CHAPTER FOUR

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NEW TURBAND – DRUMER'S CAP
CHAPTER FOUR

THE CAUSES FOR THE MUTINY

A. "The New Turban" and Dress Regulations

Several were the causes that finally led to the Mutiny at Vellore. The more striking of the causes was basically religious. Religion played a very sensitive role among the Indians and anything that would 'polute' religion was looked upon with a sense of fear and hatred. As a matter of fact, clearly, it was the desire on the part of the surviving princes of Tipu to reconquer the lost position that led to several other incidents in its wake. They needed a ruse with which they could play upon the sentiments of the people in general and the sepoys in particular. So far as the latter were concerned, if they were instigated and persuaded they could unite and revolt. It was for this purpose that the emissaries were despatched to several centres.

The British officers thought at first that the insurrection was entirely local in nature, proceeding from some partial cause of disaffection, ostensibly connected
with the changes in the dress of the Indian army. But afterwards they fully realised that the Mutiny was the result of a dangerous machination which had been formed for the purpose of effecting the reestablishment of the Mohammadan power in India. The dress regulations and other, religious and administrative causes, were secondary causes for the Mutiny. But they collectively promoted discontent and disaffection in the minds of the Indian sepoys.

One of the ostensible causes, for the Mutiny was the introduction of the New Turban and other dress regulations. The New Turban introduced in 1806 turned out to be an important incident and the conspirators used this to instigate the sepoys. The introduction of the New Turban originated from the advice and under the superintendence of Col. Ignaw, the Adjutant General. The ‘Dress Regulations’ was issued on 13th March 1806, and was recorded in Section VI, Para X of the Army Regulations. This regulation says:

"It is ordered by the regulations that a native soldier shall not mark his face to denote his caste or wear ear-rings when dressed in his uniform and it is further directed that all parades and upon all duties every soldier of the Battalion shall be clean shaved on the
chin. It is directed also that uniformity shall as far as is practicable be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the lip.*

The old turban was thought of as inconvenient and it was proposed to replace it by a lighter one which was better suited to the military character. The invention of the new Turban was made by the recommendation of two officers of long experience in the Company and further it was sanctioned by Sir John Cradock, the Commander-in-Chief. Finally it was submitted for orders to Lord William Bentinck the Governor of Madras. It was thought that a change was necessary for the smart turnout of the army. The New Turban was made of broad cloth, covering an iron frame, with the exception of a cotton tuft, made to resemble a feather and a leather cockade. It resembled the leather caps introduced into His Majesty's European Regiment.

The pattern of turban used by the sepoys at the time of the introduction of the New Turban was by the order of 15th March, 1797. This pattern rose to a flat top with a tape and tuft placed diagonally. The present New Turban as established by Lt. General, Sir J.F. Cradock, was a turban for the native commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and rank and file or regiments of native infantry. Sealed patterns will be furnished. Each turban
to be made sufficiently large to reach low down upon the
head and to fit so firmly as to prevent the turban becoming
unsteady when the soldier moves at an accelerated pace.
The turban shall be worn even upon the head and touching
the eye brows."

The new turban was said to resemble the cap worn by
the drummer of the 13th Regiment of the Indian Infantry. 10
The Adjutant General and his Deputy attempted to justify
that the pattern of the New Turban was similar to the one
that men of the 2nd Battalion of the 14th Regiment and 2nd
Battalion of the 1st Regiment already wore. It was further
reported that the old 12th Battalion of the 12th MNI 11 had,
for many years, worn a bonnet almost exactly similar to
those of High Land Regiments, and continued to do so until
the introduction of the Turban of 1797. When the 36th
Battalion (26th MNI) was first raised the men wore a bonnet
of the same kind as the 12th with the addition of a tuft and
leather cockade. 12 The officers decided to make the sepoys
look smarter and more soldierly in uniform and appearance.
So, Sir John Cradock had instructed that the sepoys should
wear a hat-like turban, that they should clean shave their
chins, trim their moustaches in a prescribed manner and
give up caste marks and ear-rings. 13

In India hats were particularly associated with
Europeans and the common name for the Europeans was "hat-men". The sepoys assumed that the new regulations were to be the first step in Europeanization. The proposed change was, for long, a matter of publicity. In the first instance, three turbans were made and three men (one of them a Mohammedan) wore them at the Presidency for inspection. These men declared that they preferred them to the old ones. The new pattern turbans were afterwards publicly exhibited at the Adjutant General's Office where they were seen by officers and men of all ranks and classes. The new turban was a hat which was thought of as a Drummer's cap.

There was no military regulation in the Presidency of Madras. So John Cradock, the Commaner-in-Chief appointed the Deputy Adjutant General to prepare it. The Code was accompanied by a Minute in which the Commaner-in-Chief stated that the whole of the regulations was comprised in 27 sections and submitted to the Government. The old and sanctioned regulations, comprised in 150 folio sheets, consisted of regimental orders respecting drill, discipline and dress already in force and sanctioned by the Government. The tenth paragraph of this contained the "new Military Code" which was the interesting one among all other old orders, but created much alarm. Different types of turbans were in use in the Army. Upon the representation of the Adjutant General and his Deputy, it came into contemplation to direct
a common pattern for the whole service and the arrangement
was left to these officers. 18

There were, as analysed by the British officers, two
principle causes for the Mutiny at Vellore. Firstly, the
innovation in the dress and secondly, the residence of the
family of the late Tipu Sultan at Vellore. 19 The innova­
tions in the dress caused much agitation in the minds of
the sepoys. Orders which prohibited the sepoys from wearing
the marks of their castes and to war the "New Turban" were
all against their customs and practices. 20 Their feeling
was "The first take away the external marks of our own
castes and religious distinction; then they desire to change
our dress and to assimulate the Turban to the cap of the
Drummers". They mean next to make us "Christians". 21 This
was root of the great dissatisfaction. There was a common
cry "that the next attempt will be to make the sepoys
Christians".

Christianity in India was then regarded by the Indians
rather as an impure mode of life, associated with the wearing
of hats, eating of beef and pork, the drinking of spirits
and neglect of personal purity. 22 European dress was held
up as an object of degradation and humiliation. 23 The
sepoys appeared to have felt that the wearing of the new
Turband would make them to be considered as Europeans and would have them removed from the society, and intercourse in their own caste.\textsuperscript{24}

The New Turband and privation of caste marks were the engines which in the hands of the conspirators had produced and created hostile disposition,\textsuperscript{25} discontinuing the marks of wearing the new Turbands on parade or whilst on duty were abstractedly prejudicial to no caste or injurious to no feelings but in the hands of the conspirators they were transformed into certain presages of further innovation - experimental to the introduction of Christianity. The conspirators said, "Don't wear that hat. If you do, we shall become Fringers (foreigners?), if you sepoys consent to wear that hat what will become of us? The whole country will be ruined. Bazaar people, Ryots and all of us will be obliged to wear it."\textsuperscript{26}

They further advised, "These Fringers have conquered the country, now when they shall have made you complete Christians by putting on those hats they will put a stop to all our religious ceremonies both Mussulman and Hinduos, you must all eat together, nobody will give you wives, or even water out of their hands."\textsuperscript{27} The sepoys were advised that the new Turband was a hat and if they wore it their
caste people would not supply them even water and would not marry their daughters. This discontent caused by this new dress regulation was fostered by Tipu’s princes and their followers. Basically, there was a deep-rooted hatred both among the Mohammadans and Hindus to the rule of the Christians, who had snatched away the country which once belonged to their own rulers. This feeling was always pricking in the hearts of the sepoys and they were ready to break forth at the slightest provocation. Thus, every outbreak of the natives against the Europeans was almost considered to be a war of independence.

A conspiracy had been hatched long before the introduction of the new Turbans. In an effort to deepen disaffection the princes of Tipu now spread out a rumour among the sepoys that the new Turbans were made from the leather of pigs and cows. Pig was an unclean animal to Mohammadans while the cow was sacred to the Hindus. The wearing of hats made from such animals would constitute a grave sin to both Muslims and Hindus. The discontent among the sepoys on account of the Turban was utilised by the conspirators and the instigations of the palace and pettah were simultaneous actions. The British Officers reported uniformly that there was “almost universal objection” against the new Turban.
The first incident of insubordination and disobedience to the command of the superior officers occurred at Vellore in the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment. The sepoys refused to give up their old Turbans and accept the new Turbans. They objected that it was not a turband but a hat, which was against their religious sanction. One incident clearly shows the degree of disaffection against the introduction of the new Turband. On the parade ground, one day, Major Bose ordered one company of his Battalion in his presence to put on the new Turbans and informed them that the other Companies would soon receive the orders to wear the new Turbans. Almost all the sepoys either as an act of obedience or through fear and necessity, but with great reluctance complied with the order. But one of them, not only resisted the order but attempted to stab Major Bose with his bayonet.

A Court of Enquiry was appointed to find out the causes for the disobedience and unrest in the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment. The Court of Enquiry was presided by J. Mackerras, the Lt. Col. of the 2nd Battalion of the 23rd Regiment, Thomas Marriott, the Lt. Col. of the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Regiment and Lt. Col. Forbes of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment as the members. The Court gave its private opinion upon the New Turband. The court expressed
that there was nothing in the New Turban which could really affect the prejudices of caste. The general objections seemed to be not to the figure but to the ornaments of the New Turban.

Circumstances of extreme insubordination marked the conduct of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment at that period and there appeared nothing that could justify the supposition that any real objection did exist. Further, it was suggested that immediate measures should be taken to enforce discipline in the army. It was reported that the conduct of the Indian officers was the most suspicious and they were found not active in their duties. They all seemed to enjoy the rising discontent. W. Jones, the leather manufacturer, who had contracted to furnish ornaments for the New Turbans of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment, informed that he was threatened that he would be killed for having made the ornaments for the new Turbans. Shaik Cossim, one of the chief conspirators, was asked by the officer commanding the garrison at Vellore, if any discontent existed about the Turban. Shaik Cossim offered to place the Koran on his head and swore that there was none. Even the Hindu sepoys deposed that the New Turban was free from the objection of their caste.

It would therefore appear that the sepoys did not have
strong objection to the new regulations. It is also likely that in this respect they were instigated to a greater extent by the conspirators. However, fear of stringent action against them seems to have made them later depose that they had no objection. However, it was under such circumstances that the principal mutineers were tried before the Native General Court Martial and sentenced to receive corporal punishments. 42

The British officers thought that after the Court Enquiry, there would be no objection to the use of the new Turband. This belief was due to the fact that the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment, the principal Battalion of the Mutiny on the 10th July, pursued the most orderly conduct when the New Turband was given. 43 The native officers of that battalion gave assurances to the superior officers and pledged themselves that no man in that corps could express the smallest discontent at the New Turband.

In fact this was quite contrary to the intelligence provided by Mustapha Beg, a sepoy of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment, about 20 days prior to the Mutiny. According to him the sepoys had conspired and had decided to rise in revolt and kill all European officers. The native officers who were enquired about it made the European officers
strongly believe that Beg was a drunked and a mad man whose
words need not be taken serious note of. A more positive
and satisfactory repudiation of Mustapha Beg's assertions
could not be made than the solemn assurances of the whole
of the native officers that nothing like an objection to
the Turban did exist and that they themselves would imme-
diately make it up and wear it. Such assurances from the
native officers were sufficient to invalidate Mustapha
Beg's unsupported and improbable statement, as a charge
of madness and drunkenness. But the truth of Mustapha
Beg's statement was realised only after the 10th July, 1806.

Another argument could be put forward to show that
the sepoys were ready and willing to wear the Turban and
that the whole corps was equally well placed with it. In
the very heat of the Mutiny a man exclaimed pointing to the
Mysore Flag which was hoisted by the Mutineers, that the
British thought that they were fighting on account of the
Turban. But, "No" that (pointing to the flag) is what that
we are fighting for and our own religion. As a result,
the Court of Enquiry, the suspected corps, the 2nd Battalion
of the 4th Regiment was removed from Vellore and two Havil-
dars and four Naikues were discharged from the corps under
general orders. Thus, unrest was not the result of a
resistance to an article of dress, but silent treason.
The objection and opposition to the Turbhand first appeared at Vellore and then spread out to Wallajahbad and Hyderabad when all other army stations were free from discontent and disaffection. Throughout the extended quarters in India, the Southern Division, the Northern Division, the Ceded Districts and Mysore no discontent had been discovered and it was among the few corps who had connections with Vellore that the same spirit under different agency, was calculated to produce similar effects. The excitement created by the proposed alterations in dress extended to the troops at Hyderabad, Wallajahbad, Bellary, Bangalore, Nundydrug and Sankarydrug. The same type of disobedience and unrest prevailed in Wallajahbad and Hyderabad. A native Subedar at Wallajahbad, who had been guilty of apparent connivance at the disorderly proceedings which had taken place, was summarily dismissed from the service.

On 7th August, 1806, it was reported that an alarming state of disaffection prevailed in the Subsidiary Force at Hyderabad occasioned by the General Orders of the government respecting the change of Turbhand and other dress regulations. The same alarms that were spread out among the troops in the Carnatic became general in Hyderabad at the very time the Mutiny broke out at Vellore. The Turbhand order and other dress regulations threw the whole of the
Subsidiary Force amounting to 10,000 into utmost disorder. 55
It was reported at Hyderabad that the cause for the unrest were firstly, the introduction of the new Turban and secondly, the orders regulating the dress and appearance of the sepoys. 56 The introduction of the New Turban excited great disgust and much general discontent. This was successfully employed by the Hyderabad conspirators, as the principal instrument of instigation of the sepoys. The introduction of the New Turban strongly impressed on the minds of the native troops that the British Government had entertained a serious design to force them to embrace the Christian religion. 57 The sepoys converted the New Turban into a hat with a cockade and feather. The conspirators had taken a solemn Oath to resist by open insurrection against the wearing of the New Turban. At Hyderabad the introduction of the New Turban was to have been the signal for a revolt.

At Bangalore and Nundydrug, like in other places, the promulgation of the general orders respecting the dress produced the same discontent in the Native army. 58 The same disaffection and discontent were extended to other quarters also.
Thus, the causes for the Mutiny at Vellore and for the unrest in other army stations, as the Enquiry Committee at Vellore states, were:

"That the late innovation as to the dress and appearance of the Sepoys was the leading cause of the Mutiny, and the other was the residence of the family of the late Tipu Sultan at Vellore." 69

B. Religion — As the cause of the Mutiny

The Mutiny of Vellore, the first of its kind in the British Native Army, was caused by the introduction of reforms in the army dress which affected the religious sensibility of the sepoys. 60 As seen above, the conspirators were waiting for an opportunity to instigate the sepoys to revolt. Much earlier than the enforcement of the new regulations regarding turban etc., it had been made public and the conspirators had made use of it to instigate. Though originally the sepoys had not thought much about it, the idea of pollution of religion, injected into them by the conspirators had so deeply seared into them that they now very firmly believed that it was an attempt on the part of the Company to convert them into Christianity. 61

The Hindus and Mohammadians, in those days, were not
familiar with the English ways and of what little they had seen of their manners they did not approve. The marks on the face indicated the sepoy's caste, and that could not be dispensed with. A Muslim would not like to shave his beard which was commonly associated with his faith. The most obnoxious innovation was the leather cockade in the New Turban. Some Hindus would not touch any leather at all. To all Hindus hide or skin of the animals was objectionable. No Mohammadan would knowingly wear anything made of pig skin and it was widely suspected that the cockades of the New Turban was made of these materials. The slightest contact with the cockade would, therefore, defile and pollute the sepoy and degrade them by their relatives and kinsmen.

But all these dress regulations were already in force to certain extent for many years in the service but was never rigidly enforced. The wearing of ear-rings and caste marks on the fore-head, however, were only applied to the Hindus. As a practice all men were allowed to wear small ear-rings and smaller marks of their caste on the fore-head.

F. Pierce, the Deputy Adjutant General, reported that he did not recollect to have seen during that period
a native sepoy on duty with caste mark on his face or with large ear-rings in his ears. He further stated that he never noticed such marks of caste or ear-rings even at Vellore where he was stationed as Major of a Brigade. The order regarding caste marks and ear-rings was justified on the ground that, although they had not previously been published by any formal orders, it had never been the custom in any regular corps for the men to appear with them on parade. Letters from General Fugald Campbell, Lt. Col. Chalmers and Major Bruce, were quoted to support of this assertion. As the turn-screw attached to the forepart of the uniform was converted into a cross, the symbol of the Christian faith, the turban was held up as an object of hatred as a Christian hat. Even the practice of vaccination which had been for some time introduced was represented as intended to advance the cause of the Christians. Though force and punishment might overcome individual opposition, the firm dislike was widely spread among the sepoys.

The marks of caste had generally been discontinued throughout the army. Major Bruce, of the 20th Regiment, reported that when sepoys were paraded for general and Regimental duty they always appeared clean shaven on the chin, without the marks of caste on the fore-head or ear-
The marks of caste were not always used by the sepoys. All the evidences prove that when the general order was strictly enforced, the sepoys suspected the intention of the British Government. They earnestly raised a common cry "that the next attempt will be to make the sepoys Christians."

Under these circumstances the conspiracy formed against the Company had an advantageous "tool", the religion, successfully applied in the course of their instigation. Their object was silent, secret treason. The princes of Tipu Sultan despatched innumerable persons throughout the South to take the advantage of these circumstances and instigate the native army to rise against the Company. Evidences proved that for a length of time at Vellore the deepest machination was at work to turn every part of dress of the sepoys into an attempt to introduce Christianity. Any matter respecting dress in the country was quite intimately connected with caste and religion.

The sepoys in the Carnatic and in Vellore communicated their sentiments to their relations and friends at Hyderabad regarding Turband. A letter was received from a sepoy at Chicacole by Mir Abbas, the Subedar of the 11th
Regiment at Hyderabad. The letter contained an exact drawing of the new turban and expressed a desire to learn what steps had been taken by the troops at Hyderabad respecting the turban. Thus the new turban and privation of marks were doubtless the engines in the hands of the conspirators who produced a hostile disposition and it enabled them to work upon the minds of all castes of the sepoys to a revolution. Discontinuing the marks or wearing the new turban on parade or whilst on duty were abstractedly prejudicial to no caste or religion, injurious to no feelings but in the hands of the conspirators they were formed into certain pressages of further innovations or an experiment to the introduction of Christianity. Finding that they could work up to oppose by force the innovations, it was resolved to give a religious twist to the conspiracy.

The whole system of the British militia was essentially different from the system of any of the Native powers. Dress of the Europeans was held up as an object of degradation and humiliation. Such was the feeling for every part of the European dress. The Court of Directors wrote to the Collector of North Arcot District that the Christian religion was misunderstood, its principles little felt throughout the country. They wrote, "The happiness, purity or integrity of a numerous part of European inhabitants
has been lost or impaired from the want of a proper establishment of good clergymen. 78

In India the laws of caste and the laws of religion were part and parcel of one divine law and caste was a stronger force than any law of religion or government. If a man offended against the rules of the castes, a meeting of his caste followers was instantly called and if the offence was proved he would be condemned to a form of persecution. 79 The caste system was rigid and the low caste people were looked upon with contempt. 80 India survived all the religious, political and physical convulsions from which she has suffered from times immemorial. Invader after invader has ravaged the country with fire and sword; internal wars have carried devastation into every corner of the land; tyrannical oppressors have desolated its homesteads; famine has depopulated entire districts; floods and earthquakes have changed the face of nature; folly, superstition and delusion have made havoc of all religion and morality. Yet, the simple self-contained Indian township has preserved its constitution intact, its custom, precedents and peculiar institutions unchanged and unchangeable amid all other changes. Such customs, ornaments and caste marks were dear to the people in the country. 81 When they were in danger sepoys
decided to "prefer death than to wear the turban". The Mohammadans in India were as superstitious as the Hindus. They were no less infatuated with the power of magic. It was a well known fact that Tipu Sultan was so superstitious that during his last war in which he lost his life and his kingdom, he had engaged the services of the most celebrated magicians of his own country and of neighbouring provinces, in order that they might employ all the resources of their art in destroying the British army by some efficacious operation. In this difficult and critical position the magicians very humbly acknowledged their powerlessness and to save the reputation of their craft they were obliged to maintain that their magical operations, so potent, when directed against every other enemy, were utterly ineffectual against the Europeans. Such superstitious belief was common in the society both in Hindus and Mohammadans. Thus, when rumours were spread out by the conspirators regarding the genuineness of the intentions of the Company in the introduction of new Regulations with regard to dress etc. more as a matter of convenience and military discipline, and a religious motive was attributed to such changes the sepoys were made convincingly to believe that there was a solution.
The instigations and machinations of the dethroned princes having sufficiently and successfully worked on them, the fear of religious extermination (if they accept the new turban) made both the Hindus and Mohammadans join the conspiracy to destroy the Europeans. The Mutiny was partly a "Hindu Revolt" supported by the Mohammedan conspiracy. The British were regarded as a dangerously revolutionary influence threatening to overturn or undermine the established social and religious framework of the entire Indian community. It was even believed by many Indians that the British were deliberately plotting the destruction of the old religions in order to convert the Indians forcibly to Christianity.

There were good reasons for believing that some among the white men were determined to convert as many Indians as possible to their own creed. Missionaries of all Christian denominations had been hard at work in each annexed territories from the first moment of its inclusion under the British rule. But the widest difference of opinion was about the share the missionaries had in the Mutiny. One party maintained that the missionaries had nothing to do with it, while another laid all the blame on them and both argued as if the introduction of Christianity into India hung on the decision of the difference.
It is undisputed that the disaffection had a religious ground. Racial arrogance on the part of the British officers led to various incidents. In 1799 two Danish missionaries, Mr. Marshman and Mr. Ward proceeded to Bengal. After the Vellore incidents these missionaries were ordered by the British Government to quit the country but they obtained an asylum at the Danish settlement of Serampore in the neighbourhood of Calcutta. In England some of the Directors of the Company like Baring, Toone and Twining who had voiced their opposition to the activities of the Christian missions in India, at once asserted that the Mutiny at Vellore was the outcome of these activities. The question about the responsibility of the Christian missionaries was first raised in India by Cradock, the Commander-in-Chief of the army. Soon after the Mutiny, he observed that the "advancement of Christianity played a role behind the out break". Cradock's view was echoed in the Court of Directors in England.

The Company's policy regarding Christian mission was revealed in the letter despatched from the Court of Directors to the Governor of Madras. The letter says that during the whole course of administration of Indian territories it has been the declared principle to maintain a perfect toleration of various religious systems. The
Directors of the British Company said, "when we afforded our countenance and sanctions to missionaries who have time to time proceeded to India for the purpose of propagating the Christian religion, it was far from being in our contemplation to add the influence of our authority to any attempts they might make; for, on the contrary we were perfectly aware that the progress of such conversion will be slow and gradual". 92

The Christian Mission Press, worked then by a group of missionaries, had its headquarters at the Danish settlement of Serampore. Lord Minto complained to the Chairman of the East India Company in 1807 about a publication issued from Serampore by the Missionaries. The publication was issued in the native language, contents of which were highly offensive to the religious feelings of the natives. 93 A total abolition of caste, openly preached among the people, had a terrible effect on the people in general. The objectionable matter affecting the religion of the natives was openly preached. The publications and public preachings were calculated, not to conciliate, but to irritate the minds of the people. The labours of the missionaries were calculated in a far degree to excite alarm among the native subjects than they were at any former period. 94 Such activities of the Christian Missionaries were suspected by the natives and the sepoys in the army.
John Cradock, by intelligence from Seringapatam and
by a private letter from Col. Brunton, understood that both
the sepoys and native officers apprehended a design of
converting them by force to Christianity.  The intel-
ligence from Seringapatam reported to Lt. General John
Cradock, the Commander-in-Chief, that it was a common cry
that the next attempt would be to make the sepoys Christians.
The primary cause, therefore, was the deep-rooted hatred
of Mohammedans and Hindus to the rule of a Christian
nation. The sepoys preferred death – a conflict ensued.
Hundreds were killed in the struggle. A severe execution
of the prisoners took place on the spot. Many others were
hanged and shot by sentence of Court Martial. Not content
with so much blood shed, many hundred men were banished
from this country and their families for ever. But the
punishment of the offenders was made only secondary to the
great effect of calming the universal alarm for their
religion. The History of the world tell us that when popular
frenzy rises to an extra-ordinary pitch whether inflamed
by religion or political feelings, it is almost impossible
exactly to calculate the extent of its range. A vast
distance between the feeling of attachment and respect
existed towards the European officers. The daily rumours
circulated were all unfriendly to the British Government.
On the contrary, an unfortunate distrust existed on the part of the European officers against the sepoys.\footnote{99}

Though the British Government concluded that the "Turban" and other regulations by no means constitute the primary cause of the Mutiny, a general revised order regarding the dress was issued.\footnote{100} Particularly the revised order was issued to tranquilise the minds of the sepoys and to eliminate the fear regarding their religious faith.\footnote{101} The British officers recommended to repeal the New Regulations about the Turban that had occasioned great discontent in the army.\footnote{102} The revised order was circulated on 24th September, 1806.\footnote{103} This order said:

"The order of Government under date the 15th March, 1797 fixing a pattern Turban shall continue to be in force - leather cockades and plumes shall not be worn - stocks of every description shall be abolished".

"The Jacket shall be worn as received from the contractor, without any additional ornament or distinction, and the half mounting shall in no particular differ from the patterns lodged in the office of the Military Board and already in use".

"The fullest permission shall be given to the native Troops to wear their marks of cast at all times and in any manner they shall be granted with respect to the hair on the upper lip and wearing of Toys and ornaments peculiar to different families and casts. The imposition of any restraint either by order or by request on the inclination of the sepoys in these particulars is positively
forbidden. The Governor-in-Council also requires that every practicable indulgence shall be shown to the sepoy in the observance of his domestic customs.

This order was issued by the Governor of Madras which was signed by G. Buchan, the Chief Secretary to the Government on 24th September, 1806. According to this order the old order issued on 17th June was cancelled. It was reported that there arose a considerable misunderstanding between the Native Troops and the European officers in respect of the late alterations in the dress. Under this circumstance the new order was issued to eliminate the misunderstanding and maintain peace in the army. The alleged connection of missionary activities with the out break of Vellore Mutiny had lost much of its plausibility in the light of the origin of the Mutiny and the findings of the enquiry commission. In Madras Presidency the number of missionaries was small and in the Carnatic there was one Missionary at the time of the Mutiny. The Europeans themselves lost their religious purity. The happiness or integrity of a numerous part of European inhabitants in India had been lost or impaired for the want of a proper establishment of good clergymen. The Court of Directors expressed their feelings at the breaking of the Vellore Mutiny that it
was occasioned by the wanton or needless violations of the religious usages of the Natives an opinion considerably sanctioned by the Supreme Government of Bengal and even countenanced by the first despatches of the Fort St. George Presidency. After the Mutiny the Europeans frightened to take any restrictive action. Two missionaries who arrived in Bengal shortly afterwards were immediately ordered to leave the country. George Burlow, the Governor-General, did not want the missionaries to "interfere with the prejudices of the natives" by carrying their work.

C. Other Causes

There were controversies regarding the causes for the Mutiny. Craddock, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army interpreted the Mutiny as due to an intrigue to restore the family of Tipu who were interned within the fort of Vellore after the fall of Seringapatam in 1799. He stressed the possibility of a secret alliance between the princes and Native officers and sepoys. He confirmed the existence of the machination. Secondly, the sepoys and their officers were dissatisfied with the conditions of their service and their low pay-scale in comparison with that of the Europeans. He pointed out that a general
discontent prevailed among them due to the transfer of the Carnatic to the management of the British East India Company and the introduction of new judicial and revenue regulations. He stressed the administrative causes which sowed the seeds of disaffection throughout the army. To Cradock, the question of turban was a mere pretext, and it served only to conceal the intrigues of the sons of Tipu and the sepoys. But the report of the Enquiry Commission assigned first turban and secondly, interference of Tipu’s family as the causes for the revolt. Cradock contended that the General order was not as much responsible for the disaffection as the other causes. While Lord William Bentinck, the Governor of Madras, held the view that the “General Order” regarding the dress regulations was responsible for the revolt. Thus the primary causes for the Mutiny could be enumerated as firstly, the new dress regulations secondly, the presence of the Tipu’s family at Vellore, thirdly, the administrative reforms of the Company. The third cause, namely, the administrative causes needs some more elaboration.

Major Hazlewood reported in his letter to prove the existence of the Southern Conspiracy opined that the natives
were degraded and a general indifference prevailed in the Native Army. The sepoys were asked to perform menial offices though they were from the highest rank of the society. The military character attached no additional degree of dignity to them and they disowned all precedence except when they derive from their caste alone.\textsuperscript{112} The military officer, however high his rank, was without a shadow of authority and without respect. He had no means of information, no power over his Bazaar or cantonment beyond the exercise of a parade.\textsuperscript{113} As a punishment for offences a sepoy or a native officer might be condemned to do labour on the public roads.\textsuperscript{114} The military officer could levy no taxes, could not touch any man's property and order summary trial and punishments upon persons who were not soldiers or followers of his camp or cantonment.\textsuperscript{115} These powers were not delegated to military officers. In fact, attempts were made to compensate the loss of power in some other way. The conspirators, mostly native officers in the army, finding that the number they could work up to oppose the innovations was very small, resolved to give a religious twist to the conspiracy.\textsuperscript{116} Military character was sufficiently lowered by the establishment of civil power over them.\textsuperscript{117} The Revenue system was not satisfactory. The Judicial regulations had diffused a spirit of discontent
amongst the natives. The local attachment had been destroyed. Many ryots gathered in the towns and discontent was prevalent among the whole. The confidential report said, "The true interests of the country are satisfied to a blind adherence to an unjust and injurious system of government and to mistaken partiality for men unacquainted with and despising the natives. The continuance of this system may shake our power in India to its center and must inevitably soon destroy the Native Army". ¹¹⁸

That part of the Judicial code which directed all criminal causes to be tried by the Mohammedan law and all civil questions by the Hindu law, was objectionable. The tedious forms and delay in transacting business in the courts were much hated. The levelling principle of the Code had excited the most marked disgust of every man of rank and character amongst the natives. The process of law appeared tedious and costly to the illiterate and poverty-stricken inhabitants. The enforcement of law by village servants as well as public servants contributed to diverse standards in the administration of justice.¹¹⁹ The Judges and Magistrates, by their ignorance of the native customs and injudicious exercise of their authority had increased it. The Company Officers complained that the unlimited powers
vested in the judges and the indiscreet exercise of those powers, had in great measure deprived them of the respect and esteem of the sepoys. 120

The weakness and indecision of the Madras Government had increased the public disorders. 121 Ever since the Mutiny the natives of every sect manifested a disposition to speak ill of the British to question their right to rule the country. The machination and new conspiracy actively employed the emissaries throughout the south and successfully instigated the natives in general. The conduct of the Government towards the Military was not satisfactory. The gradual introduction of the reforms would have been more effective than a sudden introduction. This was expressed in a confidential letter. This letter says, "It were perhaps wise to effect reform but it should have been done by degrees. New system should have been allowed to operate partially and fully feel before it was universally introduced. Influence of sword dissolved too soon, before another had been established." 122

The period in reference was a period of famine. The rains failed and the grains became dearer. The action of importing grains was delayed too long and produced a scarcity at Madras and some stores were broke open and
plundered. Sepoys continued to guard the Bazaars. After
the grain came from Bengal in abundance the inadequacy
resulted in a great demand and great distress was appre-
hended. The transfer of Carnatic from Great Nawab's family
to the Company was the most cold and contemptuous act,
neglecting the feelings and sufferings of the family. When
the Nawab handed over the authority, a set of native revenue
servants were dismissed. Many of them were left to perish
whilst the Revenue Board was leisurely discussing the merits
of their petitions for a subsistence. Active agents of
Tipu's princes and old servants of the Nawab encouraged
a spirit of revenge. The Mohammadan population particularly
had the greatest resentment. The scarcity of rice occasioned
riotous and outrageous behaviour among the natives. These
facts prove the dangerous revolution which had taken place
in the minds of the natives.

The relationship between the natives and the British
Officers was very distant. The language was a great barrier
for the Europeans who could neither converse nor understand
them closely. Between an army composed of Hindus and
Mohammadans and the Europeans who commanded them, there
could be but little community of feeling. Differing in
religious belief, in habits of life, in form and complexion,
they had not even the bond of a common tongue, the European officers generally possessing but a slender knowledge at all of the language of their officers. It was a great error on the part of the European Administration.

Lord William Bentinck said in his private letter to Governor-in-Council on 26th September, 1807, after his recall, "The Europeans generally know little or nothing of the customs and manners of the Hindus. We are all acquainted with some prominent marks and facts, which all who run may read, but their manner of thinking, their domestic habits and ceremonies, in which circumstances a knowledge of a people consists, is, I fear, in great part wanting to us. We understand very imperfectly their language. In the same letter Bentinck continued and warned, "We do not, we cannot, associate with the natives. We cannot see them in their houses and with their families. We are necessarily very much confined to our homes by the heat; all our wants and business which could create a greater intercourse with the native is done for us, and we are in fact strangers in the land."

The number of military officers (Europeans) in the Madras army was 552 in 1800 and 1300 in 1809. In all districts the civil Judges and Magistrates were appointed.
The old free and easy ways were giving way to more formal procedure. The civilian officers were drawing twice as large a salary as the military officers. The European officers themselves were agitating and showed a spirit of insubordination which developed into a Mutiny in 1809. Personal dislikes and animosities acquired the bitterness born of daily intercourse among the British officers.

Civil servants were not yet wholly divorced from trade and a high standard of official life had yet to be built up. Madras society was in an unhealthy state and divided into parties. The grievances and complaints made by the sepoys to their superior officers were not listed to and they decided that the Mutiny was the only way to get rid of their troubles. The Enquiry Commission at Vellore said, "It is not easy to calculate upon the motives which may have actuated a large body of men, composed of different castes, religious and countries."

The discipline in the army stations had relaxed very much. A neglect of military duty on the very night of the Mutiny was proved by evidence before the Enquiry Committee. The European officer commanding the main guard being summoned to go to the rounds at mid-night, declared himself indisposed and directed the Subedar to take
his place. The Subadar in imitation of his superior officer, pleaded the same excuse and asked the Jamaidar, who was one of the principal conspirators, to do the duty. The Jamaidar reported that all was well at that very hour when the conspirators were getting ready for the attack. Each Battalion had a native Commandant in addition to the Subedars to each Company. They were invariably treated with respect and morning and evening they waited upon the European officer in command. Their visit was not a mere ceremony but for a friendly conversation. These attentions had been discontinued in 1806. The native commandant was barely above the level of the sepoy and could value himself little more only because of the difference in pay. With wounded pride they performed their duties. The military character, if not lost, was polluted.

The Command of the place, Mysore, was divided into three classes. The Commanding Officer controlled the troops, the Collector was charged with the care of the Police and the Pay Master of Stipends with the custody of the princes of Tipu's family. This was a departure from original plan of administration by which the whole of those duties had been entrusted to the military commander. A Mysore, namely Rustom Ally Shah, publicly proclaimed the existence of the conspiracy to destroy the Europeans and hoist the
flag of the Muslim faith. He deposed before the Court of Enquiry that he proclaimed this twenty days before the actual occurrence of the Mutiny, in every street in the Pattah at Vellore and in several languages. Nobody seemed to notice this warning. Even the police and civil officers did not take this seriously. The British authorities called this action as "criminal indifference" on the part of the Civil and police officers and inhabitants as well. Even the police was found to be dissatisfied and could not be relied upon. Police Department continued to be a weak point in administration.

The European servants of the company had rigidly pursued the course prescribed by the Supreme authority. As the whole course of action of the Mutiny was supported and executed by the Native Officers, it was thought of raising the character of the native troops and the native officers. Moreover, the British were considered aliens and an alien rule cannot but be disliked, though it cannot be laid down as a general principle that a government, because it is foreign, becomes unpopular. But unscrupulous defiance of moral principles and the reckless exploitation of the masses that characterised the early activities of the British traders, made the rule of the
Company odious and hateful to the people. The idea of domination is inherent in a foreign rule. It imposes some basic hardship on the free development of the subjects. Commotion and disturbances were always, throughout the history of the British Rule in India, round the corner. Driven to extremity by misery and privation the disaffection of the people increases to a certain height and tends to manifest itself.

The British policy towards the natives was cold, selfish and unfeeling, it was characterised by a total want of sympathy and even of contempt for the Indians who were no better that "nasty heathen wretches". Lt. Col. Gillespie reported on 12th July 1806, to Governor-in-Council that 10 or 12 Europeans were killed in the contest but he added that he was happy to note that he found their bodies near the dead bodies of 200 sepoys. Such was the tendency of the Europeans over the natives. The dislike of the British system had been so deeply engraven in the hearts of the people that it would have been surprising for the Europeans when they heard the horror of the Mutiny. The hostility and aversion to the British rule in India had nothing in the circumstances of the English being conquered. The real cause was their own short sighted policy and consequent extortion and mis-government which
they practiced. 137

The brave defence of Mysore and the heroic death of
Tipu Sultan in 1799 had set noble examples of national
exertion, and served as an inspiration to other spirits
who were in mortal peril at the encroachments of the British
power. The downfall of the Muslim authority in Arcot and
Mysore, the suppression of the Southern Rebellion (1800-01)
were the root causes for the disaffection and discontent.
The Southern Polygars' people and their relatives who were
serving the Native British Army and Tipu's men who were
enlisted into the British Army were the ring leaders and
chief conspirators in the Mutiny. The ultimate aim of
the conspiracy was to destroy the British rule and raise
the Mohammadan Government on the throne of Mysore and
Arcot. The conspirators took the oath which bound them
to murder every European and, to hoist the flag of the
faith and establish a Musselman Government. 138

Another remote cause could be enumerated and that
was the appointment of young Europeans as Collectors and
in other high ranks. It was thought of as a mistake on
the part of the British authorities. The Europeans
generally knew little or nothing of the customs and manners
of the natives. 139 The sepoys who had served for more than
twenty years or thirty years in the army were commanded by a "Boy" of twenty years, a fresh ensign from England. The antipathy of the sepoys was much increased by the necessity of entrusting "Boys" with the management of the government which required judgment, moderation and the experience of at least middle age. This was one of the remote causes but could not alone produce the crisis.¹⁴⁰

The British Government, warranted a suspicion, after observing all the incidents in the army stations in the south, after the Mutiny, that the change of sentiments in the country and among the troops had taken place before the promulgation of the Press Regulations and the introduction of the New Turban.¹⁴¹

Lastly, the main cause of the Mutiny was the influence of the native officers who were the chief conspirators. Some of them were revered and respected as religious saints. For example, Mohammad Jaffer, the principal conspirator, was a Jamadar in Tipu's army. After the fall of Tipu he joined the British Company Service. He possessed considerable degree of influence on his corps derived from his ostensible character as a learned and religious fanatic. He was looked up to with a degree of respect and addressed with reference by all the natives. This kind of
homage was due to his religious character and assumed sanctity and learning. Many young men of the corps were in long habit of attending him for instruction.142
REFERENCES AND NOTES

3 Ibid., p. 724.
5 Ibid., p. 246. (Extract from a Code of Military Regulations).
8 See the plates I to III for picture of Turban and dress of the Sepoys in 1806.
9 W.Y. Cannan: Indian Army Uniforms under the British from the 18th century to 1847, London, 1969, p. 132.
10 See plate II: Photo of the Drummer of the 13th Regiment, and his cap which resembled the New Turban. The exact photography of the New Turban could not be traced.
11 MNI is, as is found in the original records. This might be the abbreviation for Madras Native Infantry.
15 Thornton, Edward: The History of the British Empire in India, Ch. XXI, p. 63.
22 Oxford History of India, p. 610.
25 Ibid., Vol. VIII, p. 454.
27 The natives called the Europeans as "Fringers" then.
29 Beveridge: *op. cit.*, Ch. IX, p. 814.
34 Ibid., p. 12.
35 Ibid., pp. 16-17.
Mustapha Beg was the sepoy of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment, who discovered the conspiracy on 17th June, 1806, and reported the existence of the conspiracy to his Commanding officers. The Officers did not believe but after the incidents Beg was honoured by a cash reward of 2000 pagodas and the pension of a Subedar for life.


Thornton: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Ch. XXI, pp. 60-61.
56 Ibid., p. 1589.
57 Ibid., p. 1590.
58 Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 3161 and Vol. VIII, pp. 399-400.
60 Malcolm : op. cit., Vol. 2, Notes and References, p. 444.
64 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 520.
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    1872, Ch. XVIII, p. 212.


106. Letter from the Directors to the Collector of North Arcot, dated April 14, 1807.


113 Ibid., p. 134.

114 Ibid., p. 135.

115 Ibid., p. 445.

116 Ibid., pp. 454-55.


118 Ibid., p. 119.

119 Rajayyan, K.: History of Madurai, Madura, 1974, Ch. XII, p. 408.


121 Ibid., p. 119.

122 Ibid., Confidential Paper No. 2, p. 121.


125 Letter from Lords William Bentinck to Governor-in-

126 Cardew, Sir Alexander: The White Untiny, Ch. 1, p. 20.

127 Ibid., p. 33.


129 Ibid., Vol. XI, p. 335.
Wilson, W.J. cited, Vol. III, Ch. XVIII, p. 177.


Ibid., Vol. VIII, p. 433.

Thomson cited, Ch. XXI, p. 18.


Bentinck, William cited, p. 42.


S.S., 1806, Vol. VIII, Original Documents, p. 121.

Ibid., Vol. III, p. 1319.