

At this Moment our own Cavalry made a gallant Charge ; but, after dispersing and almost destroying a small Body of Infantry that made a very determined Resistance, were soon obliged to fall back, from a more considerable Body of Infantry, that had rallied and made a Stand on a Space of broken rocky Ground, extremely disadvantageous for Cavalry ; and at the Moment of their Retreat, and whilst the whole of our first Line was impeded by it, the Nizam's Horse, which had followed Colonel Floyd across the Ravine, with very good Intentions, but very injudiciously, threw themselves, in an unweildy Mals, into the Front of our Left Wing, on a Piece of Ground so rugged and rocky, as well as so near to the Enemy's Batteries on the Island of Seringapatam, that they could not act with Efficacy in Front, and continued to prevent our Line of Infantry from advancing, by which Means an invaluable, though short Space of Time was lost, which enabled the Enemy to avail themselves of the Vicinity of the Batteries upon the Island, and, by retreating to their Protection in the utmost Confusion, to save their Army from entire Destruction.

Fatigued and exhausted as the Troops were by the Badness of the Night, the Tedioufness of the March, and by their long and extraordinary Exertions during an excessive hot Day, and covered, as the beaten Enemy were, by the Works on the Island and by the Guns of the Fort, nothing more could then be attempted ; and the Army accordingly, after the Arrival of the Tents from Arrakerry, encamped just beyond the Reach of the Cannon on the Island, and nearly on the Ground upon which the Action had terminated.

Three of the Enemy's Guns were taken on the Hill that was attacked by the Corps under the Command of Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell ; and One Gun, with a great Number of Standards and Colours, were taken from their Main Body. Their Loss in Men was very considerable, but the Number could not be ascertained.

It may probably appear to you, and to any other Persons unacquainted with the peculiar Situation of Seringapatam, that, after having defeated the Enemy's Army, I might have proceeded to the Attack of the Place, without losing Time, or putting myself to any material Inconvenience ; to form a Junction with General Abercromby ; but even if I had thought the heavy Guns that I had brought with me sufficient for the Siege, I could not there, as at Bangalore, chuse my Point of Attack, and keep my Army in a compact State to resist the whole Force of the Enemy, and defend my Approaches. In order to besiege the Fort it would have been necessary to force my Passage over to the Island ; and this can only be done on the North Side, opposite to the Carigut Pagoda, where there is a good Ford, at the Distance of more than a Mile from the Fort ; for the Ford on the South Side is not only very rugged and difficult, but is likewise commanded, within 700 Yards, by the Works of Seringapatam, and the Bridge, which is still standing on that Side, is immediately under the Guns of the Place.

The Ground on the South Side rises gradually from the River ; and, as Tippoo would certainly have crossed over with his Army to that Side, as soon as he saw my Batteries in sufficient Forwardness to enable me to force the Passage of the Northern Ford, I should have been exposed, on getting upon the Island, to a cross Fire from the Fort and from the Enemy's Army, which would not only have rendered it impossible for me to attempt the Siege, but would probably have obliged me to abandon the Island with considerable Loss.

It was therefore necessary ; before any Attempt could be made upon the Island, that a Force, able to resist the Attack of Tippoo's whole Army, should be stationed on the South Side of the River, which could only be effected by my joining some of my Battalions to the Corps under General Abercromby ; and I therefore determined, after allowing the Troops to recover themselves a little from their Fatigues, by an Halt of Two Days on the Field of Battle, to proceed to the Kanambaddy Ford, according to my former Intention.

The Soil of all the Parts of the Mysore Country, that I have seen, is in general dry, and by Nature unfruitful, and Sustainance, either for Men or Animals, can only be raised upon it by a most persevering Industry in it's Inhabitants ; but the Country adjoining to Seringapatam is peculiarly rugged and barren. The Mountains are immense bare Rocks, and the lower Grounds are so thin in Soil, and so universally and closely covered with large loose Stones, that no considerable Produce can be raised from them by the Exertions of any Degree of Industry whatever.

The utmost Pains had likewise been taken by the Enemy, during the Two preceding Months, to destroy all the Villages, and every Particle of Forage and Provisions belonging to the Inhabitants, within a Circuit of several Miles ; and to those Circumstances, of so much Disadvantage to the Operations of the Army, was to be added the premature Setting-in of the Monsoon, near a Month before the usual Period ; and, by the united Operation of the Causes that I have stated, we had not only, during the Six or Eight preceding Days, suffered very considerable Losses amongst our Draft and Carriage Cattle, but the greatest Part of those which survived, were at this Time reduced to a very weakly Condition.

We were obliged to make so great a Detour, that we could only reach the Kanambaddy Ford in Two Marches ; and as the Face of the Country is exceedingly uneven and hilly, intersected with a Number of deep Ravines, and the Road for the heavy Guns was to be made the whole Way by our own Pioneers, these Marches were found so difficult, that, notwithstanding the Pressure for Time, I was forced to halt One Day, after the first March, by the Draft Cattle having been completely exhausted in accomplishing it.

Considerable Detachments of Troops were ordered to attend and assist the heavy Guns on the second Day's March ; but the Bullocks were so extremely reduced, that, even with the Aid of the Soldiers at the Drag-Ropes, their Progress was so tedious, that the Body of the Army was upwards of Twelve Hours in marching as many Miles, and the Rear Guard did not reach the Encampment near the Ford till Nine o'Clock in the Evening of the 20th of May.

It was not, however, till after I had received the Reports from the different Departments, on the following Morning, of the general wretched Condition of the public Cattle of the Army, that I saw the Impossibility of moving the heavy Guns and Stores from the Spot where they then were, and that it became necessary for me to decide on relinquishing entirely the Prosecution of the Plan for the Campaign, in which General Abercromby had been instructed to co-operate. I then lost no Time in communicating my Determination to General Abercromby, who had advanced as far as Periapatam ; and I directed him, after descending the Ghaut with the Troops under his Command, to put them into Cantonments on the Coast of Malabar, during the Rains, and until the proper Season should return for re-commencing our Operations.

