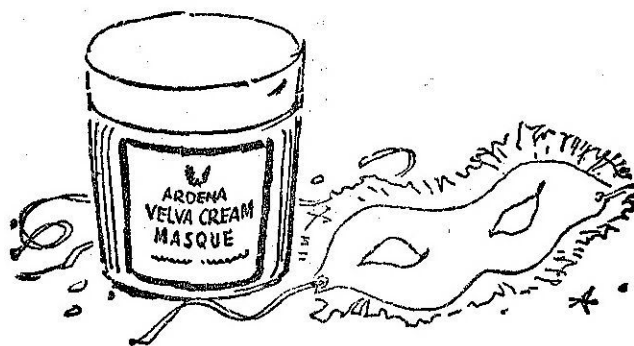


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Contributions are invited from members on subjects calculated to be interest to the Union. MSS. must be written on one side of the paper only and must reach the Editor at least a fortnight before the date of publication of the Journal.

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Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon.

[VOL. : LIV.]

JANUARY—DECEMBER 1964.

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—EDITORIAL—

In the opening article of our issue—Vol. XL III, No. 2, April 1953, we ventured to give a brief history of the Swiss de Meuron Mercenaries Regiment of Infantry which had been in the pay of the Dutch Government for 14 years and were withdrawn summarily at the critical moment prior to the capitulation of Colombo to the British. We reproduce in this issue an article which appeared in the *Calcutta Review*, Vol. 117, October 1903, on "His Majesty's Regiment de Meuron" which was written by Julius James Cotton of the Madras Civil Service. The article has come to hand through the kind courtesy of Mr. James T. Rutnam and is republished with due acknowledgement to the "Review" in which it originally appeared.

Mr. Rutnam, in forwarding us a typescript of the article writes, "Cotton was a former scholar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He was the author of a book on Tombstones and Monuments in Madras, a work which formed a model for J.P. Lewis' equally meticulously written masterpiece on Tombstones etc. in Ceylon (1913). The *Calcutta Review* has a long history and in the 1870's published a series of articles on Ceylon Affairs by William Digby, author of the life of Richard Morgan. The de Meuron Regiment, as you know, played a significant part (thanks to the younger Pitts's general *factotum*, Dundas and Hugh Cleghorn) in the Dutch capitulation of Ceylon in 1796. Familiar Ceylonese names such as Nell, De La Harpe, Senn, Piachaud and Grenier are associated with this historic Regiment. Cotton appears to have had re-course to an extremely rare book on this Regiment's history compiled by Theodore de Meuron and privately printed in 1885, and reviewed by General Turnell in the *Madras Mail* on the 29th July, 1896. Records of the Regiment are preserved in the Library and Museum at Neuchatel in Switzerland. Some of the Regimental papers were reported to have been taken to the War Office in London. Cotton's article includes a graphic description of the

Regiment's exciting action at the Battle of Seringapatam in 1799 when Tippoo was killed. This article is deserving of reproduction in your excellent journal. There is a copy of a reprint of this article in the Colombo Museum. As far as I am aware there is no other copy in Ceylon. My typescript was extracted some years ago directly from the *Calcutta Review* through the courtesy of Dr. Hans Keller, *Charge d'Affaires* of the Swiss Legation at the time. To complete the record, I should make reference to another informative contribution on the de Meuron Regiment made by H.W.M. in the *Times of Ceylon* Christmas Number of 1915, (pp. 5—9). H.W.M. stands for the initials of H. Woosnam Mills, a co-editor with Crosbie Roles of the *Times of Ceylon* some fifty years ago. Woosnam Mills appears to have visited Neuchatel with his wife shortly before he wrote his article which has often been quoted by students of the history of the Early British Period in Ceylon. This article too deserves republication. I append hereto a short bibliography."

Since only one copy of a reprint of this article from the *Calcutta Review* is available for reference in Ceylon, our subscribers will no doubt bear with us for the large number of pages given to its publications in this issue of the *Journal* to the exclusion of our normal features. It will be readily appreciated that the research worker and historian, to whom no doubt this subject will most appeal, are served better by having the complete reprint in one number, rather than in the form of a serial.

The Regiment de Meuron

Extract from

THE CALCUTTA REVIEW

Volume CXVII, October 1903.

No man who hath tasted learning but will confess many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world; and, were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away.

MILTON.

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HIS MAJESTY'S REGIMENT DE MEURON

The recent war in South Africa must always remain remarkable as the first serious contest carried on by Great Britain in modern times solely with her own national forces. The smallness of her standing army—invariably out of all proportion to the number of her population obliged her (it is true) to invoke the aid of auxiliaries from her colonies: but whereas in former wars necessity had compelled her to enlist the services of foreign mercenaries, the contingents who came to her assistance against the Boers were composed of men of British speech and blood, owing allegiance to the same sovereign and forming units of the same Empire. The days are gone of the Captains Courageous whose swords were always at the disposal of the highest bidder, and who did not scruple upon occasion to fight against the land that gave them birth. But it is good to remember how large a part has been played by men of alien race in the history of our islands. It was with Irish, and not with English, troops that Ireland was conquered. We find recorded in "Drake and the Tudor Navy" the regret of an officer who had distinguished himself in the suppression of the Irish clans that he had not Irish kernes with him in Spain. Marlborough's ever-victorious army was as composite a body as can well be imagined and was made up of English, Dutch and Germans, many of the latter being in British pay. Both William the Third and Anne paid the expenses of Swiss regiments which served against the French under the Grand Duke of Savoy. When the House of Hanover came to the throne of England, Hanoverian troops naturally acted as auxiliaries to the British flag. The armies which fought at Dettingen and Minden were as largely made up of Germans as of English, though the former were for the most part paid with English gold. When England was threatened with invasion, we borrowed Dutchmen to resist the Highlanders in their march upon Derby. We employed hordes of Germans in the American War of Independence; and we hired Hessians and Germans in the Irish insurrection of 1798. Even as late as the Crimean War, we recruited a Swiss and a German Legion. After the peace, many of the soldiers re-engaged with the East India Company, and the third Regiment of Bombay Europeans was largely composed of them. Others were encouraged to emigrate to the Cape, where they were granted lands, and many of their sons took up arms in the late war, on the side of the Transvaal burghers.

But it was during the long struggle with Napoleon that our Army List showed the most extraordinary patch work of military odds and ends. We had a very serviceable force of all arms in the King's German Legion; we had three double-battalion regiments of Swiss infantry, Corsican Rangers, Greek light infantry, and many corps of French emigrés. Most of the latter were destroyed in vain expeditions to the coasts of Brittany and La

Vendee, and none of them survived the peace of Amiens, except the battalion of Chasseurs Britanniques, which was raised from the *debris* of Conde's brigades, disbanded at the signing of the same peace.

So again, it was with Indian and not British soldiery that India was chiefly won. Even the leaven of white troops was stiffened by a considerable non-British element. This was the case with every European nation that maintained troops in India. Paradis, the bravest of Dupleix's generals and commander of Madras during its French occupation, was a Swiss born in London: and many of his countrymen served in his ranks. La Bourdonnais brought Caffres over from Madagascar, and it was a shot from a French Caffre that killed Anwarooddeen, Nabob of the Carnatic. Similarly the garrisons in the pay of the Dutch were rarely above one quarter or a third Dutch; the remainder being composed of English and French deserters and renegade continental adventurers who came for the purpose of making or mending their fortunes. Of the Company's forces at Plassey, the Madras Infantry which formed the largest contingent, was commanded by Gaupp, a Swiss, and a large proportion of the rank and file were foreigners. One of Clive's best officers was Adolphus Gingers, "a Swiss gentlemen and as brave a one as any of his nation;" and among this lieutenants was the Huguenot de Vismes.

Even in the days before Plassey foreign corps were entertained in John Company's service. Orme speaks in 1752 of the ships from England bringing out reinforcement of two Swiss companies, each 100 strong, and commanded by Swiss officers. One of these companies, while proceeding to Fort St. David by boat, was taken by a French ship and carried into Pondicherry: where it remained till it was sent back by Godeheu at the beginning of the negotiations. The other commanded by Captain Polier took part in the battles of the Carnatic under Lawrence. In 1757 there were Swiss soldiers at Calcutta, part of the two battalions of Colonel Prevost's regiment taken over by the Company the previous year.¹ The notorious Walter Reinhardt, husband of the Begum Sumroo, and the murderer of defenceless English-

1. Thirty-two Swiss soldiers died at Madras between 1752 and 1758 according to the Registers of St. Mary's Church, edited by Rev. H. Malden. Colene Prevost's two battalions do not appear to have formed a separate regiment, but were incorporated with the Company's European regiments. This may account for the appellation "European" instead of English given to those regiments. Among the troops on the Coromandel Coast the "Swiss Infantry Company" is definitely so named. One company of Artillery which came out to Madras on the *Montfort* in August 1753 was entirely composed of foreigners, principally Swiss.

men at Patna, made his first acquaintance with India as a Sergeant in Captain Ziegler's company, attached to the Bombay European Regiment. As early as 1757 Ives mentions a prisoner named Alexander Sansawre, "who first came from Europe to Bombay in a Swiss company of soldiers," and was re-captured after deserting to Law. Another corps was Doxat's Chasseurs (referred to by the painter Hodges in his *Indian Travels*), and a third a body of French dragoons, which Claude Martine, when a prisoner of war and a simple warrant officer, raised for the service of the Company from the French captives at Madras.

The Neuchâtel Regiment de Meuron is of later enlistment. Its existence is overlooked by the British historians of India, and passed over in a couple of pages by military writers such as Wilson. Its name has been so long absent from the pages of the Army List that its mention, in these days of short-lived memories, can hardly be expected to arouse enthusiasm. The manuscript of its services lies somewhere among the lumber of the War Office, unread and forgotten. One of the many corps of mercenaries which the Swiss nation furnished to fight the battles of other Powers in the eighteenth century, the Regiment de Meuron has fallen into oblivion as thorough as that which has overtaken Dillon's Royal Regiment of Ireland or the Gendarmes Ecossais. Its story none the less offers much that is curious to the burrower in literary bye-ways. For the last twenty years of the eighteenth century and the first fifteen of the nineteenth, wherever fighting was to be done in Ceylon, India and Canada, the Regiment de Meuron was in the thick of it. Like the Israelites of old under Moses, it was for nearly forty years on the move, the distances it traversed and the hardships it endured being far in excess of those recorded in the itinerary of the children of Jacob. In its ranks men of every nationality rubbed shoulders—Swiss, Poles, Russians, Italians, Germans, inhabitants of towns as far removed as Basel and Pondicherry. Originally raised in the interests of the Dutch East India Company, the Regiment after fourteen years of warfare against the British, transferred its services to King George of England and served its new master with the same degree of intrepidity as it had once been happy to display against him. It was the fashion in those days for professional fire-eaters to shift their allegiance much after the manner of the Princess, who varied their religion "comme on changea sa chemise". Yet once in the British service His Majesty's Regiment de Meuron was true to its salt. Besides minor laurels, it can claim the distinction of having carried its colonel's colours triumphantly through the breach at Seringapatam.

But the real interest of the career of this gallant band of Switzers lies less in the alarms and excursions it can record than in the many sidelights which it incidentally casts upon the social and military details of a stirring period. The account of de

Meuron negotiations with the British War Office reads like the columns of a modern newspaper. The deeds in many lands of his life of derring-do recall the adventures of a mediaeval soldier of fortune.

In a corner of the museum in the old Swiss town of Neuchâtel there stands a case of shells and natural history specimens labelled "collection de Meuron". Brought from the Coromandel coast more than a century ago, these curios became the nucleus of the natural history museum of Neuchâtel which, enriched by such men as Agassiz and Coulon, is to-day as much a glory of the town as her chocolat Suchard or her timepieces. It is characteristic of the ingratitude of posterity that, if de Meuron be remembered by his fellow-citizens, it should be by virtue of a conchological assortment concealed in a dark corner of the Neuchâtel museum. As a British general once of some importance, he is deserving of a wider mention in history.

Charles Daniel de Meuron was born at Saint Sulpice on the 6th May, 1738, the eldest son of Theodore de Meuron, at that time "Justicier" at Vals de Travers.² His boyhood was not eventful, yet his military ardour must have asserted itself early, for we find him, while still in his teens, enrolled in the Regiment de Hallwyl, formerly de Karrer, a body of Swiss marines in French employ. The English fleet was then blockading Rochefort at the mouth of the Charente, and here Charles de Meuron, who ended his career at seventy as a British General, commenced it as an ensign at seventeen by fighting against his future honourable masters. After the defence of the Isle of Aix, his promotion to the rank of lieutenant seems to have definitely marked his adoption of the military life.

2. The father is also described as "Captain in one of the companies". He had two younger sons, Theodore Abraham and Pierre Frederic (of whom later) and three daughters.

In March 1757, a larger sphere of activity overseas for the first time opened out before him. Together with a company of the Regiment de Hallwyl, de Meuron embarked upon the *Florissant*, a vessel of seventy-four guns which had been equipped by the French Government with a view of lending assistance to the American colonists in their struggle against England. But the vessel was fated never to reach her destination for, while in Martinique waters, she fell in with the *Buckingham*, a British 74, and was so severely handled that she was within an ace of striking her flag.³ It was fortunate that the approach of darkness enabled her captain, de Maureville, to effect an escape in spite of his losses and to bring his disabled vessel into the neighbouring haven of Port Royal. Here the arrival of the Swiss marines proved nothing if not opportune, for the Regiment de Hallwyl was in time to take an active part in repelling the invading squadron of Admiral Moore: a land engagement in which de Meuron added a third and severe wound to two which he had already received in the preceding sea-fights.

3. There is a graphic account of the fight in "The Memoirs and Adventures of Mark Moor, late an officer in the British Navy" a book published in 1795, which merits rescue from oblivion if only on account of its fantastic title-page. For not only is it declared to be "interspersed with a variety of original anecdotes selected from his journals when in the Tuscan, Portuguese, Swedish, Imperial, American and British services, in each of which he bore a commission, "but" as the author has been at intervals the Manager of a respectable company of Comedians, in several of the principal towns of England, France and Flanders, he has also added some original sketches of several theatrical characters, who now rank high in the Thespian Corps, with descriptions of the various scenes in which he had been lately involved through the machinations of petty fogging attorneys, in which the arts of those Terriers of the law are fully exposed for the benefit of Society." At the time of the encounter between the *Florissant* and the *Buckingham*, Moore was a midshipman on board the latter. On the 3rd of November, when in company with the *Wessel* sloop and the *Bristol* of 50 guns, she fell in with the French fleet. "Captain Trag of the Marines took his faithful stand by the colours, with a cocked pistol in his hand, declaring that the contents of it should be lodged in the first man that would attempt to strike them to the enemy, and, if carried away by a shot, there was another to supply its place". The *Florissant* poured in a broadside wounding Captain Tyrrell of the *Buckingham* "when command devolved upon Mr. Marshall, first Lieutenant, who, whilst he dropped on his knees abaft the binnacle to pray, had the his head shot off by a ball that happened to pass that way". Nothing daunted *Buckingham*, answering with a starboard broadside sent one of the opposing frigates to "visit the secrets of the hoary deep". Captain Tyrrell's wound being dressed, he immediately resumed the command. "We fought the *Florissant* so close that our bowsprit got foul of her fore rigging: We engaged her five glasses, at the end of which, night coming on, she thought fit to sheer off; we were such a wreck that we could scarce work our way into St. John's Antignas with both hand and chain pumps going."

The return journey of the *Florissant*, if less eventful, cannot have been without its dangers. The ship, indeed, had suffered so much as to be hardly seaworthy, and her detachment of marines must have felt it no hardship to be transhipped at Cadiz into the *Triton*. In this vessel they finally reached Marseilles after an absence of nearly three years' continuous sea-service. The company was at once ordered to its regimental depot, and the young lieutenant—certainly no loser by his sufferings—returned to Switzerland the proud possessor of a wound pension of eight hundred livres and bearing upon his breast the Croix de Merite Militaire. In the interval of leisure which was now vouchsafed him, de Meuron was not idle. On the 3rd of December, 1762, he married a French lady, one Marie Fillon, of Morveaux in the parish of Segousac near Cognac in Angoumois; and a few months later, on the Regiment de Hallwyl being broken up, he applied for and obtained a commission in the Swiss guards of Louis Quinze, being posted to the Regiment d'Erlach. It is to be presumed that the next few years were devoted by de Meuron to the enjoyment of connubial happiness, for we do not again meet with his name until the 22nd of June, 1768, on which day he received his appointment to the grade of captain, with the rank of colonel in the French army: a sufficiently rapid advancement for a young married officer of but thirteen years' service.

When war broke out afresh between France and England during the revolt of our American colonists, Holland joined France and applied to the French Government for the services of a Swiss officer for the purpose of raising a Swiss regiment to assist in the defence of the Dutch East India Company's possessions. The Duc de Choiseul, Colonel General of Switzerland and the Grisons, was then Minister for War and Marine. After several ineffectual attempts to prevail on Swiss officers in French employ to undertake the task, he accepted an offer of assistance from de Meuron, who immediately applied for the formal permission of the Neuchatel authorities to levy recruits in his old canton. In reply to a letter addressed to them by Major de Sandol Roy, the Quatre Ministres granted the Sieur Meuron de Morveaux full power to enroll the inhabitants and burgesses of Neuchatel and its banlieue. The permission was, however, conditional on what in these days seems a curious stipulation: namely for the better administration of justice, the noble company would not fail to provide the regiment with "deux officers grandjuges jurisconsults".⁴

4. Francois Raymond, grand judge, died at Colombo on the 19th of July 1790. Another, Albert Fivaz, captain lieutenant, left India on pension on the 1st of January 1800, and afterwards served in the English army. He died at Paris in June 1816.

The "capitulation" or engagement between the chevalier de Meuron, "colonel d'infanterie et capitaine-lieutenant des gardes suisses de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne", and P. E. Vandeperre, seigneur of the four bans of Duyreland, a Director of the Netherlands East India Company, was drawn up in triplicate and attested by F. G. Boers, the legal adviser of the Company, at Paris on the 28th of May, 1781. By the terms of the agreement the colonel stood pledged to furnish before the 1st of November a fully armed and equipped regiment of one thousand and twenty units, no one of whom was to be less than five Holland feet in height. The corps was to be "suisse neuchâtelois" and to bear the name de Meuron; its members must be Protestant, and at least two-thirds of them must be drawn from the cantons of the Swiss confederacy. The appointment of the officers was vested in the proprietary colonel with the exception of that of the officers of two companies, the nomination of whom was to lie with the Directors of the Honourable Company: a precaution which suggests that the Dutch authorities were alive to the advantage of some permanent espionage over de Meuron's nominees.

The twenty-five articles of the "capitulation" amply illustrates with what minute and business-like precautions against future contingencies the Dutch East India Company was accustomed to safeguard its interests. It would be difficult to find a single detail of importance, whether relating to equipment, numbers, or finance, which is not clearly laid down in black and white in the model document which gave birth to the Regiment de Meuron. The strength of the regiment is fixed at ten companies of one hundred and two men, with twelve gunners four sergeants and four corporals attached to every company; the establishment of officers is to consist of a commander with the rank of colonel proprietary, a lieutenant-colonel, a major, ten captains, ten lieutenants, a lieutenant paymaster, three ensigns, a head surgeon with ten assistants, and a sergeant-major. All staff officers are to be of at least six years' service, captains and lieutenants four, and sergeants three. The Swiss military code is to be observed and neither officers nor men are to be subject to the Dutch tribunals except for the offences of malversations and high treason; the latter especially being, as the "capitulation" quaintly adds, a crime "ce que ne plaise à Dieu". All ranks are to engage themselves for a definite period of five years; in the event of the disbandment of the corps, officers are to receive half pay for the remainder of their lives so long as they are not employed by other powers. Meanwhile the colonel is expressly exhorted to a proper performance of his duties. "Il leur rendra bonne et brave justice," and with a sudden lapse into the concrete, the contract stipulates, "et leur paiera leur prête tous les huit jours".

The rate of payment, per annum, must have been sufficiently satisfactory to those immediately concerned. While the salary of the colonel commandant was fixed at three thousand florins

annually, that of the private soldier amounted to one hundred, and eight florins; the chief surgeon was to receive the pay of a lieutenant, six hundred florins; the major eighteen hundred, and ensign four hundred and eighty, sergeant two hundred and forty, and a captain twelve hundred. To obviate any future difficulty as to the vexed question of exchange, the florin is stated to be equivalent to vingt sols courant.

On the regiment being mustered and approved, the Company binds itself to pay over to the colonel three hundred pounds French per man for the initial raising of the regiment and its transport to the Ile de Ré, de Meuron, in his turn, undertaking to forfeit ten thousand pounds French, should the establishment on the day appointed for the final muster be more than one hundred men short of the required number. Fifty supernumeraries are allowed to fill up vacancies on the strength before the regiment arrives in the Dutch colonies. A sum of twenty-five thousand florins will be paid over annually by the Company for the renewal of armament and clothing and for recruiting; the condition is attached that whereas future equipment may, in time of war, be purchased in France or elsewhere at the will of the proprietary colonel, in time of peace it shall be only of Dutch make and bought in Holland.

Every detail of dress and equipment is, as might be expected, minutely set forth in the "capitulation." The customary uniform of a Swiss regiment was scarlet, but as de Meuron's troops were to be employed against English red-coats, blue with yellow facings was in this case decreed to take the place of familiar "couleur sang de boeuf." With this, in accordance with the fashion of the time, were worn gaiters and white knee-breeches. The helmet is defined as "un chasque a criniere flottante avec plumet houppe" bearing the arms of Neuchâtel. It is laid down that privates are to be armed with a "good" musket, a bayonet and, with what seems a superfluity of detail, "a belt to hold that bayonet." Sergeants are to carry a sword, corporals and drummers a sabre. Each unit is to be provided with two pairs of stockings, shoes and gaiters, a knapsack, a working dress, and a nightcap; during the voyage to the East these luxuries are not to be unpacked, but the uniform will be confined to a woollen shirt and trousers, a surtout and a "bonnet de police." It is interesting to note that the officer charged with the purchase in Paris of this regimental outfit was Captain Yorck, afterwards to become celebrated in the Napoleonic campaign of 1814 as the Prussian Marshal Yorck.

5. The old perquisites of Proprietary colonels exist to this day in the emoluments known as "Colonel's off reckonings, still drawn by officers of the Indian army.

The Regiment de Meuron was granted, by the "capitulation," the use of four standards, to be borne by the companies of the field officers. The principal flag displayed upon a white ground the monogram V.O.C., of the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oostendische Compagnie) together with the mottoes "Terra et Mare, Fidelitas et Honour," borrowed from the Swiss regiment de Hallwyl, in which de Meuron had served his apprenticeship to arms. The remaining standards carried the colonel's livery colours, black, green and yellow with a broad yellow cross upon which the same mottoes were inscribed. The regimental seal bore in its centre the arms of the de Meuron family, around which were grouped the shields of the thirteen Swiss cantons: accolé with the colonel's armorial bearings being those of the Dutch East India Company. The proprietary character of the regiment was still further emphasized in the costume of the twenty drummers, two of whom were attached to each company, these, after the usage of the day, being clad in the livery colours of their colonel.

By the end of July, 1781, Charles Daniel de Meuron had carried out his contract, and the regiment of which he was proprietary colonel stood assembled at its appointed rendezvous, the island of Oleron in Brittany. Owing to a series of gales, more than a month elapsed before its embarkation for the Cape. Eight companies alone could find accommodation in the *Fier*, the transport which had been placed at the disposal of de Meuron, and the remainder of the regiment was compelled to proceed to its destination in a smaller vessel. The two ships formed part of an unwieldy convoy of three hundred merchantmen, under the escort of nine French warships commanded by Admiral La Motte Piquet. Harassed at every turn by the English privateers which swarmed the seas like sharks, the huge convoy quickly fell into disorder and the smaller of de Meuron's transports early became detached from her companions. By a happy combination of circumstances, she succeeded in reaching the Cape six weeks earlier than did the *Fier*. Her contingent of troops can hardly be described as the most promising material for a new regiment. During the voyage, indeed insubordination gradually rose to an extent which must have sorely perplexed the officers on board. The climax was only reached when a plot was hatched to overcome the vessel and turn pirates: an ambition which was discovered in the nick of time by Major de Sandol Roy and not repressed without the greatest difficulty.

The *Fier* meanwhile held by her course with the remainder of the Squadron. Her captain, by name d'Alberade, was eager to push on ahead; de Meuron with characteristic caution, was as firm in his intention of abiding with the escort. In the light of later events, it was fortunate for the regiment that the colonel successfully opposed the blandishments of d'Alberade. For a

chapter of disasters the progress of the *Fier* merits comparison with the missionary journeys of Saint Paul. Had she proceeded alone upon her voyage, it is hardly open to doubt that the two companies of would-be pirates upon the smaller transport would have represented the entire Regiment de Meuron on their arrival at the Cape.

As things were, the disappearance of the English frigates brought little relief to the tormented flotilla. A succession of equinoctial gales arose which fell with terrible force upon the convoy, and orders were finally given for the vessels to separate. While the admiral with the bulk of the squadron made for the West Indies, seventeen of the ships under escort of the *Hermione* put in at the Canaries in order to refit and water. Among these latter was the *Fier*, which met with so hearty a reception at the hands of the good folk of Santa Cruz that the misfortunes of the voyage were quickly blotted out from the memories "of de Meuron and his men. Eight days of November were spent in feasting and dancing" before the convoy had sufficiently recuperated to pursue its journey to the Cape.

In spite of this refreshment, fresh disasters were none the less in store for the new regiment. Hardly had the squadron left the Canaries on the horizon than it became becalmed. At this inauspicious moment, d'Alberade, who had once been so insistent in his desire to navigate alone, made the alarming announcement that his provisions would not last him till the Cape. The regiment was immediately put on half rations, but to little purpose. Scurvy broke out and in a few days prostrated two hundred and thirty of the eight hundred men on board. There was nothing left but to invoke the aid of the other ships which at a council held on board the *Hermione* consented to provision the *Fier* from their joint store.

All hands must have been thankful when on the 6th of January 1782 Table Mountain hove in sight. Next day, the regiment landed at Cape Town, and its colonel lost no time in forwarding to the Governor, Baron Plettenberg, a detailed letter of complaint against the captain of the *Fier*. In this document justly described in its concluding paragraph as "une longue épître"—de Meuron declaimed with indignation against the sieur d'Alberade who, intent solely on securing a good market at the Cape, had filled the hold with merchandise. To so great an extent was the vessel encumbered with "pacotilles" that it had

6. It is interesting to note the officers who signed this document, as it contains the earliest record of their names: de Meuron Motiers, de Gerbolles, Lardy-Bessardon, Jequier, Duvois, Gradcourt, Bailly, Touchon Ried, Gradmann, Dubois, Chevalier de la Raitrie, Dauphin Muriel, Bernard, Boysser and Garnier.

been found necessary to relegate not merely the soldiers effects but the ammunition itself to an exposed quarter of the deck, where the combined action of sun and rain had quickly conspired to render them useless. As a result of insufficient food and water, one hundred and three men had died of scurvy; several had fallen overboard for want of proper fittings to the ship's side; while some forty had been impressed to do the work of the ship's crew. Nor had the officers fared better. The supplies of the mess had been ruthlessly pillaged by the captain's servant. This individual, who had already acquired an unenviable notoriety by detection in the act of diluting the soldiers' eau de vie with eau de mer, yet further succeeded in establishing a "corner" in so indispensable a necessity of life as drinking water. This he was able to retail to the officers from his master's private store at the monopoly rate of a crown a bottle, with no greater punishment, when complaint rose too high to be stifled, than condemnation for twenty-four hours to sailors' fare. Even if we cannot justify every item in de Meuron's bill of damages for two hundred and seventy thousand florins—a sum which included an indemnity of three hundred florins for every soldier on the ground of the permanent injury to his health caused by privation—it is clear that the treatment accorded to the officers and men, for whose maritime conveyance the Dutch Company had paid as much as twelve hundred florins per head, was anything but desirable or satisfactory. Protest, unfortunately, proved of no avail. The Governor was not unnaturally reluctant to enter into the merits of a controversy which bid fair to swell into a bulky volume, and contented himself with referring de Meuron to his principals in Europe; a mode of obtaining redress which would no doubt have required a larger expenditure of patience than the colonel was now able to bestow up on the matter.

Hardly, in fact, had the regiment recovered from the effects of the voyage than it was re-embarked upon the *Hermione* and despatched to Ceylon to re-inforce the fleet of that "amiral diable", the Bailli de Suffren. After having taken part in the expulsion of the English from Trincomalee, it was ordered to Cuddalore, then sorely beset by the English under General Stuart. Here the regiment was in time to join in the sortie of the 25th of June 1783; a sortie rendered memorable by the British capture of a young French sergeant in the regiment of Aquitaine of the name of Bernadotte, the future General of the Empire and King of Sweden and Norway. Previous to this the corps had been afloat and engaged in the two sea-fights between Suffren and Sir Edward Hughes; when we read that an English broadside was

7. That this was an excessive charge is shown by the fact that the King of France paid only 600 florins a head for the transport of his men to the Ile de France on board these very ships.

so successfully directed as to bring down the mainmast of the *Heros* and at one stroke annihilate some forty of the regiment who were serving as marines.⁸

On the conclusion of peace, de Meuron and his men were ordered to Ceylon, whence, after a short stay, they returned to the Cape. Here they shared garrison duty with the French Regiment de Pondicherry, then under the command of Colonel Gordon. Difficulties soon arose between the two regiments, for the French soldiers displayed a noticeable reluctance in saluting the de Meuron colours. Naturally enough, in the consequence, wounded honour sought satisfaction in the customary manner and the officers indulged themselves in a lengthy succession of duels, from which the colonels do not appear to have been exempted. Other troubles were in store, moreover. Not a few men of de Meuron's regiment deserted about this time, being enticed up-country, by the Dutch Boers to serve as farm-hands. Those of the fugitives who could be captured were shot, but there can be no doubt that the regiment suffered a considerable diminution in its ranks, and its relief in 1786 by the Regiment de Wurtemberg was only just in time to prevent complete disorganisation.

Barras, the Revolutionary Director and protector of Josephine, who was soldiering at the Cape in 1781, gives a curious picture of the place in his memoirs. "At the time of my arrival at the Cape of Good Hope", he writes, "its governor was a fat Dutchman, M. Plentinberg, a member of the Netherlands East India Company. His wife was of opinion that her personal fatness conferred on her the right of being as insolent as her husband. These two vain creatures, who lived isolated in their palace, were the terror of the inhabitants." Barras was at the time a cadet in the regiment of Pondicherry, which Suffren's squadron had landed at Table Bay on the 21st of June 1781 after a severe brush en route with Admiral Hughes off San Jago, one of the Cap Verd Islands. Under orders of the Count de Conway, Suffren had disembarked both the Pondicherry regiment and a part of the regiment of Austrasia. "These joined to a Dutch battalion under Colonel Gordon, a man of military talent, were

8. Innes Munro in his "Narrative of Military Operations on the Coromandel Coast" states that on the 15th February 1782 Admiral Hughes recaptures five vessels which had been taken from us to the northward of Madras. The sixth was the *Lauriston*, a transport captured by the *Isis*. Captain Lumbley, which contained many officers and 300 men of the Regiment of Lausanne." Lausanne seems a mistake for Neuchatel; and if the vessel was captured, she must have been retaken, for the French account shows that all the troops of Suffren's *Corps d'armee* were subsequently landed at Porto Novo. The action in which the French flag-ship *Heros* lost her main mast was fought on the 20th of September 1782. "The hurrahs of the English first showed Suffren that they thought he had struck his flag. Not for long did they remain under this delusion. Rushing on the poop, Suffren cried with a voice which sounded above the roar of the combat: 1 Brig flags, bring up all the white flags that are below and cover my ship with them."

to form the garrison which the Court of Versailles, convinced that the existence of our squadrons and the retention of the Ile de France and of India depended on our retaining possession of the Cape, had sent thither to defend them against British attacks. Barras served abroad till March 1783, when a quarrel with de Conway happily ended in his being sent home with despatches. Shortly afterwards he resigned his commission and settled in Paris.

From the Cape, the regiment de Meuron was sent back to Ceylon, leaving behind it a depot of thirty-three men commanded by Captain Zorn and Lieutenants Bore and Kibourg. Arrived at Ceylon, Colonel Charles Daniel de Meuron seized the opportunity to leave the regiment, making over the command to Pierre Frederic, his younger brother. The reason of this sudden determination reveals the astuteness of the colonel. Some years before, the precaution had been taken to obtain the consent of the States General to declare the regiment hereditary property. Colonel de Meuron's union with Mademoiselle Fillon had not been blessed with offspring. On the other hand, Pierre Frederic was not only the father of children but his presumptive heir. It need no great gift of political prophecy on the part of Charles Daniel de Meuron to perceive that, while the regiment might safely be left in the hands of his successor, the presence of its proprietor in Europe and a proper exercise of influence at headquarters could not fail to add to its value as a family commercial asset. The actual transfer of command, unfortunately was not effected without considerable opposition on the part of the officers, who were less alive to the motives which were actuating their colonel. The duelling epidemic which had been so prevalent at the Cape revived, and Pierre Frederic was twice "called out", happily without injury to his life or character. To make matters worse, several of the most promising officers resigned their commission. Included among these, it is of interest to note in passing, were the brothers of Sandol Roy, of whom one was at that time lieutenant-colonel of the regiment, while the other held the rank of captain. Both had previously served with distinction in the Swiss Regiment de Boccard in French employ, and both had successful careers after leaving the Regiment de Meuron. The elder, Francois, had at the Cape struck up a friendship both with the future Marshals Yorck and with Barras, who was then, as we have seen, a cadet in the Regiment de Pondicherry. The acquaintance proved a useful one in later years, for in 1815 Barras was enabled to obtain for him a post on the staff of General Bachmann. He died at Neuchatel in 1827. The younger brother, Simon, after a short apprenticeship to arms in the Regiment de Boccard, had seen service, before joining the colours of de Meuron, under Frederic the Great in Prussia and in Poland. On resigning his commission in the Regiment de Meuron he passed in to the Dutch military service and was appointed

Governor of Malacca and subsequently Captain-General of all the Company's European troops in the Dutch Indies. It has been recorded to his credit that, so long as he retained command, the English were foiled in their attempt to conquer Java.

During its sojourn in Ceylon, the Regiment de Meuron—perhaps by way of putting an end to further dissensions in its rank—was employed in two expeditions against the King of Kandy. In these, however, greater difficulties appear to have been encountered from nature than from the natives.⁹ The soldiers, none the less, we read, "conserverent leur belle humeur." The regiment had at this period a battery of eight guns, but their services were little requisitioned. Several detachments of men were scattered among the various garrisons of the Island, and others stationed in India. The next few years were spent, indeed, in comparative inactivity, and Charles Daniel de Meuron had small reason to regret the relinquishment of his command.

A trifling interlude was afforded in 1793 when two companies under Captain Pierre Lardy of Auvernier (the same who afterwards led the grenadier company at the storming of Seringapatam) escorted Governor Van Angelbeck from Cochin to Colombo. It was this Cochin contingent of which we read in Grandpre's "Voyage to the Indian Ocean and Bengal undertaken in 1789-90" "I found" he writes "the Regiment de Meuron in garrison at Cochin. This Swiss Regiment levied in France was composed of Frenchmen, several of whom offered me their services; including one who had been bred a butcher, and undertook to supply me with all the meat and livestock I might require to take away with me. The wish to benefit a fellow countryman induced me to accept his offer".

Pierre Lardy was again singled out for special duty in 1794, when the Dutch Government placed four companies of the regiment under his command at Negapatam. The regiment, indeed must have been considerably scattered about this time, whether in garrison or for the purpose of affording travelling protection to the Dutch officials. In the same year, Governor Van Graaf, who had been appointed Director-General at Batavia,¹⁰ took with him

9. Pervival in his Account of the Island of Ceylon gives a different picture. "About twenty years ago the Dutch again penetrated into the King of Kandy's country, but were attacked by the natives with so much spirit that the present General de Meuron, then a Colonel in the Dutch service, narrowly escaped being taken with a large detachment near Sittivacca, and by accidentally taking a different road from that the Candians expected he would, he got safe to Colombo."

10. At his departure Van Graaf delivered a long memorandum to his successor Van Angelbeck dated Colombo, 15th July, 1794, on which he writes: our military force now consists as follows—11 companies National Europeans, 10 companies of the Regiment de Meuron, 5 companies of the Regiment de Wurtemberg, 5 companies Malays, 9 companies Sepoys, 9 companies of Artillery, not including the invalids and a few old Europeans and natives detached to the small outposts." Colonel D.C. Von Driberg (who died at Negapatam, 22nd June 1804) commanded the forces, and Colonel Elias Paravicini the Artillery.

from Colombo an escort of sixty-two men of the regiment under Captain Samuel Gigaud and Lieutenant J. B. Vautier. Captain Gigaud, a close personal friend of the Governor, was selected to command the troops on board the four men-of-war composing the squadron; but neither he nor Vautier lived long to enjoy their honours. Both succumbed within the year to the effects of the climate, which also carried off two-thirds of the soldiers, and, as a result of this disastrous expedition, their returned to Colombo no more than thirteen men under charge of a "fourrier" who had gone out a simple corporal and thus unexpectedly came back as senior officer of the remnant of the company.

The inaction of the regiment was not to endure much longer. In 1795, the French Revolution was destined to throw the affairs of the Dutch East India Company into complete confusion. The French under Pichegru overran Holland, entered Amsterdam, and proclaimed the Batavian Republic. The Prince of Orange, the hereditary stadtholder, fled with his family to England, and placed the Dutch colonies abroad under the protection of the British. It followed as a matter of course that his orders were at once countermanded by the republican authorities in Holland, and the colonial governments quickly became the victims of disorganisation. Suddenly came the news of the Battle of Camperdown and the destruction of Dutch trade. The Vereenigde Oostendische Compagnie was bankrupt.

On the 1st of August 1795 followed the English invasion of Ceylon. The bulk of the Regiment de Meuron—its pay fallen into arrears and discontent manifest in its ranks—lay with its Colonel at Colombo. Three detachments, each of two companies, held Trincomalee, Fort Ostenberg, and Point de Galle.¹¹ The little army to defend the coast did not in all exceed three thousand men and fell an easy prey to the organised invader. The English under Colonel Stuart and Admiral Rainer began operations by landing at Trincomalee in the face of a tremendous surf. After a stubborn resistance, the place surrendered to them on the 27th of August, and the detachment of the Regiment de Meuron—one company under H. D. de Meuron-Motiers have lost as many as thirty men out of the eighty who composed it—was taken prisoner and deported to Madras. The defenders of Port Ostenburg capitulated four days later. Point de Galle had its communications cut off. Fort Batticaloa surrendered on the 18th of September. Puntô Pedro, Jaffnapatam, Mannar followed suit in quick succession.

11. The garrison of Trincomalee consisted of 798 officers and men, of whom 185 were Dutch, 84 Swiss, 136 Wurtembergers and 363 Malays and Sepoys. Fort Ostenburg was garrisoned by 8 artillery men, 69 of de Meuron Regiment, 32 Dutchmen, 54 Wurtembergers and 89 Malays. Batticaloa had a weak garrison of 39 Europeans and 98 natives.

Colombo alone continued to hold out through the untiring energy of the Regiment de Meuron. Owing to the indisposition of the Dutch commander, the supreme authority rested in the hands of Pierre Frederic de Meuron who was the heart and soul of the defence. A vigorous resistance was being offered by the beleaguered garrison when their efforts were rendered unavailing by an unexpected thunderbolt.

The investment of Colombo was at its height when word arrived that Charles Daniel de Meuron had ceded his regiment to England and was then on his return to India in order to personally supervise its transfer.

One is not surprised to learn that Pierre Frederic received the news with incredulity and showed no inclination to suspend hostilities. Himself a commander of dogged perseverance, he resolved upon defending Colombo to the last. But there was only hardship and small glory to be gained in the service of a bankrupt company, and neither officers nor men required much persuasion to follow the example of the proprietor of the regiment to whom they considered their allegiance to be mainly due. A promise was obtained from Major Agnew the British envoy, that the regiment would not be called upon to serve against the Dutch, and de Meuron had no option but to acquiesce in the wishes of the force which he commanded. By a document drawn up under the hand and seal of the Governor of the Island, the Regiment de Meuron was formally released from its oath to the Dutch Company, the statement being appended that its colonel had conducted himself throughout as a man of honour.¹²

Embarkation for Tuticorin was fixed for the 27th of October following. Vague rumours of mutiny on the part of a few discontented spirits fortunately came to nought. The Governor, Van Angelbeck, must, notwithstanding, have been considerably relieved when in that Sunday morning the companies marched for the last time past his house to the Place d'Amsterdam in perfect order: three cases of drunkenness among the men being the only disquieting symptoms which he afterwards reported. By the 29th of October, the last of the regiment had left the quay, being played out of the town to the tune of "Malbrouck s'en va t'en guerre," an air which had been specially selected for the occasion by the chef de musique, Bernard, and which we are told, "égaya toute la population." One hundred and fifty women, children, and slaves accompanied the regiment which embarked on three Dutch

chaloupes and a vessel commanded by Pierre Monneron, the same who on the 1st of May 1792, had been chosen with Beylic deputies of French India to the Assemblée Nationale at Paris.¹³

The Galle companies gave more trouble. Although stringent orders had been issued that no member of the regiment should remain on the Island, recruiting for the Dutch army was being extensively carried *sub rosa* in the ranks by individuals who "se disant patriotes" winked openly at desertion. Matters arrived at such a pass that Captain Zweifel (who was one day to command the regiment in succession to Larky) was hurriedly despatched to hasten the embarkation of the companies. One shipload under Lieutenant Senn reached Tuticorin safely on the 7th of November, the other which should have started with seventy three men arrived with but twenty six on board, the remainder having deserted on the eve of their departure. Matters were not improved by a short halt at Colombo in order that Zweifel might take leave of the Governor, for Jacobinism was then rampant in the city and several of the Swiss soldiers were persuaded by a certain Major Vaugine to escape from their quarters and embrace the new cult.

Robert Percival of the 19th Regiment of Foot, who served throughout the Ceylon campaign, gives a different version of the capitulation of Colombo in his "Account of the Island of Ceylon". According to him, the Regiment de Meuron had already transferred its services to England before General Stuart landed at Negombo in February 1796. Its agreement with the Dutch Company had, no doubt, expired some three months previously; but it is difficult to believe that the regiment voluntarily changed its masters in the hour of danger. The Dutch in their turn tell their own story of the downfall of the capital. They openly assert the treason of Governor Van Angelbeck and imply that as the Stadtholder in 1795 had thrown himself on the protection of the English, the Governor of Ceylon had contrived the surrender of the Island in order to gratify his new allies. Monsieur C. F.

12. Colombo surrendered on the 15th of February 1796. The garrison was composed of 95 officers, 909 Europeans troops. 1840 Malays and Sepoys and 281 seamen—3125 in all.

13. The *Bombay Courier* for the 19th October 1797 records, "A private letter has been received within these few days from Muscat, of which for the present we can only learn that it relates the death of Mon. P. Monneron, who did not survive, as we had hoped, the loss of his vessel upon the Arabian Coast. Were M. Monneron less known in the commercial world of India, this article might have been omitted; but the memory of a man, who, like him has explored with such industry the resources of trade in each quarter of the world; who has successively tasted, with the same equanimity, the plenitude of wealth and a penniless poverty; who has so magnanimously struggled with such a rare tide of misfortune; and whose mind was enriched with such a store of information; we say, such a man, unless we have been deceived in him, merits a tribute of respect."

Thombe, an officer who had served in Batavia, published in 811 his *Voyage aux Indes orientales*, in the second volume of which he has inserted an apology for the capture of Colombo from data supplied by him by individuals at Java, who had served during the brief assault. He specifies vigorous and earnest preparations for the siege for months before it actually took place, which were ostensibly continued up to the approach of the English. But he recalls many suspicious acts of the Governor prior to and during the advance of the British. At length on their march to Colombo and the appearance of the English squadron in the roads, the Governor's conduct became unequivocal. He held frequent conferences with Major Agnew, the English envoy, who landed from a frigate in the offing; and immediately after his departure the Regiment de Meuron announced their intention to transfer their allegiance to the British. Van Angelbeck then commenced to conceal his plate and valuables, and awaited the enemy with a composure that, coupled with a multitude of minor circumstances, awoke the garrison to consciousness that they had been betrayed. "Le 16 fevrier toutes les troupes pensant avec raison qu'elles étaient trahis voulurent se révolter et plusieurs coups de fusils étaient dirigés sur la maison du Gouverneur Van Angelbeck" (Vol. II. p. 214). Under these circumstances the doomed fortress surrendered; and such was the indignation of the soldiers that nothing but the presence of the English saved the Governor from their vengeance.

It is certainly a remarkable circumstance that Van Angelbeck should have remained in Ceylon after the capture of Colombo. He lived there for several years, and eventually committed suicide. The Dutch have made no mention of the latter fact, but Cordiner describes his funeral by torchlight in September 1799. When the body was deposited in the family vault by the side of his wife, whose skeleton was seen through a glass in the cover of the coffin.

With the arrival at Tuticorin of what had now become His Majesty's Regiment de Meuron, a new chapter opens in its history.¹⁴ Since its foundation in 1781 to the 31st of October 1795, there has passed through the ranks two thousand two hundred and seventy seven non-commissioned officers and men. Of these forty-two had met their death in battle, principally at Trincomalee, one hundred and thirty nine had died at sea, three hundred and twenty nine had died in hospital, making a total mortality of five hundred and ten. No less than six hundred and thirty seven men had been dismissed the regiment, one hundred and eighty-nine had deserted, and fifty-five were prisoners of war.

14. A number of Wurtembergers also took service with the British, for 68 of them figure among the Madras troops which landed at Banda and captured the Spice Islands in March 1796.

Twenty-seven cadets and non-commissioned officers had, on the other hand, won for themselves commission in the regiment. Of the fifty-three officers who had served the Dutch Company during the fourteen years which had elapsed since the foundation of the corps, as many as twelve were members of the family de Meuron.

The transformation into a British regiment of what, to judge from the proportion of dismissals and desertions had degenerated into a discontented and undisciplined body of irregulars, displays the exercise of a certain sagacity on the part of its proprietary colonel. The negotiations in spite of the suddenness of the transfer had been prolonged and tedious. As far back, indeed, as 1793 the military authorities in India had, in a despatch addressed to Lord Fitzgerald, reported to the Home Government on the possibilities and advantages of acquiring in their own interest the services of so formidable a corps of mercenaries. The flight of the Stadtholder to England at length induced the War Office to consider, and after much hesitation to accept, the recommendation. In the beginning of 1795, orders were finally issued to Colonel Hugh Cleghorn to proceed to Neuchâtel on an urgent mission for the purpose of endeavouring to arranged terms with Charles Daniel de Meuron. The bargaining as was to be expected, proved a complicated matter, and was terminated only by an offer of the British Government to pay the Dutch East India Company. On the 30th of March, however, a provisional agreement was signed, and ratified by Dundas on the condition that de Meuron should at once proceed to India and personally superintend the transfer of the regiment.¹⁵ He and Cleghorn accordingly started off by the overland route from Venice to Alexandria and Cairo and thence to Suez, landing eventually at Madras after a troublesome journey on the twenty-fourth of September. Nearly a year later, on the second of August 1796, the capitulation signed at Neuchâtel by Colonel Cleghorn was at length ratified by the Government of Madras, the signatories in addition to de Meuron being the Governor Lord Hobart, together with his members of Council, Sir Alfred Clarke, E. Saunders, and E. Fallofield. It might have been supposed that the transformation of the Regiment de Meuron had now definitely been effected. In reality, the negotiations were only just beginning. De Meuron had still to reckon with the British War Office. On his arrival in England at the close of 1797,¹⁶ he found his hands fully occupied. For

15. Captain J. J. de Bolle, who had served up till 1790 in the regiment de Sonneberg, accompanied de Meuron as Aide-de-Camp. He and Lieutenant de Dardel were afterwards associated with Cleghorn in 1796 in a mission to the King of Kandy.

16. De Meuron left for Europe in March 1797 on board the "Barrington" with Captain de Bolle, Lieutenant d'Yvernois of Saint Sulpice and Samuel de Meuron, son of Lieut.-Colonel de Meuron. On board the same ship was Lord Abercromby. After a stormy passage, during which the ship had to put in for several weeks at Newfoundland, de Meuron reached Deal on December 13th, 1797.

various reasons, indeed the Madras "capitulation" was no longer entirely approved in London: reasons not unconnected with the matter of the Dutch arrears, payment of which had been withheld in Madras owing to the non-arrival of certain documents. Enquiry at the War Office elicited the surprising information that the name of the Regiment de Meuron was unknown to the officials. Repeated applications to Dundas remained unanswered. "I am as yet," naively protests de Meuron "without the answer which I may truly say that I await with as much impatience as the Jews did their Messiah". In a letter to de Meuron-Motiers, he expresses himself more forcibly: the Ministers are so astonishingly occupied "*que c'est une mer à boire pour less voir et pour obtenir des decisions*". Finally an interview with Dundas was accorded, and de Meuron found himself confronted with the absolute refusal of the Government to settle the arrears of the Dutch Company. Nothing daunted, however, he as resolutely refused to agree to any such conditions, and enlisted in his support the influence of Mlle. de Montmollin, a Neuchâtel lady at that time in favour at the English Court. Backed by her assistance, de Meuron continued to maintain a steadfast attitude and satisfactory compromise was eventually agreed upon, by which, in addition to the thirty thousand pound already paid him by the authorities in India, he was to receive a further grant of eighty thousand pounds in full discharge of all such arrears as might be owing to the regiment by the Dutch East India Company. An agreement embodying these terms and presented to him by General Nesbitt "*en le laissant dans l'alternative de l'accepter immédiatement ou de perdre son régiment*": a sudden decision on the part of the War Office, which sufficed to bring the negotiations to a point at which de Meuron was compelled to acquiesce.

The revised contract was drawn up and signed on the 25th of September 1798 by Charles Daniel de Meuron and General John Ramsay. By the terms of the agreement, the British Government understood to grant to de Meuron himself the rank and pay of Major-General in the British service, and declared that he and all the officers of his regiment should henceforth rank with officers of the King's service in accordance with the respective dates of their commissions. The sum of three thousand pounds was in addition to be paid annually to de Meuron in order to meet expenses of keeping the regiment up to its full complement. The King engaged the regiment for ten years certain; if, at the expiration of that period the engagement should not be renewed, officers were to be placed on English half-pay so long as they might refrain from accepting military employment under other powers. The appointment and promotion of the officers, who must be of Swiss extraction, was stated to remain in the hands of the colonel proprietary, subject to confirmation by His Majesty. The establishment, dress, and equipment of the

regiment was hence-forward to conform to that of the British infantry. The regiment was, however, permitted to retain its own colours with the addition of the Union Jack in the upper inner canton,¹⁷ and the Swiss marches were further authorised except on parade. The strength of the regiment was fixed at nine hundred and fifty men not including a hundred corporals sergeants and the usual number of commissioned officers. A chaplain was attached to the corps and three surgeons were appointed in place of the eleven who owed their position to the paternal care of the Swiss Federal authorities. For every German recruit it was arranged that de Meuron should receive the sum of sixteen and a half pounds, the terms being the same as those of the 60th regiment of Hanoverians: for every Swiss recruit, the rate of payment was to be half as much again, owing to the difficulty of procuring soldiers of that nationality. Finally, it was laid down that the contract should take effect only from the 1st of January, 1799. During the intervening period, the regiment was to rank as an auxiliary corps, independent of the British army, and liable to be called upon for service only in cases of necessity.

With the completion of his labours, de Meuron retired to Neuchâtel to enjoy the dignity and emoluments of his new position as a British Major-General. That his regiment had proved a successful speculation admits of little question, and his later years were passed in a leisured affluence which quickly ensured for him a leading share in the affairs of the Swiss township. The close of his career was as uneventful as his earlier life had been adventurous. On the 6th of April, 1806, he died and was accorded a military funeral by order of the French General Oudinot, his old comrade in arms in the regiment d'Erlach who was at the time in command in Neuchâtel. The final ceremony seems, however, to have stirred up resentment among the more turbulent spirits in the city. Evil tongues were not wanting to reproach the French with having granted military honours to British general. To such an extent, indeed, did "ces propos d'auberge" exasperate the French grenadiers that an attempt was actually made to disinter the body and to throw it into the lake: a chivalrous project which was checked only by the personal influence of General Oudinot, and which forms a characteristic conclusion to the career of the soldier of fortune who had sold his regiment to England.

In the meantime, however, the regiment had by no means taken unkindly to its new masters. On its arrival at Tuticorin in November 1795, it had been warmly welcomed and had speedily

17. In 1814 General Rottenburg reported that the old flags, then 18 years in use, were not in accordance with regulations, and recommended that the yellow cross dividing the fields should be light blue.

adapted itself to the new conditions. Drawbacks there had doubtless been at first. Pierre Frederic de Meuron, who had found accommodation in the quarters of the late commandant, complained that the most indispensable furniture was lacking and that he "ne trouva pas même de quoi faire un peu de lumière". The discomfort, fortunately, proved of short duration. After Tuticorin the first destination was Madras, but, owing to the rivers being in flood, it was found impossible to transfer the entire regiment. Two companies only were in consequence stationed at Madras from the end of November 1795 to December 1796, while the others were ordered to Poonamallee and Colombo and later to Negapatam.

In 1797, Colonel Pierre Frédéric de Meuron was appointed Military Governor of Ceylon. The post was hardly an enviable one. No less than three Military Governors had died within the five months that England had been in possession of the island. The first was Colonel Petrie, of the 73rd Regiment, the capturer of Cochin in 1795. The second was General Doyle, who died in June 1797. Colonel Bonnevaux of the Company's service, the next senior officer on the island, succeeded him: but had only arrived three or four days at Colombo from his former command at Point de Galle, when he was killed by his curriole upsetting as he drove out through one of the gates, and was buried within a week after his predecessor. De Meuron was appointed by Lord Hobart from Madras, and in addition to taking the command was placed at the head of a commission to investigate into the revenue departments. Mr. Andrews, a Madras civilian, had been brought into the island as superintendent of the Ceylon revenues and had swept away the Dutch system of imports and collections, substituting in all its severity the Carnatic system with a host of extortionate Malabar dubashes to enforce it. Discontent became so great that the Sinhalese rose in revolt, and it was not till after considerable loss on both sides that the insurgents were entrusted to de Meuron, and continued by Frederick North, afterwards Earl of Guildford, who relieved him in October 1798 as the first British Governor. The latter made short work of the "infamous faction of Madras civilians" by wholesale dismissal, suspension and enforced resignation. The recommendations of the de Meuron commission constitute a valuable state paper and were forwarded by North to the Marquis of Wellesley. They are now among the Wellesley papers in the British Museum, where they form Nos. 13864, 5, 6 and 7 in the catalogue of additional manuscripts. De Meuron continued as Brigadier-General commanding the troops in Ceylon till February the 7th 1799, when being too late to join his regiment in the field, he was transferred to the command at Vellore.

In July 1796, a curious incident diversified the monotony of the regiment's existence. The officers in that month despatched to the magistrates at Neuchâtel a lengthy and remarkable letter

expressing their entire satisfaction at their transfer from the service of "une compagnie idéale" to that of England. Twenty-one officers at Poonamallee and twelve at Vellore appended their signatures to this interesting document. The penultimate paragraph alludes in flattering terms to Charles Daniel de Meuron, the "father" of the regiment. "Le corps d'officiers, pénétré de reconnaissance pour son respectable père, a cru ne pouvoir la lui témoigner mieux qu'en demandant à son colonel-commandant, Monsieur le Brigadier-General Pierre Frederic de Meuron, la permission de vous écrire, Messieurs et très honorables magistrats, pour vous faire part des sentiments qui l'animait, persuade, qu'en voyant que les soins et les travaux du General Major ont tire vos enfants, vos parents, vos compatriotes, du precipice ou ils étaient prêts à tomber, vous lui en tiendrez compte en approuvant ses demarches; et comme il retourne dans le sein de sa patrie, il y trouvera l'accueil que meritent ses bienfaits, lesquels ne se bornent point à tout ce qui tient aux individus qui composent aujourd'hui le regiment, mais s'étendent sur tous les Neuchatelois que le gout, pour le service militaire pourra porter à y enterer. La bonne volonte de toute le corps, la confiance entiere que nous sommes fondees a donner a notre colonel commandant, nous donnent lieu d'esperer que nous ne diminuerons pas l'opinion que l'on a des Suisses, en joignant a toutes ces considerations l'assurance que nous vous donnons qu'il ne s'est pas trouve parmi nous un seul partisan des principes qui ont bouleverser l'Europe, et qu'au contraire nous cherissons tous les gouvernements sous lesquels nous avons le bonheur de naitre.

In 1798 the news of Bonaparte's landing in Egypt gave promise of new employment for the regiment, but the orders for its departure were for some reason countermanded. A detachment of twenty men, however, under Sergeant Portinger accompanied General Lake to Calcutta and embarked thence for Egypt. The expedition can hardly be described as having been successful. In 1801, the sergeant returned alone to India, his entire command having fallen victims to the Arabs.

At the commencement of the Mysore campaign, six companies of the regiment under Major H. D. de Meuron were in garrison at Tripassore, the remaining four being stationed at Vellore under Lieutenant-Colonel de Meuron-Bulot, whom sickness prevented from taking part on the coming operations. In December 1798, the regiment joined the Wallajahbad division under General Floyd and a month later was paraded with the Grand Army and inspected by General Harris. The entire Madras column now numbered twenty thousand men, mostly European. One half were cavalry, whilst the park of artillery was the most formidable that had yet been gathered together in the East. Six brigades were formed, two of European troops and four of sepoys; the Regiment de Meuron being assigned with the 33rd and 73rd

regiments to the second Brigade under Colonel the Hon'ble Arthur Wellesley. As may be imagined, the progress of this vast array was in no wise conspicuous for its rapidity. Three months, indeed, elapsed before it came within sight of Seringapatam, being joined on the way by the Bombay army under General Stuart and by a force of twelve thousand of the Nizam's soldiers commanded by Meer Allum.

De Meuron Bayard, then a marching captain in the regiment, and seventeen years later its commander, has left a detailed diary of his experiences in this campaign. The volume is still preserved in the Neuchatel library, and its pages offer many graphic details of the storm which are not to be found elsewhere.

During its passage over the ghauts, the Regiment de Meuron, which had been posted on the left wing with the baggage and artillery, suffered severely both from heat and from privation, Tippoo having been careful to devastate the villages on the line of route, however much he may have neglected to defend the passes. The draught cattle, in particular, died by hundreds daily as the result of want of fodder, and the heavy guns had to be drawn by elephants or, where these failed, by men. Meanwhile the Mysore cavalry hovered about the flanks paying special attention to the baggage train. On the 25th of March, de Meuron Bayard records that he was nearly cut off while carrying orders to the rear-guard of the regiment under Captain Pierre Renaud. In eluding the pursuit of three horsemen, he took the wrong direction and found himself suddenly in the burning village of Sultanpet, Hyder's reputed birth-place; a predicament from which he only extricated himself finally through the superior staying powers of his horse.

Two days later came the battle of Maravelly, memorable as the first occasion on which the future Duke of Wellington was under fire. Part of the regiment de Meuron was actively engaged for three hours and lost seven killed and as many wounded. The road was now open to Seringapatam, and the English still further deluded Tippoo, who expected them to take the route Lord Cornwallis had adopted in the last war, by advancing in the other direction across the Cauvery. On the 2nd of April the advance guard was within sight of the island fortress, and the Swiss diarist found leisure to indulge in a glowing description of the luxury which was prevalent in the besieger's camp. The British soldier, we read, did not cook his dinner, did not carry his knapsack, did not groom his horse. All he did was to fight, everything else being done for him by lascars. Officers, we are told, carried each a cook, a couple of body-servants, a syca, a grasscutter and half-dozen baggage carriers, in addition to two oxen for the conveyance of their tents; while those of higher rank sometimes indulged themselves with a satrip's suite of as many as five hundred followers.

Even the Regiment de Meuron travelled with human impediments in the shape of several of its officers' wives. The most prominent among these appears to have been Madame de Meuron Roger, the lady of Major H. D. Meuron-Motiers who, with her three daughters, took the field upon an elephant.¹⁸ Once in the trenches, these courageous ladies must have soon repented their determination. Life ere long became anything but easy for the besiegers. Provisions ran short, until on the 17th of April bread was being sold at a rupee the quarter of the pound. Finally the commissariat reported that food supplies would not last beyond the 9th of May and it was found necessary to put the entire army on half rations. Lieutenant and Quartermaster Louis de Pury—who on the 21st of March 1801 was killed in a duel by Lieutenant Alexandre Lequin, the latter being in consequence cashiered—writing home to his father relates how his clothes were drenched and dried upon him three times within twenty four hours. "Cependant", he adds, "tout le monde étoit content ne desiroit que de se battre". The enemy for their part, gave them every opportunity, and displayed so great activity that every foot of ground gained for the entrenchments was disputed at the point of the bayonet. The Swiss soldiers took their full share of work being employed first in the defence of Shawe's Post, one of the earliest gained, and then in conjunction with the second battalion of the 12th Madras Infantry in the capture of the Powder Mill, known henceforward as Macdonald's Post. In the two days fighting of the 26th and 27th of April round Sultanpet Tope, the regiment lost twelve killed and twenty five men wounded. Assistant Surgeon Lesser was decapitated by a cannon-ball while Captain Piauchaud of the Chasseur Company and Lieutenant Cuisant were both wounded. Sergeant-Major Zehnpfenning particularly distinguished himself by his gallantry during these attacks, in which the Eighth Company was led into action by the diarist de Meuron-Bayard, in the place of Lieutenant Baer who was on duty with the heavy ordnance. In a few more days the breaching batteries were

18. The youthful occupants of the howdah, it may be remarked in passing, all married in India. Suzanne in 1806 became the wife of Adjutant Jean Jacques de Gaechter who in later years served as aid-de-camp to General Baird at the bombardment of Copenhagen and eventually rose to the colonelcy of the Fourth Regiment of Swiss Guards in Paris, dying at Yverdon in 1840. Patromilla in 1805 married Lieutenant P. E. de Caselli later miniature painter at Pondicherry, where he died in 1817. Her second husband was J. Dayot, Intendant-General of the French establishments in India, on whose death in 1821 she was left in reduced circumstance. The French Government having refused her a pension on the ground that her father and her first husband had both been officers in British service, she then petitioned the Directors of the East India Company who in 1825 granted her a compassionate allowance of seventy rupees per mensem. This pittance she lived to enjoy for no less than fifty-four years more.

planted; several of the heavier guns being dragged across the Cauvery by the Swiss soldiers. On the 2nd of May, Lieutenant Lalor of the 73rd forded the river at great risk and reported the breach practicable. That same night the enemy's rocket factory in the heart of the town blew up with a tremendous explosion, "ce qui," adds de Meuron-Bayard, "nous fournit un superbe feu d'artifice, aussi difficile à imiter qu'à décrire." Much damage had been caused by these projectiles, in the launching of which the Mysoreans were especially expert; one rocket having carried off the arm of Colonel Montagu, commanding the Bengal artillery, who succumbed subsequently to his injuries.

By the 3rd of May, preparations for the final assault had been completed. The storming column consisted of four thousand men under General Baird selected from among the various European and native regiments. Included among these were the two flank companies of the Regiment de Meuron, the Grandiers being led by Captain Lardy with Lieutenants de Montmillin and Wolff, and the Chasseurs by de Meuron-Bayard (vice Piauchaud wounded) and by Matthey. The remaining eight companies stood in reserve under Colonel Wellesley. In the van of the stormers went a detachment of pioneers with hatchets and ladders under the order of Lieutenant Charles de Meuron-Tribolet, Colonel Sherbrooke who commanded the right attack, having requested the services of a Swiss officer, knowing English, as their leader.

Shortly before one o'clock on the 4th of May, the forlorn hope of fourteen men advanced under Sergeant Graham and de Meuron-Tribolet. The distance to the breach was only six hundred yards, but that short space included both the river and the ditch. In about six minutes these obstacles had been surmounted and the British flag was planted on the walls by Graham who, the next moment, fell a victim to the fire of the enemy. De Meuron-Tribolet behind him waved his hat in the air excitedly; an action which attracted the attention of Colonel Wellesley who, recognising the head-dress, asked of the officer nearest to him—"de Meuron d'Orbe, who of your regiment is that upon the breach?" Ere long the breach had been sufficiently enlarged by the pioneers to admit twelve men abreast, and General Baird at once gave the signal for the advance. The storming party rushed forward under a wild fire of musketry, handgrenades, and heavy ordnance, which rendered the crossing of the rocky bed of the river a task of no little peril. Their guide, the gallant Lalor, fell wounded about midway and was drowned in the passage. Once however, the opposite side had been gained, cover was found under the fort wall and scaling ladders were quickly planted at a spot which Baird had previously indicated to de Meuron-Tribolet. The remainder of the column scrambled up pell-mell, Lieutenant Alphonse Matthey

receiving a tremendous blow on the head while mounting and falling with great force upon de Meuron-Tribelet. Matthey succumbed to his wound two days later, being the only officer of the attacking army actually killed upon the breach.¹⁹

On reaching the summit the two companies diverged right and left as previously arranged. Their cartridge-boxes had been soaked during the crossing, but a charge with the bayonet scattered the Mysorians, before these latter were able to reload, and the force under de Meuron-Bayard soon gained ground to the east, in spite of a murderous fire from the houses. The enemy's guns were spiked as soon as captured and the Union Jack planted upon every outwork gained, in one of which a store of ammunition was opportunely discovered by the attacking body. A terrific fusillade from the Direction of the North Gate followed, and Swiss soldiers running to the assistance of their comrades, found themselves suddenly in the Palace Square which was being held by the 74th Regiment who had succeeded in capturing some of Tippoo's Frenchmen. Within the Palace all was terror and confusion until Major Allan obtained an entrance wrapped in a white flag and learnt from the panic-stricken young princes that Tippoo was no longer with them. He had in fact left the Palace with his guard as soon as the assault began, and hurrying to the ramparts had shot several of the storming party with his own hand. Seeing then that the English were carrying all before them, he made his way to the north of the fortress with the intention of rallying a part of the garrison and retreating with it to his camp outside the town. So great, however, was the crush of fugitives at the river-bridge that further progress became impossible, and the Sultan himself, who had been twice wounded, was nearly carried off his feet. He still endeavoured to press on, when his horse was shot under him, and almost immediately afterwards he received a third wound, severe though not fatal. His attendants, among whom were a number of his women, placed him in a palanquin. He left it and crawled to a gateway leading to a garden. At that moment, sweating with heat and mad with excitement, a body of English troops appeared on the scene.²⁰ A British sergeant rushed forward to lay hands

19. He was the son of a receveur at Cornaux in Switzerland. His brother Frederick who died a lieutenant-colonel at Yverden in 1850 commanded the Red River expedition in 1816. He published a treatise on the employ of the carbine and a memoir with maps on the draining of the marsh at Zeeland.

20. A private in the Regiment de Meuron named Christenau, a native of Offenberga and known as the "Brunswicker," who was afterwards master of the Garrison Band at Fort St. George (where he buried his wife in 1823) is said to have been the soldier who killed Tippoo. But Lord Valentia, in 1804 after describing his visit to Seringapatam where he dined with Colonel de Meuron and his officers, wrote: "It is still unknown who gave the fatal wound to the Sultan. The invaluable string of pearls which he wore round his neck was the prize of the soldier, but it has never been traced. He had been many years collecting this, always taking off an inferior pearl where he could purchase one of more value."

on Tippoo who made a cut at him with all his remaining strength, inflicting a deep gash about the knee. The next moment the Tiger of Mysore lay dead with a bullet in the head, another in the chest, and bayonet wounds in four places in his body. His handful of retainers fought over him with the energy of despair and covered his remains with their corpses, several women being shot promiscuously with his guards. The body, as is well known, was not found till after nightfall, when it was placed in a litter and carried off by torchlight to be identified by his two sons at the palace. Meanwhile Tippoo's flag had been hauled down and the British colours hoisted in their stead, saluted with twenty-one guns from the batteries and with three cheers from the assembled victors.

House-to-house fighting still continued after the occupation of the palace, the Frenchmen in Tippoo's service more than once rallying the Mysoreans in the streets. By four o'clock, however, all serious resistance was at an end; and, as soon as calm had been partially restored, orders were issued by beat of drum granting the troops permission to pillage until noon precisely on the morrow. De Meuron-Bayard, who was on guard at the bastion near the Mysore Gate, divided his company into three portions, one of which went out to plunder while the others remained on duty. He records as a noteworthy circumstance, that during storm and sack alike, the utmost humanity was displayed by all ranks. "*Les femmes furent principalement respectées et protégées ainsi que le reste des habitants qui n'avaient pas les armes à la main*". Two soldiers he adds, who were discovered plundering half-an-hour after the expiration of the time limit were at once hanged without ceremony.

The conquerors, indeed, had other duties to perform. Of these the most pressing was the removal of the corpses and wreckage which encumbered the city's streets, and the interment of the British officers killed, including Matthey, who were buried upon the breach. Quiet was now so far restored that most of the townspeople re-opened the shops. At four o'clock on the afternoon of the 5th of May came the burial of Tipoo himself who was interred with military honours besides his father and mother in the Royal mausoleum of Lal Bagh, two miles outside the city.

Hardly had this ceremony concluded and the troops returned to quarters than a most tremendous storm of thunder, lightning and rain burst upon the town and continued for several hours. So violent was the lightning that number of lives were lost in the camp and out-posts. Lieutenants Barclay and Grant, of the 77th Regiment, were killed, and all the servants, horses, and even dogs of Lieutenant Bellasis struck dead and himself much injured. Forcibly as the value of the capture was felt on

the day of its accomplishment, the army had now more reason to congratulate itself as the torrents which fell this evening completely filled the batteries and trenches with water, and rendered the river impassable for some days afterwards. On the 7th of May, the British headquarters were transferred to the Darya Daulat, Tippoo's favourite summer residence, and the grounds at Lal Bagh were turned into a hospital. The privations and fatigues endured in the trenches had, unhappily been succeeded by excesses which more than doubled the mortality of the great army. Soon it was thought wise to remove the bulk of the troops outside the city. The Chasseurs at the Mysore Gate were relieved by the 33rd Regiment de Meuron and the whole of the Second Brigade, were despatched to the outlying cantonment of French Rocks, some fifteen miles away. The change in one sense proved disastrous. Ere many days, the camp was visited by another violent storm which deluged the tents, destroyed a large quantity of booty, and inflicted vast damage, especially in the lines of the 74th Foot. During its progress, de Meuron-Bayard's orderly, Plessang, was, we are told, drowned.

This accident added another item to the list of casualties of the Regiment de Meuron. Between the 10th of April and the 4th of May, it had lost forty killed and thirty-five men wounded. The deaths included one assistant surgeon, one lieutenant, three sergeants, five corporals, two drummers and twenty-five rank and file; one man had been drowned, and two had been reported missing. The Seringapatam medal was not the only reward of the survivors. Lieutenant de Pury records that he received 9,540 pounds French as his first instalment of prize-money, and on the eighth of October writes that for the second he expects as much again. "La troisième" he concludes, "viendra quand elle pourra." Matthey's portion of one thousand and eighty pagodas was, in addition, owing to his death, divided among his comrades.

Fame had something further in store for the Regiment. One at least of its heroes was immortalized in Robert Ker Porter's great historical picture of the assault of Seringapatam which was exhibited for several years at the London Lyceum. At the left extremity of some 2,550 square feet of canvas was depicted "Captain Lardy of the Regiment de Meuron (sic), being assisted by one of the artillery men in binding up his wounded left arm in order that he might rejoin the storming party." It is certainly remarkable that of the three officers wounded at the breach, two, namely Lardy and Matthey, should have been Swiss. The third was Colonel Dunlop, of the 77th Foot. All the other casualties among officers, ten killed and eleven wounded, were sustained either during the passage of the river or in the subsequent street fighting.

In the middle of June, the regiment returned from French Rocks to Seringapatam and was present both at the installation of the new Rajah of Mysore, a boy of six, under the Dewanship of Purneah, and at the departure of Tippoo's four elder sons for Vellore, the nine younger children being left at Seringapatam in charge of Colonel Wellesley. In November 1799 it was again moved, this time to Arnee, where its Colonel, Pierre Frederic de Meuron, has been commanding the station during the whole of the Mysore campaign; and in August 1800 it was under orders for Vellore. Here it arrived with a total strength of no more than 536 men, a detachment of 216 having been despatched under Captain Bernard to take part in Colonel Wellesley's pursuit of Dhoondiah Wagh, who in the following September was finally run to earth and killed at Conagull. Less than a year later, the Regiment de Meuron was once more in Madras.

On the 24th of February 1801 it was reviewed on the north glacis by General Lake and passed as very fit to be presented either to friend or foe. "The same evening" (record the papers of the time) "Major-General de Meuron gave a ball and supper at the Pantheon at which Lord and Lady Clove and General Lake were present." Its quarters were then in Fort St. George; and the colonel obtained permission to use the fort church for divine service. The well-known Gericke, whose monument by Flaxman now adorns the walls of St. Mary's, was at the time regimental chaplain. It was doubtless he who officiated at the funeral of Isaac de Meuron de Rochat, captain and paymaster, whose grave in the island cemetery bears the date, 22nd of May 1800. The next year two privates suffered the extreme penalty of the law, being convicted of murder at different sessions, the first by the Recorder, and the second by the newly constituted Supreme Court. The records of their trials are unfortunately no longer traceable among the Registrar's records.²¹

The muster roll of the regiment of the 1st of August 1801, shows 431 officers and men at Fort St. George, 227 in the field against the Poligars, 14 at Arnee, 57 at Vellore, and 20 in Bengal, these last probably comprising the small party afterwards sent to Egypt under Sergeant Portinger. Adding fifty-one recruits who had arrived by the ship of the 26th of July, the affective strength of the regiment would thus appear to have

21. Their names were J. D. Grenier, tried in January 1801, and F. Koenig, tried in August 1801. General Lake landed in Madras on the 29th January 1801, on his way to Bengal to take over the chief command from Sir Alured Clarke. On the 11th February he reviewed the Body-guard, on the 19th the first Battalion of Artillery, and on another date the 2nd Battalion. On the morning of Tuesday, the 3rd March, he embarked for Calcutta,

amounted to 798. The two companies at this time on active service were engaged with Colonel Agnew in a campaign against the Poligars of Madura and Tinnevely; with them we read, were Captains Bernard and Zweifel, Lieutenants Wolff,²² Baron Muller, Gaechter, E. de May, Peter, Surgeon Franke, and the Chaplain Jean du Pasquier. Active employment was also found for four companies under Major Lardy who served with Colonel Montresor in his successful attack on the "Barriers of the Bullum Rajah" at Arakerri; which is, in spite of its distinctly Hibernian sound, on the borders of Mysore and Canare.

From a regimental point of view, a more important incident was the departure from India of Colonel Pierre Frederic de Meuron, who, the 18th of March, 1801, embarked for Europe on board the "Eden Castle" and reached London in November. With the exception of a short visit to Switzerland, he remained in London until the arrival in England of his regiment in 1807. In that year he retired and settled at Neuchatel until his death on the 12th December 1812.

Several other officers, it may be noted, left India with their colonel, among these was A. de Dardel who, six years later, was despatched on a recruiting mission to Sweden; a mission which can hardly have been attended with success, since only one Swede is known to have served in the regiment. The seven Danes, moreover, who figure in the muster-roll, were probably enlisted at the time of the occupation of Tranquebar in 1801. In that year, two companies of the regiment under Captain Bernard with a small body of English troops under Colonel Campell were despatched to the little settlement, which promptly capitulated without a blow. The Swiss garrisoned the Danneborg for six weeks, and then returned to their regiment.

Soon after de Meuron's departure, the regiment, commanded by de Meuron-Bulot, was again moved to Seringapatam. Leaving Madras on the 20th of September, it took no less than forty days to reach the Mysore capital. Three of the fifty recruits died upon the road, and the rains were so great that frequent halts were necessary: for the most part at places like Pullicondah, Santgur, or Ouscotta—names long since forgotten in days when railways have replaced route marches.

For four years longer, the Regiment de Meuron continued to garrison the little island by the Cauvery. On the 29th of April 1803 it had the misfortune to lose its Colonel J. P. de

22. Elias F. Wolff died in September 1801 at Shuleveram "with Lieutenant-Colonel Innes' detachment in camp".

Meuron-Bulot, who with his eldest daughter, "a young lady of great worth and beauty," and Lieutenant Holborn of the 34th Regiment, was drowned in the surf at Madras by the upsetting of the accommodation-boat in which he was proceeding to join the *Union* on his way to Europe.

In the Seringapatam cemetery repose several of the officers of the regiment: John Reunolds, paymaster, Captain Mayer Francois Piachaud, Charles Bugnon, and Colonel Henri David de Meuron, who like de Meuron-Bulot, met his death by drowning on the 23rd of September 1804. He had commanded the regiment throughout the Mysore campaign, and, in 1802 acted as Military Governor of Pondicherry. His widow, Mary, died at San Thomé on the 17th of August 1805, and is buried in St. Mary's cemetery, Madras.

Another officer, de Pury, was shot dead in a duel by Alexandre Lequin, whose subsequent history is recorded in one sentence: "Le 3 janvier, le capitaine Lequin a compara devant la cour martiale pour avoir tué en duel le Lieutenant Pury, le 31 mars, 1801. Lequin, condamne, a été degrade devant le regiment et a été chasse du service." The sentence exhibits a curious contrast with the regiments early history at the Cape, when duels appear to have been too common of occurrence to have attracted the notice of the authorities.

Lord Valentia, who made the grand tour of India in 1804, halted at Seringapatam from the 29th of February to the 4th of March. "I dined", he writes, "with Colonel de Meuron, who had invited all his officers to meet me. He resides in a part of the palace of Hyder. The state room was painted green, which seems to have been a favourite colour of that chief, with much gilding. It joins one side to the harem and opens into the public" All these buildings had been turned to official purposes. The other part of Hyder's palace was the residence of the Surgeon and the seraglio an European hospital. Tippoo's zenana served as a barrack for the artillery; his private apartments were occupied by the Resident and his public by the European troops.

During the last years of its service in India, the numbers of the regiment, from one cause or another, fell considerably. At its first review at Seringapatam, it mastered 707 men; on the first of August 1805 it was reduced to 618, of whom fifty, by special permission of the Commander-in-Chief, were afterwards drafted into the Honourable Company's Artillery.

The corps left Seringapatam for the last time on the 20th of September, 1805, and after leaving a strong detachment at Tripassore, reached Fort St. George in thirty five days. The journey was marked by a dispute among the officers, as a result

of which Colonel Lardy, who had now succeeded to the command was compelled to report E de May and de Meuron-Renaud for having insulted Captain de La Harpe. No proceedings were however, taken since de Meuron-Renaud had already been under arrest eleven months for another offence and, it was anticipated, would be still further punished. De La Harpe, it may be noted, in company with Senn, took an early opportunity of obtaining a transfer to the third Ceylon Regiment: a course in which he was joined by a number of men whose engagement in the Regiment de Meuron had expired.²³

In January, 1806, the regiment received orders from home the Tripassore detachment having rejoined its comrades in Madras. As many as thirty eight sergeants and two hundred and fifty men were drafted in to other regiments, no less than one hundred and thirty-three joining the first and second battalions of Artillery.²⁴ The corps itself was consequently reduced to thirty five officers, sixteen sergeants and one hundred and sixteen men at the date of its departure. Nineteen "enfants de troupe" were left behind in India, twelve being placed in the Male Orphan Asylum, while the remaining seven were provided with three months' subsistence allowance in the hope of their eventually obtaining vacancies.

On the 11th of October the bulk of the regiment was embarked on the *Admiral Gardner*, seventy men under the order of Captain de Rham²⁵ setting out on board the *Metcalfe*. The journey proved long and tedious, a half of fifteen days being made at Colombo and another of ten days at St. Helena, and it was not until the 18th of July that the ships came to anchor at Greenwich.

23. De La Harpe's descendants are still in Ceylon. Mr. J. Piachaud, a planter at Kadiyananda, is the great grandson of Major Piachaud, of Nyon, who died at Seringapatam, 27th December, 1802, age 40.

24. This called forth the following remark from the Court of Directors in their General letter dated the 6th of April 1809. "In consideration of the long and faithful services of the Regiment de Meuron under the British Government in India and of the deficient state of Artillery Corps we do not object to the transfer of a part of that regiment to the corps alluded to, notwithstanding our disinclination on general principle to any large proportion of foreigners being admitted into that corps".

25. De Rham was adjutant of the regiment in England, Sicily and Malta, and A.D.C. to Generals Hope, Gibbs, and Gore. He was attached to the German Legion under Major-General Hudson Lowe and retained on the staff of the Duke of Cambridge till that corps was disbanded, when he returned to his own regiment. He was A.D.C. to Baird in the expedition to Copenhagen. He knew nearly all the tongues of Europe and India, and was specially charge with recruiting and instructions. For 1½ years he was language master at High Wycombe Military College, and was "in at the death" of the regiment in 1816.

On arrival, the corps, after a stay of six weeks in the Isle of Wight, was despatched to its depot at Lymington for the purpose of completing its strength. Its next destination was Guernsey, where Captain de Meuron d'Orbe's daughter Louise, was married to a painter named Long, a native of the Island; her brother, it may be noted, entered the Hanoverian Legion and fought at Waterloo.

In May, 1807, the regiment was once more at Gosport. That England was not altogether to its liking seems to be evidenced by the fact that a number of officers seized this opportunity to resign their commissions or to exchange into other regiments. Captains Baer and Donzel were pensioned off; Baron Muller de Friedberg obtained a captaincy in the Regiment de Froberg; F. Treuller passed into the Chasseurs Britanniques and Florian Sprecher into the Hanoverian Legion; while Louis Pillichody, who had left a brother in India in the English dragoons, secured a commission in the Regiment de Watteville, and Louis Xavier de Lentzbourg one in the Royal Regiment of Malta.

The next destination of the corps was Gibraltar, where it received a welcome addition to its ranks in a number of Piedmontese and Germans who had deserted from Napoleon's armies. From thence it was despatched to Messina, where, on the 20th of April 1808, it was incorporated into the English army of occupation under Colonel Lardy. After the repulse of the English fleet in the Bay of Naples, two years later, and Sir Hudson Lowe's ignominious surrender of the Isle of Capre, Murat's ill-starred attempt to descend on Sicily seemed about to afford a fresh opportunity of distinction to the regiment. As things turned out, however, no fighting of consequence was destined to occur. Barely two regiments had landed at Spoleto when a storm arose which effectually scattered the transports and the detachments already disembarked fell an easy prey to the companies of de Meuron and de Watteville.

More important, perhaps, was another change which now took place in the colonely of the corps. Pierre Lardy, who had commanded the regiment since the death of de Meuron-Bullet in 1803, sold his commission to a Major Wyndham, and the command reverted to the next senior officer, Zweifel, who curiously enough, had in 1804 married the widow of de Meuron-Bullet.

In 1812 we hear of the regiment at Malta. Here on the 25th of March, new uniforms would seem to have been served out, making the third change which had been effected in the regiment's attire since its entry into British service. The scarlet coat with blue facing and leathern helmet with a bear skin

crest has already given way to a coatee, round hat, and gaiters; and these in their turn were replaced by a jacket, trousers, and a shako. The Grenadier company was distinguished by a red plume, the Chasseurs by a green, the Fusiliers by a white; while the officers in full dress were resplendent with a blue silk sash with organe fringe. "Cet ensemble de tons," as we may well believe, "étoit des plus harmonieux et d'une éclatante gaité". Pouches and scabbards were in addition ornamented with a plaque bearing the letters G.R. surmounted by a royal crown and the inscription "De Meuron's Swiss Regiment": a device which also figured on the shakos when the corps came to adopt that form of headress. So far, however, as "éclatante-gaité" might be concerned, the regimental surgeons easily outshone their comrades. During the first period of British service, the surgeon-major seems to have been clothed in a gray coat profusely trimmed with gold lace, a scarlet waist-coat as lavishly bedecked and scarlet breeches. In view of the exceptional attraction of so gorgeous an attire, it is certainly remarkable that the name of not a single Swiss is to be discovered among the medical staff.²⁶ Out of the twenty four medical officers who accepted service with the regiment, eight were Germans, eight Frenchmen, five English, and three Dutch. The uniform worn by the corps in the Madras Presidency in 1805 stands out in curious contrast to the splendour of these surgeons. Here the waist-coats and trousers were of a dull drab colour—a presentiment of the modern khaki—while the facings were of Saxon blue and the trimmings of silver.

During the stay of the regiment at Malta, one of its officers at least was busied with more serious matters than a change of uniform. The difficulties of an officer on leave of absence to his native Switzerland are exemplified by the experiences of Lieutenant Emanuel de May of Berne, soldiers who had seen service in Flanders under d'Erlach before joining de Meuron's ranks in 1796. On the 7th of December 1811 he left Malta on six months leave. Barely two days had elapsed when the vessel was wrecked upon the African coasts and its passengers plundered and imprisoned by the Barbary natives. Released two days before Christmas, de May proceeded to Tunis, where on the 5th of January he embarked for Naples. On arrival there, he was placed until the 8th of February, when, such were the combined effects of his shipwreck and his lodging under a crazy Neapolitan roof which allowed the rain to drip through upon his bed, that he fell sick of a fever and was

26. This was not the case in earlier years. In 1796 Charles Philippe Caudmont was Surgeon-Major with three Aides, Ch. F. Reine, Paul Glessner, (or Lesser) and Alois Plettner. Later on occur the names of W. Wybrow, John Franke, A. Ludwig Winter and John Samaason, who buried a wife Jeromana at Arnee in December 1799.

unable to leave his room until the 2nd of March, by which date three months of his leave had practically expired. Finally he reached Berne in safety on the 12th of April, where he was busily employed in arranging the affairs of his brother Rodolphe who like himself held a commission in the Regiment de Meuron. Suddenly, on the 22nd of April, a secret warning reached him that he was on the point of being arrested at the instance of the French ambassador. Accompanied by a young ensign Auguste de Lorient, who had just joined the regiment, he effected an escape into Germany and took the mail to Schaffhausen. From thence he travelled to Ulm and down the Danube until he reached Vienna where he was delayed ten days by the necessity of procuring passports for the remainder of the journey. On the 29th of May, he was at Brood upon the Turkish frontier. Five days elapsed before the departure of the caravan and nine more went in reaching Serajevo. Here fresh difficulties again detained him for four days, and it was not until the 2nd of July after a most troublesome journey that he finally arrived at Salonika where Mr. Scharnaud, the British Consul, succeeded in obtaining for him a passage to his destination, on the 22nd July. Three weeks later he was able once more to rejoin his regiment at Malta, having overstayed his leave by upwards of two months.

Meanwhile the authorities were discovering a new sphere of action for the regiment. The term for which the corps had been engaged had already been renewed on 1809 for a further period of seven years, with the added stipulation that no Italians, Englishmen or Frenchmen should be henceforth recruited; and at the beginning of 1813 orders were received for its immediate embarkation for America.

In a general order, dated the 4th of May, 1813, the anniversary of the storming of Seringapatam—General Oakes, commanding the troops at Malta, testified in eloquent terms to his appreciation of the good conduct and discipline of the Regiment de Meuron, and on the following day the troops were once again afloat, on board the *Regulus Melpomene* and *Dover*.

At the end of August, the regiment, now twelve hundred strong, landed in Canada. The English were then engaged in hostilities with the Americans both on the Great Lakes and along the frontiers, the British force being divided into two army corps under the command of Sir George Prevost, a Genevese by origin²⁷, and, as events soon proved, a weak and incompetent leader.

27. Prevost (1767-1816) was the eldest son of Major-General Augustine Prevost, who served under Wolfe, by his wife Anne, daughter of Chevalier George Grand of Amsterdam.

The first column of twenty-five thousand men in three brigades had been despatched under Sir Gordon Drummond to operate on Lake Ontario with Washington as its objective. At the beginning, the division met with fair success, for on the 24th of October, it occupied Washington, whence, however, after setting fire to the Capital and most of the public buildings, it was compelled eventually to retire. The Regiment de Watteville, which was unlucky enough to take part in this expedition suffered severe losses both here and at the repulse before New Orleans.

The Regiment de Meuron was more fortunate in being selected to join the army of Upper Canada, comprising some thirty six thousand men under the command of General Brisbane, where it was brigaded with the Canadian Voltigeurs. The only important operation in which it shared was the attack on Plattsburg. Lieutenant Charles de Goumoens, who died at Lausanne as recently as 1882, has left an interesting narrative of this, the last, passage of arms in which his regiment was destined to play a part. The Swiss corps was stationed on the left wing of the army, and was the last to pass the line of block houses on the American frontier. The city of Plattsburg was divided into two by deep river, but the Regiment de Meuron succeeded in occupying the lower half of the town and had it not been for the want of energy displayed by General Provost in failing to order an immediate attack upon the citadel, would have rendered itself speedily master of the whole. Its colonel, so soon as he had established his position in the town, sent off an orderly to General Provost, but was met with the injunction to continue to maintain himself as best he could. The regiment had lost sixteen men in the attack, and for six days longer remained in the town, exposed to a heavy fire, day and night, on the 12th of September, the English fleet advanced to attack the American defending squadron, but was exposed to such a terrific cannonade from the fort that the first shot fired killed the British Admiral and so disabled his flagship that she was driven to surrender. This disaster took place under the very eyes of the regiment, which was awaiting orders to attack the citadel, and would almost certainly have overpowered the defenders, had General Provost only been willing to combine a land attack with the naval demonstration. As matters stood, the fleet was no sooner disabled than the batteries of the citadel concentrated their fire upon that portion of the town which was in possession of the British troops. Ere long a church which protected their position had

28. While the regiment was in Canada, Surgeon-Major Weber died at La Prairie, leaving a widow and five children. The lady married E. de May and returned later to Switzerland, where one of the sons, George Weber, practised for a long time as a doctor at Fleurier.

been blown away, and the forces were compelled to evacuate the city, the Regiment de Meuron covering the retreat of the artillery and being the last to cross the bridge, which was held until the last moment by a detachment of Chasseurs under Captain Frederic Matthey, a brother of the subaltern, who had distinguished himself in the assault at Seringapatam.

The next time we hear of the regiment, it was at Burtonville where, on the 12th of May 1815, General Campbell reported it as being in a high state of efficiency. At the review held on that date, its strength was returned as follows: one colonel, two lieutenant colonels, two majors, ten captains, eighteen lieutenants, six ensigns, an adjutant, a paymaster, a quartermaster, a surgeon, an assistant-surgeon, sixty four sergeants, thirty corporals, twenty-one drummers, and eight hundred and fifty two men, making in all a total of one thousand and eleven. The officers at this time were composed of twenty eight Swiss, five Germans, and eleven Englishmen. No less than fourteen of the Swiss officers were natives of Neuchatel, but only two were of the de Meuron's family, namely de Meuron Bayard and Lieutenant Jules Cesar de Meuron, a son of de Meuron d'Yvernois. The eleven oldest officers were Captain Bourgeois (forty years of age and eleven of service), Lieutenant/Colonel de Meuron-Bayard (forty years of age and nineteen of service) and Captain Fuchs²⁹ (thirty six years of age and twenty years of service); the youngest officers were Lieutenant de Meuron (nineteen years of age with two of service) and Auguste de Lorient who must have joined the regiment at thirteen, since, with two years of service to his credit, he is entered as no more than fifteen years of age. The regiment included two Englishmen, 313 Swiss 256 Germans, 120 Italians, 23 Spaniards, 3 Portuguese, 7 Russians, 6 Poles, and 7 men of diverse countries; of these 203 were of the age of twenty, 264 were twenty five, nearly four hundred were of the age of thirty, four were fifty and two were fifty five. Ninety two wives accompanied the regiment, together with twenty-four boys over the age of ten, two under ten, and sixteen girls.

Meanwhile the career of the corps itself was rapidly drawing to a close. Desertion was once more rife among the men, recurring with lamentable frequency in the officers' reports, and with the repulse before New Orleans, peace preliminaries indicated that the services of the regiment would no longer be required. On the 11th of March 1816 the final notification came to de Meuron-Bayard that the British Government had resolved on the disbandment of the regiment.

29. Fuchs who was in the Regiment de Roll exchanged commission in 1819 with Antoine Courant.

The 24th of June was the day fixed for the departure of such of the men as desired remain in the colony. These numbered 343 being 23 sergeants, 13 drummers, and 307 privates. With them went 79 women and thirty children. Ten of the officers at the same time accepted half pay in conjunction with a liberal grant of land: Matthey, d'Orsonnens, de Graffenried, Fauche, Bourgeois, Wittmer, Robins, Leonard, Napier, and Schultz many of the non-commissioned officers joined the Canadian militia as instructors: the *Montreal Gazette* of the 28th of November, 1815, alludes warmly to the efforts of the colonel inducing his men to take up such employ and conclude with the cry of "Vive le Regiment de Meuron!"

In an order of the day, dated the 26th of July, 1816, General Sir John Sherbrooke,³⁰ who had fought with the regiment at Seringapatam, showed his appreciation of the services of the corps by flattering farewell, and a few days later the remnant of the regiment, now reduced to 27 officers, 37 sergeants, 22 corporals, 7 drummers, and 232 men, embarked from Quebec in the *Eliza*.

Thirty eight days later, the regiment was once again in England. On the 24th of September, Lord Palmerston, who was then Secretary of State for War, communicated to the colonel commanding the final orders for disbandment, and the troops were transported to the depot at Lymington, whence they took ship for their respective homes.

On the 4th of November, 1816, the War Office acknowledged the receipt of forty nine volumes of the regimental papers. The flags of the regiment passed into the possession of de Meuron-Bayard, who, on his death in May 1859 at Heusdon in Holland at the age of eighty eight, bequeathed them to Theodore de Meuron.

The Regiment de Meuron had now ceased to exist, but its traditions continued to animate the settlers, whom it had left behind in Canada. May, d'Orsonnens and Fauche, indeed, had not long taken up their lands, before they were conducting an expedition of Swiss soldiers on the Red River where the Indians had recently massacred the Scotch settlers of Lord Selkirk's colony. Joined on the way by a small detachment of the Regiment de Watteville, they completely cleared the country of the Indian marauders in twenty months. Captain Matthey, in writing

30. Sherbrooke (1764-1830) was, says Wellington, "the most passionate man I ever knew". The episode known as the Wynyard Ghost occurred while Sherbrooke was quartered at Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, in 1784-5.

home to his old Colonel, de Meuron-Bayard, draws a lively picture of the privations, which were undergone by the expedition, and describes, among other incidents, how he accidentally encountered 1,100 leagues from the mouth of Mississippi, Sapper Dalcour, a former deserter from the regiment.

In June 1817 the three officers, May, d'Orsonnens, and Fauche, were once again in London. The Regiment de Meuron was, it is true no longer in existence, but not on that account as yet forgotten. To such a height, indeed, did misrepresentation as to its past conduct obtain a hearing in the House of Commons, that, acting on the advice of Colonel E. G. de Bosset³¹, an old member of the regiment, the three officers addressed a collective protest to the Commons from their address at 4, Queen Square, Westminster drawing attention to the high appreciation of the services of the corps which had been placed on record by Sir John Sherbrooke while in Canada.

With this characteristic termination to its history, the career of the Regiment de Meuron was now ended. Of the thirty-five years of its existence, fourteen had been passed in the service of the Dutch Company and twenty one in that of England. During the first period, 2,277 men had passed through the ranks: during the second and longer period no more than 2,014. A conception of the cosmopolitan nature of the regiment may be derived from a study of the muster-rolls of this period of British service. Among the nationalities represented were 630 Swiss, 502 Germans, 192 French Alsations, 123 Italians, 293 Dutch, 29 Spaniards, 16 Hungarians, 3 Portuguese, 4 Poles, 3 Russians, 7 Danes, 4 Englishmen, and 1 Swede; 2 members were from Guadeloupe, two from San Domingo, ten from Ceylon, three from Pondicherry, two from the Cape of Good Hope, and three from Canada. Two Boers, and a score of Eurasians seem, in addition, to have taken service with the regiment. The average age of the men was thirty-three, while one man of sixty-two and four of sixty appear upon the lists.

The officers numbered in all two hundred and seven. Of these no fewer than eighteen were of the family de Meuron. Two of them, Gustave and Auguste, who were with the Prussian army learning their duties, remained in that service after the outbreak of war with France and fought at Jena. Two others died before being graded and one young cadet had to be sent back to Europe as not possessing "les qualites suffisantes pour etre officier". The contribution of the family to the British army within the short space of twenty one years included two major-generals, two colonels, two lieutenant-colonels, nine captains, and two lieutenants.

31. His brother C. F. de Bosset was present in 1799 at the battle of Zurich, where he had been sent by Mr. Wickham, the English envoy. He was promoted from the Regiment de Meuron into the King's German Legion.

Of the remaining officers, outside those of Swiss extraction, twenty three were French, twenty one German, and thirty one English. Of the Swiss officers themselves, forty four, in addition to the de Meurons, were natives of Neuchatel. In this connection it may here be noted that during the stay of the regiment in England, Lieutenant Vitel of Verrieres while on six month's leave of absence was summarily arrested in passing through Paris, and on the 4th of May 1807, shot by order of the Emperor: after which event stringent orders were issued by Napoleon to prevent recruiting for British purposes in the principality of Neuchatel.

Owing to the reluctance of the British War Office to yield up its official secrets, not a little of the history of the regiment must necessarily remain involved in some obscurity. The first attempt to solve the difficulties which stand in the way of the regiment's biographer dates from the publication in 1885 of a privately printed and almost unprocurable essay compiled from papers in the family's possession and edited with a fair show of Historical inaccuracy and much confusion of material by Theodore de Meuron, "l'arriere-petit-neveu du general de Meuron, Colonel Proprietaire du regiment." The only known copy of this work is the author's own, which, at his death, passed into the library of Monsieur Albert de Montet, of Cardoune, near Vevey, cidevant lieutenant in an Austrian Dragoon regiment, to whom I am indebted for the loan of the volume. A review of the essay by General Turrell appeared in the *Madras Mail* of the 29th of July, 1896. The pamphlet itself and a few scattered articles in the "Musee Neuchatelois" of about the same date, may almost be said to constitute the entire published authority for the history of the regiment. It is probable that a search among the regimental papers in the possession of the War Office would not only elucidate many mysteries in connection with the British service of the regiment but restore to more than one unremembered hero the need of praise that is his due.

JULIAN JAMES COTTON,

Madras Civil Service.

Formerly Scholar of C.C.C., Oxford

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THE GOOD OLD DAYS—VI

"The Return of a Runaway"

BY BAAS KUEVELAAR

About the middle of the XVII century all Antwerp was astir looking for the 15 year-old son, Joseph, of the burgomaster Jan de Wandelaar. All search was however fruitless. Speculation was rife as to the fate of the youth and suspicion rested on some Portuguese sailors who were having a carouse at the *herberg*¹ "St. Nicholas" the day previous. Little Joseph was always up to mischief and therefore always in trouble. He was consequently a general favourite with the numerous adventurous spirits to be found at such a busy centre as Antwerp. The fact was that Joseph had entered the inn to see the sailors enjoying themselves, and having expressed a wish to be a sailor man, was taken on board the Portuguese ship and arrived at Lisbon. The Pichelingue, as they nicknamed him, made himself quite comfortable on board, and when the Portuguese fleet sailed for the Indies for the defence of Malacca, which was about to be attacked by the Dutch, Joseph sailed with it as page to Don Francisco de Lopes, in command of the ship "Santa Maria." They arrived at Malacca, after the usual eventful voyage in those days, to find preparations being made for its defence against the Dutch fleet. Galle being threatened about the same time, the fleet was despatched there, and it was thus that Joseph became associated with the thrilling events which occurred in Ceylon shortly afterwards.

The Portuguese had been living a life of ease and pleasure all these days at Galle, never sufficiently realising the dangers which were to threaten them at the hands of the heretic Dutch. Maria Soarez, the wife of Dom Francisco de Lopes, was a *filha de Gale*² and one of the leaders of Galle society. Her daughter Francesca, a charming brunette of the Indo-Lusitanian type of beauty, was the admired of all admirers. Her uncle Dom Abrahao de Silva Dissanaiké, Mudaliyar, husband of Sibilla Soarez, had his eye on Francesca as a prospective wife to his son Joao then holding the rank of Mohandirao. But Francesca was "not having any." Her heart was set on the blue-eyed Pichelingue who had now been raised to the rank of an *alferez*, and looked quite smart in his new uniform. So that at a dance given by Senhora de Lopes it was pretty evident to the Mudaliyar and his son Joseph was the favoured one, although Francesca was most gracious to her cousin Joao resplendent in his gold-laced uniform of a Mohandirao.

1. *Herberg* i.e. inn

2. *Filha de Gale* Portuguese for "a daughter or woman of Galle."

Never was there at Galle such a large quantity of *filhos*,³ bolos, aloa de Muscat, fogacas, pente fritadas, pasteis and doces consumed, never was there such a run on the vinho de Madeira⁴ and gloria.⁵ The cantegas and chikottis or love songs were of the wittiest and never was the caffrinha danced with such eclat to the music of the local toepas fiddlers. In fact the dance was voted a colossal success.

A few months after these events the alarm was sounded that a powerful Dutch fleet was about to enter the harbour, and Captain Dom Francisco de Lopes had to hurry to his defence post, the *baluarte*⁶ St. Antonio with Jose de Fandeleiro (as he was named), as a subaltern. The Dutch fleet entered the harbour sailing along the eastern side, beyond range of the guns of the *baluarte* St. Jago, and encamped at Magalle. There was much weeping and lamentation among the womenkind in the Fort. The Captain of the Fort was at his wits end. The place was ill-prepared to sustain a siege by well-disciplined European troops. Provisions were scanty, so was ammunition, and the guns and rifles were of antique and obsolete pattern. On the other hand the Dutch were provided with brass cannon and hand-grenades discharging fire and poisonous gases, the invention of a German corporal in the Dutch ranks, Herr Wurstenschlemmer of Berlin. As was to be expected the Portuguese were badly strafed and had to "*bukken*",⁷ as the Dutch put it in their expressive and elegant language. The Mudaliyar and his family at once went over to the Dutch side taking with him his sister-in-law, Francesca and Joseph. He was afterwards made Mahamudaliyar to the Dutch Commandeur of Galle on the recommendation of Raja Singh the Second, King of Kandy. Dom Francisco de Lopes was taken as a prisoner of war to Batavia where he also entered the service of the Hon'ble Dutch East India Company.

He had begun keeping a Diary commencing from the date of his leaving Lisbon down to the capitulation of Galle. This, with his other papers, was taken by his wife to the house of the Mudaliyar who took great care of them as they contained numerous references to the noble family of Dissanaike as deriving from an adigar of the King of Kandy, who in prehistoric times fled from the Kandyan court and settled in the low country, an event which has often been incidentally related in the newspapers every time the office of Mahamudaliyar fell vacant. After the conquest these papers were handed to the Predikant Zaligerius

3. *Filhos bolos* etc. Portuguese sweetmeats

4. *Vinho de madeira* Madeira wine

5. *Gloria* i.e. a drink made from arrack and spices

6. *Baluarte* is bulwark

7. *Bukken* i.e. submit, yield

who intended writing a history of the East Indies under Portuguese rule. He took them with him to Holland when he repatriated and translated the same into Dutch, but the translation was not published till many years after his death.

Joseph, who had married Francesca, died as *opperhoofd*⁸ of Batticaloa leaving a son Jan, who was an assistant in the Dutch service stationed at Colombo.

The mother of Joseph was Gertruida Moutmaker, whose brother, Adriaan Moutmaker, was in command of one of the Dutch companies at the siege of Galle quite oblivious of the fact that his nephew Joseph was fighting on the Portuguese side,

Dom Francisco de Lopes and Adriaan Moutmaker became close friends at Batavia and often related to each other their experiences of siege of Galle, but Dom Francisco had quite forgotten about his papers, and his wife, in her correspondence, never referred to them.

Dom Francisco, his wife, Francesca, Joseph, the Mahamudaliyar and his son Joao, had been gathered to their fathers, when Dom Francisco's "Notes on the East Indies," saw the light. Containing, as they did, important information about the Portuguese in the East Indies and their rule there, many copies were sent out to the new Dutch colonies in the East. The Diary contained many passing references to Jose de Fandeleiro, how he was brought to Lisbon from Antwerp on board the "Santa Maria" and served as page, and afterwards as subaltern, to the diarist at the siege of Galle. This attracted the attention of the descendants of Adriaan Moutmaker at Batavia who had heard, as a matter of family tradition, how the de Wandelaar family had been thrown into mourning by the sudden disappearance of the only son of the Burgomaster of Antwerp, and local antiquarians were busy endeavouring to connect Jose de Fandeleiro *opperhoofd* of Baticalo with Joseph de Wandelaar the Burgomaster's son. The *akte*⁹ (dated 1641) of Jose de Fandeleiro helped partly to solve the problem. It began thus. "Jose de Fandeleiro¹⁰ van Antwerpen, van Portugeesche ouders, Krijgsgevangene, in dienst der Ed C. genomen," etc., and proceeded to state that he was appointed assistant.

8. *Opperhoofd* i.e. Chief.

9. *Akte* i.e. act of appointment.

10. *Jose de Fandeleiro* etc. i.e. Jose de Fandeleiro of Antwerp, of Portuguese parentage prisoner of war, is taken into the service of the Honourable Company.

Search among the Portuguese Records (this was long before the Dutch had a playful way of destroying them) showed the "Jose de Fandeleiro o Pechilingue filho d'Antwerpia" aged 15 years had come out to Ceylon in the ship "Santa Maria" in 1640 as a page to Captain Dom Francisco de Lopes and it appeared from the marriage register of Galle of 1650 that Jose de Fandeleiro van Antwerp, boekhouder, was married to Francesca de Lopes van Gale, *beide Roomsche*,¹¹ on a promise thereafter to adopt the Protestant faith.

Their son Jan, born at Galle in 1656, was at this time a very old man with a numerous family. He remembered his father Jose who had light hair and blue eyes and spoke Portuguese with a strong Nederlandsch accent, but had always preserved a strange silence on the subject of his family history. Jan had an idea that his mother was somehow related to a Mahamudaliyar.

The collective effect of all this evidence was that it established beyond a doubt that Jan de Fandeleiro's father was no other than the lost son of the Burgomaster of Antwerp. Joseph's share of his father's estate was lying in Chancery at Antwerp and Jan and his descendants found no difficulty in proving their title to the same as heirs at law. Jan was determined to live and die in Ceylon and so were some of his descendants. His other descendants wisely left Ceylon, resumed the old family name of de Wandelaar, and settled at Antwerp where their weird colonial ways were, for many years, the talk in social circles there. So that, long before the Dutch Burgher Union was thought of, when it was the fashion to be ignorant of one's grand-parents, whenever the de Fandeleiros of Ceylon said that they were the same as the de Wandelaars of Antwerp, there was a smile of incredulity on the faces of their listeners who could not get over the idea that the de Fandeleiros were Portuguese. But the appearance in Belgium of a book on the History of the Wandelaar family of Antwerp, (which included the Ceylon branch), soon convinced these doubting Thomases, who heard for the first time of the fate and adventures of Joseph de Wandelaar in the Good Old Days.

11. *Bride Roomsche* i.e. both Roman Catholics.

OBITUARY

EDMUND REIMERS, M.B.E.

By the death of Edmund Reimers on the 10th of June 1964, a scholar and writer who had long given service to the elucidation of the Dutch period in the history of Ceylon, passed away. Like most others of his generation, throughout his life his interests ranged widely. Born on the 30th of January 1881, he was educated at St. Thomas' College, and joined the Government Clerical Service on the 3rd of January 1900. He held several appointments in that Service until the 30th of June 1921. In 1916 he proceeded to England on war Service.

While in the Clerical Service, when attached to the Library and Record Office, Reimers found the time to make himself proficient in translating the old land grants or *Tombos*, which had been written in the period of the Dutch occupation of Maritime Ceylon, and were often produced, or required, in Courts for settling disputes or land actions. This interest, and his proficiency in rendering into English the archaic Colonial Dutch terms used in the compilation of the old records, was reflected in his being selected to fill the office of archivist, when Mr. R. G. Anthonisz retired from Government Service. He spent some time in Holland qualifying himself for this office.

On the 1st of July 1921 Edmund Reimers was appointed to act as Archivist, Librarian and Record-keeper. He was confirmed in that office on the 7th of July, 1931, and retired ten years later. The Archivist serves also as Honorary Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission whose main function is to locate documents, the existence of which has been hitherto unknown. Accordingly, as the Commission was set up soon after he assumed office, Reimers officiated as its first Secretary. Much spade work was done by him in the discovery of monuments and other important records of remote viharas and institutions, and in the preparation of a National Archives Register of private family documents of historical interest.

It is to Edmund Reimers, and his predecessor and mentor—Mr. R. G. Anthonisz,—that we owe the substantial volume of edited and printed notes and translations from the records in the Archives dealing with the Dutch era. The translation and publication of the Memoirs of the Dutch Governors which form the most interesting and valuable series among the collection of Dutch Records deposited in the Ceylon Government Archives, are in themselves a cultural asset to this country. Four of the thirteen volumes translated were published by Edmund Reimers.

Reimers' energies turned in later years from research increasingly towards building up and strengthening his department and to wider service to the public. He published many papers on Dutch political and social history pertaining to Ceylon, was a popular lecturer on the subject he had specialized in, and was an interesting or even sometimes a very entertaining conversationalist.

As a clubman, and his interest in sport, Edmund Reimers will be particularly remembered for the parts he filled in the Havelock Golf Club when play was confined to the Anderson Links, adjoining the Havelock Park. He was one of the oldest members of the club and a stylish, high ranking golf player in fact, one of the best players among the Ceylonese of his day.

In 1934, Edmund Reimers received the distinction of Membership in the Order of the British Empire. He also later received a decoration for his contributions to Dutch history from the Queen of the Netherlands. Due to advancing years, and poor health he gradually drew away from public life but he never lost enthusiasm in literary or cultural matters which came to his notice even in old age. His industry and literary output find measure in the bibliographical data appended.

R.L.B.

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NEWS AND NOTES

Minutes of the Galle Dutch Council 1734-1736, A.C.

The Codex showing the elegant Dutch script of the period is one of many exhibits on display at the Archives. The selected example gives the first page of the Minutes of Friday, July 16, 1734, with the names of the members.

The copyist wrote with a quill pen and dried the ink with black sea-sand, grains of which can still be seen adhering to the paper. Blotting pads were not in use and in any case would have served little purpose, since they would soon have reached saturation point in mopping up after the sweeping strokes of a broadnibbed quill pen. Each clerk was equipped with a small container, generally horn-shaped, with a quantity of sea-sand for soaking up and caking the surplus ink.

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Treaty of 1766:

The treaty of 1766 between King Kirti Sri and the Dutch brought to an end the Kandyan-Dutch war of 1761-65. The King's letter to the Dutch signifying his willingness to accept it was engraved on beaten gold shaped into the form of an Ola-leaf.

The story of the negotiations and diplomatic fencing that led up to the ratification of the Treaty is full of dramatic incident. Two prolonged conferences were held, the former in December 1765 and the latter in January 1766. There were repeated deadlocks when, so it seemed, the parleys were about to break down. The King was represented by Dumbara Ralahamy, Pilima Talauve Ralahamy, Angamana Ralahamy, Mivatura Ralahamy and Moragama Muhandiram Ralahamy. On the Dutch side the delegates were G. L. de Coste and J. G. van Angelbeek (afterwards the last Dutch Governor of Ceylon). At each stage these special Commissioners reported back to the Secret Committee of the Dutch Government for fresh instructions.

The stubborn opposition of the Kandyan during the discussions at one stage forced the Dutch to resort to indirect pressure by ordering Major-Duflo to march with a formation 1000 strong through the Matale district: while Colonel Feber with 2000 men was to strike from Sitavaka through the 3 Korales and Sabaragamuwa. The King thereupon sought an armistice of twelve days to enable him to confer afresh with his Ministers, Governor van Eck agreed,

On the 8th of February the conference sat again hour after hour, striving to hammer out a solution which both parties could accept. Towards midnight Dumbara Ralahamy rose from his seat, refusing to concede a single further point. We do indeed want peace, he said, but the price is too high. Already we have given way too far.

At last, on February 14, 1766, with the King's approval, the terms were finalised and a formal assembly of the full Council was summoned. The King's envoys too were invited. The whole treaty was read out aloud, clause by clause. But again they raised objections, until it was announced that the sacred relics which had fallen into Dutch hands at Kandy would be returned. Then, at 7-30 p.m. the Treaty was signed.

The account books of the Company show that the five Kandyan ambassadors had brought with them a staff of 1,130 persons,—secretaries, soldiers, musicians cooks and other attendants.

The treaty was translated into Sinhalese by Predikant Philipz, the Maha Mudaliyars John Alvis and Don Joan Illangakoon, and the Maha Mohottiyar Don Simon de Silva.

There are conflicting reports as to the number of copies signed. Some reference indicate that four copies were submitted for the King's sign manual. But the letters to Batavia state that "the two original exemplars, signed by the Governor and the whole Council of Polity and authenticated by the King's seal (so that one may be preserved in the King's custody and the other with us), are being despatched.....to the Court.....to be likewise signed by His Royal Majesty and.....confirmed with the Seal of State."

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Earliest Book on Ceylon :

The World's oldest printed book with a reference to Ceylon (Taprobane), was printed in Rome on November 7, 1506, it is in Latin, with thick Gothic lettering, from, the press of Johann Besiken.

Only three other copies are known to exist, one in the British Museum (Grenville Collection); one in the Library of the Royal Society, and the third in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

The title in translation reads: "The recent exploits of the Portuguese in Ethiopia, India and other Eastern lands".

The Book takes the form of a letter from King Manuel of Portugal to Cardinal Alpedrinha conveying information supplied by Fernao Soares who has sailed back to Lisbon on May 22, 1506. It gives an account of the voyage of Dom Francisco de Almeida in 1505, his visits to the African coasts and arrival in South India.

The passage relating to Ceylon reads in translation: "It would be easy for our troops in their continuous daily roaming advance to cross over to numbers of other Eastern islands and countries and reach even as far as Taprobane itself, which was once upon a time believed to be another world but which is only four days sail distant from our towns....."

The theory that Ceylon formed the northern tip of a great southern continent is mentioned by some of the earliest Greek writers. Onesicritus, who flourished between 330 and 300 B.C., wrote: "Taprobane, under the name of the country of the Contralanders (i.e., a southern landmass counterbalancing the northern landmass to which Europe belonged: contrast the modern term The Antipodes) was for a long time believed to be another world". Later, in the period between 160 and 125 B.C. another Greek astronomer and geographer, Hipparchus wrote:

"Taprobane is either an extremely large island or the hithermost part of another world".

Pomponius Mela, too, writing in the years 38 to 40 A.C. expressed the view that Ceylon must be the northernmost section of a vast landmass stretching far downwards into the southern hemisphere.

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First Sinhala Book :

The first book ever to be printed in Sinhala with movable types in Ceylon; issued from the Dutch Company's Press at Colombo in 1737.

Many attempts had been made from about 1720 onwards to set up a printing press for books in the Sinhala language: but the technical problems could not at first be overcome. However, about 1725, the superintendent of the Company's Armoury, Gabriel Schade set to work again on experiments in casting the Sinhalese types and moulding the required machine parts.

In 1729, when his work was well advanced, he had the misfortune to draw upon himself the malice of Ceylon's worst Dutch Governor, the infamous Petrus Vuyst who had set up a reign of terror in the Island. Schade appears to have been seized, imprisoned and put to the torture. It was not till seven years later, after the arrival of Governor van Imhoff, that he was able to come out of his seclusion and again take up the work. But Vuyst's illtreatment had left its mark on him. He was feeble and broken in body, though still stout of heart. With the help of two clergymen, J. W. Konyn and J. P. Wetzelijs, who trained the required typesetters and mechanics in reading and arranging the Sinhala characters, he brought his work to the final stages. But his death about the middle of 1737 robbed him of the satisfaction of seeing this first Sinhalese book issued from the Press a few months later.

The work is entitled "Singaleesch Gebeede—Boek". If it is agreed that the letters of the Sinhala alphabet should be so shaped that they bear the closest attainable likeness to pearls, then it must be conceded that the work of Schade in clearness and form surpasses the product of many a modern press.

NOTE BY EDITOR: This, and the Three "Notes" preceding it, are from the Administration Report of the Government Archivist (Mr. J.H.O. Paulusz) for 1956.

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The Simon van der Stel Foundation:

Is arranging for a representative International exhibition of photographs of Cape-Dutch architecture of the 17th and 18th centuries, during March and April 1965, in Cape Town, South Africa. Ceylon has been asked to help with photographs of old gabled houses, forts and churches. The Foundation which is an endowment by a one-time Governor of the Cape, is a cultural organization studying Dutch history, tradition and buildings, and intends holding this exhibition in all South African cities.

The Editor of the Journal, who was contacted in this matter, has forwarded to the Director of the Foundation a widely representative collection of exhibits representative of Dutch architecture dating to the occupation of maritime Ceylon by the Dutch East India Company, with illustrative maps, diagrams and notes pertaining to the exhibits. They have been catalogued as follows:

- I. Territorial Maps of Ceylon of the Dutch Period and a leaflet describing the Armorial bearings shown on it.
- II. Colombo:—(a) Map of the van Goens fortress, Introductory notices and 5 photographs. 18th century impressions; and two of "Dutch Houses" (since demolished)
(b) Wolvendaalsche Kerk: Booklet and 11 loose pictures of exterior and interior of the Kerk.
- III. Negombo: Introductory notices and 2 pictures of the Fort.
- IV. Kalpitiya: " " " 2 " of Fort and Church.
- V. Mannar: " " " 3 " " " "
- VI. Hammenheil: " " " 2 " of Fort.
- VII. Jaffna: " " " 6 " of Fort, Church, and gabled houses in Pettah.
- VIII. Elephant Pass: Introductory notices and 1 pictures of the Fort.
- IX. Trincomalee: " " " 1 " " "
- X. Batticaloa: " " " 1 " " "
- XI. Matara: " " " 1 " of Redoubt van Eck
- XII. Galle: Historical Map, Introductory notice and 8 photographs.
- XIII. Ambalangoda Introductory notice and 2 pictures of old Church (now the resthouse garage)
- XIV. Beruwela: Introductory notice and 1 picture of old ware-houses.
- XV. Kalutara: " " " 1 " of Fort.
- XVI. Ruwanwella: " " " 1 " " "

The Origin of the Name Galle Face: The name of the well known sea-front promenade and lung of Colombo, has been open to much speculation and many and varied derivations have hitherto been given. Here is new light on it. Like many another place-name in Ceylon, this name too appears to be an anglicized corruption.

The southern land-approach of the Dutch fortifications they called "the Castle" comprised the ramparts, two batteries called Rotterdam and Middleburg, a moat and draw-bridge. The Gate-way which gave access from the Castle to the glacis was called "the Galé Gate", since the fortification faced Galle. These works were finished off by an entrenchment called a **Fausse-bray**—a ditch and low parapet behind which infantry could shelter and effectively prevent the enemy by musket-fire from getting near enough to the ramparts to effect an escalade. Inasmuch as the Dutch called the gate "Galé Gate", they called this work Galé Fausse which in anglicized form came to be Galle Face.

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Music in The Streets:

The first barrell organs that came to Amsterdam, about 1850, were small enough to be carried around by one man, strapped to his back. No one thought of building out-sized organs until Leon Warnies, a blind Belgian, who had settled down in Amsterdam, got the idea in 1875, to lease out cylinder-organs. This enabled Warnies to order larger organs, so large and heavy, in fact, that three-wheeled chassis had to be placed under them. The single operator gave way to a three-man crew that manoeuvred the weighty organ through narrow streets. It is still done the same way today. The boss of the crew, the one who holds the municipal licence, hires the organ and settles accounts with the owner. The organ-grinder proper is usually a strong fellow, for he must apply muscle to the big wheel that turns out the music. The third man helps the boss collect the money. And all three lend a hand when it is time to push the organ to another street or square.

The Editor (Dr. R. L. Brohier, 43, Asoka Gardens, Colombo 4) will be glad to receive articles for publication in the Journal and items for inclusion in News and Notes. Articles should, if possible, be typewritten.