

Educational (1912) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 163

DATED 26-2-'12

[Despatch Abstract.]

Memorials

Rejecting the petition
submitted by R. Parthasarathi
Pillai, Proprietor Mannadi Dispensary
requesting that his two sons may be
appointed to ~~some~~ some high posts
under the Govt.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Stock Form No. 135.
4,000-1-8-08.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Received 19 FEB 1912 190 , Registered 19 2 1912.

Subject.

Employment of Panchamas as Inspectors of Schools

ENCLOSURES.

No. one

Spare copies

No. 740.P

Station Guindy , Dated the 17th February 1912 .

From (Name) C.B. Cotterell Esqr I.C.S.

(Designation) Private Secretary to H.E. the Governor

To The Secretary to the Government of Madras,

Educational Department.

Sir,

I am desired to transfer to you for disposal by the Government the enclosed petition dated the 16th February 1912 from R. Parthasarathi Pillai, Mannadi Dispensary, Madras.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. B. Cotterell

Private Secretary

PR

To

His Excellency the Hon'ble

Lord Gibson-Carmichael, K.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.

Governor of Madras.

The humble petition of R. PARTHASARATHI
PILLAI, Proprietor of Mannadi Dispensary
and ex-President of "Authee Dravida Janah
Sabha" residing in No. 52, Sembudos Street,
George Town, Madras, E.

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:—

That the Petitioner is a member of the Panchama Community and as such, was
elected President of the "Authee Dravida Janah Sabah"—a Sabah which was formed for the
amelioration of the down-trodden class the Panchamas, the aboriginal tribes of Southern
India.

Ancient
History of the
Panchamas.

The Panchamas number about seven millions equivalent to the total population of
the Province of Mysore. Before the Aryan conquest of India they were a powerful class.
Mr. Walhouse remarks:—"It is well known that the servile castes in Southern India once held
far higher positions and were indeed masters of the land on the arrival of the Brahmanical
caste. Many curious vestiges of their ancient power still survive in the shape of certain
privileges which are remarkable instances of survivals from an extinct order of society—shadows
of long-departed supremacy—bearing witness to a period when the present haughty high-caste
races were suppliants before the ancestors of degraded classes whose touch is now regarded as
pollution." Among their ancestors there were distinguished Grammarians, Poets, Philosophers,
Sages, Kings, &c., as Kabilar, Thiruvalluvar, Saint Nanda, Tiruppani Alwar, Pandya King
Adhiviera Raman, &c., But successive waves of foreign invasion compelled them to settle
down as sediment of political storms.

How the
Panchamas
served the
Europeans.

At the time when the English merchants first set their foot in Madras, the Mahome-
dan power was in its zenith and the Hindus were wallowing in the mire of superstition and
always kept themselves aloof from the Europeans whom they opprobriously addressed by
the name of *Melachas*. It was then the Panchamas who ministered to the daily wants of the
young British merchants among whom good many were bachelors. The extent to which the
domestic servants in Madras are familiar with the English tongue as compared with the other
parts of India, the manner of address by Europeans of female servants by the term "Ayah"
(meaning grandmother,—also a term of respect in Tamil) and the growth of a new commu-
nity—the Eurasians who are numerically strong only in the city of Madras are facts which
irresistibly lead to the conclusion that the Europeans in early days accorded to the Pancha-
mas most sympathetic treatment.

The rise
of the Pan-
chamas.

Under circumstances so favourable it is natural for any one to question whether the
Panchamas improved their status and occupied any high position in life. To the credit of
the British Government it must be stated that some of the Panchamas held high positions in
the Government Service. Rai Bahadur Iyasawmi Pillai was appointed as District Surgeon
and subsequently at the time of his death was Health Officer of Madras and Honorary Physician
and Surgeon to H. E. the Viceroy. Kumbam Ramasawmi, a contractor was so rich and
philanthropic as to feed for a number of days the poor population of Madras during the severe
famine of 1887. P. Vencatachellam, Millionaire and Indian Condiment Manufacturer was
establishing his prestige at Home and in the Continent. In the Government Service, there
were a number of men occupying lower ranks as Apothecaries, Sub Inspector of Schools,

3

Sub-Registrars, Supervisors, Sheristadar of District Court, and Subadars with the title of Rai Bahadur &c. In his Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of British administration, Dewan Bahadur Srinivasa Raghavaiyengar, C. I. E., observes—"There is one hopeful feature in the situation, viz., that the Pariahs notwithstanding centuries of social degradation, are singularly docile, attached to their masters amenable to instruction and not unintelligent, and there can be little doubt but that a great deal may be made of them and that their improvement is not such a difficult or hopeless undertaking as one might be inclined to think when one sees their present degraded condition in the rural parts."

The loyalty of the Panchamas.

The chief trait in the character of the Panchamas is their spontaneous loyalty to the British. In the early wars of the British it was from this class that Lord Clive recruited his army and won his laurels. There were very few Kshatriyas in Southern India to be enlisted as Sepoys and the other castes were debarred by their caste restrictions and they were equally unfit for Military service. The enlistment of the Mahomedans was apprehended as they were at the time the open enemies of the British. The Madras Queen's Own Sappers and Miners recruited from the Panchamas is the relic of the old East Coast Army which did Yeoman service to the British and represents the position of the Panchamas in the defence of the British Empire, where as the so-called caste Hindus of South India never shed a drop of blood in the field, withal, there is the clamour to arrogate to themselves the loaves and fishes of the Public Service. Panchamas usefulness in the European households as domestic servants needs no description here, for it is well known and recognised.

The downfall of the Panchamas.

As education spread among the higher classes and as the Government insisted passed candidates for admission into the Public service, it became impossible for the Panchamas to maintain their progress. In fact, they had to make retrograde steps. As Mr Hare (now Sir Lancelot Hare) truly observes that it is difficult for certain classes "to gain admittance or having gained admittance to keep their position in Government Offices. This consideration also explains the frequent exclusion in many Offices of all but a few castes and has sometimes even gone so far as to make of some offices almost a family gathering". Schools and Colleges have sprung up solely managed by caste Hindus for the exclusive use of their children, and the Missionary Institutions could not entirely avoid the Brahmin teacher. Under conditions so hostile, it is no wonder that education among the Panchamas should languish. The formation of the District and Taluq Boards which increased the power of the educated classes, specially the Brahmins, was detrimental to the advancement of the lower classes. Half a century ago the Medical Department had a number of Hospital Assistants recruited from the Panchamas, the Mahomedans representing the rest. But now District Boards require caste Hospital Assistants and Caste Midwives. If the District Board be of opinion that a Panchama Hospital Assistant cannot be of use to caste Hindus it should at the same time admit that a caste Hospital Assistant cannot be of use to the Panchamas who number seven million souls. So long as the latter is not recognised by the Hindus, the Panchamas and other backward classes are placed at a great disadvantage by the Hindus getting even a fraction of Self-Government.

Sympathy of the British towards the lower classes.

Never in the history of India, do we come across of any ruler bestowing the slightest attention for the amelioration of the lower classes. But the British Government has broken the record by establishing Schools all over the Presidency in view to illuminate the undeveloped mind of the lower classes. The following note taken from "The Hindu" dated, the 3rd November 1908, shows what deep interest is taken by the rulers in the well-being of the depressed classes:—"the day and night schools of 'Depressed Classes Mission,' Poona Branch, were visited by the Commissioner and the Collector, Messrs Morrison and Carmichael respectively. The proceeds of the Concert given by Miss Clarke on the 17th Sept, amount to Rs. 3467/—. This sum is to be supplemented and allotted for building purposes and the building is to be named after Miss Clarke, the Governor's daughter". The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam have already taken steps to secure a fair and proportionate representation of all classes in the Public service.

How the good intention of the Government stands unrealised.

4

As was anticipated by the Panchamas of light and leading Primary Schools established for the benefit of the Panchama children have not proved of much use to them, as the Government entrusted the supervision of such schools to caste ridden officers. Anent this point the "Madras Mail" dated the 13th August 1908, in its leader "The Elementary Education & Aided Schools in Mysore" made the following remark:—"Too often as the Government of India have confessed, it has been found that the Officials even of Educational Departments have displayed a hostile attitude towards the education of the lower classes". It is contrary to the Hindu notions of the fitness of things that the Panchamas should ever be permitted to make any social advancement and this is the reason why the so-called high Caste Hindus are averse to educate the Panchamas or to propose ways and means for making the Primary education more popular among the Panchamas.

Remedy for the evil.

The humble Petitioner most respectfully prays that His Excellency may graciously be pleased to appoint Panchamas of education to be Inspectors of such Schools. This is the only field in the Government service where the Panchamas could work without being oppressed by the Caste Hindu. As the Hon. Mr. Justice Sankaran Nair observed in his presidential address in connection with the 22nd Session of the Indian National-Social Conference:—"As officials we (caste Hindus) may be found satisfactory, we may also be powerful critics of the administration, but we can never be safe administrators ourselves. The mental habit which sanctions and enforces the Purdah approves and wherever it is safe to do so enforces the customary treatment of the Panchamas, Christians and Mahomedans is not conducive to progressive administration. The emancipation of the down-trodden masses or other classes cannot be safely entrusted to those who cannot divest themselves of this mental habit."

In conclusion the Petitioner begs to lay before your Excellency the case of his two sons.

The educational qualifications of the petitioner's 2 sons & their claims to high appointments

(1) P. Dhanavelu Pillai is the eldest of his surviving sons. He passed the Matriculation Examination of the Madras University and also the Handwriting & Dictation tests for Under-graduates. He is now drawing a salary of Rs 50/-per mensem, as a clerk in the Postmaster General's Office and has put in a service of 16 years and possesses a good record of his service.

(2) P. Jayaram Pillai is a Bachelor of Arts of the Madras University and is proficient in Tamil, Telugu and Hindustani. He is now a Sub Registrar of 3 years' standing. He is the only graduate among a community of seven million souls. He has been highly spoken of as to his merits and capabilities.

The humble Petitioner most respectfully begs to point out (1) that he is highly connected—among his close relatives are the late Rai Bahadur Iyasawmi Pillai, District Surgeon of Cuddapah, Rai Bahadur Madurai Pillai, Ship Dubash and Honorary Magistrate of Rangoon and late P. Venkatachellum, Millionaire and Indian Condiment Manufacturer, who spent nearly ten thousand Rupees for the celebration of 60th Anniversary of the reign of H. M. the Queen Victoria, as an expression of his loyalty in which virtue the Panchamas stand individually and as a class second to none in the British Empire. (2.) that his sons feel the disability arising from the want of caste very much; the second son had to starve for half a day owing to the boycott of his waterman due to the persuasion of the caste people. (3.) that the rules requiring certain educational qualifications for filling up the higher appointments should be a little relaxed in favour of the Panchamas as the Government was pleased to do in the case of the Eurasians in certain departments and when appointing the sons of some well known Indians for the post of Deputy Superintendentship of Police quite recently, having regard to the fact that the Panchamas have to prosecute their studies under most harassing and discouraging circumstances and (4) that it is becoming almost impossible for his sons to get on well in the Government service without sufficient encouragement at the hands of the benign Government.

In the circumstances, the humble Petitioner most respectfully prays that your Excellency may be pleased to appoint them as Inspectors or Asst. Inspectors of Schools or confer on them some independent and lucrative appointments under the direct control of European Officers, taking into consideration the facts (a) that there is none in the Panchama community at present in the Government (British) who hold higher appointments as were before a generation though at present in the enlightened Native States of Mysore & Baroda some special privileges have been created in favour of the lower classes and accordingly in Mysore there are three Panchama Medical Graduates now holding high appointments. (b) that his sons have to maintain a respectable position in life as educated members of a large Community and being also well connected. (c) that such appointments would be stimulus to education as Panchamas without education are better able to earn well as domestic servants &c. and (d) that the petitioner himself is an old Military Medical Subordinate (retired) and belongs to a family who early consecrated their services to the British Government.

Dear Mr. Sarathy,

George Town, Madras, E.

MADRAS,
16th February, 1912.
~~10th January, 1909.~~

DEPARTMENT.

No. 103, dated 10. 2. 1912.

Wm.

E

The petition will be rejected under
para. xiv (3) of ² C. Memorial Rules.
[H. E. para xiv (3) of the rules.]

I.

The petitioners

PG

23.2.12

Re
25.2.12

Note

The current petition is only a copy of the
one considered and disposed of in June 82

D. Soldy 11-2-09 with the date and the name of H. E. the Governor altered. Attention is also solicited to para. ^(on p. 2) 6 of notes to Gene.

C. 456 Vol 5 - 8 - 09

PG

23.2.17

When given for copying _____
 When copied _____
 When examined _____
 When signed _____

191

READ AGAIN G.O., No.
 191

, DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO G. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
 IN ORIGINAL.

A A A A A A A

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
 B = Not to be copied.
 P = Copy abstract only.
 Q = Copy Heading only.