

# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

*Judicial* DEPARTMENT.

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| G.O. No. | 10  | Press           |
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| Dated    | 5-1 | 19 68           |

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 1. Read the following letter from G. A. BALLARD, Esq., Special Commissioner, North Canara; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Dharwar, 15th December 1858.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you that after communicating to Brigadier FitzGerald on the 6th Instant, that the North Canara Field Force was no longer required, as reported to you in my letter of the same date, I started the following day for Sircy. Mr. Robinson kindly came in from his southern Talook to meet me and we had full personal communication regarding frontier affairs.

2. It would have been more satisfactory had the few insurgents still out, surrendered, as the Portuguese authorities confidently expected they would do within 3 days, some 3 weeks ago; and indeed I delayed requesting Brigadier FitzGerald to break up the Field Force for some days in the hopes that intelligence that these men actually had come in might reach me before the step was taken. But as after so much delay it appeared quite uncertain when they would come in, and indeed doubtful whether they would come in voluntarily at all, and as the whole strength of the Bund was completely gone, it appeared quite unnecessary to keep up a Field Force on their account.

3. As before notified, however, I requested Brigadier FitzGerald to keep up a small Force in the Soopah Talook, and I trust that it will be determined to continue this for a time at least.

4. The other British provinces bordering on Goa have their Military Police and frontier posts, and I think it would be highly impolitic for us again to leave the country along our frontier line from Belgaum to Sedasheghur, wild and unopened as it is, so entirely without Military protection as we have hitherto done. Considering how little manifestation of Government there has hitherto been in that part of the country, I think it surprising that disturbance should have been so rare, rather than that it should occasionally have broken out.

5. I was not in Soopah till the regular "Bund" had left Canara; but from what I learned afterwards during some 7 months residence and investigation, I can never endorse the opinion that the Talook was in rebellion even when the Sawanths were at their highest, and the western portion of it was at their feet. I do not believe that restrictions on coomery, land-tax, price of salt, or any other cause of that nature gave the Sawanths a single follower. Had coomery been free; had there been no land-tax, and had salt been as cheap in Canara as in Goa, the insurgents might have had no more partizans, but they would have had no fewer.

6. There were a few Dessais, who, from a feeling of clanship, Mahratta restlessness of disposition; and, it may be, a tincture of that uneasy feeling which the mutinies in the Northwest caused to spread over India, were willing to join any chiefs who were willing to lead, especially with a name so well known as that of the Sawanths. There were the other and lower classes of vagabonds who were ready to follow for the sake of the license only. But with these exceptions, not very numerous when the population of a whole Talook is concerned, I believe the people of Canara assisted and associated with the Bund through fear and fear alone.

7. In fact with the ryots of that part of the country Government was a sort of myth. A white face or a red uniform was rarely seen among them. The visits of such a magnate as a Tahsildar were few and far between—a Choukydar and his Colcars were their representatives of the Sirkar.

8. When, amongst such a population, men like Baba and Hanamant Sawanth suddenly made their appearance, leaving burning Choukies behind them and carrying captive Choukydars in their train, with their plausible lies about the Peshwa,\* and their stories of the absence of

\* Note.—In sundry letters (found after the dour on the Sawanth's camp at Sonali in October last) from the Dessais to the Portuguese authorities &c., they allude to the coming of the Peshwa and to their being engaged in his cause against the English. They say that if the Portuguese continue friendly, they (the Sawanths) will secure them from harm when the Nana comes, but that if the Portuguese assist the English, they must take the consequences. I have met with no proof that the Sawanths had communication with Nana Bithoor and it is matter for speculation, whether they had grounds for asserting communication and connection with him; or whether they merely assumed connection to give themselves importance.

*Fort St. George, Judicial Consultation, 11th January 1859.*

"Company's lascars," the simple people were paralyzed: many fled to the jungles; many were caught and gladly paid ransoms; and many sought to anticipate trouble by giving sums of money before-hand.

9. It is necessary that this state of things should be understood before one of my principal reasons for recommending that posts should be kept up for some time in Soopah can be appreciated. In a political point of view, I think it desirable, but in what I may call a social point of view, I think it not less so. I think their occupation would tend to give the people juster ideas with regard to Government; that it would give them a feeling of confidence and tranquility; and that, with the opening of the roads through the jungles; for which I was glad to see preparations commencing and which cannot be too energetically effected, it would materially aid the social development of a people requiring and deserving care and attention.

10. I have little more to add, but before concluding beg to say a few words on a subject which has some relation to the remarks in paras. 5 to 8. I mentioned in a previous letter Captain Searle's dour on the occasion of the entry of the Sawanths into Canara in October last. Captain Searle's official report has I hear been made public. As I had before the honor of observing, I think he deserves great credit for the energy and determination he showed on the occasion; and his dour had a very beneficial effect in showing the insurgents that our Troops could run them harder than I suspect they had previously given our Regulars credit for being able to do. But Captain Searle should certainly have been better informed before he officially stated that the Bund were supplied in his immediate neighbourhood with coolies and guides, *by the same villagers who had shortly before supplied him*, that his guides were deliberately treacherous, &c. &c. I have no hesitation in saying after the fullest examination that every specific case of assistance given willingly to the Bund stated in the report is most materially, however unintentionally, misrepresented, and that consequently a very false impression of the feeling of the villagers is raised by its perusal.

11. The villagers gave food and they gave coolies to the Bund on several occasions; but they did so to armed men in no mood to be trifled with. In the case in which Captain Searle supposes they gave food to the Bund whilst he was near, and shortly after they had supplied him, I believe him to be completely mistaken.

12. A juster ground of complaint is that the villagers did not give information—of this I have complained all along. But even here it must be remembered that they were threatened with the most sanguinary vengeance if they did give information, by men whom they knew to have no scruples. The natural apathy and ignorance of the villagers makes them averse to troubling themselves about giving information at any time on any subject; and superadded fear, on occasions like the one in question, keeps them silent till counter threats or violence wrings it slowly from them, they are placed in difficult circumstances. I well remember a villager exclaiming in his bitterness "you are both one to us, both Bundwallas and Sepoys;" and it appears to me that till we have diffused a little more enlightenment amongst them, it is almost unreasonable to look for much more sympathy and assistance at their hands than we receive, though I confess that is little enough.

No. 2.

ORDER THEREON, No. 10; dated 5th January 1859.

Ordered to be communicated to the Military Department.

2. The Government concur with the Special Commissioner on the expediency of keeping up Military Posts for some time to come in the Soopah Talook.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,  
Chief Secretary.

Ed. F. Cartledge.

No. 10.

Ordered to be communicated  
to the Mil<sup>y</sup> Dept.

Will

The Govt concur with the  
Special Commissioner on the  
expediency of keeping up  
Military Posts for some time  
to come in the Soopah Talook

Fort St. George }  
5th January 1859. }  
Mil<sup>y</sup> Dept. }  
Com<sup>r</sup> of Canara }  
Major & Co. of the }  
Dir<sup>y</sup> of the }  
5th B. Eng<sup>t</sup> }  
14th Dec 1859