M.R.C. 1—38,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1046	Press ~~Mis~~
42-43	
Dated 6-8-~~19~~1859	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department, from 30th July to 5th August 1859.

No. 42. Read the following letter from P. GRANT, Esq., Magistrate of Malabar ; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Judicial Department, Fort Saint George, dated Calicut, 26th July 1859, No. 66.

I have the honor to bring to the notice of Government, a recent occurrence at Cochin, which though of little importance, I consider deserving of their information.

2. On Saturday the 2nd Instant, between 3 and 4 o'clock P. M., the Sepoys of the Detachment of the 45th Regiment N. I., stationed at Cochin, assembled at the Government rice godown at that place, for the purpose of receiving their usual allowance of rice. The article was objected to, as being unfit for issue. A reference was made to Captain Barwise, the Officer Commanding the Detachment, by whose order the issue was postponed until another day, with a view to the rice being sifted and cleared of maggots with which it was, it is said, infested.

3. The godown, I may add, is situated near the entrance of the principal street of the town of Cochin, and the houses in this street are chiefly occupied as bazars.

The Sepoys, it is presumed, dispersed. The direct route to their Lines, lay though the street just mentioned, and they had in their way to pass a small bazar.

Six shops are stated to have been plundered.

A party of the Sepoys, laying hold of a tub of rice which stood on the ground at one of the shops, emptied its contents into the street. A scramble for the spoil, on the part of the Sepoys and the idlers of the town ensued, and all that could be picked up, was carried away by them.

A similar scene seems to have been enacted at the other shops, and the matter ended.

The utmost probable value of the property plundered was no more than 100 Rupees.

4. Two of the Sepoys were seized and placed in the Jail at Cochin, but were released from insufficiency of evidence for their conviction.

5. The affair, though of a comparatively trifling character, was a source of alarm to the inhabitants of the place.

They had heard of a serious grain-riot at Quilon, in which Military Sepoys, of the same Corps, were said to have been implicated. This, coupled with the fact of the Sepoys having been the prime movers in the riot under reference, operated on the minds of the people. From what Mr. Cullin, the Joint Magistrate of Cochin, states, a general panic prevailed.

The rice-dealers shut their godowns to the great inconvenience of the public. But Mr. Cullin had them before him, and allayed their apprehensions, after which, the godowns, were, I believe, re-opened. I may mention, that the prices of rice at Cochin are high, but not more so than those ruling in several other parts of the District, and their reduction, to any extent, could or can hardly be expected in the present season of the year.

6. On the receipt of Mr. Cullin's report of the occurrence, I asked him, by Telegram, whether the excitement caused by the riot had passed away. He answered in the affirmative; and all is now quiet at Cochin.

7. It is indeed to be regretted that the real parties concerned in the riot have as yet remained undetected; I suggested a further, energetic, inquiry, in view to tracing them, and deferred reporting the matter to Government until acquainted with the result. From Mr. Cullin's reply, I find that he has been unable to do any thing in furtherance of my views. The Bazar-men, one and all, have declared their inability to point out the offenders, if the Sepoys were paraded, and Captain Barwise, who readily lent his co-operation in the inquiry, has failed to discover the culprits, from "the difficulty which," he remarks, "always exists in getting one Sepoy to give evidence against another, when there may have been many engaged."

Mr. Cullin, however observes, that so far as he can judge, the Sepoys of the Detachment are generally well behaved, quiet men, and that he is disposed to believe that the outrage in the bazar was the work of a few bad characters among them, and "a comparatively petty affair, but magnified by the fears of the inhabitants into something formidable, simply because Military Sepoys were concerned in it." He expresses a hope "that we shall have no similar case hereafter, and that the Sepoys and the inhabitants will get on well together, as has been the case with former Detachments."

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department, from 30th July to 5th August 1859.

No. 43. ORDER THEREON, 4th August 1859, No. 1046.

Communicated to the Military Department and to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, through the Adjutant General.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

Order thereon 4th August/59 - No. 1046.

Communicated to the Military Dept & to H.E. C-in-C & Mil. Sec. Adj. Genl

Mil. Dept. } Dispr.
Adj. Genl. }

Communicated for information