

# HISTORY OF MAURITIUS

(1507-1914)



BY S. B. DE BURGH-EDWARDES

F.R.G.S., F.R.C.I.

ILLUSTRATED

LONDON: EAST AND WEST, LTD.

THE HISTORY OF MAURITIUS



PAUL AND VIRGINIA

From an old drawing in the author's possession

THE  
HISTORY OF MAURITIUS  
(1507-1914)

BY

S. B. DE BURGH-EDWARDES

F.R.G.S., F.R.C.I.

MEMBER OF THE MAURITIUS HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE, OF THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, THE LOCAL BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION, ETC.  
SCOUTMASTER COMMANDING THE MAURITIUS BOY SCOUTS  
(DECEMBER, 1914)

*ILLUSTRATED*

LONDON  
EAST AND WEST LTD.  
3 VICTORIA STREET, S.W.

1921

*WORKS BY SAME AUTHOR*

---

L'HISTOIRE DE L'ÎLE MAURICE

(1507-1895)

Paris, 1910

WHAT IS SCOUTING?

WHAT DO BOY SCOUTS DO?

Mauritius, 1913

MAURITIUS BOY SCOUTS

RECORD OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS, 1912-1917

Mauritius, 1918

MAURITIUS BOY SCOUTS

RECORD OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS, 1918-1920

Mauritius, 1921

BOY SCOUTS MAURICIENS

SOUVENIRS DE LA VIE EN FAMILLE

Mauritius, 1921

GEOGRAPHIE ILLUSTRÉE

DE L'ÎLE MAURICE

Mauritius, 1921

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION  
TO  
LIEUT.-COLONEL L. S. AMERY, M.P.  
AS A HUMBLE TRIBUTE  
TO HIS WORK FOR THE BRITISH EMPIRE

## FOREWORD

DEAR READER,

This book was written by a youth of  
nineteen years.

Will you be kind in criticizing it ?

THE AUTHOR.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND - - - -	1
MAURITIUS UNDER THE PORTUGUESE AND SPANIARDS -	2
THE DUTCH TAKE POSSESSION OF MAURITIUS - -	3
THE DRONTE, OR DODO - - - -	4
MAURITIUS IN POSSESSION OF THE DUTCH - -	5
DUTCH SETTLEMENTS - - - -	7
THE FRENCH TAKE POSSESSION OF MAURITIUS - -	10
TRIALS OF SETTLEMENT (1715-1721) - - - -	11
"L'ILE DE FRANCE" UNDER THE FRENCH EAST INDIES COMPANY (1721-1767) - - - -	11
L'ILE DE FRANCE UNDER THE KING'S GOVERNMENT -	21
THE BATTLE OF L'ILE DE LA PASSE - - - -	43
THE CAPTURE OF L'ILE DE FRANCE BY THE ENGLISH (29TH NOVEMBER TO 3RD DECEMBER, 1810) - -	50
MAURITIUS UNDER BRITISH GOVERNMENT - - -	53
SIR JOHN POPE HENNESSY - - - -	89
SIR CHARLES CAMERON LEES - - - -	94
SIR HUBERT JERNINGHAM - - - -	94
SIR CHARLES BRUCE - - - -	97
SIR CAVENDISH BOYLE - - - -	100
SIR JOHN CHANCELLOR - - - -	106



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
PAUL AND VIRGINIA . . . . .	4
THE DRONTE, OR DODO . . . . .	8
PLAN OF WARWICK HAVEN . . . . .	10
MAP OF MAURITIUS UNDER THE DUTCH . . . . .	20
GOVERNOR LABOURDONNAIS VISITING PAUL AND VIRGINIA . . . . .	30
THE DEPARTURE OF VIRGINIA FOR FRANCE . . . . .	34
GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN OLDEN TIMES . . . . .	40
MAP OF MAURITIUS UNDER THE FRENCH: MILITARY OPERATIONS . . . . .	44
PLAN OF NAVAL ENGAGEMENT OFF L'ILE DE LA PASSE . . . . .	46
THE NAVAL ENGAGEMENT . . . . .	48
GENERAL DECAEN . . . . .	48
CAPTAIN DUPERRÉ . . . . .	48
CAPTAIN WILLOUGHBY . . . . .	48
CAPTAIN BOUVET . . . . .	50
THE CAPTURE OF THE ISLAND: BRITISH FORCES LANDING SKIRMISH BETWEEN BRITISH AND FRANCO-MAURITIAN TROOPS . . . . .	58
THE MARKET OF PORT LOUIS IN OLDEN TIMES . . . . .	64
THE DEATH OF VIRGINIA . . . . .	64

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
PAUL PRAYING ON VIRGINIA'S TOMB - -	70
MAP OF MAURITIUS UNDER THE BRITISH - -	74
THE ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS, PAMPLEMOUSSES -	80
CUREPIPE - - - - -	84
THE COASTERS' WHARF, PORT LOUIS - -	90
RIVER LA CHAUX, MAHÉBOURG - - -	90

# HISTORY OF MAURITIUS

## THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND

MAURITIUS was well known to the Arabs who discovered it and the adjacent islands during their numerous trips across the Indian Ocean. They used different parts of the coast as hiding-places for their captures. It was only towards the year 1500 that they visited the whole island, and made sketches, no two of which, however, were alike, giving some idea of its situation and shape.

The date of the later discovery of Mauritius by the Portuguese has given rise to much controversy. Among the several theories advanced the following remains the most probable:

A fleet of fourteen Portuguese vessels, commanded by Tristan da Cunha and Alfonso d'Albuquerque, sent to Melinda, anchored off Mozambique early in November, 1506. Of these fourteen vessels, the names of seven only are known. These were the *San Iago*, the *Cirne*, the *Santo Antonio*, the *Santo Alfonso*, the *Santa Maria das Virtudes*, the *Santa Maria*, and the *Galegea*. Tristan da Cunha and Albuquerque sailed for Madagascar with a view of exploring it.

Diego Fernandez Pierera, the first pilot of the fleet, taking charge of the *Cirne*, desired to cruise farther in the Indian Ocean. He discovered Réunion on the

9th February (the anniversary of Saint Appolina), and called the island "Santa Appolina." He discovered Mauritius a few days later, and called it "Cirne," after the name of his vessel; and, later on, Rodrigues, which he called "Diego Fritz," after his own name.

The author of the book has succeeded in obtaining from a historian in Amsterdam a reproduction of an Arab sketch. It dates as far back as 1508, and was drawn by a geographer named *Ruych*. On this sketch, Madagascar is called *Comorocada*, Bourbon *Margabin*, Mauritius *Dinarobin*, and Rodrigues *Dinanora*. Notes written in Portuguese, and appearing to be very old, give for Margabin *Santa Apolina*, 9.ii.1507, and for Dinarobin *Ilha do Cirne*, 20.ii.1507, and under these notes *Pierera*.

This sketch, extremely old, tends to prove that Mauritius was well known to the Arabs, and that it was discovered by "Pierera" on the 20th February, 1507.

## MAURITIUS UNDER THE PORTUGUESE AND SPANIARDS

FOR about seventy-five years Mauritius was in the possession of the Portuguese, but they never attempted a settlement. At that time, being masters of the Indian Ocean, they were sure the island would not be taken from them, and directed their efforts towards their more important possessions. They contented themselves with ascertaining its geographical position, and leaving on shore deer, goats, monkeys, and pigs.

Subsequently Mauritius belonged to the Spaniards

for a few years. This nation also did not attempt a settlement. In 1598 they lost their Netherland provinces, and were obliged to abandon all their Indian trade to the Dutch.

### THE DUTCH TAKE POSSESSION OF MAURITIUS

ON the 1st May, 1598, a fleet of eight Dutch vessels, under the command of Admiral Cornelius Van Neck and Rear-Admiral Wybrandt Van Warwick, left Texel I. for Bantam, in the Dutch East Indies.

Soon after passing the Cape of Good Hope, on the 8th August, the fleet was separated by a severe cyclone. Three vessels—the *Mauritius*, the *Holland*, and the *OverYesel*—continued their journey under the command of Admiral Van Neck, while the five others—the *Amsterdam*, the *Zeeland*, the *Guelderland*, the *Utrecht*, and the *Viedland*—under the orders of Rear-Admiral Van Warwick, sailing eastward, sighted Mauritius in the afternoon of the 17th September. Two boats were sent to study the coast. Van Warwick anchored in the south-eastern bay on the 19th, and allowed everyone to land on the 20th. The Dutch greatly admired the dense forests, containing splendid palms, numerous ebony-trees, and a most luxuriant vegetation, including a great variety of ferns. The island was crowded with birds of all kinds and colours, which would come and eat from the sailors' hands. On the shore a hanging stage, the spar of a capstan, a big ship's yard, and a quantity of wax were found, evidently the remains of a vessel wrecked in the neighbourhood.

The sick were landed and soon recovered their health. The chaplain of the vessel celebrated a thanksgiving service. Parties of the crews were detailed to examine different places in the interior of the island, and it was ascertained that the place was uninhabited.

Van Warwick then took possession of the island for the Dutch, and named it "Mauritius" in honour of the Stadtholder of Holland, Prince Maurice of Nassau, and the bay in which they safely anchored "Warwick Haven."

A board bearing the arms of Holland, Zeeland, and Amsterdam, under which were cut the words "Christianos Reformados," was nailed to a tree. A plot of ground was cleared, in which fruit-trees, beans, and peas were planted, and the whole surrounded by a wooden palisade. Domestic animals of different kinds were left behind, when Van Warwick continued his cruise.

On the 2nd October, after making the necessary repairs to his vessels, he left Mauritius, delighted with his sojourn in the island, and sailed for Bantam.

### THE DRONTE, OR DODO

ONE afternoon some sailors, while on a trip inland, heard a noise much resembling the cackling of a goose. Going towards the direction of the noise, they soon discovered a clumsy bird about two feet high. Its body was devoid of elegance; it had a big head and a long, powerful beak; its wings were short; while its tail consisted of from three to five black-and-white curved feathers.



**THE DRONTE OR DODO**

**Drawn by the Author from an old painting at the Museum of Port Louis**

## MAURITIUS IN POSSESSION OF DUTCH 5

Its nourishment consisted of the seeds of wild trees and of the Pandanus (Vacoa). The "dodo," as the Dutch sailors called the bird—a slang term meaning "stupid, lazy"—was covered with ash-coloured feathers. It had ugly eyes, short legs, and pebbles were found in the bird's stomach.

Dodos were numerous in Mauritius when the island was discovered. They are said to have disappeared towards 1640, two years after the first Dutch settlement in the island. It seems probable that they were destroyed by pigs or the other domestic animals set free by the Dutch.

## MAURITIUS IN POSSESSION OF THE DUTCH

THE Dutch at first did not seem very anxious to attempt a settlement in Mauritius, though the island was visited very often and many reports sent to Europe on the importance of such an attempt.

On the 12th August, 1601, the island was visited by Admiral Hermauser, sent by the Dutch Cape Government to inquire into the commercial and military advantages of a permanent settlement. Hermauser landed at Morne Brabant and was surprised at meeting a Frenchman, Jacques Lebrun, who stated that he and a few companions had escaped from Malacca in an open boat. They had been miraculously thrown on this island. When he refused to continue the hazardous voyage to Europe he was abandoned and remained during twenty months the only inhabitant.

In January, 1606, Admirals Matelief and Van der



Hagen visited the island to report on the same matter.

In 1610 Pieter Both, appointed Governor-General of Batavia, was proceeding there with three vessels, when they were nearly destroyed by a terrible cyclone soon after passing the Cape of Good Hope in April. He managed, however, to call at Mauritius to have the vessels repaired. Some of the officers had brought their wives, and everyone was allowed to land. This was the first time women went on shore in Mauritius.

On the 24th March, 1613, the English captain, Castleton, of the *Pearl*, visited the island, which he called "England's Forest."

On the 10th January, 1615, Pieter Both, on his way home, was caught by a violent cyclone and his vessel wrecked a few miles off Mauritius, where he intended to land again. His body was picked up in Tombeau Bay, and buried on the shore. One of the vessels, however, managed to reach Holland.

On the 24th January, 1617, the body of the great sailor Jacques LeMaire, who had sailed on his vessel, *La Concorde*, for a voyage of circumnavigation, was landed and buried in Mauritius by Captain Shouten, of the *Horne*, which was accompanying the *Concorde*.

On the 19th April of the same year, Van der Brock called at Mauritius, and took on board an important cargo of ebony.

In 1625, 1630, and 1633 further cargoes of ebony were taken from Mauritius for the Société de l'Orient formed by Frenchmen of Dieppe. On the last cargo, however, no great profit was made, and this trade was finally abandoned.

## DUTCH SETTLEMENTS

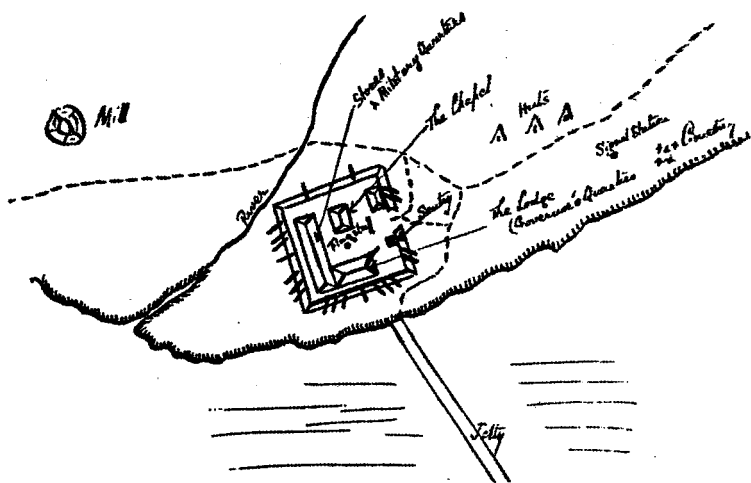
CORNELIUS SIMONZ GOOYER landed on the coast of Warwick Haven (Old Grand Port) on the 7th May, 1638. The vessels *Maen* and *Swal*, forming the expedition, landed a Governor, a doctor, a priest, an officer, ten soldiers, and eleven men. Ten slaves also formed part of the population of the settlement. Fowls, goats, deer, and pigs were found to be numerous in the island.

A residence for the Governor, a fort, a military bungalow, and three small huts formed the small village. The main occupation consisted in preparing shipments of wood, which a vessel would take to Holland once a year.

Gooyer was replaced in October, 1639, when Adrian Van der Stel landed with another forty persons, including women. On the 6th February, 1644, a violent cyclone destroyed the small village and the plantations. Van der Stel was relieved in May, 1645, by Van der Maartzen, who found the colonists without any discipline or organisation. The inhabitants were lazy and very quarrelsome. He remedied this, built good quarters, and encouraged cultivation. Before very long, however, tired and sick, he asked to be relieved. He was replaced in April, 1648, by Reynier Pory, who was very enterprising. Pory introduced the sugarcane, built new huts, and settled some of the inhabitants on the shores of the North-West Haven. Pory died in January, 1650, and Maximilian de Jongh was appointed Governor. In 1654 the population of the island was reduced to forty persons, and de Jongh,

discouraged, resigned, and was replaced by Abraham Evertz. The Dutch Government now directed all their energies to their Cape Settlement, and in 1657 decided to abandon Mauritius; in July, 1658, the remnants of the population were deported to the Cape.

A second attempt at settlement was made in June, 1660, when Adriaan Neewland landed at Warwick Haven, with a secretary and twelve men. The Governor fell ill and died, and the rest of the population migrated to the forest. A vessel was sent to deal with them, and they were brought back to the Cape and severely punished. In May, 1664, Dirk Smient landed with thirty-two white men and twelve slaves, with orders to resume the wood trade. Of enterprising character, he soon rebuilt the small town, but he got into trouble with the Dutch Government. He was recalled and replaced in December, 1668, by Frederic Wreeden, a man of very bad character, and a heavy drinker. He was drowned in February, 1672. Hubert Hugo, appointed Governor towards the end of 1671, landed at Mauritius on the 13th February, 1673, with sixty white men, eighteen women, and thirty-five slaves he had brought from Madagascar. Active and intelligent, he would have done much for the island, had he succeeded in obtaining the support of his Government. He was successful in all his new enterprises, and the island was entering on an era of prosperity, when he discovered that he was spied upon. He insisted on leaving the island, and was replaced in October, 1677, by Isaac Lamotius. Like his predecessor, Lamotius was very intelligent and enterprising, and did everything to encourage cultivation.



PLAN OF WARWICK HAVEN, 1695

Some inhabitants settled at Rivière Noire, and at Flacq, where a nursery garden—"The Royal Garden"—was created, in which many European trees were cultivated. The sugar-cane, already introduced, was cultivated on a larger scale. Two brothers Wilhem settled in the Central Plains, where they installed a small mill.

Lamotius was relieved on the 22nd October, 1692, by Roelef Diodadi, a clever but cruel man. He inflicted such harsh treatment that many of the slaves ran away into the forests. On the 9th February, 1694, the fort and nearly all the buildings, made of wood and covered with branches, were burnt down by the slaves. Four of them were caught and burnt alive. The fort and the buildings were rebuilt, in 1695, in stone, and the fort was armed with twenty guns.

Leguat, a Frenchman, and a few companions who had been abandoned at Rodrigues and had sailed for Mauritius in a small, hastily constructed boat, landed on the 26th May, 1693. They were bringing with them a few pieces of amber, collected at Rodrigues. Diodadi at once seized the amber and had them sent to Ile Marianne, a rock facing Old Grand Port, where they were kept in close confinement for three years. According to Leguat, in his story of his travels, the island was a thick, continuous forest in which lived troops of wild horses (which the inhabitants would occasionally kill to feed their dogs), deer, and goats in great numbers. Wild pigs were seen in hundreds, chiefly in the southern part of the island, apes were numerous, and dozens of turtles were found all round the coast.

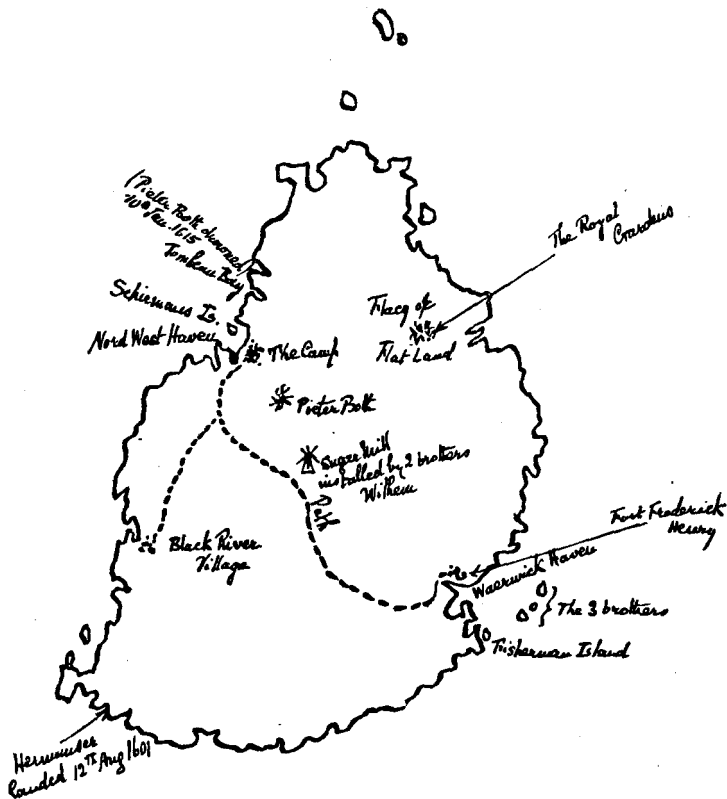
In 1702 a violent cyclone destroyed all the planta-

tions. The Governor, whose health had been failing for some time, asked to be relieved. He left the island on the 25th September, 1703, leaving the government to his secretary, Van der Veldt, a very active man. The colony was prospering, and the inhabitants, numbering about 400, were all delighted.

From 1706, however, the island suffered terribly from a succession of violent cyclones and floods. Visits of pirates became numerous, while the maroon slaves were constantly setting fire to the buildings and plantations. The population got discouraged and disorganised. The Dutch Government decided to abandon the island. This was completed in February, 1710, when all the settlers, together with the few soldiers and their followers, were removed to the more prosperous colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

### THE FRENCH TAKE POSSESSION OF MAURITIUS

In the early days of 1715 Guillaume Dufresne, captain of *Le Chasseur*, cruising in the Red Sea, received instructions from the King of France, Louis XV., to take possession of Mauritius. Dufresne landed with his followers at Port North-West on the 20th September, greatly impressed by the charm of the island, with its dense forests of big trees and rare ferns, in which dwelt a great variety of most beautiful birds. After ascertaining that the island was uninhabited, as had been reported to him, Dufresne took possession of it. A large white flag was hoisted on a high mast,



MAURITIUS UNDER THE DUTCH (1638-1710)

L'ILE DE FRANCE UNDER FRENCH E.I.C. 11  
an artillery salvo fired, and the island solemnly named  
" Ile de France." He departed a week later, leaving  
no one behind him.

#### TRIALS OF SETTLEMENT (1715-1721)

THE Governor of Bourbon tried on three occasions to  
send a few families to Mauritius to settle, but these  
attempts at settlement were never successful.

#### " L'ILE DE FRANCE " UNDER THE FRENCH EAST INDIES COMPANY (1721-1767)

IN April, 1721, Louis XV. requested the French East  
Indies Company, just formed, to undertake a settle-  
ment in Mauritius. On the 23rd September, 1721,  
le Chevalier Jean Baptiste Garnier du Fougeray,  
captain of *Le Triton* of St. Malo, landed at Port  
North-West and found the island uninhabited. He  
again took possession of it. A high mast was erected  
and a large white flag bearing a fleur-de-lys hoisted.  
Near to this a great cross was placed, on which was  
written in Latin:

" Long live Louis XV., King of France and of  
Navarre. May he live for ever.

" He who gave instructions to add this Isle to His  
Dominions and to call it ' Ile de France.'

" It is in honour of this Great Prince that the Royal  
Ensign has been hoisted by Jean Baptiste du Fougeray,  
Captain of *Le Triton* and a native of the town of St.  
Malo, who landed in this place on the 23rd September,



1721, and left on the 3rd November of the same year, to return, with God's help, to France."

On the 1st December, 1721, Mr. Duronguet le Toullec, Major at Bourbon, provisionally appointed Governor of l'Île de France, landed there with fifteen men, a priest, and a doctor, all from Bourbon.

They settled at Port South-East, where they had landed.

In January, 1722, Mr. de Nyon, Colonel and Engineer, Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, who had been appointed Governor of l'Île de France by the King in April, 1721, landed at Port South-East with 210 soldiers, 140 Frenchmen (mostly engineers, ex-soldiers, and sailors), 40 women, 2 priests, and 2 brothers, all of St. Malo, and 30 slaves.

On his arrival, Mr. de Nyon had a thanksgiving service celebrated on the shore. He established himself at Port South-East, where a small village was erected near the ruins of the Dutch buildings, and called Port Bourbon.

Very enterprising and painstaking, Mr. de Nyon encouraged cultivation. He introduced Moka coffee, which was quite a success on a certain plain of the island which still retains this name. Some families settled at the northern port, which was called Port North-West. Concessions of large plots of ground were readily granted to the new colonists, the main condition being that they had to follow the Governor's instructions as to what they would grow on the land. More slaves were procured from Madagascar, and soon plantations of all kinds turned the place into quite a promising little colony. Vessels to and from India would call on their way, and their requirements would always

be provided, as the island had great resources as regards food.

Mr. de Nyon appointed a *Conseil National*, composed of six notables of the island. This was a kind of Court of Justice, and depended on the " *Conseil Supérieur* " of Bourbon.

On the 23rd and 24th June, 1722, rain fell very heavily without stopping, damaging the huts and the plantations. Brother Adam, a great botanist brought by Mr. de Nyon, was found drowned on the 25th. Exceedingly charitable and fond of cultivating the land, the Governor had placed him in charge of the cultivations. He was much beloved by all, and his death deeply moved the small colony.

In December, 1723, on the King's order, a *Conseil Provincial*, composed of three judges in civil matters and five for criminal ones, was appointed. Appeals from the decisions of this Court were allowed before the *Conseil Supérieur* of Bourbon.

On the 23rd a terrible cyclone destroyed all the plantations, and by February, 1724, the population, was on the verge of starvation. Mr. de Nyon summoned a meeting of the principal inhabitants on the 10th February, 1724, and the captain of an English vessel anchored in Port Bourbon was asked to go to Madagascar to fetch food. The captain agreed and sailed under the French flag.

On the 24th March, black maroons compelled the small military garrison of Savanne to retire.

The food trouble was much relieved in May by the return of the vessel sent to Madagascar.

On the 17th January, 1727, Mr. Dumas was appointed Governor-General of Bourbon and l'Ile de France, and

had to pass six months alternately in each colony. He chose Bourbon for his residence, and only landed at l'Ile de France on the 23rd August. The system did not continue long. It was soon decided to give l'Ile de France a Governor of its own. On the 26th October, 1728, Mr. de Maupin was appointed Governor, and landed on the 31st August, 1729. Very active and enterprising, he set himself at work soon after his arrival. The forts commenced under Mr. de Nyon were completed, except as regards the one at Port North-West, for which a new plan had to be made. On account of the prevailing winds, which were unfavourable to vessels leaving the harbour, Mr. de Maupin transferred the capital of the island to Port North-West.

On the 4th February, 1731, a cyclone of extraordinary violence, followed by three days' heavy rains, damaged all the buildings and destroyed the plantations. The Archives offices, which were still at Port Bourbon, were brought down and many old documents spoilt by water.

On the 31st May, 1732, Mr. de Cossigny arrived. He had been sent to report on the resources and the utility of l'Ile de France. He sent such a favourable report that the Company decided that every effort should be made to give l'Ile de France the importance it would acquire under good administration.

Bertrand François Mahé, Lord Labourdonnais, Officer of the King's Vessels, Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, appointed Governor-General of l'Ile de France and Bourbon, landed at the former on the 5th June, 1735. Labourdonnais is the real founder of l'Ile de France. He found the

island without commerce, the inhabitants discouraged and constantly fighting the maroons. Exceedingly intelligent, active, and persevering, he decided to change everything. Port North-West was proclaimed the capital of the island under the name of *Port Louis*. A fine harbour and a model village were created. He supervised in person the construction of docks, military bungalows, a good hospital, stores, offices, gardens, etc., and the repairing of batteries and the ships in harbour. Government House was built on his plan. The inhabitants of Port Louis were provided with excellent drinking-water from Grand River North-West, brought to the capital by a fine aqueduct, two miles long, built on the Governor's plan. He encouraged cultivation, which was considerably extended. Labourdonnais introduced manioc from Brazil. Fruit-trees, cotton, indigo, maize, vegetables, etc., were planted on a large scale. In 1742 l'Île de France was making excellent bread from wheat grown in the island. Mr. de Villebague built a mill near Port Louis. The first sugars made were dark and paste-like. An excellent liquor was obtained and was much appreciated by the inhabitants.

Two thousand five hundred persons from Bourbon settled in Mauritius, where some 100 new houses were built. Roads were started, and many small crafts were built to traffic round the coast. Labourdonnais began building a fleet of big vessels from wood cut in the island, and armed these vessels. On June 5, 1737, he established a *Conseil Supérieur*; the Government was reorganised, and the maroons captured. In March and April 1738, Labourdonnais lost two children, and on the 8th May his beloved wife.

These deaths affected him very much. In December, 1739, he went home on leave to France, and was replaced by Mr. Didier de St. Martin, President of the Conseil Supérieur of l'Ile de France, during his absence. Instead of meeting with gratitude from his Company, Labourdonnais found the Directors very ill-disposed towards him. Grave accusations had been received on his doings from people jealous of his genius. He fought them out and apparently convinced his Company of his innocence. On the 14th August, 1741, he was back in l'Ile de France.

In 1742 Labourdonnais proceeded to India, in command of his fleet, and relieved Mahé on the Malabar coast, besieged by the Indians. On his return to l'Ile de France, he was improving the fortifications and repairing his important fleet, when he received the order to disarm and send his vessels to France.

In January, 1743, Captain Picault of the *Elizabeth* took possession of the Seychelles Islands. The French flag was hoisted on the principal island, which was called "Mahé," in honour of Labourdonnais.

During this year occurred the adventure of the young French officer, Mr. Grenville de Ferval, who was visiting Madagascar. Betsy, daughter of the King of "Foulpoint," warned the young officer of her father's intention to have him murdered. She arranged to save his life. In return Grenville married Betsy, and both returned to l'Ile de France. Later, the King of Foulpoint died. Betsy abandoned her rights to the throne to remain with her husband. She then presented her possessions to the French Government.

At 3 a.m. on August 18, 1744, the *St. Gérard*, commanded by De Lamarre, coming from France with 120

passengers, was wrecked off l'Ile d'Ambre, at the north-east of l'Ile de France. Only nine persons were able to escape the disaster. The island suffered from the loss of a few notable passengers, and also on account of the important cargo. The devotion of the officers of the vessel in saving the passengers, and particularly two young girls, was related long after to Bernardin de St. Pierre. This inspired the great writer when he wrote his admirable work *Paul and Virginia*.

War being declared between France and England, Labourdonnais sailed for India on the 23rd March, 1746, leaving the government for the second time in the hands of Mr. Didier de St. Martin, who was second in command and First Conseiller to the Conseil Supérieur of l'Ile de France.

Labourdonnais sailed for India in command of a fine fleet, manned and equipped principally from the resources of l'Ile de France. Off the Coromandel coast he had an engagement with the English fleet under Admiral Prayton. He stopped at Pondichéry. It was agreed between Dupleix and Labourdonnais that Madras should be besieged by the latter, but having received orders from France not to keep any place he might capture, soon after the capitulation of Madras, Labourdonnais agreed to return it, provided a heavy ransom was paid. Dupleix got wild over this, as he was anxious to keep the town and have it strongly fortified. Dupleix at once accused Labourdonnais of high treason, and ordered him back to l'Ile de France. On his arrival there on the 7th December, Labourdonnais learnt from Mr. Barthelmy David, who had assumed the government from the 8th October, that he had arrived with orders to have him arrested and sent to France as

a prisoner. However, after a most careful inquiry, Mr. David failed to find any really serious charge against the behaviour of Labourdonnais. Instead of having him arrested, he gave him the command of his fleet, and ordered him to leave for France. Labourdonnais left on the 5th March, 1747.

On his way to France, Labourdonnais' vessel was separated from the others by a gale; and finally he himself was captured by the English and brought to London. There he was treated with the highest consideration and given his liberty. On reaching Paris in February, 1748, he was at once arrested and sent to the Bastille, where he was kept prisoner for three years and finally set free, to die three years later from the moral and physical suffering of this most unjust treatment.

During the administration of Mr. Barthelmy David, which lasted till 1753, nothing very important occurred. A severe cyclone visited the island in December, 1746. In March, 1748, Admiral Boscawen, in command of twenty-eight English vessels, made an attempt to land troops at Petite Rivière. The small garrison of l'Île de France proceeded with a gun to the place where the landing was expected. Bugle-calls and the noise of a few drums completely deceived Admiral Boscawen, who thought the resistance stronger than it was. He abandoned his idea and sailed for India.

The residence of the Governor, which was at Montplaisir and had been built by Labourdonnais, was abandoned in 1749. Mr. David, somewhat in love with a young lady of Moka, had a fine building erected there. This he called *Le Réduit* and, according to him, such a building was necessary as a sheltering-

L'ILE DE FRANCE UNDER FRENCH E.I.C. 19  
place for the ladies of the island, in case of an attack.  
"Le Réduit" was soon provided with charming  
gardens.

Mr. David asked for leave, and sailed for France  
on the 10th February, 1753. He was replaced by his  
brother-in-law, Mr. Lozier Bouvet, a great sailor who  
did much to encourage cultivation.

On the 18th April, 1753, the island was visited by  
Abbé de la Caille, who, together with Mr. d'Après  
de Manneville, the celebrated hydrographer, drew  
up the first map of the Colony. They remained nine  
months at l'Ile de France, and determined the heights  
of all its mountains, the length of the rivers, and other  
details.

In February, 1754, an epidemic of smallpox caused  
numerous deaths. In March the island was visited  
by a violent cyclone, which, however, carried away  
the epidemic.

During his administration Mr. Bouvet went to India  
on different occasions to give help there, as the French  
were still fighting the English.

On the 3rd January, 1756, Mr. René Magon  
relieved Mr. Bouvet. Like his predecessor, Mr. Magon  
did everything to encourage agriculture. He allowed  
the inhabitants to grow whatever they liked on their  
concessions. Large herds of cattle were constantly  
introduced from Madagascar, and sold at a low price  
and on credit to the inhabitants. Mr. Magon created  
a salt-pan, at Caudan, and encouraged the foundry of  
Messrs. Hermans and de Rostaing, situated at Montagne  
Longue, where iron had been discovered in the time  
of Labourdonnais. Villebague Sugar Factory became  
a fine mill. *Le Réduit* was enlarged and embellished.



Mr. Magon gave much help to the French expedition to India under Admiral Count d' Arché and Général Lally.

The Governor sent an expedition to occupy the Seychelles Islands, which had been taken under Labourdonnais in January, 1743. Mr. Nicolas de Morphey, captain of *Le Cerf*, landed at the port of Mahé, on the 6th September, 1756, and hoisted the French flag.

On the 8th November, 1759, Mr. Marie Desforges Boucher relieved Mr. Magon, who had applied for leave to proceed to France. Though anxious to continue the enterprises started by his active predecessor, Mr. Boucher could rely on no help from the East India Company, whose affairs and finances were now in a most deplorable state. On the 28th January, 1760, a terrible cyclone caused much damage and destroyed many vessels in the harbour. On August 11, 1762, the Conseil Supérieur, at a long sitting, prepared new regulations for the police of the island, divided the island into eight districts, and appointed "Commandants de Quartier," who, with the help of two or three inhabitants, formed in each district a small "municipality." The French possessions in India had been ruined by the numerous fights against the English, and no help could be given to l' Ile de France. Goods received from Europe were sold at fabulous prices, and the island was on the verge of starvation. A great meeting was held on the 10th February, 1763, and Messrs. de Maudave and de Pytois were deputed and allowed by the Governor to proceed to France to explain the situation.

On the 4th August, 1764, the East India Company was bankrupt, and the Iles de France and Bourbon were sold to the King. However, it took three years



MR. DE LABOURDONNAIS VISITING PAUL AND VIRGINIA  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis

before the Company could liquidate itself and the King's Government become established. During this period the position of the inhabitants of these two islands became unbearable. The population of l'Ile de France, composed of 4,000 whites, 600 blacks, and 15,000 slaves, lost all the commerce they were carrying, mainly in wheat, rice, maize, and beans.

### L'ILE DE FRANCE UNDER THE KING'S GOVERNMENT

ON the 14th July, 1767, Colonel Jean Daniel Dumas and Mr. Poivre landed at l'Ile de France, both holding commissions from the King, the first as Governor-General of l'Ile de France and of Bourbon, and the second, who had already passed some years in the island and introduced spice plants into it, as Intendant and President of the Conseil Supérieur of l'Ile de France. The Governor was vested with complete civil and military authority, while the Conseil Supérieur became something of a Court of Justice. Mr. Poivre was in charge of the finances of the Colony. On the 27th an ordinance of the King was promulgated establishing the future administration of both l'Ile de France and Bourbon.

These changes did not work smoothly at first. Quarrels were constantly occurring between the Governor and the Intendant. Some trouble arose among the members of the Conseil Supérieur, and Mr. Dumas seized the occasion to order the proclamation of martial law. This the Conseil refused to register; the Governor then entered the room at the

head of soldiers and had his order registered in the records (27th February, 1768). The members left the room, headed by Mr. Poivre. The Governor dismissed Mr. Desribes, the Procureur-Général, and had Mr. Rivaltz de St. Antoine, a member of the Conseil Supérieur, expatriated to Rodrigues. The Conseil appointed a Commission to inquire into the matter, and a report was submitted to the King. Mr. Dumas was recalled (27th November, 1768), while Messrs. Desribes and de St. Antoine were reinstated. Mr. de Steinaner temporarily administered the government until the arrival, on the 6th June, 1769, of Mr. le Chevalier Desroches.

On the 14th July, 1768, Bernardin de St. Pierre, engineer, landed at l'Île de France with revolutionary ideas. His great plans of colonisation met with no support, and he left the island.

On the 1st August the island was divided into eleven districts—Rivière Noire, Plaines Wilhems, Terre Rouge, Moka, Port Louis, Montagne Longue, Pamplemousses, Rivière Basse, Flacq, Fort Bourbon, and Callebasse. A Royal Ordinance provided for the raising of a militia force in the island. This was started only on the 15th June, 1769.

In March, 1770, iron was discovered at Pamplemousses, but as the metal obtained in the island could not compete with that of Europe, the mine was abandoned.

Although some friction still existed between the Governor and the Intendant, Mr. Desroches did much for the improvement of the Colony, and chiefly that of Port Louis. Fine broad streets were started, cutting one another at right angles. The harbour was dredged under the supervision of Mr. Tromelin, who also built

a big causeway from the mainland to l'Ile aux Tonneliers, to prevent the silting up of the harbour by rivers discharging into it.

The cemetery called "L'Enfoncement," situated in the middle of the town (now Company's Gardens), was removed and the Western Cemetery opened at the beginning of a terrible epidemic of smallpox in December, 1770.

Mr. Poivre now developed his long-cherished desire of introducing spices and plants into the Colony. To his zeal the island is indebted for all the most useful plants growing there.

Poivre had purchased the former Governor's residence at Montplaisir and had embellished the gardens by planting many new trees of all kinds. On his departure in October, 1772, the Government bought these gardens and placed Mr. Céré in charge of them. Mr. Céré showed as much zeal in the upkeep and improvement of the gardens as his predecessor had done. These became so pleasant that they were called "The King's Gardens." They are now called *The Royal Botanical Gardens*, and stand fourth in the world.

On the 1st February, 1771, a violent cyclone with heavy thunder and lightning caused immense damage. A vessel in harbour was sunk, while the *Ambulante*, with a detachment of the Regiment of Clarre on board, was wrecked off Morne Brabant.

In March, 1772, another cyclone visited the island, and swept away a plague of locusts from which it was suffering.

On the 21st August, Le Chevalier de Ternay, appointed Governor, and Mr. Jacques Maillart Dumesle, Intendant, appointed to relieve Mr. Poivre, landed

at l'Ile de France. They took up their appointments on the 24th. Both Mr. de Ternay and Mr. Dumesle were active and enterprising, and under their peaceful administration the Colony soon reached a very prosperous state.

On the 13th March, 1773, Philibert de Commerson died at La Retraite, Flacq. The Colony is indebted to this great botanist for the introduction of numerous valuable trees and plants.

During the night of the 9th April occurred one of the most violent cyclones which ever visited the island. The Roman Catholic Cathedral was brought down, together with some 300 houses. Many people were killed, thirty vessels were wrecked, and all the plantations completely destroyed.

On the 30th July, a Royal Ordinance divided the island into eight districts as formerly proclaimed by the Conseil Supérieur in August, 1762—viz.: Rivière Noire, Plaines Wilhems, Moka, Port Louis, Pamplemousses, Flacq, Rivière Basse, and Port Bourbon. In October the Powder Mills exploded, killing the soldiers in charge.

A weekly newspaper appeared for the first time and proved most useful. On the 19th November the vessel *Le Mars* took fire and exploded violently in harbour. The vessel rose a great distance in the air and fell with a terrible crash, covering the sea with numerous pieces of burning material.

On the 24th February, 1774, the family of Mr. Lehec, Lieutenant of the Royal Artillery, living in a house adjoining La Retraite estate and composed of his young wife, her sister, and a child a year old, were all murdered, together with the two servants. After the crime

the criminals set fire to the residence. Three soldiers were found guilty and hanged.

On the 2nd December, 1776, Mr. le Chevalier Guiran de la Brillanne succeeded Mr. de Ternay. Strictly honest and fond of military discipline, Mr. de la Brillanne was rather feared than beloved. He was ill during nearly all the time of his administration. On the 14th August, 1777, Mr. Delaleu, Conseiller of the Conseil Supérieur, presented the Court with the first volume of his important work on Colonial Laws. On the 1st March of the following year Mr. Céré gathered with great ceremony the first cloves and nutmegs grown in the island. These were sent to the King.

On the 5th October, Mr. Magon de la Villebague, formerly Governor of l'Ile de France, died in the island, at his residence of Villebague, where he had been settled for some time past. His eldest son was substitute Procuror of the King on the Conseil Supérieur of the island. According to Mr. Magon's desire, he was buried in Pamplemousses Cemetery, near the present church, which he had helped to build financially. The church mentioned during Mr. Labourdonnais' time had been installed in a fine house close by, that had been bought and arranged for the circumstance.

In December, Jean François Cossigny, the great engineer who had been sent to report on the resources of l'Ile de France, and had been mainly responsible for the appointment of Labourdonnais as Governor of the island, died at Port Louis, where he had been settled since 1752.

Mr. de la Brillanne died on the 28th April, 1779, and was buried in St. Louis Cathedral. On the 3rd May, Mr. le Chevalier de Souillac, Governor of Bourbon,

took over the appointment of Governor of both islands. Very active and enterprising, he worked hard to increase the prosperity of the island and the honour of the French flag in the neighbourhood. He was soon deeply beloved by all the inhabitants. With great zeal he provided troops, provisions, and ammunition for the expeditions under Generals Duchemin de Chenneville and de Bussy, and for the fleets of Admirals d'Orves and de Suffren. The war with England, instead of interfering with the prosperity of the island, brought there, on the contrary, a crowd of French and neutral vessels, which carried goods which the Colony needed, while the Governor's zeal in providing for the wants of the expeditions sent to fight the English in India, drew the attention of the French Ministers to the importance of the island, which soon became an important base and enjoyed great prosperity.

Three Intendants succeeded one another—Mr. Foucault from the 17th November, 1777; Mr. Chevreau from the 4th July, 1781; and Mr. Motais de Narbonne from the 12th October, 1785. In December, 1780, the first harvest of grapes planted at Champ Delort took place. Four barrels of bad wine were made, and gave rise to much pleasure and amusement. In January, 1784, a violent cyclone visited the island (which had been spared for the last eleven years) and caused much damage. On the 4th April, 1785, Mr. de Souillac went on a tour to India. He was replaced up to the 28th June by Colonel du Fresne of the Forces of Bourbon, and from that date to his return on the 9th November, by Mr. de Fleury, Colonel of the Regiment of Pondichéry.

On the 4th August, 1786, at 6.30 a.m., after a loud



noise, marked earthquake shocks were felt in different parts of the island. A few houses were damaged.

Mr. le Chevalier Antoine Raymond de Bruny d'Entrecasteaux, appointed Governor of the Isles of France and Bourbon, landed at the former on the 22nd October, 1787, but assumed the government on the 5th November on the day of the departure of Mr. de Souillac, who had been appointed Governor-General of the French establishments in India. On the day of his departure the colonists gave Mr. de Souillac a grand lunch, followed by a splendid fête. On his way to the quay, the beloved Governor received a moving testimony of the colonists' appreciation of his efforts to improve their welfare. Thousands of inhabitants from all parts of the island enthusiastically cheered him.

On the 31st December, 1788, at night, a most violent cyclone visited the island. Heavy storms took place, lasting twenty-three hours. The *Résolution* and *Vénus* had just left St. Paul, at Bourbon, when they were caught by the cyclone. The latter vessel, carrying twenty sons of the best families of l'Ile de France, who were proceeding to France to complete their studies, was never heard of again, while a few days later the *Résolution* entered the harbour seriously damaged.

Of France's former settlements in India, Pondichéry was the only one of importance now left, and consequently it was decided to remove the headquarters of the Governor-General to l'Ile de France. Lieutenant-General Count de Conway, Governor-General, landed at l'Ile de France on the 12th November, 1789, and relieved Mr. d'Entrecasteaux on the 14th. He found the island in a very prosperous state, but the

inhabitants were excited by the news of the French Revolution. They desired a new Government and numerous liberal changes. The new Governor did not sympathise with these ideas, and decided to put a stop to their circulation. He disbanded the popular volunteer force for fear that they might join in any insurrection.

The financial position of the island became very bad, and it was necessary to issue paper currency to settle the Government's debts. The garrison refused to be paid with notes, and great trouble occurred.

On the 31st January, 1790, a French sloop, the *Bâtiment Paquebot*, No. 4, commanded by Captain de Coriolis, anchored off Port Louis. The officers and the crew landed, and announced the news of the French Revolution. They all wore tricolor cockades and distributed thousands of them to the population. The cockades were now worn everywhere with great enthusiasm and excitement. The crew of this vessel advised the population to form committees, after the example of those formed in every district of France, to draw up memorials of complaints and demands. Posters were stuck up, giving revolutionary instructions. On the 4th February a most violent meeting was held in the parochial church of Port Louis, when the Revolution was proclaimed by acclamation. Notices were posted up everywhere, calling upon the population to form "Assemblées." The Governor ordered the destruction of the posters and sent soldiers to arrest the ringleaders. A violent fight took place on the Place d'Armes, when the prisoners were set free by the excited population. Soon after, the disorder was so general that the soldiers

joined the rioters. The Governor was approached daily by persons asking for permission to hold meetings. Mr. de Conway had to give in. After reproaching Mr. de Coriolis's behaviour, he finally allowed the holding of an unprecedented meeting, which took place on the 21st April. The French Revolution was again proclaimed by acclamation at l'Ile de France, and a committee of sixty-one members, chosen from the notables of the island on the new electoral system, was formed, and called *Assemblée Coloniale*. This Assembly was to appoint two members to represent the Colony in the National Assembly in France. Mr. Ange d'Houdetot was elected President of the "Assemblée Coloniale." The troops were sworn in. A National Guard was formed to replace the volunteers. Every effort was made after this to keep the public peace. With great reluctance, the Governor had to accept what had been done. On the 17th June the sloop *Stanislas* arrived and landed the Decrees published in France on the 8th March, creating Colonial Assemblies, municipalities, etc., exactly as had been done at l'Ile de France. The excitement reached its zenith. Clubs were formed bearing such names as *Les Amis de la Constitution*, *Les Jacobins*, *Les Sans Culottes*, and *La Chaumière*.

On the 25th May the naval squadron from India, under Admiral Comte MacNemara, anchored off Port Louis. When he heard of the prevailing disorders, he warned his crew against the "useless agitation and criminal ambition" of the "unconscious" ringleaders. This the Colonial Assembly took as an outrage. In June, when its existence was officially recognised, Mr. MacNemara and his officers were brought before it and tried. Mr. de Conway would not tolerate this,

and tendered his resignation, leaving the command (29th July) of the island to Mr. de Chermont, until the arrival of Mr. David Carpentier Cossigny, Governor of Bourbon, on the 19th August, 1790.

The indignation against the Admiral, and also against those who did not approve of everything done by the Colonial Assembly, grew so intense that on the 18th June a post and lanthorn were erected on the Place d'Armes in front of Government House. The two members elected to represent the Colony at the National Assembly in France were ready to leave. It was rumoured, however, that MacNemara intended to stop them on their way to France and destroy their written instructions. His papers were searched and letters he had written to the Minister in France reporting that the soldiers of l'Île de France could no more be relied upon, and describing the disorders in the island, were found. He was again brought before the Colonial Assembly for reporting against its members. On the 4th November, a number of soldiers of the Pondichéry Regiment took to boats, and, boarding MacNemara's vessel, brought him on shore. Dragged before the Colonial Assembly, which was sitting in the church, he succeeded in defending himself. It was decided to keep him confined in barracks until his departure. M. de Cossigny decided to escort him to the barracks, but at the last moment, through some wrong information being given to him, the Governor took another road. On his way M. de MacNemara was hooted and struck with sticks, and his escort could hardly prevent him from being beaten by the excited mob. Arriving in front of the post near Government House, believing that he was going to be executed



THE DEPARTURE OF VIRGINIA FOR FRANCE  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis

he rushed into a shop and ran up a staircase, hoping to reach the roof. Stopped by a locked door, he unfortunately fired on the soldiers following him. He was caught, and dragged into the street, and his head was cut off and carried through the streets on a pole. At night one of his sailors buried his corpse. This was the only crime committed during the Revolution at l'Ile de France. It had the effect of immediately calming the excitement of the population.

On the 8th September, 1790, Claude Peuthée, a native of Burgundy, hoisted the French colours at the top of the Pieter Both. The ascent of the peak had been one of a most dangerous nature. On the 29th October he again climbed this high mountain, and at night fired rockets, which caused much sensation and joy.

On the 7th January, 1791, the *Colonial College* was founded. Provision for this College had already been voted by the Colonial Assembly.

The Assembly now drew up a Charter establishing a *Directoire* at l'Ile de France, which provided for the establishment of municipalities and the election of mayors. A special Court of Justice was installed in Port Louis, while a jury was created for trying criminal cases.

This charter was adopted on the 2nd April, 1791, and sanctioned by the Executive on the 21st. It was called *La Constitution Coloniale*. The Colonial Assembly being elected annually, the members forming part of it at its second election, on the 11th July, 1791, were much more moderate, and although they were nearly always opposing the Government, they were less troublesome than the first.

In January, 1792, a terrible epidemic of smallpox

broke out and carried away 4,000 lives in three months.

On the 16th June, Lieutenant-General Hippolyte Maurès, Comte de Malartic, appointed Governor-General of the Isles of France and Bourbon, landed at the former. He took up his appointment on the 19th. With him also arrived two commissioners to re-organise the Government—Messrs. Jacques François Le Boucher and Daniel l'Escalier.

The affairs of the island might have been governed peacefully, when in May, 1793, the inhabitants of l'Île de France obtained news of the extraordinary powers of the clubs of the Jacobins throughout France. The discontented at once formed a Jacobin Club under the name of *La Chaumière*; this continually interfered with the authorities, who had to give way on many occasions.

The owners of merchant ships sailing for France, full of valuable cargo, petitioned the Admiral commanding the station for two frigates to escort the convoy, as the mother country was at war with England. Admiral de St. Félix only allowed one frigate to accompany the convoy. "*La Chaumière*" at once accused de St. Félix of dealing with the English and created such trouble that the Admiral had to allow two frigates to escort the merchant ships. A few months after, de St. Félix insisted upon being granted leave and proceeded to Bourbon to recruit his health. "*La Chaumière*" again accused him of dealing with the English, and forced the Governor to send a vessel to Bourbon to arrest him. On the 11th April, 1794, the Governor of Bourbon, the Civil Commissioner, and a few other high officials of that island, who were

accused of having helped de St. Félix, were arrested by members of "La Chaumière" and all landed at Port Louis, where they were sent to prison in a tower near the Place d'Armes. A guillotine was erected by order of "La Chaumière." The Colonial Assembly, however, succeeded in ordering that all prisoners should be tried by court martial, and some time elapsed before the members of this court were elected. In November the news of the downfall of Robespierre and of the Jacobins reached the island. At once the Colonial Assembly ordered the dissolution of "La Chaumière," and thirty of its most dangerous leaders were arrested and deported. The guillotine was brought down, and de St. Félix and other high officials were all set free after a short trial, when their innocence was proclaimed.

On the 6th January, 1794, Adrien d'Epinau, the great Mauritian patriot, was born at Moka.

Meanwhile corsairs, arming themselves in great numbers, either at l'Île de France or at Bourbon, were seriously endangering English commerce all through the Indian Ocean. The East India Company prepared a great expedition under Admiral Newcome and General Meadows. Two men-of-war—the *Centurion* (50 guns), Captain Osborne, and the *Diomed* (44 guns), Captain Smith—met at Rodrigues and were ordered to blockade both islands.

When this was known, Captain Renaud, who had now relieved de St. Félix, sailed at the head of the colonial forces of l'Île de France, composed of the *Cybèle* (18 guns), Lieutenant Tréhouart (born at l'Île de France), the *Prudente* (12 guns), Captain Renaud, and two small brigs—*Le Coureur*, Lieutenant Giraud, and

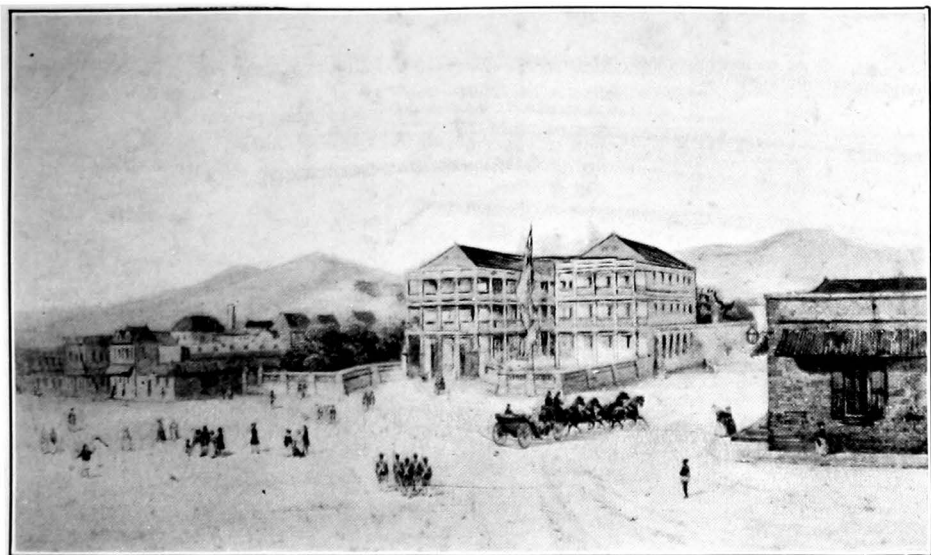


the *Jean Bart*, Captain Loiseau—each of 6 guns, on the 19th October, to meet the English vessels. Many young men of the island volunteered to reinforce the crews. Off Bambou Mountain the action started at 3 p.m., and after heavy injuries on both sides, the English fleet retired at night and returned to India. On their return to l'Île de France the colonial forces were cheered, and Malartic made Tréhouart and Giraud captains.

On the 28th October the Colonial Assembly proclaimed the abolition of the slave trade, carried on chiefly with Madagascar.

In March, 1795, Mr. de Fleuriot, at the head of a few gentlemen, hunted and destroyed a gang of murderers called the "Jean Louis" in the forests near Port Louis.

On the 18th June, 1796, four frigates under Rear-Admiral de Sarcey, carrying 2,200 troops under General Magallon, anchored at Port Louis. On board the *Forte*—one of the frigates—were two agents of the French "Directoire," Baco and Burnel, sent with special orders to carry out the immediate emancipation of slaves without compensation to their owners. When they disclosed their intentions to the Colonial Assembly, the whole population got exasperated. The streets were crowded with most excited mobs, protesting against such measures. The agents, at a meeting of the Colonial Assembly on the 22nd June, threatened to dismiss the Colonial Assembly, to suspend the Governor, and to incorporate all the young men of the island, whom they called "rebels," in the Indian regiments. At the same instant Government House was invaded by every opening, Baco and Burnel



PORT LOUIS: GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN OLDEN TIMES  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis.

had a hundred fists shaken at them, while an unprecedented tumult reigned. A revolver was fired at Baco, without effect. These gentlemen decided to leave the island. The population was so wild that the mayors and the Governor had every difficulty in protecting them from being mobbed on their way to embark.

In April, 1798, trouble occurred among some of the troops forming part of the garrison of l'Île de France, who had received orders to proceed to Batavia. Most dangerous revolutionary ideas had been spread among them. The white male population of the island was called out, and on the 25th, at daybreak, the young National Guard, composed of four columns with twelve guns, advanced towards the barracks under the command of Malartic. The two mutinous regiments were embarked on board the frigate *La Seine*, which sailed for France.

On the 23rd August the National Assembly voted an annual pension of 3,000 louis to Mrs. Montlezun Pardiac, daughter of Mahé de Labourdonnais, the beloved Governor, to whose genius the Colony owed its foundation.

On the 4th November new troubles occurred in Port Louis, on account of the putting into circulation of paper currency. A mob of about 3,000 persons invaded Government House and insisted on the dissolution of the Colonial Assembly. In order to put a stop to further disorder the Governor acceded to the request, and on the 7th, when help had arrived from the villages inside the island, the ringleaders were all arrested and embarked for France on board the *Nathalie*.

Matters now became more peaceful, and the only great difficulty which Government had to face was the depreciation of its currency. This proved such a hard question to

solve that the Intendant, Mr. Dupuy, fearing the terrible opposition he would meet in providing means to balance the Government expenditure, resigned on the 5th November. Mr. de Chavaloa, who replaced him, was very firm, and, strongly imposing his views on the Colonial Assembly, soon improved matters.

In January, 1800, Captain l'Hermite, of the *Preneuse*, returning from the coast of Africa, met the English vessels *Tremendous* and *Adamant*, of 74 guns each. An action was started close to Tombeau Bay, but soon the *Preneuse* was becalmed and driven to the reefs. L'Hermite ordered his crew on shore and set fire to his vessel. Taken prisoner, he was brought to Commodore Hotham, who allowed him to keep his sword and set him free two days later.

During the last days of January troubles occurred in Bourbon. A group of Royalists, believing in the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, proclaimed their independence. Malartic and three members of the Colonial Assembly of l'Île de France proceeded to Bourbon, and after a long conference and a speech from the President of the Assembly of l'Île de France, condemning the idea of separation from the motherland in danger, the Royalists were calmed. Malartic returned to l'Île de France, where he arrived on the 5th February. The next day a violent cyclone visited the island and caused much damage to buildings and plantations.

On the 28th July the beloved Governor died of apoplexy at the age of seventy-five years, his death being deeply mourned by the population of both islands. On the 30th his body was carried to the Parochial Church on a gun-carriage pulled by artillery officers. General Magallon assumed the government.

On the 16th August the body of Malartic, after lying in state from his death, was brought in great pomp to a provisional resting-place at the Champ de Mars. Commodore Hotham, in command of the British squadron, asked as a favour to be allowed to attend the funeral. This was granted, and his vessels in harbour, with flags at half-mast, fired their guns in reply to those of the island as a sign of mourning:

On the 29th July of the next year, the body of Malartic was transferred, with great ceremony, to its final resting-place, where it now lies.

General Magallon, who had succeeded Malartic, was kind and was soon much beloved. The island was governed very peacefully. A few republicans were constantly troubling the National Assembly. It was decided to send them to France, but the vessel on which they were embarked sank not far from l'Ile de France, and two-thirds of the crew and passengers were drowned.

On the 13th October, 1800, Mr. Cossigny de Palma, ex-Deputy of the Conseil Supérieur of l'Ile de France, to whose zeal the colony was indebted for the introduction of numerous fruit-trees, returned to this island, appointed Commandant of the Powder Mills by the French Government. Mr. Cossigny was authorized to allow slaves of the Government a small pecuniary remuneration. The colonists got alarmed, and thought that he had been charged with secret instructions for the long contemplated emancipation. The colonists met and requested that Mr. Cossigny be asked to leave the island. The Government would not grant this, whereupon the whole municipality of Port Louis resigned. Mr. Cossigny voluntarily left the island in January, 1801.

A strong Government had now been established in

France. Bonaparte, who had gradually succeeded in becoming master, was now going to submit the colonies to a very arbitrary régime.

In October, 1802, news of the Peace of Amiens reached l'Ile de France. Reports of Napoleon's great intentions towards l'Ile de France and Bourbon, and particularly the former, also arrived. These were so flattering for l'Ile de France that when the news of Napoleon's proclamation as Consul for life was known, the inhabitants arranged great demonstrations, and the news was proclaimed all over the island with great joy.

The question of slavery was settled by a decree of the First Consul, providing for its continuation. A decree also provided that the Isles of France and Bourbon were to be governed by three officers, the Colonial Assemblies being dissolved.

In March, 1803, a fleet composed of the frigates *Marengo*, the *Atalante*, the *Belle Poule*, and *Sémillante*, and of two transports, the *Côte d'Or* and *Marie Françoise*, under Admiral Linois, left Brest for Pondichéry via the Cape. The squadron had on board General Decaen and 1,351 officials destined for the civil and military Governments of the French Indian possessions and of the Isles of France and Bourbon, which had all been given to France by the Peace of Amiens.

On his arrival at Pondichéry on the 12th July, Linois was met by ten English men-of-war under Admiral Raynier. These refused to deliver up the settlements. The next day a French frigate brought news that war had again broken out, and Linois was ordered to proceed to l'Ile de France without any delay. At night Linois, abandoning the *Marie Françoise* and 200 soldiers and a few notables who had already been landed, sailed

for l'Île de France, where he arrived on the 17th August.

On the 25th September the frigate *Le Berceau* (Captain Halgam) entered Port Louis, carrying official information of the declaration of war against England, and of the official appointment of General Decaen as Governor-General of the Isles of France and Bourbon.

General Charles Mathieu Isidore Decaen assumed his appointment on the 27th September. On the 28th the constitution of l'Île de France was suspended for ten years. The Colonial Assembly was abolished; Mr. Léger was appointed Préfet Colonial, with functions similar to those of the Intendant; Mr. Crespin became Commissary of Justice. The courts of law were established as in 1792. General Vandermaesen was appointed Officer Commanding the Troops. Decaen had been prejudiced against the inhabitants and led to believe that the Colony was in a state of anarchy. He kept to himself for some time, but after making a tour round the island and studying the character of the population, he soon found out how he had been misled. He then became very kind and soon won the support and affection of all.

Decaen did everything to induce neutral vessels to visit l'Île de France and Bourbon. Port Louis and St. Denis were opened to free commerce.

The favourable position of the Isles of France and Bourbon rendered them most valuable for the equipment and victualling of French men-of-war and privateers who were constantly attacking the English commerce in the neighbourhood.

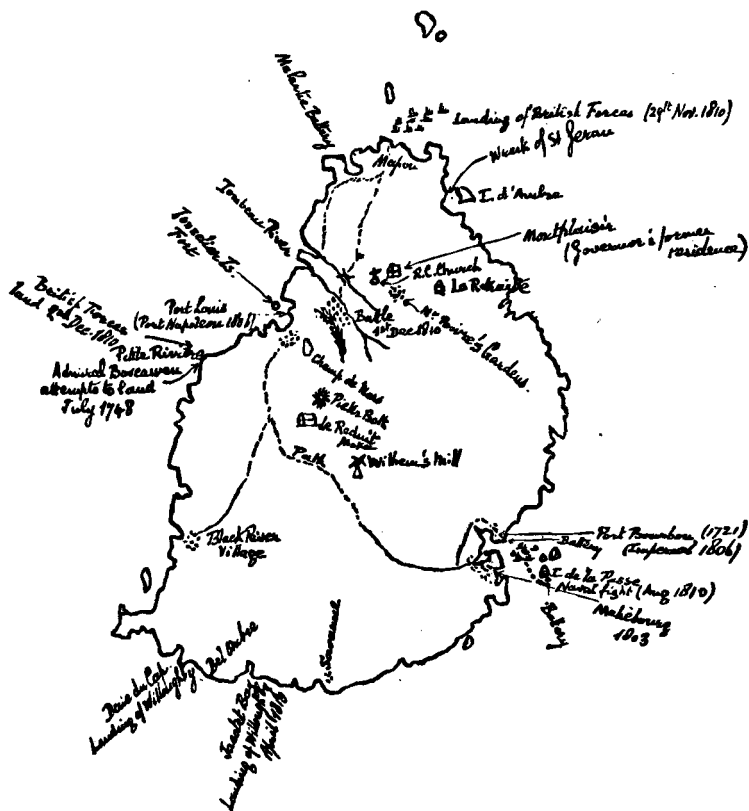
Remarkable exploits were performed by the corsairs Surcouf, Tréhouart, Perret, Cochet, Hamelin, Bouvet,

and others. Numerous others were equipped and armed at l'Île de France. They captured rich English convoys, which provided for the Colony's expenses. The creoles of the island, who were men of great activity and fine adventurous spirit, delighted in perilous enterprises.

In 1806 Decaen made another tour round the island to organise its defence. He repaired the fort on l'Île de la Passe. A fort was built opposite the one at Old Grand Port, on the other side of the bay. Stores and barracks were built, and Decaen created a small village which he named Mahebourg, after Labourdonnais. At Port Louis, Caudan was dredged. Decaen had a second story added to Government House, while he had fine bank buildings erected facing the Place d'Armes. The Powder Mills were turned into a prison. New Courts of Justice were erected in the centre of the town at the place where they now stand. The Colonial College was enlarged and fine buildings erected and opened on the 2nd December, 1806. "Bureaux de Bienfaisance" were started for the poor. Decaen had a suspension bridge built over Grand River North-West. All the roads were much improved. In August, 1806, on the Emperor's birthday anniversary, the Governor changed the name of Port Louis into that of *Port Napoléon*, Port South-East into *Port Imperial*, and Bourbon into *Île Bonaparte*. In every respect Decaen strove to make the island feared by the English, while he maintained order and prosperity among its population.

As a token of gratitude the colonists asked that his son, the first child of a Governor born at l'Île de France, might be christened Île de France, and the notables of





MAURITIUS UNDER FRENCH GOVERNMENT (1715-1810):  
MILITARY OPERATIONS, 1810

the island asked the favour of acting as step-parents. Great public rejoicings were held on the 19th October, 1806, on the occasion.

In 1809 the East India Company could not continue to bear the heavy losses inflicted upon its commerce by the corsairs of l'Île de France. Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India, reported to England that immediate steps should be taken to capture the Isles of France and Bourbon. Towards the end of May a detachment of 200 Europeans of the 56th Regiment, with 200 sepoy under Lieutenant-Colonel Keating, landed at Rodrigues on the 4th August. This island was prepared as a base for future operations.

In September Vice-Admiral Bertie, of the Cape Squadron, and Commodore Rowley, of Rodrigues, attempted several landings at l'Île Bonaparte. On the 21st the first landing took place at St. Paul. After four days the English retired, taking with them considerable stores, while they were able to judge the kind of resistance they would meet in case of a serious landing.

On the 7th April, 1810, Captain Willoughby, of the *Nereid*, attempted to capture two vessels in Jacotet Bay, in l'Île de France. He landed a detachment, which met with resistance from some soldiers and the inhabitants of Bel Ombre, about seventy in all. These, however, were compelled to retire, leaving their commander and their guns in the hands of the enemy. The English destroyed the guns and retired after capturing valuable stores.

Landings were also attempted at Mapou on the 25th May, at Baie du Cap on the 2nd June, and at Bras de Mer St. Martin on the 2nd July, but all these were repulsed.

On the 24th June other troops reached Rodrigues. On the 3rd July an expedition under Commodore Rowley and Lieutenant Colonel Keating left Rodrigues for l'Île Bonaparte. On the 7th, 2,000 Europeans and 1,850 Sepoys were landed at La Grande Chaloupe and Sainte Marie. From different directions the English marched on St. Denis. On the 9th l'Île Bonaparte surrendered. Mr. T. Farquhar, who was on board, and who had already been appointed Governor of Bourbon, assumed duty.

On the 14th August, 1810, during a dark night, 250 soldiers, detached from the *Sirius* and under the command of Captain Pym, landed at l'Île de la Passe in the southern harbour of l'Île de France and captured the forts defended by 38 men under Captain Escussot. These were made prisoners and a garrison of 130 men left on the island. From this strong position many landings were attempted. The battery of Pointe du Diable was captured, the Captain and three men killed, and the rest taken prisoners. At Old Grand Port, twelve miles off, on the same day a company of the National Guard was beaten off. All these landings were only to reconnoitre the island's defences and to spread leaflets containing a proclamation of Mr. Farquhar inviting the inhabitants to help the British in their conquest of the island, when they would enjoy great liberty and happiness.

Decaen decided to dislodge the enemy from l'Île de la Passe. As it was necessary to attack the English by sea, Decaen ordered Hamelin, who was at Port Napoléon, to get his squadron ready and to sail as soon as possible to meet the English and fight them.

## THE BATTLE OF L'ILE DE LA PASSE 43

On the 20th August, at 10 a.m., Captain Duperré's fleet was sighted. He had left the island on the 14th March for a cruise near Mozambique.

### THE BATTLE OF L'ILE DE LA PASSE

CAPTAIN DUPERRÉ'S fleet, sighted on the 20th August at 10 a.m., was composed of the *Bellone* (40 guns) as flagship, the *Minerve* (48 guns), Captain Bouvet, the *Victor* (20 guns), Lieutenant Morice, and two other vessels of 30 guns each—the *Wyndham* and the *Ceylon*, of the English East India Company, captured by Duperré on the 5th July. The *Ceylon* was commanded by Lieutenant Moulac of the *Minerve*, and the *Wyndham* by Ensign Darod of the *Bellone*.

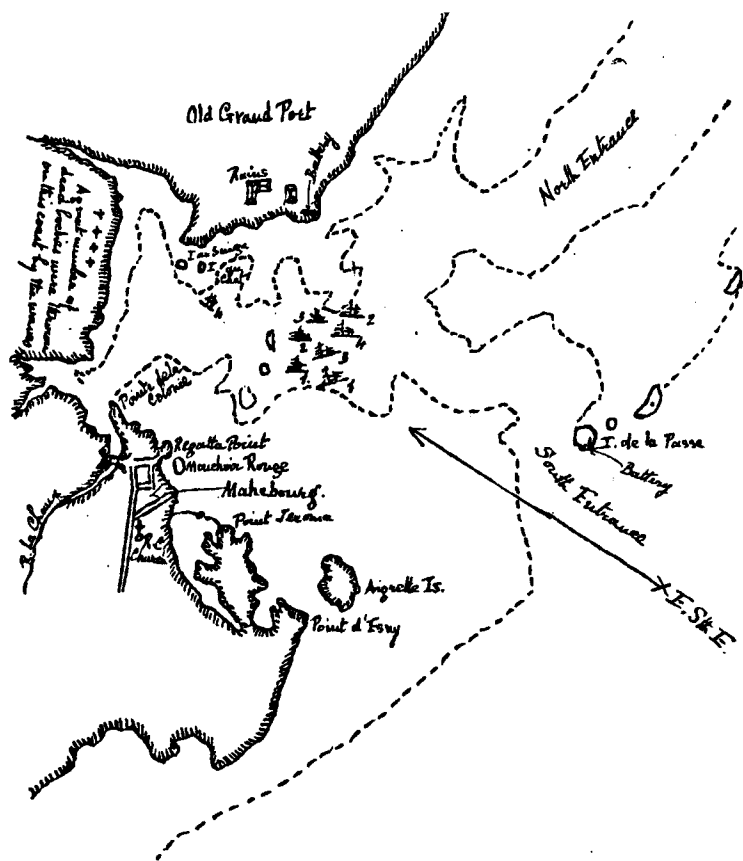
On the French forces being signalled, Captain Willoughby at once saw his perilous situation, and ordered the fort and the *Nereid* anchored close by to fly the French colours. The fort also hoisted the signal, "The enemy is cruising off Coin de Mire." Duperré decided to obtain news from Port Imperial before starting in pursuit of the enemy. He therefore ordered his vessels to form line, and signalled to the *Victor* to lead the way.

At 1 p.m., as the *Victor* had entered the channel, closely followed by the *Minerve*, the *Nereid* and the fort replaced the French colours with the Union Jack, while the French vessels were fired at at pistol range. Duperré insisted on forcing the channel, and succeeded in bringing in all his vessels except one. They cast anchor in the bay at the junction of the two passes out of reach

of the English fire. The *Minerve* and the *Ceylon* had borne the brunt of the enemy's fire, and their hulls were pierced by several shots a few inches above water-line. The *Minerve* had twenty-three casualties and the *Ceylon* eight. The *Wyndham*, the last vessel of the line, had not attempted to force the channel. She sailed a southerly course and was captured the next morning, in Black River Bay by the English frigate *Sirius* and sent to Bourbon.

Duperré anchored his ships in front of Monkey Island and decided to wait for Captain-General Decaen's instructions. Decaen was at Port Napoléon. Lieutenant Morice was sent on horseback with a message to the Governor. Pending instructions, Duperré prepared for action, while on the other hand Willoughby spared no effort in fortifying his position. On the 22nd Decaen reached Mahebourg, and at once started to reinforce the crews, and sent the frigates munitions of all kinds. The colonists of the town of Mahebourg eagerly gave fine support, and great activity prevailed to prepare accommodation and relief for the sick and wounded. At noon the *Sirius* joined the *Nereid*. Towards the afternoon Willoughby and Captain Pym, having decided to attack the French, advanced, the *Sirius* leading. Halfway, the *Sirius* came upon a shoal, and was only removed the next morning with great difficulty. At 1 p.m. on the 23rd two other English frigates—the *Iphigenia*, Captain Lambert, and the *Magicienne*, Captain Curtis—anchored near the fort. The four English frigates now prepared for action.

At 5 p.m. they started and came down straight on their opponents. The *Sirius* (36 guns) made for, the *Bellone* (40 guns), the *Nereid* (36 guns) for the *Victor*



THE BATTLE OF L'ILE DE LA PASSE (23-28 AUGUST, 1810)

French Fleet:

1. *The Bellone*
2. *The Minerve*
3. *The Ceylon*
4. *The Victor*

English Fleet:

1. *The Sirius*
2. *The Magicienne*
3. *The Nereide*
4. *The Iphigenia*

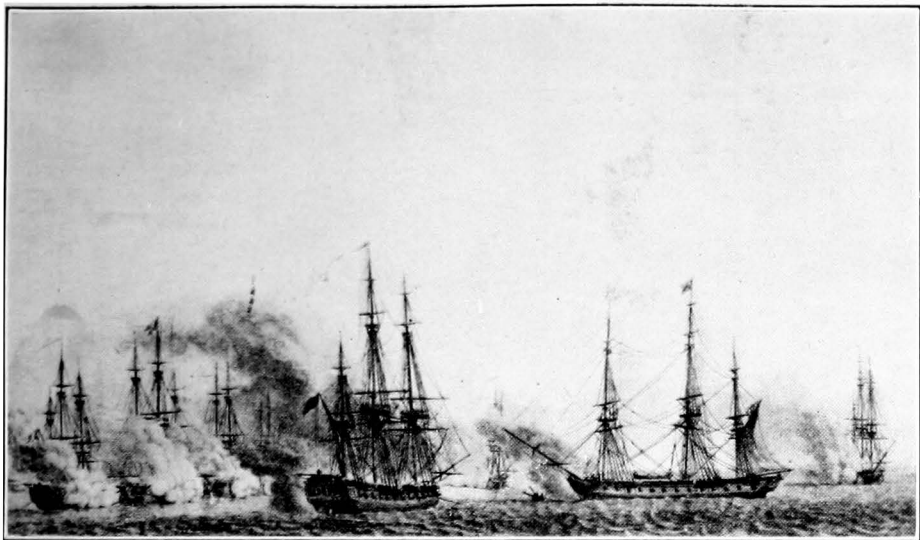
(20 guns), the *Iphigenia* (36 guns) for the *Minerve* (48 guns), and the *Magicienne* (28 guns) sailed between the *Minerve* and the *Ceylon* (30 guns each). The English frigates came on slowly under their small jibs. No less than 10,000 colonists who had gathered all round the coast and on the surrounding mountains were anxiously awaiting the result. How solemn and yet terrible was the sight of the English vessels coming slowly forward to meet their opponents! The French marines, as eager as they were, more impatient than the French Guards at Fontenoy, first gave the signal for the fight. At 5.30, while dusk was setting in, Bouvet opened fire, and the action soon raged furiously. An hour later the *Magicienne* ran on a reef close to the *Minerve*, and exposed her beam to the firing of that frigate. Soon the *Nereid* attacked the *Victor* violently and shattered that vessel, which drifted ashore. The *Nereid* then attacked the *Bellone*, and a most violent engagement took place.

The *Sirius*, coming ahead, struck on a coral reef on the other side of the channel. All the rigging of the *Minerve* and *Ceylon* having been destroyed, these vessels were driven by the current on to the *Bellone*, and the three French vessels got jammed together. The *Bellone* was thus offering her larboard to the English frigates, while the *Minerve* had her batteries concealed by the *Bellone*. The *Minerve* had also paralysed half of the *Ceylon's* guns. The *Magicienne* could fire from her broadside guns on to the decks of the *Minerve* and the *Ceylon*. The *Minerve* answered with only four available guns, and the *Ceylon* with half her batteries. At 7 p.m. the action was raging furiously, causing a deafening noise. Some 200 guns

were engaged. At 9 p.m. Duperré was wounded in the face by some grapeshot and fell senseless on the deck of his vessel. His officers wrapped him in a flag and brought him down to the surgery. Bouvet then took command, and went on the *Bellone*. With great zeal Bouvet and his officers renewed their deadly volleys. Under the violent fire of the British frigates, flying-bridges were constructed between the three vessels and ammunition supplied in great quantity to the *Bellone*, while a powerful battery was improvised on the *Minerve*. Volleys succeeded one another, and the dark night was illuminated by the firing of guns. On the shore hundreds of colonists stood admiring the courage of the heroic sailors. Decaen was directing an 18-pounder on shore, while Vandermaesen was in charge of two other pieces. At Old Grand Port the colonists were firing at random with the old guns of the Batterie de la Reine. At 11 p.m. there was a lull. At midnight the action stopped altogether. The darkness was so great that effective aim was impossible.

Next morning the fight started anew, and continued with terrible vigour on both sides. The *Nereid*, covered with débris, her masts broken, the decks encumbered with dead and dying, surrendered towards 8 a.m. At this moment a score of French prisoners which the *Nereid* had made on l'Île de la Passe, and who had been kept shut up in her hold, burst the doors of their prison and rushed from the hatches with a tricolor flag in hand. Bouvet sent Lieutenant Roussin with a dozen men to take charge of the vessel. A most horrible sight was offered to their eyes: the frigate's deck was covered with dead and dying, while severed





THE BATTLE OF L'ILE DE LA PASSE

Illustration from M. J. Milbert's "Voyage pittoresque à l'île de France," etc.

limbs were lying in all directions. Roussin found Willoughby lying senseless on the quarter-deck. He was wrapped in the Union Jack, badly hurt in the head, his left eye out of its socket. All the vessel's guns were broken to pieces, its decks battered, and its port-holes smashed. The deck and the inner side of the vessel were all covered with blood. It was a monument of most tragic glory. The dead were thrown into the sea, while the wounded were sent on board the *Victor*. Willoughby was carried on board the *Bellone* and placed near Duperré. Meanwhile the action was still proceeding. The order was now given to all the French vessels to direct their fire on the *Magicienne*, Captain Bouvet being determined to destroy the English vessels one after the other. At 4 p.m. the *Magicienne's* fire seemed to slacken; she was pierced at different places, and water was rapidly pouring in. At 5 p.m. she gave up the fight, and only fired at intervals while her crew was transferred to the *Iphigenia*. At 8 p.m. Captain Curtis set fire to his vessel after having loaded all the available guns and pointed them at the French frigates. At 10 p.m. these guns started firing one after the other, causing much havoc amongst the French. Half an hour later the *Magicienne* blew up with a terrible noise and spread serious damage all round. After a few more shots the rest of the night was quiet.

On the 25th, as day dawned, the *Iphigenia* attacked vigorously while Captain Pym was doing his best to refloat the *Sirius*, which was also taking part in the action, but all his attempts proved unsuccessful. The French now directed all their fire on the *Sirius*, which was soon to become their next victim. Two hours

later this vessel was completely wrecked and pierced in no less than twenty places. She had 8 feet of water in her hold.

At 9 a.m. Pym transferred his crew to the *Iphigenia*, and reluctantly set fire to his fine frigate. At 10 the *Sirius* exploded violently. The *Iphigenia* now attempted to defend herself, but it was not long before the French succeeded in refloating the *Minerve*. An hour later the *Iphigenia* got under way for l'Île de la Passe, where she anchored under the protection of the guns of the fort. In the afternoon Decaen went on board the French fleet and congratulated Bouvet and his men.

On the 26th the French prepared themselves for another action, while the English were getting ready to retire from l'Île de la Passe.

In the early morning of the 27th Hamelin's fleet was signalled. It was composed of the *Vénus*, under his orders, the *Manche*, Captain Dorval du Guy, the *Astrée*, Captain Le Marrant, and *L'Entreprenant*, Second Lieutenant Le Breton. Hamelin had left Port Napoléon on the 21st, and should have been in front of l'Île de la Passe well before this, but on his way he had met with heavy seas and contrary winds.

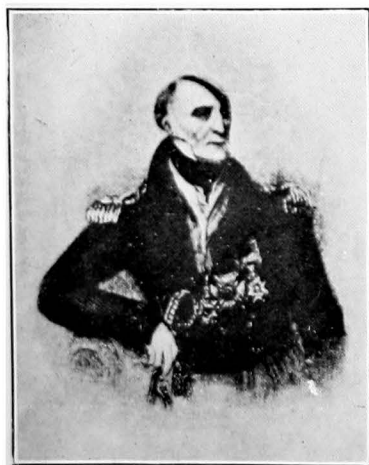
Hamelin was near l'Île de la Passe by noon. The English, having no provisions and no water, realised the impossibility of opposing Hamelin's fleet, while Duperré's fleet would not be long either in coming to fight them on the other side. Hamelin sent one of his men to offer a capitulation to Captain Lambert, urging the immediate surrender of the fort and of the *Iphigenia*. After some correspondence on the subject,



GENERAL DECAEN



CAPTAIN DUPERRÉ



CAPTAIN WILLOUGHBY



CAPTAIN BOUVET

Illustrations from "Le Combat du Grand Port et la fin de l'Occupation Française"  
by kind permission of author, Mr. Leon Huet de Froberville.

Lambert capitulated on condition that the English prisoners should be sent to Bourbon within a month. Early on the 28th, Decaen, unaware of the surrender, sent an ultimatum to Captain Lambert. The latter informed the Governor about the correspondence and arrangements made with Hamelin, and Decaen willingly acceded to all the conditions. At 10 a.m. on the 28th the French colours were hoisted on the *Iphigenia*, which Bouvet had taken charge of, and also on the fort. The sailors could hear the cheers of the population on the shore. As kind-hearted and generous after battle as they were daring and courageous during it, the French sailors helped the English wounded, who were landed at Mahebourg. The natural kindness and sympathy of the inhabitants of the island, the delicate attentions of the womenfolk and children, soon calmed the great sorrow of the vanquished and the sufferings of the wounded. In the same room of the fine residence of a colonist of Mahebourg, Duperré and Willoughby were nursed together, and used to speak to one another, admiring each other's exploits.

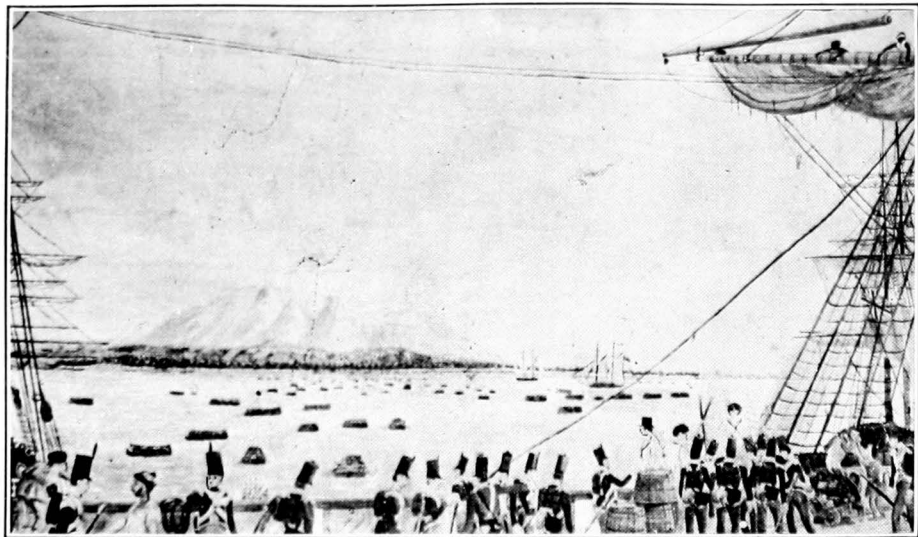
Thus ended the glorious battle of l'Ile de la Passe, which raged for three days. The great skill and courage exhibited by the sailors of both fleets will remain the example and admiration of generations. The French losses were 36 killed and 112 wounded, out of 600 men. The prisoners, numbering 100 naval and military officers, and 1,600 soldiers, sailors, and non-commissioned officers, were ultimately removed to Port Napoléon.

THE CAPTURE OF L'ILE DE FRANCE BY  
THE ENGLISH

(29TH NOVEMBER TO 3RD DECEMBER, 1810)

STRONG reinforcements were now being sent to Rodrigues. On the 3rd November the Bombay Squadron, and on the 6th troops from Madras, reached the English base. On the 22nd other troops from Bengal arrived. All preparations being now ready, the expedition sailed for l'Ile de France. It was composed of twenty-one frigates, forty-six transports, and a few small vessels carrying 11,300 European troops, 2,000 marines, and 2,700 sepoy and twelve guns. The whole fleet, delayed by currents, anchored in the north at Bras de Mer du Mapou, about seventeen miles from the capital, on the morning of the 29th, and started landing troops at 10 a.m. The small French garrison blew up Battery Malartic and retired before the English. At 3 p.m. the British forces started, making their way towards the capital in two directions—by the coast, and by the public road.

To oppose the British forces, Decaen had under him the regiment of l'Ile de France of 800 men, a battalion of colonial troops of 330 men, two artillery companies of 100 each, a battalion of marines of 500, the National Guard of about 800 men stationed in Port Louis (750 in the districts), and a battalion of black troops of 400 men (500 in the districts)—in all about 4,200 men, of which only 2,500 were available to meet the British forces.



THE CAPTURE OF THE ISLAND: BRITISH FORCES LANDING  
From a drawing by R. Temple, a member of the British forces

The French forces were under the orders of General Vandermaesen, and were divided into three columns, commanded by Major Lerch, Captain Josset, and the officer commanding the National Guard, Mr. Latour. The English, coming forward, soon met the National Guard of Pamplermousses under Mr. H. Martin. Some violent skirmishing took place. The latter finally retired.

After a long and trying march the British forces halted in front of the Powder Mills at 1 a.m. On the 30th Colonel Macleod captured the batteries of Baie aux Tortues and Tombeau Bay.

General Decaen instructed Vandermaesen, with 1,200 men and the black battalion and three guns, to take up a strong position at the foot of Montagne Longue. He then sent 300 men to destroy the bridge on Tombeau River. With some 30 horsemen, General Decaen pushed forward to reconnoitre the English forces. At about 100 yards he was met by sharp firing and had to retire, closely pursued.

On the 1st of December, at daybreak, General Abercromby moved forward. The troops passed over Tombeau River by the bridge, which had been damaged, but not destroyed. The artillery, however, had to ford the river under French fire, and suffered heavy loss in so doing. The English had now reached open country and made straight for Vandermaesen. The French General allowed them to come to close quarters, when they were received with volleys of musketry and thrown back. The French now delivered fierce attacks, which caused heavy losses on both sides, but they were soon overwhelmed, as English reinforcements were coming in all the time.



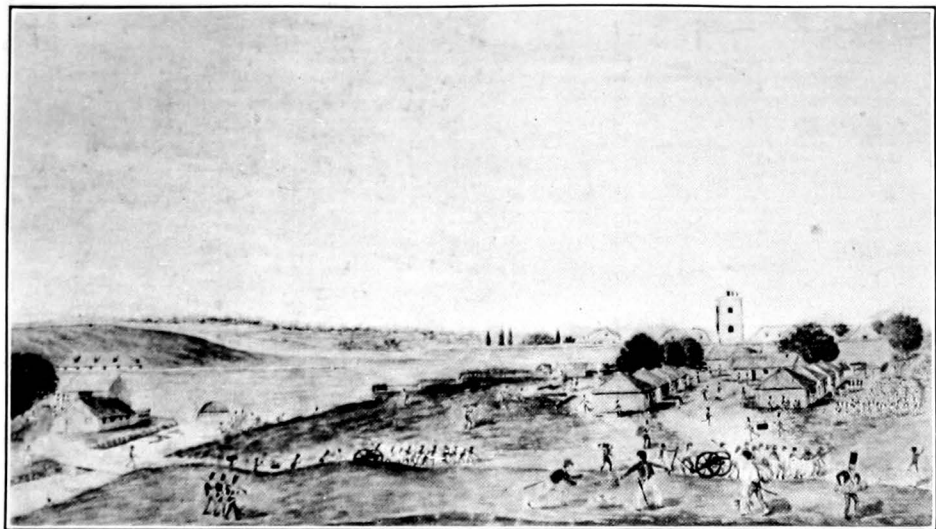
Meanwhile the sepoy had climbed Montagne Longue, which the Pamplemousses militia had failed to defend in time, though ordered to do so. Vandermaesen, fearing he might be cut off, retired slowly until the guns of Battery Dumas could bear on the pursuing English forces. The English halted there to reorganise and await reinforcements.

The battle at the foot of Montagne Longue had been of extreme violence. The French had lost 72 men, and the English 30. Amongst the dead were Lieutenant Colonel Campbell and Major O'Kief, and amongst the wounded Colonel Keating. The French had lost Captain Sébille and Captain Blin d'Illiers; General Vandermaesen, Major Lerch, Adjutant Deshegues, Captain Jourdheuil, Lieutenants Morainville, Marle, Desjardins, Pigeot, de Carey, and de Cherval were amongst the wounded.

In front of Fort Dumas, which was armed with six 8-pounder guns, severe skirmishing took place. The National Guard offered a splendid resistance, while many youths were in the trenches.

Decaen and Vandermaesen prepared a plan of attack. With 2,500 men they decided to open fire on the 2nd December in the morning. Soon after, General Decaen learnt that the English, coming down from Montagne Longue, had entered Moka and were moving towards the capital by the south. This was a false rumour, it being proved later that these were men of the National Guard coming from some inland district.

Decaen had just started his attack when the news of the arrival of the Cape Squadron was received. The English were landing fresh reinforcements at Petite Rivière. Decaen, who was short of munitions, realised



**SKIRMISH BETWEEN FRANCO-MAURITIAN TROOPS AND ENGLISH FORCES IN FRONT OF  
THE POWDER MILLS**

From a drawing by R. Temple, a member of the British forces

that all was now lost; so, to avoid more bloodshed, he asked for a truce to discuss the terms of a capitulation. At 10 p.m. General Vandermaesen and Duperré met General Warde and Commodore Rowley. After a long and most difficult exchange of conditions, the capitulation was signed at 1 a.m. on the 3rd and sent to Generals Decaen and Abercromby to be ratified.

The capitulation, the most honourable ever granted, was accepted through the efforts of Mr. Farquhar, the new Governor, who had received instructions to annex the island to the Empire without any violence.

By the terms of the capitulation the troops were not to be considered as prisoners of war, and were to be sent back to France at the cost of the British Government. The colonists were to preserve their religion, properties, laws, and customs, while those who desired to leave the colony were given two years to do so, and were to be able to leave the island with all their belongings. On the 3rd December the Union Jack was hoisted on all Government buildings.

## MAURITIUS UNDER BRITISH GOVERNMENT

MR. FARQUHAR, the new Governor, was of a kind and noble character. He was nearly always ready to hear the complaints of the colonists and study their wants. Instead of finding them a gang of adventurers and demagogues, as he had been informed, he found them quiet, good-natured, very hospitable, modest, and laborious. Many of them were of high education, appreciating true merit and extremely sensible of the

fair treatment which the new Governor adopted. New police and administrative changes were the subject of the first proclamations, in which the name of l'Île de France appeared together with that of Mauritius, Port Napoléon with Port Louis, and Port Imperial with Grand Port. The Courts of Justice were maintained with a few modifications, and Mr. John Shaw was appointed Chief Judge.

Mr. Farquhar had already won the confidence of nearly all the inhabitants, when on the 8th April, 1811, he handed over the government to Major-General Ward, having not, up to then, received his commission from the King. However, on the 11th July, having received his commission as Governor of Mauritius, Bourbon, and Dependencies, he resumed his post in Mauritius.

Soon reciprocal confidence marked all transactions between the governing and governed bodies. The colonists could foresee a future full of prosperity, and everyone strove to do his best to maintain concord and great courtesy towards one another. The greatest liberty was given to all enterprises. As far as possible, Government made only a few indispensable changes in the Administration, and every effort was made to keep the form most in harmony with the colonists' temperament. The Governor found the inhabitants extremely alive to kindness and disposed to accept any equitable measures rendered necessary. Within six months after the occupation of the island, commerce and agriculture had surprisingly developed.

The Colony's welfare had been abandoned by the French Government, and notwithstanding General Decaen's genius and efforts, the island would not have

remained long without being reduced to a deplorable state. The British Government put into circulation large amounts of money, and everyone was soon anxious to enter into some new enterprise.

Apart from some trifling discussions between young officers and some excited youths, good-feeling prevailed everywhere in the frequent meetings at which the members of both great nations met. Mistrust everywhere disappeared and was replaced by strong feelings of friendship.

Smallpox started in August, but the outbreak was fought with energetic measures and vaccine, and was not serious. In June, 1812, the first races took place at the Champ de Mars, with great ceremony, under the direction of Colonel Draper, a member of the Mauritius Turf Club. These were attended by a dense crowd of spectators coming from all parts of the island. Since that day, every year, the Colony owes to this excellent organisation a few days of great sport which usually attracts thousands of inhabitants from all over the island.

General Sir Alexander Campbell relieved General Ward on the 5th January, 1813, as Officer Commanding the Troops.

On the 14th, the Act of Parliament abolishing the slave trade came into force. Mr. Farquhar, realising the great danger of immediately putting it into force, kept his eyes shut for a time, being sure that he would soon obtain better results by persuading the colonists and appealing to their good-will.

The first case of hydrophobia occurred in the last days of January, the victim being a young man of good family, and an order to kill all the dogs of the

Colony was executed, when no less than 2,000 of these useful animals were killed.

In February an enormous boa-constrictor, 15 feet long and 15 inches in diameter, was killed by Messrs. de Fleuriot and Cazelens at Le Réduit cascade. It appears that the animal was landed from a vessel coming from India, which was wrecked off Grande Rivière. On the 28th June the vessel *Orient*, containing powder, took fire in the harbour and exploded. Two young Mauritians forming part of the crew were killed.

In August Lord Moira, the Governor-General of Bengal, visited Mauritius. The colonists gave him a hearty welcome in return for his kind treatment of French prisoners of war in India.

On the 15th October, 1814, news of the *Treaty of Paris* reached Mauritius. By it this island was definitely ceded to Great Britain, while Bourbon was restored to France. Port Louis and Mahebourg were immediately opened to foreign trade, and the whole colony soon benefited by this measure.

In 1815, when Napoleon returned to France, a small conspiracy to overthrow the British rule made some ground, and a few colonists assembled at Plaine Magnien to march on the troops quartered at Mahebourg. The plan was disclosed, and General Butler, reaching the spot on the day arranged (4th September), met some 400 men, who scattered on the arrival of his troops. Two ringleaders were arrested and deported.

The year 1816 was marked by a terrible fire which took place on the 25th September at 7 p.m. and raged all night. A fourth part of the capital was burnt down. The Governor's help was worthy of all praise.

He assisted the many victims by allowing them sheltering-places in Government buildings and ordering free distribution of clothes and food.

On the 4th December Mr. Farquhar laid the foundation-stone of the fine dock closing the harbour. On the 13th August, 1817, Major-General Hall relieved General Sir Edward Butler as Officer Commanding the Troops.

On the 8th September Mr. Farquhar appointed "Councils of Commune" in Port Louis and in the districts. These were a kind of municipality. On the 19th November Mr. Farquhar proceeded on leave by the *Phaeton*, leaving the government to Major-General Hall. A very enthusiastic demonstration rewarded the trouble this Governor had taken to meet the colonists' wishes. The new acting Governor was of too military a character, and soon strongly made up his mind that the slave trade was being carried on on a very large scale all over the island. To repress this he used every means, ill-disposing many of the inhabitants. Planters were worried by frequent domiciliary searches made under the pretext of some illegal introduction of slaves. These, for sheer revenge, would denounce cases against their masters, who, though innocent, were caused much trouble.

On the 25th January, 1818, a violent hurricane damaged the Royal College, while five vessels in harbour were wrecked.

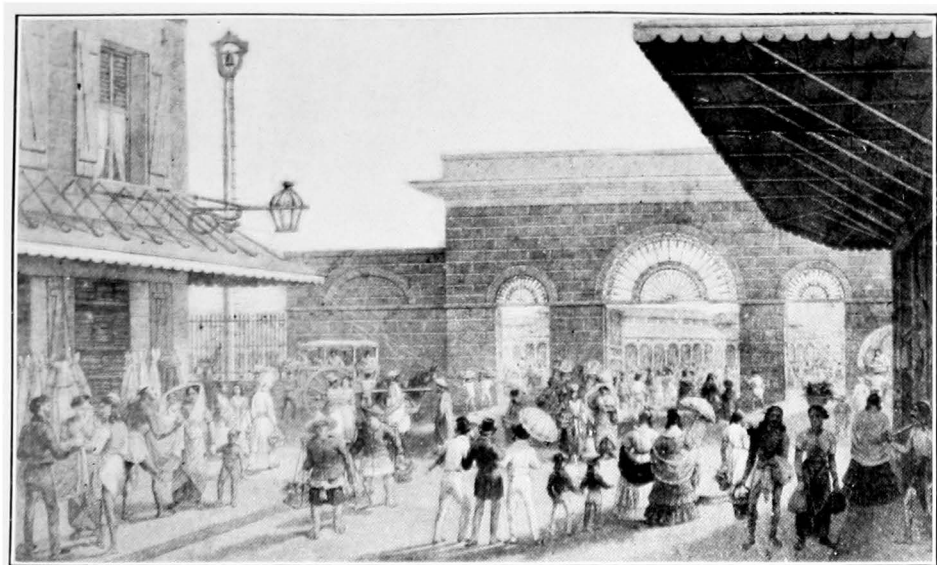
On the night of the 28th February, a terrible cyclone caused much havoc. The theatre in the Company's Gardens and many houses were destroyed. The population suffered terribly from the consequences of this succession of catastrophes. The Councils of

Commune insisted on more help being given by the Government, whereupon the Governor dispersed them (6th March, 1818). Colonel Dalrymple, who held broader views, allowed the re-establishment of the Communes in December.

Some time after, Major-General Hall ordered the seizure of vessels containing contraband goods, on their passage to Port Louis. The Admiralty Court decided that it was incompetent itself to judge matters of this kind. The Governor thereupon suspended the Commissary of Justice (Mr. G. Smith), the Procureur-General, and the Collector of Customs (Colonel Draper). In November they were reinstated by order of the Secretary of State; and on the 10th December, 1818, Major-General Hall was ordered to hand over his power to the next officer in command, Colonel Dalrymple, who acted for two months until the arrival of Major-General Darling, 5th February, 1819, as Acting Governor and Officer Commanding the Troops. Though of feeble character, the new Governor was animated with the best intentions, but soon allowed himself to be led by other functionaries strongly hostile to the Mauritians. On the 29th October H.M. frigate *Topaz*, Captain Lumley, arriving from Ceylon, anchored at Port Louis. Cases of a strange sickness very much resembling cholera had been discovered during the voyage from Ceylon. However, the Governor did not consider the advice given by the Councils of Commune and allowed the crew to land. The sick were sent to the Civil Hospital.

On the 18th November, 1819, cholera morbus appeared in Port Louis and made rapid progress. It soon became a terrible catastrophe. There was no time to bury the dead bodies. Port Louis was deserted,





PORT LOUIS : THE MARKET IN OLDEN TIMES  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis

and the colonists, panic-stricken, fled to the country. The Councils of Commune met and vigorously insisted on the departure of the vessel. The Governor finally consented to this. Meanwhile someone denounced to the Governor some supposed introduction of slaves. Major-General Darling, exasperated at having met such antagonism from the Councils of Commune, openly expressed his opinion that the epidemic was only a punishment for the very disgraceful traffic in slaves which was being carried out by the inhabitants. The Councils of Commune met and insisted on the Governor withdrawing what he had said. The Governor then dissolved the Councils of Commune and suspended the Commandants de Quartier on 17th February, 1820. On the 13th April, thanksgiving services were held in all churches on the cessation of the epidemic, which had caused the death of some 10,000 victims. Governor Farquhar returned on the 5th July, with the title of Baronet, and assumed duties the next day. Public rejoicings were held on his return, and a *Te Deum* was sung in the churches. Impeached before the Cabinet for having sacrificed the Government's interest to acquire popularity in Mauritius, he defended his case before the Secretary of State and cleared himself. To alleviate general distress, he held a meeting at Government House. Local charity committees were organised and a distribution of food to the poor arranged. On resuming duties, the Governor reopened Port Louis to foreign trade, but, unfortunately, under certain restrictions. Sir Robert, who had already partly succeeded in preventing the introduction of slaves by appeals to the honour of the inhabitants, continued his work, and at his departure the trade had

been nearly entirely suppressed without coercive measures. In February, 1822, some slaves assembled on the Pouce Mountain and appointed a Malagasy named *Ratsitatane* as their leader and decided to come down to Port Louis, when they hoped the other slaves would revolt to fight for their independence. Laizaf, one of the ringleaders, denounced the plot to the police. On the 22nd, at 4 p.m., a few white flags were unfurled on the mountain as the signal for revolt, while the armed band of maroons came down. They were met by some soldiers. After firing a few volleys at random, they fled. Ratsitatane and twenty-five of his followers were captured. Ratsitatane and one Latulipe were executed and their heads exposed at their meeting-place. Laizaf was condemned to penal servitude for life, while the others had long sentences of hard labour passed upon them.

On the 19th March the coin called *token*, sent from India for use in Mauritius, was put into circulation.

A new theatre was opened on the 11th June, 1823. A society of amateurs got up many good pieces and amused big audiences until the arrival of a professional troupe in October.

Sir Robert Farquhar left Mauritius on the 20th May. He was much regretted by all the colonists. Several banquets were given in his honour, and he received many addresses. A large crowd of inhabitants of all classes bade good-bye to the Governor, who had won their esteem. Major-General Darling, again temporarily at the head of Government, endeavoured to gain good opinion during the twenty-three days of his administration. On the 12th June, 1823, Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole assumed the government. Kind, loyal, and

active, he was not long in winning the esteem of the population. On arriving, he began to work for the prosperity of the island. He encouraged cultivation, which during the later period of the government of Mr. Farquhar had already been much extended.

On the 23rd February, 1824, the island was visited by a violent cyclone. The upper part of the Royal College was destroyed, while many houses were brought down, killing their occupants. The whole country suffered severely, sugar factories, dwellings, and crops being all seriously damaged.

The year 1825 presented various changes in the administration which have affected the subsequent fate of the island: The first of these was the admission of the sugars of Mauritius into English markets. The sugar export from Mauritius had been subjected to an extra tax of ten shillings per hundredweight (in favour of West Indian sugars). Sir Robert Farquhar had on different occasions appealed against this to the Home authorities, but without success. Sir Lowry Cole continued this complaint, and finally in June, 1825, the export of the Colony's sugar was relieved of the extra tax. This was announced on the 4th August, and soon everyone turned to sugar-cane cultivation, which resisted more readily the violence of cyclonic gales. Cotton, coffee, indigo, and nutmeg cultivations were all abandoned for the sugar-cane. Roads were opened and steam mills imported. The crop of 1827 reached 45,000,000 pounds against 20,000,000 pounds in 1825.

The new Council of Government was established on the 19th August, and caused general satisfaction, though it was composed entirely of official members,

and the public had no voice in its deliberations. The clergy were now to be helped by the establishment of *fabriques* appointed in each district during the year. In July, 1826, the Bathurst Canal, due to the interest shown in the work by Mr. Farquhar, was completed and gave excellent water to the town. A Chamber of Commerce, under Government supervision, was established on the 12th September, 1827.

A Commission of Inquiry was appointed to report upon the administration of the Cape, Ceylon, and Mauritius. The Commissioners—Major Colebrooke, Messrs. Blair and Bigg—arrived at Mauritius on the 1st October, 1826, and remained in the Colony for nearly two years, when they heard the evidence of a few persons. A year later (1828) they published their report, which contained exaggerated accusations about the barbarous treatment inflicted on slaves in Mauritius, while suggesting very few reasonable recommendations for the Civil Service.

On the 26th December, 1827, while some repairs were being made to a Government office near the Company's Gardens, a large leaden coffin was discovered, and was found to contain the remains of the wife and child of Labourdonnais. These were removed with great ceremony to the Roman Catholic Cathedral. The building had served, very long ago, as the chapel of the founder of the Colony. On the 27th February, 1828, the streets of Port Louis were renamed and the houses numbered.

The month of April was signalised by the visit of Sir Hudson Lowe, the severe guardian of Napoleon at St. Helena. Crowds hooted him as he passed, and some excited youths threw stones at him. After three days

of a most exciting and anxious time, Sir Hudson decided to leave the island.

On the 18th June, 1828, Sir Charles Colville assumed the government of the island. Sir Lowry Cole, who had been appointed Governor of the Cape, remained in the Colony until the 18th August before obtaining a vessel to take him there. On his departure he was presented with an address and a fine silver cup as a token of gratitude.

Sir Charles Colville was very kind and sympathetic. Called to govern Mauritius during the period of the general emancipation of slaves, he was not equal to meet the great troubles which were bound to arise.

Charming fancy-dress balls, the first of their kind, were given by Lady Colville—the first at Government House on the 22nd August and the second at Le Réduit on the 3rd November—and were attended by a large number of inhabitants.

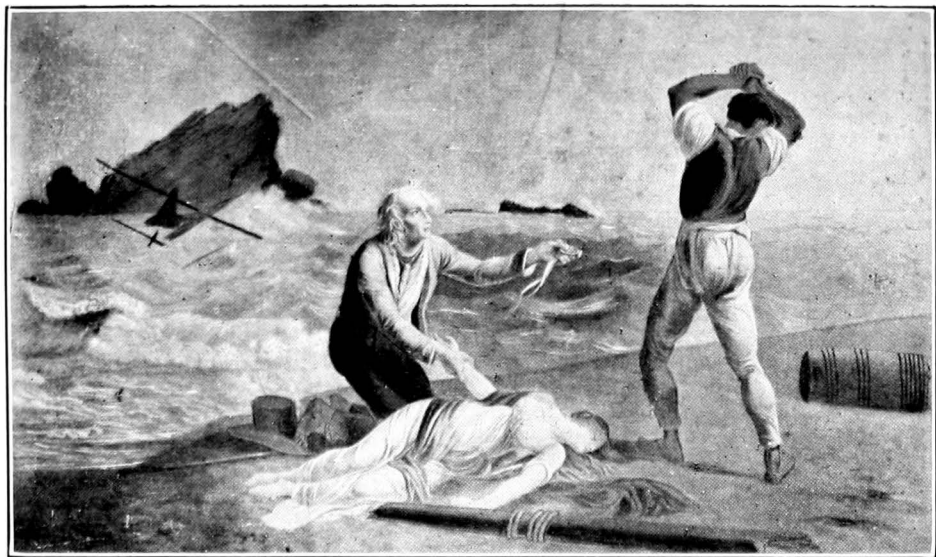
A new Chamber of Commerce, consisting of members elected by the commercial body, was established on the 25th October.

The Anti-Slavery Society in London succeeded in getting a series of hard and vexatious measures adopted to ameliorate the condition of slaves. Then followed the appointment of a Protector of Slaves in Mauritius (7th February, 1829) with extraordinary powers. The population strongly protested, as some of these powers were already vested in the Procureur-Général. The Protector, however, arrived, and soon proved to be very ill-disposed against the planters. His interventions always caused great difficulty. Some time after, the colonists learnt that the Cabinet at Home had ordered the immediate emancipation of all slaves. Such

a radical change, forced upon the Colony without preparation, greatly alarmed the population, who saw a menace to the security of their life, property, and commerce. On the 17th September, 1830, planters coming from all parts of the island held meetings in Port Louis to protest against this decision. The public opinion soon accused the Governor of not having strongly defended their interests. It was, however, proved later that he had done all he could to have emancipation enforced gradually, but had met with wild opposition from Home. On the 21st, at an extraordinary meeting, the colonists decided to send Adrien d'Épinay as their delegate to state their claims before the Colonial Office.

D'Épinay was also instructed to ask for the maintenance of the laws of the Colony as guaranteed at the capitulation: the election of a *Conseil Législatif* somewhat resembling the Constitution of 1791, suspended by Decaen in 1803; the admission of competent Mauritians to all posts of the Civil Service; and the liberty of the Press.

Adrien d'Épinay sailed on the 10th October, 1830, and was received with great courtesy by Lord Goderich, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, who acceded to many of his requests, and, two months after, postponed the order about the immediate emancipation of all slaves, and agreed to a Legislative Council composed half of official members and half of unofficial members selected by the Governor from the notables of the island. D'Épinay returned on the 25th October, 1831, and landed amidst a dense crowd, who cheered him. A great meeting took place, and he explained the results of his mission. As a token of gratitude, the



THE WRECK OF THE "ST. GÉRAN" AND DEATH OF VIRGINIA  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis



colonists presented him with a service in silver bearing an appropriate inscription.

A serious revolt of slaves took place on the 20th September on an estate at Rivière du Rempart, while in October a series of fires were lighted on estates by the slaves. The colonists met and asked that the Protector should be sent away.

The new *Legislative Council* met for the first time on the 23rd January, 1832, the old one being abolished by a proclamation of the 18th of the same month.

Ever since 1828, articles had been appearing in the newspapers in England containing false accusations about the barbarous treatment inflicted on slaves in Mauritius. The Order in Council of the 2nd November, 1831, regulating the rights and duties of masters and servants, was received in Mauritius on the 24th March, 1832. At the same time news reached the island that a Mr. John Jeremie, formerly Chief Judge at St. Lucia, had been appointed Procureur and Advocate-General of Mauritius.

Mr. Jeremie had published a book in London about the slave trade, which he urged should be abolished at once, and in his book he used harsh terms in speaking of the Mauritians. The latter at once saw in him an agent of the Anti-Slavery Society, sent to Mauritius to proceed with the immediate emancipation of slaves without any compensation. The population then made up its mind to oppose this by every means in its power.

During this time the slaves, who were aware of the whole matter, became insubordinate and even provoking. On the 27th March a great deputation of colonists assembled at Government House. Addresses from

all classes of the community poured in, asking for a delay in the putting into force of the Emancipation Bill, and for permission for the colonists to arm themselves and form local corps of volunteers to meet the danger into which the Colony was now plunged.

The Governor granted these requests. The corps was formed, and the volunteers soon numbered 2,500. Mr. Henri Adam was appointed Colonel and Mr. Félix Barbé Lieutenant-Colonel of the corps. The volunteers did good work, as their presence in different places where revolts of slaves had started soon calmed the excitement.

On the 3rd June, 1832, Mr. Jeremie arrived on board the *Ganges*, which anchored at Port Louis. The news of his arrival was known all over the island in the afternoon. People coming from all parts walked all night, and on the 4th, in the morning, an enormous crowd had assembled in front of Government House. All the trade of Port Louis was suspended and not a single shop opened its doors. The bazaar itself was closed. It had been decided that *Inertia*, as the strike was called, would continue as long as Mr. Jeremie remained in the Colony. The Port Louis volunteers assisted the troops in trying to maintain public order. On reaching town, Sir Charles Colville, the Governor, was met by the crowd, and numerous addresses were presented to him asking that the Procureur-Général should not be allowed to disembark, to prevent terrible disorders. The Governor could not meet their desire, but promised that Mr. Jeremie should not land until the population was calmed. On the next morning Mr. Jeremie landed at 6 a.m. under strong military escort. He was hooted by excited

crowds. At Government House he was sworn in and took his seat in the Council in the middle of an unprecedented disorder. His installation at the Supreme Court was postponed on account of the general excitement prevailing. The shops and the bazaar remained closed. The slaves revolted at many different places. The Governor issued a proclamation to warn them that they could only expect the King's protection by obeying the law and their masters. Arrests were made among the educated population for purchasing fire-arms. On the 11th the Governor decided to form a corps of civil servants. On the 12th the harbour and transport work was suspended, and Government had to take on the job.

The 22nd June had been appointed as the day on which Mr. Jeremie would be installed at the Supreme Court. He slipped out by the back-door of Government House and reached the Court between mounted police, unobserved. Mr. Virieux, the Vice-President of the Court, was absent, and the ceremony had to be postponed, to the fury of Mr. Jeremie. He now endeavoured to return to Government House, but on reaching the door the crowd pushed him back. A military guard was sent for; but Mr. Jeremie was to have an anxious time. Soon afterwards, his hat was knocked off many times by dense and threatening crowds. A little before entering Government House, Captain Congreve of the 29th, who commanded, was hit by a stone, while Mr. Jeremie was collared and struck. He finally lost his temper and ordered the soldiers to charge the mob, and several persons were wounded. In front of Government House the police had to charge the crowd, which received them with umbrellas. Here

the situation became exceedingly serious, and Mr. Jeremie had a very narrow escape. To assure himself of the opinion of the mass of the population, the Governor allowed a meeting to be held. This took place on the 27th, when thousands of colonists attended and unanimously decided, in the midst of terrible excitement, that Mr. Jeremie should leave the Colony as soon as possible. The Governor then submitted the question to the Legislative Council on the 7th July, and there again it was adopted by an immense majority. Meanwhile shops up-country had also closed their doors. Sir Charles at last decided to ask Mr. Jeremie to return home. As soon as it was known that Mr. Jeremie was leaving the island, the shops reopened after forty-five days of strike. Mr. Jeremie embarked on the 28th July at 6 a.m.

Several inhabitants of Grand Port were arrested on the 23rd October, 1832, and accused of having conspired against the Government. On being brought to trial they were all discharged on the 26th December.

On arrival in England, Mr. Jeremie, who had promised that he would come back to return the bad treatment he had received in Mauritius, made a strong report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the population, which he called a gang of most dangerous rebels, who had all taken up arms to oppose by violence the execution of His Majesty's orders. Lord Gode- rich, who only heard one version, decided that Mr. Jeremie should return to Mauritius.

Meanwhile Sir Charles Colville, having had enough, asked to be relieved.

Sir William Nicolay, C.B., his successor, reached Port Louis on the 30th January, 1833, extremely

nervous, as the island had been reported to be in rebellion.

On the 1st February, 1833, Colonel Draper, Collector of Customs and Official Member of the Legislative Council, and Mr. Virieux, Vice-President of the High Court, were suspended for having voted for the return of Mr. Jeremie. The next day Messrs. Prosper d'Epinay and Edouard Pitot resigned their seats on the Council. On the 8th two other members, Mr. Lucas and Mr. Gaillardon, resigned. During the following month great difficulty was experienced in finding other members, as several influential colonists refused the honour.

Next, a long proclamation appeared disbanding all local forces under pain of death, and stating that martial law would be proclaimed and strictly enforced if there was any further trouble. The colonists decided to send Mr. Adrien d'Epinay a second time to England to explain the real position to the Secretary of State, and show him how he had been misled by Mr. Jeremie. Mr. d'Epinay and Sir Charles Colville left Mauritius on the 26th February, 1833.

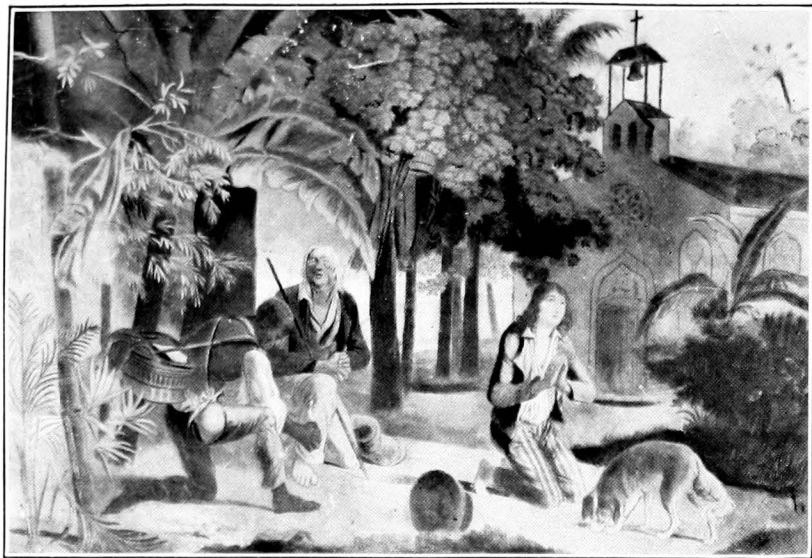
On the 29th March Mr. Jeremie came back to Mauritius on H.M.S. *Jupiter*, which also landed 500 soldiers to reinforce the garrison. Though exasperated, the colonists decided to remain quiet this time. This completely upset Mr. Jeremie. He was installed in his post in the Council and at the Court without any trouble. Mr. Reddie was also installed as President of the Court of First Instance. More wild at the prevailing tranquillity, Mr. Jeremie succeeded in convincing the Governor that a general conspiracy was being planned, and soon a proclamation appeared (May 24th) ordering the volunteers to surrender

their arms and ammunition within ten days (the proclamation also spoke of "cannons"!). The volunteers had never been equipped; only sporting guns were in their possession, and this was quite lawful. As neither arms nor ammunition were forthcoming, many fruitless searches were made. Mr. Adam (a French ex-colonel), who had been appointed Colonel of the Volunteers, was now held responsible, and was soon "considered as a foreigner" and deported by order of the Secretary of State (July 5th).

Then Mr. Jeremie decided to revive the Grand Port Sedition affair, when in October, 1832, several gentlemen in Mahebourg had been accused of having prepared an attack on the troops and an attempt to overthrow the Government.

Messrs. Brodelet, de Keating, de Fenouillot, de Robillard, Bignoux, and Grandemange, were arrested on the 25th August, 1833, by order of the Procureur-Général, and imprisoned on a charge of high treason. These gentlemen were kept 210 days in prison, during which time Mr. Jeremie was preparing his plan to challenge the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in this special matter. In the hope of having Judges appointed according to his own desire, he used all means to influence the Governor. He challenged Chief Judge Blackburn as incompetent to sit, from his being connected with an estate. The accused were all rich planters of Grand Port.

The Executive Council, which the Governor summoned to study the case, rejected the request (13th February, 1834) of the Procureur-Général. The Council concluded by passing a severe and marked censure on Mr. Jeremie's proceeding, declaring his mode of treating



PAUL PRAYING ON VIRGINIA'S TOMB  
From an old drawing at the Museum of Port Louis

the Judges unwarrantable. Mr. Reddie now suggested that the Judges of the Court be suspended until the Home Government had decided on Mr. Jeremie's challenge. This the Governor did not accept. The Great Conspiracy Plot was started on the 10th March, 1834, and continued during no less than sixteen long sittings. Mr. Jeremie himself prosecuted, showing a most vindictive character, stupidly incapable of mastering his temper. Quietly and calmly Mr. Prosper d'Epinau, who was defending the case in company of three other barristers, upset all the charges, and on the 29th the accused were acquitted on all counts amidst great cheering.

Mr. Jeremie appealed to the Privy Council against the decision of the Legislative Council and the verdict of the Court. This brought the whole case before the Secretary of State, who, after having heard of Mr. Jeremie's behaviour towards the Supreme Court and the length of time which had elapsed before the trial of the case, ordered his dismissal. The Governor informed Mr. Jeremie that the Secretary of State observed that at the same time as His Majesty regretted the loss of his talents and zeal, he considered they were outbalanced by his want of judgment and total absence of command of temper.

The next day a dense crowd at the theatre cried "À bas Jérémie!" "God save the King!" and the National Anthem was most enthusiastically sung. Mr. John Reddie, President of the Tribunal of First Instance, whose behaviour in support of Mr. Jeremie had been reported to the Secretary of State, was also dismissed (30th September), and both he and Mr. Jeremie left the Colony on the 29th October.



The order of deportation against Mr. Adam was revoked and he returned to Mauritius. He arrived on the 19th January, 1835, on the same day as Mr. Adrien d'Épinay, who was back from his second mission to England. Their arrival gave rise to a great public demonstration of joy. Mr. d'Épinay had met with much antagonism in England, yet if his mission had not secured many great advantages it saved the Colony from some of the most dreadful measures which the members of the Anti-Slavery Society were trying to impose on the population. Soon after, all trouble disappeared. The emancipation of slaves was started on the 1st February, and no disorder occurred. The principle of compensation adopted by Parliament was accepted, and things went on quite smoothly.

Of course, now that the slaves were free, they refused to engage themselves as labourers, and the planters' position became serious. It was then decided to import Indians from India, but it took some time before this was finally arranged. On the 20th September some Madras immigrants were introduced on five years' engagements. On the 8th December the indemnity for 68,613 slaves, amounting to £2,112,632, was paid by the Home Government.

In July, 1836, the first branch of a Steam Navigation Company was established in Mauritius, and the island was soon visited by the first steamer. On the 10th October the port of Mahebourg was reopened to commerce, and soon this beautiful harbour contained some fifteen vessels taking freight. On December 12th the Government Savings Bank was opened in Port Louis.

In February, 1838, a Mauritian Association was formed to explain the colonists' wants to the Home authorities.

On the 11th March, as a consequence of exaggerated complaints which had been made to the Indian Government about the abuses of vessels taking a much larger number of immigrants than they could carry, the Indian Government suspended immigration. So far 23,200 labourers had been imported. Labour became scarce, and wages rose.

On the 1st September the Commercial Bank started business.

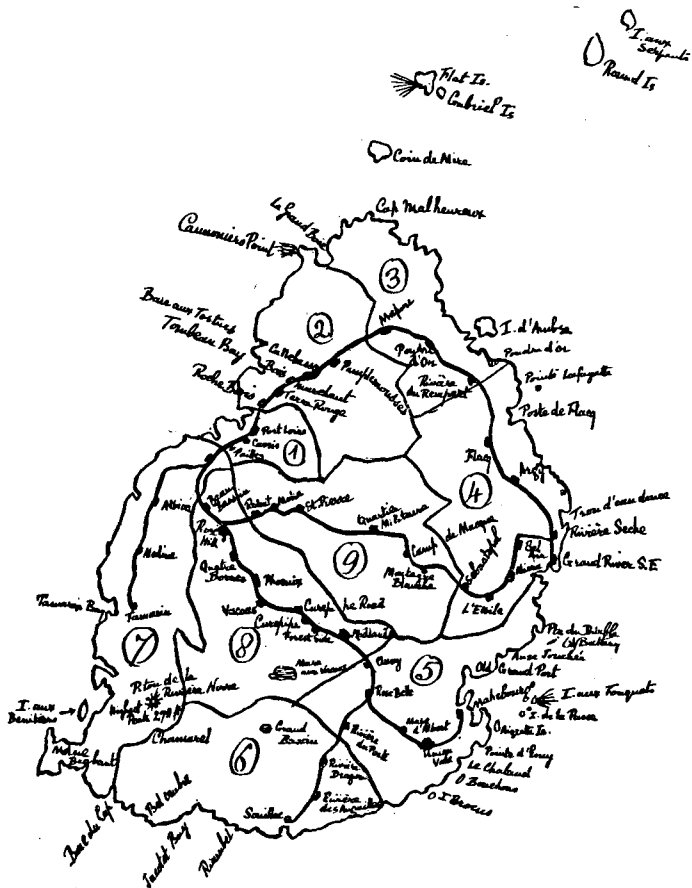
On the 11th October planters held a great meeting to ask that the Indian immigration be resumed.

During the last days of August, 1839, two French frigates—the *Isère*, Captain Le Barbier du Tinant, and the *Lancier*, Captain de Chauffray—entered Trou Fanfaron to be repaired. A week later the British vessel *Greenlaw*, Captain Driver, entered the harbour. The French captains had lent their flags to decorate the ballroom of some families who had invited them to a dance on shore, after which they went and spent a few days with friends in Grand Port. Meanwhile the flags were returned and the crew hoisted them to dry. Unintentionally a British flag was placed at the lower end of the line. Captain Driver thought his country had been insulted, and on the next morning ordered the French colours to be attached under his vessel's bowsprit. A French officer boarded the *Greenlaw* and asked Captain Driver to remove the French flag from where it was, trailing in the sea, whereupon the latter said that he was only returning the insult offered to his country; and, notwithstanding the French officer's

explanation, that the arrangement of the flags had been unintentional and unfortunate, Captain Driver refused to meet the French officer's request. The French commanders and the French Consul called on the Governor and explained the whole matter. The Governor ordered Captain Driver to hoist the French flag on his vessel. A few days later Sir William requested the French commanders to hoist the Union Jack. This they refused to do, insisting on the fact that there had been no bad intention on their part and they had nothing to repair. The Governor then ordered that the crews should have no communication with land except on special permission. Unaware of this, Mr. de Tinant went ashore and took dinner at a friend's. On returning to his vessel, he was stopped and locked up until the next morning, when he was released on the Governor's order.

Both frigates left on the next day for Bourbon, and the flag incident was the subject of a long correspondence between the two Governments in Europe.

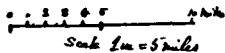
Sir William left Mauritius on the 20th February, 1840, regretted by none. Colonel Power, Officer Commanding the Troops, was sworn in as Acting Governor. On the 26th May the remains of Adrien d'Épinay, who had died in Paris on the 9th December, 1839, arrived on board the *Amphitrite* to be buried, according to his will, in his native land. On the 1st June the funeral took place at the Cathedral, and was followed by a dense crowd about a mile long. At Pamplemousses Cemetery, where he was buried, a thousand friends had accompanied his coffin to its last resting-place. Many speeches were made, recounting the career of one of Mauritius' most distinguished sons.



MAURITIUS (1810-1914)

Districts:

- |                       |               |                   |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Port Louis         | 4. Flacq      | 7. Black River    |
| 2. Pamploumousses     | 5. Grand Port | 8. Paines Wilhems |
| 3. Rivière du Rempart | 6. Savanne    | 9. Moka           |



On the 6th of July Sir Lionel Smith, K.C.B., assumed the government. Of kind but energetic character and broad views, he did his best to meet the planters' difficulty in obtaining labour. From January to April, 1841, the price of sugar reached high figures. On the 19th July the English text of law was declared the only legal version to be used.

On the 2nd January, 1842, Sir Lionel died after having contracted pneumonia while attending to his sick wife, who also died on the 5th. They were both buried in Port Louis Cemetery. Colonel Staveley assumed the duties of Acting Governor until the arrival of Sir William Gomm, K.C.B., on the 21st November. On the 23rd the Governor made his opening speech to the Council in French, and announced the formal authorisation of Indian immigration. This much rejoiced the inhabitants, and particularly the planters. Sir William took great interest in the matter, and the census taken on the 6th November of the following year showed that the number of immigrant labourers amounted to 25,000 men and 3,000 women.

In 1843 the Colony went through a terrible financial crisis which caused much anxiety. The great quantity of paper in circulation during the last month of the preceding year had driven the specie out of the island, and every effort had now to be made by Government for the withdrawal of paper money and the reimbursement of its value.

In April, 1844, a violent epizooty caused the death of some 20,000 animals, including 12,000 horned cattle and 6,000 pigs. The money market improved much towards the end of the year.

During 1844 two remarkable introductions were

made which perfected sugar manufacture. The first was the vacuum pan, which was installed on the Labourdonnais and Phœnix Estates; the second was the apparatus called Wetzell, which was installed on Rochebrune Estate. With the help of these two kinds of apparatus the quality of sugar produced was considerably improved, while much time and fuel were economised.

Mauritius, which was carrying on an important trade with Madagascar, was now faced with a serious problem. The King of the Hovas, Radama, who had never interfered in the strangers' settlement and commerce in his country, had died, and his widow, Ranavala Manjaka, had succeeded him. She now displayed a totally different attitude, expelled the missionaries, started a most unfair treatment to the settlers and traders, and interfered in all their doings.

In consequence of serious complaints, the Government of Mauritius decided to obtain explanations. Captain Kelly, of H.M.S. *Conway*, was sent to Tamatave on the 13th October, 1844, to exact entire satisfaction for the repeated insults proffered against the residents in Madagascar and the commerce carried on by them. Captain Kelly was met on his way by a French man-of-war under Commodore Desfosse.

Ranavala now ordered all strangers either to naturalise themselves at once or depart. As time was refused, the French and English decided to obtain it by force. It was decided to bombard Tamatave, and its forts were attacked, but the feeble allied force was repulsed, leaving a few prisoners in the hands of the Hovas, who cut off their heads and stuck them up on poles on the beach. Ranavala then closed Madagascar

to foreign trade. This had a very serious consequence. Meat in Mauritius rose to famine prices, while agriculture had to suffer much from the want of cattle for labour. Those engaged in the cattle trade were thrown out of employment. Madagascar had also been a great outlet for Mauritius cotton goods, cutlery, ironware, etc. Sir William submitted to the Home authorities a plan for the conquest of the island, but this was abandoned owing to the French claims on it.

The patent slip of Messrs. Scott, and Murray was opened during the course of 1846 by the Governor in front of the civil and military authorities and thousands of spectators, who hailed with delight and great wonder the sight of a large ship moving on dry land.

A census taken on the 1st August, 1846, showed the population of the island to be composed of—

			<i>Males.</i>		<i>Females.</i>
General	..	..	30,148	..	25,331
Ex-apprentices	..	..	28,142	..	21,223
Indians	..	..	48,935	..	7,310
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			109,225	..	53,864

On the 15th September, 1846, an Order in Council, after considering a petition from a certain category of inhabitants of the island, stated that from the 15th July, 1847, proceedings before all Courts would be carried on only in English. This created much discontent, as the population always cherished old customs.

On the 14th July, 1847, a young barrister who had already made a name for himself, Mr. Cécicourt Antelme, was defending in French, for the last time, a case before the Assize Court. He prolonged the debate intentionally, so as to carry it to a late hour.

While he was finishing his pleading, the clock of the Cathedral near by struck midnight. Then, in a most remarkable speech, he bade good-bye to his mother tongue, causing great emotion in the crowd that had invaded the Court buildings. On leaving the Court he was carried shoulder high and loudly cheered.

During the month the inhabitants of Port Louis held a public meeting at the Hôtel d'Europe, which was situated at the place of the present Hôtel de Ville, and asked the Governor to appoint a committee to take special care of the capital. The police stopped the meeting. The organisers then petitioned the Secretary of State, who acceded to their request. The Municipal Corporation was constituted by Ordinance No. 16 of 1849, drafted by the Procureur-Général, Mr. Prosper d'Épinay.

Sir William Gomm left the Colony on the 5th May. Colonel T. Blanchard acted as Governor up to the 21st, when Colonel R. Sweeting took over the acting appointment until the arrival, on the 8th June, of Sir George Anderson.

On the 1st September Government currency notes of Rs. 5 and 10 were issued for the first time.

On February 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, 1850, the first municipal elections took place. Six hundred electors voted and the eighteen Councillors were proclaimed on the 28th. On the 4th March following, the Governor selected Mr. Louis Léchelle as Mayor, and Mr. Felix Koenig as Deputy-Mayor. In 1903 the number of Councillors was reduced to twelve, three for each ward.

During this year Judicial Ordinances altered the organisation of the Courts of the Colony. The Cour d'Appel was now to be called Supreme Court, and con-



sisted of the Chief Judge and two or more Puisne Judges. This Court was invested with the powers of the Court of Queen's Bench and made a Court of Equity. The Court of First Instance was abolished and district courts established. Most of these laws were not put into force before 1852.

Sir George was still busily engaged with matters of public utility when he was appointed Governor of Ceylon. Public dinners were given to thank him, and addresses from all parts poured in. His departure was much regretted by all sections of the community. Major-General Sutherland acted from the 19th October to the arrival of Sir John Macaulay Higginson, C.B., on the 8th January, 1851, as Governor. Anxious to do his best to meet the colonists' wishes, the new Governor visited the whole island (June) to make their acquaintance and study their wants. He received from all sides a most cordial and agreeable welcome.

On the 12th August the *Queen of the South*, the first steamer opening a regular monthly service with England, arrived, having made her trip in forty-three days.

During the course of the year, the turbine, the greatest improvement in the manufacture of sugar, was introduced in the island. The process of drying the sugar, with all its inconveniences, was now abandoned, and considerable time was saved, while the colour of the crystals of sugar was much improved.

In September the influenza called "grippe" broke out, and in a few days there was scarcely a house in the island where half of its members were not laid up and unable to attend to their duties.

During 1852 the Judicial Ordinances were put into

force. The Indian immigration was resumed. Though Indian labour was a great necessity, the inhabitants dreaded the introduction from India of contagious diseases prevailing there.

In September, 1853, a short time after His Excellency's trip to Seychelles, on account of failing health, the ports of Madagascar were reopened to foreign trade. Soon vessels from there brought a large quantity of oxen, ducks, fowls, and pigs, which were sold at very moderate prices. The Madagascar rice was also a great boon to the inhabitants of Mauritius.

On the 24th March, 1854, the S.S. *Sultana* arrived with cholera on board. Although the vessel was placed in quarantine, the disease broke out in the Central Prisons on the 15th May and soon raged furiously, the deaths reaching 207 in Port Louis alone on June 11th. Every family had to deplore the death of one of its members. Many persons were left to perish in their solitary agony, the death of many others being known only days after by the accidental discovery of their remains. The deaths became so numerous that great panic prevailed, and nearly all those who could fled to the rural districts, where the epidemic soon broke out and raged as furiously as in the capital. In Port Louis all the shops were closed, the streets deserted, and only funerals were to be met with. The calamity became so great that dead bodies had to be removed in carts. These could be seen going to and fro with a small bell ringing, while houses were broken open and dead bodies thrown into the carts and covered with lime. Many high members of the population were swept away, and even medical men perished on duty. The doctors and the clergy showed



THE ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS : PAMPLEMOUSSES

most heroic devotion, working day and night in hospitals and wherever their help was of great use.

The epidemic disappeared on the 4th August, having stricken 7,650 victims out of a population of 160,000. The Governor's health declining, he obtained leave of absence and left for England on the 14th April, 1854. General Sutherland assumed the duties of Acting Governor.

On the 18th January, 1855, Major-General Hay relieved General Sutherland and acted until the return of Sir John on the 11th June following.

During his sojourn in England the Governor had been busily engaged in obtaining immigration and a regular steam navigation service for Mauritius.

During 1856 the sugar increased in price beyond all expectation, and the prospects of the Colony were very brilliant, when on the 6th March cholera reappeared with great virulence, soon causing 80 deaths in Port Louis. On the 27th it reached its apogee in claiming 125 deaths in the capital alone, and then gradually declined in violence, to disappear on the 7th June, having caused some 3,532 deaths.

The lack of a proper quarantine station caused the passengers coming from India great privations and much discomfort. The Government of India, to whom these troubles were grossly exaggerated, suddenly stopped immigration. Some time after, however, the Government of Mauritius voted some £60,000 to provide quarantine quarters at Flat Island and at Canonnier's Point.

The first steam voyage through Aden was started on the 26th December, 1856, and the vessel from England, the S.S. *Higginson*, reached Mauritius on the 27th

January, 1857, proving the route the most prompt and advantageous.

On the 26th June news reached the Colony that immigration had been reallowed. The colonists learnt also with great delight, just as one of the largest crops was to be gathered, that the price of sugar had reached an unprecedented figure, and would probably rise, as it was in great demand in European markets.

On the 10th September, the Governor's health becoming worse, his Excellency left the island, being temporarily replaced by Major-General Hay, until the arrival of Sir William Stevenson, K.C.B., on the 20th November.

Of kind and sympathetic character, the new Governor soon appreciated the inhabitants and became their sincere supporter. The appointment of an engineer to arrange for the construction of railway-lines, which Sir James Higginson had asked for, was granted, and Mr. Longridge arrived on the 10th July, 1858, to carry out the survey of the island and suggest the proposed lines.

His report and plans were laid before the Council and adopted on the 24th February, 1859, and the work was started immediately.

On the 30th August the fine statue of Labourdonnais on the quay was unveiled with great ceremony. On July 18th the Governor's daughter was married to Lieutenant Marindin, R.E. Many colonists were invited, and the fête organised on the occasion proved a great success. Great friendship prevailed between the English and Mauritian communities.

In August, 1860, earthquake shocks were felt at different places in Grand Port. In September the

colonists petitioned the Queen to be allowed to use French as well as English in the Law Courts of the Colony. This request was refused.

Sir William, who had been ailing for some time died at Le Réduit on the 9th January, 1863, and was buried at Moka on the 12th.

He was much regretted by the whole community. He had been one of the best Governors that had administered the island, and his devoted character had won him universal popularity. At a meeting held at the Town Hall some days after his death, it was unanimously decided to raise a statue to the memory of the much beloved Governor. This, together with a statue of Adrien d'Épinay, was entrusted to the son of the latter, the great sculptor.

Major-General Johnstone acted as Governor until the arrival of Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., on the 26th November following.

Great and useful improvements were inaugurated during Sir Henry's administration. The Time Ball on the Signal Mountain was dropped for the first time on December 31st. On the 1st March, 1864, Ile aux Fouquets Lighthouse was first lighted. The North Line Railway to Pamplemousses was opened to traffic on the 23rd May.

A fine flower show was held at Government House on the 15th and 16th June. The Grand River railway bridge was completed on 10th June, 1865, and the Midland Line to Mahebourg opened to traffic on the 19th October. On the 9th November the town of Port Louis was first lighted by gas.

On the 9th September, 1864, occurred the death of Rev. Father Laval, a Roman Catholic missionary.

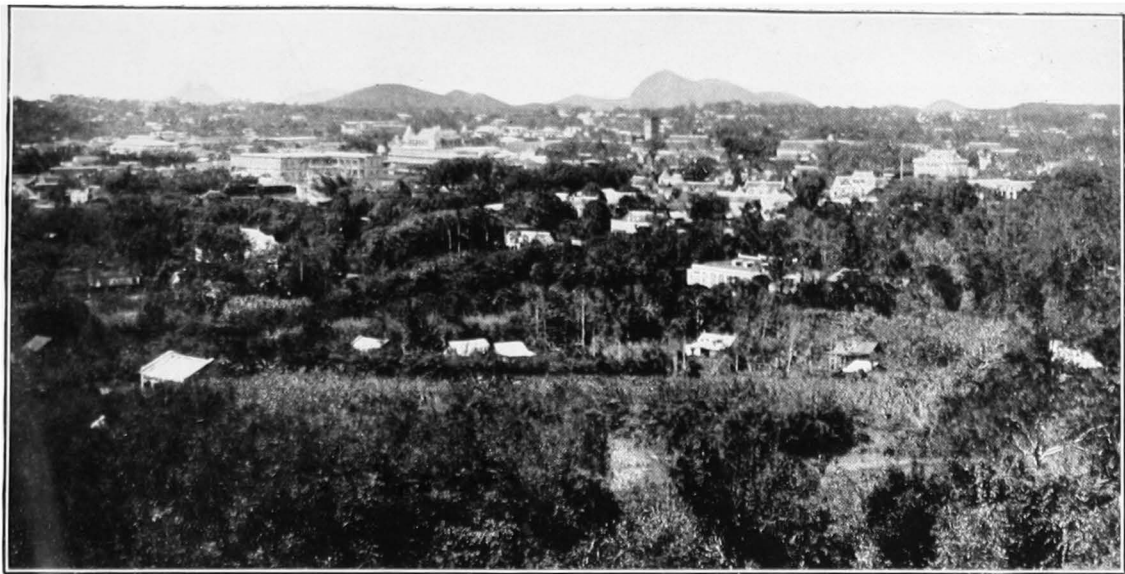
who had converted some 10,000 colonists, and who was much beloved by all sections of the community. This plunged the island in great sorrow. His funeral was attended by a thousand persons of all classes. He was buried at Ste. Croix. Hundreds of colonists visit his tomb every year on the anniversary of his death.

On the 12th February, 1865, heavy rains, which had fallen during several days, caused great inundations all over the island; twenty-one lives were lost in Port Louis and ten in the districts.

Three great financial companies started business: the Mauritius Land and Credit Agency Company, and the Crédit Foncier de l'Île Maurice, in March, 1864; the Crédit Foncier of Mauritius on the 2nd May. The latter is still in existence.

The unveiling of the statue of Adrien d'Épinay in the Company's Gardens on the 26th September, 1866, and that of Sir William Stevenson in front of Government House on the 20th June, 1867, were attended by a large crowd of colonists, anxious to pay a tribute of gratitude to the two great men who had done much for the welfare of the Colony.

In December, 1855, malaria started and spread rapidly. The epidemic was not long in raging furiously, chiefly in Port Louis, Pamplemousses, and Mapou. In April 7,850 deaths occurred in the island, but the epidemic declined in July, having then caused 31,930 deaths, or slightly over one-eighth of the whole population. Hospitals were opened everywhere, and all were crowded. In the streets only funeral processions could be seen; corpses were left at the doors of houses and picked up by carts. The Western Cemetery was enlarged. Heaps of bodies remained three and four



MAURITIUS: THE SECOND AND HEALTHIEST TOWN—CUREPIPE



days before it was possible to bury them. The Bois Marchand Cemetery was opened. Committees were formed to collect funds to help the sufferers, and generous contributions were received from England. Port Louis was soon deserted by all the colonists who had means. They settled up-country, when the small villages of Beau Bassin, Rose Hill, and Curepipe (to-day the finest town) were started, and proved of a much healthier climate.

An inquiry was held into the cause of the epidemic, and attributed it to several causes. One of these was the digging for the establishment of railway-lines. Others contended that the fever was introduced from India. The latter is most probable. However, up to the present, malaria is endemic in Mauritius and claims numerous deaths every year, chiefly among the poorer classes.

During the first fortnight of 1868 an islet, since named "Ilot Barkly," after His Excellency the Governor, was formed at the entrance of the harbour after a violent *raz de marée*.

On the 11th and 12th March one of the severest hurricanes on record visited the island and caused immense damage to property and shipping. The canes were levelled like grass. Large trees were uprooted, while a hundred houses in Port Louis and many up-country were blown to pieces. The three Roman Catholic churches and the Protestant Cathedral were seriously damaged. Great havoc was caused on the railways, nearly every station being unroofed, while two spans of the Grand River iron viaduct, each measuring 126 feet in length and weighing 120 tons, were actually lifted and hurled into the ravine. Happily,

passenger trains from Coromandel to Mahebourg were resumed on the 13th, five engines happening to be on the other side of the line before the cyclone. The passengers had to change trains after passing a narrow suspension bridge, hastily constructed across the river.

The running of goods trains was resumed five months later on a wooden bridge, which proved of excellent temporary use until the viaduct was rebuilt three years later.

During the hurricane some 100 lives were lost, while the interruption of the goods traffic caused much loss to revenue.

During the early part of 1870 great uneasiness was created by the proposed scheme of underground drainage for Port Louis, projected by the great engineer Mr. Bazalgette. Public meetings against the suggestion were held, and a petition signed by 7,000 colonists was sent to the Queen. The idea was abandoned.

The visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh on H.M.S. *Galatea* between the 24th May and 3rd June created much enthusiasm. All classes of the population united in doing honour to the first Prince of the Royal Blood of England to set foot on the shores of this dependency of the Crown. Great festivities were organised, comprising balls at Government House, the Masonic Lodge, Races, an Exhibition, a Soirée de Gala at the theatre, and a brilliant entertainment by the garrison at Mahebourg.

Sir Henry and Lady Barkly left on the 3rd June, 1870, and Brigadier-General Selby Smith was sworn in as Officer Administering the Government pending the arrival of Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, K.C.M.G., as Governor, on the 12th October following.

A serious hailstorm took place at Medine in the district of Black River on the 4th December, 1870.

Sir Arthur was much too sympathetic towards the Indians. Having shown himself very weak from the outset, the planters soon met with trouble. For the least thing the Indians on estates would leave their work to go and complain to the Governor. Some time after, a German of low birth, residing in Mauritius, a Mr. Plevitz, started to incite the labourers on estates to revolt. In August, 1871, he had published in England a pamphlet accusing the planters of shameful injustice towards the Indian labourers. This exasperated the planters, and the Chamber of Agriculture, at a great meeting, held on the 13th November, insisted on a regular inquiry into the matter being held, and asked that Mr. Plevitz be deported. A petition signed by all the planters was sent to the Queen. A long debate took place in Council on the 14th. On the 7th April, 1872, Messrs. W. E. Frere and V. A. Williamson, appointed Commissioners by Her Majesty to inquire into the condition of Indian immigrants in Mauritius, landed at Port Louis, and remained until October, 1873. In spite of the great efforts of Messrs. Virgile Naz, William Newton, and George Guibert, who were defending the planters, the report of the Commission, published in April, 1875, was far from being satisfactory, and a series of stringent measures for the welfare of Indians was recommended.

In June, 1873, Mr. Julyan, one of the Crown Agents for the Colonies, deputed by the Secretary of State, landed in Mauritius, and made a careful and minute inquiry into the civil establishment of the island with a view to effecting every possible economy.

An epidemic of measles from October, 1873, to May, 1874, claimed 2,400 victims. A hurricane in March, 1874, heavily injured the sugar crop.

Sir Arthur H. Gordon left the island on the 30th September, 1874, and his departure was not regretted. The planters were rather pleased. The Honourable Edouard Newton, Colonial Secretary, administered the government up to the 21st November, when Major-General Sir Arthur Purves Phayre, K.C.S.I., C.B., was sworn in as Governor. He arrived with instructions from home to put into force the recommended measures to protect the Indian immigrants. During 1877 Ordinances were passed to regulate the construction and maintenance of camps of Indian labourers on estates. These laws, many of which are still in force, were not, however, carried out before 1879.

The branch railway-line to Souillac, ten miles long, was opened to traffic on the 1st January, 1878.

On the 4th April Sir George Ferguson Bowen, the new Governor, assumed his duties. Sir Frederic Napier Broome was appointed Lieutenant-Governor (the first of the new title). He administered the government during the absence of the Governor, who passed nearly all his time on leave out of the Colony. A cattle plague raged during 1879, and destroyed some 30,000 animals. The Moka Railway Line was inaugurated on the 14th June, 1880, the work having been started in April, 1879.

During 1881 a plan of reforestation and planting of trees in river reserves—which were now increased, without any compensation to the owners, to 150 feet on both banks, instead of 50 feet as formerly—gave rise to violent debates in the Council of Government.

Great meetings took place on the 5th July and 8th September, when the report of Mr. Thompson—the expert sent out from home—was condemned. The Governor then appointed a Woods and Forests Board and a Forest Land Purchase Commission, and the question was settled later, meeting to some extent the wishes of the landowners. Compensation was ultimately given, and many of the Forest Laws amended.

The colonists, much dissatisfied with the new autocratic ways used by the officials in proposing measures seriously affecting their property, signed numerous petitions to Her Majesty the Queen, asking for a change in the political Constitution of the Colony. They asked that more elected members be allowed to form part of the Council of Government. The petitions were sent to the Queen in October, 1882. The request was refused by the Secretary of State. The matter was then dropped for some time.

### SIR JOHN POPE HENNESSY

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR JOHN POPE HENNESSY, K.C.M.G., Knight of Malta, Member of the House of Commons from 1859 to 1865, who had already made a name for himself as a great writer and orator, was appointed Governor of Mauritius on the 2nd December, 1882, and landed at Port Louis on the 3rd June, 1883. His Excellency was deeply beloved everywhere he had been Governor, chiefly at the Bahamas, the Windward Islands, and Hong-Kong.

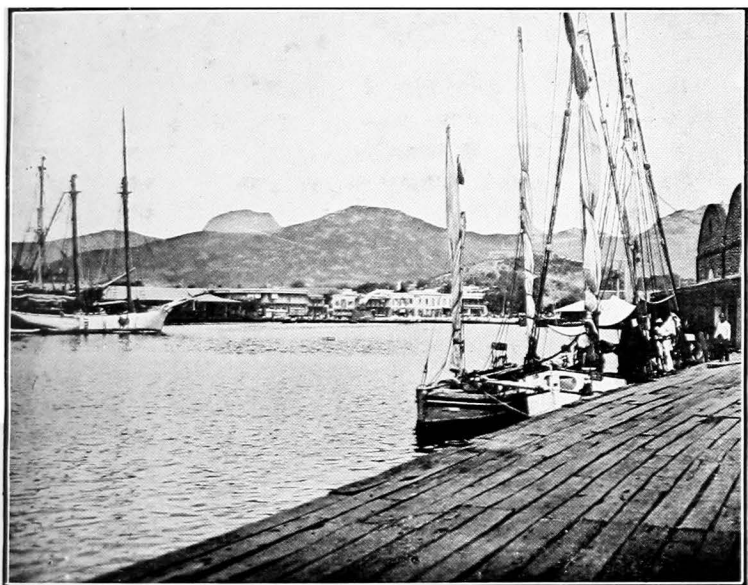
The new Governor spent the first months of his

administration studying the character of the inhabitants, and soon turned out their true friend. From the first speech he made at the Distribution of Prizes at the Royal College on the 3rd August, 1883, the colonists could appreciate the great liberal ideas of Sir John, and immediately reopened the question of a Reform of the Constitution. A new petition was addressed to Lord Derby, which Sir John strongly recommended. Contrary to all expectations, permission was granted to the island to have a *Legislative Council*. Up to the present change, the Constitution had consisted since 1831 of a *Council of Government*, composed of seventeen members in all—the Governor, eight salaried officers of the Crown, and eight members nominated by the Governor, so that Government could always command a majority.

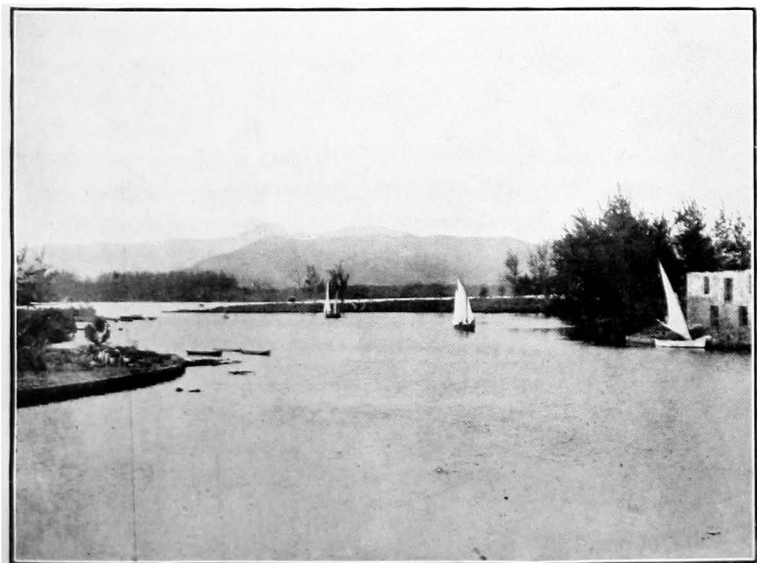
By Letters Patent of the 16th September, 1885, promulgated on the 20th October, a *Legislative Council* was allowed, composed of the Governor, eight *ex-officio* members, nine nominated, and ten "elected by the population."

The reformists organised a great popular banquet, which was given at the Royal College in honour of Sir John.

A few colonists, however, objected to the introduction of an elected representative body into the Council of Government, chiefly on two grounds: some thought the Asiatic voting element of the population would swamp the true Mauritian element, others feared the elected members would constitute an oligarchy of rich planters. Such was the position when the first elections took place on the 11th January, 1886, giving rise to very acute feelings on both sides.



PORT LOUIS: THE COASTERS' WHARF



MAHÉBOURG: RIVER SCENERY

The ten members elected were Dr. O. Beaugard and Mr. de Coriolis for Port Louis; Mr. Vincent Geoffrey, Rivière Noire; Mr. C. Antelme, C.M.G., Plaines Wilhems; Henry Léclezio, Moka; Charles Planel, Pamplemousses; Edgar Antelme, Rivière du Rempart; Henri Adam, Flacq; Sir Virgile Naz, K.C.M.G., Savanne; and Henri Portal, Grand Port.

The first meeting of the new Legislative Council took place on the 19th April. Sir John devoted himself heart and soul to the Mauritian cause. He strove to prove how unjust it was to prevent competent colonists from reaching the higher posts in the Civil Service.

Meanwhile the anti-reformists were using all means to attack Sir John, and soon some high officials, including the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Clifford Lloyd, sided with them. These, becoming more and more powerful, now gained four newly elected members of the Council—Messrs. Antelme, Beaugard, de Coriolis, and Planel—to oppose the Governor, against whom violent and groundless accusations were advanced. The Secretary of State, who was now led to believe that serious trouble would soon have to be met with, named Sir Hercules Robinson, Commissioner-General of the Cape of Good Hope, to make a full enquiry into Sir John Pope Hennessy's administration. This wonderful gentleman landed at Port Louis on the 4th November, 1886, and on the 14th December, after carrying out a mimic inquiry of a very few sittings, suspended Sir John. Thousands of colonists crowded to Le Réduit to offer their cordial sympathy to the beloved Governor. Sir Hercules Robinson took over the government (15th December) for three days, when he left the Colony,



after having appointed Major-General Hawley (18th December) in his stead.

On the 17th the Municipal Council, crowded on the occasion, voted a tribute to Sir John's administration. Great meetings took place, and two petitions were prepared and signed by some 10,000 colonists—the first to Her Majesty the Queen, protesting against the unjust decision of Sir Hercules Robinson, and the second to the beloved Governor, expressing the Colony's deep sympathy for the treatment meted out to him and thanking him for his loyal attitude towards the population. Mr. William Newton, a brilliant barrister, was chosen, as delegate of the population, to proceed to London to plead Sir John's case before the Home Government. Mr. Newton left on the 17th January, 1887, and was received by the Secretary of State on the 28th February following. On the 12th March Sir John left Mauritius to go to the Colonial Office and discuss the disgraceful treatment he had suffered. Mr. Newton had many interviews with the Secretary of State, who, after studying carefully all the accusations and the defence, soon discovered how he had been misled. On the 12th July Sir John was reinstated by the Secretary of State, and he insisted on returning to Mauritius. Sir John then prosecuted *The Times* for £20,000 damages before the Queen's Bench and won his case. Mr. Newton was back in Mauritius on the 1st August, when a dense crowd gave the successful young advocate a great ovation.

Sir John and Lady Hennessy returned on the 22nd December, 1887, and landed amidst unprecedented scenes of enthusiasm. From the landing-stage to Government House carpets had been laid on the road,

adorned with no less than a dozen triumphal arches artistically beflagged and decorated with flowers.

A crowd of some 25,000 colonists cheered the much beloved Governor and his devoted wife, while addresses poured in from every corner of the island. A special thanksgiving service was held at the Roman Catholic Cathedral. Mr. de Coriolis resigned his seat on the Council, and at the by-election held on the 17th January 1888, Mr. William Newton was elected. Sir John now governed in peace up to December, when he left on the 11th. He took his pension and retired to Ireland. Sir John and Lady Hennessy's sincere friendship towards the colonists and great charity towards the poor had won for them from the very outset an unprecedented popularity among all classes. Numerous addresses and souvenirs offered to Lady Hennessy testified to the great admiration and love the Mauritians had for both. Active and persevering, Sir John encouraged everything that was useful to the welfare of the Colony, while his valuable efforts during the labour crisis were deeply appreciated. His administration witnessed many important and useful inaugurations. The telephone was in use in Port Louis in October, 1883. Electric light was installed at the Civil Hospital and on a few estates. The greatest improvement was the damming of the Mare aux Vacoas and the installation of many miles of pipes providing the numerous towns in the neighbourhood with pure water for drinking.

On the 19th April, 1888, heavy hailstorms occurred in Grand Port and lasted for some twelve minutes. Heavy rain fell during the two following hours.

Colonel Arthur T. Hall acted as Officer Administering

the Government until the arrival of Sir Charles Cameron Lees, K.C.M.G., on the 21st December, 1889. The new Governor was a great diplomat, but was not of a very enterprising character.

In October, 1890, the Port Louis Gas Company could not continue to work. The capital was almost deserted at night, as all the inhabitants with means had fled to the healthier villages up-country ever since the epidemic of fever. The Company was now unable to make both ends meet, and entered into liquidation. The municipality returned to the old system of petroleum oil lamps. Curepipe had its electric light in October, 1889, while Quatre Bornes, Beau Bassin, and Rose Hill had theirs in April, 1901. Port Louis, the capital of the island, was the last to have its electric light, in August, 1909. A balloon ascension by Mr. James Price at the Champ de Mars on the 17th September, 1891, attracted a dense crowd, but the experiment met with no success.

Sir Cameron Lees went on leave on the 12th March, 1892. The Colonial Secretary, Hubert E. Jerningham, was sworn in as Officer Administering the Government. The most violent cyclone which ever visited the island occurred on the 29th April at 4 p.m. The weather had been fine in the morning, and no one could foretell the arrival of such a calamity. The wind started blowing about 10 a.m. and reached a high velocity towards 2 p.m. A great calm ensued, and many people never thought of the impending danger. A few minutes before 4 p.m. a thundering noise was heard all of a sudden, and within a few minutes the wind was blowing at the extraordinary velocity of 125 miles per hour for about five minutes, and then 100 miles per hour

for the following hour. Everything in the path of the cyclone was carried away. At 7 p.m. all was over. Horrible spectacles of destruction could be seen everywhere. Half of Port Louis had been destroyed; 900 persons had been killed, 1,200 wounded, and some 15,000 left roofless. The Royal College buildings were brought down; the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and the convents were seriously damaged. Whole families under the ruins were crying for help. From fine houses levelled to the ground, dead and dying bodies were removed. People under the ruins were moaning loudly, while many who had been saved were mad with sorrow looking for their relatives. The Convent of Bon Secours had been levelled, killing nuns and a dozen orphans. The vessels in harbour were jammed together, while big lighters were stranded on the quays. During the night fire set in and helped in the destruction of the city. Many young Mauritians and their elders, who were waiting at the Central Station for a train to reach their residence up-country, rushed to the devastated region, and worked all night to remove bodies from under the ruins. In the rural districts everywhere immense damage had been done to property—sugar factories and plantations were destroyed. Three hundred deaths were registered; 2,000 persons were wounded, while some 20,000 were roofless and ruined. The sugar crop was reduced by over 50 per cent.

Many kind and generous helpers came from every corner of the island. The dead were buried; the wounded well cared for; the population fed, clothed, and sheltered; and in this great work of charity the Government took the lead. The zeal and devotion of the Acting Governor, Mr. Jerningham, were admired by

all the colonists. The Home Government granted a loan to the planters and house-owners who had suffered, repayable in twenty years. Generous subscriptions in aid of the victims came from England and many parts of the Empire, France, America, Réunion, and Seychelles.

The Acting Governor was confirmed in his post on the 21st June, 1893, and knighted. All Mauritius appreciated this well-deserved reward to the Governor's devoted behaviour towards the population.

During the month of October a Mr. Jansen, passing himself as a Dutch Admiral, was received with all honours. He was the guest of the Governor and notabilities for about a month, and great popular balls were given at Le Réduit in his honour. Discovered by some colonist from whom he had borrowed money under another disguise, the great "Admiral" fled and was never more heard of. On the 15th April, 1893, the new extension railway-line from Montagne Blanche to Rivière Sèche was inaugurated. On the 23rd July a terrible fire, which started at 7.30 p.m., consumed one of the principal commercial parts of the capital. Sixty-eight fine houses in Moka and Rempart Streets, and numerous fine buildings of the *chaussée* were destroyed.

The Council of Government had adopted a scheme for the laying of a telegraphic cable in September, 1891. In November, 1893, the cable laid by the Eastern Telegraph Company, connecting Mauritius to the world-wide system of this Company, was inaugurated. The first telegram was sent by the Governor on the 25th to Her Majesty the Queen, at 2.45 p.m., and the reply received at 5.20 p.m.

On the 15th September, 1894, a report on the drainage of the town of Port Louis—prepared by Mr. Engineer Chadwick, who had also been responsible for the fine work done to the Mare aux Vacoas during Sir John Pope Hennessy's administration—was laid before the Council of Government. The proposed scheme was strongly supported by the Hon. Sir Virgile Naz and the Hon. Henri Léclezio, and was adopted after some strong opposition from some members who thought the scheme would be a cause of constant danger to the health of the inhabitants of the capital. The drainage started working in April, 1895.

On the 22nd February, 1894, though the wind was blowing in squalls, the velocity had not been sufficiently high to stop the railway circulation entirely. A train, fortunately almost empty, while passing St. Louis Bridge, near Pailles, was caught by a violent squall and blown over the bridge into the ravine 50 feet below. Five persons were killed and ten severely wounded.

A fire, which might have been as big a conflagration as that of 1893, occurred on April 3rd, 1895. The offices of Mr. Notary R. Koenig and the Hon. V. Geffroy, containing valuable artistic paintings, were consumed.

During 1896 Port Louis again witnessed two fires—the first on the 12th July and the second on the 26th August—when some very fine stores and offices were burnt down.

Sir Hubert Jerningham left the Colony on the 14th January, 1897, Charles A. King-Harman, C.M.G., being sworn in as Officer Administering the Government until the arrival of Sir Charles Bruce on the 11th May. The new Governor's appointment was greeted with

pleasure, as he was well known to the Mauritians. He had been Rector of the Royal College, and then Colonial Secretary, during the first period of Sir John Pope Hennessy's administration. Though Sir Charles had to carry out strict instructions he had received from Downing Street, he never lost an occasion of fighting for the interests of the colonists. A very trying period was now in store for the Colony. The first calamity was bubonic plague.

The population was still struggling against the consequences of the previous disasters when the first case of plague was reported in Port Louis on the 7th January, 1899, causing great alarm.

A deputation of colonists asked for the immediate burning of the contaminated zone, but this was disapproved by the majority of the members of Council, who decided on the evacuation of the zone for a period of six months. The Royal College classes were transferred to Curepipe (5th June), while the Civil Hospital was transferred to the Royal College buildings. Though the plague never spread as seriously as cholera or fever, it caused much anxiety and trouble chiefly on the estates, where it used to occur every year during the crop season. It disappeared miraculously in 1917.

On the 31st January a violent explosion took place at Fort George at the head of the harbour, causing the death of seven soldiers and wounding six.

On the 18th July, 1901, another calamity was introduced into the Colony by a cargo of oxen coming from Bombay. Surra broke out and within a few weeks carried away all the oxen, mules, and horses, seriously endangering the sugar industry.

Even every public and private activity was soon

seriously dislocated, and measures taken at enormous cost to meet the situation only relieved it a very little.

The following words expressing the courage with which these succeeding calamities were met, and written home by an influential Englishman, are well worth publishing:

“When one knows the extraordinary courage with which planters, overseers, and labourers alike here have faced the plague, the surra, the reduced crops, and other calamities which have visited them during these last years, and that planters have not shrunk from any sacrifice to maintain, and generally to maintain with intelligence, their estate; and when one knows and has seen the Indian labourers, owing to the loss of draught animals, harnessing themselves to heavy carts and dragging them along estate roads, under heavy rains, willingly and cheerfully bearing all hardships to finish the crop—I cannot think that classes which show such spirit to maintain an industry which is capable of doing well in fair competition with the world should be allowed to sink, and that no hand will be held out to them in their time of trial.”

On the 5th August, their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of York (King George and Queen Mary) visited the island. Great public rejoicings brought their Royal Highnesses in contact with the colonists; and from the outset, the Royal couple gained the heart of every Mauritian by their simplicity and affability. On her arrival the Duchess of York laid the first stone of the foundations on which it was intended to erect a fine statue of the late Queen Victoria, her grandmother. The statue, though ordered long before, was received



only in 1902, when it was unveiled by Sir Charles Bruce, on the 9th August.

In November surra had caused such a great disorganisation in the transport of canes and sugar to and from estates, that planters appealed to Government for help. A motion asking for a loan of Rs.3,000,000 was adopted by the Council on the 17th and approved by the Secretary of State on the 24th December. This allowed owners of estates and planters to install tramway-lines, and the new mode of mechanical transport, which is now found on every estate, proved of great need and saved the Colony from disaster:

In October, 1903, Seychelles, which so far had been a dependency of Mauritius, was declared a separate Crown Colony, and was given its Governor, the Hon. C. B. Sweet Escott being the first. On the 30th Sir Charles Bruce left Mauritius, Sir Graham Bower, Colonial Secretary, being sworn in as Officer Administering the Government, until the arrival of Sir Cavendish Boyle, K.C.M.G., on the 20th August, 1904.

In 1905 a Mr. Gleadow, an expert on forests, was sent to Mauritius. His report of reforestation, submitted to the Council on the 28th December, contained unjustifiable and offensive statements on the Mauritians, and a violent discussion took place in Council, when the injurious passages were removed by order of the Government.

Surra was still causing much anxiety, while the price of sugar was getting lower every year. Even crops were now reduced. The natural consequence of this unfortunate state of affairs seriously affected the Colony's finances. For the last two years expenditure had exceeded revenue and the whole reserve was being

swallowed up. This could continue for some years, but when the reserve had been exhausted the Colony was steadily going towards utter ruin.

On the 7th May, 1907, the Chamber of Agriculture met, and after seriously considering the crisis, appealed on behalf of the planters for another loan of Rs.3,000,000, so as to allow owners of estates to install up-to-date machinery, and other important ameliorations. This would allow the main industry of the island to compete with the sugars coming from less handicapped markets. The planters also asked for the creation of a Department of Agriculture, to study and provide improvements for cultivation and production, while it was suggested that some sort of irrigation be started and co-operative banks be opened to help the small planters.

This request was refused by the Secretary of State, chiefly on the grounds that the Civil Service of the Colony should be reduced and economy ought to be resorted to on many items. This, of course, exasperated the planters.

On the 9th July, 1907, a painful incident occurred during a sitting of the Legislative Council. The Hon. E. Sauzier protested against the appointment of Mr. Banbury to the post of Receiver-General, which had been filled with great ability and to the satisfaction of all concerned by Mr. Duvergé, an aged Mauritian. Mr. Cameron, the acting Colonial Secretary, then made an unjustifiable statement about the members of the Civil Service. The indignation was soon general, and all the members of Council refused to attend any more meetings before this gentleman left the island. Great meetings took place at the Champ de Mars (26th

August) and at the theatre, and the population insisted on his departure. To calm the prevailing excitement, Mr. Cameron was transferred to another colony.

In March, 1908, the Colony's finances got exceedingly low, and were rapidly approaching bankruptcy. The Chamber of Agriculture again met, and for the second time (on the 11th) asked that a loan be made to planters to save the whole situation. This time the Secretary of State suggested that the Colony should ask for a Commission of Inquiry to report on the sugar industry and on the Civil Service. Should the Commission recommend a loan as absolutely necessary he would readily approve it. On the 8th April the Chamber of Agriculture, and the Council of Government on the 23rd, by a majority of twenty-four against three, definitely declined the offer of a Commission of Inquiry as being of no necessity, since the colony was ruined, and could not meet the expenses of such an inquiry; whereupon the Secretary of State replied that he would arrange for the Colonial Government to pay most of the expenses.

During this time Messrs. R. Mérandon, E. Nairac, G. Guibert, E. Laurent, and a few others, all members of a political party called *L'Action Libérale*, were busily engaged in propaganda in favour of the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. On the 1st June, 1908, Messrs. Mérandon and Dawson left Port Louis in a house-waggon for a trip round the island to make speeches in favour of the Commission. This caused great animosity between the two parties, and the friction became so great that troops had to be stationed at Government House in December.

On the 2nd February, 1909, the Legislative Council,

by a very small majority, voted a motion asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission. This was readily approved by the Secretary of State on the 8th. The Commission was composed of Sir Frank Swettenham (President) Sir Edward O'Malley, Mr. Woodcock, K.C., and Mr. Harding (Secretary). The Commissioners landed at Port Louis on the 18th June and remained until the 24th August, and heard many witnesses. The majority of the witnesses were against the imposition of fresh taxes. They explained that, not only had the last crops been the worst produced, but the Colony had met with a most unfortunate series of misfortunes, and that, to carry on, extraordinary expenses had to be incurred to meet the ravages of surra, plague, and lack of labour. No profit could be derived, as the price of sugar was at its lowest. The most important requirement was the installation of modern improvements on estates, so as to allow of a reduction in the manufacturing price of sugar. As sugar was the principal source of revenue to Government, the Hon. Sir Henry Lélézio very wisely explained that the great crisis had already occurred when the Colony had to face both reduced crops and low prices, but that, as soon as the price would rise and the production increase, the revenue would show an excess over expenditure. The inhabitants already could not make both ends meet, and would be starved by the imposition of more taxes. No other means but the improvement of estates could save the colony.

This theory proved true when in 1910 a combination of reasonable prices and a fair crop balanced the Colony's finances. The Report of the Commissioners was laid before the Council on the 22nd June, 1910, and

caused general dissatisfaction at first, though some of its recommendations proved of great utility later on. The Report granted help to planters, recommended the creation of a Department of Agriculture, the appointment of experts to arrange for irrigation, and co-operative banks. These suggestions were excellent. The Civil Service was very unfortunate. The Commissioners pushed their idea of amalgamation of posts beyond working possibility; salaries were reduced, while those of small functionaries were fixed at such figures as would discourage competent youths desirous of joining the Service.

The year 1911 saw the Colony resume its prosperity. It had started with a deficit in public finances of some Rs. 500,000 and ended with a surplus of about the same amount. In January the election of the members of Council had to be renewed. The population was divided into two parties, called the *Oligarques* and the *Démocrates*. The elections took place during unprecedented excitement and intense party feeling. The author remembers that even at the Royal College, where he was a scholar, the two parties were represented and the friction between them much worried the Rector. Violent newspaper campaigns and exciting speeches had brought the animosity to its highest. The first elections took place in Port Louis on the 16th, when two "Démocrate" members were elected, On the 17th the elected member for Plaines Wilhems was an "Oligarch." In the afternoon a long procession was formed and marched to the new member's residence to cheer him. On its return collisions took place with groups of "Démocrates," who mainly consisted of artisans, servants, etc., armed

with sticks, stones, and bottles, and people on both sides were seriously wounded. After dinner a violent fight occurred, when pistol shots were fired. The military had to be called out.

During the night a criminal conveyed to Port Louis the false news that one of the newly elected members for Port Louis who resided in Curepipe had been murdered with his family during the night. This was sufficient to excite the lower classes, who had passed these last days drinking. Early on the 19th a mob of lawless loafers sacked the offices and houses belonging to members of the "Oligarch" party, causing immense damage. The printing offices were broken into, press material completely destroyed, shops looted. Then the crowd besieged Mr. Ducasse's residence (Mr. Ducasse was an "Oligarch"), and he and his son had to defend themselves with revolver and rifle for hours, killing some of the rioters. Then the latter proceeded to the Central Station, and the innocent passengers alighting from the trains coming from up-country were attacked with sticks, stones, and bottles, and many were seriously injured. The looting continued until about 9 a.m. without any serious interference on the part of the police.

The troops had reached Port Louis by this time, and order was soon restored. The streets were strewn with wreckage, paper, smashed household furniture, etc. The damage was excessive. The rioters then spread into the districts and continued to loot Chinese shops for several days. The military policed the towns and villages for several weeks, during which great excitement prevailed.

In all other districts "Oligarchs" were elected.

A most careful inquiry was held into the trouble, and was carried out by an Army officer, a nominated member of the Council of Government, and the Substitute Procureur-Général, under the presidency of Général McDonald, Officer Commanding the Troops. A number of persons were sent to the Assizes and condemned, but the ringleaders very cleverly escaped.

On the 10th April Sir Cavendish Boyle left the Colony. Mr. George Smith, Colonial Secretary, was appointed Officer Administering the Government until the arrival of Major Sir John Robert Chancellor, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., R.E., on the 13th of November.

In July the coleopteral *Phytalus Smithi*—an insect pest attacking the sugar-cane, mostly the virgin plantations—appeared at Mon Rocher, Pamplemousses, and was a cause of much anxiety during the following years.

The new Governor arrived with strict instructions to carry out many of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. Frank, very kind, severe but impartial, he visited the whole island, and proceeded slowly in the putting into force of the numerous changes. Accompanied by his gracious wife, they both soon won the deep esteem of all the colonists.

On the 24th June, 1912, amidst a dense crowd representing all classes of the community, His Excellency unveiled with great ceremony at the Champ de Mars the fine statue of Edward VII., deeply beloved in Mauritius. This work of art is one of the many due to the great Mauritian sculptor, Prosper d'Epinau.

During the year many of the recommendations of the Commission were put into effect. The amalgamation of departments took place—the Poor Law Commission

with the Protector of Immigrants, the Registration Office with the Civil Status, the Post Department with the Telegraph, the Master's Office with that of the Registry, etc. Experts arrived: Mr. Harriot submitted his report and plans on irrigation; Mr. Wilberforce on co-operative credit societies (1913). The railway rolling-stock was much improved and increased. The Department of Agriculture started working on the 10th May. A deviation line and fine new bridge over the Grand River North-West were built and opened to traffic on the 5th May. His Excellency, who was an engineer of high capability, designed plans for, and supervised the work of, many fine buildings. The Royal College of Curepipe was opened on the 12th January, 1914. All the roads were much improved, Government buildings restored and repainted, and bridges rebuilt in concrete. All these works were carried out under the able supervision of a great Mauritian Engineer, the Hon. P. Le Juge de Segrais, Director of Public Works and Surveys.

The Mauritius Turf Club, the oldest sporting institution of the Colony, to which the population is indebted for numerous enjoyable gatherings, celebrated its centenary in August, 1912, by a series of brilliant festivities. A great banquet, splendid races, a sumptuous ball, assembled the Mauritian and English communities, and an atmosphere of sincere friendship prevailed between them, to which His Excellency and his gracious consort contributed to a large extent.

The Governor strongly recommended two able Mauritians to the important posts of Chief Justice and Procureur-Général, and the appointments of the Hon. A. Herchenroder, K.C., and Etienne Keenig met



with unanimous approval. Other competent Mauritians had already proved themselves Heads of Departments of merit, among them the Hon. Martial Noel, of the Registration Office; the Hon. Emile Pitot, General Manager and Engineer of Railways; and the Hon. Paul Le Juge de Segrain, Director of Public Works and Surveys.

Under the beneficial influence of a loyal co-operation and great friendship which animated the most important sections of the community, the Colony soon enjoyed a period of unprecedented prosperity.

On the 5th July, 1914, a fire broke out at 5 a.m. and consumed the fine building of the Family Hotel in the centre of Curepipe, seriously threatening the whole town. The Boy Scouts were the first on the spot, and the valuable and courageous assistance they gave was much admired.

During the last years the Colony made wide steps towards progress. A regular auto-taximeter car service between Curepipe and Port Louis started working in 1910. Telephonic communication between Curepipe and Port Louis was inaugurated in January, 1914. Irrigation was started on extensive lines, great extents of land were cultivated, and the prices of sugar maintained at reasonable figures. Large and rich crops were expected. The finances of the Colony were in a most flourishing state, showing a surplus reserve of some Rs. 5,000,000.

Such was the position of the island when the Great War broke out. The greatest emotion, the deepest sorrow, filled the heart of every colonist when it was known that France had been invaded by the Germans. The French Consulate, its yard and neighbourhood,

were crowded with colonists representing all sections of the community anxious to express their indignation at the Huns' behaviour; and the next morning, when it was solemnly proclaimed that England had declared war upon Germany, the crowd's delight gave rise to unprecedented demonstrations and delirious cheering. In every corner of the island one saw signs of the deep attachment and loyalty of the inhabitants of the Colony towards their former mother country and the noble nation whose great flag had protected them for over a century. Fervent patriotism animated all classes, and everyone spontaneously expressed his desire of doing something for the Empire.

The author much regrets he has to end here. In order to describe the brilliant efforts of this small Crown Colony to take her share in the Empire's glorious struggle, a special booklet would have to be written, and the author is afraid that his style would not do justice to the theme. The work would have to contain the names of the 800 young Mauritians who have enlisted of their own accord and mostly at their own expense, and who have won great merit and glory, either in the French or English armies.

At the outbreak of war a national subscription raised a considerable amount. Before selling their crop, planters offered a million pounds of sugar to the English armies, and a similar amount to the French armies. The Colony doubled its annual military contribution; voted Rs. 1,000,000 to provide for a fleet of aeroplanes; subscribed a War Loan of some Rs. 8,300,000; raised a labour battalion of some 1,700 men, who were sent to Mesopotamia, and shared in the expenses and upkeep of the battalion; raised many

thousands of rupees for the French and English Red Cross Societies; while it also enrolled a Volunteer Force, where old and young, fathers and sons, prepared themselves to meet any attack, and thus relieved the garrison, which was sent to the battlefield.

Concerts and fancy fairs followed one after the other, and the ladies and girls of the island devoted themselves to working without rest to raise funds to be sent Home. In all the shows the young Mauritian Scout took an active part, and twice a year—on *France's Day* and *Our Day*—he would follow the example of his brothers all over the Empire by doing some job to earn a contribution towards the collections. Special committees were formed to collect and send clothes, cigarettes, jam, and sweets of all kinds to the soldiers on the battlefield.

On every occasion during the Great War the inhabitants of Mauritius have shown themselves worthy of their ancestors—worthy of the loyalty, of the chivalry and generosity which always characterised the French of l'Ile de France. The island has remained the pearl of the Indian Ocean and will remain, the author has no doubt, dear to the British Empire.