APPENDIX - I

Proclamation by Rani Gowri Parvathi Bai Fixing the Age Limit of the Marriage of Namboothiri Girls and their Maximum Dowry as Rs.100 dated 31 Karkkadakam 998 M.E.

Whereas large sums of money amounting to Rs.1,000 or 2,000 are demanded as dowry and whereas the practice leads to the alienation of Brahmanswam properties and the ruination of families and women are constrained to remain unmarried till their thirtieth or fortieth year of age and consequently many untoward things are seen to happen. We are pleased to issue this proclamation for the welfare of the people and the good of the State.

All virgins in the families of Namboothiris and Pottis should be married between the ages ten and fourteen. No person shall demand and none shall pay more than 700 fanams (Rs.100) as dowry. All the women above fourteen remaining unmarried shall be married within a period of two years from this date. Those who violate this law will be subjected to judicial process and punished in conformity with the Dharma Sastras.
APPENDIX - II

A Statement by Miss. Annie Mascrene, Member of Travancore State Congress Working Committee.

Membership in the State Congress appears to be a sufficient reason for disregarding the conventional respect for womanhood. That has been my experience since I became a member of the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress. Soon after I became a member I found myself isolated; that is to say my brother and sister who are in the Government Service were transferred beyond immediate reach. Thus I Government Service were transferred beyond immediate reach. Thus I was left alone with my aged mother.

My appearance as one of the Defence Vakils in Narayana Pillai Sedition case brought about another situation. After accompanying Mr. Pillai to jail, I returned home and within half an hour there was a pelting of stones at my residence. Stones aimed at me penetrated through the screen and hit me on my leg. I wrote to the Diwan and to the Commissioner of Police immediately. No enquiry has hitherto been made and the matter appears to have been ignored. Now the situation has become worse. On Friday the 29th April I was robbed of all my belongings, clothes, money, jewels, my sannad, University diplomas, certificates and other records of value. About three o’clock in the morning, there was a flash of torchlight in my bedroom which roused me from my sleep. I found myself face to face with a man who hid his person behind the torch. I got up and asked him who he was. He left. I could see the light of the torch as he escaped. He was about five feet four and rather of a thin constitution with a cloth round his waist. I discovered that four of the trunks in my house were missing, not only trunks containing valuables but also those which were in use as receptacles for eatables, curry stuffs and other things of daily necessity. The soiled clothes left hanging on the stand were gone. Even rags from the lumber room were removed. The bars of the windows were forcibly pulled back and the miscreants had entered the rooms through those windows, which happened to be left half open for purposes of ventilation. By half past three I
reached the house of Mr. Latiff, the Inspector of Police with the information regarding the theft. It took some time to wake him up. He directed me to be Cantonment Police Station and sent his servant to keep me company. On the road to the inspector’s house I found two of my missing trunks left empty on the road. By four in the morning I was at the Police Station. The Inspector had instructed his messenger to ring up all the neighbouring police stations immediately. I conveyed to the constables at the station, the message myself. They were remarkably lukewarm. They went to every room except the one with the phone, till I pressed a constable to phone up immediately. Only an hour had elapsed since the theft.

The constable took another ten minutes to fix up the number of the phone. He was attempting to transmit the message when the Inspector himself arrived and rang up the Fort Police Station. He directed me to give my statement to the Constable. The latter took half an hour to mend the pencil and another ten minutes in consultation with his colleague as to the form and matter of my statement. I told him that the statement being mine and I being an advocate I may be left alone to narrate the story; but he was not prepared to change his accustomed method and style. It was six in the morning when the statement was recorded and I allowed to go home. They told me that they would follow me to the scene of occurrence without delay. They arrived at my house after ten. The nature of the theft is rather interesting. It looks as if the thief was particularly anxious to take away every piece of cloth available in the house. The trunks were heavy enough. An ordinary thief would naturally have been satisfied with them. But this thief wanted also the soiled clothes left on the stand and even the rags in the lumber room; so much so that when we woke up we found that the night dress was all that we, mother and daughter had to proceed with.

Fortunately for me, I had been out on propaganda work for the Congress and had returned only late in the evening on Friday. So my traveling bags with two sarees in it were left beside my bed. The thief had come to my bedroom with the torch but I was up in time to prevent the suit case from being removed. But for this accident I should not have been able to go to the Inspector at all. When the thief was escaping, I noticed that there was something hanging at
his side. His movement was handicapped to a certain extent. Later on, I discovered that the hatchet used for chopping wood was missing: in all probability he had come to my bedroom armed with that. On the whole it is fairly certain that more than one were engaged in the nefarious act and that they had other motives than the common craving for filthy lucre. Throughout the night a grand festival was going on in a temple nearby.

On Saturday evening, while I was walking along the Main road a Constable entrant in the recent Police Sports with number 18 in red stitched on his banyan came on a bicycle from behind, almost hit me on the back and cycled away demonstrating the glee resulting from the success of the mischief. It has come to my knowledge that a couple of weeks back, the office of Mr. M. N. Parameswaran Pillai, an advocate and a prominent member of the State Congress was broken into and ransacked; that on the very night of the theft in my house an attempt was made to break into the Congress office; that the same evening, somebody forced his way into the garage at the house of Mr. K. T. Thomas M.L.A., the Joint Secretary of the Congress, left the lights of his car switched on and removed certain articles of toilet from the bathroom. It is significant that in spite of popular uproar the assault on two editors on the highroad in open daylight remains undetected.

There is strong rumour afloat in the town that prominent workers in the State Congress are targets of attack in more methods than one. I have come to know that confidential enquiries are being made by C.I.D. constables as to the methods of harassing members of the Congress. It cannot possibly be that in the capital of the State police administration is so lax as to allow a free hand to habitual offenders. In Trivandrum are the Police Commissioner, a D.S.P. one A.S.P. and more than one Inspector of Police. It is indeed unfortunate that property and person should have become so insecure and that the personal safety of women should be so openly challenged in these days and that with impunity. Being a women living alone with an aged mother perhaps these consistent assaults and insults are calculated to strike terror, but if they be meant to dissuade me, a member of a minority community, from doing what lies in my power for the attainment of responsible government, these attempts are bound to
fail signally. These experiences only strengthen my conviction that responsible
government is an immediate necessity and redouble my efforts for its attainment
and goad me to devote more time and energy in the cause of the Congress.

I avail myself of this opportunity to appeal to the womanhood of Travancore to rise equal to the occasion and render all possible help for the Congress. I wish that the womanhood of the State would realise from these experiences of mine that even the conventional respect for womanhood may at any time be threatened, if things are allowed to continue in this fashion. A demand from the womanhood of the State is certainly bound to hasten the day when we shall have an executive thoroughly responsible to the legislature where the voice of the women of the land shall not go unheard.

Sd/-

Miss. Annie Mascrene

Trivandrum,

2 May 1938.
APPENDIX - III

Travancore in 1900