No. 67. Read the following letter from A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to the Hon. W. HUDLESTON, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Coimbatore, 17th November 1873, No. 75 :—

I have the honour to forward, for the information of Government (who may possibly wish to refer the same to the Medical Department), translation of an original letter, with numerous signatures from certain natives of Caroor, in reference to the anticipated substitution of Hospital Apprentices for Hospital Assistants, the former being possibly of European or East-Indian parentage, while the latter more lowly office is held by natives.

2. It is desirable that Government should be made aware of the prejudices which are alleged to interfere with the free use of European skill and medicine ; and, in the first instance, there is the social prejudice amounting apparently to scandal in natives' houses being visited by persons not of their own caste ; and the second objection, a less valid one in my opinion, but one which can be easily provided against, is to the medicines being mixed or diluted in water by others than their own caste.

3. I think some expression of the views of Government would be of importance. No doubt the schoolmaster is abroad, and the petition is headed by one ; but it is now time that some authoritative exposition should be afforded to the higher classes in reference to their interests and prejudices.

4. If authorized by Government, I would propose to point out to the petitioners that the education of the Hospital Apprentice is of such a superior nature that he is thereby fitted, not merely for more skilful practice, but selected for unexceptional conduct ; that any breach of professional decorum is visited with the severest punishment ; and that, therefore, there is no reason to anticipate bad consequences from the change. At the same time I must note, for the information of Government, that there were treated, at the Coimbatore Dispensary, during the ten months of January to October 1873—

		Males.	Females.
Brahmins	In-patients	7	0
	Out-patients...	606	237
Other* Hindus of Caste.	In-patients	60	19
	Out-patients...	2,137	861
Mahomedans ...	In-patients	12	2
	Out-patients...	454	283
Total ...		3,267	1,402

which would seem to indicate a gradual change in native prejudice on one of the points alluded to.

5. It is, as stated in the petition, very possible that the female prejudice adverted to is still stronger than the male; indeed for a long period the native females have been neglected in their education, and, by their male relatives, taught to view the European as a kind of demon who should be avoided ; the Abbé Dubois is authority for this statement. After the inculcation of such ideas, it is not wonderful if they produced results such as are described in the petition.

6. Whether this false impression would not be rather confirmed by Government conceding to it is for consideration, but at all events it would be desirable

* Pariahs excluded.

that great care should be taken, in the Medical Department, in the selection of Hospital Apprentices for the charge of Taluq Hospitals, so that none of the anticipated evils may result, and that the advantages of such institutions may be made available to all classes.

7. I take this opportunity to suggest that it is desirable that efforts should be made to enlist native opinion in favour of the education of females for medical attendance in certain cases on their fellow-women.

8. If caste-women could be induced to enter the profession of nurse, or skilled attendant, in such cases, a great boon would be conferred on the unrepresented class of the people.

9. I find a difficulty in making a suggestion on this point; but, as the subject of the medical education of ladies in Great Britain is now attracting attention, possibly the example and services of some such qualfied persons, if available, might aid in attracting females of the higher classes in this country to the profession of skilled nurse.

10. It is most probable that the class of the community which suffers most from the want of skilled attendance is the female portion of the population. There is a repugnance, both of nature and of prejudice, to the treatment by a difficult sex of maladies peculiar to the sex.

11. The petitioners may ascribe this reluctance to ignorant prejudice, but we may admit a higher ground, on the score of female delicacy. At all events, it seems a duty to assist in bringing to the so-called ignorant and apparently neglected class the blessings of good medical aid.

12. How much suffering has been silently endured from want of such aid can never be known; but there are indications which to the Magistrate suggest a clue to the suicides, sometimes returned by the Village Magistrate as due to unbearable internal pain, described it is true in more homely phrase.

13. I find that, for this district alone, for the ten previous months of this year, there were thirty-one cases of female suicide, 2·1 of which were ascribed to this cause. There were forty-one female suicides last year, and it, therefore, seems to me that the subject deserves the earnest consideration of Government, whether indeed some contribution from the State, from the sums devoted to the higher branches of education, almost gratuitously, or at least on most favourable terms, granted to classes who can afford to pay for it, and, when the supply of State-educated persons is in excess of Government requirements, might not be devoted to the less showy but perhaps more useful relief of human suffering.

To A. WEDDERBURN, Esq,
President of the Local Fund Board, Coimbatore.

Most Honoured Sir,—We, the undersigned people of the town of Caroor, most humbly beg to address to your honour the following petition, and request that it may be given the consideration of which it may be worthy.

2. We hear that the Government have lately issued an order to the effect that Hospital Assistants now in charge of the Local Fund and Municipal Dispensaries should be withdrawn for general duty, and their places be supplied by Hospital Apprentices, or officers of warrant grade, and that measures are being taken speedily to introduce the change.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
9th December 1873.

3. We believe that the officers proposed to supply the places of the present Hospital Assistants will be East Indians or Europeans. We do not think they will be other than these. It is a fact admitted or readily to be admitted that no institution is more beneficial to us or to a community than the medical one. It is this institution which immediately concerns the well-being of the people. Therefore we now regret that we should lose altogether the benefit thus intended to be conferred on the people, in case the officers appointed to be in charge of the dispensaries are East Indians or Europeans. At present, the men in charge of the dispensaries being natives we have every facility and convenience in getting medicines from them. We are now free from all castal feelings, and willingly take their medicines without any scruples of conscience. We do not care now whether they mix water with a medicine given to us. On occasions when we cannot attend the dispensary we invite them and receive them into our houses, and this is never looked upon by the people as anything objectionable, as indeed it is not.

4. Should the proposed change be effected we shall forego all or most of the facility and convenience we now enjoy under the native medical men. No doubt the officers proposed to be appointed may be better qualified and abler men; but how much their qualification and ability will be useful in a town like this, or in a native town, is a point for consideration, and which we solicit should not be lost sight of before the introduction of the change in question. Not a Hindu will be willing to take medicines internally when he has reason to believe that they are in any way mixed with water by the East Indians or Europeans. So long as the religious feelings of Hindus are strong, or not alterable, they would rather lose the benefit offered to them than injure their feelings. So long as we live in a community we cannot freely take the East Indian or European medical officers into our houses without subjecting ourselves to public censure.

5. Another objection, perhaps greater than all that have hitherto been urged, is what follows:—At present the Hindu females are more prejudiced than males. They are habitually confined to their houses, and seldom or never allowed to go freely abroad even within the limits of their towns and streets. They are never accustomed to see, receive, or talk to a stranger even though he be a Hindu. What should, therefore, be their feelings when all on a sudden an East Indian or European is sought to come and treat them. Surely they will be hurt. Some considerable number of years should pass before they can put up with such a thing without being shocked. Thus we do not doubt that the females will not in the least be benefited by the medical institution if the intended change be brought about. Furthermore, we beg to state that the state of a disease, at least that disease which cannot be ascertained from mere inspection, can never be described satisfactorily by any other than the sufferer. Without such description we do not think that a medical officer can identify the disease with some one or other of what he has known. In the absence of such an identification he will not be able to treat or advise the sufferer in the appropriate manner. When this is not done, of course, no remedy can be effected with confidence or except by chance. But all these requisites cannot be obtained when the patient and the medical officer solicited are mutually ignorant of, or not well acquainted with, the language of the other, and this is not unfrequently the case.

6. In proof of the fact of the natives being always backward or unwilling to take advice from these medical officers, we beg to state that even in large towns where there are more qualified European or East Indian Officers, such as Civil Surgeon, Apothecary, &c., the people are resorting always to the Native Dressers for treatment. This is not through their ignorance of the higher abilities of the former officers, but surely because they are so much precluded from seeking their advice by their inveterate castal prejudices.

7. In conclusion, we beg to say that in case the change actually takes place we shall never derive that benefit from the institution (an institution entirely or mostly intended for the good of the natives) which the Government suppose we shall, and then the views of the Government will hardly be realized. Under these circumstances, we pray in earnest that the subject may be laid before the Government for their re-consideration and the alteration of the proposal to appoint

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
9th December 1873.

Hospital Apprentices or warrant grade officers to the Local Fund and Municipal Dispensaries. We shall be very highly obliged by your honour's kindly complying with our earnest prayer.

We beg to remain, &c.,

CAROOR, (Signed) S. VENCATARAMANIAH, *Schoolmaster*,
8th November 1873. and others.

No. 68. ORDER THEREON, 9th December 1873, No. 1784.

The Collector will explain to the petitioners that the object of Government in their late order was to guard against the employment of unqualified men in the responsible charge of dispensaries, and that it by no means follows that the practitioners appointed in their stead will not be natives. Their representations will be referred to the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, who will pay special regard to them in framing his arrangements.

2. The subject of training females for the profession of medicine is under the consideration of Government.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department.
" Collector of Coimbatore.
" all Presidents of Local Fund Boards
" " Do of Municipalities

Exd. J. Wright.

Govt. of {1873} Madras.

FINANCIAL.

To

THE SURGEON-GENERAL,
INDIAN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated December, 9th.

Read.

Enc.

G.O., 9th December 1873, No. 1794.

DECEMBER.
Nos. 67-68.

Caroor Dispensary.—The petition from certain natives of Caroor against G.O., dated 17th September 1873, No. 960, Public Department, ordering the withdrawal of all Hospital Assistants from the charge of dispensaries, referred to the Surgeon-General, Indian Medical Department, in view to special regard being paid to the representations made by the petitioners.

Coimbatore Collector's office
17th November 1873.
Dupl 18/11/73

No. 75.

From,

A. Wedderburn Esquire,
Collector of Coimbatore.

To,

The Honorable W. Hudleston,
Chief Secretary to Government,
Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to forward for the information of Government (who may possibly wish to refer the same to the Medical Department), translation of and original, letter with numerous signatures from certain natives of Caroor, in reference to the anticipated substitution of Hospital Apprentices for Hospital Assistants; the

former being possibly of European or East Indian parentage - while the latter more lawly office, is held by natives -

2- It is desirable that Government should be made aware of the prejudices which are alleged to interfere with the free use of European skill, and medicines - and in the first instance - there is the social prejudice emaunting apparently to scandal - in natives houses being visited by persons, not of their own caste; and the second objection, a less valid one in my opinion, but one which can be easily

provided against, is to the medicines being mixed, or diluted in water by others than their own caste -

3- I think some expression of the views of Government would be of importance - No doubt the School master is abroad, and the petition is headed by one - but it is now time, that some authoritative exposition should be afforded to the higher classes, in reference to their interests and prejudices -

4- If authorized by Government, I would propose to point out to the petitioners

that the education of the Hospital apprentice is of such superior nature, that he is thereby fitted, not merely for more skilful practice, but selected for unexceptional conduct; that any breach of professional decorum is visited with the severest punishment; and that, therefore, there is no reason to anticipate bad consequences from the change. At the same time I must note for the information of Government that there were treated at the Coimbatore Dispensary during the 10 months of

January to October 1873:— 3
11 9

× Pariahs excluded.	Brahmins		Other Hindus of caste		Mahomedans	
	In	out	In	out	In	out
	Males / Females	Males / Females	Males / Females	Males / Females	Males / Females	Males / Females
7 "	606 237	60 19	2,137 861	12 2	445 283	

Grand Total —
Males. Females.
3,267 1,402

which would seem to indicate a gradual change in native prejudice on one of the points alluded to.

5. It is, as stated in the petition, very possible, that the female prejudice adverted to is still stronger than the male; indeed for a long period the native females have been

neglected in their education,
and, by their male relatives,
taught to view the European,
as a kind of demon, who
should be avoided; - the
Abbé Dubois is authority for
this statement - After the
inculcation of such ideas,
it is not wonderful if they
produced results, such as are
described in the petition.

6. Whether this false impression
would not be rather confirmed
by Government conceding to
it, is for consideration, but
at all events, it would be
desirable that great care
should be taken in the

medical department, in the
selection of Hospital Apprentices
for the charge of Zalug in
Hospitals, so that none of
the anticipated evils may
result, and that the advantages
of such institutions may be
made available to all classes.

7. I take this opportunity
to suggest that it is desirable
that efforts should be made,
to enlist native opinion
in favour of the education
of females, for medical
attendance, in certain cases,
on their fellow women.

8. If caste women could
be induced to enter the

profession of nurses, or
skilled attendant, in such
cases, a great boon would
be conferred on the un=
=represented class of the people=
9- I find a difficulty in
making a suggestion on this
point, but as the subject
of the medical education
of ladies in Great Britain
is now attracting attention,
possibly the example, and
services of some such qualified
persons, if available, might
aid in attracting females
of the higher classes, in this
country, to the profession of
skilled nurse—

10- It is most probable
that the class of the community,
which suffers most from
the want of skilled attend=
=ance, is the female portion
of the population- There is a
repugnance, both of nature,
and of prejudice, to the treat=
=ment by a difficult sex
of maladies peculiar to the sex-

11- The petitioners may ascribe
this reluctance to ignorant
prejudice, but we may admit
a higher ground, on the score
of female delicacy- At all
events, it seems a duty to
assist in bringing to the
so-called ignorant, and

apparently neglected class,
the blessings of good medical
aid -

12. How much suffering has
been silently endured from
want of such aid can never
be known, but there are
indications, which to the Magistrate,
suggest a clue to the suicides,
sometimes returned by the
village magistrate, as due to
unbearable internal pain, so
described, it is true, in more
homely phrase -

13 - I find that, for this District
alone, for the 10 previous months
of this year, there were 31 cases
of female suicides, 21 of which

were ascribed to this cause.
There were 41 female suicides
last year; and it therefore
seems to me, that the subject
deserves the earnest consideration
of Government, whether indeed,
some contribution from the
State, - from the sums devoted
to the higher branches of
education, almost gratuitously,
or at least on most favor-
-able terms, granted to classes,
who can afford to pay for
it, and when the subsidy
of state educated persons
is in excess of Government
requirements, - might not be
devoted to the less showy,

but perhaps more useful

relief of human suffering-

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt servant

A Middleburn

Collector-

Govt. of {1873} Madras.

Financial 17

To

The Surg. Genl. Ind. Med. Dept.

&c.

Dated Dec. 9
Read.

G.O. 9 Dec. 1873. No. 1784.

Nos. 67. 68.

Medical Practitioners - The petition from Certain Natives of Cavoor against G.O. of 17 Sept. 1873 No. 960 Pub. Dept. ordering the withdrawal of all Hosp. Assts. from the Charge of Dispensaries referred to the Surg. Genl. I. M. Dept. for attention in framing his arrangements.