

CHAP.
XXXII.

1746.

And he is,
accordingly
appointed as
dubash.Diarist
tells the
Governor
that the
English
instigate the
Muham-
madans.And being
asked what
should be
done,
makes a
suggestion.

Muhammadans.* The Governor asked me whether I considered him fit for the office of dubâsh. I replied that I did. He then said that Rangappa Chetti was a clever man, and that he would appoint him. It was accordingly ordered, in a letter addressed by the Council to Madras, that Rangappa Chetti, who was there, was to be employed as dubâsh.

The Governor now walked out of the room, and asked me whether it was not at the instigation of the English that the Muhammadans were acting as they at present were doing in Madras. I assured him that it was so. "What shall we do then?" asked the Governor. I replied: "If we hold out to Mr. Morse, and the other Englishmen who are with him, the threat that if they persist in invoking the aid of the Muhammadans, in connection with politics at Madras, we shall alter our present treatment of them, and subject them to indignities, they will write to the Muhammadans beseeching them not to interfere any further, and will also forbid their chief of the peons to cause trouble by colluding with the horsemen who beset Madras. If we do that, I think the

* No entirely satisfactory explanation of these phrases has been found. They are Telugu, and respectively mean *I do not want, sir,* and *No sir.* The language spoken between themselves (known by natives as the "house talk") by people of the Che i (merchant or trader) caste is Telugu, which was a good deal affected at Pondichery. The Lubbays—for an account of whom *vide* footnote at page 53, Vol. I—are, to this day, noted as being tight hands at bargaining, and as the two Telugu words used in the text frequently occur in the course of driving a bargain between native traders, it seems probable that they were applied as a nickname to the Lubbays, to distinguish them from the Hindustani speaking Muhammadans.

unrest there will be put an end to." The Governor at once went to the Council chamber, and having caused what I had suggested to be embodied in the despatch for Madras, returned to the room where I was. Then Tânappa Mudali suggested to me to represent to the Governor the importance of sending men to Azhisapâkkam, and other villages. I did so; and he informed us that he had despatched parties to those places with orders to tear down the flags that might be displayed there by the Muhammadans, and to seize those who attempted to display them.

When M. d'Espréménil was talking with the Governor, at day-break this morning, Madame Duplex was present, and said to her husband: "When Nawâb Anwar-ud-dîn Khân came here, he called me his daughter, and laying his hand on mine, expressed his desire to see us drive out the English, and hoist our flag at Madras. As he said this, I will now write to him." "Do," replied the Governor. After further consideration, they summoned Madanânda Pandit, at 6 o'clock, and bade him compose a letter purporting to be from Madame Duplex, to Mahfuz Khân. The first draft was destroyed; the second was fair copied, and Madame Duplex sent it by her mace-bearer, accompanied by a present consisting of two portraits, and two china plates, not worth four cash in all. Now, what shall I say as to the good sense of the husband who allowed his wife to write to Mahfuz Khân, without a thought of the fact that the rules of

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Which is
embodied
in the
despatch to
Madras.Diarist
represents
the need for
sending
men to
Azhisapak-
kam, etc.Me Duplex
proposes
to write to
Anwar-ud-
dîn Khan.Governor
approves.But, after
further
consider-
ation, she
writes to
Mahfuz
Khan.Remarks
of diarist
as to the
wisdom of
M. Duplex
in permit-
ting this.

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Muhammadan etiquette regard with but scant favour a woman as a correspondent; and without considering whether a mere letter from her—wife of the Governor of Pondichery though she be—was the most likely means of diverting from his purpose one who, to punish the French for having, so he alleged, plundered Madras of 15 or 20 crores of pagodas, directed the commanders of his garrisons to occupy the suburbs of Pondichery, and blockade the town itself so closely that neither a basket of corn, nor a bundle of straw or firewood, can be carried into it unperceived; and who, at the same time, had ordered the blockade of Madras, and the capture of its suburbs, and was himself marching thither with that very object? When Madame Duplex was about to despatch her letter to Mahfuz Khân by her mace-bearer, she called me to her, and exclaimed: “Rangappa, my letter to Mahfuz Khân will set matters right.” “Who doubts it?” said I. “The only cause of delay is that your letter has not yet reached the hands of Mahfuz Khân. The moment that he receives it he will either order it to return, or he will put a stop to the war, and treat for terms.” “Order what to return?” asked she. “His army,” replied I. “That is true!” she exclaimed. I now ventured the remark: “Had you not better delay sending your letter until we see the effect of that of the Governor? I think that you ought to address the old man first, and ask him to write to his son.” She replied, with a little severity in her look:

What Madame said to him when about to despatch the letter.

His diplomatic reply.

He suggests delay in sending the letter.

“When Mahfuz Khân came here, he, too, complimented me, by calling me his sister. What does it signify whether a letter is despatched by me, or the Governor?” Unwilling to provoke her on this account, and considering that it was none of my business to interfere, when the master himself did not see anything wrong in her proceedings, I flattered her without stint or measure, and took leave.

I then went to the Governor, who conversed continuously with me regarding the movements of Mahfuz Khân, and the capture of MM. de Kerjean, and Gosse. I thereupon made a suggestion to him, saying: “Whoever goes, none other than you can bring matters to a proper conclusion. You once proposed that when Madras was captured, we should repair thither, remain a month, and arrange everything. Let us accordingly . . . *

* Blank in the original.

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Madame Duplex objects.

Diarist, unwilling to provoke her, speaks flatteringly.

Then waits on, and converses with the Governor.

And suggests that he should go to Madras, as once proposed.