *Tankervill* was the only vessel lying in the roads, and Norris asked that he might be permitted to embark in her for Surat. But Consul Pitt could not comply with this request till the arrival of the *Sommers*, which was daily expected. He began to assume an indifferent attitude in all business transactions with the Ambassador, who threatened that if he were not speedily provided with a ship, the embassy would be at an end. When the *Sommers* arrived, Consul Pitt expressed doubts whether he and his Council had authority to provide a ship for the Ambassador, and they requested him to make a formal demand for a vessel. This was accordingly done, and the *Sommers*, a newly-built ship of 500 tons, under Captain John Douglas, was finally chosen to convey him to Surat.

Meanwhile other important matters needed attention, in particular the question of finance, which had been a constant anxiety to Norris from the very beginning of his mission. He had been requested by the Directors to conduct his negotiations with the Emperor as expeditiously as possible and to control his general expenditure as far as was consistent with his position.⁵ They reminded him that "the Indians are in our opinions a very wise People and differ from that which wee count grandure in England, (keeping great Tables) and wee believe the heate of the country as well as our Interest will lead you to be frugall therein". But the supplies of money and goods which they sent to their factories at Masulipatam and at Hugli were generally delayed, and unless the merchandise was sold the Ambassador's expenses could not be speedily defrayed.

Although strict economy had been observed, the expenditure of the past few months had proved greater than had been anticipated. It amounted to more than Rs. 113,566, including the cost of presents to various Mughal officials. But, considering the elaborate nature of the equipage and the difficulty of procuring what was necessary, the sum was by no means excessive. In addition to his English retinue, a very large number of Indian servants was employed in various capacities according to their peculiar castes, as they would not do any duty which their own caste forbade. Norris remarked: "Every mans Grandeur in this place is reckond by ye number of Derbasses & puons he keepes".

On July 22 (1700), the accounts of the embassy for eight months, presented in Council, were audited, approved and signed by His Excellency. The accounts contained copies of all orders given to Mr. Harlewyn for the issuing of money during that time, and also of the pay books of the English retinue and Indian servants. Norris was paid £1,500 by Consul Pitt in Council in order to complete his first year's salary; but they were unable to advance further sums on account of the drain upon their resources. Norris was, however, advised to obtain additional funds from Surat, in order to refund the amount supplied by the factory at Masulipatam.

While the Ambassador was preparing to leave Masulipatam, news was received that the Bill to continue the Old Company as a Corporation, as already described elsewhere, and also the Wea-

vers' Bill restraining the import into England of Indian wrought silk and painted calicoes and other articles, had passed the House of Commons and were now before the House of Lords. If the Bills should pass at such a critical juncture, they would stultify the embassy as well as reduce the Indian trade, and might provoke retaliation from the Emperor. No embassy to promote trade, or corporation to carry it out, could effect its object if the country sending it out should legislate against trade itself. The proposed legislation, in fact, was opposed to the object of the mission with which Norris was entrusted, and to the intentions of the Old Company. It was impossible for Norris to predict what effect would be produced upon the Emperor and his ministers by the slight thus offered to the Ambassador's character, which the Old Company had throughout endeavoured to vilify and undermine.⁶

These Parliamentary measures undoubtedly prejudiced the prospects of the New Company, at least in the estimation of its rivals. Governor Thomas Pitt of Fort St. George and others of the Old Company received the news with evident pleasure. When the announcement reached them in November, 1700, that the Royal Assent had been given to the first Bill, Thomas Pitt made it a great occasion by publishing the text of the Act and regaling the whole town with demonstrations of joy. He at once communicated the fact to the Old Company's other settlements, desiring them to celebrate the occasion in a similar manner. All the Englishmen on different parts of the Coast, including Consul Pitt and the members of his Council, were also informed of it.⁷ Thomas Pitt also communicated with the Mughal Governor of Masulipatam about the new Act, asking his support in all matters.

Finding that the Ambassador was determined to sail for Surat, Consul Pitt delivered to him a memorandum of several privileges and grants to be procured from the Emperor in a new *farman* for carrying on the affairs of the New Company on the Coast of Coromandel. This was to be based on the *farman* bestowed on the Old Company in 1675 by the late Sultan of Golkonda, to which certain additions were to be made with the Ambassador's approval.

These privileges were to include the grants for the villages

of Devarampattu, Velagapadu, Madapollam and Malachi Mahmud Peta, with the rivers adjoining, rented for an annual sum of about 620 *pagodas*; permission for a mint in order to coin gold, silver rupees, *pagodas*, *fanams*, and *cash*, etc. at Madapollam; and a bill of sale for a piece of ground on which to build a factory. The New Company's servants, factors and merchants, with all their families, were to be exempted from the "head money" and all other taxes, and not to be molested or disturbed by the Mughal officials in carrying on their business, and in going to Golkonda and any other places. The Company's washermen were also to enjoy the same privileges and have in addition a suitable piece of land near the factories, with a supply of running water and a tank, and freedom to build and live there with their families. The transport of cattle and goods to Golkonda was to be customs free, excepting the ox-drawn carts conveying goods from Masulipatam to Golkonda, which were to bear a charge of one *pagoda*. All disputes among themselves, or with Indians or others, were to be decided by the Consul and his Council, whose decision was to be final.

The Old Company was to deliver up stamps and dies belonging to the mint at Madras upon their determination or otherwise, with all the original *farmans*, *nishans*, and other documentary privileges together with those towns adjoining Madras which had been given to them, as these were granted to the English in general. These were, therefore, to be placed under the control of persons appointed by the King of England. According to the powers given to the Consul in the King's Commission, all Faujdars and Mughal officials were bound to recognise the Consul as a minister of the King of England; and under no circumstances were they to receive applications relating to trade and commerce on behalf of any Englishmen or their representatives other than the said Consul or deputy chosen by the King for that purpose. The *farman* was to include a clause granting free trade to the New Company, or other Englishmen authorised by the King. Further, provincial governors and their subordinates were not to permit English subjects individually or collectively to rent any towns, villages, *petas*, rivers or any land within the limits of the Presidency or in any part of the Mughal's revenues, or receive customs for

any sort of goods and merchandise imported or exported without a warrant under the seal of the Consul.⁸

Sir William Norris embarked for Surat on August 15, 1700. The Mughal Governor and his subordinates were notified of the event, and all the English gentlemen of the place attended with the exception of those connected with the Old Company, who were specially ordered not to be present. Tillard in his diary gives a vivid and picturesque description of what happened :—

"15th ditto his Excellcy...went aboard ye ship *somers*, Capn. John Douglas Comdr, for Surat. He went thro' ye town in great splendour, viz : first, from ye great house, called King of Golkonda's to ye consull's.....He went under ye canopy of $\frac{1}{2}$ a dozen Rundells, on black man to each, ye consull following him wth 2 over his head, then his Excellcy's brother Jno [sic] Norris, Esq, wth 2 over his head, after him ye councill wch were onely Mr. Jno Graham & myself, ye rest being dead. After ym follow'd ye factors & writers, & all ye English Nation then in town, exceptng ye Old Compa servts, wch never would take any notice of ye Ambassr. Before his Excellcy went his gentlemen Mr. Mills & Mr. Hales, wth Mr. Harlewyn, Paymaster to ye Embassy, who carried ye sword of Justice before His Excellcy, and before ym went all my Lords Livery servts, there going onely 4 by his side; and before ym went a compa of soldiers wch they took out of ye ship, the barge crue [sic] going first of all with velvett caps & coulld wastcoats, well armed. My Lord had ye Union and King's flagg likewise before him, wch he ordered to be burnt so soon as he came into ye consull's house—I suppose because they were old and torn".⁹ The guns continued firing after Norris was in the barge, until he arrived at the island within "side ye barr".

When Norris was safely on board the *Sommers*, he at once sent to the authorities in England despatches conspicuous for the clear and detailed account they gave of recent events at Masulipatam. One was addressed to the Court of Directors of the English Company, explaining his reasons for going to Surat by sea. Norris made serious complaints against Consul Pitt, to whom he attributed the disastrous consequences of his long detention at Masulipatam, while in many other ways he (Pitt) was not

acting in the New Company's interest. Though the Consul was chiefly entrusted with the management of the embassy, yet he placed its affairs in the hands of those who were devoted more to the interests of the Old than of the New Company. Norris particularly mentioned the treachery of Imam Quli Beg and Venkatadri, which was as plain to him as noonday, and stated that the Consul had retained the services of the latter in spite of the allegations made against him.¹⁰ He also accused the Mughal officials of taking bribes and of disobeying the Emperor's orders by obstructing his own plans. Their conduct had in consequence been reported to the Mughal. Norris added that neither their threats, their promises nor their fear of losing their heads could prevail upon him to alter his decision. He wrote in similar terms to Mr. James Vernon, Secretary of State, and caused both the letters to be read to Consul Pitt, so that he might have the opportunity of refuting the charges laid against him.

Consul Pitt vindicated his own conduct against Norris's accusations, expressing the view, shared by his Council, that if the Ambassador had adopted a more conciliatory attitude his mission would have met with success. He and his Council repudiated all responsibility for the delay in receiving sailing orders for the *Sommers* stating that the delay was due to the fact that the invoices of what was laden on account of the embassy were not ready. They strenuously denied the charges made against them to the Court of Directors, whose decision in the matter was eagerly awaited.

Consul Pitt and his Council also protested against the reflections on their loyalty to the Company made by Sir Nicholas Waite from Surat. Pitt declared that Waite's accusations against Imam Quli Beg were not well founded, and that he himself was satisfied as to his ability and integrity. He asserted that though Imam Quli Beg was formerly in the Old Company's interest, there was no valid reason why he should now betray the New Company after having been appointed to serve it, unless, indeed, he was provoked to do so.

The Ambassador finally sailed from Masulipatam on August 23, 1700, and on the 28th passed Fort St. George where, as before, no salutes were fired in his honour. On account of un-

favourable winds and currents, the ship did not reach Ceylon till October 22. *The Canterbury* passed, homeward bound, and the opportunity was seized to send letters and official despatches to England by her. After leaving Ceylon, the *Sommers* kept near the Coast and on November 13 arrived at Goa, where she stayed for a week. This enabled Norris to see the various places of historic interest in the city. The ship then anchored off St. John's on the Coast on December 5, and from that place the Ambassador wrote again to the Court of Directors, sending his report against Consul Pitt and, in addition, all the minutes of his own Council.

On the morning of December 10, after a voyage of nearly four months, the *Sommers* anchored off the mouth of the river at Suali, near Surat. Two of Norris's retinue had died during the voyage; the rest including himself had kept in good health. He had a mixed reception from the ships lying off Suali. Just before the *Sommers* anchored, she was saluted by 11 guns from one of the Mughal's men-of-war, which had her flags flying at the main topmast head as a special compliment. A salute of 9 guns was fired from the *Sommers* by way of acknowledgment. All the other 'Moor' ships in the road immediately fired salutes of 9 guns—as Norris remarked, according to "ye Number they carryd but none wth even Guns", which he had heard was the custom of the 'Moor' to salute. The *Sommers* at once replied with a full salute of 11 guns.

In contrast to this demonstration of goodwill, none of the three Dutch merchantmen lying at anchor either saluted or hoisted their colours.¹¹ This attitude of their captains surprised not only the Ambassador, but also the outside observers. It was still more galling to his dignity that the Old Company's ships did not show him the respect due to his rank. At this juncture Sir John Gayer was on board the *Tavistock* at Suali displaying the Union flag at the main top masthead, and the *Loyal Merchant* was also within sight of his Majesty's flag. The same indignity was offered to Norris when the *Tavistock* passed the *Sommers* a few days later.

Norris immediately sent his secretary on board the *Tavistock* to ask for an explanation and ordered the Union flags to be

struck. Gayer complained to the Mughal Governor, but Norris represented that he had supreme authority over all the English in India, and so had power to have the flag hauled down. Gayer nevertheless defied Norris and re-hoisted the flags of the two ships, thus proving to the Governor that the Ambassador's authority was not paramount.¹²

The Ambassador consoled himself for this snub with the information gained from those best acquainted with the fleet powers of Admiralty that, at sea outside the King's dominions, no force or compulsion could legally be used against any person not saluting the flag. Norris therefore took no further notice of the incident at the time. But later he made representations to the Lords of the Admiralty regarding the insolent behaviour of the captains of the two ships in giving their first salute to a French man-of-war on its arrival at Suali and thus casting a slur on the King of England's colours.¹³ Norris for his part did not first salute the French Commodore when he took up a position astern as a mark of respect to the flag. He considered that it would be derogatory for any single man-of-war carrying the King's Jack to give him or anyone else the first salute, and especially for a man of his position. Norris boasted that if the King of France himself had been on board it would not have become the flag he carried to give the first salute.

Before leaving the *Sommers*, Norris showed his appreciation of the services rendered and the civility shown him by Captain John Douglas by highly commending him to the Directors in London. He also presented him with Rs. 1,000, partly to compensate him for losses on cargo.

As navigation was impossible above Suali, the Ambassador remained on board the *Sommers*, while the preliminaries for his reception at Surat were being arranged.

NOTES

¹ Vol. 13, p. 10 of *Masulipatam Factory Records*.

² No. 7184 of O.C. 56-II.

³ Vol. 13 of *Masulipatam Factory Records*.

⁴ Vol. 19 of *Factory Records, Miscellaneous*.

⁵ The Directors had been hopeful of the mission's success during its

early stages, and sent long despatches to the Ambassador regarding the position of the two Companies, and the course to be pursued in India. They trusted that Norris would do his best to forward their interests by impressing on the Emperor their dependence on his justice, and gave him the final injunction that he would "endeavour to comply with the humours of the natives so far as is consistent" with his honour.

⁶ Vol. 19 of *Miscellaneous Factory Records*.

⁷ Vol. 25 of *Factory Records, Fort St. George*.

⁸ *Factory Records, Misc.*, 20; and also No. 7141 of O.C. 56-II, India Office.

⁹ P. 85 of *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifteenth Report, Appendix, Part X.* (The Manuscripts of P. Edward Tillard).

¹⁰ Vol. III, pp. lvii-lix of Hedge's *Diary*.

¹¹ P. 1 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹² Vol. 99 of *Surat Factory Records*; also Vol. V, p. 116 of *Factory Records, Misc.*

¹³ No. 7412 of O.C. 56-IV.

CHAPTER VII

Surat : Final Preparations for the March to the Emperor's Camp.

Norris at once announced his arrival to President Waite who on the morning of December 12, accompanied by two other Englishmen, went on board the *Sommers* to welcome the Ambassador. Salutes of twenty-one guns were fired on their arrival and departure from the ship, as Norris was particularly anxious to pay due honour to the New Company's President. During the next few days Norris had several conferences with Waite and members of his Council, who supplied him with information concerning the general state of affairs at Surat, especially as to the position of the Old Company and its attitude towards himself. They further advised him how he might best act in the New Company's interest in regard both to his conduct of the embassy's business at Court and the arrangements to be made for his reception on landing.

The question of the presents brought by Norris was also discussed. Waite pointed out that the Directors at Skinner's Hall had been ill-advised in several matters, and especially with regard to presents, for some of the articles on which they set much value were thought little of by the local Mughal officials, while other European Companies had brought presents of far greater value including even curious rarities.

Nothing could be done without money. Norris gathered from Waite that "ye highest to ye Lowest all were mercenary except 2 of ye Greate men att ye camp who are known never to accept of a Gratuity". Though small presents of European rarities might be given in public, sums of money could only be secretly negotiated through a broker with the chief ministers, officers, governors, and "even ye Mogull himselfe, who values nothinge soe much as a good sum of money paide into his Treasury."¹ Norris, therefore, resolved to work on these lines, so that he might procure the several *farmans* on his arrival at Court.

The manner of Norris's reception on landing at Surat was also discussed. He insisted on being given a State reception and further demanded that he should be assured of this beforehand by the Governor. As Ambassador of the King of England, he claimed that he should be received with greater marks of honour than those accorded either to Waite himself or to the representative of any other nation. Sir Nicholas agreed to this, seeing that it would prejudice the embassy if Norris were not received with such especial honours as would convince Governor Diyanat Khan and others at Surat that he was really the King's representative.

The prospect for the mission's success seemed doubtful, for Sir John Gayer and others of the Old Company had done all they could to disparage Norris in the eyes of the Mughal officials by circulating details of the Act of Parliament continuing the Old Company as a trading corporation; a printed copy of this had been sent forthwith to Sir Nicholas Waite.² The result was that the Mughal Governor declared that if, as the Old Company's servants asserted, Sir William Norris came only from a company of merchants, he dared not receive him as the representative of a King, without the risk of losing his head, unless the Ambassador could show him the King of England's letter to the Emperor. The Governor was in doubt as to which of the two, Norris or Gayer, was supreme and truly invested with royal authority: nor could any arguments reassure him. The rivals of the New Company, as Waite wrote, spared neither "calumnious aspersions, unaccountable bribes as if invested with the Mexico Mines" nor, indeed, any other method which might overthrow the embassy. They had given the Governor and his son large sums of money in order to embarrass the embassy, to prevent Norris being received with honour, and to humiliate President Waite.

Although the Governor was assured that the King of England's letter could be shown to him, there seemed no possibility of securing the reception or acknowledgment of Norris' position as Ambassador without a resort to bribery. Norris evidently thought and expected that his position, backed by the Emperor's *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak* already granted, would make it impossible for the Governor to refuse him an honourable

reception. But he was soon warned by Waite that methods of transacting business in India were quite different from the procedure in Europe, and that nothing, as has been said, could be done without money. It was difficult at this time to induce the Governor, by rhetoric or eloquence, to obey any of the aged and infirm Emperor's commands. He declared that the Emperor's *hasb-ul-hukm* did not oblige him to meet Norris outside the city, but only to conduct him out of that Government, and he demanded money as the price of his acknowledgment of the Ambassador.

Norris, therefore, arranged to secure the Governor's "good-will and friendship" and advised Waite that a "very handsome and distinguishing present" would make him "a fast friend" and promoter of the New Company's interest. Waite promptly gave the Governor 2000 gold mohurs, his son 1000, and his Eunuch 200 (at 13 rupees 24 pice each) in order to secure a suitable reception for the Ambassador. The business was skilfully transacted by Rustamji, while Diyanat Khan promised to keep the matter private in his own interest.³ These devices had the desired effect. The Governor and his son decided to receive the Ambassador at Umbra, five miles from the city, and also to escort him with all honour out of his Government.⁴

Meanwhile Sir Nicholas Waite had made various arrangements for the Ambassador's landing and reception. A few months earlier he had hired a suitable house situated near the river, and to this was added a dining room built of "bamboo and timber for his Excellency etc. to dine, wch was lined with corse chints and furnisht with tables & chairs costing about Rs. 16,000". The principal house contained "two lodging roomes", and an ante-room and another room facing the river to be used for receptions. Waite appointed fifteen peons to guard the house by night; but in spite of this precaution the bamboo portion was burnt down at the instigation of the Old Company's factors. So tents were pitched as quickly as possible in Noquedah Amud's garden, about a mile from Surat, for Norris's accommodation. The Governor was asked to grant free egress and ingress from the garden for the Ambassador and his retinue, as well as peons, conveyances and horses hired for the service of the embassy. All the equipage, baggage and presents were sent

ashore, and according to usage, the customs house officers scrutinised and took special account of all the presents without demanding any duty. But Norris took offence at their procedure, as he had been told that nothing of the kind would be done. Other preparations were being made, and Sir Nicholas had drawn up for the Ambassador's approval a plan for the cavalcade which was to accompany him on his public entrance into Surat. Before Norris left the *Sommers*, the accounts of the embassy for the past two months were audited in Council.

At about 7 o'clock on the Christmas morning, Norris disembarked from the *Sommers* and went on board a barge flying the Union flag. At the same time a similar flag was lowered from the main topmast-head of the *Sommers*, and the sailors cheered him five times; Norris acknowledged the cheers with one, and was answered with three more. He then received a salute of 31 guns. In less than four hours he reached the yacht which lay at anchor at Umbra, and another yacht arrived conveying the retinue. Both the yachts saluted him as soon as the Union flag was hoisted on board his own yacht. The 'Moor' ships, including those belonging to Abd-ul-ghafur,⁵ also fired a salute, which was duly returned. On hearing the report of the guns fired at Umbra, the New Company's factors at Surat at once fired a salute of 31 guns to welcome the Ambassador.

The following morning at about 9 o'clock Sir William left the yacht and entered a barge accompanied by Dr. Edward Norris, Secretary to the embassy, who carried a box (decorated with the Arms of the King of England), containing the Ambassador's commission and King William's letter to the Emperor. Norris was escorted to the landing place by Captain Douglas, Mr. Harlewyn and three members of the New Company's factory, together with his pages and trumpeters in other boats. He was then carried up the bank in a *palanquin*. Diyanat Khan, the Governor of Surat, his son, and President Sir Nicholas Waite, with their respective retinues, were in readiness to receive him. As soon as Norris alighted from the *palanquin*, the Governor and his son moved forward and welcomed him with embraces.⁶

To assert the validity of Norris's commission, the King's letter, with its superscription and seal on the outside, was then

shown to the Governor, who seemed well satisfied with its genuineness. The Ambassador and the Governor then entered their *palanquins*, and the imposing procession started for Surat. His Excellency's cavalcade included President Waite's flag, the Union flag, and two others bearing the Ambassador's own arms and the King's arms, State horses richly caparisoned, trumpeters, state *palanquins*, peons, lancers, hautboys, kettledrums, bagpipes, musketeers and archers in due order. Behind these came Mr. Hale, bearing a naked sword point upwards, and following him were liveried servants on horseback. The sword of state was carried by Mr. Mill before the *palanquins* in which were the Ambassador and the Governor. Thirty peons followed bearing silver lance and swords with scarlet scabbards. Close to Norris's *palanquin*, on the left hand side, a shield emblazoned with the King's Arms was carried by a *Jaillpidar* attended by three others; and there were also in attendance two chief peons, each carrying silver-gilt fanning feathers. Then came Sir Nicholas Waite and the Governor's son in their *palanquins*, followed by men with silver lances and four "gentlemen" on horseback. Behind these came a state coach with Dr. Edward Norris, which was followed by three other coaches containing various members of the embassy and the New Company, and a fourth without occupants.⁷

On entering the city of Surat, Norris received a salute of thirty-one guns from the New Company's factory, and of eleven from the castle. He was gratified to learn that the latter was a particular mark of respect shown only to the Emperor and his sons. On arriving at the Governor's house the whole of the party took seats in the following order: in front Sir Nicholas Waite, the Ambassador, the Governor and his son; Dr. Edward Norris, Mr. Harlewyn, Mr. Bonnell, Mr. Lock, and Mr. Peirson on either side, with Mr. Mill, carrying the sword of State, standing in front.

After an exchange of compliments the Governor informed Norris that he had received him with the greatest honour and respect as commanded by the Emperor, who had also written to him to hasten Norris's journey to Court, because Aurangzib was then "very old"⁸ and desired to see the Ambassador before he

died. Furthermore, he was besieging a castle and wished that Norris might be present at its capture. Norris at once took the opportunity of enquiring about the Emperor's campaigns, and said how glad he would be to have an audience with him after he had completed them. The Governor readily gave him an account of Aurangzib's conquests, and asked Norris to tell him when he proposed to begin his journey, as the Emperor would expect to be informed of it. After some further conversation, betel and rose water were offered as a sign that the reception was ended. Norris took the betel as was customary and gave it to Rustamji, but he refused the rose water, as it was not offered by the Governor's own hands.³ Before taking his departure, Norris presented one of his best *palanquins* to the Governor.

The procession then resumed its march through the city to the New Company's factory, passing near the castle, from which another salute was fired in honour of the Ambassador. Vast crowds of people were assembled all along the route to see the spectacle, which, according to Norris, was "new & more splendid & Regular then ever they had seen before". While the procession was on its way the "great Codjee" [Qazi] passed by in his *palanquin*. Norris learnt that he was a personage of such great consequence that even the Emperor, his sons and other important persons were accustomed to alight from their *palanquins* and wait deferentially till he had passed by. Norris was naturally unaware of the custom, and even if he had known of it, would probably not have considered it consistent with his ambassadorial dignity to conform to it. He felt instinctively, however, that something was expected of him, so he ordered a member of his suite to convey a small present to the Qazi by way of atonement and as a mark of civility.

Norris was handsomely entertained at the New Company's factory by Waite, who ordered a salute of 31 guns to be fired in honour of the King of England and the Ambassador. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon Norris left in the same state, passing through Surat to his temporary residence in the Noquedah's garden,¹⁰ where he arrived in the evening.

These proceedings were closely watched by the Europeans, including the Old Company's servants, who were jealous of

Norris's reception by the Mughal Governor, though they admired the magnificence of the procession. In a letter to the Directors, Waite wrote that the "noble reception richness and decorum and order of his retinue and cavalcade was esteemed the greatest that ever was seen in these parts of the world". Several Mughal officials sent accounts of the reception to Court, and the Dutch and other Europeans were permitted to take copies of the proceedings.¹¹

After settling down in the garden, Norris officially announced to the Governor of Surat his position as Ambassador, and stated the causes which had led King William to establish a new Company with rights and privileges greater than those of the Old Company. Notwithstanding his knowledge of the new Act, Norris informed the Governor that the King had dissolved the Old Company, the accounts and claims of which were to be entirely discharged before September 29, 1701, warned him that the New Company was not responsible for any debts or misdemeanours of the Old Company, and assured him that his Company would conduct its trade and commerce in India with all honour and integrity. The Governor advised Norris to lay the matter before the Emperor.

Norris also, through Sir Nicholas Waite, notified all English subjects in or near Surat, including Sir John Gayer and others of the Old Company, that he had appointed the 28th instant for publicly reading His Majesty's commission at his tent, and inviting them to be present that they might be fully apprized of the character, power and authority with which he was invested.¹² Accordingly, at 10 o'clock on the morning of that day, President Waite, his Council, and the rest of the New Company's factory, together with Mr. Samuel Annesley and Mr. Vandure, formerly of the Old Company, and Captain Symmons, an interloper, waited upon His Excellency. There were also present the harkara and several Indian merchants, and Senior Pereira, a Jew.¹³ But not a single person in the service of the Old Company came, although President Colt and his colleagues sent a flattering letter to Norris, wishing him every success in his negotiations with the Emperor, and assuring him that his coming would prove of great benefit to all English subjects in protecting them against Mughal officials.

The King's commission to the Ambassador was read by Dr. Edward Norris, all present standing. The harkara and others desired to inspect the document and expressed their satisfaction with its contents, and before leaving the whole company complimented the Ambassador. The same night the harkara sent the purport of Norris's commission to the Mughal Court.¹⁴

The Ambassador was compelled to stay at Surat for a few weeks, during which time he received a number of visitors, amongst them Mughal officials, important local merchants, and other residents of foreign as well as of English nationality. One of his first Indian visitors was the Noqueda, or Chief Admiral, of the Mughal's men-of-war. The Noqueda was well received by Norris, with whom he had long discussions, particularly on the vexed question of piracies. Other visitors made spontaneous charges against the Old Company, and Norris gave a sympathetic hearing to all their representations in order to vindicate the King's honour as well as his own.

The harkara or Public Intelligencer, Hussain Hamidan, and several other merchants were admitted to the Ambassador's presence "in a large roome hansomely furnisht & sett out for yt purpose. The Roome was hunge wit fine scarlett cloth spreade over wth rich carpetts unless att ye upper end where I satt in a chaire of state wth all ye breadth of ye Roome & about 4 yards in length was spreade wth scarlett velvetts richly Embroyderd wth gold ye chaire where I satt & ye ffootstool ye same & on both sides my chaire great velvett cushuons laide of ye same Embroidery".¹⁵ After exchanging complimentary greetings, they represented to him the heavy debts¹⁶ owing to them and to the brokers by the Old Company. They implored Norris to have justice done to them; and considered that Diyanat Khan, the present Governor of Surat, was a "greate Rouge". Norris could not but wonder that such a charge should be brought against him, the Governor, publicly and in such plain terms. The merchants were then dismissed with "Bettle & Rose water brought in utensils of Gold made for yt occasion"; but the harkara remained and had a private conversation with him. The harkara assured Norris that he was a friend of the New Company and would always remain so. The visit was ended by drinking the health of the

Emperor and the King of England, in which Norris joined. The latter perceived that the harkara was accustomed to drink in company with Europeans, and gave him a case of spirits. He noted in his *Journal*: "All these Moores are very fond of these spiritts & ye most acceptable present can be made". The harkara went away very well pleased, at least to outward appearance.¹⁷

Abd-ul-ghafur, the most influential merchant at Surat of above 40 years standing, had the special honour of being privately received by the Ambassador—a mark of distinction not given to other merchants. Ghafur related his grievances against the Old Company, stating that the King of England had not been always properly informed of the transactions of his subjects in those parts, and giving his opinion that persons coming into a strange country should place before any consideration of their own profit and advantage the duty of conducting their affairs in such a way as would cause no reflection on their own King and country. The Old Company, he held, had humiliated both by all manner of villanies. Ghafur gave a vivid but somewhat exaggerated description of his losses. Norris shrewdly summed him up as "a subtle crafty fellow & though neare 80 yeares of age knew (how) to Introduce his story & tell it to all ye advantage imaginable".

Norris expressed his regret at hearing these allegations against his countrymen, and notified the merchants that those who had any demands upon the Old Company should take proper measures to obtain satisfaction. He asked Ghafur and the others to submit to him a written statement in English and Persian of their complaints, properly attested, against the Old Company and the Mughal officials associated with them, so that he might use it on his arrival at the Court in order to obtain satisfaction.¹⁸

On several occasions the Ambassador received Mr. Pedro Pereira, who offered his services and sent him a handsome present of provisions. They conversed on various subjects, and Norris found him "a man of sense & greate knowledge & experience in this country, as likewise ye Camp, where he had been some yeares scince". He consulted him as to the manner in which Europeans, especially of his own rank, should approach the Emperor, and how he might expect to be received. Pereira gave a decided

opinion that Norris would be received with great civility and respect, as the Emperor set a greater value upon a compliment sent from the King of England than one from the Grand Seignior, of whose ambassador, whilst at Court, little notice had been taken, and who had felt himself slighted. Pereira gave further information regarding court procedure at audiences. He hinted that the ministers would create insufferable delays and hindrances in the conduct of Norris's business, unless they were brought over to the New Company's interest by gifts; and said that next to presents of money, they set most store on "stronge spiritts wch all the Moores are fond of Exept ye Mogull who keepest strictly to his Religion & drinks none". He further added that the Emperor would never allow the English to take off the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. customs duty at Surat, because if he did so, all other nations would expect the same favour and he would thus lose a most valuable source of revenue, as the port yielded from nine to eleven lakhs of rupees annually.¹⁹

Pereira also gained further information from an Armenian, well acquainted with Court procedure, who had been twice at the Emperor's Camp, and had lived there some time in attendance on the Dutch envoy. Pereira told Norris that nothing was more necessary than to procure a man thoroughly conversant with the manners and customs of the Court. He could recommend no one of his own knowledge, but the person he had heard of who could best inform Norris was one "Johannes Pottvleet a flleminge Musitian to Osman Dara, an acquaintance & correspondent of Mr. Bouckers".²⁰ The Armenian had also told him that the Dutch envoy had had audience with the Emperor in "ye comon place of givinge audience", but, as Norris represented a crowned head, greater privileges might be accorded him than were allowed to the Dutch envoy. Further, the Armenian suggested that Norris should insist on having audience in the *Ghusal-Khanah*, or the private audience chamber, which was the most honourable, and where Norris, being allowed nearer approach to the Emperor's person, might not only with his own hand deliver the King's letter to him, but in the manner and custom of his own country might make only one low bow, though if the Emperor favoured him with a *serpaw*, or robe of honour, three bows must be made.

All the presents should be brought before the Emperor at the first audience, a list of them having been sent the previous day. In addition, Norris should offer him a present of gold *mohurs*. The Dutch envoy had presented 101 gold *mohurs*, but Norris, being of much higher rank, should offer double that number. He was warned to obtain a receipt for the sum at once, through his broker, from the officer appointed to receive it, otherwise the latter might call upon Norris, the following day, for the money. At the second audience Norris should offer a smaller sum, though with the same proviso. The Ambassador was also advised to make regular presents of money to four of the Emperor's mace-bearers, who would then always make a passage for him wherever he went; while further gratuities should be given to all the Mughal's officers acting as sentinels, so that they might readily make way for him and show him due respect, otherwise they might slight him. Norris's first audience with the Emperor should be of a ceremonial nature only, and afterwards he should request the Emperor to name the official with whom the business of the embassy should be conducted. The three *farmans* for the different factories should be procured at one time, as the trouble and expense would thus be less than if they were separately obtained.

Norris's first ceremonial visit should be paid to Asad Khan, the Grand Wazir; but he must not expect his visit to be returned, as the Emperor never permitted any of his ministers or Umaras to have any conversation with Europeans or other distinguished strangers without his permission. As an instance of this, Pereira told Norris, on the authority of the Armenian, that the Dutch envoy, whilst at the Emperor's Camp, had only visited the Grand Wazir and another important minister, and had refused the invitation of an Amir or nobleman to visit "a pretty garden within his Tent", because the latter did not wish to obtain the Emperor's leave for him to do so. Pereira said that as far as he could remember, the whole expense of the Dutch envoy's negotiations had amounted to Rs. 200,000, and he advised Norris that his negotiations should be chiefly transacted by his "procurator", empowered to negotiate with the minister appointed for the purpose. Moreover, Norris must strictly limit his visits and seldom go out.

on any account, as it was considered to be "ye greatest piece of Grandeur to be seldome seen".²¹

On the last day of the Christmas season Norris entertained at dinner, after the usual custom in England, Sir Nicholas Waite, the members of his Council, several English ladies and Mr. Pereira. Afterwards King William's health was drunk, and guns were fired from the two yachts lying at anchor near the garden.

It was natural that the Jesuits, the most influential of all the Roman Catholic Orders at Surat, should be desirous of paying their respects to an English Ambassador. Accordingly on January 10 (1701) Norris received "2 Jesuitts",²² one of whom had been resident at Surat for eight years, and the other had recently arrived from Europe. In order to avoid discussing any political or other matters he led them into giving an animated account of the "heathens" who had lately been converted as Christians. Norris wrote: "They tell of multitudes converted on ye other end of ye Malabar Coast, but wherever I goe I find very few converted on ye spott where I am, I told them I had seen St. Xavier's Tomb,²³ in one of ye Jesuitts Chappell att Goa who immediately asked whether they showd me his Body & havinge told ym No, They began to tell me yt it was brought over from China uncorrupted and remained soe yett & particularly yt his fleet were as white & fresh as when alive & his visage little altered: In Discourse of ye many converts he had made in China they attested wth greate confidence yt he had ye power given him of workinge miracles & yt he had raisd 3 from ye Deade".²⁴

The other Catholic priests at Surat were equally eager to make the acquaintance of the Ambassador, and within a week two Fathers belonging to another Order had an interview with him. Norris particularly appreciated the conversation of one of the Fathers who was a classical scholar. Of these two Fathers he writes: "2 French ffranciscan fryers²⁵ came to make me a visitt, one of ym had been in ye country for 17 yeares had travell over most parts & had been once att ye Mogulls Camp & Informed me yt he was att least 93 yeares old wch older by 6 yeares then I had heard yet Acquainted me likewise that he had receivd Intelligence yt Sultan Eckbar had left Persia & was come in disguise into India in order to make his pretentions to ye Crown att his fathers

death & yt he was now att Amadavad ye cheife city of Guzoratt wch would all declare for him as likewise would ye Rasbootes of whose cast [e] his mother²⁶ was. The good ffather seemed to be a very mortified & Religious man & I really believe was soe: I likd his company ye better for his speakinge ye best & most intelligible Latin of any I had mett wth yett att his goeing away I ordered him 20 Rupees".²⁷

Towards the end of January, Samuel Annesley, who congratulated Norris on his arrival at Surat, came to pay him a private visit. But knowing him to be "a crafty Designing knave", Norris avoided all discourse with him except on general matters and in relation to the debt of the Old Company incurred whilst Annesley was in its service.

Norris regretted that none of the Old Company's servants, nor the French or Dutch Directors, came to meet him, regarding their want of courtesy to the King's Ambassador as in some degree disrespectful to the King himself. He was confident that if the Old Company's servants had understood their own interest, and applied to him, it would have been possible for him to do them some signal service, which no one but himself could have done. It was now out of his power to do so. Probably Norris did not realise how much the Old Company's affairs in those parts would have suffered by any acknowledgment of a superior, which would have endangered its credit with the merchants.

Norris suspected that the Old Company's servants were intriguing with the French and Dutch Directors to show him disrespect. He trusted that the King of France would observe that one of his subjects was taking no notice of an Ambassador from his ally in a foreign country, and that the King of England, who was the Stattholder of Holland, would also have reason for resenting the conduct of the Dutch Director. It was clearly realised that the Dutch were so jealous of any other settlement in these parts, which might possibly interfere with their own, that they would spare no pains to obstruct its growth. Any rival in the spice trade would ruin them at once. The Dutch spent enormous sums in maintaining their settlements, and this expenditure could only be met if they retained a monopoly of the trade.²⁸ The profit they drew annually from India was by selling their spices, copper

and some other commodities brought from Japan, to the value of one million sterling; from some places they received money viz. from Surat annually six lakh of rupees, which was probably carried to Bengal and invested in goods there. The profits of their trade in Bengal were so great that they justified their reputation as men who would do or suffer anything for gain by tamely submitting to affronts which otherwise they would have resented.²⁹

The position of the Old Company's servants, already precarious, became more critical when Norris brought several charges against their chief, President Colt, and others, who had vilified King William, calling him a "madman and a fool" who, having first sold the trade of India to the New Company, had for gain restored it to the Old Company. Further, their masters in England were very powerful; they pretended that King James was their friend and, when restored to his throne, would make them sole possessors of the Indian trade. These statements were disclosed by Mir'Ali Naqi, who was reckoned to be, as Norris wrote : "A very cunning designing man soe of a certainty is accounted as greate a knave as liar his whole businesse is to gett as much money as can be scueezd from both Companys by pretending to be a greate freind & confident of both, and betrayinge both..."³⁰

Norris submitted a written statement to the Governor Diyanat Khan, regarding the slanders, amounting to high treason, made against the King. He insisted that the Governor should arrest Mr. Colt and "keep him in irons" till the Emperor had been acquainted with the circumstances and had issued his orders. If the Governor refused to comply, Norris threatened, it would be his duty to inform the King of England and also to acquaint the Emperor and demand satisfaction.

Gayer, who was anxiously watching the proceedings, sent a letter of protest to Norris by three servants of the Old Company's factory, who were refused admission. After reading the letter outside the compound, they threw it back inside the gate in derision. As a result they were immediately arrested and brought back, disarmed, and their necks tied to their thighs with cords. Charges were framed against them of forcible entry into Norris's precincts, which was contrary to international law and an indignity to the Emperor in whose dominion he was. They

protested their innocence and disclaimed any desire to seek favours from Norris, whereupon their cords were removed and they were set free on parole. A welcome meal followed, of "rosted fowles and a piece of beef boiled & carrots with one bottle of claret wine and another of water". Later they were even entertained in Mr. Harlewyn's tent with "claret, punch, pipes and tobacco".

In a written statement Norris informed the Governor of the incident and demanded that justice should be done upon the offenders. They were taken under escort to Diyanat Khan, "their hands being bound with a rope". Subsequently they were allowed to return to their factory on condition that they would not leave Surat without the Governor's permission.⁸¹ These proceedings naturally convinced the Mughal's officials and the local people that Norris had supreme authority over the English.

But this humiliation was not allowed to pass without a strong protest from Gayer and Colt to the Governor, stating that Norris could have had no authority to act thus directly against the Act of Parliament. Further they on their part called for justice to be done declaring that the Old Company's affairs were daily embarrassed and its servants notoriously abused by malicious men in the New Company's service. Other charges were brought against Waite and his colleagues of suborning servants and soldiers of the Old Company in order to strengthen the Ambassador's retinue. These men, they said, had received large promises and had been extravagantly treated by Waite, at whose instigation they perfidiously carried away some of the original papers, arms and ammunition from the Old Factory. Amongst the papers were several letters written by Gayer and Colt; these were delivered to Norris, who on perusing them found several passages expressing very material opposition to the embassy.

It was alleged that the Old Company's servants had not only given large sums to the Governor, but also had lavishly bribed the Qazi and the Diwan for their services and in order to engage them in their favour. The corruption of the local Mughal officials could not easily be fathomed except by those who had constant dealings with them. On the authority of those who were well-acquainted with their conduct, Norris re-

marked : "There is nothing of honour Truth or Justice. Money here does all thinges and nothinge to be effected but by dint of Bribery, and they are soe far from beinge ashamed to own it yt they will fairly tell those yt transact wth them the [sic] sums of money they are offerd on ye other hand & unlesse they are assured of a higher advance will not move a step". Considering that it was even contrary to his Christian code of morals, Norris declared that he would never be concerned "in person" in such detestable practices, even though circumstances might sometimes oblige him to wink at it. He proceeded to state that though this corruption prevailed among the chief ministers and officers, yet the Emperor himself was the very "patern of Justice & endowed wth all virtues that render princes amiable". He added that, being very old, Aurangzib was not so conversant with, or active in conducting State business as formerly, but that he never failed to give redress to the humblest of his subjects who complained of any injustice done to him. Nevertheless his officers were often induced by bribery to disobey the Emperor's direct commands and had even dared to ignore his repeated instructions.³²

Unsparring in their efforts to frustrate the embassy, the Old Company's servants at Surat had already despatched some Banians to Court and later sent an Armenian named Cojah Avennes, who had been employed there for several years. Governor Pitt had also sent an agent from Fort St. George to co-operate with them, and he desired to be informed of Norris's proceedings.³³ They were all entrusted with large sums with which to bribe the ministers at Court. The Dutch Company at Surat also sent a Procurator to join with them in defeating Norris's plans.³⁴ They were watching his proceedings with keen interest, expressing doubt about the success of his mission from the very beginning.³⁵

These activities induced Norris to recommend to the Secretary of State the necessity of King William's taking Bombay out of the Old Company's control on the termination of its charter. He argued that if it continued to be subject to the Old Company, its servants would constantly assert that theirs was the only settled Company and that it enjoyed the King's favour; moreover, it would appear to indicate that their outrages on the merchant ships were not resented in England. Other unfortunate consequences

might follow, seeing that having the harbour and fort for their security they would be able to commit daily outrages, and if this should happen whilst Norris was in India, he would be answerable for them.

Another cause of apprehension was the receipt of the copy of the Act of Parliament to which references have already been made. Any union or coalition with the Old Company at this juncture, Norris considered, would be the ruin of the New Company. In spite of the precautions taken by the authorities of the New Company to avoid any responsibility for the debts of the Old, the latter would refuse payment of them, and they would then be claimed from the New Company as the established body, under whose protection the Old Company's servants would shelter themselves. Nevertheless, the Ambassador hoped to bring matters to a successful conclusion.

Preparations for Norris's journey to Court had now been in progress for some time, and he was fully satisfied with the arrangements made by Waite. All the necessary conveyances and servants were in readiness. Waite discovered that the Old Factory's people had been tampering with a hundred peons by bribing them to desert the Ambassador between Surat and Aurangabad, and it was feared that the remainder might follow their example. They were therefore dismissed, and the Qazi promised to supply a similar number to take their places. This incident alarmed Norris; he determined to accept all the English soldiers who came to offer their services for his guard, and enlisted the men who came over from the Old Factory. Complicity in the plot was, however, denied and it was considered to have been a political trick on the part of Waite to cast odium on the Old Company's servants. Despite all these preparations and precautions, it was doubtful whether the embassy would ever reach its destination on account of the Emperor's constant warfare with the Marathas, which made the journey rather hazardous.

But the arrival of the two 'Eddys'⁸⁸ from the Emperor's camp with the *hasb-ul-hukm* and *dastak* kindled fresh hope in Norris's heart. These documents, which were, as usual, issued by Wazir Asad Khan, ordered the various officials to assist and conduct the Ambassador on his journey, and also instructed them

as to the conveyance of the presents to the Emperor. The 'Eddys', having been delayed on the way, had been 36 days in travelling to Surat. Norris received them and, according to their custom, they were allowed to sit in his presence. Rustamji took his seat with them, for Norris considered him to be "a very subtell Intelligent adroit man".

There were other difficulties to overcome, for Waite had not yet been able to procure a good interpreter at Surat. The best man available was the Company's chief broker, Rustamji, who knew Portuguese but did not understand English. There was little prospect of transacting business with either honour or security, except through Mr. Mill, who with great diligence had acquired a moderate knowledge of Persian. It was hard to find an Indian interpreter, Dr. Edward Norris thought, who was wholly qualified to serve the Ambassador, whose expectations were high, and not one of them was "proof against the temptation of gold".³⁷ Consequently all the more important business was entrusted to Mr. Mill, though at the same time Rustamji was unanimously chosen to accompany Norris as a 'go-between', till an able interpreter was sent.³⁸ Waite entertained a high opinion of Rustamji's ability; he was well acquainted with the "misterious intreagues of these people and capable to prevent the impolice and chargeable projections of our hot brethren". Though Rustamji complained that he would lose much by leaving Surat, he nevertheless refused any gratuity from the Ambassador in the hope that the Directors would confer upon him a medal, chain and some rare object of value in recognition of his faithfulness in promoting the New Company's interests.³⁹

Some marks of honour were immediately bestowed upon Rustamji. On Waite's advice, Norris presented him with a horse handsomely accoutred and also "a rich vest & Turbatt". After receiving these presents Rustamji made three *salams* on the ground, and at once put on the habit. Norris then placed a shawl round his shoulders, which was taken as the greatest mark of honour that could be shown him. As acknowledgment of his gratitude, Rustamji knelt down and kissed Norris's shoe and made again three *salams* to the ground. He rode home upon the horse wearing the robe of honour, and received congratulations and presents

from all his community, friends and acquaintances, as well as from those who hoped to obtain employment under him. In remarking that Rustamji belonged to the Parsi sect, Norris wrote that the chief feature of that religion consisted in "worshipinge fire or wt they judge to be soe, viz. sun, moon & stars & pay great veneration to any sort of fire wch they reckon a greate crime to extinguish & soe have some constantly kept burninge, this man has some yt has been preservd for 100 yeares & upwards".⁴⁰ Rustamji's going to Court alarmed the Governor Diyanat Khan, who knew that Rustamji was aware of his taking bribes and other rogueries and feared an exposure at Court.

One Muhammad Hakim Salih, who had already proved himself faithful to the New Company's interest, was appointed Wakil or agent by President Waite to negotiate the whole business of the Company with the Mughal officials till a resident should be settled at Court.⁴¹

There was also need for a medical adviser. Mr. John Maxwell, surgeon of the New Company's Factory, was appointed to attend His Excellency to Court, but was dismissed while Norris was at Burhanpur, and on his return to Surat, continued his lewd life of debauchery. Waite often admonished him to change his way of life, but as that proved impossible, he was finally dismissed from the New Company's service.

Before leaving Surat, Norris tried to appease the Mughal's local officials and outdo the Old Company by giving various presents, consisting of sundry European commodities to the amount of Rs. 1800, to each according to his rank and dignity. The recipients of these were the Governor, his son, the Harkara, the Wakia'nawis and the holy priest, two of whom were not altogether satisfied with their presents, regarding them as not being of sufficient value. Norris was surprised and resented their conduct. In his opinion the gifts were valuable, and even if they were not, they ought to have been prized as coming from the Ambassador. It was beneath his dignity to have his presents closely scrutinised.⁴²

The question of finance had yet to be settled. The intention of the Court of Directors was that expenses should be defrayed mainly from the profits of the Factory at Surat. The amount they had voted seemed to be insufficient seeing that the

Old Company's servants had lately remitted large sums to Court to defeat the objects of the embassy. To outbid it Norris suggested to President Waite that "large gratuities and private remittances" in money should be given to the Emperor, his chief Ministers and others at Court. But as he was not authorised by the Directors to make money presents in order to gain immunities and privileges without the consent of the President and his Council, he asked for full powers to act.

At the outset Norris was unable to procure the amount required to reimburse the Masulipatam Factory for what it had already spent.⁴³ The *Albemarle* had not yet arrived from England, and as there was not sufficient stock to load the *Montague*, he was advised to carry with him about Rs. 50,000 in specie and a credit for Rs. 100,000 in good bills, as that amount of money might be needed at Court. These sums were additional to what had already been spent at Surat, the other sums which had had to be paid to the Indian servants, and used for the hire of carts, etc., and other expenses. But this plan failed on account of the artifices used by the Old Factory, its brokers, and the *banians* in general to put a stop to all remittances and loans. By giving personal security, Waite raised Rs. 40,000, which was appropriated to Norris's expenses on the way to the Camp, and promised to send bills for the Rs. 100,000 after his departure from Surat.⁴⁴ He further recommended the Ambassador to write to President Littleton in Bengal asking for a credit of Rs. 50,000, in the hope that a total sum not exceeding Rs. 200,000 would be sufficient to bring the embassy to a successful conclusion. At the same time Waite advised Norris to effect the business speedily, taking advantage of the natural covetousness not only of the ministers, but also of the Emperor himself. Aurangzib's long warfare had exhausted his resources, while his annual revenues, to the great discontent of those who were heaping up wealth against the sudden change daily expected by his death, were insufficient to meet the State expenditure.

As regards the privileges and immunities to be solicited from the Emperor in the interest of the New Company's settlements in India, Norris was advised by President Waite and his Council, if Aurangzib died before his arrival at the Camp, to return imme-

diately to Surat. If, on the other hand, that event happened while Norris was at the Camp, he must use his own discretion as to the best course to pursue. Considering the great age of the Emperor, and the methods employed by the Old Company to frustrate his negotiations, it would be desirable to demand *farman*s for the three factories at Surat, Masulipatam and Hugli, with such grants as had been hitherto enjoyed by the Old or any other European Companies in those places. They pointed out, however, that, as it was the Emperor's custom to consult the local authorities before granting these, and a *farman* for Surat had already been granted at Waite's request and on the favourable report of the Governor, this *farman* which was still lying unsealed should be taken at first and properly completed.⁴⁵ Then the other two would be more easily obtained, and Norris could offer to supply the Emperor with 6,000 maunds of lead yearly at six rupees to be paid out of the customs. This would be of great service to the Company, and prevent many inconveniences caused in the past by the Governor's interference with the sale of that commodity. He was also warned not to apply for any new concessions until the customary grants had first been passed, as this would facilitate the securing of others. Waite and his Council declared that the total exemption from customs sought by the Directors would never be granted; in place of that, Norris should agree to the late Governor Amanat Khan's proposal to King William that a new Company should be granted large privileges on condition that it undertook to convoy the Surat ships to and from Mokha. In return Norris should ask for an annual grant of six lakhs of rupees, to be paid to the New Company for the expenses of the convoy, and also free of any customs duties payable by President Waite, in whose name the *farman* for Surat would be granted.⁴⁶ This arrangement, in their opinion, would be a benefit rather than a loss to the New Company.⁴⁷

Norris, for his part, hoped to obtain for the New Company immunities which no other European nation had enjoyed. He was not perturbed on learning that Diyanat Khan had written to Arshad Khan⁴⁸ in favour of the Old Company,⁴⁹ asking him to influence the Emperor not to grant the Ambassador any *farman* without first consulting him and obtaining security for the protec-

tion of the merchant ships belonging to the Emperor's subjects from pirates. Nor was he less confident that he would be received with respect greater than that paid to any other Ambassador at Court, provided that the aged Emperor's life were prolonged and his own life spared.

The draft of a *farman* for Surat was delivered to Norris, incorporating in it the articles of the *farman* which Waite had already sent to the Emperor. Some alterations were made and a few new articles added to it by Norris in the course of his negotiations at Court.

The *farman* requested that the Emperor would grant freedom of trade in order that factories might be erected at either Surat, Broach, Cambay, Akbarabad, Ahmadabad, Sind or in any other parts or ports in the Emperor's dominions. It asked that the factors should have liberty to rent houses and land for building purposes in their various settlements; that they should be allowed to pass from any of the said places, buying and selling goods and merchandise without hindrance from anybody; and that a convenient plot of ground near each factory should be granted for a cemetery.

It was further requested that a piece of ground on the river-side outside Surat should be granted for a port, and also for building a warehouse near the town gate, where goods could be stored until cleared by the Mughal's customs officers. The President and all others, both men and women of the New Company, were to have free egress and ingress between the town and any place or destination they chose. No obstruction was to be offered to the conveyance of goods and merchandise imported from England and other countries into Surat or other ports, or to their transfer to Akbarabad, Ahmadabad or any other place for sale, or to the conveyance of goods from those places to Surat, or to any other port or place. The factors should be permitted to ship or sell them as they pleased and be not required to pay a higher customs duty than that at the rate of *two per cent* paid by the Old Company. The *farman* asked that when goods were entered and valued, the Mutasaddis⁵⁰ of the said ports should give a certificate thereof, and settle their accounts annually with the New Company. No second customs duty should be exacted for bullion.

brought from England or any other place to Surat, Cambay or any other port, and if this was unsold and in consequence re-exported the same concession should be extended. Goods bought at Akbarabad, Ahmadabad or other places in the Emperor's dominions, which had once been entered at the customs house at Surat, Cambay, or any other port, and, after having been sent to a ship, had been returned and placed on board for a second time, should be free of any second customs duty. It was requested that all goods intended for any other port, but landed at Suali for convenience while the ships were being cleaned or repaired, should later, when returned to the ship, be similarly free of a second customs duty. Goods and curiosities should not be sold or taken away by force by the Governors or officers of the said places, without the consent of the Company's servants; on the other hand the Faujdars, and other Mughal officers on the road, were to convey the same through their respective Governments with safety and give all necessary assistance. The Company should be indemnified by the local Mughal officer for any goods purchased in the Emperor's dominions and stolen in transit.

The *farman* further requested liberty to establish a place for the mint in which all the New Company's gold and silver brought to Surat from England or any other place could be coined without any demand or molestation on the part of the officers. It asked the Emperor to command that the bullion and merchandise of the ships of the New Company should be landed and placed in the separate warehouse situated near the river within the wall of the town, the key of this warehouse to remain with the customs officers.

Large guns, anchors, lead and similar articles of all kinds which the Company might bring to Surat, Cambay, or any other port, if they were brought for the Emperor, should be sold to him at the market price, and the remainder should be sold at the Company's discretion. The various breeds of horses brought from England, Arabia, Persia, or any other place to Surat, Cambay, or other ports in the Emperor's dominions, were to be free from the Governor's and officer's seal of wax fixed on their necks, except the horses intended for the Emperor's service, which were to be sold at a fixed price and paid for in ready money. The

Company should be permitted to sell the horses to any one, either at Surat or elsewhere within the Emperor's dominions, without interference. Whenever any of the New Company's ships was sent from Surat or any other port to Arabia, Bunder Abbas or any other place, all merchants, subjects of the Emperor, and others should have free liberty to place their goods on board the ships without molestation.

The *farman* asked that provisions, apparel, wrought plate, jewels and necessaries brought ashore from the New Company's ships or sent on board should be free of customs duty, and that the port officers should clear them at once without taking them to the customs house. No books or papers of the Company brought from England or elsewhere, either on their arrival or on their transmission to any town or factory, should be opened or taken away by the Emperor's officers.

All persons leaving the factory or ships without permission should be arrested and handed over to the President of the Company. The factory should be allowed to employ its own broker, and if he was found guilty of any crime at any time, a report was to be made to the President.

The Mutasaddi was to insist on immediate payment being made to the Company by all merchants who were in debt to it or subject to any demands, and all Englishmen residing in the Emperor's dominions were to be answerable for their own debts or misdemeanours, but not accountable for those of any other person.

The *farman* requested that all differences and disagreements between any of the King of England's subjects in those parts should be settled by the President, and that the Emperor should command his officials everywhere to permit the President to act in all such cases according to his commission and the laws and constitution of England. An Englishman found guilty of any crime should be punished by the President, the Mughal's subjects by the Mutasaddi. The President should have power to arrest any of the factory's servants for debts or misdemeanours and to detain them till satisfaction had been given.

It requested, further, that the President should be permitted to fly the King of England's flag on the factory, and on State

occasions to have the same borne before him, and that he should be authorised to have the use of trumpets, *palanquin*, coaches, horses, etc. and to employ as many servants as he thought necessary. These privileges were to be granted only to those English subjects who were empowered by the King of England.

Furthermore, it asked that whatever favours, privileges or immunities were enjoyed at the present time or might in future be granted to any other Europeans, within the Emperor's dominions, should in like manner be enjoyed by the New Company.⁵¹

Waite offered some advice to Norris as to his conduct on the journey. As the circumstances required the utmost speed, he hoped that the Ambassador would stay at Burhanpur as short a time as possible, and that, taking such provisions as were obtainable there, he would proceed on the remaining stages of his journey to the Imperial Camp, which was upwards of 40 *corse* towards Goa. The Emperor was leaving Wazir Asad Khan to secure Burhanpur not only against the enemy, the Marathas, but also against his second son, 'Sultan Osman Shah',⁵² who, having been ordered to assist the Governor of another province, was encamped near that place, and was suspected of intriguing with the enemy in the hope of obtaining their help upon his father's death. Norris, he said, would receive better advice at Burhanpur as regards a visit to this prince, but he was urged not to fail to pay his respects to the Wazir, whose influence might prejudice Norris, or, on the other hand, might secure his safe-conduct to the Camp.

The Ambassador was also made acquainted by Waite with the attitude and character of the various Mughal officials at Court who had to be approached for business negotiations, and was given a particularly lucid account of the forces working for and against the two Companies. This showed clearly how divided the Emperor's officials were with regard to the affairs of the Companies—as much so as the servants of the Companies themselves. Norris was advised of the necessity of securing the interest of Arshad Khan, who as 'Governor' of the Emperor's household naturally possessed no slight influence over Aurangzib. Unfortunately, Arshad Khan was a prominent partisan of the Old Company, at any rate for the moment. He was brother-in-law

to the Governor of Surat, and might be influenced through Waite's friendship with his son. Arshad Khan was an enemy of Asad Khan, the Wazir and favourite of the Emperor. Asad had not yet declared himself for either Company. Waite, therefore, suggested that it would require great tact, and diplomacy on the part of the Ambassador to secure and keep the good offices of these two highly placed persons.

There was also a strong faction on which the New Company could rely as being the enemies of the Old. These were described by Waite as "men of honour". Mukhlis Khan, "second Treasurer of the Horse", in great esteem with the Emperor, could be recommended to the Ambassador; so could Rahullah Khan II, "High Steward", and "Duke" Yar Ali Beg, first "Arasbekee" [*Ara'idbak*], whose "virtue and integrity" made him pre-eminent in the Emperor's favour. The latter was the principal advocate and patron of the New Company. Further, Yar Ali received no bribes and devoted all his energies to the promotion of the honour and welfare of his sovereign and country, and was a good friend of Arshad Khan. Norris was advised especially to consult Yar Ali Beg, and to choose him as the person who should introduce him into the Emperor's presence from time to time and otherwise act as a medium.

Behind each of these leading personages in each party, friendly, hostile or neutral, were subordinates, whose characters were succinctly summarised. Those officials who were neutral carried the greater weight with the Emperor, and Waite asked Norris to influence them in his interest. Munim Khan, second "Arasbekee", the chief advocate of the Old Company, might "secretly be gained"; Multafat Khan, "a Councillor" had not much interest with the Old Company; Abdul Rahaman Khan, "second Judge"⁵³ of the Court, was entirely at the service of the Old Company, and could not be secured for the New. Saf Shikan Khan, commander of the artillery [*Mir-i-atish*], was unreliable and had no influence with the Emperor. Among the neutrals were Tarbiyat Khan, a "councillor" and Bahramand Khan, "Chief Treasurer" of the horse.

There were also lesser satellites, such as Dianat Rai, of the "cuttaree" [*Khatri*] caste; Bhaskar Rai and Gokuldas Banian,

permanent residents at Court, were "procurators" of the Old Company.⁵⁴

Norris was warned to be careful in his treatment of these officials, both in his deportment and in general behaviour under new and strange circumstances, so that he might not make enemies among them by any omission. A false step was easy, for the customs and the treatment of strangers in the Court of the proud and arbitrary Emperor differed from the usage of the Royal Courts of Europe. Aurangzib styled himself "King of the World", and in the minds of his subjects, his great ministers were considered equal or little inferior to other kings. None of these ministers, Norris was informed, would concede any seniority when he visited them, and might become his enemies instead of friends if any difference was made in their reception, or if they were expected to sit in equal state with him. Any departure from this procedure might prejudice the prospects of the embassy.⁵⁵

In the meantime, preparations for the departure of the embassy were hastened, and on January 25, 1701, tents were struck in readiness for the Ambassador's keenly anticipated journey to the Emperor's Camp.

NOTES

¹ P. 6 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*, Bodleian.

² Knowing that the passing of the Act might embarrass Norris's negotiations, Waite strongly advised him to ignore it entirely, though he sent to Norris copies of the two bills which had received the Royal Assent, one restraining Indian goods and the other relating to the Old Company. See pp. 7, 13, *Ibid.*

³ P. 15, *Ibid.*

⁴ Thomas Pitt in one of his letters rightly observed that, as Sir William Norris spent large sums of money to secure his reception at Surat, the *Umaras* at Court would certainly expect to receive from him sums amounting to twenty times as much. See *Letters from Fort St. George, 1700-1701*, Vol. X, No. 3, India Office.

⁵ Norris referred to Ghafur as "ye Richest Merchant in Suratt a Moor sole proprietor of 20 large vessels & worth (as it said) 800,000 sterling". See p. 18 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁶ P. 19, *Ibid.*

⁷ No. 7308 of *O.C. 56-III*.

⁸ On January 18 (1701), Mr. Thomas Harlewyn in his letter to the Company mentioned that the Emperor was 92 years of age on the 4th of November last. See 7872 of *O.C. 56-IV*.

* Norris recorded that there were sitting on the carpet at the Governor's house "ye Mogulls secretary who tooke minutes of all yt was saide & passd, & others likewise of ye same nature yt wrote down their Remarks, all wch is sent to ye Mogull". See p. 20 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁰ The garden was described by Norris as "a very convenient & pleasant place, but Suratt (att least as much as I saw of it) worse yn most country market Townes in England". He also despatched two letters, one to the Secretary of State, and the other to the Court of Directors giving a complete account of the proceedings.

¹¹ No. 7478 of *O.C. 56-IV*.

¹² P. 21 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹³ Pereira had been a resident for fourteen years at Surat, and was employed by diamond merchants in London, receiving a 10 per cent. commission. One of Pereira's brothers in London was a special friend of Norris. Probably the former had sent his respects to the Ambassador. See p. 27, *ibid*.

¹⁴ No. 7478 of *O.C. 56-IV*.

¹⁵ P. 24 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁶ The amount of these debts stated by the merchants to Norris differed from that put before him by Messrs. Thomas Lovell and Samuel Annesley, formerly of the Old Company. However exaggerated the merchants' statement might be, there was no doubt that their claims, as well as the debts to the brokers, amounted to a huge sum. The adjustment of these debts, it appeared to Norris, would be very difficult, for neither had the factors at Surat kept any account of them, nor were they entered in their London books. The factors relied solely upon the honesty of the brokers to appraise the correct value and quantity of the goods provided by them for shipment to England. See p. 47 of *Rawl. MS. C. 912*; pp. 30-31 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁷ The *harkara* was anxious to send Norris some Indian dishes and made him a present of "severall large dishes of meate dressd after their fashion". Norris made a present of Rs. 20 to the man who brought it, and "likd ye lookes of one dish so well wch they call Cabob yt I ordrd it to be brought to ye table att dinner & eate very heartily of it & was indeed very palatable & good". See p. 40 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁸ Mr. Pereira advised Norris to make use of an instance which had happened eight years earlier, when several pirates were "seizd att Goga about 30 leagues to Southward of Surratt & carryd up in chaines to ye Mogull upon their submission & askinge forgiveness he pardoned ym all". Pereira suggested that if Norris had an opportunity of discussing the question of piracy with the Emperor, he might advantageously point out that the clemency then shown was probably one of the causes of the later piracies. See p. 45, *ibid*.

¹⁹ Pp. 37-38, *ibid*.

²⁰ See *ante* Johannes Baccherus.

²¹ Pp. 35-36 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²² It is difficult to identify these two Jesuits on such indefinite clues. The Jesuit house at Surat was established some time after 1650. Many Jesuits passed through Surat on their way to Siam and China. They were generally non-Portuguese, and came overland to Bassora or Ormuz, and so to Surat. The late Revd. Father H. Hosten, S.J., suggested that the Jesuit who had lived for eight years at Surat was probably Father Peter

Diusse, who wrote a letter from Surat, dated January 28, 1701, to the Rev. Father Director of the French Missions to China and East India (See Vol. X, pp. 234-5 of *Lettres Edifiantes Et Curieuses, Paris, 1781*). As regards the other Jesuit, the Very Rev. Father Felix, O.M.C., of Lahore suggested that he might have been Father Philippe d'Avril.

²² The sarcophagus of St. Francis Xavier was erected in the Church of Bom Jesus at Goa in 1624. Dr. John Fryer and Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri also visited the Church during their stay in India, and both gave a short description of the sarcophagus in their books. See Vol. II, p. 12 of Fryer's *A New Account of East India and Persia*, edited by W. Crooke, London, 1912; also p. 251 of Careri's *A Voyage Round the World*.

²³ P. 48 of Rawl. MS. C. 913.

²⁴ Father Hosten considered that the above two Friars were really Capuchins, who were settled at Surat in 1639. He also suggested that one of them might have been Father Francois Marie of Tours, who was in Rome in 1703 and there defended the Capuchin claims about the Malabar parish in Pondicherry. While at Surat, Father Francois wrote a *Thesaurus Linguae Indianae*, which in 1704 reached the library of the Propaganda, Rome. He may have been the fluent Latin speaker referred to by Norris. See Vol. IV, p. 288 of *Storia do Mogor*; also pp. 193-4 of *Paulinus, a. s. Bartholomaeo India Orientalis Christiana, Rome, 1794*.

²⁵ The mother of Prince Muhammad Akbar, the fourth son of Aurangzib, was not a Rajput. Her name was Dilras Banu Begam, daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan and she was connected with the Persian royal family. Akbar revolted against his father in 1681 and conspired with the Rajputs to gain the throne. As a result he was forced to leave India, and took refuge at the Court of the Shah of Persia in 1688. He endeavoured once more to invade India and proceeded as far as Multan at the head of 12,000 Persian cavalry, but was repulsed by Shah Alam. He never reached Ahmadabad as the Franciscan Father asserted. He died in Persia in 1704. See Vol. III, pp. 51-52, 354-359 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; also Vol. II, p. 322 of *Storia do Mogor*.

²⁶ P. 55 of Rawl. MS. C. 913.

²⁷ P. 52, *Ibid.*

²⁸ P. 45, *Ibid.*

²⁹ P. 47, *Ibid.*

³⁰ No. 7386 of O.C. 56-IV.

³¹ No. 7412, *Ibid.*

³² Vol. III, p. lxx of Hedge's *Diary*.

³³ No. 7878 of O.C. 57-III, para. 25.

³⁴ *Dutch Records*, 1st Series, Vol. LVI, No. 1765, pp. 16-17.

³⁵ *Gurz-bardars* or mace-bearers.

³⁶ O.C. 56-IV, No. 7377.

³⁷ It was felt that Rustamji could be ill-spared from Surat, and in his absence two of his nephews had to manage the business of the New Company's factory. *Ibid.*, No. 7406.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 7478.

³⁹ P. 39 of Rawl. MS. C. 913.

⁴⁰ O.C. 56-II, No. 7134.

⁴¹ P. 49 of Rawl. MS. C. 913.

⁴³ No. 7284 of O.C. 56—III.

⁴⁴ P. 63 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴⁵ No. 7370 of O.C. 56—IV.

⁴⁶ No. 7380, *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ It should be noted that Waite and his Council, in their letters to Norris, meddled in some matters outside their sphere, whereas other affairs were treated in abstruse and ambiguous terms, especially in relation to the disposal of sums of money. See p. 56 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴⁸ Arshad Khan Mir Abul ula was a nephew of Amanat Khan Khwafi. For a long time he had been Governor of Kabul, and in 1697-8 came to Aurangzib's Court, where he succeeded Kifayat Khan in the office of *Diwani-i-Khalisa*. By honesty, uprightness and his admirable grasp of State business, he became a great favourite with the Emperor. This rousing jealousy and envy of his colleagues, he was never free from trouble and enjoyed no peace of mind. He died in 1700-1. See Vol. I, pp. 290-91 of *Maasir-ul-Umara*, by Nawab Shamshadul-Doula Shah Nawaz Khan.

⁴⁹ Thomas Pitt wrote to President Colt that he had received information from Court which implied that Diyanat Khan seemed to be in the Old Company's interests, and his son in Sir William's, but that neither of them could be trusted. See verso 71 of *Addl. MS. 22, 843*, British Museum.

⁵⁰ Accountants.

⁵¹ No. 7552 of O.C. 57—I, also No. 7060 of O.C. 56—I.

⁵² Norris really meant Prince Muhammad Azam Shah (1653-1707). He was the third son of Aurangzib, but as his eldest brother, Prince Muhammad Sultan, died in 1676, he became the second of the four sons alive at that time. See Vol. I, p. 62 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*, 1925.

⁵³ The Chief Mufti.

⁵⁴ No. 7067 of O.C. 56—I.

⁵⁵ No. 7380 of O.C. 56—IV.

CHAPTER VIII

On the Way to the Imperial Court

A definite stage in the fortunes of the embassy had now been reached. Norris, after alternations of hope and despair, at last found himself able to set his face towards his long-anticipated goal. At this moment the future assumed a brighter hue for him; he had now every reason to believe that he would return to his own country with some solid proof that his diplomacy had not been unsuccessful.

Norris's journey to the Mughal Court through three provinces, with its attendant dangers and difficulties, proved to be long and tedious; moreover, though in many ways full of interest, it was undertaken at an inopportune moment, as the aged Emperor was then personally directing military operations against the various Maratha hill-forts, while his generals were engaged in attacking the enemy in the open country, to complete the subjugation of the Western Deccan. The Marathas promptly took advantage of the weakness of the Imperial troops in morale and discipline by counter-attacking them. Their predatory raids became more frequent, and their systematic attacks and relentless devastation of the Mughal territories created terror in the Emperor's Army. Further, as will be shown in the account of Norris's journey, bands of private robbers profited by this state of affairs and joined the Marathas.

On the morning of January 27, 1701, Norris took his departure from Surat. Naturally, the event was marked by the ceremonial due to a Royal embassy. President Waite, with his Council and the staff of the New Company's Factory, also Mr. Pedro Pereira and Mr. George Bowcher, came to wait on His Excellency. It was an imposing spectacle. As soon as the carriages and camels had started with all the equipment and baggage, accompanied by the four pieces of ordnance, and the soldiers for his guard in readiness, Norris entered his *palanquin* and set off with flags flying on his journey towards the Emperor's

Camp, in much the same manner in which he had entered Surat.¹ The mission was so well-equipped, and everything was in such good order, as to remove any apprehension of Norris being attacked on the way.

At Salabatpura, just a mile out of the town, President Waite and those who accompanied him alighted from their *palanquins* and coaches and bade farewell to His Excellency, wishing him all health, happiness and success in his mission. To his surprise Norris found that Muhammad Murad Khan,² who had charge of the Emperor's revenue, brought from Ahmadabad, lay encamped at this place in a most disorderly state. He desired to join Norris's convoy, but as he was not ready by the time appointed, the Ambassador did not think it fit to delay his journey for a moment. After three days' march, however, Murad Khan overtook the Ambassador, sent him his compliments and presented him with some partridges. Norris duly sent a gift in return.

The first day Norris travelled about seven *kos*³ to Nagdev Bawdi. The country was pleasant, but he found deep sands in some places, which caused several of the carts and carriages to break down. This trouble was due chiefly to the greed of the owners, who, as they were paid according to the weight carried by the carts, deliberately overloaded them. Norris remained there for two days till other carts arrived from Surat. He encamped near a mosque, where was "a large Tank of water to wch you descended about 15 steps & arched over". Mr. Jeremiah Bonnell, Mr. John Lock of the Surat Council, and Mr. Dudley, steward of the factory, with Captain Douglas of the *Somers* and Captain Caulier of the *Montague*, who accompanied Norris during the first day's journey, remained with him and took leave of him after two days.⁴ Captain Douglas had an accident in which his horse, which was borrowed from the French Director by Mr. Bonnell, broke its foreleg. Norris immediately ordered compensation to be paid for it; Waite was to pay for the loss and place it to the Company's account. The horse was brought to his camp, and the next morning it was delivered to the 'Moore's', who cut its throat and "feasted deliciously of it. That being one of their chiefest daintys". Whilst Norris was here, two closed hackeries arrived with women, coming from Persia, and

bound for the Emperor's Camp; they also wished to take advantage of the Ambassador's convoy.

After a restful night, Norris set out with his party early in the morning and travelled through very pleasant country to Bardoli. About half way there, he stopped at a garden where there was a tank, and allowed his servants and the cattle to drink water from it. The name of the place was Jug-bawdi. A mile further on, he came to *Bhima Parak Talao*, a tank built by the Old Company's broker of that name. Near it was another small tank called *Sunnar Kuwa*, well excavated by a goldsmith. As soon as Norris had settled down in his tents with his entourage, he considered the best method of getting daily provisions, and ordered a thorough review of all the routine of the mission—accounts, encampment and order of march—so that everyone should know his duties. Next day he marched along a sandy road through open country to Valod. The land hereabouts was very rich and fruitful; several fields of corn, supposed to be the later crop, were seen.

Continuing his march through similar country, he encamped on February 1st 1701 on a fine open plain, surrounded at a distance by low hills, just beyond Vyara, a town with some trade. The chief Banian of the town visited the Ambassador and paid his respects to him. In the town Norris saw a very large *cara-vansarai*,⁵ walled in like a castle, and also a cemetery less than a quarter of a mile away. Vyara, as he described it, "stands like Newmarkett, a Town in the middle of a large champaign country, but this place has ye advantage of ye richnesse & fertility of ye soyle beinge ye best" he had yet seen. On his way to this town, he met a *kephala* or convoy of Prince Azam Shah, which was going to Surat and other places to collect revenue due to the Prince arising from and being "settled on ye produce of ye adjacent places". Norris obtained this information from an Englishman who had been in the Prince's service for fifteen years, drawing a salary of Rs. 15 per month without any increment. He also learned that Azam Shah had just received advice from Court that his father, Aurangzib, was dying and that for three days he had not spoken to anybody, "soe was concluded deade & yt he was sendinge about ye Country to gett as much money as he could

& gaine as many freindes" in order to dispute the succession with his brothers.

As the following day was Sunday, Norris rested in his camp; but he was startled to see that about "100 of the Mogull's Horses" came up and encamped near him. On Monday morning he resumed his march and passed through Khekra [Khekde], a small village. Here he saw a large *caravansarai* which was the common camping-ground, but he did not stay there in order to save time. He passed two small rivers and halted near two tanks, the best he had as yet seen on the road. Norris observed: "This country if cultivated would produce any thinge, but there beinge no property it is not regarded, wee mett wth no Towns or people as in Europe but a few thatcht or Cajan houses & those very rarely".⁶ He encamped at a village called Gadhi-Chauki, surrounded at a distance of half a mile by hills covered with brushwood, amongst which were several of the "Rajahs people as they call them that are a sort of Robbers yt live in ye woods & watch their opportunity to plunder those they can or dare". For this reason Norris kept good watch and "showd English colours yt they might know who wee were". On the evening of that day the son of "Rajah Ginae,"⁷ who "is a Tributary to ye Mogull & has about 15 townes under him", sent his compliments and expressed a desire to see the Ambassador. Not wanting to be troubled with him, Norris sent word that he did not receive visits so late. The Rajah's son was, therefore, escorted to his tent by Rustamji, who gave him rose-water and betel; but as he was still insistent that he should just have a look at Norris, the latter gave him the opportunity by walking out round his encampment. The son paid his respects to Norris the next morning by waiting on him for two miles with his guard, and, when taking his leave, offered to go further with him if he wished.⁸

The next place Norris reached after a long day's march, was Navapur.⁹ Here he had some difficulty with a sort of customs house officer, who demanded a duty of 3 pice per cart and carriage and stopped some of the foremost vehicles. The man was arrested, and the local Mughal representative was informed of his conduct. Norris encamped here in a shady garden of mango trees, which were then in blossom and were very re-

freshing and sweet. There was a large square *caravansarai* near the place, built by an unmarried daughter¹⁰ of Aurangzib. This Princess had built 14 other *caravansarais* on the roads out of charity to poor travellers and merchants. Norris was curious to see this *caravansarai*; it was a "square of about 100 yards & on each side of the square are doores like a College wch leades to a little apartment wch ye first comer may take as he pleases; they are very dirty & nasty, fitt for nobody but carters & camel drivers. About ye midle of ye square stands a little mosck [mosque] where I saw several of ye Moores att their Devotion, near ye mosck was a little square buildinge for a Hamham.¹¹ The walls & ye 2 Gates you goe in & out are stronge enough to preserve any Travellers yt make use of ym from ye Insult of Robbers".¹²

Norris resumed his march through a very fruitful country, growing an abundance of wheat and other grain such as he had not yet seen. The wheat here was bearded just like barley in England, but the grain seemed to him much the same. There was also growing a "greate quantity of sun(n) as ye natives called it", but he believed it to be 'gun' [goon] of which they made coarse cloth for sacking called 'gunny'. He wrote that the stem "resembles flax & it is drest after ye same manner, but ye seed grows different in a little yellowish pod $\frac{1}{2}$ inch longe of a purple colour shapd like a crescent & longer then any aple seed: wth this plant they made their paper."¹³ Several small rivers were crossed, the last of which was called *Sampoorn*,¹⁴ its water was poisonous, especially in the rainy season. About half a mile before encamping at "Seravy Cawzee"¹⁵ [Sarai Kazi], Norris passed through a town called "Isalerry" [Visarvadi?], which was newly built. He noticed that most of the houses were built of rushes and very low—really huts rather than houses. There was a sort of guard at this place, as in other small towns. Mountains, called *ghats*,¹⁶ ran for a long distance on his right hand, but up to now they were neither very steep nor high.

So far the whole retinue was in good health, and there was no lack of any necessities or refreshment on the way. Norris travelled about six *kos* on February 6. Painghat (or passes, lowlands), was reached just after noon and he encamped right at

the foot of the mountains for the rest of the day and the night. Not far from Painghat he stopped at a place called "Canapore" [Khanapur] where there was a "caravansera about 40 yards square built after the same manner as ye former, & a Terras att ye Top 5 yards broad, it is seated in ye middle of this sweet plane neare wch runs a Rivulett of very sweet water wch falls from ye top of ye Hills". He goes on to describe this place as particularly "capable of being made ye finest Garden in these parts or perhaps in ye world, ye situation naturally soe convenient and pleasant well waterd & ye most fruitful soyle I ever saw att ye bottom of ye 2 hills a vineyard would produce ye finest grapes in ye world. A Rich Gentoo Rajah lately Turnd Moore [Muslim] lives neare this place & has a fine plantation of oranges & lemmons".¹⁷

Most of the following day was spent in strenuous marching up the steep, rugged mountains with heavy baggage. Norris, describing his experiences of the journey, says that he was carried up with great ease in his *palanquin* and stayed on the top of the hills called "Balagate" [Balaghat or upland country] under a large *banian* tree till the whole of the baggage had arrived there. A large plain lay before him, surrounded by hills, and at a distance he viewed "7 castles¹⁸ or rather watch houses on ye Top of ye mountains & may serve for Refuge, but are of no other use. Most of these castles in view belonge to the Mogull, but to my admiration ye Top of these mountains & this very passe through ym wch wee marchd up today belongs to a Rajah not yet conquerd by ye Mogull, & att ye top of ye mountain has a choultry¹⁹ with some officers attendinge, demandinge some small custome of merchants & straglinge passengers, but asked none of us: I orderd 2 field peices with a good guard of English to march the first & secure ye passe. This Rajah's name is Shubah Gi,²⁰ who with a very little charge might soe fortify this passe yt it would be impossible for any to come without his permission on payinge for it as he pleasd, wch I likewise wonderd was not done either by ye Mogull or ye Rajah for all comunication betwixt ye Mogull's Camp & Suratt might be cutt of if this was done by ye Rajah & seemes to be a neglect of ye Mogull not to secure it. Severall camells & 2000 oxen went up ye day before to carry

Rice to ye Mogull's camp & ye like came down to-day goeing to Novoporee for a supply of Rice for Osman Shaw's [Prince Azam Shah's] Lescharr,²¹ soe yt if this passe was anyways securd or stoped both these armys must starve".²² Fruitful as the region was, Norris, with his English eyes, could not but wonder that Mughal armies should send there for provision through an unconquered country without any guard, even from a distance of two hundred miles. It was either depopulated or wholly neglected for want of owners.

Norris believed that there was no finer air in the world than on the top of those mountains, while the soil seemed to him extraordinary and capable of any improvement. The site chosen for the encampment was in a large mango grove, with a delightful river on one side and on the other the town "Dehell" [Dahivel?] which had a mud wall round it and a "little castle", but was very ill defended, not having more than three Indians to man it and no guns.

As an example of the purity of the air at that place, Norris for the first time saw a chameleon. He had not believed what he had read about the chameleon changing colour, but he now saw it verified more than forty times in one afternoon, and the creature assumed almost all the colours of the rainbow. He wrote: "Whtever you put it upon white, Red or blue for ye generality sympathizd wth ye colour he was upon & puttinge him upon a Persian carpett in a Trice appeard in ye severall colours as were in ye carpett. As to the creature itselfe it agrees in shape wth ye skeletons of this animal I have seen in Librarys & cutts in bookes of Travells, ye natives fancy it a very poysnous creature, & warn you against it, but it was handled by severall & saw nothings like rancher or venom in it, but ye most quiet contented mild animall I have mett wth. Its texture is very extraordinary, his eyes looke like little diamonds sett after ye Indian fashion but little appeares of these, but ye Globe of it seemes large wch he will turn anyways looke anyways, up wth one eye & down wth ye other & soe looke before him wth one, & behind wth ye other: seemes to be rousd att nothings, has a very wide mouth wch he opend once when he was handled too hard, his ffeett are in ye nature of Lobsters claws his forefeet have 3 claws

one ye outside & 3 within upon wch he walkes with as great circumspection as a Rope dancer. His Tayle is longe wch he winds about whtever he walkes on for security & to seize him I orderd him to be kept for, I thinke, it is a great rarity. From ye Top of ye mountains to ye place wee enchampt a noble champaign pleasant & fruitful country."²³

Another day Norris experimented with the chameleon's eating and the manner of catching its prey, which was in his opinion "very nice and curious". The chameleon did not take any food for about twelve days after it was caught. He had the creature brought to him again, and saw no alteration at all in it. It paid no attention to pieces of meat and insects placed before it, nor to the many flies which were buzzing about it. Then some water was offered to it, but it did not taste it till Norris took some in a spoon and poured it down into its throat. The chameleon immediately opened its mouth and drank the water greedily, holding up its head so that Norris might pour the water into its mouth, which was very large. Having swallowed three or four large spoonfuls of water, the chameleon began to seize its prey at sight. As soon as it saw a fly, if out of its reach, "he would walke his wonted pace till he knew he had him within compass, & then shot out his Tongue as quick as an arrow out of a bow & never faild to direct it right always catching his prey, but before he darted his tongue lookd for about a second very steadily & sternly att yt he shott att".²⁴ The chameleon caught about eleven flies, one at a time, from a distance of about 5, 6 and 8 inches. Then, seemingly well pleased with its repast, it went to sleep.

Having remained in the mango grove one night, Norris continued his journey early next morning along numerous winding roads and through some narrow passes, but mostly across wide plains surrounded by hills, with a very fertile soil and many cornfields. So far he had not heard of any enemies in those parts, but he was to expect meeting some scattered troops beyond Aurangabad. Every possible precaution was taken to prevent a surprise. There was always a good guard ahead and another in the rear, while Norris, with the four guns and horse, marched in the centre, so as to be able to give the more effective help to

any party that might be attacked. On the road he was alarmed to learn from two of Sir Nicholas Waite's *pattamars* or foot messengers, returning from the Emperor's Camp at "Merch"²⁵ [Miraj] on their way to Surat, that the Mughal's Camp had lately been surprised by the Marathas, that his troops had been worsted and had lost several standards, elephants and horses, and that he had had two of his "Cheife Rasbootes killd".²⁶ Otherwise Norris found nothing much to record except that he passed through a place called "Gourda", consisting of a few little mud houses. The day's journey was completed earlier than usual, and about mid-day he arrived at Kokale, a small town sixty-six *kos* from Surat, with his retinue in good health and all in order. Before reaching it, he saw the remains of a fort—only mud walls without anybody to defend it. He observed that the Governor of "Kokel" [Kokale?] "wisely engrosses all thinges to himselfe by wch money is to be gott and made us pay as deare againe for Hay wood etc. wch wee wanted as wee usd to doe att other places. Noe sort of manufactures in any places wee have passed thro' yett".²⁷ Norris always observed the Sabbath day, so, February 9th being Sunday, he rested all day in his camp at "Kokely" [Kokale?]²⁸ and only attended to current correspondence. He despatched letters to the President and Council at Surat and a packet to the Court of Directors; also several letters to private friends, which he desired to be forwarded to England as soon as possible.

Pressing on his march over a rugged country, Norris reached Pahuni. The Indian members of his retinue showed him several forts, which in their opinion were "very stronge", but he was not near enough to see how strong they actually were. The first two were mounted with 100 guns each, and the third was a small one. The last, called Galna "castle", near which Sir William encamped, was commanded by a great Amir,²⁹ and he was told that it was mounted with 1,200 guns; but all he could discover from a distance was that it was a large fortification on the side of a high hill, and that the surrounding country was very pleasant. About two *kos* from Pahuni, he passed close under a fort called "Kankreoli", which, he was informed, was mounted with 50 guns, though he could not see one. Indeed, it seemed

to him to be a very insignificant place, as well as all the other forts he had seen. Norris passed through several small mud villages and encamped at Chandanpuri near the bank of a river, the water of which was very good. His retinue supplied themselves with water for the following day's use, as they expected to meet with little or no water all day. The mission traversed an open pleasant country, in the latter stages hilly and rugged, and for most of the day like "Epping forest" and reached Sakri, on February 12th. At this place Norris found "plenty of corn & sugar canes", by which chiefly the inhabitants subsisted, grinding the canes and with the "juice exprest boyle it & make Jag-gery".

The Ambassador met on the road the daughter of the Governor of Surat, married to a son⁸⁰ of Amanat Khan, Diwan of Ahmadabad. This lady was attended by a large number of horse and foot, struggling along after their manner, and an even greater number of women crowded into hackeries as tight as they could be packed. She herself was in a closed *palanquin*, and others were carried before and behind her; "she pulld up ye side to looke out", but Norris could "discover neither her face nor dresse". Several merchants had taken advantage of this convoy and accompanied her, with carts laden with various goods. Soon after passing the lady, Norris met "Rajah Ruganack" [Raghunath] "the greate Rajah in these parts & who I heard had been temperd wth to stop or plunder us, but ye good old man came up in his palankeen & his son in another close up to mine, & told me he had heard of my cominge & was desirous to see me & came to offer his service if there was anything he could doe for me or anything hereabouts I wanted".⁸¹ Norris returned the Rajah's civility in a suitable manner, saying that he was glad of this opportunity of seeing him, but at present was in want of nothing. The Rajah offered him a box of snuff or perfume, which Norris seemingly declined, and so, after wishing each other a good journey, they parted good friends.

Raghunath complimented the daughter of the Governor of Surat by attending and safely conducting her through his district. His retinue consisted of 50 or 60 horsemen "wth very large & longe speares, but light beinge made of bamboos & pointed sharpe

with Iron on both Ends, he had 4 very small peices carryd & fastened on 2 camells wch could be of no use or service, & a little after wee mett 2 more on a carriage but very ill fixd". Nothing impressed Norris more than seeing several of the Rajah's good horses, one grey, one black ledd "15 hand high" and the finest he had seen. A few miles away to the right, near his encampment at Kasari,³² he saw a large "fort" on a mountain called "Monatung"³³ [Mangyatungya], belonging to the Rajah, and also a little nearer, a small fort called "Tonaki", on the top of which was a "Hott Bath like to ye Bath waters in English".

The mission's progress to the next halting place was slow on account of the narrowness of the pass and rough stony road, and a hill which for about two hundred yards was steeper than any Norris had ascended. After many windings and turnings they reached the top and came to delightful open country, "ye Turf as fine as New markett Heath & att convenient distances large groves of mangoe Trees". Norris encamped in one of these groves near the riverside and a town called "Boncalee".³⁴ Close to this town there was a tank, and a very fine tomb of "curious Architecture in wch lys buryd a Rich Gentoo, who before his death Turnd Moore & this Tomb erected for him". It appears to have attracted Norris's admiration, for he records that the dome of it "is ye finest architecture I have seen in India ye best stone and ye best cemented, ye Diameter within 27 foot ye height about 50 foot soe good an echo yt ye musick tryd all their instruments".³⁵

The journey to "Degawn" [Devgaon] was very different. After marching about twelve *kos* through all "even pleasant way", Norris arrived there early in the afternoon and encamped in an open plain near the river-side. This was the longest journey he had yet made, and was especially remarkable considering that he found no water for his retinue on the way. Some Surat merchants, with twenty carts laden with goods, had joined his convoy, but he ordered them to keep at some distance so as not to mix with his own people. He noticed that this was "ye first town in wch there was any manufacture of white cloth & yt but small consistinge chiefly in Womens cloutes".³⁶

Marching on through very pleasant country, hill-girt plains

and valleys, with a very rich and fertile soil, Norris reached "Nesampore" on February 17th. On the way he had seen three or four small towns with mud walls, and one small river. The famous fort of Daulatabad, where the King of Golkonda³⁷ was imprisoned, came into sight upon a hill just before Norris encamped about two miles away. Though he had no opportunity of entering the fort and thoroughly examining its construction and strength, Norris's description of it from the outside and his observations on it are of great value and are consequently inserted here *verbatim* :

"The Natives talke more of this Castle then any other in ye Mogull's dominions wch makes me believe it may be one of ye strongest. They tell you of 7 Castles upon this one Hill & vast number of Guns & some of a vast bigness, too big indeed to give credit to ye Report viz. of a fathom diameter; I make no account of wht they say either as to ye number of ye men Guns or ye bignesse of them".

Norris goes on to remark that for "this country I looke upon it a very stronge place & hardly to be taken by Indians wth bow and arrows and an easy conquest to a Body of Europeans in a few days. The single Hill upon wch ye fortification is built (& yt wch seemes ye strongest is just on ye very top of all) may be att the bottom 3 miles in circumference & about halfe a mile att ye top of it; it is a high & steep hill, att a distance I can liken it to nothings better than a very large stack of Hay shorn & made even att ye bottom, for soe this is either hewn smooth & made very steep att least 30 foot out of the Rock or if earth dug & I suppose a large ditch round, att a little distance on ye North side Runs a Ridge of hills upon ye 2 nearest of wch are small fortifications on ye South side all a large plane, on ye West there seemes to be some little outworkes, & on ye East it seemes to be fortifyd & built from ye top to ye Bottom. It seemes very steep to gett up & I suppose must be compassd by windinge & turninge & severall small fortifications in ye way wch ye Natives call Castles; on ye very top of all is ye Castle wch seemes a large pile of Regular fortification & I beleive may not be only stronge for this country but seemes extremely well fortifyd & artificially on all sides especially to ye Eastward; they never permitt any European

to come in it nor much nearer it then wee are & in yt are not in ye wronge to keepe their "fortifications undiscovered. The Indians say a Kinge of Bagnagor³⁸ is here kept prisoner wth ye Kinge of Golcunda, they are safe enough be they who they will & may live very pleasantly & contentedly. I beleive in as sweet aire & pleasant clymate & scituation as ye world affords. In this place where wee are enchampd, there is a Caravansera (though not soe large wee have mett wth) yett lookes ye best built & neatest wth 4 handsome turrets att each corner one: To ye Eastward of ye Castle stands a large Town halfe a mile distant from ye foot of ye hill in ye middle of wch is a little Tower on wch they said Mufti climbs up when he warns prayers but others say a place where water is drawn up to supply ye Town".³⁹

The progress of Norris's journey was for some days slow on account of the presence of Maratha hordes in the surrounding country. Yet he was able to arrive on February 18, 1701, at "Coranporee", a suburb of Aurangabad, which he described as being in point of distance as "Southwark to London". Leaving Aurangabad on his left hand about a mile distant, he noticed not far off a large mosque, from which to the place of his encampment he saw an almost continuous line of thatched mud houses. About a *kos* before he reached Aurangabad, he passed through a large and populous suburb, where the manufacture of all kinds of "white brown cloth" was conducted on a large scale. Aurangabad itself was a very large city with an extensive trade; it was noted for the "finest taftys, cuttanees & Alligars".⁴⁰ But all Norris saw of it was a large building with four high towers that seemed to him to overtop all the rest, which he took to be a kind of seraglio. On further enquiry, however, he learnt that it was the tomb of Aurangzib's beloved wife,⁴¹ and that the Emperor himself wished to be buried there. He went on: "Aurangabad is scituate on a pleasant valley att ye ffoot of a Ridge of Hills yt runs to ye Norward, ye soyle all about very Rich & fruitfull. Inhabited by many Rich merchants ye Govermt Greate & profitable".

An abundance of provisions of all kinds was to be found here; also grapes, sweet lentions and China apples. Norris found one sort of grapes which he had not seen before. This was very

delicious, "red & as big as a Damson, but shapd like a Cornelian, ye pulp much firmer then any other Grape neare ye consistence of a plum, but ye skin tenderer yn other Grapes & few of ym gives a man enough". Some damask roses were brought to him with exactly the same smell as roses in England, which he had not noted before in India. He believed that there was "nothings of Grain fruit flowers or any thinge belonginge either to ye feild or Garden but wht may be producd here in plenty & perfection".⁴²

Having been warned, Norris was naturally afraid that his enemies might attempt to entrap him at this place. The Old Company's Factory at Surat was believed to have offered forty men a large sum to prevent him from completing his journey, and he had also been informed of some secret transactions between the Governors of Surat and Aurangabad in relation to himself and Rustamji. Further, the *kephala*, or convoy, of Murad Khan and Abdul Rahaman Khan lay encamped not far off, though they pretended that they were only staying to finish their Ramazan and would then proceed to the Emperor's Camp. Moreover, the incident at "Boncalee" a few days earlier was still fresh in his mind, when a sudden disorder or mutiny had broken out among the peons, and his own life had been in danger. An enquiry was made into the matter, and some of them were immediately discharged. Norris warned Waite that none of them should be retained in the New Company's Factory, and cautioned him about their conduct.⁴³ All these considerations made him apprehensive, and he avoided encamping at Aurangabad; he had intended to march three *kos* farther, but the tentmen pitched his tents much nearer to the suburbs of the city than he liked.

A further incident had delayed the Ambassador's journey for a few hours. Several Indian servants and carters refused to march any further in spite of his orders, the reason being that Murad Khan and his party were unable to proceed for fear of an attack by a large force of the Marathas encamped within sixteen *kos* of Aurangabad. Norris was resolute and refused to make any bargain with the men. He immediately called all his retinue and soldiers to arms and ordered Rustamji to go and recall the men to their duty, punish their ringleader and those who proved recalcitrant, and send at once to Aurangabad for more

men. This firm action over-awed the men; they saw that they could not get their way, and promised to resume the journey. Norris hoped that Rustamji, backed by his authority and flushed with a few more such victories, might "lose a little of his natural cowardice".⁴⁴

Before leaving "Coranporee", Norris had received a request from "a greate Rajahs Lady" who was anxious to see an Englishman. Unfortunately, for want of time, neither he nor any other member of the mission was able to gratify her curiosity, though the lady's messengers were very insistent and declared that she would make a very handsome present to anyone who would pay her a visit.⁴⁵

At last Norris was able to resume his journey through open country, on a route that wound all along the skirts of hills, and reached "Gelgawn." The progress made had encouraged the Indian servants, and so the utmost endeavours were made to persuade them to complete the journey. Norris himself felt safe enough at "Gelgawn", and sent a complimentary message to the Governor of Aurangabad informing him that he could not stay there long, because the Emperor had especially commanded him to proceed quickly to the Camp.⁴⁶ The Governor returned the compliments with great civility; he apologised for not having a convoy ready, but said that if he would stay there three or four days he could provide a good one. He warned Norris at the same time that a large number of "rouges" were ravaging the country and that if anything happened to him he (the Governor) would not be answerable for it. The truth of the matter was that Murad Khan and Abdul Rahaman Khan, who had charge of the Emperor's money, were still at Aurangabad and wanted to travel under Norris's protection, though they were ashamed to own it. As they were not yet ready to march, the Governor, who was partly responsible for their safe conveyance to Court, wished Norris to wait till they were ready.

Norris did not accede to the request, and continued his march the following morning through forest country, with a range of hills still on his left, and reached "Ponzee" [Pachud?], a town with mud walls strong enough to withstand any assault. Here he learned that for the last few days the inhabitants of that town

had been in a state of panic and had closed the gates owing to attacks by 500 Maratha horsemen, but these had been apprised of his coming and retired. The people refused to open their gates till they knew who Norris was. They told him that the horsemen were still in the neighbourhood and that very morning had burnt a neighbouring town, the flames of which were still visible. On the way to this place, Norris saw some Marathas carrying two flags, "all white"; on sighting his retinue, they rode away in haste to warn their companions of his approach. While encamped there he observed a body of horse on the top of a hill advancing towards him. He ordered his retinue to fall in and stand on guard, whereupon the horsemen retreated.

About half way between the two places, Norris's Indian servants discovered near the road the bodies of seven men, who could not have been killed more than two days previously. They were all stripped, lying face to the ground, their heads wounded in several places and their backs and sides stabbed with lances. It was thought that they might be *pattamars* or messengers, and on a search being made four papers in Persian were found near one of the dead men. Three of these bore seals of the Chief Diwan of the Emperor's Commander-in-Chief,⁴⁷ and were addressed to the Governor of Aurangabad, giving him orders for the safe conduct of a sum of money to the Camp.

There was another alarm at midnight, when the Ambassador was told that a party of Marathas was breaking into his camp to surprise him. Immediately, upon beat of drum, all his guards stood to their arms and remained on the alert for half an hour till scouts had been sent out and a strong patrol had marched round the camp; then, as no enemy appeared, they turned in again. Some bodies of horse were sighted and it was declared that 7,000 of these were ravaging and burning everything in their path, but they always fled whenever Norris's party approached. The Ambassador was inclined to think that no "number of Indians would attacke us partly out of feare & partly because not att any enmity wth us". He realised at the same time that the Marathas were ready to rob anyone who fell into their clutches, and were eager to revenge the death of twenty of their brethren, who had been caught near Aurangabad by a high officer of the Mughal. He

criticised the inefficiency of the Mughal Army, remarking that though there were plenty of troops to escort the Emperor's money, horses, etc., yet none of them would stir a step when they heard that a force of the enemy was about, though the latter had not yet dared to attack Norris and his retinue.⁴⁸

Sir William marched on to "Demandevee"⁴⁹ [Davarwadi?] passing by a town called "Kelda", which consisted of mud walls and houses like the rest. Here he noticed that two guns were mounted upon towers and that several men were stationed on the walls with their arms ready and with numerous large stones upon the top of the mud walls, for use in case of an assault. When they thoroughly understood who Norris was, they were pleased at his arrival, for on hearing of it the Marathas had marched away from the place. When he had gone about two *kos* from "Kelda", Norris saw a large force of cavalry approaching with the apparent intention of attacking his party in the rear. His Indian retinue immediately gave the alarm "wth much noise & more feare", and Norris, alighting from his *palanquin*, ordered the guns to stop and all Europeans to be drawn up in rank and file on foot. Norris himself, armed with a blunderbus, was in the first rank and, with the others similarly armed, advanced for about a mile, preceded by the four pieces of ordnance. Perceiving the discipline and readiness of Norris's retinue, the enemy retreated in haste.

At a place about a mile from "Demandevee", a Frenchman, Peter de Laval⁵⁰, physician to the Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Khan, met and warmly welcomed the Ambassador complimenting him on having frightened away the Marathas.⁵¹ De Laval himself, with a few others, had intended to go to Aurangabad, but they had postponed their journey for some days for fear of the Marathas. Norris asked his secretary and others to entertain the Frenchman and find out all they could from him. De Laval told them that the "Sevadis [i.e. the Marathas] party were 7,000 strong, all upon mares as their custome", and that on hearing of the Ambassador's approach they marched away towards the river *Kisnah*. Ghazi-ud-din Khan Firuz Jang was also not more than four days' march ahead of Norris on his way to Brahmapuri. The Nawab had heard through some Armenians of Norris's arrival at Surat and his march to the Emperor's Camp, and would be

glad to see him. De Lavalley added that in his opinion the Nawab was "as greate a Comander as any in ye Empire havinge ye comand of 8,000 horse & nobody more, yt he had ye comand of 60 Omrahs, 32 of wch could beate Drums wch nobody could doe yt had not ye comand of 3,000 horse. That he had lately obtained a victory over ye Sevagis for wch ye Mogull had sent him a serpaw, yt beinge one of ye most considerable comandars of ye Mogull's army Osman Shaw (who is in friendship & alliance wth all ye Sevagis party) Had made his pretentions lately known to Gozda Chawn (who has now 50,000 horse under his comand for ye quelling these Rebels) & urgd him to assist him to make war against & help him to dethrone his father, but he [Ghazi-ud-din Khan] gave him a very honourable answer yt he would never take up armes against ye Emperor, but on his Death would assist him wth ye utmost of his power".⁵² On the other hand, as Norris recorded, De Lavalley spoke slightly of Wazir Asad Khan, and "seemd to think yt Sultan Eckbar⁵³ would make ye strongest party on ye account yt his mother was of ye Rasboote cast [e] all ye sons are makinge partys & Cambouch⁵⁴ ye youngest seems to be ye weakest".⁵⁵

Norris arrived at "Shawgur" on February 22. At the bottom of the adjacent hills runs a river called the *Cangor*, a tributary of the *Nasspore*, which runs right across the country and falls into the sea north of Madapollam. During the rainy season the river there was not fordable and was "passd in basketts". This town had stronger walls and gates, and was better fortified, than any Norris had seen on his journey. It had an extensive manufacture of all sorts of fine clothes, such as *beatilhas*⁵⁶ and *baftas*, and was the chief market for similar goods made in the neighbourhood. *Beatilhas* were better and cheaper there than in any other place on that side of the country. Many other places were supplied with fine *muslins* and variety of other white clothes from here. The famous shipowner and merchant Ab'dul-ghafur had his factories there; he used to buy vast quantities of these goods and send them to Surat, whence they were exported to neighbouring countries by sea. Norris found the town mainly inhabited by 'Gentoos', who were busy industrious people, while the 'Moorees' were drones.

On this day another body of Maratha horse and foot was sighted, but on ascertaining Norris's identity they made off with all speed, joined their companions and ravaged the country that lay at their mercy. On seeing Norris the people of the town opened their gates and came running out with demonstrations of joy. Three or four "stragling Rouges of ye Sevagis" fell on some of his Indian horse-keepers, who were at some distance from the rest of the retinue, and robbed them, but they were caught and taken to the local Governor, who sent them back to Norris that he might punish them as he thought fit. As they were not his enemies, he set them free after a warning. He described them as 'Rouges' who had "stringe in their Bosom of Twisted silke & cotton on purpose to strangle those they caught".⁶⁷ Norris's leniency did not impress them, for on the same evening they burned a small town about two *kos* away from his camp. They were evidently waiting for the convoy which was bringing the Mughal's money, and considered themselves strong enough to face this, though not equal to an attack on the Ambassador. Norris surmised that the convoy might stay at Aurangabad either for fear of the Marathas or in expectation of Aurangzib's death, in which event the members of the convoy could keep the money or use it to buy the Marathas' friendship. Besides the Marathas, whose movements kept Norris's retinue continually on the alert, there were a number of men hanging about the outskirts of the camp to watch the Ambassador's movements for motives which were not clear to him—but these soon disappeared.

Here the Mughal faujdar sent his son, with some officers and well-known merchants, to call on Norris. They expressed their satisfaction at his arrival, and their gratitude for the great service he had done them in driving away the Marathas. They were no less anxious to enquire after the King of England, whose name they took down, as well as the Ambassador's, and after some discussion walked round the camp inspecting the guns, coaches, carriages, etc. They were dismissed with the customary rose-water, and were very pleased with their entertainment, though they whispered to Rustamji that instead of rose-water they would have appreciated some "stronger water" brought from England. Norris took the hint and immediately ordered a case of "strong

waters" to be sent to the faujdar and his son. On their departure he ordered the drum to be beaten and the trumpets sounded and the guards were paraded, a sight which the visitors had never witnessed before.

Norris spent Sunday at "Shawgur", as usual, resting in his camp. He remarked that both at prayers in the morning, and prayers and sermon in the afternoon, a "greate company of ye Natives of ye better sort, especially of ye Bramines, flockt to ye doore of ye Tent, where divine service was performd & stayd all ye while & tooke greate notice of ye manner of our worship. It may soe please God it may be in order to their conversion hereafter in his good Time. ⁵⁸

The journey was continued next day over a soil so rich and fine that it might have been made for a garden, and towards the end of the day's journey, Norris ascended a considerable hill and encamped at "Mowsee Pondersee" [Midsangwi?]. This town was situated, like the rest, in the middle of a large fertile plain, surrounded by mud walls, with a rivulet running by.

Beed was reached next day,⁵⁹—a town, as Norris observed, very pleasantly situated in a fruitful valley, and approached for the distance of a mile through a continuous mango grove. A fine river⁶⁰ of pure water ran round the town, which was the largest he had yet seen. The suburbs consisted of "little nasty Thatcht houses", but within the stone walls round the town were several handsome well-built stone houses. The gates of the town were large, high and strongly built. The town was well populated, and a great crowd of the inhabitants came to see the Ambassador's camp. Not far off was a cemetery in a garden, in which were some fine monuments; also three castles, but none of them of much strength. A high Mughal official was in residence, who lived in some state, for Norris saw several large elephants belonging to him. He was asked to show his *dastak* or passport to this official. It was a "large & Rich Government", and a place of "very greate trade", with considerable manufactures of several sorts of cloth, particularly coarse varieties, including cloth for tents etc. in which it was the Mughal Army's main source of supply. All along the riverside could be seen cloth washing, whiting and drying.

About sunset Norris walked a quarter of a mile out of his camp up a hill in order to have a better view of the town; but as it was Ramazan, and the Muslims, who do not in this period eat till sunset, were preparing fires to cook their supper, the smoke prevented him from seeing very much of the surrounding country.⁶¹

The most difficult and tedious part of the journey was now to come. The country was rugged and mountainous, higher and steeper than any through which the convoy had yet passed, upon "ye Top of wch Aurangzebe some yeares scince fought wth ye Sevagi [Sivaji] routed him, being forced to make his passage over this mountain, wch Sevagi [Sivaji] could not maintain". Norris wondered how the Mughal could have forced his way through when Sivaji's army was in possession of that *ghat* or mountain pass, which, it seemed to him, a small number might hold against thousands. "The Mogull", he wrote, "first had a battell wth ye Sevagi [Sivaji] att Aurengabad & beate him there, who retired to this Gatt [ghat] to Keepe ye Mogull from breaking any farther into ye country, but Aurengzebe pursued him & beate him here".⁶² The whole region appeared very wild, and the whole march was very fatiguing. There was, besides, a scarcity of water for Norris's retinue, so he thought it best to encamp at "Moman Parak Godee" [Moman Parakh-Gadhi].

Not much difficulty attached to the next stage of the Ambassador's journey. He passed the last mountain and marching through a populous town called "Chowsalee" [Chavsala], which lay higher than any town he had yet come to, reached "Pargawn" [Borgaon]. Nothing exciting was observed on the way except "a huge Deade elephant wch when wee came to have ye wind of almost poysond us". The weather now began to be hot, and some of the retinue fell sick. One of the "eddys", Zani Beg, had died after being ill for some time. Unfortunately he concealed the true nature of his malady till it was too late to cure him; according to Norris's diagnosis, he "inflamd his blood by drinkinge spirits". Another bad companion of Zani Beg, formerly an Armenian Christian, also died, a 'Moore', and on learning this another of the same race and religion in Norris's retinue tore a piece of cloth, wrapped it in the "nature of a Crosse & put it into his bosome". The Armenian was buried under a tree about two hun-

dred yards from Norris's camp; here, having poured rose-water upon him and strewed sweet herbs, with some form of prayer, they laid him to rest. They fixed some sticks and twigs so as to keep the earth in order upon his coffin, and placed a basket of stones under his head to serve as a pillow. A woman who accompanied him, whether "wife or concubine" Norris did not know, "made mighty lamentation att his death & over his grave ye next morningne".⁶³

The Ambassador proceeded through difficult and rugged mountainous country and reached Bhum on the afternoon of February 28. The trials of the march were aggravated by some pilfering 'rouges', who stole a chest belonging to one of the English servants. They were caught and tied to the carriages all day, and received further punishment.

On March 1st, continuing his journey, Norris arrived at Parenda.⁶⁴ He regretted that ever since his journey from Surat he had seen but one small "pagod" or temple of no consequence, and that seemed to have been forgotten when all the rest were destroyed. The Mughal had taken great care, in all his conquests, not to leave the smallest trace of idolatry. Parenda itself was a very large town surrounded by walls, standing upon an eminence with a river running near by. The country all round formed a large plain. The inhabitants were numerous, but seemed poor. The bazar in the suburb was very large and seemed to be plentifully provided. There was also a large old 'castle'⁶⁵ built of stone and brick, on the top of which were mounted four very big guns, designed to alarm the town and the country round upon the approach of any body of men. Norris heard the discharge of one of these more than three miles away when approaching the town. Outside the town, near his camp, there was a mosque, the 'Moor's' cemetery, and not far off a tank; from this most of the townspeople fetched water, which was not good. He remarked that all the "Moore's washinge & bathinge & ye whole notwithstandinge drinke of it" and wondered how it agreed with them. Some of his retinue suddenly became ill as the result of drinking this water. There was a small walled garden round the tank, and in the middle a tomb in which a Saiyid lay interred, so the place was considered sacred, and much frequented for that reason.

Our Eastern sky with its variegated colours and awe-inspiring natural phenomena was a continual source of delight to the Ambassador from Europe. For the last three or four days he had noticed the clouds rising and falling and the wind veering, with now and then sharp squalls. About 8 o'clock one night he saw that the sky was very cloudy; then there was some rain and, as he described, "the sharpest & loudest claps of thunder" which he had ever heard, far exceeding what he had noted on board the *Somers*. It was just like the "firing of the night gun", and Norris thought at the first clap that the cannon had burst. The second clap, about half-an-hour later, was still louder. The thunder and lightning continued till 12 o'clock; then there was a small shower, and warm winds all night.

On Sunday, just after morning service, he was alarmed at seeing about 300 Maratha horsemen within sight of his camp. Immediately all his guards and retinue sounded the call to arms, and the noise of this frightened the horsemen away. Norris took pride not only in this little victory, but also in the fact that a large number of people came out of the town to view his camp and its occupants. Norris rightly observed: "Wee beinge as strange a sight to them, where few Europeans ever come, as they would be in their fashion & dresse in England".⁶⁶

Marching was now becoming very uncomfortable for Norris and for his English retinue, owing to the heat of the sun, which was beginning to be very powerful. After a long steady journey, on which he passed three towns and two small rivers, he reached Upalai and encamped there for the night. On the way to this place, he noticed a tomb in a garden like the one already mentioned, erected to the memory of a holy Saiyid, upon which several flags were hung out. Norris remarked: "The Moore for ye most part choose to be buryd in a Garden or shady Grove fancyinge greater delights after death in shades experiencinge ye heate of ye sun whilst livinge".⁶⁷

The longest day's march had yet to be accomplished. Leaving Upalai early in the morning, and marching twelve *kos* almost the whole day on good roads, through pleasant country, and without any delays or accidents, Norris arrived at "Ancola", a small town not far from Brahmapuri. The length of the

journey and the heat of the sun fatigued them all. While walking at a place called "Angor" [Anagar?], Norris saw a small pagoda, in charge of a priest. It was built of a "smooth Tyle about as big as ye hand & on it cut 2 very ugly faces". He could not learn the history of it, but only that it had been the priest's 'God' these thirty years and had proved very kind to him. For this reason it was worshipped with flowers, and a cruse was hung up which continually dropped water for its refreshment. Norris could not help pitying "ye simplicity & ignorance of the fellow", and could hardly refrain from breaking it in pieces. The priest offered him some flowers, which he refused. The man's living depended upon others who came to pay their devotions and offer him money.

Being anxious that some preparation should be made for his arrival at Brahmapuri, and expecting to hear from Wazir Asad Khan⁶⁸ in answer to his letter asking permission to encamp at a suitable place there, Norris rested in his camp at "Ancola" on Ash Wednesday. Not wishing, however, to prolong his stay at "Ancola" till the Wazir's answer was received he made a comparatively short march and encamped about 9 o'clock on the morning of March 6 near the bank of the river *Bhima* at Brahmapuri.⁶⁹ He passed Asad Khan's camp, which was on "ye side of a very large Hill ye River runninge neare it. There was nothinge but confusion in their Enchampmt no order or Regularity but everybody raisinge a little mud Hutt as he thought convenient for himselfe & his family".⁷⁰

No sooner was Sir William encamped there than he received a complimentary visit from the Darogah and the Kotwal, who told him that they had been ordered by the Emperor to afford him all possible security. They pointed out that he had encamped outside their jurisdiction and asked him to move a little nearer the town; in two or three days' time, they said, they might hope to have a sufficient guard for him. Norris thanked them for their kindness and attention, but replied that he would prefer to stay where he was; he had travelled all the way without any guard except his own, and had arrived there safely; he always kept a good guard and, after he had set his night watch, would allow neither them nor anyone else to come within two hundred yards

of his camp. He also impressed upon them that he had several times sighted a large number of the Mughal's enemies during his journey, but they had never dared to attack him. The Darogah and the Kotwal maintained their objection to Norris remaining where he was, and declared that they would not be answerable for any loss he might sustain through robbery. They therefore asked him to give them a written document which would free them of responsibility if he should be robbed. Norris bluntly refused, and declared that he had nothing more to say about the matter. His already existing prejudices, and his ignorance of these officials' routine and responsibilities, caused him to remark: "These Catwalls yt have orders to secure everybody from Rouges & Robbers & are to keep nights watch are themselves ye greatest Rouges & those they pretend for yt guard are a pack of pick pocketts & Raschalls picked up on purpose to pilfer ye Catwall himselfe shares ye greatest part of ye Booty".⁷¹ Norris then informed the Wazir Asad Khan of his arrival at Brahmapuri. The Wazir sent a messenger intimating his great pleasure at the news. He added that he had planned a better and more convenient camp for the Ambassador on the other side of the river but left the matter entirely to his discretion.

All the carts and hackeries were discharged, as their drivers were unwilling to proceed further. Moreover, the charge for the hire of these conveyances from Brahmapuri to the Emperor's Camp would be as much as that from Surat to Brahmapuri. Rustamji was ordered to hire with all possible despatch sufficient new vehicles for the remainder of the journey to the Emperor's Camp. At the same time Mr. Laurence Hackett, the Chaplain, who, it may be remembered, had preceded the Ambassador to Brahmapuri, some months earlier with 'gentlemen' clerks, soldiers, State furniture, etc. had submitted a statement of the orders he had received from time to time from President Waite. It was discovered that Hackett and others had consumed a good deal of the wine in their charge, so for fear of a shortage Norris ordered a supply of the best *arack* and some Persian wine from Surat and Goa. An enquiry also revealed that the clerks and soldiers had been guilty of disorderly conduct. Some of these clerks proved to be incompetent, being "raw giddy idle loose boys

for the generality". There was also the Jew Isaac Toby, who came as an under-interpreter, but was of no use because he did not know any language but his own. He had spoken disparagingly of the Ambassador and had incited the soldiers to mutiny and desertion. Toby was immediately dismissed and ordered not to come near the camp. Another man was found guilty of a similar offence, but, being a Muslim, was handed over to the Kotwal for punishment. Norris complained that, except for seven soliders under Hackett's care, the men had conducted themselves to "the scandal to our most Holy Religion & Reflection on ye English nation". Ten Englishmen were recruited on the spot to fill their places; and the guilty, that they might not infect others, were sent back to Surat under the command of Hackett, accompanied by John Maxwell, the surgeon of the Surat Factory. A sum of Rs. 1500 was paid to discharge all the debts of Hackett and those under his care, and to provide necessities for the journey. In case of Hackett's death, Maxwell was to take charge and to observe the written directions, and if the latter died the first writer was to take his place.

The greater part of the journey to the Emperor's Camp had now been accomplished, and before we follow Norris any farther on his journey, let us see in the next chapter how he utilised an interval of three weeks at Brahmapuri.

NOTES.

¹ The retinue consisted of 62 European soldiers, 350 Indian servants of all sorts, 7 *palanquins*, 2 coaches, 4 long hackeries, 30 short hackeries, 74 carts for the carriage of presents, baggage etc., 25 horses, 22 camels, 41 oxen for drawing or carrying coaches, hackeries, field pieces and water. See No. 7475 of O.C. 56-IV, India Office.

² He was a *faujdar* in Gujrat, and took with him a strong army to assist the Emperor. See Vol. V, p. 74 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

³ The word is derived from Sanskrit, and is a measure of distance in India, though it varies in different localities. Akbar's *kos*=2 miles 4 furlongs 183½ yards. (See *Hobson-Jobson*.)

⁴ Norris delivered a packet into Mr. Lock's hands to be given to President Waite, containing a duplicate of his will, letters to the Lords of the Admiralty and Captain Cock; also copies of very material letters sent from the Old Factory at Surat to Sir John Gayer, the originals of which and many more remained in his hands. He also requested Waite to keep an account of liabilities incurred on account of the embassy and left unpaid. See p. 65 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*, Bodleian.

⁶ *Karwansarai* is a resting-place for the accommodation of travellers. (See *Hobson-Jobson*).

⁷ P. 67 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁸ This Rajah, Sir Jadunath Sarkar informed me, was evidently a loyal Rajput named Raghunath Singh, whom he traced as a Mughal *Thanahdar* in Rajputana at the end of 1679. Raghunath Singh had evidently accompanied Aurangzib on his march from Rajputana to the Deccan in 1681, as so many other Rajput captains had done. In 1700 he was probably *faujdar* (not ruling chief) of Baglan or of West Khandesh.

⁹ P. 67 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁰ It is now a *taluka* town of the West Khandesh District. The ancestors of the present Gaikwad family of Baroda made this their capital early in the 18th century and thence extended their sway over Gujarat. It is now a railway station, 65 miles east of Surat.

¹¹ She must have been Zinat-un-nissa Begam, the second daughter of Aurangzib. The Princess was unmarried and noted for her piety and good works. She was with her father for many years in the Deccan and attended him devotedly to the end of his life. Manucci, in supposing her to have been married, confused her with her sister. See Vol. I, p. 61, Vol. III, p. 54 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; also Vol. II, p. 58 of *Storia do Mogor*.

¹² *Hamam*.

¹³ P. 68 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁴ P. 69, *ibid*.

¹⁵ *Samph* signifies a snake.

¹⁶ Here he was informed that all provisions, both for men and cattle, were extravagantly dear at the Emperor's Camp, so every precaution was taken to reduce expenses as much as possible. The daily expense for the maintenance of his entourage was considerable; he could not manage with less than £65 per diem.

¹⁷ The word specially denotes the mountain ranges parallel to the Eastern and Western Coasts of the Peninsula, or to the Sahyadri and to the Desh. (See *Hobson-Jobson*).

¹⁸ P. 69 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁹ Norris always styled these hill-forts 'castles'.

²⁰ The word is etymologically doubtful, but here signifies a simple hall or shed for the transaction of business. (See *Hobson-Jobson*).

²¹ Norris could not have meant the great Sivaji; but it must be remembered that foreigners often confused him with some local officer in his service. Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai is inclined to think that "Shubah Gi" was some local chief, probably Subhanji, of which the former name may be a local corruption.

²² *Lashkar* or camp.

²³ Pp. 70-71 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁴ Pp. 70-72, *ibid*.

²⁵ P. 78, *ibid*.

²⁶ The Emperor had arrived at Miraj (on the left bank of the *Kisnah*, about thirty miles east of Kolahpur) on January 1, 1701, coming from Khawaspur. He spent some weeks there before leaving to besiege the fort of Panhala. See Vol. V, p. 172 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

²⁶ No. 7424 of O.C. 56—IV; also p. 73 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁷ P. 72 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁸ During Norris's stay here some persons made their way into his camp by stealth and tried to instigate others to attack him. One of them was arrested, and it appeared that he was employed as a spy by the Old Company. He confessed that several peons in Norris's service had been bribed by their agents to set fire to the powder, or to do any other mischief they could. A strict watch was constantly kept, so that none of them dared to attempt anything of the kind.

²⁹ He was always the *Subahdar* of a Province.

³⁰ This must be Mir Saiyid Muhammad Iradatmand Khan, second son of Amanat Khan II, and son-in-law of his own uncle Diyanat Khan Mir 'Abdu-l-Qadir. See p. 231 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*.

³¹ P. 75 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³² This is evidently the well-known Kasarbarighat or mountain pass, some 40 miles due south of Dhulia. A traveller from Surat to Aurangabad has to cross this pass after Malegaon.

³³ Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai informs me that this mountain has on its top some Jain temples, which are visited by crowds of Jain devotees in December, when an annual fair is held.

³⁴ Here Norris received news, in a letter from Waite, of the shameful arrest of Sir John and Lady Gayer, with others belonging to the Old Company's Factory at Surat. He immediately sent *pattamars* with letters to Waite asking for a detailed account of the arrest. Rustamji told him something about it, but he did not give much credence to this. See p. 77 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³⁵ P. 242 of C.O. $\frac{77}{50}$, P.R.O.

³⁶ P. 77 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³⁷ *Ante*.

³⁸ Norris confused Bijapur with Bhagnagar or Haidarabad. Sultan Shikandar 'Ali 'Adil Shah, the last King of the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur, was for some time a prisoner at the Daulatabad Fort, where the Sultan of Golkonda shared his fate. In September 1686 the investment of the fortress of Bijapur was completed. Subsequently Shikandar was carried about with the Emperor's train under strict surveillance, and died on April 3, 1700, when Aurangzib was besieging the fort of Satara. Local tradition and a few authors attributed his death to poisoning through treachery on the part of the Emperor, who was apprehensive that a movement might be set on foot in favour of the defeated King. The dates of the annexation of Bijapur, as well as the age and death of Shikandar, vary in the different authorities. Sarkar gives the best account of the fall of Bijapur. See Vol. VII, p. 323 of the *History of India* [Khafi Khan] etc. by Sir H. M. Elliott and Professor John Dowson, London, 1877; Vol. I, p. 260 of *History of the Mahrattas*, by J. C. Grant Duff, Milford, 1921; Vol. II, pp. 522, 541 of *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of the Nizam's Dominions*, by Syed Hossein Bilgrami and C. Willmott, Bombay, 1884; Vol. II, pp. 299-300, Vol. III, p. 195 of *Storia do Mogor*, by Niccolao Manucci; Vol. IV, pp. 324-328 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; also p. 47 of *Architecture at Beejapoor etc.*, by Captain Meadows Taylor, London, 1866.

³⁹ P. 79 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴⁰ The prosperity of trade at Aurangabad was greatly enhanced during Aurangzib's reign. This is confirmed not only by the testimony of Norris, but also by other European travellers of the seventeenth century like Thevenot and Manucci. Its opulence declined greatly when Haidarabad became the Nizam's capital, but its trade and traffic have recovered very much in our own time. See Part III, p. 76 of the *Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the East-Indies*; Vol. II, p. 428 of *Storia do Mogor*; Vol. VI, p. 148 of the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Oxford, 1908.

⁴¹ Dilras Bano Begam, Aurangzib's first wife, died in 1657 at Aurangabad and was interred there. A beautiful mausoleum of white polished stone was erected as a monument over her grave at a cost of over six lakhs of rupees. Aurangzib's remains were buried at Raoza, or Khuldabad, about 14 miles north-west of Aurangabad, and a plain sepulchre was built according to his wishes. See p. 564 of *Gazetteer of Aurangabad*, Bombay, 1884; Vol. II, pp. 348-49, 714-15, 717 of the *Historical Sketch of Nizam's Dominions*, by Syed Hossain Bilgrami and C. Willmott; also Vol. II, p. 57 of *Storia do Mogor*.

⁴² P. 81 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

⁴⁴ Norris complained to Waite that he had always given Rustamji authority over the Indian retinue, but that he had not the courage to exercise it, and suffered the most insignificant of persons to dispute his commands. Norris was careful not to ask any Englishman to meddle with the Indian retinue or concern himself with them in any way. See O.C. 56-IV, No. 7450.

⁴⁵ P. 83 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴⁶ P. 83, *ibid.*

⁴⁷ This is Ghazi-ud-din Khan Bahadur Firuz Jang, who was one of the two ablest Generals of Aurangzib, the other being Zulfiqar Khan Nusrat Jang, his rival. His name was Mir Shahab-ud-din, son of Qilij Khan Khwaja 'Abid of Turan. He came to India in 1669 and joined the Mughal Army. His military genius was soon recognised through his numerous exploits and successes against the Rajputs, Marathas and the Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda, which not only raised his rank in the Army, but won him the coveted distinction of *Sipah Salar* or Commander-in-Chief. Though he became blind, he nevertheless retained his position, as the Emperor—though jealous of him—could not spare him on account of his sound judgment. In 1705 he was appointed *Subahdar* of Berar. After the accession of Bahadur Shah, he was made *Subahdar* of Gujarat. He died in 1710. His son Mir Kamruddin (Nizam-ul-Mulk) Chin Kalich Khan Asaf Jah became the first Nizam of Hyderabad. See pp. 587-592 of *Maasir-ul-Umara*; pp. 84, 133 of Sarkar's *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*; also *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. IV, p. 404; Vol. V, pp. 37, 385, 399; Syed Hossain Bilgrami and C. Willmot's *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of the Nizam's Dominions*, Vol. I, pp. 56-59, Bombay, 1884; also *Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan* (Vol. 7, p. 553 of Elliott's *History of India*).

⁴⁸ P. 83 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁴⁹ Most of the chief inhabitants of the place came to see Norris's camp and took a particular interest in the great guns and the manner in which they were mounted on their carriages.

⁵⁰ The name is no doubt a corruption of Pierre de Laval. There is no reference to him in the catalogues of the British Museum or the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, or in any contemporary printed records known to us. Some Frenchmen served under Aurangzib as artillerymen, physicians

and surgeons. M. Bernard, a Frenchman, was Court Physician to Jahangir. He was a favourite with the Emperor and earned the confidence alike of the ladies of the seraglio and the nobles. The celebrated traveller Dr. Francois Bernier was for some time under the patronage of the learned Minister Danishmand Khan. See p. 172 of Irvine's *the Army of the Indian Moghuls*, London, 1903; pp. 274-5 of Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, ed. by Constable and Smith, Milford, 1916.

⁵¹ President Waite at Surat had at first received false news that the Marathas had fallen upon the rear of Norris's party, killed ten or twelve Englishmen, and wounded fifty Indians. He was naturally very anxious for Norris's safety; but later he was jubilant on learning the true facts about the retreat of the Marathas, and circulated the news amongst the Mughal officials and the citizens of Surat. He also hoped that the news of Norris's triumph would reach the Court before his arrival there, and would help to persuade the Emperor to grant the Ambassador's reasonable demands. See Nos. 7461, 7473 of O.C. 56-IV, India Office.

⁵² Pp. 85-86 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁵³ Prince Muhammad Akbar.

⁵⁴ Prince Muhammad Kam Baksh.

⁵⁵ This is an interesting account Norris gathered of the Emperor's Commander-in-Chief, and the prevailing state of affairs before proceeding to the Court. The Frenchman was directly attached to the staff of one of the highest officials of State, hence his observations have their value. See p. 86 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁵⁶ A kind of fine *muslin* made at Masulipatam, Pondicherry and other places, used for women's veils. See *Selections from the Consultations*, by A. T. Pringle; Vol. III, p. 233 of *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Glossary), Madras, 1893.

⁵⁷ P. 87 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁵⁸ P. 88, *ibid.*

⁵⁹ On his way to Beed, Norris was impressed to see 800 camels empty, going to Hosangabad to fetch rice and flour for Prince Azam Shah's *lashkar*.

⁶⁰ The *Bensura*.

⁶¹ P. 89 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁶² P. 90, *ibid.*

⁶³ Pp. 90-91, *ibid.*

⁶⁴ The town is situated in the Naldurg district, on the frontier of the Ahmadnagar district. It was once for a short time the capital of the Nizam Shahi Kingdom. Aurangzib incorporated it in the Mughal Empire during his Viceroyalty of the Deccan. See Vol. II, pp. 707-709 of *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of the Nizam's Dominions*, by Syed Hossain Bilgrami and C. Willmott; also Vol. IV, p. 146 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

⁶⁵ The fortress was one of the strongest fortifications of the time. It was probably constructed by the Sultans of the Bahmani dynasty of the Deccan. When Taylor visited it, during his official career at Haidarabad, he found a number of guns "lying dismounted on the wall and ramparts, but most of them old and useless". There is a fine reproduction of it from an original lithograph by Mr. Weld Taylor in the *Sketches in the Deccan*, by Captain Philip Meadows Taylor, London, 1837.

⁶⁶ Pp. 92-93 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁸⁷ P. 94, *ibid.*

⁸⁸ The *Wazir* was then staying at the base camp at Brahmapuri or Islampuri in charge of the Emperor's family, baggage etc., when Aurangzib left the place to besiege the Maratha hill-forts. See Vol. V, p. 160 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

⁸⁹ Norris performed the journey from Surat to Brahmapuri in thirty-one days, covering a distance of 234 *kos*.

⁹⁰ P. 95 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁹¹ P. 96, *ibid.*

CHAPTER IX

Brahmapuri: Failure to Win Over the Wazir

The arrival of an English dignitary, in the person of an Ambassador from the King of England, created a sensation, and the news at once spread throughout Brahmapuri, or Islampuri, and its vicinity—all the more because it had been anticipated for some days through the gossip of the local Mughal officials and others in business communication with Surat. Although the people had shown no particular interest in the representatives of other Oriental potentates when they came to the Imperial Court, an Ambassador from a European sovereign was such a rarity that vast crowds of people of all classes flocked daily to see Norris's imposing camp, and still more its distinguished chief and his retinue. Even senior officers of the Mughal Army came to inspect his encampment; Norris declared with evident pride and delight that they had never seen anything like it before, nor had they seen anything in the Wazir's or Prime Minister's camp to be compared with his State tent, which they all specially admired. On some days, indeed, the attentions of the staring crowd became so embarrassing that Norris was forced to retire and close the tent doors. Even greater numbers came to see the soldiers drill, which the Ambassador had ordered them to do every night. Norris records: "The English are exercised daily wch imprinte terror & a strange notion of ym in ye minde of ye Indians". The accoutrements of the Horse Guards and their handsome appearance were objects of great admiration. Indeed, all forms of military discipline and martial order were great novelties to the people.

So curious did the crowds become that they came to watch divine service at Norris's camp on Sunday mornings and evenings. Once several eunuchs and other important people stood near his tent for the greater part of the service, and observed the proceedings very closely. Norris found them "very silent & Respectfull". He was especially impressed by the conduct of those

who came to see the service. "I have seen many congregations in England behave themselves wth lesse decency then these Infidells", he remarked. He also expressed a hope that it might in some way be "instrumentall to their conversion".¹

There were other interesting happenings during the few weeks Norris spent at Brahmapuri. Some Mughal officials sent the Ambassador their compliments, while others were anxious to obtain medical aid from his surgeon. One of Zulfiqar Khan's wives sent a message asking the surgeon to come and see her child, the only "one of 10 survivinge & ye hopes of ye family all dyinge of ye same fitts this child labours under". This request was readily granted, and the surgeon called several times to see the child. He was cordially received, but was not allowed to give the child any kind of proper treatment, as the relatives disliked the use of clysters and were afraid of hæmorrhage. The surgeon did his best, and rubbed the child's nose "wth a little salvolatile obosum". Not only did the child immediately recover from the fit, but as it happened, it had no more. The relatives were delighted with the surgeon's skill, and asked for another bottle of the same medicine, which was given. The eunuch talked of giving a feast for the surgeon, but never offered him a pice, nor did any other of the important men who sent for him. Norris observed: "It is not their custome ever to offer a phisitian a fee as in England, but ye method is, the Dr. bringe in a bill as large as he pleases wch is paide". In any case Norris ordered his surgeon not to take any fee even if it were offered him.²

The report of the surgeon's healing power spread quickly, and the Ambassador received an urgent message, supposed to be from the Wazir Asad Khan himself, asking that the surgeon might come and cure a friend of his. The surgeon was sent, and was confronted with "a deade man & one yt had been soe for 6 houres". He concluded that the ignorance of the people was so great that they believed the English could "almost raise ye deade".³

One morning Norris received a compliment from the Emperor's chief eunuch, Khidmatgar Khan, who had the care of all his daughters, wives, and concubines and was also charged with the education of all his sons. He regretted that he could not

come and see the Ambassador in person, ostensibly on the ground of his old age and infirmities, but assured Norris that he would be glad to do any service that lay in his power, either with the Emperor or any one else. At the same time the Khan desired the favour of Norris's surgeon for consultation. The Ambassador not only granted the request, but ordered the surgeon to take with him "a velvett case of ye best cordiall waters" and to tell the eunuch that it was the best of its kind England could produce; Norris himself used it when ill, and hoped it would do the eunuch good. In his private opinion, however, the real reason of the eunuch's sending for the surgeon was that he hoped to get "a case of spiritts wch they are all extremely fond of".⁴ He did not like to disappoint him in his expectations, as he might be of some use, being in great favour with the Emperor and in his confidence. Norris also thought that the eunuch had not come to see him either because Wazir Asad Khan had forbidden it considering it too great an honour for the Ambassador to receive a visit from one of his rank; or because the Mughal's own physician had interfered and suggested that the Emperor would take it amiss if anyone but himself were consulted. It is understandable if the physician desired to keep his patient to himself, for he got Rs. 70,000 in six months out of Khidmatgar Khan. Norris also diagnosed that the eunuch's distemper was "a deade palsy" which he should have been glad to get rid of and believed that the English surgeon could do him good, but dared not contradict the Mughal's physician. When Norris sent his secretary to return the compliment, the eunuch received him with great courtesy and entertained him with "betle & perfumd essences & waters wth his own hands."⁵

Another day the Mughal's second eunuch, well attended, visited Norris, and stayed in his tent for about half an hour. Sir William rose up on his arrival, but the eunuch did not approach to take him by the hand, because he did not think it good manners to "treade on ye embroydery". In that one particular Norris thought that the Mughal officials showed much delicacy, though rude and presumptuous enough in most others. The eunuch was allowed to sit on a chair in front of the Ambassador, which some of his retinue "spreade wth white cloth"; the rest sat on the carpets. Norris himself sat on an "elbow

chaire with embroyderd cushions & ye spreadinge about me crimson velvett embroyderd wth gold, wch they tooke particulare notice, as likewise of my Rich bed made of ye finest & Richest English Brocades & never had seen ye like". This eunuch was very inquisitive and asked Norris several "cunninge questions". He seemed particularly anxious to know whether any person wore a hat or sat down in the presence of the King of England. Norris—who at this juncture was negotiating with the Wazir about his reception—tactfully replied that only Ambassadors were allowed to do so. The eunuch asked questions about the King of England's and Norris's names, and also whether the English and the Dutch were all of one nation and of the same religion. Norris gave suitable answers to all these questions. The eunuch then apologised for coming to see him on a Sunday, and asked if he might hear the music and see the soldiers drawn up, which requests were complied with. Then betel and rose-water were offered, and the eunuch asked Norris whether that was how friends were entertained in England. But when Norris told him that the English custom was to entertain friends with a glass of wine, he laughed and was evidently anxious to have a glass himself. The real object of his visiting the Ambassador was thus revealed. Like all the other visitors he pretended that he had great influence with the Mughal, and that it would be his business to introduce Norris to the Emperor's presence, in which matter he could render him valuable service. Norris gave him a patient hearing and thanked him for calling, but he confessed that he had learned since his arrival in India not to give any credit to "one sylable any of ym speake." The eunuch had been at Aurangabad for a change of air, and was now going up with Murad Khan to the Emperor's Court.⁶

Very different were the attitudes of some other Mughal officials, who visited Norris or sent messages either from motives of personal interest or to ascertain the probable time of his departure for the Court, so that they might go under his protection. These officials had just arrived from Aurangabad with the convoy which was accompanying the Emperor's treasure,⁷ and had received express orders from Aurangzib to come to Court as quickly as possible. Norris suspected that they were unwilling to

go near the Marathas even together, without his support, though they were ashamed to own it, or else proceed by another way. One of these officials made minute enquiries about Norris's strength in arms and ammunition, and suggested that he should mount all his guns, as numerous bodies of the enemy were near at hand. Norris assured him that, well armed, he would drive off all the Mughal's enemies he might encounter on the way. Even Nazar 'Ali Khan,⁸ son of the Nawab of Ahmadabad, commanding a thousand horse, was one of this party. He made a handsome present to the Wazir Asad Khan, hoping to induce him to write to the Emperor asking for permission for him (Nazar 'Ali Khan) to await reinforcements at Brahmapuri. He pretended that there were numerous bodies of the enemy along the road, though his real reason was the fear that if he went to the Court, he would be sent out to fight the Marathas. He hoped to remain quietly at Brahmapuri, and found an excuse that would serve at least to delay his march. This was that there was a body of 20,000 enemy horse about 17 *kos* away. If this was true, Norris felt, they would soon rout all Asad Khan's army in his camp, even though "called 100,000 strong", as it might be if "wives, whores, children, eunuchs, shroffs,⁹ broakers, merchants & traders" were included. Norris thought this number did not contain "4000 people who pretend to fight and of those not 500 that dare looke a real enemy in the face".¹⁰ Norris's own retinue was so considerable that he did not believe the full strength of Asad Khan's camp would dare attack him, whereas they—disorganised, luxurious and slothful—seemed to him a very easy prey for a determined enemy. They were neither courageous, nor possessed of any knowledge of the art of war.

At the same time Norris was impressed by the extent of the Wazir's wealth. He described him as "ye Greatest & Richest man in ye Empire next ye Mogull & most say Richer then He having amassd vast sums of money by very large Incomes & never paying any body wch makes him Generally hated."¹¹ His Riches cheifly in Jewells & some Gold wch he always carrys with him.¹² They tell us he has 30 wives and 800 other women with him¹² & has change of 3 or 4 every night wch I thinke might be spard considering his age wch is 90 yeares Old.¹³ He has not

been in soe greate favour as formerly for these 3 or 4 yeares, but ye Mogull has not thought fitt out of policy to displace him, because his sons & creatures have ye chiefe comands of ye severall armys & yt it would be difficult & breed ill blood amongst his other cheife ministers To preferr one to his office, he has been sent for often to ye Mogull, but has always found some excuse to stay where he is. It is impossible to beleive how dissolute & luxurious ye lives of these greate men are. The vizier spendinge his whole time wth his women, his enunchs & pandars, who have liberty of accesse att all times & his secretarys in Relation to business but rarely & yt as ye eunuch pleases. Both ye vizier & all ye prime ministers fond of nothing more then Hott spiritts wth wch they make themselves drunke every day if they can gett it, give a prodigious rate if they buy it & no present soe gratefull as that. The Mogull himselfe winks att it & drinks not a drop himselfe, but they say is grown fearefull & jealous of all mankind."¹⁴

Another day, Ghulam Mahmud, son of the deputy Wazir Arshad Khan, expressed his desire to visit Norris in order to enquire when he would be ready to start, so that he might travel with him for safety's sake. He also was one of the party who had come with the convoy bringing the Mughal's money from Aurangabad. Norris appointed a time to see him, and accordingly the guards were drawn up at the entrance to his tent and he was ready to receive him "wth sound of Trumpett & beate of drum & everythinge else prepar'd suitable to his quality". The Ambassador waited for some time before he heard any news of his coming. But Ghulam Mahmud dared not proceed, because he discovered "a Sheyk yt was a spy upon him"¹⁵ near Norris's tent. Considering this reason very trivial and having waited for Ghulam Mahmud about two hours, Norris dismissed his guards and retired. Perceiving that no visitors would be received that night, the Shaikh immediately departed. Ghulam Mahmud then appeared, but Norris informed him that he was retiring and would not receive any one after dark. Ghulam Mahmud expressed his regret for the delay, admitting it to be his own fault, and went away disappointed.¹⁶

It was ascertained, however, that the chief object of Ghulam

Mahmud's visiting Norris was to secure the Ambassador's influence with the Emperor so as to gain for himself the Governorship of Surat, then held by Diyanat Khan. The Khan had also combined with it the post of diwanship of the Deccan, but about a month earlier the Emperor had deprived him of the latter post and disposed of it to Ghulam Mahmud. So Arshad Khan desired his son to assure Norris that if he would intercede with the Emperor and induce him to bestow upon Ghulam Mahmud the Governorship of Surat also in place of Diyanat Khan, he would receive, in return for this favour, Arshad Khan's whole-hearted friendship and assistance in the furtherance of the affairs of the mission at Court. Furthermore, Diyanat Khan had written to Arshad Khan, saying he believed the Ambassador was planning to turn him out of his post. Moreover, Diyanat Khan, whose sympathies were entirely with the Old Company, had already sent up large sums of money to be distributed amongst the important officials at Court so as to secure his post and to hinder Norris from getting any *farman*.¹⁷ But Norris believed the whole thing to be a trick, considering the prejudice of Arshad Khan and Diyanat Khan against the affairs of the New English Company, and, further, the close relationship and friendship between these two officials. The story, he thought, was probably concocted to induce him to rely on their friendship, and make it easier for them to deceive him.¹⁸

Ghulam Mahmud, however, without waiting for Norris, set out from Brahmapuri with the Emperor's treasures in company with other Mughal officials, taking a roundabout route to avoid the Marathas.

There were other incidents which reflect on the conduct of the lower rank of Mughal officials. One of Norris's peons, a 'Gentoo', was taken by the Darogah or head of the police, and forced to pay the poll tax. The police chief at first demanded Rs. 14, but was content with Rs. 3½ and one for himself. Norris thought it wiser to take no notice of the matter, suspecting it to be a trap laid for him. His enemies, he believed, hoped that he would demand exemption from the tax for all the Hindu members of his retinue, and that this would lead to negotiations which would delay matters and keep the Ambassador at Brahmapuri,

and at the same time cast a slur upon him. His stern comment was that neither "friendship nor justice is to be had or expected in this Leschar" [*lashkar*].¹⁹

Norris seemed to find other things of interest besides his visitors. On one occasion he was approached through Rustamji by a merchant who brought for his inspection a diamond which he was offering for sale. It weighed 31 *ratis*, and the merchant valued each *rati* at Rs. 3,000, or Rs. 93,000 for the whole. Norris asked Rustamji what its price would be at Surat, and was told not more than half the sum quoted, as it had a little flaw; otherwise it was a large stone of fine water.²⁰

The Ambassador himself continued to be in good health considering that the weather had been very hot and the winds warm. Though he found that the winds did not here carry with them the same fierce heat as all along the Coast of Coromandel, they were warm enough to be very unpleasant. He wrote: "ye chaires you sitt & ye Beds you ly [e] on beinge throughly heated wth it wch make it troublesome & causes greate drought. I have been almost as Thirsty for this week as in the Hott winds att Metchlapatam, but have given myselfe ye liberty of eatinge wht fruites I could gett & drinkeinge all sorts of coole liquors att all times & I thank God found no ill consequence by ym yett".²¹

Meanwhile Norris's arrival at Brahmapuri had been formally communicated to the Wazir Asad Khan, who was of course encamped there. It was highly important that Norris should meet the Wazir, whose influence would carry great weight when the actual negotiations began at Court. He therefore informed the Wazir's Secretary of his intention to visit the Nawab, and said he would like to arrange beforehand all matters of ceremony relating to his reception, so that it might be worthy of his high rank. He intended, he said, to make his visit to the Nawab as splendid as possible and to give him a most acceptable present.²²

Asad Khan seemed well pleased, and agreed that Norris should send his secretary to settle the details of his reception. Norris, in his own words, thought that the Mughal officials were "strangers to all customes of yt nature in Europe havinge had none of my character here these 100 yeares, but saide withall yt they had Records by ym relatinge to ye last English Embas-

sadr yt was here in ye Reign of Shah Jehan [sic]".²³ Accordingly Norris sent Mr. Mill to the Wazir's Secretary,²⁴ who advised him to draw up a statement saying how the Ambassador wished to be received.

In dealing with officials at the Mughal Court—as, indeed, at any other Court in the world—there was the problem of appeasing the underlings, who always took undue advantage of their privileged position. It was equally impossible to determine whether they had been genuinely commissioned by their superiors to do a certain thing, and how far they represented affairs to their masters as they really were. It happened that soon afterwards the Wazir's chief eunuch and favourite paid a long visit to Norris's camp. He told Rustamji that, for the sake of his prestige, the Wazir wished the Ambassador to give him as good a present as he gave anyone else. He also declared that the Wazir was ready to do Norris all manner of good services and would receive him with every mark of honour and esteem. The real object of his visit was discovered when he put forward a request in the name of the Wazir's Secretary, who, he said, would take it very kindly if he had two "cases of spiritts" presented to him, and would endeavour to deserve the gift. To come thus and beg for something in the name of another person was a "meaner sort of pimpinge", if possible, than the eunuch's proper profession.

Norris thereupon sent the Wazir's Secretary a memorial written in Persian and English. He stipulated in this document that he (the Ambassador) should come in full State, with flags, kettledrums, trumpets, and everything else in accordance with the custom of his own country. On alighting from his *palanquin*, he should be received and conducted to the Wazir by his highest officer. When the Ambassador arrived at the place appointed for the interview, the Wazir should enter by another way in order to meet, receive and embrace him standing. The Ambassador would take a seat on a level with the Wazir, and his secretary, Dr. Edward Norris, Mr. Harlewyn, Mr. Mill, and another gentleman, with His Excellency's sword of State, would then have places given them suitable to their ranks. It was always, Norris pointed out, the custom in Europe that when an Ambassador visited a person

of rank or high official, that person should return the visit himself, and if he could not do so, that the visit should not be returned by any other person of inferior rank. The Ambassador was to take leave first, and the Wazir should rise at the same time. Finally, if at any time any greater honour or mark of respect had been paid to the Ambassador of any other King over and above what was stipulated in the document, Norris insisted on the same as his right.

On reading these demands, the Wazir's Secretary made objections and declared that his master could not agree to the terms proposed. He immediately drafted a new document himself in Persian. When it was translated into English, it was found that in the first clause, after citing the Ambassador's rank, the Secretary styled him "a servant of ye Nabob". The sword and the drum were not to be admitted, and Norris was to be received not by the "highest officer", but by "one of the Wazir's officers". On all other points he agreed to Norris's demands.

These points of etiquette created a serious difference. Norris was furious; he at once drew up a protest, though "wth all ye mildnesse & even temper imaginable", and sent it to the Wazir's Secretary. He declared that the Secretary did not fully comprehend the honour and respect due to his rank. Desirous as he was of Asad Khan's friendship, he was yet neither a servant of, nor subject to, any one living except the King of England. Norris, in short, maintained that he could not possibly modify his proposals in any way, and to establish a precedent, he pointed out that the previous English Ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, had been received by Prince Khurram, Jahangir's son, at Burhanpore (in Khandesh), in full State, after the manner of his own country. He himself, therefore, was justified in expecting from the Wazir a reception similar to that accorded to Roe. He must on no account detract from the dignity of his rank in order to gratify the Wazir's personal desire. He also hinted that as the Emperor had sent word three times to hasten his appearance at Court, he intended to make his way thither with all possible speed; he hoped, therefore, that the Wazir would excuse him if he did not pay him the visit which had been proposed, seeing that the conditions suggested were inconsistent with his rank and dignity.

Several messages were exchanged between Norris's secretary on one side and the Wazir's Secretary and the chief eunuch on the other, in order that a compromise might be reached. The Wazir's Secretary seemed much concerned at the misunderstanding, and scratched out the word "servant" as if it had been inserted by mistake. At the same time, he declared, the Wazir could not give way on the other two points—the drum, and the Ambassador's reception in the place appointed for the interview. The beating of a drum was something which neither the Wazir nor the Emperor's sons themselves could do. It was a thing the Wazir dared not allow, and what the Governor of Surat had done in receiving Norris could be no precedent for him. Not even the Dutch Ambassador was allowed to have a drum beaten. When His Excellency came to the Nawab's house, he was to sit in the *diwankhana*,²⁵ then, in a little while, the Nawab would come out; the Ambassador would rise and meet him, and they would go together into an inner apartment and sit in equal State, but the Nawab should leave when he pleased.

The Secretary urged that if Asad Khan were to receive His Excellency in the manner proposed, it would through some channel come to the ears of the Emperor, who would be angry with the Wazir. The Emperor would likewise take it amiss if Norris left Brahmपुरi without seeing the Wazir. Asad Khan, the Secretary declared, was a very mild, courteous man, but his deputy, who was with the Emperor, was "very proud and haughty", and the Ambassador would find a great difference between the two. If, the Secretary concluded, His Excellency was determined to leave without seeing the Wazir, he could go with a convoy which was to leave in a few days with money for the Emperor.

Norris held his ground with equal persistence. He pointed out that the Dutchman was not an Ambassador, but only a Commissary from the Governor of Batavia, and therefore could not form a precedent for him. And even if he had come from the States of Holland, Norris, as the Ambassador of a crowned head, would have insisted on a more distinguished reception. He demanded the immediate signature of the document, failing which he should return it.

Thus several days were spent without any decision being reached. Finding that the Wazir was adamant about the beating of the drum, Norris declared himself ready to waive this demand. He did not expect that this concession would induce Asad Khan to give way on the other points in dispute, but he was anxious to show the world, and especially those whose interests were immediately concerned, that he did not mean to endanger those interests by an undue insistence on matters of punctilio.

It was customary on such occasions to send a list of the presents which were to be made. Norris refused to send a list, but gave an assurance that the presents would be such as were fit for him to give and the Wazir to receive. The value of a present, he contended, depended rather upon who gave it than on its intrinsic worth. The value of the present offered to Asad Khan was at least Rs. 8,000, and it included "some of all sorts of ye choicest glasse ware", and especially "ye stronge waters" which Norris knew "their mouths waterd att". The Wazir's chief eunuch and favourite was also assured of a considerable gratification to himself if he could get the offer accepted. But Norris's offer was rejected as unworthy of the Wazir's acceptance. The eunuch had the impudence to ask if the Wazir must show him so much honour for so small a present as that.

Norris thereupon informed Asad Khan that he was sorry he must leave without paying him a visit, but that his rank as the King of England's Ambassador would not permit him to wait a moment longer on any account whatever. He would, therefore, proceed with all possible dispatch to the Emperor's Court. But this message made no impression on the Wazir, who returned the same answer as before.

The delay, in Norris's belief, was entirely deliberate. He was informed that the Grand Wazir and all his officials were bound fast to the Old Company, which had gained their friendship by large and frequent bribes, and had no doubt promised them a large sum for not seeing the Ambassador—which they knew would be the result of their insisting on such terms as they did. Moreover, the procurator of the Old Company had distributed various presents at Brahmपुरi, and secured letters of recommendation from Asad Khan to several people at Court. He even

had the audacity to declare that Norris was no Ambassador from the King of England; for which Sir William resolved, upon his arrival at the Imperial Court, to arrest him and "keep him in irons" whatever the consequence might be.

The Wazir's officers evidently believed that Norris would agree to any terms, but they found themselves mistaken. He vindicated his line of action in a letter to Sir Nicholas Waite. He strongly suspected, he told Waite, that even if he did visit the Wazir, the intention was to treat him slightly and in a manner unworthy of his rank, so that he would have been forced to demand satisfaction from the Emperor before going to the Court, or having any other dealings with him. Further, he was informed that, as matters then stood at Court, a complimentary visit so dearly bought would have been of no advantage to the Company's interest. He felt that he had treated the Wazir with the greatest consideration, and gone farther than he ought to have done in making concessions, so that no one interested in the Company could justly charge him with leaving anything undone which could have made the Wazir its friend.

At last Norris informed the Wazir's Secretary that he intended to leave for the Emperor's Camp on the 27th and asked him to tell the Wazir, presenting his respects and reaffirming his desire for the Wazir's friendship. Norris suspected that the Secretary did not give the Wazir a proper and accurate account of his visit, for he was rather indifferent and ill-humoured in receiving the message, which caused Sir William to comment: "These people are as ignorant as proude, neither know or practise any civility, & were not sensible ye sendinge to take my leave was a complemt & yt it had been Rude to have gon [e] without it",²⁶

Just then Norris received an unexpected message supposed to be from the Nawab Zu'lfiqar Khan, the Wazir's son, who had just arrived at his father's camp. He regretted that he had already been there two days without either seeing or hearing from the Ambassador. He reminded Norris that both he and his father had been instrumental in procuring and sending him *dastaks* to Masulipatam and Surat, and that they had done nothing which he could regard as disobliging. Norris replied that this was the first notice he had had of the Nawab's arrival at Brahmapuri,

otherwise he would have sent his compliments to him at once; the reason why he had not been able to see his father, the Wazir, was the conduct of his Secretary. At the same time, Norris had been very sensible of Zu'lfikar Khan's friendship.

Norris learnt that Zu'lfikar Khan was very scantily attended and stayed only a few days at his father's camp. Various reports were current as to what forces and attendants he had. Some alleged that he had 10,000 horse, but left 7,000 of these four *kos* out of Brahmapuri, while others reported that he had not 1,200 in all. The reason of his coming to the camp, it was rumoured, was to "pursue a Rajah" who lay very near and was "very stronge". But the truth of the matter, as Norris was informed, was this. Zu'lfikar Khan was then in disfavour with the Emperor for permitting a convoy of provisions to get into the Panhala fort, which Aurangzib was besieging, for which reason the Emperor had "dismissed him"²⁷ from the post he was occupying and sent him to Brahmapuri. But father and son were afraid that something worse might follow, which, after a long private conversation, they were preparing to forestall. Zu'lfikar Khan's disgrace was further confirmed by the fact that he had sent all his women and Asad Khan all "ye choicest of his Treasure" to Sholapore fort, about 12 *kos* distant, that they might not be seized by the Emperor.²⁸

While at Brahmapuri, Norris received from Shaikh Abdul Rahaman, the Chief Mufti, some secret information in a document²⁹ written in Persian, relating to the rank, charge, power, interests and proceedings of the high officials at the Mughal Court, in the hope that he might be better able to transact his business with them. This information was more detailed and exact than that given by President Waite and mentioned in a previous chapter. It stated that all *farmans*, orders and other matters of that kind passed through the hands of the deputy Wazir Arshad Khan and his secretary. Norris was warned not to apply to them, as the former was a relation of Diyanat Khan, Governor of Surat, who was hostile to the New Company. The second *bakshi* Ruh-ullah Khan, being 'steward'³⁰ of the Emperor's Household, had, according to custom the duty of introducing ambassadors and looking after their affairs. The 'Russian'³¹ Ambassador was

introduced by him, and after spending a large sum of money, was not successful in getting the desired *farman*. Similarly a 'padre'³² of Goa was presented by him, and after spending Rs. 75,000, obtained only a *parwana*. Ruh-ullah Khan's secretary offered to manage Norris's affairs, but it was found that his expectations were too great. The Khan's father had received 2½ lakhs of rupees for procuring a *farman* for the Old Company, and the Ambassador's business, being relatively more important, would deserve a more considerable reward. Multafat Khan, "Keeper" of the Emperor's jewels and "first Lord of the Bed-chamber" was always near his sovereign and had greater opportunities of speaking to him than any other person. Not only was he Aurangzib's greatest favourite, but his influence with the Emperor was so great that even Arshad Khan and all the other high officials at Court showed courtesy to him. Moreover he was a conscientious man and took nothing openly; he was difficult of access, and those who had business with him must wait his time.

Bahramand Khan, the "great Bakshi",³³ on the contrary, took money publicly. Shaikh Muhammad Aqil was a whole-hearted friend of the New Company, and as it were, procurator for the Ambassador and President Waite, but his influence with the Emperor was insignificant, as he rarely saw him. According to the Mufti, Imam Quli Beg, a resident at Court experienced in business transactions, had suggested that Zu'lfiqar Khan might introduce Norris to the Emperor; but as he was in command of the army, he was seldom with his master, and was not, therefore, the proper person to be entrusted with the Ambassador's affairs. Imam Quli Beg also intimated that he would try to get Arshad Khan to present the Ambassador to the Emperor. It was a task which Arshad Khan was most desirous to perform, but as it would be then in his power to oblige Diyanat Khan, it was feared that the Ambassador would be misrepresented in every possible way. The name of Fazil Khan,³⁴ the Emperor's Secretary, who was also an assistant of Wazir Asad Khan, was likewise proposed as the person who might undertake the honourable duty of presenting the Ambassador. In that case the business of the *farman* must be referred to the "halsa"³⁵ or Patent Office," of which Arshad Khan was chief, and Yar Ali Beg was the "Daroga".³⁶

So if Fazil Khan should undertake it, then Yar Ali Beg, who had all along been the New Company's true friend, would take it as a slight to himself and be offended. Inayatullah Khan,³⁷ another deputy of Wazir Asad Khan, was a pious, conscientious man and never took bribes, but he was a friend of Arshad Khan and Diyanat Khan.

The Mufti further suggested that the Emperor would in all probability direct Ruh-ullah Khan to find quarters for the Ambassador and look after him and his affairs, but if His Excellency were to leave him and apply to anyone else, then he would certainly make an enemy of him. The Mufti therefore advised Norris to take Yar Ali Beg's advice when approaching the Emperor's Camp.

In the Mufti's opinion, Yar Ali Beg would be the best person to present Norris to the Emperor. All the *Umaras* at Court were afraid of him on account of his probity. He was easily approachable and always indefatigable in the service of his friends. Further, Yar Ali Beg had access at all times to the Emperor, who knew his integrity, and not only allowed him great liberty of speech, but would be ready to grant anything he asked. His official position was a guarantee that whatever he ordered would be speedily executed. Norris should also visit and gain the friendship of Prince Kam Bakhsh, who was in high favour with the Emperor and might do him a great service. Nor should he neglect to secure letters of introduction from the Wazir Asad Khan, if he met him, to his deputy Arshad Khan and Fazil Khan. It would be well if Mirza Muhammad Baquir were with the Ambassador, because he could give a particular account of the Government and Customs of Surat.³⁸

Mr. Harlewyn, the treasurer, submitted to Norris an account showing sums received from President Waite and the Council, compared with those already expended or likely to be required. But money was needed to oil the wheels of diplomacy, and it was not forthcoming. This was very far from re-assuring, for the balance likely to be at Norris's credit when he arrived at Court would not exceed Rs. 12,000. The bills of credit promised to Norris had not yet been sent after him. Rustamji sounded the *sarrafs* at Brahmapuri, and confessed the naked truth that no money was

to be had there on bills either for Surat or Bengal, and that the embassy would not be able to get any money at the Emperor's Camp; for the *sarrafs* acted in collusion and their interests were one and based on one principle. The *sarrafs* of the Old Company's factory at Surat had written to the local *sarrafs* that the New Company was comparatively poor and that its ships had not yet arrived. About six weeks before Norris's arrival at Brahmapuri, the Old Company sent a *sarraf* to prevent him from drawing any money there or at the Emperor's Camp. The *sarrafs*, Norris believed, might have the further aim of ruining Rustamji's credit, because he belonged to a different caste; or the scarcity of funds might simply be a pretext for making Norris pay heavily for what was to be advanced.

Norris at once informed Waite and his Council of the financial position and begged them to procure him sufficient supplies with all possible speed, to prevent the ill consequences that might otherwise befall the embassy. Rustamji had already borrowed a large sum before Norris's arrival at Surat and afterwards, so that he could not undertake to obtain further funds.

Waite and his Council had already supplied the embassy with a considerable sum before it left Surat, and Norris was empowered only to spend such money as was required to obtain the necessary *farmans*; but now, realising his difficulties, they empowered him to spend money at his discretion to expedite the business of the embassy. This liberality was intended to counteract the plots of the Old Company. As the large investments made at Surat prevented the Council from supplying him with further sums, they recommended Norris to draw upon Bengal. Waite assured him that "gold blinds ye Eyes of this Governmt", and that he would not leave anything undone that might be of use to Norris. He believed that His Excellency's first audience, and the speedy obtaining of his grants, must be recompensed by the payment of Rs. 100,000 to the Emperor. It might be possible for Rustamji's bills to be cashed at Surat for that amount or even larger sums until that unlucky ship the *Albemarle* had arrived. Norris, as advised, appealed to President Littleton at Hugli to send a remittance for Rs. 50,000 without delay, as the success of his negotiations depended largely upon "proper application and convenient

expedition".⁸⁹

During Norris's stay at Brahmapuri, and, indeed throughout his journey, he maintained a steady correspondence, through regular *pattamars* or foot messengers, with President Waite and his Council at Surat, as well as other Presidencies. These related chiefly to the events and daily progress of his journey, and not least the prospects of the embassy, financial affairs and other urgent matters. In return he was constantly kept informed about the situation at Surat, domestic and business affairs, the attitude and proceedings of the local Mughal officials, the rival Old Company and other European settlements. Nor did he forget to give valuable directions for the guidance of affairs at Surat, and for the needs of the New Company's other settlements. At the same time he wrote to some important Mughal officials at Court, who sympathised with his aspirations, announcing his coming and earnestly soliciting their help in his future plans. He sometimes had to send his letters in duplicate for fear of their miscarriage. He was informed that many of the professional *pattamars* had about that time been taken by the Marathas, barbarously tortured and some even killed. But in spite of the many dangers on the way, almost all the letters were safely received.

NOTES

¹ Pp. 100, 112, *ibid.*

² Pp. 104, 111, 120, *ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁴ Drinking and other vices had become more prevalent among the Mughal noblemen from the time of the Emperor Jahangir, whose personal example had infected his courtiers. The Company's servants, being aware of these proclivities, often included European liquors in their presents to high Mughal officials. For instance, Governor Pitt of Fort St. George once sent to the Nawab Zu'lfiqar Khan a hundred bottles of Canary, and to his deputy Da'ud Khan, on more than one occasion, varieties of liquors, in return of favours received from them. The greatest thing that Aurangzib did during his reign was to prohibit the sale of spirits by Hindus and Muslims. But the rigour of his ordinances was inevitably relaxed as the result of his Ministers themselves being addicted to drink, and the Europeans and other Christians who served in the Mughal artillery obstinately refused to refrain from it. See Vol. II, pp. 5-7, Vol. IV, p. 131 of Manucci's *Storia do Mogor*; p. 107 of *Records of Fort St. George: Diary and Consultation Book of 1698*, Madras, 1922; Vol. I, pp. 353, 377 of *Madras in the Olden Time*, by J. Talboys Wheeler, Madras, 1861.

⁵ Pp. 107-8, 110-111 of *Rawl. MS. G. 913*.

* Pp. 111-112, *ibid.*

⁷ It amounted to nearly 25 lakhs of rupees. Norris gathered that the *Wazir* took a portion of it, and sent the rest to the Emperor. A lakh of gold *mohurs* was brought by *pattamars*, who took advantage of Norris's convoy and had arrived at Brahmapuri several days before the other convoy. See p. 109, *ibid.*

⁸ He was adopted son of Shuja'at Khan (Kartalab Khan), the thirty-eighth *Subahdar* of Gujarat (1684-1701). Nazar 'Ali Khan distinguished himself in various military expeditions. See William Irvine's "notes" in Vol. IV, p. 247 of *Storia do Mogor*.

⁹ *Sarrafs* or money changers. See p. 200 of *The Dutch in Malabar* by A. Galletti.

¹⁰ Pp. 95, 120 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹¹ The *Wazir's* wealth was somewhat exaggerated. Of course he had a large income, but like other *Umaras*, he was in embarrassed circumstances owing to the expenses he incurred to maintain the dignity of his position. During the last years of Aurangzib's reign, the pay of the *Wazir's* soldiers was usually in arrears; this state of affairs continued even after 1707, and he raised a loan to meet their demands. This was done in order to convince the new Sovereign that he was hard pressed for money and thereby to conceal his wealth, as the Emperor claimed all the possessions after an *Amir's* death. At the same time, Asad Khan was not so wealthy as Norris surmised. See Vol. I, p. 9 of Irvine's *Later Mughals*; also pp. 212-213 of *Bernier's Travels in the Mogul Empire*, second edition, Milford, 1916.

¹² In spite of Asad Khan's great administrative ability, he had serious defects of character. Sarkar says that the *Wazir* was "a grand noble and lived in a princely style above that of other peers, with a weakness for handmaids and singing-girls, of whom he kept a large harem and on whom he spent more than his income". See Vol. III, p. 69 of *History of Aurangzib*.

¹³ The estimate of Asad Khan's age was evidently based on hearsay; if Mr. Irvine's authority is to be accepted, the *Wazir* was at the time rather over 75. There is, however, a discrepancy of about two years in the dates as given by Mr. Irvine and by Nawab Samsamud-Doula Shah Nawaz Khan. See Vol. II, p. 21 of *Storia do Mogor*; and also p. 277 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*, translated by H. Beveridge. (Bibliotheca Indica Series.)

¹⁴ Pp. 100-1 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁵ The spy system could be traced to the administration of justice and Government at a very early period in Indian history, references of which can be found in Vedic literature, in Manu and Kautilya. Aurangzib had a very efficient intelligence department, composed of four thousand spies (*harkarah*) in "the imperial service scattered throughout the Kingdom". It was so elaborate that the Emperor himself secured private news of all the affairs and intrigues of the Persian Court through two Indian *banians* who had business affairs at Ispahan. Their reports were sent through the Caravan which generally came to India in the spring. These spies once suggested to Aurangzib that he should invade Persia, declaring that there was nothing to hinder his victorious march even to the capital itself. See pp. 44, 95, 248, 275 of *The State in Ancient India*, by Beni Prasad, Allahabad, 1928; p. 270 of *Hindu Law and Custom*, by Julius Jolly, trans. by Batakrishna Ghosh, Calcutta, 1928; p. 213 of *The Army of the Indian Moghuls* by William Irvine, London, 1903; and also p. 98 of *The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East Indies* (The Coronation of Solymán III, the Present King of Persia), London, 1691.

¹⁴ Pp. 127-129 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁷ Pp. 129-130, *ibid.*

¹⁸ P. 130, *ibid.*

¹⁹ P. 121, *ibid.*

²⁰ P. 127, *ibid.*

²¹ P. 121, *ibid.*

²² Norris courteously expressed his desire to pay his respects also to the Emperor's favourite daughter, who was then at Brahmapuri, in whatever manner would be most acceptable. See p. 98, *ibid.*

²³ Jahangir.

²⁴ Mr. Mill reported to Norris that the *Wazir's* secretary's apartment consisted of only "a little Thatcht cujan Hutt nothing neare so good as ye worst of our Tents spreade only wth settingees & white cloth over it & but one cushion wch he complemented him wth". See p. 100 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁵ Audience chamber.

²⁶ Pp. 97-100, 101-104, 106-107, 109, 113-117, 119, 131 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*; *O.C. 56-IV*, Nos. 7485, 7490, 7514; also *Factory Records, Misc. 20* (Edward Norris's letter to Sir Nicholas Waite and Council, dated March 17, 1701).

²⁷ The Mughal General Zu'lfiqar Khan was, in fact, continually engaged in a campaign against the Marathas, which could not be effectually pursued without his military leadership. He was later raised to higher rank and position during the reign of Bahadur Shah I, and became Chief Wazir when Jahandar Shah ascended the throne. He was a great soldier and an experienced administrator, but, towards the end of Aurangzib's reign, his disloyalty, negligence and treasonable conduct with the Marathas became somewhat notorious. He later paid for his faults with his life in the reign of Farrukh Siyar. One cause of his disgrace, not mentioned by Norris, was his inglorious retreat with a large army from Panhala with heavy loss in artillery and baggage. See Vol. II, pp. 315-317, Vol. III, pp. 250-251, 271 of *Storia do Mogor*; Vol. I, pp. 10, 30, 239 of Irvine's *Later Mughals*; Vol. V, pp. 100-1, 106 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; also p. 79 of Sarkar's *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*.

²⁸ *Rawl. MS. C. 913*, pp. 131, 133.

²⁹ This was translated into English at Brahmapuri and dated March 21, 1701. See No. 7510 of *O.C. 56-IV*, India Office; also pp. 123-126 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³⁰ Lord High Steward.

³¹ Sir Jadunath Sarkar says that no Russian Ambassador is known to have visited Aurangzib, and is of opinion that such an event was clearly impossible, in view of the foreign relations of the Delhi Government at that time and its utter weakness at sea. Probably Norris confused 'Russian' with 'Khurasani' (i.e. Central Asian) envoys. In 1659, however, the Duke of Muscovy sent Ambassadors to China, and these were well received by the Emperor. Muscovite merchants had trading relations with Ispahan, though not with India. See Vol. II, pp. 271-72 of Tavernier's *Travels in India*.

³² The 'padre' envoy referred to above was Father Luis da Piedade, an Augustinian Friar, who, in 1700, was charged by the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, Antonio Luiz Gonsalves de Camara Cautinho, with a mission to the

Court of Aurangzib, with valuable presents for the Emperor and his Ministers. Father Luis obtained various concessions from the Emperor confirming peace and friendship with the Portuguese, trading privileges, assurance of help against pirates, and the restoration of St. Thome by the *Nawab* of the Carnatic. On his return he also brought some valuable presents from the Emperor in exchange for those he had taken to the latter from the Viceroy. See pp. 1, 7, 10, 16, 19 of *Ultimas Embaixadas Portuguesas a Corte Mogol*, by Prof. P. Pissurlencar, Nova-Goa, 1938.

²² *Bakhshiu-l-mulk*.

²³ This is probably Mir Muhammad Hadi Fazil Khan (son of Haji Muhammad Wazir Khan), who died in the Deccan in 1703. After he had been apprenticed first under Ruh-ullah Khan II, and then under Salabat Khan, his ability was soon recognised; he was put in charge of the household (*Biyutat*), and afterwards combined with it the post of deputy *Khan-i-Saman* or Lord Steward. See p. 547 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*; and also Vol. III, p. 270 of *Storia do Mogor*.

²⁴ The word should be *Khalisa*, or the office of royal exchequer, where the business of the revenue department was mainly transacted. See *Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms*, by H. H. Wilson, London.

²⁵ Superintendent of the Office.

²⁶ Son of Shuk-ullah Khan and Hafiza Mariam, tutor of Aurangzib's eldest daughter Zeb-un-nisa Begam. Through the latter's influence Inayat-ullah Khan soon rose to higher ranks in his *mansab*, and became favourite secretary of the Emperor and *Diwan* of the *Khalisa*. He tried to reform the system of *jagirs* bestowed on high officials. A man of character, he found recognition in his being appointed temporary *Wazir* of Bahadur Shah I. He was the author of *Ahkam-'Alamgiri* and compiled the *Kalimat-i-Tayyibat*, dying in 1726. See T. W. Beale's *An Oriental Dictionary*, London, 1894; Vol. I, p. 333, Vol. II, p. 105 of Irvine's *Later Mughals*; and p. 79 of *Studies in Mughal India*.

²⁷ No. 7510 of O.C. 56-IV, India Office; and also pp. 123-126 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁸ Nos. 7420, 7482, 7513, also letter from Norris to President Waite and Council (March 11, 1701), 7470 of O.C. 56-IV; 7565 of O.C. 57-I; *Factory Records*, Misc. 20; *Surat Factory Records*, Vol. 6; also pp. 97, 98, 105 118 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

CHAPTER X

The Last Stage of the Journey

The last stage of the journey had yet to be accomplished before Norris could reach the environs of the Emperor's Camp at Panhala. It covered a distance of sixty-five *kos*, or eight days' march, through regions similar to those he had already traversed, and full of historical interest—particularly as having been the scene of much warfare. The Ambassador was not yet immune from discomfort, excitement, and even danger, but it was consoling to feel that his journey's end could not be far off, so far as actual travelling was concerned. It was, too, a help to him to have acquired on the way some knowledge of the Emperor and his Court, and to have later on the rare opportunity of personally witnessing the investment of two famous Maratha hill-forts. He had already obtained an insight into the condition of the country, an experience which was likely to be of the greatest value to him in the business he was about to undertake.

Norris finally left Brahmपुरi on the morning of March 27, 1701. He intended to march in the most orderly manner in sight of Asad Khan's camp, but owing to Rustamji's misdirection he took the wrong route, and in consequence there was disorder and confusion amongst the retinue. Naturally Norris was disappointed, and it was probably done intentionally, for no one could give any reason for it, and Rustamji would "neither scruple lyeinge nor swearing". In consequence of this incident, the first day's journey was not a very pleasant one. Norris spent the night at "Bolony" and next day had a much pleasanter and more refreshing march to "Onur"—a town, he observed, totally demolished "by reason of a neibouringe pagod", the ruins of which were still visible. It is well-known that the sight of Hindu temples and infidel practices was repugnant to Aurangzib, who, in his bigoted zeal, had ordered the governors to destroy these all over the provinces both before and after his accession to the throne.

The march was here handicapped by Norris's ignorance

of the nature of the country ahead of him. He soon experienced difficulties and hardships in traversing a barren, rugged and uneven forest country, in which he could find no water till he reached "Ghent". This town had been recently demolished by the "Rajahs", and contained but very few inhabitants, who supplied travellers with rice, grain, etc. There Norris encamped amidst pleasant surroundings, and not far from him were encamped two sons¹ of Amir Khan, who was governor of Kabul and had died about three years earlier.² He was a "very greate man" and had a great command. Besides being father of seventeen sons, Amir Khan was supposed to have left ten *kror*³ of rupees; the Emperor appropriated⁴ this and made provision for the sons in his army and elsewhere. Like other European travellers, Norris was surprised to learn that these vast acquisitions of the nobles often fell into the hands of the Emperor after their death. It was said at that time that Aurangzib was in great need of money; on the other hand, some people declared that he had vast wealth hidden and kept secret at Agra and Delhi, but no one knew the truth of the matter.⁵ Several people from the camps of Amir Khan's sons visited Norris's, and nothing excited their curiosity more than the cannon and the number of Englishmen in his retinue. Some of them were even so inquisitive as to ask why the Ambassador had so many Englishmen in his retinue, believing that his object was to side with some of the Emperor's sons and presumably aid them in their designs on the throne. Amir Khan's sons soon marched away "very slenderly attended" with one elephant and about two hundred horses, in the direction of Burhanpore, on their way to Delhi.⁶

Marching on through a hilly but fertile country, and travelling a mile out of his way to avoid the troublesome ascent and descent of a steep *ghat*, Norris and his party arrived at Daphlapur. He noted that the steepest part of the hill was just by "Gadee Polangwraw", one of the "strongest forts"⁷ he had yet met with in India—strong enough to keep out enemies armed with bows and arrows. Norris observed: "It stands on ye top of a steep Hill strong walls round it, 4 small bastions, att each corner one on wch is planted one Gun more in Terrorem then for use. On ye side of ye Hill houses all round".⁸ Not far from this fort, when

alighting to refresh himself under a *banyan* tree, Norris saw a "pagod" which was nothing but a "plaine round greate stone without any figure carved on it, painted on ye Top or rather dawbd some flowers strewd on it & little pitt wth Incense under it, water & other necessarys wch ye hills people thinke this stone wch they Idolize wantes".⁹ He indiscreetly hinted to one of his *chobdars*,¹⁰ a Muslim, that he should demolish it, which the *chobdar* readily did, as "ye moore men beinge greate enemys to Idolatry".

Within two hundred yards of his camp was another famous "Gentoo pagod". It was very poorly built, but the best part of it was left standing, consisting of "a small cloister wth 3 little arches on wch are very odd Images of their Gods painted on ye wall & on each side of this cloister 2 small domes soe low you can hardly stand upright & ye doore soe low much adoe to gett in. In ye midle of each a place raisd $\frac{1}{2}$ yard high & ye like square of Earth & in ye midle a plain stone fixt wch they adore & call Madew",¹¹ [Mahadeo]—one of the principal Hindu deities.

On April 1, Norris intended to make a long march, but was prevented by the roguery of the tent men, who had been bribed by the owners of a large number of oxen laden with rice that were attached to the Ambassador's convoy. These men, finding that their cattle could not travel quietly, and fearing capture by the raiders, who were out in large parties, prevailed upon the tent men to pitch the tents after quite a short march from the camp at "Sergaraw". Norris warned them that this sort of thing must not happen again; yet it was a blessing in disguise, for there were some troubles on the way, and alarms of the enemy approaching. In fact, a few raiders did come near enough to the rear of the column to carry off two of the oxen belonging to the people who followed the convoy; but one of the rearguard shot one of their horses as they fled. They reappeared in the hope of effecting a surprise and carrying off some booty, but fled at the sight of a blunderbuss. These incidents made Norris very uneasy; he wrote in his diary: "The Indians are very apt to be alarmed att ye smallest appearance & give alarms when they ought not, wch for ye future I have forbid". All the English soldiers were drawn up near the town and drilled to overawe the raiders and their spies.

In spite of all these happenings Norris was here able to accomplish a good day's journey of about twelve hours, through the richest soil, he confessed, he ever saw in his life. Crossing the river *Kisnah*, he pitched his tents on a "pleasant green Risinge Hill", three *kos* beyond the town Miraj. He noticed just outside the town the spot where the Mughal had recently encamped before leaving for Panhala. Norris described the place as "ye Richest plane perhaps in ye world, no bowlinge green more even nor garden richer mold, ye length above 2 corse & ye breadth about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile". He could not, however, perceive any "Relicks of order or Regularity & the ditch Thrown up all alonge ye line wht a boy of 7 yeares old would jump over for his pleasure, soe yt whover had a mind to attack ye Camp had nothings to hinder ym". All the way from Miraj to Norris's camp he frequently noted offensive smells from the carcasses of elephants, camels, etc; and just under the walls of Miraj, he found a stench that was almost unbearable. The inhabitants, he observed, would rather put up with the smell than take the trouble to remove the obnoxious remains. Although Miraj was "a greate Town", it consisted simply of mud houses, forts and walls, and like the rest, had round it a small ditch, dry at the time. Norris thought the walls and forts could easily be destroyed. He saw only one gun mounted, and that was for show. The inhabitants were numerous, and there were many wealthy men amongst them, on account of the Emperor staying there so long.¹²

Soon after leaving this place for "Heerlaw", the Ambassador met the *kephala*, or convoy, of Murad Khan. He, it may be remembered, was, with others, escorting to Court the Emperor's treasure, of which Aurangzib was extremely anxious to obtain possession as soon as he could. They exchanged compliments on meeting again. The *kephala* overtook Norris's column and, by intermingling with his retinue, caused stoppages and confusion. Norris was naturally annoyed. He noted a sharp contrast between his marching and theirs, which was very "regulare till ye passing of a River makinge ym put our carriages in confusion, but my Horse Guards Habited like ye K's. [King's] Guards marchd all alonge In ye greatest order yt could be & greate notice taken of ym. Most of those yt passd for soldiers belonginge to Fatti

Ulla Chawn¹³ were Jarlass¹⁴ (Usbeques¹⁵ as they call ym) & are to be known by their ruckd Turbans for ye most part a ffeather in it & bootes wth sharp heeles quite different from ye Moores. Their march was more confused then freeholders goeing to choose a Knight of ye shire, & soe they could not but admire & approve ye Regularity of ours, ye sight of our Canon & Blunderbesses startled ym, ye very handinge of our Arms would make ym give way". Marching through their camp with trumpets sounding and drums beating, the horse guard grasping their carbines and the officers with drawn swords, the English convoy encamped at "Heerlaw", about three *kos* from the *kephala* of Murad Khan. The *kephala* was not able to reach Norris till a day later. The Ambassador took the opportunity of showing them the twelve brass guns brought as presents for the Emperor, so that an account of them might be circulated at Court in advance. It was thought that the guns might be all the more acceptable, because the siege of the Maratha forts was then in progress.

The final stage of the journey, though somewhat tedious, was successfully accomplished. Norris travelled on through desolate and seemingly barren hills. Few carriages ever passed, camels being the general mode of conveyance. The Mughal's baggage always carried on "men's shoulders" caused the convoy more trouble than on any previous day's travel, and broke some of his carriages and wheels. Norris at last arrived three *kos* from the famous Maratha hill-forts¹⁶ of Panhala and Pavanghad, and encamped by the riverside only about a *kos* from the *chouki*, or guard, of the Emperor's *lashkar*. Aurangzib was besieging the forts at the time; Norris could hear the guns, though they were some distance off. He believed that the Mughal guns were discharged more frequently than usual that day on account of his arrival.

As soon as he was settled in his tent, Norris drank the Emperor's health and a salute of seven guns was fired in the expectation that the Mughal would hear, but to the Ambassador's regret the "noise did not reach him". The compliment was, however, returned by an Amir, whom Norris met later. Shortly afterwards proper *dastaks* were granted by the Emperor, on the representation of Yar Ali Beg, permitting Norris and his retinue to encamp

wherever they liked, and also for his coming to the Court. Thus a great mark of respect and consideration was shown to him. There were several principal officers of the Court attending on the Emperor to deal with affairs, but he received none of their petitions except Norris's, which Aurangzib "tooke & signed wth his own hand & heard nobody else". The Ambassador's swift march, without a special escort sent by the Emperor, through the midst of the enemy's country gave much pleasure to Aurangzib, who had been regularly informed of his progress by the *harkara* of the several places.

Accordingly a convenient place for the encampment was selected, and within a few days (on April 10) Norris made his entry into his quarters in the Emperor's *lashkar*¹⁷ in great state, with all his insignia and sword of State amidst "crowds of gazing people". Everything was allowed in the procession except the beating of a drum or the sounding of a trumpet, though they were carried. The grandeur and orderliness of the procession were a show new to the spectators. But it was remarkable that none of the high officials received Norris at his entrance to the *lashkar*; only Yar Ali Beg, who was extremely friendly, sent his own officers to keep the passage clear and preserve order among the spectators, which task they effectually performed. This only emphasised the apparent negligence and want of foresight of the Mughal Ministers in thus failing to observe this formal etiquette due to Norris's diplomatic rank.¹⁸ The time, indeed, was not favourable, seeing that all the Ministers and subordinate officials were preoccupied with the affairs of the Emperor's campaign. The Ambassador was presented by Yar Ali Beg's secretary with a basket containing a variety of fruit and "Persian sweetmeates", in return for which Norris gave a handsome gratuity to the servant who brought it.

Norris was greatly discouraged, immediately on his arrival at the Camp, to see for the first time the printed Act continuing the Old Company's existence as a corporation. This was enclosed in the letters addressed to him by the Court of Directors of the New Company and sent overland by way of Aleppo.¹⁹ The news of the misfortune to the *Harwich* near the coast of China was also conveyed to him here by President Waite. Mr. Delanoy,

who was a "very Ingenious well Temperd obliginge gentleman"; died on board the ship. Norris was very sorry to hear this, and recorded that "two copys of verses" had been presented to him by Mr. Delanoy, one at the Cape of Good Hope, and the other forwarded with a letter from Surat, received at Brahmapuri. Both these poems were preserved by Norris as a memento of the author.²⁰

The strain of the journey for the last two and a half months, under trying climatic conditions, had not been without its effect, and Norris suddenly fell ill. One day his condition was so serious, with "frequent vomitings great faintnesse & violent inward heates" that he seemed likely to go to a court higher even than that of the Mughal. But fortunately, through the unremitting care of his surgeon, who prescribed "bleedinge & a good dose of Laudanum", Norris rested very well and was much strengthened. His vomiting ceased rapidly and he was able to eat "a small partridge & quaille wch ye first of my eatinge in 6 days". He made a perfect recovery from his illness within a few days, and thanked God for this grace at so critical a time. It was gratifying to hear that the Emperor particularly enquired after Norris's health, and the causes of his illness.

Storm, rain and hail made camping at Panhala most disagreeable. The weather had been just as bad only a fortnight before at "Ghent". On Good Friday, just after the evening service, continual thunder, with some claps very "near & loud", began, accompanied by a violent storm of hail and rain and a gale of wind. It came on rather suddenly, and the tents not being as well fixed as they might have been, and the ground consisting of about three inches of mould with hard rock below, the pegs gave way and several tents were blown down upon the heads of the inmates. The storm raged with great violence for about half an hour. Norris gives us a pen picture of his experience: "Just before ye storme came wee saw it very black & darke towards ye east from whence it came & prodigious cloud of Dust drove before it. The Haile stone yt fell in ye storme were as big as ordinary plums & shapd like younge mushroomes of a more spungy substance & lighter much in proportion then ye Hailstones in England however were very troublesome—This

storme cominge with yt Impetuosity did us some damage, but nothinge soe much as I expected. This I looke upon to be ye Elephants (as they call it) yt is ye stronge gust of wind yt generally attends ye breakinge up of ye Monsoon & beinge either ye very day of ye month or within a day yt ye monsoon broke up last yeare. When ye storme was over we sett up our Tents & did as saylors doe after a storme dry & Refitt as fast wee could & prepard against ye next"²¹

Another unfortunate incident followed, which alarmed Norris far more seriously than anything that had yet happened in his camp. On Easter Sunday (April 20), just before morning service, a mutiny broke out for the second time amongst the peons. It was caused by quite a trivial matter, but the men had been stirred up by the procurator of the Old Company with the object of embarrassing Norris's audience with the Emperor. Intoxicated with *bhang*, or drink made from hemp, they made a daring attack with their fire-arms and swords, and seriously wounded two or three of Norris's people who were unarmed at the moment. They refused to lay down their arms and took up a defiant attitude, but one of their ringleaders was shot and the rest fled.

Norris was then sitting in his tent with his brother, and on hearing the sudden discharge of the muskets and general noise, they immediately ran out unarmed to see what was the matter. They found that "a stronge Lusty Moore man", with drawn sword and shield on his arm, was running amuck, "hackinge & hewing" all those who came near him. The man entered the precincts of the Ambassador's tent, and wounded one of Norris's unarmed gunners. He then boldly made his way towards Rustamji's tent, and several times cast his eyes towards Norris. Seeing that many people had now collected, he tried to escape, but was prevented by a shot breaking his thigh bone, and was brought to the guard tent.

This affair caused a great sensation and had the effect desired by Norris's enemies, who used every artifice to arouse discontent all over the Emperor's Camp. All Norris's peons who had been actors and abettors in this villainy went to the Kotwal or the Prefect of Police, and lodged an exaggerated complaint. The Old

Company's procurator, who was present, egged them and told them what to say. They complained that the English had killed several "true believers", and not satisfied with that, had dragged them into a tent, beaten the drum and drunk wine in triumph over them, "shav'd of one side of their Beards & pissd in their mouths".

The Kotwal informed the Mughal of these allegations and, in the meantime, dramatically seized Rustamji and detained him as a hostage; but he released him later on his making some composition with him, and under pressure from Yar Ali Beg.

To forestall all malicious and false reports, Norris at once communicated all the circumstances of the affair to Yar Ali Beg, who took up his cause straightway with the Emperor. Norris explained that the affair had taken place without his knowledge, and that he had taken all possible precautions against anything of the kind happening in the future. He had given orders that nobody should in any circumstances open fire, but that in case of mutiny or disturbance, the alarm should be given immediately by beat of drum, and the men drawn up in a body to await his orders. At the same time he sent a protest to the Kotwal, declaring that all the complaints made to him were lies, and warning him to be absolutely just in the matter with the Emperor. Norris feared that the Mughal would demand the handing over of those who had shot the "true believers", a demand with which he was resolved never to comply. The matter was then referred to the Qazi, who, after a comprehensive enquiry, reported to the Emperor that the Englishmen were not to blame and had acted justifiably in self-defence. The Emperor was satisfied, and so the affair was at an end. On account of this and previous misconduct, Norris discharged all the peons who had been recruited from Surat, and engaged new men. Thus he not only reduced the number of Indian servants, but greatly lessened the expense.

But there was one incident in this transaction which showed how grossly corrupt were some even of the high Mughal officials, who were entrusted with the administration of justice. The Qazi,²² whose office corresponded to that of a "Ld Chancellor", and to whom the case was finally referred, had already twice asked Norris for a horse which he had liked very much. Norris assured

the Qazi that he would give it to him with "embroiderd accoutrements" as soon as he had made his present to the Emperor, because it would not be proper until then to give a present to a subject in public. This argument seemed to make little impression on the Qazi; he impudently reminded Norris that the affair of the peons had been referred to him for a report and asked him again whether he would give him the horse or not. Norris, realising that the Qazi might do him an injury, handed over the horse and accoutrement to a subordinate official, with instructions that it should be given to the Qazi after his audience with the Emperor. But he was most indignant at the Qazi's conduct. "These people", he wrote, "are as base as corrupt because they are made up of falsehood themselves beleive there is no Truth in any one else. They distrust everybody because they are conscious themselves are not to be trustd".²³

As mentioned above, Aurangzib was then actively engaged in besieging the Maratha strongholds, and Norris's account throws many side-lights on the actual position of both parties. It was believed that the fort of Panhala would be surrendered to the Emperor in a week's time, and that Aurangzib would then move his Camp to another place. The commanders of the two forts demanded only the two lakhs of rupees due to them as pay from the "Rajah", on receipt of which they would surrender the forts. At the time there was incessant firing both from the forts and from the Mughal guns. The effect of these could not be guessed, but Norris obtained some first-hand information²⁴ from an Englishman who visited his camp, and had a lively conversation with some of his fellow-countrymen. He seemed very free and communicative, and told them all he knew about the Emperor and his campaign. The fort of Panhala, he reported, had been captured by the Mughal ten years ago; but it had no sooner been put into proper repair, refortified and well supplied with provisions and ammunition, than the Marathas scaled the walls and took it in one night, and had retained it ever since. The batteries in it were very indifferent and unable to perform any effective service. Not more than seven guns were employed in the siege of the fort, and orders were given as to how many times a day each gun was to be fired. Instead of cannon ball they generally used "stones

rounded for yt purpose",²⁵ though they might have obtained iron, as Tarbiyat Khan, Master of the Ordnance [*Mir-i-Atish*] had allowed for it, also for a "peece of Hemp every shott for a wadd, but insteade of it make use of Hay". The English gunner also said from "ye Top to ye bottom there is nothinge but cheatinge & Treachery & basenesse in ye Highest degree".

The fort, it seemed, had no more guns than the besiegers, and not more than three hundred men, and though there were two or three breaches in the wall, yet the Mughal army dared not attempt to enter or make an assault. Although there were multitudes of people of all sorts in the Emperor's *lashkar*, and several generals, not more than 20,000²⁶ could claim to be fighting men, though Aurangzib was paying for over 100,000 men. The false muster-rolls²⁷ were "ye cheifest Gaine of all ye officers for a Generall yt has ye pay of 8,000 horse wch is about 25,000 sterlinge a month (as Asad Chawn has) if he keepes 1,500 it is reckond a greate deale & ye Rest put in his pockett & sae all ye Rest". As a result the Emperor was put to such immense expense in paying so many officers for so many horses that Norris wondered where the money came from. The English gunner also reported that the Mughal was very poor and needed money badly, that the whole army was vastly in arrears, and that he himself was owed 14 months pay. The soldiers were grumbling and beginning to be mutinous, leaving their posts and openly speaking "slightly & revilingly" of the Emperor himself as well as his officers, but they had been quieted to some extent by the recent arrival of Murad Khan's *kephala* with a large sum of money. The English gunner also confirmed the report Norris had received that the Emperor had sent away both his son Prince Azam Shah and his grandson Bidar Bakht for tampering with the Army and plotting to seize and depose him. He described Aurangzib's alertness with complete accuracy: "The old Kinge is very cuninge & has spys²⁸ upon every body & soe good intelligence yt nobody can move a step or speake a word but he knows it, and his design of continuinge in these parts is to be amongst ye Hills to Hinder his sons from makeinge any attempt upon him all approaches wth an army being difficult".²⁹ A fortnight later Bidar Bakht was commanded to pursue the enemy at Brahmapuri, on

the pretext that the enemy was strong there; but the truth was that Aurangzib did not wish to keep either Bidar Bakht, or any one else who was in league with Prince Azam Shah, so near himself.

About this time twelve of the "Mughal's Army" were killed by fire from the fort. In the middle of April the Emperor himself went out to inspect the approaches made to the fort, particularly the point at which Fath-ullah Khan had been in command. Norris gathered that Aurangzib was carried in "such a thinge as they put upon elephants when they ride on them by 16 people, yt he was all over white both the dress of his Body & His Turbatt & his beard as white as they that were 100 chopdars [chobdars] before him and greate numbers of Horse & vast numbers of people crowding to see Him, but that he himselfe tho' carryd openly saw nobody havinge his eyes always affixd upon a Booke⁸⁰ he carryd in his hands & readinge all ye way he went without ever divertinge to any other object".⁸¹

The Emperor had ordered most of his generals to attack the Maratha hill forts in a body. About mid-day on April 21 Norris saw the hill that leads up to the fort of Pavanghad covered with men going up, a great number assembled on the top between the two forts of Panhala and Pavanghad, and the Mughal's colours set up in several places. Firing from the forts was repeatedly heard, and about 8 in the evening many lights were seen coming down the hill again. It appeared that the assailants had failed in their attempt, had lost some men and withdrawn.

An army of over 100,000 men had already been investing the forts for six months without any result, though the Mughal was extremely anxious to take them. Norris was sounded through a high official as to whether he and other Englishmen with him would assist in taking the fort. It was pointed out to him that this would be a great service to the Emperor, in return for which any request made by the Ambassador would readily be granted. He was at first reluctant to accede to such a request, and concluded that they had either a very small opinion of their own prowess or else a great confidence in the capacities of the English. Their opinion, he observed, seemed to be that Englishmen could perform any exploit imaginable by dint of courage and firearms.

They were encouraged in this belief by the fact that Norris had been able to march through the enemy's country without special escort, which showed that the English were not afraid of numbers. These were perhaps the considerations which led the Emperor to request Norris to make an attack and to believe that the English assault would carry the fort at once.

Aurangzib had already been informed by his son Prince Kam Baksh that the guns were of good quality and should be of some value in the siege. Norris was therefore asked, before his audience, to offer to send the Emperor the twelve brass guns with some Englishmen to take charge of them. Norris was himself anxious to get rid of the guns, as it was impossible to get carriages either for them or several other things, which he wished to dispose of before the Mughal removed his Camp. He consented, therefore, to hand over the guns to the Emperor if he would graciously accept them before his audience, and further offered to supply six gunners to take charge of them and assist to the best of their power in taking the fort, on condition that the men were to be returned to him (Norris) whenever asked for. He also pointed out that the guns would be ineffective unless loaded with iron ball, and that stones, which the Mughals generally used, would soon spoil them. The Ambassador would not consent to all his soldiers being employed in an attack on the fort. He feared that this was a device of Ruh-ullah Khan and others for the purpose of making an attack on him when he was undefended; there were, too, many other weighty reasons for his rejecting the proposal. He was ready to supply six Englishmen to manage the brass guns, if they could place them where there was a possibility of doing some execution. This proposal, he thought, might induce the Mughal the more readily to grant him the *farmans*. The Emperor was dissatisfied with the proposal; he would rather have had a general undertaking to help than the specific offer of the six gunners. Norris, however, still persisted in his original proposal, representing that the offer of men skilled in gunnery was the most advantageous suggestion he could make to the Emperor. He pointed out he had only a handful of Englishmen with him, several of whom were ill, so that he had hardly a sufficient number of guard himself to secure his own camp against

attack. Norris hoped that no misconstruction would be put upon his proposal, nor anything further expected of him.⁸² The fort of Panhala was finally captured on the 25th of May.⁸³

One part of the English gunner's story Norris was unwilling to believe, because it contradicted the idea he had of Aurangzib at that time. The character given him universally throughout his reign was that though he made his way to the throne through a "greate deale of Blood & sacrificid ffather & Brothers, yet they Report yt he has Repented very seriously & severly of it, & his Reign for 45 yeares has been both very mercifull & Just". But the gunner told him quite another story. It was true, he said, that the Mughal never put anyone to death publicly, but whenever he had a mind to destroy anyone of whom he was suspicious or afraid he did it under the guise of friendship, declaring that the person had done him some great service, and must be rewarded with a *sarapa*, or robe of honour. This was so "strongly & artificially poysond under ye arms" that the first time a man wore it his death was certain. The gunner declared that Aurangzib had killed several people recently in this manner. But one Rajah had found a way of evading it. When the Mughal summoned him to confer on him a *sarapa*, he came so well attended that he knew the Emperor would not order him to be murdered, and when presented with the robe he told Aurangzib that he would wear no garment but one off the Emperor's own back. The Mughal realised the position, and to avoid suspicion pulled off his own robe and gave it to the Rajah.⁸⁴ The whole story is obviously untrue. There is no doubt that gossip of all sorts was rife at the Emperor's Camp, and Aurangzib's occasional unscrupulous actions gave currency to fantastic tales such as that related by the English gunner.

NOTES

⁸² Amir Khan Mir Miran had no children by his wife Sahibji, daughter of 'Ali Mardan Khan *Amiru-l-Umara*. But he had many children by mistresses, and the two sons referred to above must be among these. A few of his sons held responsible administrative posts in the Mughal Imperial Service. See p. 252 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*, translated by H. Beveridge.

⁸⁴ He died on April 27, 1698, after having been Governor of Afghanistan for about twenty-one years. A son of Khalilullah Khan, Governor of Delhi, Amir Khan obtained high military rank, even in the reign of Shah

Jahan. But during Aurangzib's reign he held in addition a succession of high administrative posts. Not only was he conspicuous in various expeditions, but he was one of the ablest of the Mughal proconsuls. His administration of Afghanistan shed much light on the social conditions and political history of that difficult and distracted country; his success was largely due to the guidance and loyal comradeship of his wife Sahibji. It is difficult, however, to agree entirely with Bernier that it was Amir Khan's warm partisanship of Aurangzib which secured for him the Governorship of Afghanistan. See pp. 246-250 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*; also p. 186 of Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, Milford, 1916.

³ A *Kror* is one hundred lakhs of rupees, or, according to Norris, about eleven millions sterling. One *lakh* is one hundred thousand rupees.

⁴ This statement is corroborated by reference to *Ruqa'at-i-'Alamgiri*, Letter 99 (*Addl. MS.*, B.M.), which says that after Amir Khan's death the Emperor commanded the *Diwan* of Lahore immediately to confiscate the property of the Khan wholesale. This observance of the escheat system has already been discussed, but the system may be a little further elucidated here. It was invariably enforced, except in the case of vassal kings and zamindars, the only two classes of landholders in India privileged to transmit their titles to their heirs at death. As for the nobles, they were servants of the State and held their land by virtue of service. Hence on their death their titles did not pass to their next of kin, but lapsed to the State. Norris, like Dr. John Fryer and Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri, was unaware of the real position and could not, therefore, appraise the actual working of the escheat system. See pp. 162-169 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration*; Part III, p. 235 of Careri's *A Voyage Round the World*, 1752; and also p. 195 of Fryer's *A New Account of East India and Persia*, 1698.

⁵ The wealth of the Mughal Emperors was often exaggerated by European travellers to India, their reports being based on common gossip or derived from scanty information. Aurangzib had already spent the amassed wealth of his great ancestors, preserved in the vaults of the Agra and Delhi forts, and on his death, as Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole points out, the Emperor left only thirteen *lakh*, or less than £150,000, in the treasury. Protracted warfare in the Deccan exhausted his resources, and during the last years of his reign the revenue of Bengal was "the sole support of his household and army". It is true that after making all deductions from the regular scale of assessment, the revenue of Mughal India in 1707 was enormous; but, as Bernier rightly observed, although "the Greate Mogol be in the receipt of an immense revenue, his expenditure being much in the same proportion, he cannot possess the vast surplus of wealth that most people seem to imagine". To make a precise estimate of the gross revenue of the Empire from all sources is impossible unless all the Mughal official records are thoroughly explored. Edward Thomas, William Irvine, Lane-Poole, Vincent Smith and Moreland all discussed the question in their respective works, with results often at variance; they relied chiefly on European authorities. See p. 129 of Stanley Lane-Poole's *Aurangzib and the decay of the Mughal Empire*, Oxford, 1908; Vol. V, pp. 16, 447 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; p. 222 of Francois Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, Milford, 1916.

⁶ Pp. 135-136 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁷ There is a fort near here called Mahimangad.

⁸ P. 136, *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁹ P. 136; *ibid.*

¹⁰ Attendants on a man of rank.

¹¹ *Rawl. MS. C. 913*, p. 137.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹³ Fath-ullah Khan Bahadur 'Alamgirshahi was a Turani, and an old and experienced commander under the Mughal. He became famous in the various operations against the Maratha hill-forts and was promoted after the fall of Panhala. There was considerable rivalry between him and Tarbiyat Khan (*Mir-i-Atish*), who also led the siege operations against the forts of Panhala and Pavanghad. Towards the end of Aurangzib's reign, Fath-ullah Khan received command of 3,000 troopers with 1,000 horse. He died early in the reign of Bahadur Shah. See pp. 537-542 of the *Maasir-ul-Umara*, translated by H. Beveridge.

¹⁴ Norris evidently mis-spelt the name in the English script. Professor V. Minorsky writes to me that there is little doubt that the word stands for Barlas. The Chengizids of the Chaghatay fief (who were Mongols), were succeeded by their Turkish *Umar*, one of whom was Timur. The latter's particular tribe was called Barlas (or Barulas), and it is perfectly clear that this clan name was retained by the Great Mughals, who in fact were Timurids (not Mongols). The Barlas were their nearest-of-kin tribe, and it was natural that they should occupy a privileged position in the administration. The name Barlas is constantly mentioned in Sharaf al-din 'Ali Yazdi's *Zafar-nama*.

¹⁵ The Uzbeks (or Ozbeks) were later invaders who, under Shibak Khan (a real Chengizid), overthrew the last Timurids of Herat. The dynasty was Mongol, but the subjects like the Barlas were Turks. Moreover, it was a well-known practice to go on calling the later invaders by the name of their predecessors who had lived in the same territory, and *vice versa*. The different contingents of the Emperor's Army were composed of Mughals, Afghans, Persians, Arabs, Turks, Uzbeks and Rajputs. Usually they had no uniformity of dress, but each "class of troops dressed in a similar style". One modern author says: "The Uzbeks' manner of fighting wants spirit and courage; they vociferate loudly, and the fate of the advanced guard decides the conquest. They are a superior description of irregular cavalry, but poor soldiers". See Barthold's articles in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*; p. 183 of Irvine's *Army of the Indian Moghuls*; Vol. II, p. 372 of *Travels into Bokhara*... by Lieut. Alexander Burnes, London, 1834.

¹⁶ These two forts stand on the Panhala spur of the Sahyadris, about twelve miles north-west of the Kolhapur State, Bombay. They are about half a mile apart, separated by a ravine, and at one time were, along with other forts, the "homes and defences" of the Marathas. Dr. Fryer described Panhala itself as "one of their wealthiest and strongest cities". The Panhala fort crowns one of the hill tops, which rises about 275 feet above the uplands and is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in circumference. Major Graham in his description (1854) says it "formerly presented a perfect model of a hill fort, complete both by art and nature". The two forts, as well as others, were built by Silhara Bhoja Raja II in the eleventh century. After his downfall, they fell successively into the hands of the Marathas, the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur, and the Mughals. In 1692 the forts were retaken by the Marathas and were in their possession at the time of Norris's visit. But within a few weeks, as will be seen, they came into the possession of the Mughal; then they were again retaken by the Marathas, and remained under the Kolhapur Government till 1827, when for a time they were made over to the British. In 1844, during the minority of Sivaji IV, both the

forts were taken by rebels, who seized Colonel Ovans, the British Resident of Satara, and imprisoned him in the Panhala fort. See Vol. XXIV, pp. 313-316, of the *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency (Kolhapur)*, Bombay, 1886; p. 120 of *Statistical Report on the Principality of Kolhapur*, compiled by Major D. C. Graham, Bombay, 1854; and also Vol. I, pp. 302-3 of Grant Duff's *A History of the Mahrattas*, edited by S. M. Edwardes, Milford, 1921.

¹⁷ Norris described it on the strength of his brother's report. The latter went through the greater part of the *lashkar* one day on business and considered it "meaner & poorer then can be expressed or would be beleivd. Nothing to be seen but confusion & disorder in their enchampmt, & the nastiness & stench of ye place very offensive, takinge no care to Remove any stench but lett all sort of nastiness & deade carcasses wch they day att present are pestilentiall, 40 or 50 Gentoos [Hindus] beinge carried out & burnt daily". See p. 150 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹⁸ It is interesting to compare with Norris's entry into the Emperor's Camp the entry into Delhi of the Persian Ambassador Budaq Beg, on a friendly mission from Shah 'Abbas II in 1661; and of the fugitive King 'Abdullah Khan of Kashgar in 1668. Both of them belonged to Muslim States, and were received with unequivocal marks of respect by the chief *Umaras*; they were given a State reception on their entry into Delhi. Of course all these events took place when Aurangzib was at the height of his power and grandeur. See p. 147 of Francois Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, ed. by Constable and Smith, second ed., Milford, 1916; Vol. II, pp. 47, 190 of Manucci's *Storia do Mogor*; and also Vol III, pp. 107-8, 115-116 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

¹⁹ P. 152 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁰ P. 158, *ibid*.

²¹ Pp. 160-161, *ibid*.

²² The *Aqzu-l-Qazat Qazi*, or Chief Judge of the Empire, was at this time Muhammad Akram, who succeeded Khwajah Abdullah in May, 1698, and continued in the post till his death some time after October, 1705. He appears to have been a weak man, devoid of personality and independent judgment, and prone to give decisions that would please his Sovereign—like the notorious Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, only without his virtues. The Chief Qazi always resided at Court and accompanied the Emperor wherever he went. Muhammad Akram had failed to maintain the high ideal of his great office and, like some of his predecessors, used to take bribes; indeed, few of them were noted for their honesty and probity. See Vol. III, pp. 72-75 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*; pp. 131-132 of Sarkar's *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*; and pp. 26-27 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration*.

²³ Pp. 162-169 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

²⁴ Norris does not mention the name of this Englishman in his *Journal*, but records that he had been in India thirty-two years, and several years in the service of the Sultan of Golkonda, and had been with him when he was taken prisoner; he had since served the Mughal as a gunner at a salary of Rs. 4 a day. There were also other Englishmen as well as Dutchmen, Germans, and Frenchmen serving in the Mughal Army as artillery officers. They were mostly fugitives from Goa and the Dutch, English and French settlements. See p. 145 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*; and p. 217 of Bernier's *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, edited by Constable and Smith.

²⁵ The Mughal's heavy artillery was so inadequate because it was cumbersome, unmanageable and ill-mounted by the Indian gunners, who were at

that period unskilled in the management of ordnance. These defects were observed by Bernier and Thevenot, as well as by other European travellers at a later period. The art of casting cannon was not very advanced in Aurangzib's reign. Mr. Irvine points out that during the earlier Mughal period the Emperors were dependent for their artillery on the help and instruction of Turks, or on run-away sailors from Surat and Portuguese halfcastes. See p. 218 of Bernier's *Travels*; Part III, p. 43 of the *Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot*; and p. 152 of William Irvine's *The Army of the Indian Moguls*.

²⁶ This computation of the effective strength of the Army at the Camp appears to be reasonable in the light of Bernier's statement and figures, though the standing army was undoubtedly much larger in his day than in Norris's. Hordes of followers, servants, traders and dealers of all sorts were reckoned as part of the Army in the Camp, and, as Manucci points out, "were four times the number of soldiers". Dr. Vincent Smith truly says: "The army, which made a brave show on paper or in camp, was of little military value". See pp. 380-381 of Bernier's *Travels*; Vol. II, p. 75 of *Storia do Mogor*; and p. 450 of Smith's *Oxford History of India*.

²⁷ The evil practice of false muster-rolls became more prevalent in Aurangzib's declining years, but it was an evil from which the Mughal Army had suffered even in its most flourishing days. The provincial governors made considerable profit out of false muster-rolls, and even the chief *Umaras*, who had been deprived of their revenues from the *jaigirs*, had recourse to this practice and did not maintain half their complements of men. Moreover, the soldiers were irregularly paid—not more than half what was due to their rank. Careri said: "Tho' these generals are in so fair a way to heap wealth; yet when they are found faulty [of] as keeping a smaller number of soldiers than is their *quota*, they are punished by pecuniary mulcts"; but it is doubtful whether this was the case in 1701. In spite of their hoards, their enormous establishments and other obligations exhausted their resources and they were often in debt. See p. 45 of Irvine's *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*; Vol. II, p. 108 of Ferishta's *History of the Deccan*, edited by Jonathan Scott, Shrewsbury, 1794; Vol. IV, p. 409 of *Storia do Mogor*; and also Part III, p. 221 of Careri's *A Voyage Round the World*.

²⁸ References have already been made to the efficient system of Aurangzib's secret service; but here it is interesting to add that Manucci records that throughout his reign "Aurangzib had much good spies that they knew (if it may be so said) even men's very thoughts. Nor did anything go on anywhere in the realm, above all in the city of Delhi without his being informed". See Vol. II, p. 18, of *Storia do Mogor*.

²⁹ P. 147 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³⁰ This would almost certainly be the Koran. Aurangzib always carried it with him in his last days, as mentioned by other European travellers.

³¹ P. 156 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³² Pp. 154, 156, 170-172, 174 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

³³ The Mughal Army lacked courage to face the Maratha onslaught from the forts. Despairing of success by force of arms after incurring great loss of time, men and money, the Emperor heavily bribed the *qiladar* of the forts, through Prince Kam Baksh and Tarbiyat Khan, and thus was able to secure an inglorious victory. See Vol. VII, p. 870 of the *History of India*, . . . by Sir H. M. Elliott and Prof. John Dowson; and Vol. V, pp. 176-7 of Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*.

³⁴ P. 147 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

CHAPTER XI

At the Emperor's Court : Audience with Aurangzib

In April 1701 the Ambassador with unflagging energy set himself to his task of making contact with some of the chief Mughal officials at Court. He exchanged courtesies with them, and hoped that they would further his interests by arranging for him an immediate audience with the Emperor. Most of these officials except Wazir Asad Khan, who was not then at Court, sent to Norris and tendered him their services; but at the same time they gave him to understand that it was the custom of the country that they should receive gratuities for their favours. Accordingly, Norris resolved to make friends of them all as far as possible. From Shaikh Abdul Rahaman, the Chief Mufti, and Yar Ali Beg, the Superintendent of the office of the High Diwan, came handsome compliments and firm assurances of friendship. Norris specially asked the latter to undertake the duty of presenting him to the Emperor, but learned that as Ruh-ullah Khan was "Great Steward" of the Emperor's Household, it was his proper function to introduce the Ambassador into the Emperor's presence, and that Yar Ali Beg would be appointed to treat with him. At the same time, the Mufti and Yar Ali Beg would both have particular regard to Norris's interests, and he was told not to be dissatisfied that the duty of presenting him was assigned to another person. Yar Ali Beg was highly pleased that the Ambassador had made no application to anyone else but the Mufti and himself; he assured Norris that his not seeing Asad Khan, the Wazir,¹ was an additional source of satisfaction to them. Evidently Yar Ali Beg was no friend of Asad Khan.

The Ambassador was punctilious in returning these courtesies through his brother Dr. Edward Norris, whom he sent to Yar Ali Beg accompanied by Mr. Mill and Rustamji and well attended. He particularly instructed Dr. Norris to inform Yar Ali Beg that he (Sir William) was highly sensible of the many favours extended to him, desired his friendship, and intended to

pay him a visit in person when he judged it most suitable. A reply came however that the Ambassador should see Yar Ali Beg only after his audience with the Emperor. Great respect was shown to Dr. Edward Norris, who was received with much kindness and cordiality, Yar Ali Beg rising from his "chaire embracing him and sitting him on his right hand". Yar Ali Beg was then informed that the Ambassador, being a stranger to the manners and customs of the Mughal Court, would like to be enlightened on any material points. Yar Ali Beg assured Dr. Norris that there was no need for such a request and that he himself would checkmate any other Court officials who sought to put obstacles in the Ambassador's way and hold up his business. Next he desired to see a list of the presents intended for the Emperor, so that they might not be misrepresented, as—he did not scruple to say—Ruh-ullah Khan had been bribed to do. For the same reason he also took to the Emperor the Persian translation of King William's letter which Norris had brought from England.

It was, indeed, very fortunate for the affairs of the embassy that the Ambassador had been recommended to that "great & virtuous minister", Yar Ali Beg, who was deservedly a trusted favourite with the Emperor. Sir William declared of him that he might be a pattern to all ministers of State in any Kingdom; that he had no equal in that part of the world, and not many in any part of it. The sterling qualities of his character could not have been better summed up than in Norris's comment that in the "midst of ye most base vitious & corrupt court in ye Universe this minister alone is virtuous. The sole businesse of all other ministers is to gripe squeeze all ye money they can from all people by ye basest & Indirect meanes Imaginable openly & barefaced. This man alone despises riches & is above ye Temptation of any bribe can be offerd. Just to ye greatest nicety & firme to ye Intrest he espouses & not to be disobligd, but by suspectinge his Integrity or offeringe bribery to debauch it. He is courted by everybody & dreaded by all ye corrupt ministers of the court who stand in aw [e] of his virtue & rigid maners. The virtue of ye antient Romans eminently appears in him & seemes a compound of Ffabritius Cato ye Censer. This man, that commands what he pleases of ye Emperour & ye Empire, may enrich himselfe as he pleases

by his greate commands offices & favour wth ye Kinge [Aurang-zib], contents himselfe wth doeinge ye Emperour Reall & True Service without amassing up Riches to himselfe & pays a greate sum every month into ye King's Treasury out of ye produce of his offices. And in ye midst of a Luxurious dissolute Effeminate debauched Empire is ye only man I yet have heard of yt live[s] like one of ye antient Romans I have namd. His habitt, his little house & furniture not all to ye value of 20 Rups. Lys upon a bare Cott wch he is not ashamd to show in ye Room of his enter-taininge strangers. His Diett as spare as his furniture a little Rice & water & yett in this little place is ye Greatest men in ye Court come & pay their court & salam to ye Ground to him. It is Impossible for one man to stem ye current of vice & corrup-tion or else this good man's example might be very prevalent".²

Yar Ali Beg assured the Ambassador of his intention to serve him in every way and asked Lala Chaturbhuj Das, Secretary of the *Khalisa*, to deal with such of Norris's affairs as should pass through his hands.

Dr. Edward Norris, having seen the man, could not doubt either Yar Ali Beg's ability or sincerity. But powerful and sympathetic as Yar Ali Beg was, yet there were other forces, possibly more powerful, that might be at work in opposition to Sir William at this early stage. A warning came from President Waite at Surat that the Dutch were in league with the Old Company, and that their brokers were appearing daily on behalf of the latter to the prejudice of the New Company. Already, at the Emperor's *darbar*, the Dutch 'procurador' had endeavoured to retard Norris's negotiations. Not only had the Ambassador proof of this, but it was certain that the Old Company was assisting the Dutch with its purse as well as with advice. It so hap-pened that the Dutch 'procurador' had already sounded Yar Ali Beg and represented to him that Sir William Norris was in-deed an Ambassador from the King of England, but that the Old Company was very rich and powerful, and the New Company insignificant and incapable of continuing for more than a short time.³ He pretended that he had no idea upon what business Sir William had come, and requested that nothing might be done to the prejudice of the Old Company's affairs till Norris's busi-

ness with the Emperor was publicly known. But Yar Ali Beg replied that he was well apprised of the English Ambassador's business, and dismissed him. The procurator had thus little encouragement to make further efforts to win over that Minister from Norris's side. The Dutch were alarmed at the New Company's progress, thinking that it might interfere with their spice trade, and ruin them, so they used all their interest to support the Old Company, knowing it to be so weak that it could never be a serious rival. At the same time the procurator of the Old Company sought admittance into Yar Ali Beg's presence, but was refused.⁴

Another day, the Ambassador sent his brother to pay his compliments to the Mufti and thank him for his favours and friendship. The Mufti received Dr. Norris kindly and with all due respect; indeed, he always showed himself ready to do the Ambassador any service he could. From his brother Norris learnt that the Mufti's tent was "meane & poore & all about him soe, but Himselfe a jolly fatt father of their Church had 5 wives, severall children & as ready to receive either a sum of money or a case of spiritts as any of ym though ye latter flatly forbidden by ye Alcoran". The Mufti told Norris that it was the custom for ambassadors to commit everything relating to presents for the Emperor to the care of the *Khan-i-saman* or Chief Steward of the Emperor's Household. But Norris must not be anxious, for on his arrival at Court everything would be done to his satisfaction.

Assurances of friendship and goodwill were also received from Hakim Salih, who, having been recommended by President Waite to serve as a procurator in the interest of the embassy, waited on Norris every day to receive his directions. As a further inducement to him to be loyal to the interests of the embassy, Norris gave him to understand that he was well pleased with his actions hitherto and would remember them to his advantage.

Indeed, no opportunity was lost of conciliating any important Mughal personage who might prove useful. One day when Barahmand Khan, a high official, was passing the camp, Norris sent his secretary, Mr. Adiel Mill, to present his compliments. The Khan expressed himself in a sense very favourable to Norris

and gave assurances of his friendship. Norris presented him with two cases of fine spirits, which he hoped would benefit the health of the Khan's brother, who was then unwell. Norris remarked: "The Generality of all the prime Ministers & officers here are soe greate Lovers of English spiritts yt nothings is soe acceptable to ym or soe greate a present, but a case of these spiritts cannot be given in private to one but another knows it, they have such spys upon one another & soe many upon me".⁵ For example, a few days before, Norris had ordered Mr. Mill to present Mahmud Aqil secretly with two cases of spirits; and in order that no Indian servant might find it out, the cases were wrapped up in a cloth and sent without anybody being told. Yet next day the Qazi sent and begged for a bottle, seeing that Norris had given two cases to Mahmud Aqil. So two cases of spirits were privately conveyed to the Qazi also. So careful was Barahmand Khan in receiving the spirits, and so anxious if possible to keep the gift a secret, that he sent two of his own servants to carry cases away at midnight with all secrecy. The Khan also desired to have two of the wax pictures and two "prospectives", which Norris accordingly ordered to be sent to him.⁶

Understanding that Ruh-ullah Khan, the "Great Steward", would present him to the Emperor, Norris sent his secretary to this official with a complimentary message. The emissary was most courteously received, the Khan giving him betel with his own hands. Norris observed that Ruh-ullah Khan was the only man he had yet met with who lived in any sort of State. He had, we are told, a pretty good tent "well spreade & severall antient people attendinge seeminge of his Councill himselfe beinge a little wild & loosely disposed wch ye Mogull knows well enough, but beinge somethinge related to him by marriage connives". It is evident that high officials who received visits of that nature made a great deal of money out of it, for everybody who came offered some sum in rupees, great or small, which the secretaries took care to collect. Norris's secretary, however, did not on this occasion offer any money.⁷

It was now high time that the question of the Ambassador's reception should be finally discussed with Ruh-ullah Khan. The "Great Steward" urged that Norris should pay him a personal

visit before his audience with the Emperor, declaring that afterwards everything would be adjusted to his satisfaction. Norris informed Ruh-ullah Khan that, though very desirous to see him, he could not come without offence until he had seen the Emperor; he would then visit him in State. Ruh-ullah Khan, however, still insisted that Norris should call on him. The Ambassador, though he knew that no favour or goodwill was intended—he was aware, indeed, that the Khan had been bribed by the Old Company's agents—found himself yet in a difficult position. Naturally he did not wish to give offence to a man of high position on a matter of etiquette—particularly as he himself was wholly unacquainted with the customs of the country, and the Khan as a sort of a Master of Ceremonies and introducer of ambassadors had been specially appointed to instruct him. Accordingly, without sending a reply, Norris consulted Yar Ali Beg on the point, and was told that he must *not* pay a personal visit to anyone of whatever rank before his audience with the Emperor, as that alone would be sufficient to give offence. The Emperor himself would answer the Ambassador's requests.⁸

A few days later Norris received a complimentary message from Ruh-ullah Khan, who expressed his desire for the Ambassador's friendship and his readiness to do anything to serve him. This message was brought by a *Mansabdar*,⁹ who spoke eulogistically of his master—referring particularly to his relations with the Emperor and the great favour and esteem in which he stood with the Mughal. He insisted yet again on Ruh-ullah Khan's desire to see Norris, and suggested that as it was not fitting for the Ambassador to visit him in person before the audience with the Emperor, the visit should be paid immediately after he had been with the Emperor. Ruh-ullah Khan, indeed, was to conduct the Ambassador straight from the Emperor's tent to his own, where Norris would be received with all the respect suitable to his rank. In recognition of this honour Ruh-ullah Khan would pay a return visit to the Ambassador three or four days later. Norris was at first well pleased with the proposal, and answered in general terms that if this would give pleasure to Ruh-ullah Khan and be convenient to him, it would be so to him also.

At the close of the interview, Norris presented the *Mansab-*

dar with "a piece of good cloth and 6 swordblades" before dismissing him. On further consideration, however, Norris judged it prudent to consult Yar Ali Beg again about the proposed visit. The latter advised Norris that he might go after his audience with the Emperor; but if he wished to visit Prince Kam Baksh or any other of Aurangzib's sons or grandsons, he must first ask leave of the Emperor, who would not only appoint a time but also indicate the manner in which the Ambassador should be received by them. On this procedure Norris comments: "The Mogull keepes all ye greate men att his Becke in strict observance to Him. None of ym dare move a step without his Leave". In proof he cites the case of Bahramand Khan, one of the Mughal's generals, who was at that time indisposed, but dared not send for Norris's surgeon for consultation until he had asked the Emperor's permission to do so.

In the course of the negotiations, Ruh-ullah Khan sought information about the Kings of Europe and the races over which they ruled, presumably in order to ascertain the relative position of the King of England. Norris enlightened him on the subject, and endeavoured to impress upon him the superior position of the English Navy. Then he explained that some of the European peoples were governed by their elected rulers, and that all of them were Christians of different schools of thought and with different languages. Norris also gave some information about the diplomatic relations between European countries, explaining that as a rule negotiations were conducted through the ambassadors of the respective countries. It was customary in Europe, on the appointment of an ambassador, that a representative of the Sovereign should meet him at the boundary of the country and conduct him into the royal presence. The ambassador approached within a certain distance of the Sovereign and then sat down. Both the King and the ambassador kept their hats on, but everyone else stood bareheaded. Whenever the ambassador desired an audience it was granted, and on leaving he was dismissed with honour and respect. If the ambassador was unable to arrange any treaty between his own Sovereign and the other King, he was allowed to leave the country with honour and respect, before war was declared between the two countries.¹⁰

Notwithstanding all the civility and respect he had shown to Ruh-ullah Khan, and the promise of generous recognition of any favours shown to himself (though the embassy had no money to spend in advance), the Ambassador had experienced nothing but delays and evasions in his efforts to arrange for his first audience with the Emperor. Naturally he had lost faith in Ruh-ullah Khan, whose compliments and professions of goodwill seemed to him to have no substance, and he considered the Khan his most irreconcilable opponent. Once more he approached Yar Ali Beg, and entreated him to use his influence to get a day speedily appointed for his first reception by the Emperor. Yar Ali Beg promised to speak to the Emperor about it, and assured Norris that he had not only been appointed jointly with Ruh-ullah Khan to present him to the Emperor, but had also been ordered to instruct him in Court ceremonies. The Emperor had more than once expressed his desire to see the Ambassador, enquiring why the audience had been so long delayed. This convinced Norris that the Emperor would not tolerate the shilly-shallying of his courtiers much longer; and that the ceremony might take place within a few days. Norris was further advised that it would not be proper at the first audience to ask for any *farmans*, but only to convey to the Emperor the King of England's letter and the list of presents. Having entire confidence in Yar Ali Beg, Norris agreed to this arrangement, but pointed out that should the Emperor—as apparently he had intended to do—suddenly move his Camp before the audience and the delivery of the presents, Norris would have great difficulty in finding transport to remove them, and even for his own necessary baggage when he was relieved of the presents. Another difficulty was that if Norris could not secure an audience till then, the necessary fees to the officers, together with the 201 gold *mohurs* he had to present, would so drain the embassy of its funds that a week's subsistence would hardly¹¹ remain. As Yar Ali Beg never accepted anything by way of remuneration for his services, Norris sent him "some spirits to smell" and other substances in fine glass bottles, and a small quantity of rolls of English tobacco which were graciously accepted.

About ten days before the audience, the Emperor sent

a message to the Ambassador by Yar Ali Beg expressing a wish to see some sorts of glass ware such as "Coozers", for his own use. Norris immediately sent him samples of the best kinds. The Emperor examined each piece, but not liking the shape, sent them all back again, saying that he had no use for any of them at the moment, but would receive all the things that were intended for him together. Norris was not sure whether this was a disparagement of his presents, or a scheme got up by some officials who had prompted the Emperor to send for things which they knew Norris did not possess having obtained an exact description from the customs house at Surat of every article he had brought with him from England. Norris decided, however, to send other kinds; and these the Emperor approved and kept for his own immediate use. Norris also informed Aurangzib that he had several very fine curiosities in glass to present to him, and that if he cared to see them he might have them before the audience. Multafat Khan enquired the price of these articles, but was told that they were presents from King William to the Emperor, and that no price could, therefore, be fixed for them. The reply was that whatever the Emperor had for his own use "to drink out of or eat" he would not accept as a present, but always paid for. Nevertheless Norris gave strict orders that no money should be accepted for the articles, even though Multafat Khan or the Emperor himself should insist on payment. Aurangzib was well pleased with several articles of the glass ware, particularly "coozers" and teapots, but would not take them without payment. It was not only his regular practice, but a law to him, and he expected to be humoured on this point. Any other things Norris might present, which did not serve him either to "eat out of or drink", he would accept without any payment. But finally Norris's offer prevailed and no money was accepted.

The Emperor, it was further declared, had for many years limited his "dyett & clothings" to a sum which he never exceeded, and had a particular account kept of everything relating to it. To defray this expense Aurangzib had purchased a plot of land between Agra and Delhi, which cost Rs. 500, and a like sum for

the charge of managing and planting it. This produced Rs. 1000 annually, and that the Emperor should "not be pincht ye managers of it gave him in account of 2000 Rupees yearly product, but ye Mogull is soe good a husband he layd up annually for 20 yeares 1000 Rs. soe that this greate Emperour's meat drinke & cloathing cost but 1000 Rupees a yeare".¹²

The Emperor at last not only granted the long-desired audience, but fixed it for an earlier date than Norris had expected. His own account of his audience, a very interesting one, testifies strongly to his sense of the special favours shown him. Norris having expressed the hope that Sunday would not be appointed for the ceremony, it took place on Monday, April 28, 1701. This was considered a special mark of respect and honour, as the day was neither a *darbar* day nor one usually set apart for public functions. Sundays and Thursdays were the regular days for public audiences. Nothing marred the magnificence of the Ambassador's entry, and the occupier of the famous peacock-throne may perhaps never have witnessed so splendid a procession of a European plenipotentiary at the Mughal Court.¹³ It was marshalled as follows :—

"Mr. Cristloe, Commander of His Excellency's artillery, on horseback.

Twelve carts on which were carried 12 brass cannon as presents.

Five hackeries, with the cloths, etc., for presents.

100 cahars and Messuris, carrying the glass-ware and looking-glasses for presents.

Two fine Arabian horses, richly caparisoned and two others without caparisons for presents.

Four English soldiers on horseback, guarding the presents.

The Union Flag.

The Red, White and Blue Flags.

Seven state horses, richly caparisoned, two'wth English furniture', and five with Indian.

The King's and his Excellency's Crests.

One State palanquin, with English furniture, of silver tissue brocaded.

Two other crests.

The Musicians in rich liveries, on horseback.
Mr. Bassett, Lieutenant of his Excellency's Foot-guards, on horseback.

Ten servants, in rich liveries, on horseback.
The King's and the Ambassador's arms.
One Kettledrum, in livery, on horseback.
Three trumpeters, in liveries, on horseback.
Captain Symmonds, Commander of his Excellency's Guards.
Twelve troopers, every way armed and accoutred after the English mode.

Mr. Beverley, Lieutenant of His Excellency's horse guards.
The King's and the Ambassador's Arms richly gilt and very large; the former being borne by sixteen men.

Mr. John Mill and Mr. Whitaker in rich lace coats on horseback.

Mr. Hale, Master of the Horse, richly dressed carrying a sword of State pointed upwards.

His Excellency, in a rich palanquin, with Indian embroidered furniture.

Four pages, two on each side of his Excellency's palanquin, richly dressed.

Edward Norris, Esq., secretary to the Embassy, in a rich palanquin, carrying his Majesty's letter to the Emperor; on either side Mr. Wingate and Mr. Shuttleworth, in rich lace coats on horseback.

Mr. Harlewyn, Treasurer, wearing a gold key and Mr. Adiel Mill secretary to his Excellency, were in the same coach".¹⁴

Again, on alighting from his palanquin before entering the *Gulalbar*,¹⁵ according to Court etiquette, permission was specially granted for Norris to ride on horseback to the apartment where Ruh-ullah Khan, the "Great Steward", Yar Ali Beg, and other high officers of State awaited him. This was a special mark of favour and respect, for no one but the Emperor's sons was permitted to enter the *Gulalbar*. The Ambassador was then conducted by Yar Ali Beg and other principal officers into an inner apartment, beyond the usual place of audience. After remaining there a short time while several orders were despatched, and having been informed of all necessary details, Norris, accom-

panied by Dr. Edward Norris, Mr. Harlewyn, Mr. Mill, Mr. Hale and Rustamji, was ushered by Yar Ali Beg into the Emperor's presence in *Diwan-i-Khas*, or the Hall of Private Audience. Prince Kam Baksh, the youngest son of Aurangzib, was present, in addition to the chief ministers. Norris and his entourage were permitted to make their "addresses after the manner" of their own country, as they would do to their own Sovereign.

After the delivery of King William's letter, and before the presentation of the gold cabinet "finely wrought", containing 201 gold *mohurs*, the Emperor commanded that a *sarapa* or robe of honour should be brought for the Ambassador. Aurangzib had punctiliously insisted on seeing the robe before it was presented to Norris, and rejected three, brought to him by Ruh-ullah Khan, as not being good enough. This action was specially noticed by all those present at Court. At last one was chosen, and Norris retired to another apartment to be invested. This ceremony having been performed, His Excellency now returned to the presence of the Emperor in all the glory of the *sarapa* and saluted him as before. The courtesy was acknowledged by Aurangzib lifting his hands twice to his head.

The Emperor then accepted King William's and Norris's presents, which were all not only valuable, but remarkable for their variety.¹⁶ Having given special instructions that the King's presents should be set apart for his own use, Aurangzib showed the utmost curiosity; he took patterns himself of every separate piece of cloth and brocade and kept them; had account taken of all the glass ware, sword-blades, etc., looked at them all, and expressed his appreciation of them. The cloth he most admired was striped and flowered, he "never having seen any before". The horses presented to him by Norris Aurangzib ordered to be taken to his own stable. They were very fine creatures, and one of them was caparisoned with "rich saddle & furniture & covering embroid'r'd with Gold on scarlett cloth"; and another with "saddle & furniture of crimson & velvett richly embroiderd with Gold".

After inspecting the gold cabinet, Aurangzib ordered it to be taken to the *seraglio* so that his ladies might see the curiosity; the gold *mohurs* he sent to his Treasury. A small pair of pocket screw-barrel pistols he specially ordered to be placed in his bed-

chamber. The great guns were to be viewed by the Emperor the following morning, and Norris knew they were above criticism; as Dr. Edward Norris described them: "a greater train of artillery than all the *lashkar* was master of before". The remainder of the presents Aurangzib ordered to be arranged in places where he might conveniently inspect them.

Norris indeed considered not only that the manner of his reception was a great honour, but that it might be of great future advantage for the Emperor to have had English manufactures thus brought to his notice. And, further, the Emperor's favourable acceptance and recognition of the gifts greatly enhanced the value of the remaining presents as well as the reputation of the Ambassador.

Norris now marched back from the Court to his own camp, in the same state and order as he had entered the Imperial *lashkar*, wearing the *sarapa* over his other garments and the "Turbatt" on his hat. Vast crowds of people were marshalled to gaze at the procession, and everyone was impressed by the Ambassador's robe of honour.

But all this magnificance had a sordid sequel the same morning, when the servants and attendants of the Imperial Household came crowding into the Ambassador's camp asking for gratuities. Rustamji, whose task it was to deal with them, had the utmost difficulty in satisfying their demands. It has been noticed how keen some of the Mughal officials were to secure perquisites, and Norris found it anything but easy to gratify, from his limited store, those who proposed to be his friends. On the advice of Yar Ali Beg, certain of the presents were reserved for Prince Kam Baksh, and Prince Bidar Bakht, the Mughal's grandson.¹⁷

In our next chapter we shall consider the really important part of Norris's mission, which had still to be accomplished. Happily he had recovered from his recent illness sufficiently to tackle the great responsibility, but it was disappointing that just about this time many of his retinue were indisposed with "fluxes".¹⁸ This illness was partly due to the immense crowds and insanitary condition of the Emperor's Camp, a state of things which was aggravated by the rains.

NOTES

¹ This information was gathered from Shaikh Muhammed Aqil, favourite secretary of Yar Ali Beg. The secretary was well received by the Ambassador, and at his departure was offered some betel with his own hand. The favour was acknowledged with great satisfaction, as the Shaikh himself almost "poured a whole bottle of Rose water in his Bosom".

² Pp. 149-150 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*, Bodleian.

³ The Dutch Director was notified by President Waite that he should not concern himself with the affairs of the English, which had no relation to the Netherlands Company. The Director in reply said he regretted that what his procurator had said about the two Companies was unknown to him. He promised, however, to write to him at the Emperor's Court, ordering him to declare publicly before Yar Ali Beg that his statement about the two Companies was not made by order of the Dutch Director.

⁴ P. 158 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

⁵ P. 157, *ibid.*

⁶ Pp. 152-153, 157-158, *ibid.*

⁷ P. 153, *ibid.*

⁸ P. 155, *ibid.*

⁹ This *Mansabdar* may have been on the staff of the Emperor's Secretariat, and held a lower rank in the Mughal Army; every official of any standing had to maintain a small army, being their "nominal commander" and in return receiving a grant in land or money from the State. See p. 109 of Lane Poole's *Aurangzib*; and also p. 8 of Sarkar's *Mughal Administration*, second ed., 1924.

¹⁰ No. 7561 of *O.C. 57-I*, India Office.

¹¹ Pp. 169, 171 of *Rawl. MS. C. 913*.

¹² Pp. 160, 170, 173, *ibid.*

¹³ Manucci described it thus: "Never had an Ambassador from Europe appeared with such pomp and magnificence. He erected his tents in the open within sight of the royal army, to prove thereby that he had no fear of Shiva Ji (the Marathas). He was armed and provided with good cannon, and had a numerous retinue". See Vol. III, p. 299 of *Storia do Mogor*, ed. by William Irvine.

¹⁴ No. 7558 of *O.C. 57-I*. John Bruce also quoted this list in his *Annals* from the same source. Luttrell gives a somewhat exaggerated account of the procession. He records that the Shrewsbury galley from India brought news that the Mughal had ordered 10,000 men "to be planted" on the road for the occasion of Norris's arrival at Court. See Vol. IV, p. 666 of Luttrell's *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*.

¹⁵ The red-coloured screen (made out of bamboos fastened together by leather straps) with proper exits, forming the artificial wall surrounding the Imperial quarters. It first came into fashion in Akbar's time. See p. 199 of Irvine's *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*.

¹⁶ There is an elaborate list of King William's and the Ambassador's presents to the Emperor on p. 64 of *Factory Records, Misc.*, Vol. 20, India Office.

¹⁷ *Surat Factory Record, Misc.*, Vol. 20. (Letters of Sir William Norris to President Waite and his Council, dated April 29 and May 2; to Consul Pitt and Council at Masulipatam, dated April 29, 1701; and also letters of

Dr. Edward Norris to President Waite and his Council, dated April 29 and May 2, 1701), India Office.

²⁴ It is interesting to note that Dr. Dellon in his book observed: "The Indians are no less subject to this Distemper than the Europeans; but the latter are not so easie to be cur'd as the first, by reason of their Debaucheries in wine and *Agua Vitae*, which is not so common among the Eastern Nations". See p. 239 of *A Voyage to the East-Indies*, London, 1698.

CHAPTER XII

Nature and End of the Mission

Readers of the foregoing pages will have little doubt that Sir William Norris was a man of recognised standing by reason of his family connections, possessed of considerable Parliamentary experience, and endowed with personal qualifications suited to the position to which he was summoned. The decision to send an Ambassador to the Great Moghal was dictated to the Directors of the New English Company naturally by their desire to advance its trading interests in India. The history of the mission shows however that Sir William's dual responsibility was the cause of serious difficulties. He was not merely the King's representative charged with the general interests of his countrymen in India, but the paid agent of a new trading Company which was endeavouring to supplant an old Company in the possession of privileges enjoyed for nearly a century. The London or Old East India Company intended to die hard, if die it must. Thus its representatives acted as traders first and Englishmen afterwards. Matters were further complicated by the political situation in England and in Europe generally. The Old Company was Jacobite in sentiment and sympathy, while the New Company owed its origin and existence to William, Prince of Orange, who now sat on the throne of the exiled Stuarts. Thus there was political acrimony as well as trade jealousy between the two concerns. The members of the Old Company were not misled by Sir William's role of Ambassador; they planned to send a representative of their own in the person of Dr. D'Avenant to act against the New Company and, if possible, prevent the Ambassador from succeeding in his task. As we have seen the project was, however, ultimately dropped.

It has been observed that the grievances of the Moghal's subjects against the English on account of the constant outrages by pirates also became a serious problem. The Emperor was naturally indignant, and it was obvious that something must be done to mollify him and to clear the English name if the embassy

was to have a reasonable chance of success. In his letter to Aurangzib, King William promised to deal with the pirates, and the sending of the squadron with the Ambassador was an earnest of his sincerity, though it met with little success.

On his voyage to India Sir William was well received by the Portuguese and Dutch authorities of the various places touched at. He had admirably maintained his dignity as an Englishman, and upheld his diplomatic character as Ambassador with all those whom he met. Further, ample proof, not only of his power of accurate observation but also of his humour and candour, is afforded by the live and interesting accounts in his *Journal* of the local people and of their social and religious customs—qualities of description unequalled by most of the previous travellers.

The Ambassador, having anchored at Fort St. George, had experienced his first taste of the hostility he was to encounter in the chilly reception offered by Governor Thomas Pitt, whom a writer truly described as "the zealous servant of the Old Company, and the unrelenting enemy of their rivals". It seems that Norris selected Masulipatam as his place of landing in consequence of the instructions given him by the Directors of the New Company. This choice was perhaps influenced by the fact that Masulipatam was comparatively near Bijapur, where the Emperor was supposed to be encamped. Aurangzib, however, had then no fixed place of residence owing to the exigencies of his various military operations against the Marathas. Probably the Directors in London, not knowing where the Emperor might be on Sir William's arrival in India, thought that the East Coast would be as convenient as the West for the object in view. Events proved that the choice was a mistake. Surat was from most points of view a more suitable place from where to start on the journey to the Mughal's Camp than Masulipatam. But the latter presented one advantage, which may here be mentioned for what it was worth. At Surat the New Company had as yet no resident head, as Sir Nicholas Waite did not arrive till some months later. On the other hand its President and Consul John Pitt had arrived at Masulipatam a few weeks before Sir William, and was able to arrange a fitting reception for him. This was perhaps the only advantage derived from the choice of Masulipatam in preference to Surat.

Sir William Norris, on his arrival at Masulipatam, was encouraged to find that Consul John Pitt had been able to promote the trading interests of the New Company, and had also secured valuable documents and information relating to the business side of the embassy. Norris fully appreciated that all this had been done in the teeth of opposition from the Old Company's servants of that Presidency, who had firmly repudiated Pitt's authority. He maintained a hopeful mood at the beginning, and a certain warmth in his reception by the local Mughal Governor seems to have impressed him favourably. He was clearly over-sanguine, and his undue optimism appears to have created a false impression in London. His message must have been interpreted there as signifying that all was to be plain sailing for the embassy and that satisfactory results might speedily be expected; but subsequent events were destined to falsify these high hopes. The Ambassador had not been many weeks at Masulipatam before he discovered the absolute need of a golden key to the attainment of his objects. He concluded that a large present would be necessary to gain either favour or justice from the Mughal officials. It became clear that the presents with which he had come provided were insufficient and the funds at his disposal inadequate. Once persuaded that bribery was essential, he made a virtue of the necessity and decided to use it right royally. He neglected however to take careful stock of the limited means at his disposal, believing, no doubt, that he had but to ask to have them replenished.

While the opposition of the representatives of the Old Company had of course been foreseen, Sir William confidently expected that his ambassadorial rank would inspire them with awe and deter them from adopting extreme measures. But many of them were determined men, and Thomas Pitt not the least. He studiously disregarded the embassy, and employed secret agents to influence the local officials of the Mughal in order to defeat Sir William's plans. These agents also spied upon the Ambassador's movements, gave him inaccurate and misleading information, and endeavoured finally to shake his confidence in those around him. In consequence Sir William began to suspect treachery, dismissed many of his Indian suite, and even went so far as to quarrel with

John Pitt and his colleagues. He thus reported unfavourably on them to the Court of Directors. Norris's allegations against John Pitt had no real foundation; it does not seem even probable that the latter had been in any way influenced by his cousin Thomas. These cousins have been justly described by Bruce as follows: "The characters of the London Company's President, Thomas Pitt, and the English Company's Consul, John Pitt, were equally marked by zeal in the service of their employers, but distinguished by the former possessing prudence, as well as firmness, and the latter, spirit, unguided by discretion; both, however, were unfit for temporizing or conciliatory measures." Sir William's dealings with John Pitt and his Council show that he was deficient in the patience and tact necessary in an ambassador.

Norris's sudden decision to leave Masulipatam after spending nine months there in anticipation of his journey to the Imperial Camp was unwise, considering the time and money wasted for which there could be no return. This change of plan was caused by untoward circumstances, such as procrastination on the part of the two high officials of the Mughal who had been ordered by the Emperor to arrange the necessary supplies and transport for Norris's journey. There was no doubt at all that their action was partly influenced by the Old Company's representatives at Fort St. George. The arrogant behaviour of Norris himself in his dealings with the officials also deterred them from expediting his journey. The season was of course far advanced, and it would have been difficult to reach the Camp before the beginning of the rainy season. Still Norris showed lack of judgment in not accepting the offer of help made at the last moment by the Mughal's officials to facilitate his journey to the Camp. It seems to have been a genuine effort on their part to atone for their previous conduct, and a gesture of good-will towards the Ambassador. Norris made the situation still worse for himself by not acquiescing in the request of the Wazir Asad Khan that he should carry out his original plan of proceeding to the Camp straight from Masulipatam. His decision was largely due to the influence of Sir Nicholas Waite, who urged that he should come to Surat by sea, as the preparations for his journey to the Camp could be made advantageously in that place.

Norris lost another four months in his voyage to Surat. The Ambassador was no doubt much gratified by his reception at Surat, but his feelings may easily be imagined when he learned that this was secured by a considerable bribe to the local officials of the Mughal, on a scale still higher than that given at Masulipatam. Indeed, his state entry would otherwise have been impossible, as the Old Company's servants had done everything they could to prevent it. Thus the change of plan led to not much material improvement after all.

It appeared however that arrangements, including the obtaining of the necessary *dastak* for the Ambassador's journey to the Camp, had been made by Sir Nicholas Waite. He and his Council supplied valuable information regarding the Ministers at Court, their attitude towards the rival Companies, and the line that might be most advantageously followed at Court by Norris. These activities of Waite's give proof of his tact, as well as his insight into Court intricacies. The Ambassador had experienced much difficulty in deciding, in deliberation with Sir Nicholas, on the concessions to be asked from the Emperor and the minimum that might be accepted. The depleted state of the New Company's treasury and the heavy outlay already incurred by Sir Nicholas made the provision of adequate funds a special anxiety. Ultimately considerable supplies were forthcoming to be used for bribes and presents, and these might have proved sufficient had not the Old Company sent agents authorised to bribe on a still more generous scale.

The Ambassador's chief annoyance at Surat was the hostile attitude persistently maintained by President Stephen Colt and his Council of the Old Company. They steadily refused to recognise him, and told the Mughal authorities that Norris was no King's Ambassador, but merely the representative of a Company of merchants. It would appear that Sir John Gayer, Governor of Bombay, who at that time was in Surat, had allowed his zeal for the Old Company to influence him so greatly that he did everything possible to thwart the embassy. He even sent an Armenian *Wakil* to intrigue against Sir William at Court, although he was perfectly aware that Norris had the authority of the Crown. Waite, of course, protested against all this, but he appears to have

used high-handed measures which aroused the resentment not only of the Old Company's representatives, but also of the Mughal Governor. Waite was no doubt a dismissed servant of the Old Company, and certain writers, including Hedges, have described him as "intemperate and unscrupulous". Nevertheless, he was perfectly justified in resisting the Old Company's designs against the embassy. Altogether it was most unfortunate for trade expansion in India that the rivalry between the Companies should have taken so conspicuous a form. The Emperor maintained an elaborate secret service, so that he knew everything that was happening in his realm, and was not slow to exploit to his own advantage the mutual hostility between the Companies.

Moreover, as has been seen, Surat was the centre of Mughal grievances on account of the unpaid debts of the Old Company and the prevalence of piracy. The former was more or less a local grievance, but the piracy question held a foremost place in the mind of the Emperor. He had no strong naval power to deal with the pirates and secure the safety of the seas for his subjects. Europeans alone could do this, and as they were seeking *farmans* the Emperor was not blind to the opportunity thus presented of securing a *quid pro quo*. The European Companies, including the Old Company, had been compelled to give a bond for the security of the seas; but the latter resisted the demands for compensation. The New English Company, being a new comer, was not at first directly concerned in this matter of the security of the seas and compensation for failure to afford it. But the Home Government, by sending men-of-war to suppress piracy, practically acknowledged its responsibility. The Emperor, therefore, quite naturally expected the New Company to join the older trading bodies in the undertaking given. Sir Nicholas Waite even made common cause with the local merchants and endeavoured to substantiate charges of piracy against the Old Company's servants at Surat, which speedily led to the arrest of Sir John Gayer and others. Sir William Norris, anxious to be impartial, did not entangle himself in the matter.

On learning of events at Surat and on the Coromandel Coast, the Directors of the New Company expressed regret at the animosity that had been allowed to develop, and gave instructions

that the energies of its agents should be confined to the gaining of successes in the commercial field. But owing to the slowness of communications, events in India moved forward independently. The Court of Directors might instruct, but before instructions could reach India the situation to which they were meant to apply had changed. There could only be the most attenuated co-ordination between the Directors in London and their servants in India. Still less could the Court of Directors control or influence the policy and actions of the Emperor and his Ministers.

Sir William Norris was placed in a difficult position just at the time when he was on his way to the Imperial Court; for the news arrived that the Old Company had been granted perpetuity by Act of Parliament. The immediate effect was that the Mughal's officials were puzzled as to the distinction between the Companies and the credit of the embassy was greatly lowered, inasmuch as Sir William had confidently foretold the speedy demise of the Old Company. The New Company's servants being apparently proved false, what further reliance could be placed on them?

The Ambassador had now arrived at the Emperor's Camp near Panhala. He had scarcely established himself there before he realised that his task was indeed to be a difficult, costly and ungrateful one. On being received by the Emperor he requested that *farmans* should be granted for each of the Presidencies of Surat, Masulipatam and Hugli, with exemption from the bond guaranteeing the security of the seas. This request was at first favourably received, and Norris seemed to have every reason for satisfaction. Aurangzib was particularly gracious. He listened attentively to the reading and translation of King William's letters and examined the presents with the utmost care, displaying special interest in such articles as were new to him. As a proof of his favour he chose personally a specially rich *serpaw* with which Sir William was invested.

It may be noted here that this was not by any means the first foreign embassy received by Aurangzib. Bernier gives interesting details of others and the manner of their reception. Early in the reign there had come Tartar envoys from Uzbek, a Dutch Ambassador, one Mynheer Dirk van Adriechem, and diplomatic representatives from Ethiopia. All had been well received and

dismissed with honour. The Tartar envoys made their obeisances to the Emperor in the Indian fashion; the Dutch Ambassador was allowed to salute both after the Indian and European custom. The letters they had brought were in each case received by an *amir*. An Ambassador from the Shah of Persia had been accorded the special distinction of being allowed to pay his respects to the Emperor in the fashion of his own country and to deliver his letter to the Emperor in person. He had also been given a seat among the chief *umaras*. Sir William Norris was also permitted to pay his respects after the manner of his own country. But although he was given a seat among the chief noblemen, he was not received with quite the same distinction as the Persian Ambassador had been. The reason was that the Mughal did not consider the representative of any European monarch quite an equal of one from the Shah or the Sultan of Turkey, doubtless because he was not a "true believer". Nevertheless, Sir William believed that no embassy had ever before received so flattering a reception as his at the Mughal Court; nor had any made a deeper impression by its pomp and magnificence. It is curious and a little disappointing that Sir William (so far as is known) never recorded his impressions of the Emperor's appearance nor of the spectacle offered by his Court.

Sir William Norris, after the first *darbar*, cherished high hopes. He believed that if only funds were forthcoming to satisfy the officials' greed, the success of his mission was assured. But after the capture of Panhala, the business of the embassy was considerably delayed which alarmed the Ambassador. The Emperor was quite resolved to secure some tangible advantage in return for concessions to the New Company, and the one which most appealed to him was a guarantee for the safety of the Indian seas. No doubt, as a sovereign, Aurangzib had ample justification for his demands. The New Company had no connection with, or responsibility for, the piracies; but unfortunately Norris found his hands already partially tied by a premature act of Waite's. It may be remembered that the latter, without consulting the Ambassador (then at Masulipatam), had written to the Emperor asking for a separate *farman* for his own factory, and at the same time rashly promised security at sea. The Ministers assumed

that Waite's undertaking would be fulfilled, and when Sir William had to repudiate it the *farmans* were held back. During this interval three audiences were accorded him.

Things at last came to such a pass that a decision one way or another could hardly be longer postponed. It was agreed to present the Emperor with a *lakh* of rupees, to bestow a like sum on the Minister in charge of the negotiations, and proportionate benefactions on several of his assistants. Most of those concerned were now again in a confident mood, although it was said that the Emperor was still holding out for a pledge regarding the safety of the seas. Sir William had given a modified undertaking which extended to Mokha, and felt fairly certain that success was at hand; but these hopes were soon damped, for the *farmans*, though drafted, remained unsigned. The negotiations became more critical when, at that juncture, acts of piracy were again reported; for these caused the Ministers to hesitate further about completing the *farmans*. As a sequel to these piracies and the non-payment of the Old Company's debts, the Company's property and the persons of its employees were seized in the various settlements.

The competitive bribery of the two Companies had stirred in the minds of the Ministers doubts as to which of them really represented the English nation. To clear away these doubts enquiry was made at Surat on the Emperor's behalf, and again the bribery of the Companies created an anomalous situation. Meanwhile Sir William was chafing at the delay and growing anxious about his own position, which was not expected either by the Company or its representatives in India. He had already expended large sums in "gifts" and had promised still more on the completion of the *farmans*; but if every important concession was to be eliminated from them, what value could they have? By this time Norris realized that to remain longer at Court would be useless. The Emperor continued to insist firmly on a guarantee for security at sea, and the Ambassador was equally emphatic in his refusal. He maintained that three European nations had already undertaken the responsibility, and that his promise to pay the Emperor a *lakh* of rupees was contingent on the New Company being relieved of the liability. Aurangzib now appears to have

grown as tired of the huckstering as Sir William himself. Nor was he less positive in intimating his own decision. He declared that if the Ambassador refused to enter into a guarantee for the security of the seas he might return to England.

The main causes of the embassy's failure have already been emphasised, and others, such as the intrigues of Norris's own countrymen, indicated. One can easily imagine how ironical was the laughter of the Old Company's agents when Sir William vainly tried to assert his authority. In some ways he is one of the most unhappy figures in diplomatic history. Circumstances forced him into an attitude antagonistic to many Englishmen in India, although he had no personal feeling against them. It must be admitted that Norris did not prove to be an ideal Ambassador; still, but for certain adverse circumstances which could not be laid to his charge, his mission would probably have been a brilliant success, and his failure and disappointment excite sympathy. He was somewhat tactless and impatient in dealing even with his own colleagues. His unfamiliarity with Indian customs and languages often betrayed him into what, in one engaged in a diplomatic mission, can only be described as blunders. Sir Nicholas Waite, a man of much wider Indian experience, noticed his tendency to pomposity and warned him against insisting too much on punctilious observances on the part of the Mughal's officials. In spite of that warning he allowed a mere point of etiquette to prevent him from making friends with the Wazir Asad Khan. It is true, of course, that Thomas Pitt had tried, probably with some success, to secure Asad's interest for the Old Company; yet in the later stages of the embassy the Wazir appears to have taken more interest in Sir William's efforts and even tried to get the business satisfactorily concluded. But it is not easy to say how far he had forgiven Norris's original attitude towards him. Yar Ali Beg stands out somewhat conspicuously from other officials for the cordial assistance he gave the Ambassador and the entire confidence the latter reposed in him. Ruh-ullah Khan, on the other hand, is a sinister figure, ever intriguing and causing intentional delay in the hope of receiving fresh bribes. Inayatullah Khan offers a contrast to both these two in his constant identification of his interests with those of the Emperor, his master,

and in his unassailable freedom from corruption.

The failure of the mission was due in no small degree to the long duration, which made it very expensive and a serious burden on the New Company's resources. The Home Government contributed nothing for the support of its King's Ambassador. Sir William had to be continually demanding from the Directors of the New Company the means of giving "subsidies", because he had to meet the Old Company's agents with their own weapons. In addition to this he was compelled to "gratify" many Ministers and their secretaries. The more corrupt officials had every inducement to delay the business: for the longer negotiations could be spun out the more numerous would be the opportunities for bribes. The factories in the three Presidencies did not and could not support Sir William in a manner commensurate with these expenses which were enormously and unexpectedly increased. Indeed, it is quite plain that Norris lacked both firmness and judgment in dealing with rapacious court officials. Manucci truly observes that he "made a great show, and his expenses were extraordinary. No prince has ever been attended with greater pomp and ostentation, and in addition thereto his liberality was unbounded. He imagined that in this way he could push through his business more quickly. But he was quite ignorant of what the King's intentions were in regard to him. For, after all, the only thing he acquired was the nickname 'King of England', given him by the common people in the army".²

The Ambassador did not arrive in India at an opportune moment, as the Emperor was growing old and his authority over Ministers was waning. In addition, he was engaged in conducting his campaign against the Marathas. His death was expected almost daily, and his sons were intriguing hotly against each other for the succession. The Hindu chiefs, hitherto in subjection to him, had begun to watch for an opportunity of recovering their independence. It was believed that his death would be the signal for war and general chaos. The internal condition of the Empire is thus described by Sir Jadunath Sarkar: "The moral weakness of the empire was even greater than the material: the Government no longer commanded the awe of its subjects; the public servants had lost honesty and efficiency; ministers and

princes alike lacked statesmanship and ability; the army broke down as an instrument of force. In letter after letter the aged Aurangzib mourns over the utter incapacity of his officers and sons and chastises them with the sharpness of his pen, but in despair of a remedy".³

Success would have been difficult even with a more experienced and tactful Ambassador. There can be no question that Sir William Norris had to grapple with much more difficult and complicated circumstances than his predecessor, Sir Thomas Roe, in the reign of James I, with whom a comparison seems natural and indeed inevitable. Both were typical products of their respective Universities, but Roe was not quite so closely identified with Oxford as Norris was with Cambridge. Roe was better equipped for his mission by his intimate knowledge of Elizabeth's Court and the experience gained in foreign travel: Norris had neither of these. Sir Thomas went to India, exclusively a royal ambassador: Sir William was the King's representative, but he was also the agent of the New Company. Roe went out to seek privileges and an assured position for his nation, but Norris had to request privileges and rights for a new corporation seeking to establish itself on the supersession of an old one. Roe had plenty of opposition from the Wazir Asaf Khan, Prince Khurram, the Jesuits and the Dutch; but they were by no means such keen and indefatigable opponents as Norris had to contend with amongst his own countrymen and the Mughal's Ministers. Roe succeeded largely because he conciliated Asaf Khan, and obtained the support of the Empress Nurmahal; but Norris had not the foresight to attach genuinely to his cause Asad Khan, Aurangzib's Wazir. The earlier ambassador showed better judgment in bestowing presents than the later. Roe's character was more sophisticated than Norris's, and he possessed the greater intuition. Roe had a personality which commended him to the Emperor Jahangir, who was a man of liberal views. But Norris never seems to have got beneath the surface with Aurangzib, whom he found to be a stern bigot, every inch an Emperor, forbidding in manner and difficult to approach, save through Ministers who could never be implicitly trusted. Both ambassadors were impatient of slights, and each had a keen eye to material advantage. In Sir Thomas Roe were

a high spirit, tenacity of purpose, and a pride of race which did more than anything else any other envoy had done to establish English prestige at the Mughal Court. Courageous and intrepid, he exhibited to those who came in contact with him that "justum et tenacem propositi virum" conceived by the Roman poet. No ambassador who commanded respect as Roe did could ever be considered a failure. Sir William Norris was more self-important and pompous, but less diplomatic than Roe. The latter appears to have been a shrewder observer than Sir William, for his description of the Court and of Mughal administration is more elaborate than that of Norris. His suggestions to the Directors concerning their future policy were more statesmanlike than those made by Sir William to the Directors of the New Company. One final distinction between the two may be noted, and it emphasises the sadness of the fate that overtook the courageous man whose mission we have been tracing. Sir Thomas Roe lived to be rewarded for his labours, but Sir William Norris was not destined to see his beloved country again, and could not lay his case in person before the King, his master.

The same vexatious delays that had attended the major negotiations were again experienced in obtaining the *dastak*, so Sir William departed from the Camp without it. This created considerable dismay. It was a new experience to find a great ruler taken at his word, and many feared for the consequences. The Emperor resented Norris's behaviour, and the Ambassador and his retinue were stopped on the way by the Mughal troops. Sir William was finally persuaded to return to the Camp and await the Emperor's pleasure. He described his own position with complete accuracy when he declared that he could not consider himself anything else than a "prisoner". But it should have been quite clear to him that Aurangzib had no wish to do him personal injury. In this part of the negotiations Sir William had to deal with the Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Khan, one of the oldest Mughal generals, whom Aurangzib had some time before caused to be blinded.

The delay in obtaining the Emperor's final orders extended over weeks. It was said that at the eleventh hour he had granted the *farmans*, and more than once Sir William's durance was

brightened by the news that they were at last on their way to him. To bring about the realisation of his hopes he promised the Nawab large rewards in the Company's name to be paid when the *farmans* were sent to Surat. His prudence was justified, for in the end no *farmans* were received. What did at last reach him were Aurangzib's reply to King William's letter and presents in return for those sent three years earlier. They were accompanied by the Imperial command that they should be delivered to the Ambassador in person: and after some delay Sir William, who had strictly refrained from visiting the Nawab, consented to call upon him for this purpose. At the interview which followed Sir William was assured that the Emperor had promised to grant the *farmans*, but that they were not yet ready. After receiving the letter and presents for King William, the Ambassador was decorated with a *serpaw* and received an elephant as a personal gift. That these presents actually came from the Emperor himself was made plain to the assembly at the ceremony of investiture. In spite of his disappointment at the failure of his mission, Sir William did not conceal his pleasure at these polite attentions. He then resumed his march. Three months exactly had passed since Norris left the Imperial Camp when he and his retinue made a state entry into Surat.

Norris's troubles with the Emperor were now over; those with his own countrymen were to complete the tale of his tribulations. Sir Nicholas Waite was absent—apparently of deliberate intent—from the reception. He impudently asserted that with Norris's departure from the Court the embassy had come to an end so that no one need take any further notice of the Ambassador. It is difficult to find terms strong enough to characterise such conduct. Mr. P. E. Roberts, in his chapter in Sir W. W. Hunter's *History of India*, plainly puts restraint on himself when he remarks: "The meanness of his [Norris's] reception, contrasting strongly with his pompous state entry fourteen months before, was eloquently emblematic of his failure". There appears even to have been a painful altercation between the Ambassador and Waite, the latter accusing and the former defending himself. By virtue of Article 12⁴ of the New Company's instructions Waite had evidently a certain amount of jurisdiction over Norris with

regard to the embassy's mission, but it will hardly be denied that he exercised it with a singular lack of humane feeling. Even when Sir William asked Waite and the Council to meet him to confer on important affairs of the Company, they declined. An ambassador who has failed in his task is not unlike a beaten general. He is subjected to harsh and even ill-informed criticism. That is what happened in this case. Every chief in all three Presidencies severely condemned him, asserting that with more tact and prudence and a more conciliatory attitude towards the Wazir Asad Khan the *farmans* might have been secured.

In his instructions from the Court of Directors, Sir William Norris had been requested to leave India directly his mission was completed; but for some inscrutable reason his departure was delayed. After several requests a ship was chosen that was altogether unsuitable for one who, in spite of all that had happened, was still the King's Ambassador. Norris appears to have thought that the Council at Surat were afraid that, on reaching England, he would complain of their lack of support while he was negotiating at the Court; as indeed, he would have been justified in doing. Apparently, too, they feared that his *Journal* might contain severe strictures on them, for they tried to induce him to leave a copy of it in India. His refusal of this request might possibly have borne that interpretation, but as a matter of fact the *Journal* contains nothing to justify such fears. It appears also that the representatives of the Old Company were apprehensive, and that with more reason. They had opposed and thwarted him at almost every turn, and it cannot be doubted that the failure of the embassy was largely due to them. Whatever reflections on the actions of the New Company's servants the *Journal* might contain, it is certain that those of the Old Company merited severe and emphatic condemnation. The change that had now taken place in England made matters still more serious for them. For the rivalry between the Companies was at an end. They had become united, with the result that those who had so fiercely opposed the embassy now found, as it were, the ground removed from under their feet. The opposing interests of the two Companies having become merged in one common enterprise, the rival champions in India were confounded by the new situation

and, of course, found themselves no longer in favour. Their fears, however, as to what Sir William Norris might report on his return to England were soon to be set at rest. When the weary Ambassador at last sailed from India aboard the *Scipio*, the unseen Angel of Death went with him, and his worldly anxieties were almost at an end.

It is useless to speculate on what Sir William Norris's reception might have been had he been spared to arrive in England. The King who commissioned him to go to India was dead, but that would have been more to his advantage than otherwise, for King William was not lenient towards failure. The new sovereign, Queen Anne, was in the hands of a Whig ministry, and Norris belonged to that party. With the experience gained in the East, he would most likely have soon found his way back into the House of Commons. The circumstances would have been wholly favourable to the condonation of any errors with which his detractors might have charged him. He had failed in his mission, it is true, but he had manfully upheld the dignity of his sovereign and the reputation of his country. He had not secured the much desired *farmans* from Aurangzib, but at least he had made some impression upon that potentate. And even had the mission succeeded in its main object, what benefits would the *farmans* have brought, seeing that the rival Companies were now one? Sir William Norris need have had no fears about his reception in England. But that Power which disposes all earthly things had decreed an earlier end to his anxieties, with a consolation more final than royal favour or Parliamentary honour.

The intrinsic value and permanent interest of Sir William Norris's observations during the period of his stay in India must remain a matter of individual opinion, but no reader of his *Journals* will dispute the fact that he had many of the qualities of a shrewd and intelligent chronicler. His account of Fort St. George, the original cradle of the fine and flourishing city of Madras, will interest those who love to trace the development of modern cities through the various stages of their growth. Of Masulipatam, which has declined as Madras advanced, but which at his time was the principal Mughal port on the Coromandel Coast, he gives a vivid and detailed account. Norris did not

confine his attention to the towns, but was equally observant of the country. He pronounced the soil rich, but remarked that it was not cultivated as well as it might have been. This he attributed less to neglect or ignorance on the part of the cultivators, than to their fear of not enjoying the fruits of their labour, either from insecure tenure or from the extortions of tax collectors. The result was that through not growing sufficient paddy for their needs they had to import rice from Bengal. This remark applied more especially, to the districts round about Masulipatam. In his journey through Western Deccan to the Emperor's Camp, he did not fail to notice that agriculture constituted the principal occupation of the inhabitants, and frequently refers to the mode of tillage and the variety of crops. He declared that in commerce the Hindus were more competent than the Muhammedans; while his description of the coinage, and the current exchange employed in all commercial transactions, adds to our knowledge of Indian affairs during a period of Mughal administration.

Surat was a great trade emporium, and many of its influential Indian merchants owned large ships and carried on a brisk trade with the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and other parts of the East. Of course, the several foreign factories there increased the general animation by the spirit of competition they maintained. Sir William Norris discovered that travelling through the provinces was not free from danger owing to numerous bands of robbers, and constant raids by marauding Marathas. So real was this risk that travellers always kept together in parties, and persons of importance were guarded by suitable escorts. At the same time *serais*, or rest-houses, had been built along the main roads, either by the Emperor's order or through the munificence of some members of his family. On the journey inland Norris saw and described many fertile regions and places of great natural beauty. He seems also to have been favourably impressed by the architectural skill displayed in numerous tombs and other monuments scattered over the region now described as Western Deccan. He also observed with regret that many of the more artistic survivals of a past age, principally temples, had been either destroyed or seriously damaged by the Mughal. The forti-

fied castles constructed by Aurangzib and his predecessors, perched on lofty eminences in order to command the passes and river crossings, excited his admiration, but at the same time he noticed that the batteries placed in them were not correspondingly powerful, and pronounced the guns very inferior to those King William had included among his presents. Several of the towns on his route were prosperous centres of inland trade. The large bazars were filled with all kinds of local manufactures and other commodities. The prosperity of the people in those parts was very apparent, and he makes no reference to the existence of want or discontent.

The provincial governors were absolutely subservient to the Emperor. At the same time they exercised arbitrary power in their respective governments, and, so long as they were able to retain their master's favour by timely presents, were not interfered with. The governors took advantage of their many opportunities to squeeze the people, more especially the Hindus. They exacted levies from them in the form of presents, which could only be withheld at the price of confiscation. In point of fact it was his Hindu subjects who always suffered most from Aurangzib's religious intolerance. This was because, following their master's example, his governors made sharp distinctions in the matter of race and religion, and in the administration of justice favoured most those who adhered to the tenets of Islam. In his *Journal*, Norris described in unequivocal terms the manner in which the poll-tax was levied upon the Hindus and forcibly exacted from them by the Mughal's local officials. That tax, introduced by Aurangzib to provide him with the means for carrying on his numerous wars, was made an instrument of further tyranny, because the prevailing custom was for the official to exact something for himself over and above what the State demanded. The provincial governors vied with one another in the splendour of their courts, all modelled on that of the Emperor. Norris made special note of the luxury with which they surrounded themselves and the numerous occasions on which they held festival. These extravagant manifestations were indulged in without a thought for the needs and cares of the people, who were systematically kept in complete ignorance of public events and government affairs.

There was no regular postal system for communicating news between the different parts of India. The governors exercised great influence in the administration of their provinces, and even the Emperor himself was obliged to depend upon their reports, irrespective of whether they were true or not. For political reasons, indeed, they were treated by the Emperor with all the outward marks of favour and approval. He was well aware of what was happening throughout his realm, but the system had become so deeply rooted that he felt reform to be practically impossible.

Notwithstanding its imposing externals, Norris pronounced the Mughal Empire to be in a state of decay. Corruption was rampant at the Court; no one, as he discovered himself, could get a hearing without first bribing Court officials from the highest to the lowest. The transaction of all business was slow and systematically protracted. The country was still suffering from the effects of former famines. In spite of the new levy the treasury was low, and the drain upon it caused by almost ceaseless warfare was constant. But the weakest feature of all was the Army. Sir William found it disorganised owing to arrears of pay and scarcity of provisions. Its nominal strength was fictitious, because, as he discovered, the Mughal's generals diverted much of the Imperial revenues into their own pockets and made returns of the effective strength that had no relation to fact. The military force essential for the preservation of a despotic rule, such as that of the Mughal dynasty, was wasting away through the improvidence of officials, who did not realise that at the same time they were undermining their own security. The disloyalty of the army officers had brought the Imperial Government into a condition that must inevitably end in its fall. The administration was, in Norris's view, hopelessly irregular, and the Emperor too far advanced in years to be able to cope with those urgent and intricate affairs that hitherto he had kept in his own hands. It was evident that he could no longer control his own Ministers of State.

It is deeply regrettable from the historical point of view that an account which Sir William Norris obtained from Persian records, preserved among the Imperial archives, giving a full list

of all allowances paid by the Emperor to *umaras* and *mansabdars* of all degrees as well as to Princes of the blood, is missing and probably lost. Such a document would have been invaluable as throwing additional light on the Mughal system of administration. The details in the Emperor's pay-book could hardly have failed to prove informing. They would have revealed to what extent he regulated expenditure with due regard to his resources. The system in force was evidently based upon this principle—that the great ones of the land should owe both position and fortune to the Emperor's bounty or favour. It followed, therefore, that as he had unlimited power to give, so also he had unlimited power to take. As a result noblemen tried to conceal part of their wealth against the inevitable day of misfortune. But that was not easy, as spies were numberless. Although Norris records many defects in Aurangzib's character and administration, he seems nevertheless to have been fully alive to the sterling qualities of the Emperor, who had been trained to war from his youth upwards. Aurangzib was the last of the great military leaders of the House of Timur. He had ever been prompt to recognise and reward the valour of his generals on the field of battle, and no less keen in censuring and punishing incompetence or cowardice.

Notwithstanding the pomp of his Court and the grandeur with which the State banquets were arranged, Norris noted that the Emperor's personal habits were abstemious. He never attempted to emulate his grandfather, Jahangir, in his drinking bouts. He set his courtiers a good example in moderation, even if they did not follow it. That very moderation may have been the cause of his long life, which stands as a record among the Mughal Emperors. Aurangzib had a high sense of his own importance and regarded himself as the greatest monarch in the world. He was, therefore, more inaccessible to foreigners than some of his predecessors had been. It must also be remembered that the curiosity felt by earlier rulers about European countries had now somewhat worn off. These were no longer a mystery. The circumstances of the day—mercantile disputes, war in Bengal and in Bombay, the severe injury done to the Mughal's subjects by piracy were all obstacles to that hospitable and gratifying

reception on which Norris had too confidently counted.

In conclusion, it may be observed that Sir William was much struck by the general attitude of Indians towards religion. He carefully recorded their religious observances, of which he gives many details. Those characteristics are still as strongly marked a feature in the religious lives of orthodox Hindus and Muham-medans as in Aurangzib's reign. Norris was especially impressed with the reverent behaviour of the Hindus when attending Christian services in his camp. This was in entire harmony with their attitude when engaged in their own worship. He regarded the expenses incurred on the Emperor's birthday, devoted to charitable purposes, as further proof of a deep and practical religious tendency in the character of the peoples of India.

NOTES

¹ Vol. III, p. 321 of *Annals of the East India Company*.

² Vol III, p. 300 of *Storia do Mogor*.

³ Vol. I, p. xiii of *History of Aurangzib*, second edition, 1925.

⁴ P. 48 of *Letter Book 11*, India Office.

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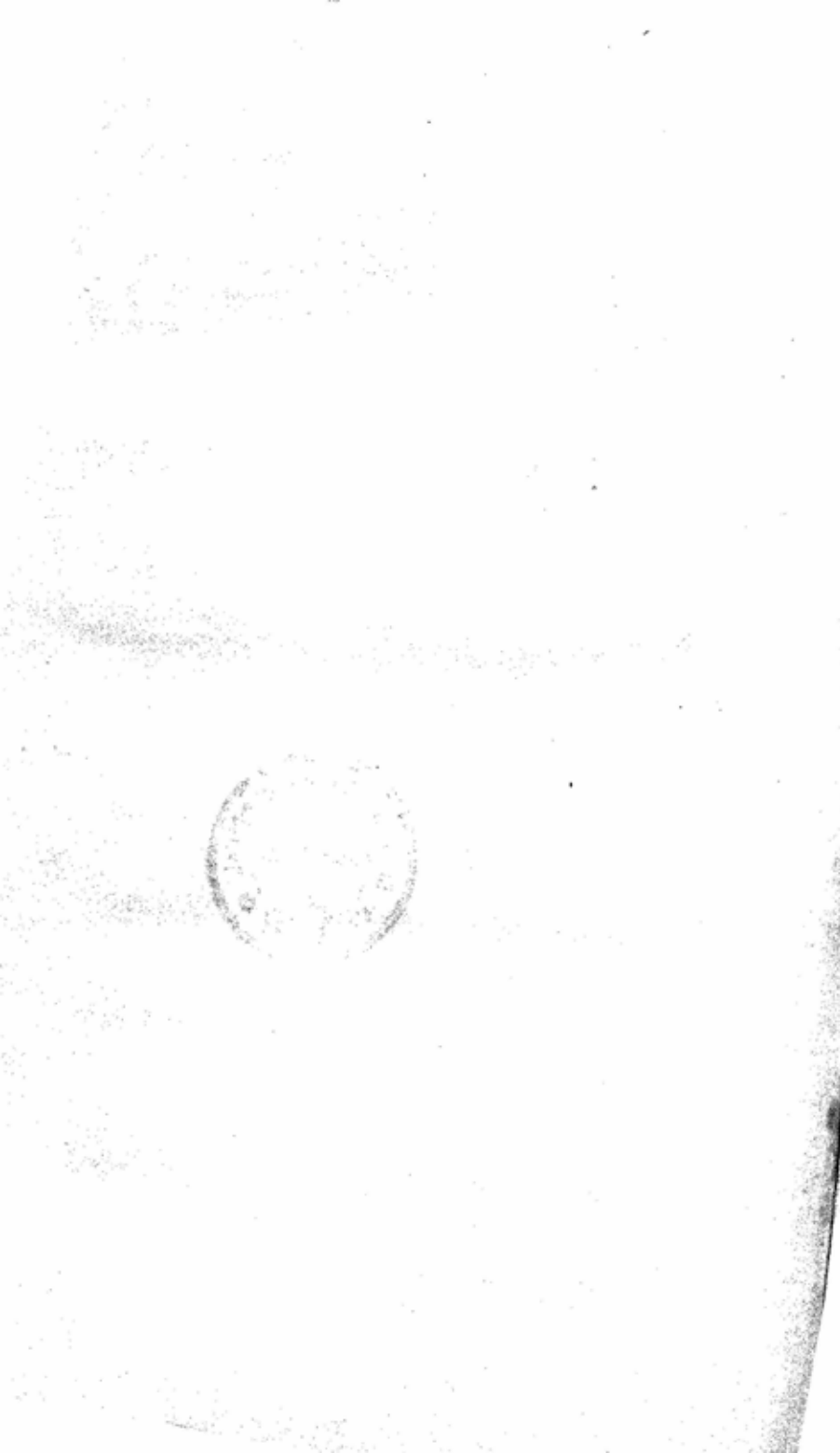
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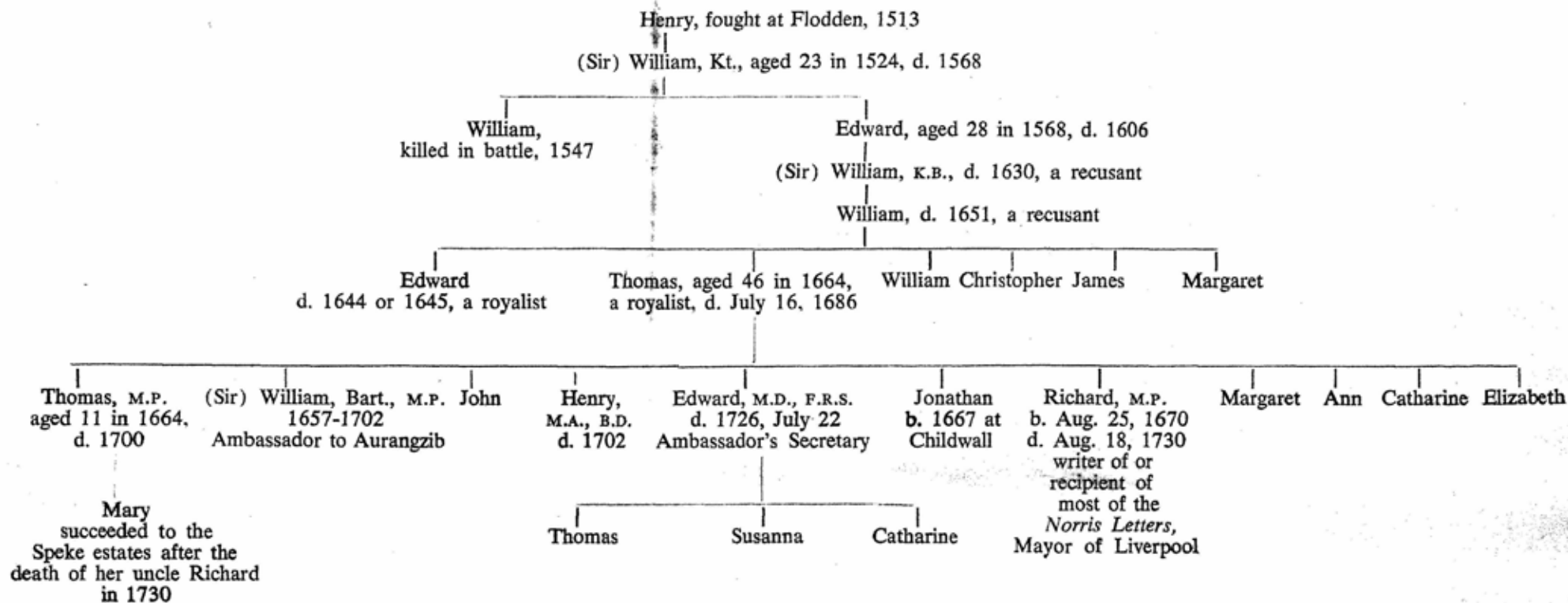
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FAMILY TREE OF THE NORRIS OF SPEKE







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