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COLONIAL DEPARTMENT.

Downing-Street, August 2, 1815.

A DISPATCH, of which the following is a copy, was this day received from Lieutenant-General Sir R. Brownrigg, K. B. dated Kandy, 25th February 1815, addressed to Earl Bathurst, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

*British Head-Quarters, Kandy,
February 25, 1815.*

MY LORD,

FOR some days subsequent to the date of the last dispatch, in which I had the honour to address to your Lordship, on Kandian affairs, dated 16th January, no circumstance occurred of sufficient consequence to be reported to your Lordship, the several divisions of the invading force being partly in movement; and partly preparing to move.

It was found, however, that great and apparently insurmountable difficulties would occur in provisioning the troops, on so many routes, with our scanty means of conveyance, and I determined in consequence on a modification of the plan. This alteration consisted chiefly in disposing the march of the troops in such a manner, that the 1st and 2d divisions, the 3d and 4th, the 6th and 7th, should arrive on the same line, and, at certain convenient points, unite together; an arrangement which, I am happy to say, brought the supplying of the army within our means, and laid the groundwork of a successful progress towards the several assigned places of destination above the hills.

On the 1st of February I learnt, by a letter of the 30th of January from Major Hook, that the 1st division, under the command of that officer, had reached Ganeteynni, situate at the foot of the Balani Mountains, and on the great road leading

through the Pass or Gravel of that name towards the city of Kandy.

Lieutenant O'Connell, with the 2d division, was close in the rear, advancing to the same point, from which Major Hook was then to diverge to the left towards Weywode, in the Seven Korles, to cooperate with Captain De Bussche, already in that quarter with a small force, formed to supply the absence of the auxiliary corps originally expected from Madras.

No serious opposition was made to the advance of these divisions. The first Adikar of the King of Kandy, by name Molligodde, brother to the Dessave of the Three Korles, who had previously come over to the British territory, and himself Dessave of the Four Korles, kept hovering in front of Major Hook's march, with some followers, but had intimated, both to Major Hook and Mr. D'Oyley, that he was desirous to join the British standard, and was only prevented from doing so by his apprehension for the fate of his family, who were under the King's power in the capital, but whose liberation or escape he expected as soon as the troops should advance sufficiently near to Kandy to induce the King to retire from that place: he further gave it to be understood, that although he was obliged to keep up the appearance of firing, he would do no harm; and in all these points, although his assurances could not in prudence be fully confided in at the time, he afterwards faithfully kept his word.

In the evening of this day (the 1st of February) I left Colombo to join the army, and proceeded by the route of Avissahavelle (usually called Sittawakka) and through the three and four Korles towards Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell's camp, at Gauniteynne. While at Kooroonagodde, on the

3d of February, a letter from the Lieutenant-Colonel, dated at Ganiteynne, on the 2d, informed, that the advance of that division, under Major Moffatt, of the 1st Ceylon regiment, having been detached to support a patrolle which was conceived to be in danger, had advanced so near the fortified post which commands the Balani Pass, that it was deemed advisable to attack it; and it had been carried, after a trifling opposition.

At Attypittya, on the 4th, I received Major Hook's report, dated from Gerigamme the preceding day, apprizing me that he had taken possession of that strong position and the neighbouring hill fort of Galgederah, with hardly any resistance, and no loss.

On the 6th I reached Ganiteynne, where it became necessary to halt for some days, to give time for the concentration of the divisions advancing from Trincomalee and the east side of the Kandian territory. Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell was encamped here, and Major Moffatt posted at Amenoopora, one mile and a half beyond the pass, and a free communication open between the two corps.

Here the Akdiar Molligodde, by a message through Mr. D'Oyley, requested permission to surrender himself with the banners and records of the four Korles, of which he is Dessave, having received intimation of the escape of his family from Kandy. My consent being signified to him, he, on the 8th February, came into camp in state, attended by a number of Chiefs of the four Korles, who had not previously appeared, and formally gave up the insignia and records of his Dessave into the hands of Mr. D'Oyley, whom I had deputed as Commissioner on the part of the British Government to confer with him.

Learning by reports from Major Kelly, commanding the 3d division, and proceeding through the province of Saffragam and Onrah towards the Indulgasinha Pass, that he could be sufficiently advanced to support a forward movement on the part of Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell and Major Hook's divisions, I, on the 10th, directed Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell to ascend the Pass and occupy Major Moffatt's position, sending his detachment a little in advance; and on the evening of the same day, I joined the camp at Amenoopora.

The Adikar Cheylapola, who had followed my progress as far as Ganiteynne, proposed to take a different route from thence; and being furnished with an escort of about fifty men, proceeded up the mountains, by a road to the right, leading into the province of Oudinooora, the inhabitants of which he was desirous to communicate with.

Late in the evening of the 11th, a report was brought to Mr. D'Oyley, that a division of the British troops, supposed to be that commanded by Major Hook, had reached Kattugastotte, a ferry of the great river called Mabavilliganga, about three miles distant from Kandy; that the King had quitted the capital, and that the defences at Gonaroooha, another ferry of the same river, about an equal distance from the city, were abandoned.

A patrolle, sent forward during the night, under the command of Major Brownrigg, reached Gonaroooha early in the morning, and, fording the river, ascertained the truth of the intelligence in

all its parts. Batteries of great extent were erected here, reaching from the common place of crossing for a considerable distance along the opposite bank, and commanding the ford; but were entirely destitute of either men or guns. Hideous objects of the King's resentment here presented themselves, in the remains of poor wretches stuck up on poles on both sides of the river, seven of which were full in view at the ferry, and the whole number counted in that neighbourhood was nineteen.

Major Moffatt, with the advance of the 2nd division, being a few miles in front of the general encampment, was, by Major Brownrigg, on his return with the patrolle, directed to proceed forward to Gonaroooha, in consequence of my orders to that effect.

On learning the foregoing particulars, I, on the 12th, dispatched Major Willerman, Deputy Quarter-Master-General, towards Kandy, with instructions to prevent the possibility of injury to persons or property, by prohibiting the entry of the troops within the gates of the city, otherwise than as guards, under such disposition as Major Willerman might judge advisable.

Mr. D'Oyley, who had accompanied the patrolle the preceding evening, and remained at Gonaroooha until joined by Major Moffatt's detachment, with which, before the arrival of Major Willerman, he had advanced to the city, which was found entirely deserted of inhabitants, and stripped of all property; empty chests, baskets and mats, were the only things found, except some few articles of furniture, not portable enough nor of sufficient value to be removed.

The detachment encamped without the gate.

On the 13th in the morning I left the position at Amenoopora with Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell's division, which I caused to halt at a convenient place on the hitherside of the river, proceeding myself to the King's granary, between Gonaroooha and the town, where I passed the night; and on the following day entered Kandy with my personal suite, and fixed my quarters in the Palace.

In the mean time I had learnt by reports from Major Hook, that he had been induced to advance, in prosecution of a plan formed with Captain de Bussche, who, with his detachment, had ascended the Jaltoevre Gravat, and was in communication with the first division, at a short distance to the left.

Information which those Officers had received, rendered it probable that the King was about to fly, and that the only remaining hope of securing him was by a rapid and secret movement of those two corps.

I was apprized by Major Kelly that he had, after a faint resistance by the enemy, possessed himself of the batteries commanding the Idalgasinha Pass, and ascended the mountains. A subsequent letter of the 13th announced the further progress of this division as far as Maturate, and by one, dated in the afternoon of the same day, at Maugala Dobbada Ganecure, one day's march from Haugeraukette, received by me on the 14th, soon after reaching the Palace, I was informed of Major Kelly having seized (together with a great deal of treasure) a number of women and children, whom he considered to be of the King's family; but this idea was afterwards found erroneous, though seven-

ral of the women proved to be related and allied to persons of the King's retinue. The treasure is reported to consist of silver coins of different descriptions, household implements, and ornaments of silver, to the weight of about 1,000lbs.

No report had been received of Major Mackay's approach, with the 5th division, from Trincomalee, but I calculated with confidence that he must be within two or three days march.

I had learnt by reports from Major General Jackson, that notwithstanding the most zealous and anxious exertions on his part, the movement of the 6th division had been retarded much beyond the appointed time, by unavoidable and insurmountable difficulties in the means of carriage, and conceiving that the strength and disposition of the troops already in the field would prove sufficient to accomplish the objects of the campaign, I addressed General Jackson on the 15th instant, countermanding the march of the 6th division, and the return of any portion of it that might be on the march.

It resulted from this situation of the troops, that the King, who was known to be in the Dessavany of Dombera, with a small number of adherents, was so environed, as to render his escape extremely difficult, and if he did succeed in getting through the pass leading to his last place of refuge, the mountains of Bintenni, Captain Anderson, of the 19th regiment, commanding the 7th division from Batticaloa, would arrive at that point, with every probability of intercepting him.

I now made a claim on the Adikar Eheylapola, for the performance of his promise to raise the people of these provinces, so as to prevent the King's escape, and to ascertain the precise place of his retreat, to which a detachment might be sent to make him prisoner.

This task the Adikar undertook with alacrity and confidence, offering to proceed to Dombera in person: dispositions were made for the proposed purpose, by preparing a detachment to accompany the Adikar, and dispatching another to form a chain of military communication with Major Kelly's force at Haugerakette.

Every thing being thus prepared, the Adikar set out for Dombera, on the 16th, preceded by the detachment under the command of Lieutenant Mylius, of the 1st Ceylon regiment, and accompanied by Mr. D'Oyley, who, on his arrival at Hakkeytugala, in the forenoon of the same day, found the detachment already there, and learnt that they had fallen in with a party of the King's people, and, after a sharp resistance, but without loss on our side, had killed three and wounded one, and captured a number of persons, two of whom were near relations of the King, and men of leading consequence, and almost all were related or allied to him.

This account, dated the 16th, reached me on the 17th, and the same day the prisoners were sent in: when conferred with, they claimed with earnestness their connection with the East India Company's Government. The principal man, by name Mutal Sawney, made a merit of having received presents and marks of distinction, from the Gentlemen in authority under the Presidency of Madras. Being asked as to the King's hiding-place, and the force along with him, he said, it was several days since he

had seen him; he was then in Dombera; he could not say if he continued in the same place, but if not, he could only go to Bintenne; that his Court was in a great measure dissolved, and that there were no principal Sirdars or Chiefs remaining with him. These communications were by no means made in the tone of a willing informer, but appear to have been true. The dispersion of the Court we had every reason to believe, as on that and on the following day, several Nayakars (as they are called) or relations of the King, surrendered themselves.

In so far also as regarded the King's place of retreat, the account of the prisoner agreed with the daily reports received from Mr. D'Oyley, who represented him to be still in Dombera, but did not venture to flatter himself or me, that he could succeed in at once cutting him off from escaping to the mountains. His letter of the 18th stated, that the King had fled from his last known place of halting, and that the inhabitants of two villages had appeared, and promised to co-operate in searching for him. The latest report that Mr. D'Oyley could then communicate was, that the King was concealed in a forest about a league and a half from Fildinya, and he had sent a detachment to endeavour to intercept him.

On the 19th in the morning, I had the satisfaction to know, by a letter from Mr. D'Oyley of the same date, that the King was in our hands; he had been surrounded the preceding evening in the precincts of Medda Maha Nuwera (the place from whence he was reported to have fled) by the people of Dombera, in conjunction with some armed Kandyans, sent by Eheylapola Adikar, and taken prisoner, with two of his wives, in the house of an Aratchy (a subordinate Headman) at a place called Gallehewatte, about a mile beyond Medda Maha Nuwera. His two remaining wives and his mother were known to be at Hanweyille, a short distance off, and being sent for, with conveyances and an escort, were brought to Fildinya.

I have since learnt, that the few Malabar attendants remaining with the King, made some resistance, and wounded one of the assailants, on which the party retired a few paces; and fired upon the house, that the King then came out and delivered himself up. It further appears, that the prisoners bound him and reviled him, and, I fear, plundered him of some articles of value.

As no regular troops or any British Officer was present, it was impossible to give full relief; such of the cloaths as could be recovered were returned. The Adikar claims, and with seeming justice, considering the sentiments he must entertain towards the King, some merit in having, by strict orders, saved his life; and great probability arises from what did pass, that nothing less than high authority could have induced them to spare him. In another view, this is one of the many facts which concur to shew, that the feelings of the people towards him (exemplified in this his favourite province) to be, when divested of the terrors of tyrannical power, no other than those of hatred and contempt.

Besides the property taken by Major Kelly, further captures, to a considerable amount, have been made, and information has been received of many places where more treasure is hid.

In a military view, the resistance, and consequently the danger, has been comparatively trifling, but it would be the highest injustice to estimate, by the inadequate opportunities which have presented themselves, what might have been achieved if the occasion had called forth the full exertions of the troops. Of fatigue and hardship of weather, they have had considerable trials, the roads being indescribably rugged, with frequent interruptions both of mountain and morass, and every difficulty that marching can possibly admit. These, however, with the dispiriting addition of frequent rain, only served to display their ardour, which no obstacles, no discouragements could subdue. But that for which I hold myself principally indebted to the army which I have had the honour and good fortune to command in this undertaking is, their orderly behaviour, and abstaining from all acts of plunder, violence, and irregularity. They have in consequence been every where received by the Chiefs and inhabitants with unfeigned welcome, assisted with supplies and means of carriage, and their camps frequented by all classes of the natives, with extraordinary freedom and familiarity. Your Lordship will readily perceive the happy tendency of this kind of behaviour, in encouraging and propagating that confidence, on the part of the inhabitants of these provinces, in the justice and moderation of His Majesty's Government, and the protection of his arms, which served to invite and attach them to the cause in which they were engaged, and led, under Providence, to a conquest, the attempting of which has in former instances proved so fatal, as to leave terrific lessons of caution and forbearance to future invaders; an enterprize which, I have no hesitation in saying, could not, with any common prudence, have been entered upon, except with the most credible assurances of the concurring wishes of the Chiefs and people, nor could ever have been brought to a successful issue without their acquiescence and aid.

The army has enjoyed in a very surprising degree the blessings of health. Our returns of sick are much below the number which might be expected in the same force, stationed in any of the garrisons of the colony.

I am now occupied in returning to their former stations such parts of the troops as will not be required to remain for the maintenance of the British government in the interior.

I am not yet prepared to present to your Lordship any connected view of the complicated and important considerations, of a political and civil nature, which arise out of this great change: these I shall therefore reserve for a separate dispatch, and conclude the present, with soliciting your Lordship to do me the honour of presenting to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, the expression of my humble congratulations, in being enabled, by the speedy and happy issue of a campaign, ending with the unparalleled good fortune of not losing a single life, to tender for his Royal Highness's acceptance, the duties of a new and industrious hardy race of people, and the possession of a territory, bountifully endowed with natural gifts, and requiring only the blessings of a just government, and an equitable administration of justice, and the indulgent care and countenance of a humane and gracious Prince.

I consider the circumstances which have taken place to be of so much national interest and importance, as to warrant my entrusting them to the care of a confidential Staff Officer. My son, Major Brownrigg, Deputy Adjutant-General to this army, will therefore have the honour of delivering this dispatch, and as he has a perfect knowledge of all the occurrences of our short campaign, he is enabled to afford such information as your Lordship may be pleased to require of him.

He will be charged with the banner or standard of Kandy, to be laid, with my most respectful duty, at the feet of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

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