M.R.O. 1—30,000—16-10-23.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1418 Press Mis

96-97

Dated 21-10- 19-1859

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department, from 5th to 21st October 1859.

No. 96. Read the following letter from CHARLES W. READE, Esq., Madras Civil Service; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, dated 21st October 1859.

1. I have the honor to request that you will bring the following representation under the immediate consideration of Government.

2. Having been pronounced guilty of acts which assail my truthfulness and personal honor as a gentleman, and would therefore be fatal both to my future happiness and to my prospects in the Public Service, it has been my duty to take every measure in my power to show that I do not deserve the imputations cast upon me. For this purpose, I have been preparing a detailed Memorial, which I propose to submit through this Government, to the Secretary of State for India, proceeding myself to England, by the next Steamer, with the original papers upon which the Memorial is based.

3. Some such important circumstances have, however, come to light, that I am induced to hope that the Madras Government will acquit me of what I feel most deeply, the imputation on my hitherto untarnished character for truthfulness. Should this be the case, I trust that the heavy expense of proceeding to England may be spared me; since no official delinquency was charged against me on this occasion, and my previous character was admitted by the Government Prosecutor to have been "*most straightforward and honorable*," I presume, that I shall be deemed eligible for re-employment, if not in Vizagapatam, at least in some other District.

4. And here I freely express regret at having had any transactions, however trifling, with the Rajah of Vizianagrum. His Elephants were used by me solely for the Public Service, and I was led to purchase the Horses and Tent under peculiar circumstances, arising partly from having been ordered to join the District without delay at a time of considerable public danger. The Mirrors also were obtained by me on a special occasion, viz., when the Governor Lord Harris came, in the course of a tour, to be my guest. In all these transactions, I acted in good faith, and in unconsciousness of doing wrong, but the consequences which have followed of course show me that I ought not to have departed even in the most trifling degree from the general rule; and if this error leads to my removal to another appointment, even at a loss of salary, I shall not dispute the decision of Government. My anxiety is to be relieved from the charge of having been wanting in truthfulness and honorable conduct.

5. I proceed now to enumerate those important papers connected with my Memorial, which I deem it proper to lay at once before the Government, they are as follows:—

1.—The letter of the Vizianagrum Rajah to Mr. Blackwell, published in that gentleman's "brief statement."

2.—A letter written to me by the Rajah on 22nd January 1858, allowing me to purchase his Tent.

3.—Letters from Mr. Healy, dated the 1st and 6th October 1859, proving, among other matters, that the Horses were sold to me, and that the Rajah had openly spoken to him of this circumstance.

6. If it should be urged, that whatever I had to state in my defence, ought to have been brought forward at the trial, I beg to bring to the recollection of Government, how much I was taken by surprise, and how unfavorably I was then situated. The Rajah's letter to Government on which the charges against me were founded, was written on 9th June. No explanation was called for from me regarding that letter during the ensuing 2 months, and I was left in entire ignorance of its existence, until it was produced at the trial. Neither the Rajah, nor Messrs. Blackwell and T. J. Knox, who aided in its preparation, gave me the least notice of what they had done, but continued the same intercourse as before, till the last moment. I even received no official intimation of the appointment of any Commission until two days after the Commissioner Mr. Phillips, had landed in the District. It was through the information of private friends only, that I heard of the appointment of a Commission, and I was left to surmise that the articles which I had purchased from the Rajah probably formed the subject of enquiry.

7. Under these circumstances, the trial took me unprepared, and I had to rest my defence upon two chief points:—Ist, My hitherto unblemished character for truth and integrity,—IInd,

The Rajah narrating truly, in reply to my questions, what passed between me and him at our meeting before I sent him the Cheques in payment of my purchases. On both these points, I must consider, that I have become unjustly a victim. I offered to make my statements on oath and subject myself as a witness to any cross examination. This was refused, but with an intimation, that the Commissioner would consider " my word of honor" as fully equivalent to an oath. Yet in the sequel, the hitherto unimpeached word of an English gentleman, has been disbelieved and credence assigned to a Native witness, who admitted having written a falschood to Government in the first instance, who evaded my questions, although relating to recent matters of fact, who had falsely stated that the receipt of the Cheques alarmed him into writing to Mr. Blackwell, when he could not have received them at that time, and who had committed the gross dishonesty of delivering up all my private letters to Mr. Blackwell, and continuing to show me a feigned friendship and esteem, till the Commissioner entered the District.

8. The letters of the Rajah to Mr. Blackwell, to which I now request the attention of Government, show how false his evidence was, on all the important points, on which his statements and mine were at issue. On this occasion, however, I will confine myself to a few of the leading incidents, placing in juxta position, the contradictory statements.

The Rajah having stated in his evidence that, the sight of the Cheques alarmed him into claiming Mr. Blackwell's help, it was pointed out in my defence, that this could not be the true motive which had actuated him, as the Cheques could not then have reached him.

It is now shown by the Rajah's letter to Mr. Blackwell, of 10th June, published by the latter Officer, that the Cheques could have had nothing to do in influencing the Rajah to address either the Government or Dr. Blackwell.

Extract from the Rajah's evidence given before the Commission.

Question.—Did he specify the papers?

Answer.—No, he said he would send papers as he was going away.

Q.—Did not he tell you that he wanted the letter to show it?

A.—No. And I did not know about the three Cheques until I saw them.

Q.—Didn't he ask you at the interview, to settle the price of the Tent, Mirrors or Horses?

A.—Nothing of that conversation took place.

Q.—Did you not say to him, when you come back in the evening, I will show the accounts and settle the prices?

A.—Nothing of that.

Q.—Mr. Reade did go to you in the afternoon?

A.—He did. He drove me part of the way to Conada.

Q.—Didn't you show him the accounts then, the price of the Tents, Mirrors and Horses?

A.—He went away. I don't remember having shewn him accounts. I am almost sure I did not. I think I did not show him any accounts. I have no doubt about this on my mind.

Extract from the Rajah's letter of 10th June to Dr. Blackwell, vide page 4, of Dr. Blackwell's "brief statement."

"Mr. Reade is going to send me Cheques for the pair of Carriage Horses, the pair of Mirrors and the Tent, with old dates. I believe 400 for the two Horses, 400 for the Mirrors, and 275 for the Tent."

Extract from the Rajah's letter of 12th June to Dr. Blackwell, vide page 6, of Dr. Blackwell's "brief statement."

"The 3 Cheques and the letter came in this morning by a Sowar. I consented for the Cheques in his presence, and how can I send them back now."

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Q.—You said that when you received the Cheques you did not know what they were.

A.—Not then. When he said I will send papers, I did not know what papers. Nothing was said on the day of dictating the letter what the papers were.

Q.—What did you think the Cheques were sent for?

A.—The Cheques themselves shew that they were in payment for the Carriage Horses said to be bought in 1857-58. Then I saw it was in completion of the arrangement, about considering the Horses sold.

Q.—He hadn't told you he would send Cheques?

A.—No.

Q.—Or that he would ante-date them?

A.—No.

9. The Rajah has thus furnished proof of his testimony at the trial being directly false, on those material points where it contradicted mine, and the letters which I now submit show that the articles were really purchased by me and that my assertion to this effect was no sudden expedient to relieve myself from the accusation of having long retained them on loan. I would here solicit the attention of Government to paragraphs 18 and 19 of my Defence on this all important point, as the sequel shows how just and correct were my then comments.

10. Under the foregoing circumstances, I trust that the Government will at once see cause to acquit me of untruthful or dishonorable conduct, as my Cheques were sent in payment of bonâ fide purchases, and in affixing to them the dates of purchase mentioned in the Rajah's Memorandum, I could have had no possible intention to deceive. The manner in which they were sent to the Rajah proves, that I could not have intended their dates to be seen by or mislead the Government, and my letter to the Rajah of the 22nd August, which was produced for the prosecution at the trial, shows that I never wished or expected the Rajah to depart, in any evidence which he might be called on to give, from the strict truth, viz., that the payment was made by me for my purchases *only in June of this year when the Cheques were sent to him.*

11. Having submitted this brief explanation, I request that the original letters may be returned to me with an intimation, whether I have relieved myself in the opinion of this Government from the charge of untruthful and dishonorable conduct. In my present position, it is of great consequence to me, to avoid the expense of proceeding to England, and I would respectfully urge, that a servant who has served the Government for upwards of 22 years, without a stain on his reputation, has claims to expect an answer to the representation which I now bring forward.

12. As the Steamer by which I proposed to proceed to England, leaves on the 27th Instant, I request to be favored with an early intimation of the views of Government. Should further explanation be wished for at my hands, I shall be prepared to give it, but at present, I am entirely ignorant of the precise points upon which the Commissioner and the Government arrived at their unfavorable decision.

No. 97. ORDER THEREON, 21st October 1859, No. 1418.

Resolved that the papers which accompanied the above letter, be returned to Mr. Reade, and that he be informed that the proceedings in his case have already been referred to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India.

2. The Government cannot re-open the case, but a copy of Mr. Reade's letter will be forwarded to the Secretary of State by the next Mail.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

From Jn St Chr Reade – C.S.

(Rec'd. 21 Octr 1859.)

Order thereon 21 October 1859. No 1418.

Resolved that the papers which accompanied the above letter be returned to Jn Reade, and that he be informed that the proceedings in his case have already been reported to H.M. Secretary of State for India –

The Govt. cannot reopen the case – but a copy of the

Reade's letter will be
forwarded to the
Secretary of State
by the next Mail

J.C.

J. C. M. Reade Esqr
with 3 Enclosures
Dispd 21st Inst.

No 40

Judl. Dept. Twenty 22d
Octr. No. 41. of 1859
Replies to Nos. 849 of 1860

9-6-860

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Prom. of Govt 21 Octr
Judicial 1859 Depart.

No. 1418

Proceedings of Govt.

Dated 21st October 1859.

96 & 97.