

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
14th November 1866.

No. 140. Read the following letter from the Magistrate of the Kistna District, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Masulipatam, 3rd November 1866, No. 358.

I have the honor to report, for the information of Government, that a caste riot occurred at a place called Mustabada, near Bezwarah, in this District, on the 26th ultimo, which resulted in one man being shot dead, and another wounded by the Police.

2. The disturbance arose from the opposition of a number of Pariahs, representing the right hand Caste, to the use of a Palankeen by certain Goldsmiths, of the left hand Caste, in a marriage procession.

3. The Goldsmiths were originally accompanied by two Police Constables on their journey to the village, where the marriage was to take place; on approaching the village, their entrance was opposed by a considerable number of men, and information was sent to the nearest Police Station, whence one Inspector, with five more Constables, speedily arrived.

4. The mob retired on their arrival, about 7 P. M.; two persons were arrested; and the Palankeen was taken into the village. The Police kept guard near the Goldsmiths' houses, which had been threatened with plunder.

5. About 10 P. M., the Pariahs, to the number of two hundred, armed with spears, swords, and clubs, returned and attacked the Police, who were overpowered by numbers, and forced to take refuge in the adjoining houses; during the scuffle, two carbines were discharged, one man was shot dead, and another wounded.

6. The Police state that their carbines were seized by the mob, and went off accidentally, but, however much the loss of life is to be deplored, it is clear that the Police would have been amply justified in firing on the mob, when last attacked.

7. The Sub-Magistrate of Gunnaveram, five miles distant, arrived in the morning, and on the following morning, 28th, the Head Assistant Magistrate, Mr. Stuart, arrived from Bezwarah. Under his orders, a number of the rioters have been arrested, and, as he has since been joined by the Superintendent of Police, a full inquiry will be made into the matter, and a more detailed report submitted hereafter.

8. I regret to add that Mr. Stuart has found it necessary to suspend the Sub-Magistrate for his conduct in connection with the riot. Further particulars will be given in a subsequent Report; but, in the mean time, I may add that, from Mr. Stuart's report, I am quite satisfied that he was justified in the step he has taken.

No. 141. ORDER THEREON, 14th November 1866, No. 1795.

The Government will await the further report promised by the Magistrate.
(True Extract).

To the Magistrate of the Kistna District.
,, Inspector General of Police.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Secretary to Government.

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