CHAPTER V

BRITISH INTERVENTION

The military operations that were undertaken by the Nawab against the feudal powers were marked by ups and downs. A limited success was won, for part of the arrears of tribute was collected and certain palayams were brought under the direct authority of the circar. But most of the poligars continued to retain their influence. At the same time any external intervention appeared to afford opportunities to the chieftains for regaining their last ground. The Madras Council felt that the Nawab would collect the arrears of rent that the poligars owed to him and that he would clear his dept\textsuperscript{1} to the English east India Company's and offer rewards. With this end in view it extended support to military operations. But it was disappointed, for nothing much could be collected and what was collected was not adequate to meet the expenses of the expeditions. In this situation the Company's found it necessary to mobilise resources for the conduct of major wars against Mysore. This required the intervention of the Company's not only in the internal administration of the country but also in Nawab's relations with the feudal powers.

\textsuperscript{1} The Nawab owed large amounts to the Company's for its wars in defense of his rights against the French and the Nevayets.
The second Mysore War broke out in 1780 and it continued up to 1784. In the course of war Haidar Ali, the ruler of Mysore, invaded the Tamil country. As a result of a brilliant campaign he occupied Srirangam and Thanjavur on the Kaveri delta. Advancing southward Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai and Vasudevanallur from the forces of the Nawab. In an attempt to win over the support of the poligars he crowned a Nayak prince referred to as Kattu Raja as the king at Madurai. After occupying the southern provinces the Mysoreans moved to the north and gained possession of more of territories -Vellore and Kanchipuram.

The outbreak of wars offered an opportunity to the restive chiefs to throw off the mask of loyalty to the Nawab. In a bid to regain the support of the poligars and to dissuade them from joining the camp of the invader, Nawab Mohammad Ali adopted a conciliatory policy. He waived the peishkush for two years, released the imprisoned chiefs from confinement and assured them that his circar would respect, their rights. Yet this was of no avail, for these concessions

2. The support extended by the English East India Company’s to the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Arcot against Mysore served as the major cause of conflict between the Company’s and Mysore.


4. Military Consultations, Fort St.George, 4 February 1781, Vol.73, p.273. Kattu Raja means king of the forest. It is to be noted that after losing the country, the Nayaks took asylum in the Wilderness of Sivaganga.
were taken as opportunistic. They were on the other hand guided by their own experiences—loss of their estates and imprisonment of their agents and more than these, their affinity with the Nayaks and the influence of Haidar Ali's emissaries.5

In the wake of the troubles, caused by the Mysorean invasion, the poligars returned from exile to their districts. Thereupon they organised disturbances on a large scale. Confronted with the challenges presented by external threat and internal disorder, the Nawab's administration collapsed and the Madras council found it impossible to raise the resources needed for the conduct of war. These negative trends invited British intervention in the administration.

Taking advantage of the war against Mysore the chiefs of Wodayarpalayam and Ariyalur returned to their palayams while the chieftains of Sivagiri and Panjalamkurichi joined the camp of the Nayak prince. In Wodayarpalayam and Ariyalur during the period of Nawab's rule the circar amuldaars increased the taxes four times of what the inhabitants paid to the poligars in former times and tortured or killed those who did not yield to exactions. The inhabitants therefore rose in rebellion and demanded the restoration of the poligar system.6 Haidar Ali, understanding the favourable situation, sent bodies of his troops in support of the poligars. Supported by the inhabitants, the chiefs expelled the Nawab's troops and


re-established their authority. In the meantime the kallar tribes after taking possession of Melur, Vellaloor and Scrugudi in kallar nadu made inroads to the vicinity of Madurai. Kattabomman of Panjalamkurichi entered into a close alliance with the Dutch and hoisted their colours on his fort. On the other hand, Varaguna, the poligar of Sivagiri, assisted by the western poligars occupied Srivilliputtur. These disturbances were so widespread that Christian Swartz of the Danish Lutheran Mission observed, “it seemed as if all the country people wished for a change, Worriarpaliam, Maravar, Tinnevelly country, Madura were all up in arms”.

After more than two years of turmoil, the country saw the prospect of the return of peace. In December 1782 Haider Ali passed away. In February 1783 the Marathas withdrew from their alliance with Mysore and made peace with the Company. The British forces, released from the war against the Marathas, invaded the western region of Mysore in 1783, in consequence of which, Tipu Sultan


withdrew his forces from the Carnatic. The destructive war was brought to an end by the Treaty of Mangalore, signed on the 7th of March 1784. Tipu Sultan and the Company agreed to effect mutual restitution of conquered territories and return of prisoners. In the end, neither party gained anything, but the fury of war spelled disaster to the country and enabled the poligars to regain their hold.

**Assignment expedition against the poligars**

The exigencies of conflict caused a serious strain on the finances of the Madras Government. As the burden of war fell upon the Company, the Council of Fort St. George applied to the Nawab for financial support. Mohammad Ali promised to pay a considerable amount, but even after eight months of war he extended no relief. His servants, on the other hand unconcerned at the destructive war, exacted money from the inhabitants and wasted it. At the same time the Nawab by his oppressive exactions alienated the poligars and it was found imperative to establish a degree of order by a policy of conciliation, so that they could be persuaded to make their customary contributions to the circar.

Accordingly the Madras Council requested Nawab Mohammad Ali to transfer the revenues of the provinces of Tiruchirapalli and Tirunelveli to the Company for the duration of war. The Nawab agreed: he gave consent either because he did not derive any substantial income from these provinces due to the disorders or he did not grasp the implications of the Company's proposed intervention. Nevertheless, by an agreement made in February 1781 the Company appointed receivers in these provinces for the collection of the net revenue from the Nawab's amuldars. These receivers were not granted any right to interfere in the internal administration, but were to be consulted in regard to the disbursement of the charges of collection by the revenue servants. In effect the receivers were entitled to exercise supervision over collection, but had no powers. That appeared essential for control. As a result the system did not work. The Nawab's servants disregarded the orders of the receivers, did not furnish the accounts of collection, and continued to harass the poligars and the peasants. Added to these, there came disputes between the receivers and the amuldars and the Nawab's interference in the working of the arrangement.

Thereupon the Madras Council suggested to the Nawab to make an unconditional assignment of all the provinces of the Carnatic to the Company

during the war period. Mohammad Ali more sensitive of his rights than formerly what he was, opposed the demand and quoted a treaty that he settled with the Bengal Government in 1781. It exempted him from all financial demands beyond the expances of ten battalians of the troops of the Company and affirmed his sovereignty over the Carnatic. Yet the Madras Government was not prepared to retreat from its demand. By a compromise it was agreed that the revenues of the Carnatic should be transferred to the Company for a period of five years and one-sixth of the annual collections should be assigned for private expenses of the Nawab. A settlement that was signed accordingly on 2nd December 1781 granted to the Company the right to nominate the renters to be appointed by the Nawab to fix the rent for the districts with the renters and peishcush for the feudal estates with the poligars. These rates were not to fall below those settled by the Nawab under similar circumstances. While the Company agreed to pay one-sixth of the settled rent to the Nawab, it consented to give account for the rest to his credit. This agreement covered all the provinces of the Carnatic, conferred much discretion to the Company for the settlement of rent and ensured for it direct control over the renters and poligars. Thus the Company gained jurisdiction over the feudal system together with revenue for a collection period of five years.

The Madras Council constituted a committee of Assigned Revenue for administration of the assignment. The Committee consisting of a Senior Member and five Members functioned through native officers called Company’s Collectors who resided at the taluq or district headquarters.

The committee of Assigned Revenue made an earnest attempt to improve the system. It kept the collectors closely to their duty, watched the conduct of revenue servants, sought to check fraud and embezzlement and attended to the progress of cultivation as well as collection. In an attempt to conciliate the poligars, it appointed the former poligars of Wodayarpalayam and Ariyalur as renters of their respective districts. These chiefs in consequence abandoned their alliance with Tipu Sultan of Mysore and joined the side of the Company. The rents of the two districts were fixed at what appeared as reasonable amounts 35,000 pagodas for Wodayarpalayam and 8000 for Ariyalur. Further, the Committee restored Palamaneri occupied by the Nawab, to the possession of Ramnad and Tiruppuvanam to Sivaganga. In an endeavour to win the confidence of the chieftains, it relieved them from the renter’s jurisdiction, which occasioned oppressive exactions and placed them under its direct authority.

19. Board of Assigned Revenue, Proceedings, 20 October 1781, Vol.1, pp.2-4. The members of the committee as appointed in 1781 were Paul Benfield (Senior Member), Charles Oakeley, Eyles Irwin, George Proctor, william Fallofield and Paul Plumber.
Thereby, the poligars for the first time experienced the direct administration of the English.\textsuperscript{20} Yet, the success of the Company’s administration was limited. The Committee was handicapped because of the limited. It found it essential to rent extensive districts to the highest bidders and to entrust unrestricted authority with the renters for the strict enforcement of collections. Due to the short duration of the assignment and the necessity to raise the maximum amount possible for the conduct of war; it could not pay much attention to the proceedings of the local servants. In addition, the transfer of administration from an establishment authority to an alien power created a general district among the poligars.\textsuperscript{21} Consequently, its conciliatory policy failed, oppression continued and the Company had to resort to force for keeping the feudal powers in subordination.

In July 1783 the situation appeared favourable to proceed against the poligars and to curb their influence, the Mysore War ended most of the forces returned to the Presidency. Several of the chieftains who were in alliance with Haidar Ali defaulted in their payments and were not prepared to clear the arrears. At the same time the Company was in need of money to settle the war torn country. Because of these considerations Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras (1781-1785) decided on the employment of forces.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 27 April 1784, Vol.5, pp.210-214.

\textsuperscript{21} Military Sundries, Fort St.George, 13 August 1784, Vol.66, p.218.
Colonel William Fullarton commended the operations. In July 1784 the forces threatened the kellar tribes with fire and sword and forced them to pay tribute.\(^{22}\) The military posts established in Kallarnadu kept the population in awe and prevented it from going to the aid of the rebel poligars. On the 4th of August the army entered Sivaganga. Fullarton directed the Marudus, the ministers of Sivaganga, to clear the arrears of tribute, but the latter withdrew to the woods of Kaliarkoil and assembled about 10,000 armed men. However, as a result of negotiation a settlement was made. The Marudhus paid 40,000 rupees in clearance of a part of the arrears and settled terms.

Kattabomman of Panjalamkurichi in the mean time invaded the poligar estate of Chokkampatti and with 14,000 irregulars he lay in wait for the appearance of the Company’s forces. But Fullarton taking a circuitous route through Palamaneri and Nagalapuram, descended upon Panjalamkurichi, He ordered the surprised garrison to surrender, but the latter refused. As it was essential to capture the fort before Kattabomman hurried back from Chokkampatti for its defence, the army commenced a siege with expedition. The rebels kept up a well directed and constant fire. The besieging forces destroyed a strong hedge which surrounded the fort, battered down a part of the wall and in a bright moon shine advanced steadily to the breach. Yet, they found it impossible to reach the

\(^{22}\) Memoir of Madura and Dindigul, Vol.3, p.9.
summit of the walls, as the rebels continued their resistance with determination. After considerable slaughter on both sides, the British troops withdrew from the venture. As the fort appeared insecure, the troops of the poligar sallied out and fled. On the 14th of August 1783 Fullarton occupied the fort. He sought to bring the poligar to an equitable settlement, but did not succeed. On the other hand the rebel chief with his troops joined Varaguna, the poligar of Sivagiri.23

In alliance with Kattabomman, Varaguna, refused payment of tribute and made preparations for resistance in his woods. Therefore, the British troops took possession of the town of Sivagiri and carried the operations to the hills. The rebels disputed every step, but unable to hold the ground before superior fire power, retreated to the recesses of the mountains. Fullarton captured a strong post, manned by the poligars' troops and employed pioneers to cut a road through the inaccessible wood. A road three miles long having been completed, the forces reached the foot of the hills occupied by the poligar. The rebels thereupon climbed up the lofty heights of the perpendicular cliffs and took their stand. Because of insurmountable obstacles, the British forces saw their task unattainable. At this juncture, the poligar of Chokkampatti, taking service with the Company's troops, discovered a secret path, reached the summit of the hills and surprised the rebel-posts.

The rebels fled in panic to different directions.24 The dispersal of the rebels of Sivagiri completed the victory won at Panjalamkurichi, for the two principal palayams fell under the control of the Company.

After establishing a few posts in Sivagiri, Fullarton encamped at Srivilliputtur, ready to make an accommodation with the poligars. The rebels procrastinated, but offered no terms for a peaceful settlement. However, threatened with a renewal of hostilities, Kattabomman and Varaguna paid 30,000 chakrams each in lieu of all the previous claims that the Company had and gave bonds for 15,000 pagodas each as condition for the restitution of their forts.25 In the province of Tiruchirapalli Eyles Irwin, the Superintendent of Revenue, strengthened the Company’s administration. As the chiefs of Wodayarpalayam and Ariyalur did not pay the rent, he imprisoned the chiefs and established the direct administration of the Company.26 Despite these, no attempt was made either to disarm the poligars or to curtail their rights. The Company in fact sought to combine its policy of coercion with that of conciliation.27


   A Pagoda was exchanged for 3 rupees and a rupee for 88 chakrams.


The Carnatic Treaty of 1787

Concerned at the attempts made by the Company to occupy the feudal estates and to strengthen its influence, the Nawab set himself vigorously at work for the revovation of the assignment. In January 1783 he obtained an order from Governor General Warren Hastings for the restoration of the revenue administration. The Board of control, which was constituted under the Pitt’s India Act of 1784, too decided in favour of the Nawab’s demand. It directed the Madras Council to make a settlement with the Nawab providing for the liquidation of his debts, which he owed to the Company or guaranteed by it and to surrender the assignment. Accordingly in June 1785 the Nawab entered into a settlement, regaining control of this revenues. Thus he regained his rights before the lapse of the full term of five years for which he made the assignment.

As a condition for the restoration of the revenue administration, the Nawab was required to enter into a settlement in 1785 and it was formed into a regular treaty in 1787. This treaty signed by Mohammad Ali and Governor Sir Archibald Campbell (1786-1789) on the 24th February 1787, consisted of Articles. The Treaty of 1787 formulated the principle of joint defence for the Coast and increased the Nawab’s contribution for the same from four lakhs of pagodas to nine lakhs of star pagodas. In effect the Carnatic was reduced to the status of a

protectorate under the guise of a joint system of defence. The Company gained the right to garrison the forts and to demolish them if so deemed essential. The English presided over the defence system and undertook to support the stability of the Nawab’s administration as in Lord Wellesley’s Subsidiary System.\textsuperscript{29} Nothing in the treaty prevented the Nawab from maintaining an army, but the crushing financial burden that was imposed upon him by way of contribution rendered it impossible.\textsuperscript{30} In the event of war the Nawab was forced to apply four-fifths of his revenues for the conduct of war and to meet $\frac{25}{51}$ parts of the total war expenditure, but the treaty made no provision for the division of the spoils. If the enemy won the conflict he might lose his rights over his territory and if he won, the Company might appropriate all the gains for itself. The guarantee of military support to the Nawab’s government served as an inducement to depend upon the English for the coercion of the feudal forces and to neglect the administration. The steady deterioration in the administration, which was already corrupt, started a chain process in the decline of the revenue and increase of debt. This in turn

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., Vol.V., no.XLI.

\textsuperscript{30}According to the terms of the Treaty, the Nawab contributed every Year 12 lakhs of pagodas towards the liquidation of his dept. and 9 lakhs of star pagodas as his contribution to “current charges” while his total revenue was calculated according to Rajah Amir Singh’s estimate - which does not appear very accurate - at 23 lakhs of star pagodas. Military Country Correspondence, Fort St.George, 17 September 1792, vol.43, pp.264-267.
created a vicious circle in which the Wallajahs played into the hands of the
Company. There followed more of British intervention in Nawab’s administration.

Assumption and Treaty of 1792

In 1790 the English East India Company assumed the revenue administration of the Carnatic and Thanjavur, despite the opposition of the rulers. In April 1790 Tipu Sultan attacked the lines of Travancore, an ally of the Company, and there followed the outbreak of the Third Mysore War (1790-1792). In consequence Lord Cornwallis, the Governor General (1786-1793) formed a triple alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam against Mysore and mobilised forces. Tipu Sultan advanced along the bank of the river Kaveri, laid waste Srirangam and marched to Thanjavur. However, as the forces of the coalition threatened Mysore, he withdrew from the Carnatic. Since then the war was confined largely to the territories of Mysore, yet the Company used it as an opportunity to invoke the emergency clauses, included in the Treaty of 1787. Further, the resources of the Company, though supplemented by payment of four-fifths of the revenue of the Carnatic and Thanjavur appeared inadequate to support the expensive military operations.\(^{31}\)

There were other causes too. Lulled into a state of security, granted by the Treaty of 1787, the Nawab attempted no improvement of his administration. The tyranny of his amuldars assumed region and the ryots groaning under the cruel oppression, neglected cultivation, leading to the fall of revenue and default in the payments to the English. Such a trend needed to be corrected. In the mean time no good relations existed between the Company and Amir Singh the Rajah of Tanjore. The Rajah pleaded his inability to pay his contributions, as required under the Treaty of 1787 and three lakhs of pagodas accumulated as arrears. The Madras Council was not prepared to compromise with any default in payment during the war time.32

Mohammad Ali and Amir Singh opposed the assumption of their revenues. Yet the Company disregarded their opposition and proceeded to issue a proclamation, assuming the revenue of the Carnatic in August and that of Thanjavur in September 1790 by a proclamation. The Madras Council guaranteed the right of the rulers to inspect revenue accounts. At the same time it promised payment of one to the respective rulers as provided in the treaties.33


On an assessment of this development it cannot be denied that the Company exceeded the authority acquired by it under the treaties of 1787, for they conferred upon it no such rights for assumption. Considering its own financial embarrassment, caused by the war with Mysore, it proceeded ahead with wholesale assumption without establishing that the rulers diverted or secreted four-fifths of their revenue for purposes other than war. It was true that their contributions fell in arrears, but the remedy prescribed by the treaties was the assumption of the revenue of such districts as were needed for the realisation of the arrears. The Madras council charged the Nawab and the Rajah of oppression; but by refusing financial relief, it failed to do what it could do to correct such a situation. In fact, the shortage of time for the recovery of the country from the devastating blow inflicted by the Second Mysore War, and the failure of rulers to reorganise the administration threw the public finances into disorder.34

The Madras Council created the board of Assumed Revenue for the management of revenue and to exercise supervision over collections. It entertained in its service the revenue - servants of the Nawab and of the Rajah and appointed collectors for the enforcement of the collections.35 The Board divided the districts

34. Military Country Correspondence, Fort St.George, 3 February 1793, Vol.44, pp.67-68.

into allotments and farmed them out for one year period with the object of minimising the risk of renractions and avasion. At the same time it sought to take precaution against entrusting the estates with over grown renters, who had for long excelled themselves in the art of exaction.\textsuperscript{36} In Thanjavur the Company's two Collectors setup a court of justice and functioned jointly in deciding cases of property. In an attempt to win over the attachment of the auxiliary powers to its side, it reduced the tribute fixed for Ramnad from 3,00,000 rupees to 2,20,000 and that settled for Sivaganga from a similar sum to Rs.1,75,000.\textsuperscript{37}

During the war, when the English withdraw their forces from the far south for moving them against Mysore, the poligars withheld payments and make incursions into the circar territories. Still Lord Cornwallis felt that seldom the poligars would commit acts of violence without provocation. At his instructions Benjamin Torin, the Company's Collector of Assumed Revenue, made an enquiry to ascertain whether the poligars has any just cause of complaint. The Collector attributed the disturbance to their turbulent disposition. Still, the Madras Council decided to treat them with forbearance, as the forces in the mean time were employed against Mysore. Infact unfamiliarity with local situation made Torin to

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., 8 November 1791, Vol.154, p.5678.

\textsuperscript{37}Madras Council, 16 January 1792, Political Despatches to England, Vol.2, p.32.
depend upon the views of officials for giving a report about the poligars. 38

The Board Assumed Revenue experienced serious difficulties in the administration. At the orders of Mohammad Ali, his amuldars made a show of disobedience to the Company’s authority by denying access to revenue - accounts. The temporary nature of the management, the pressing necessity of raising revenue and the absence of the detailed knowledge of local customs prevented the Board from reorganising the method of collection, separating revenue from the other branches of public activity, protecting the ryots against oppression, improving irrigation facilities and establishing direct contact with the inhabitants. In consequence it had to adjust with the prevailing system, improving where it could do without encountering complications.39 Besides, while it had to content itself with the exercise of general supervision, it was compelled to grant vast discretion to the persons on the field.40

Nevertheless, supported by the resources of the Tamil Country the British found it possible to win the war. The forces marched on Mysore from different directions. They occupied Dindigul, Erode and Satyamangalam - the key posts of Mysore. In February 1792 Lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the

38.Ibid., p.4
operations supported by the Marathas and the Nizam's army, he captured Bangalore and threatened Srirangapatnam, the capital. Tipu Sultan used for peace and on the 19th of March 1792, he signed a treaty surrendering half of his territories to the victorious powers. The English, as their share of the spoils of war, acquired possession of Dindigul, Baramahal, Coorg and Malabar, while the Nizam and the Marathas annexed the territory extending from river Krishna to beyond river Pennar and that between the Krishna and the Wardha respectively. These gains gave a defensible barrier to the British territories on the east coast, besides the possession of an extensive region. But neither did the Nawab nor did the Rajah, inspite of their contributions to military expenses and operations gain anything. Infact, the resources of the Carnatic and of Thanjavur contributed to the expansion of the British Empire.

The English gave up the administration of assumed revenues of the Carnatic and of Thanjavur in 1792, but occupied a recognised position of authority under the treaties signed in 1792. The Carnatic Treaty of 1792 combined in itself the fundamental principles enshrined in a preliminary settlement and the lessons gained by the English through the assumption, less to the advantage of the Nawab and more to that of the Company. The quantum of the Nawab’s annual payments was reduced from 21 lakhs of pagodas to 15,21,105 star pagodas.\footnote{While a pagoda, a gold coin, was exchanged for threee rupees, a star pagoda for three and a half rupees.}

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This gave a limited relief to the over burdened resources of the Carnatic. But the new treaty made the punctuality of payments rigorous, for in case of a second default the assumed territories would remain in the permanent possession of the Company while not provision was made to grant any concession during a calamity, Besides, the treaty placed restrictions upon assignment of lands to private creditors. In consequence exaction was continued. If exaction excited reaction, the Nawab could obtain military aid, but his apparent gains would be neutralised by the requirement to pay expenses of military campaigns. On the other hand, if the English refused support to the collection of revenue, the income would sink and the helpless sovereign could invoke no clause of the treaty for his support, as there was no provision to deal with the Company's refusal of support. In fact of military aid could strain the Nawab's finances and refusal could impede collection. Thus the treaty was a double-edged weapon, which could be adroitly wielded in either direction, in consequence of which the Nawab might lose his territory. The English gained other advantages too. While the Treaty of 1787 required the Company to furnish to the Nawab an annual report on military establishments, the Treaty of 1792 granted to it exclusive military authority. The Treaty of 1787 provided for the appointment of receivers, in times of war for the collection of four-fifths of the revenue from the Nawab's servants, if such revenue were diverted for purposes other than war. But the Treaty of 1792 confirmed the procedure adopted during the Third Mysore War, for the Company could assume the revenue while the
sovereign was to get one-fifth of it. In addition the Nawab lost his control over his foreign policy and his right to collect revenue from the poligars.\textsuperscript{42} These factors helped the English to suppress the feudal powers in the name of the Nawab.

The Madras Council signed a treaty running largely along the lines of the Carnatic Treaty of 1792 with Thanjavur in 1793. In September 1792 Sir Charles Oakeley (1792-1794) the Governor of Fort St.George, announced the Company's decision to abolish the Tanjore Treaty of 1787 and to settle another. The Madras Council, without consulting the Rajah, prepared a draft-treaty and sent it to Rajah Amir Singh for his signature. As the proposed settlement envisaged no substantial relief to his finances, Amir Singh conveyed his anxiety that it would make the country bankrupt. The Madras Council, on the other hand, refused to make any concession and asserted that the Rajah could fulfil the conditions entered into the draft treaty by a prudent management of public affairs.\textsuperscript{43} Thereupon the Rajah requested Lord Cornwallis to restore the country to him on the ground that the Mysore War ended. But Lord Cornwallis directed him to comply with the proposed terms before the surrender of assumption could be made.

\textsuperscript{42} Military Country Correspondence, Fort St.George, 17 September 1792, Vol.43, pp.265-267.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 11 October 1792, Vol.43, p.315.
In consequence, the helpless Amir Singh anxious to regain possession of his country, gave his assent. Still, the Madras Council, annoyed at the hesitation of the Rajah, declared that until his temper and conduct had changed to such an extent as to afford a reasonable ground of hope that “the interests of the English and the property of the people” would not suffer by a restoration, he could not expect to regain the control of the country. The state therefore, continued under British administration for six months after the Rajah gave his assent to the treaty. On the 12th of July 1793 the Madras Council restored administration of the country to the Rajah, on the suggestion of the Bengal Council that, “it would be more suitable to our national character to hazard an error on the side of lenity than to expose ourselves to the imputation of having treated him (Amir Singh) with excessive rigour”. The Country thus utilised the surrender of ‘assumption’ for the enforcement of an unilaterally formulated treaty on the state. Despite the dissatisfaction of Amir Singh with the terms of the Treaty of 1792, the new settlement granted him a limited relief. The total annual payment to the Company was brought down from seven lakhs of pagodas to 5,13,333 pagodas, though this was subject to change as years passed by. Besides, in times of war when the state

44. Ibid., 7 October 1795, Vol.46, p.125.


was in the possession of the Company, he was allowed to have one lakh of star pagodas in addition to one-fifth of the net revenue. However, the Company, as in the Carnatic Treaty of 1792, made the terms rigorous, obtained sole military control and the right to assume the revenues in times of war.

The two treaties were of significance as they imparted legal sanction to the encroachments made by the Company on the rights of the rulers since 1787. In fact they represented an acknowledgment of the superior status of the Company. The 'assignment' and the 'assumption' were two landmarks in the history of the British ascendancy in the Tamil Country. The settlement were of considerable advantage to the Company when it was engaged in major conflicts with other South Indian powers, especially Mysore and the Marathas. The apparently common defence system of the region as envisaged in the treaties served as an instrument to force the Nawab and the Rajah to furnish their resources for the support of large-scale military operations of the English, as and when they were required.