

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Political DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 382

Press

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Dated 23-9-1918

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Political Department,
23rd September 1862.*

No. 61. Read the following letter from G. A. BALLARD, Esq., Collector of Malabar ; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Calicut, 9th September 1862, No. 76.

* 6th instant.

I have the honor to inform you that last Saturday* night I received a Telegram from the Joint Magistrate at Cannanore stating that " my presence was necessary at once," as a public religious ceremony was to be performed the following night at the Bibi's Palace in Cannanore for which a number of utensils (State property) were required, but that these utensils were locked up in an apartment of the Palace of which Ali Raja held the keys. He refused to give the keys though several times called on by the Joint Magistrate. It was intimated that there might be trouble.

2. From a note received a few hours previously on the same day from Major Ewart I first learnt that there was any probability of excitement. I telegraphed to say that I had important work here and had reasons for not desiring to visit Cannanore immediately ; but receiving the telegram alluded to in para. 1 in reply, I started at once.

3. As on Sunday morning Ali Raja persisted in refusing to give up the keys and the ceremony of the evening would have been impeded had the vessels been withheld longer, Major Ewart proceeded to the Palace ; had the doors of the room in which the articles were, forced ; gave out the vessels, on receipt, to the Bibi's people ; and had fresh locks put on and the place secured. He appears to have managed matters very judiciously. There was a large crowd but little or no excitement.

* Sunday 7th instant.

I reached Cannanore a little after 2 P. M., that day.*

4. I should mention that Ali Raja claimed as a right to be a principal actor in the ceremony of the evening in the Bibi's Palace ; on a similar one to take place to-night ; and on several others of the same character shortly to follow. The Bibi refused altogether to have him at her Palace ; and considering how aggravating his conduct has been to her, this is not to be wondered at.

5. On arrival at Cannanore I immediately wrote to the Bibi and Ali Raja warning them that I should hold them responsible if there was any breach of the peace. I told Ali Raja that he was on no account to interfere with the ceremony at the Bibi's unless with her full consent. They both disclaimed any wish to disturb the peace, and all passed off perfectly quietly.

6. I had been desirous of receiving the instructions of Government on my letter of the 18th July last, before personally communicating with the Cannanore family ; and of avoiding any further interference before the wishes of Government were known. Under the circumstances it will be seen I had no choice but to act at once.

7. I called a meeting yesterday of the principal Mahomedan inhabitants at which I requested the Agents of the Bibi ; and Ali Raja himself ; to be present. Just as I was going to this meeting, I received copy of your letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated 4th instant, No. 354. Although that does not finally settle the question, it shews that the Madras Government generally concurs in the views expressed in my letter of the 18th July, and as it was very necessary to make a distinct settlement for the time, I told Ali Raja and the people present that the recognition of the Bibi as head of the house was distinct ; that she must manage affairs through whom she pleased as long as she did so in an orderly manner ; that Ali Rajah would be treated with courtesy as a Native gentleman as long as he conducted himself quietly, but that he had no official position nor right to interfere in affairs of State (so to speak) unless at the Bibi's desire ; that the cooking utensils, &c., above alluded to, allowed by all to be State property, had been rightly made over to the Bibi ; that certain insignia of State, hitherto in the same chamber, would also be made over to the Bibi at once ; and that these orders were distinct and final for the present ; and would be so always unless the Government of India took a different view of matters, which I considered in the last degree improbable.

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8. I urged on the Bibi and Ali Raja the desirability of coming to an amicable understanding; and Major Ewart was to see the former to-day, and if possible bring about a meeting between them. With the exception of carrying out my instructions with regard to the insignia, and a few articles of unmistakeable State property, I requested him to avoid as much as possible questions of property between the Bibi and Ali Raja for the present. When the Orders of the Government of India are known these must be gone into and settled.

As every thing was perfectly quiet, and I have not a doubt will remain so, I left Cannanore again yesterday evening.

9. I have been obliged to go more into detail than I could have wished, and may have conveyed an impression that the matter was more important than there is any reason to consider it; because I am desirous of shewing that it was quite necessary under the circumstances to give decided orders at once, and put an end to the unsettled feeling which it has been Ali Raja's policy to keep up; though, had not the call been urgent, I should have waited until more definite instructions from Government are received.

No. 62. ORDER THEREON, 23rd September 1862, No. 382.

The Government approve the proceedings of the Magistrate and Joint Magistrate in the matter reported in the above letter, and consider them to have been judicious and proper.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

No. 382 - 23rd Sept. 1862

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To Magistrate of Malabar. d. 24th