

Letter No. 88 from C. B. Saunders, officiating Commissioner, Delhi, to R. Temple, Secretary to Chief Commissioner for the Punjab, dated Delhi, 17th March 1858.

I have the honor to forward for the information of the Chief Commissioner, a copy of a Vernacular **Proclamation** issued by Khan Buhadoor Khan, Nowab of Bareilly, calling upon the Hindoos to unite and make common cause with the Mahomedans against the British. A copy of an English translation is also annexed. This document has been placed on record at the Ex-King's trial. I have deemed it right to submit a copy for the perusal of the Chief Commissioner and of the Government, as being a very peculiar document, somewhat ably drafted and worthy of attention.

KHAN BAHADUR'S **PROCLAMATION**

“With the approving sanction of God—the Lord of the Nation. Exposition of a letter written regarding the victory of the faith. All you Rajahs are famed for your virtues, noble qualities and liberality, and are moreover the protectors of your own faith, and of the faith of others. Keeping your welfare in view, I humbly submit that God has given you your bodily existence to establish His different religions, and requires you severally to learn the tenets of your own, different religions, institutions and forms, and you accordingly continue firm in them. God has moreover sent you into the world in your elevated position, and given you dominion and government, that you may destroy those who harm your religion. It is incumbent therefore on such of you as have the power, to kill those who may injure your religion, and on such as have not, to engage heartily in devising means for the same end, and thus protect your faith, for it is written in your scriptures that martyrdom is preferable to adopting the religion of another. This is exactly what God has said, and what is evident to everybody. The English are people who overthrow all religions. You should understand well that with the object of destroying the religions of Hindoostan, they have for a long time been causing books to be written and

Proceedings) 1858. Narrative of Events for Rohilkhand Division for the week ending 7th March 1858. Secretariat Records Room, Lucknow.

circulated throughout the country by the hands of their clergymen, and exercising their authority have brought out numbers of preachers to spread their own tenets. This has been learnt from one of their own trusted agents. Consider then what systematic contrivances they adopted to overthrow our religions. For instance, first, when a woman became a widow they ordered her to make a second marriage. Secondly, the self immolation of wives on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands was an ancient religious custom; the English had it discontinued and enacted their own regulations prohibiting it. Thirdly, they told people it was their wish that they (the people) should adopt their faith, promising that if they did so, they would be respected by Government, and further required them to attend churches and hear the tenets preached there. Moreover, they decided and told the Rajahs that such only as were born of their wives would inherit their Government and property, and that adopted heirs would not be allowed to succeed, although according to your scriptures, 10 different sorts of heirs are allowed shares in the inheritance. By this contrivance they will rob you of your governments and possessions as they have already done with Nagpore and Lucknow. Consider, now, another of their designing plans. They resolved on compelling prisoners with the forcible exercise of their authority to eat their bread. Numbers died of starvation, but did not eat it, others ate it and sacrificed their faith. They now perceived that this expedient did not succeed well, and accordingly determined on having bones ground, and mixed with flour and sugar, so that people might unsuspectingly eat them in this way. They had moreover bones and flesh broken small and mixed with rice which they caused to be placed in the markets for sale, and tried besides, every possible plan to destroy our religions. At last, some *Bengallee*, after due reflection, said that if the troops would accede to the wishes of the English in this matter, all the *Bengalleese* would also conform to them. The English, hearing this, approved of it, and said, "certainly this is an excellent idea" never imagining they would themselves be exterminated. They accordingly now ordered the Brahmins and others of their army to bite cartridges, in the making up of which fat had been used. The Mussulman soldiers perceived that by this expedient the religions of the Brahmins and Hindoos only was (*sic*, -were) in danger, but nevertheless they also refused to bite them,

On this the English now resolved on ruining the faith of both, and blew away from guns all those soldiers who persisted in their refusal. Seeing this excessive tyranny the soldiery now in self-preservation began killing the English, and slew them wherever they were found, and are now considering means for slaying the few still alive here and there. It is now my firm conviction that if these English continue in Hindoostan, they will kill everyone in the country, and will utterly overthrow our religions. But there are some of my countrymen who have joined the English, and are now fighting on their side. I have reflected well on their case also, and have come to the conclusion that the English will not leave your religion to both you and them. You should understand this well. Under these circumstances, I would ask what course have you decided on to protect your lives and faith. Were your views and mine the same, we might destroy them entirely with very little trouble, and if we do so, we shall protect our religions and save the country; and as these ideas have been cherished and considered merely from a concern for the protection of the religions of all you Hindoos and Mussulmans of this country, this letter is printed for your information.

All you Hindoos are hereby solemnly adjured by your faith in the Ganges, Toolsee and Salugram (Saligram), and all you Mussulmans by your belief in God and the *Koran*, that as these English are the common enemies of both, that you unite in considering their slaughter extremely expedient, for by this alone will the lives and faith of both be saved. It is expedient then that you should both coalesce and slay them. The slaughter of kine is regarded by the Hindoos as a great insult to their religion. To prevent this, a solemn compact and agreement has been entered into by all the Mahomedan chiefs of Hindoostan, binding themselves that if the Hindoos will come forward to slay the English, the Mahomedans will, from that very day, put a stop to the slaughter of cows, and those of them who will not do so will be considered to have abjured the *Koran*, and such of them as will eat beef will be regarded as though they had eaten pork, and if the Hindoos will not gird their loins to kill the English, but will try to save them, they will be as guilty in the sight of God as though they had committed the sins of killing cows and eating flesh. Perhaps the English may for their own ends, try to assure the Hindoos that as the Mussulmans have consented to give up

killing cows from respect for the Hindoo religion, they will solemnly engage to do the same, and will ask the Hindoos to join them against the Mussulmans; but no sensible man will be gulled by such deceit, for the solemn promises and professions of the English are always deceitful and interested. Once their ends are gained, they will infringe their engagements, for deception has ever been habitual with them, and the treachery they have always practised on the people of Hindoostan is known to rich and poor. Do not therefore give heed to what they may say. Be well assured you will never have such an opportunity again. We all know that writing a letter is equivalent to an advance half way towards fellowship. I trust you will all write answer approving what has been proposed herein. This letter has been printed under the direction of Moulvee Syud Kootub Shāh (Maulvi Saiyid Qutub Shah) Sahib at the Bahadooree (Bahaduri) Press in the city of Bareilly."¹

Translation of a Proclamation issued by Khan Bahadoor (Bahadur) Khan the Rebel Nawab of Bareilly found in his house on the 8th May last².

Whereas the infidel Franks (i. e. Europeans) are bitter enemies of the life, property and religion of all the Hindoos and Mahomedans, it is therefore proper for both these classes of men to use every effort in protecting them. If the Hindoos and Mahomedans join together, the extermination of Europeans, who are few in number and scattered, will appear very easy. The Mahomedans are already engaged on their part in attaining this end; but the Hindoos are careless of this important point. The reason for this appears to be no other than the prevalence of the practice of cow-killing among the Mahomedans, which is opposed to the tenets of the Hindoo faith. Hence their dissatisfaction. As even among the Mahomedans this practice is not enjoined by the word of God, inasmuch as its abandonment does not call to question their conduct as true believers, and as the protection of cow

¹ Foreign Secret Consultations, 30th April 1858, Nos. 21-23. National Archives, New Delhi.

² The 'year' is not given in the Original.

from slaughter is considered an act of grace in the Hindoo religion, it is resolved, that if the Hindoos shall exert themselves in the murder of these infidels and expel them from this country, they shall be rewarded for their patriotism with the extinction of the practice of slaughter of kine throughout my dominions. For the present so much of the purport of this Resolution is ordered to be brought into effect, that, with the exception of slaughter of cows at the public shambles, no cow shall be killed at any *mohilliah* (*mohalla*) of this town in which the Hindoos may be residing; but the entire prohibition of this practice is made conditional with the complete extermination of the infidels from India. If any Hindoo shall shrink from joining in this cause the evils of revival of this practice shall retort upon him, and if any person shall be guilty of acting contrary to the requirements of this proclamation, he shall be imprisoned for six months with a fine.¹