

Educational (1912) Department.

ORDINARY MS. ✓

G.O., No. 184

DATED 29-2-12.

(69) ✓

[Despatch Abstract.]

Questions in Council.

Recording papers
relating to the question asked by the
Honble Dewan Bahadur Ramabhadra
Nayudu & the answer given thereto at the
meeting of the Legue Council of the 14th Feb/12
re- the location of the Oriental Manuscripts
library.

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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

87C
LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

Question 128
NOTE FILE. ✓

34
17-11-12

Duplicate of Educ. Cuo. 363.
Legislative Department.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

The Hon'ble Diwan Bahadur V. Rambhadra Nayudu Gera

- 128 (a) Are Government aware that their decision regarding the location of Government Oriental Manuscripts Library in the compound of the office of the Director of Public Instruction at Nugalambakam, conveyed in G.O.No.563 Misc. dated 18th August 1911, has caused considerable dissatisfaction amongst those using it from day to day ?
- (b) Have Government perused the letter that appeared on the subject in the leading articles published in Madras Mail of 1st May 1911, the Madras Times of 18th January 1912 and in a letter in the Indian Patriot of August 28th, 1911 ?
- (c) Are Government aware that the office of the Director of Public Instruction is inaccessible to the general public, and that the tramway is far away from it ?
- (d) Are Government aware that the library is daily used by a large section of the Indian public coming mostly from Triplicane and Georgetown ?
- (e) Will Government be pleased having regard to all the circumstances of the case, that the library is located where it is or located in a place close by it or in any other locality easily accessible to the public ?

* There is nothing in this issue about the library.

Re
4.2.12.

⊕ not available just now.

Re
4.2.12.

2/ The Indian Patriot of 25-8-11

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Government Oriental Mss.
Library.

[To the Editor of the "Indian Patriot."]
Sir,--With reference to the articles concerning the location of the Library, appeared in the *Indian Patriot* of the 6th and 7th and the 22nd of December 1910, a strongly representative petition, dated 24th December 1910, was submitted to the Government, protesting against the proposed removal of the Library to the Old College compound, Nungambakam, and requesting to erect the new building in a central locality suitable to the reading public as has been suggested in the aforesaid articles with which the signatories were in full accord and sympathy. The petition was signed by 236.

In reply to the petition, G. O. No. 563, Miscellaneous, dated 12th August 1911, has been received and it runs as follows:--The petitioners will be informed that the Government do not consider that the location of the Library in the old College Compound presents any serious hindrance to its use by the persons for whom it is intended.

Any one who has some experience of the aim and scope of the Library cannot but regret the arrangement. The Government seem to have best sight of the fact that, by its removal to Nungambakam, the Library will lose the little popularity that it now commands on account of its location in the Museum Buildings which are daily frequented by numerous visitors and that the expenditure for its new accommodation and up-keep can never be commensurate with the results it may produce, but will practically be a waste. A careful perusal of the articles referred to above is quite sufficient to convince any one of this fact.

If the object of the authorities in insisting upon the removal of the library to Nungambakam is to secure a common or close accommodation for both the Library and the office of the Registrar of Books which are at present under the management of one officer, it can better be achieved by removing both to a common building or compound in a central locality. The present accommodation of the Office of the Registrar of Books is also insufficient and unsuitable, and it is said that proposals for its extension are being considered. If this opportunity is taken to secure a suitable accommodation for the Registrars Office also, it will serve manifold purposes. The irregularities and failures in the submission of the local publications on account of the out-of-the-way situation of the Registrar's Office will then be avoided; and the Library of printed books attached to the Registrar's Office may very profitably be re-opened to the public. The necessity and usefulness of the re-opening of this Library to the public cannot adequately be spoken of here.

Again, if the difficulty of the authorities to comply with the request of the petitioners lies in securing a suitable site in a central locality, it can be solved very easily. The People's Park, which has been already made unfit to serve its functions cannot be utilised for any better purpose than to accommodate such a useful and popular institution as the Oriental Mss. Library. The People's Park is unquestionably in the centre of the city and is also connected with all its parts both by train and train communication.

AN ORIENTAL.

* There is nothing in this
issue about the Library

was not considered further

19 May 1911.

MADRAS ORIENTAL MSS. LIBRARY.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT, IN ACCORDANCE with what was suggested in these columns some time ago, the Madras Government have sanctioned a comprehensive scheme for the reorganisation of the Government Oriental MSS. Library. The part of the scheme relating to the re-forming of the staff has, we understand, been given effect to, and of what remains the most important portion relates to the question of the location of the Library in a suitable building. It is now housed in a part of the Museum buildings, where its contents, unique in some respects, have attracted the attention not only of Indian Pundits and students but also of European and American scholars. Its present habitation is regarded as unsuitable for its purposes and requirements, and the question of locating the Library in a suitable place is at present engaging the attention of the authorities. The matter is of some interest to the general public, since it is they who put the library to practical use.

Years ago—the Library is nearly half a century old—it was located in a small building of the old College in Nungumbaukum. At the suggestion of the late Rev. T. Foulkes, a great Sanskrit scholar and a pioneer in archaeological research in South India, who was the real “discoverer” of the Library, Government, in 1869, appointed a Committee to suggest a scheme for its management. Amongst those forming the Committee were Mr. E. B. Powell, then Director of Public Instruction, the Rev. T. Foulkes, Mr. J. Pickford, then Professor of Sanskrit at the Presidency College, and Mr. W. S. Lily, then Under Secretary to Government, and now so well known by his philosophical writings. The Committee condemned the location of the Library in the Nungumbaukum building and recommended, *inter alia*, its removal to a room in the Presidency College, then newly constructed. It was accordingly removed, in 1870, to the College, whence it was shifted some twenty years later to the Secretariat, Fort St. George, whence it was again transferred, in 1895, to the Museum. We believe the Library was to have been located in a portion of the new wings of the Museum built in 1895, but as space had to be found for the Literary Society—pending the decision of the question of providing for it elsewhere, which has since been done—the Connemara Free Library, the Art and Ethnological Sections of the Museum, the Art collection of the School of Arts, and the collection of arms in the Arsenal, Fort St. George, the former Superintendent of the Museum (Mr. Thurston) provided room in the old Library of the Museum for the Oriental MSS. Library. This was not entirely in accordance with the original proposal of Government, for at the time the new additions to the Museum buildings were sanctioned, Government stipulated, amongst other things, that the Superintendent of the Museum should, after the building of the new wings, afford space for all these collections and the Oriental MSS. Library. Since then, the Museum has had an additional room built on, but still its requirements have not yet been fully met, we believe. However, the late Mr. Sahagiri Sastriar, then Curator of the Oriental Library, fell in with Mr. Thurston's suggestion for the utilisation of the old Museum Library for the purposes of the Oriental MSS. Library, and moved into it in 1895. Since then the latter Library has been growing both in popularity and in size, and the space available has been found to be totally insufficient for its needs, apart from the deficiencies of light and air.

The Oriental is a strictly manuscript Library, and in order to check the contents of the historical, literary and other MSS., people have to resort to the Connemara Library. The two together supplement each other's deficiencies while the University Library, located in a portion of the Connemara Library and the Victoria Technical Institute Library, in the adjoining compound, have become other useful adjuncts to the older institution. The proximity of these kindred institutions is one of undoubted advantage to the Government, the University and the general public. The position now appears to be that want of accommodation in the Museum is slowly tending to the removal of the Oriental MSS. Library from the vicinity of these other Libraries. It is true that the growing requirements of the Museum in its different departments and the Connemara Library may not allow of much space being allotted for other institutions. At the same time, both Government and the University will probably, have to soon think of adding to the Museum buildings other than those which, we understand, have already been sanctioned for strictly Museum purposes. And it is necessary to devise some well considered and comprehensive scheme to meet these requirements before it is too late. Granted that those institutions should be close together, it would, we think, be unwise and inconvenient to separate them, now or hereafter. One possible way in which the position could be met is to acquire one of the two bungalows at the south-west corner of the Museum. These are between the Museum and the Victoria Technical Institute. They belong to private owners and if at least one of them was acquired it might meet the probable extensions of all these institutions, besides affording the requisite building site for the Oriental Library. The latter would be better placed there than in an obscure corner, say, of the office of the Director of Public Instruction. The Oriental MSS. Library has grown from small proportions into a useful and vigorous institution under the fostering care of successive Curators, and its recent reorganisation by Government shows the great interest which they are taking in it.

In G.O. No. 563 Educational, dated 12th August 1911, it was resolved to locate the Oriental Manuscripts library in a new building to be constructed in the Old College compound and plans and estimates for the proposed building were called for. In January last the D.P.I. reported that he had asked the committee appointed to consider the future uses of the present College of Engineering buildings to reserve a portion ~~the~~ of the buildings for the Oriental Manuscripts library and the library of the Registrar of books and enquired whether the submission of the plans and estimates might be deferred for the present. This was allowed in G.O. No. 34 Mis. Edl., dated 17-1-12. ~~It is suggested that~~ the following answer may be given to the -- questions submitted for approval :-

"The question of the location of the -
" Oriental Manuscripts library is still under con- sideration . The decision to ^{original} ~~transfer it to~~ ^{transfer it to} ~~locate it in the~~
" Old College compound ~~arrived at in G.O. No. 563~~
" ~~Mis. Edl., dated 12-8-1911~~ has been held in
" abeyance ~~for the present~~ pending a further re-
" port from the D.P.I.", who has recently
" represented that suitable accommodation
" may become available in the buildings at
" Chepuk now occupied by the College of Engineering

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Circled in Box No 40

app. for
5/11/12

The question and answer as finally approved are as follows:-

Location of Oriental Manuscripts Library.

Question 124. (a) Are Government aware that their decision regarding the location of Government Oriental Manuscripts Library in the compound of the office of the Director of Public Instruction at Nungambaukam, conveyed in G.O. Mis. No. 563, dated 12th August 1911, has caused considerable dissatisfaction amongst those using it from day to day?

(b) Have Government perused the letter that appeared on the subject in the leading articles published in the *Madras Mail* of 1st May 1911, the *Madras Times* of 18th January 1912 and in a letter in the *Indian Patriot* of 28th August 1911?

(c) Are Government aware that the office of the Director of Public Instruction is inaccessible to the general public and that the tramway is far away from it?

(d) Are Government aware that the library is daily used by a large section of the Indian public coming mostly from Triplicane and Georgetown?

(e) Will Government be pleased having regard to all the circumstances of the case to direct that the library shall remain where it is or be located close by or in any other locality easily accessible to the public?

Answer 124—

The location of the Oriental Manuscripts Library is still under consideration. The original decision to transfer it to the Old College compound has been held in abeyance pending a further report from the Director of Public Instruction who has recently represented that suitable accommodation may become available in the buildings at Chepauk now occupied by the College of Engineering.

2. A draft order is submitted for approval.

Z.H.
28.2.12 Re
29.2.12

(This should be put up when the file is under dept)

Please note

Re
29.2.12

Noted.
PP
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P.R.
29.2.12

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READ AGAIN G.O. No., dated 191 ..

" " " " 191 ..

READ ALSO:-

C. No. 363, From the Leg. sept, No., dated 3-2- 1912

" " " " 191 ..

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ORDER.

mis

No. 186, dated 29 . 2 . 1912.

Recorded. ✓

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191

READ AGAIN G.O., No. 191

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CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO G. No.

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LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

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