MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 836	Press Mis.
48-49	
Dated 17—6—1857	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department, from 11th to 17th June 1839.

No. 11 Read the following letter from W. ROBINSON, Esq. Chief Commissioner of Mofussil Police, to T. PYCROFT, Esq. Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Chittoor, 10th June 1839.

Para 1. I have the honor to inform you that I took upon myself to send Lieutenant Fennant to Madras on the 23d Ultimo, and beg to explain the circumstance under which I have thus ventured to make use of his services away from his District.

2. The Manager of my office Mr. Bates was personally appointed a Deputy Collector, and resigned his office with me on the last day of March.

3. One of his duties had been the management and responsibility of office expenditure, of allowances and the pay-bills of servants and petty contingencies after the Bills had received sanction. These duties are so great in the various offices in my office, on duties in performance of which any large sums of money pass into the hands of my subordinates.

4. The retention of cash balances in the office has been strictly forbidden and I had opened an account with the Bank of Madras for all Expends. Petty office contingent expenses are met from a standing advance from my private funds of 20 Rupees. The expenditure being recovered by contingent bill at the end of each month. This money was entrusted to the Manager of the Office and merely entrusted by the Manager.

5. I did not, in fact I could not, immediately supply Mr. Bates' place when he left me, and the duties above named were undertaken by Mr. Jenkins the Head Writer and Record Keeper of my office; a person who draws a salary of 15 Rupees per mensem. Mr Bates appointed his successor accurately and made over charge of his duties to this individual before he left.

6. Mr Jenkins had come to me strongly recommended from Colonel Fenn's office, had been from some time previous in the public service, and has been with me almost since my office was formed. He has proved a person of very considerable abilities; but both my late Manager and myself believed his integrity, of which we had been curiously assured when he was entertained; and I thought that he might be safely trusted with the above indispensable duties during my absence.

7. I left Madras on the 6th April (the same day in fact as my late Manager) and in my absence the duty of making some bills for pay of office establishment and other contingent expenses necessarily devolved on Mr. Jenkins. He seems from the very first day to have entered a course of systematic swindling. He sealed the principal bills that came into the hands but he paid only such sums, e. g. the pay of establishment &c., as would, if withheld, immediately have attracted attention, and appropriated to his own use what was due to tradesmen and any other sums about which immediate enquiry was not likely to be made. The whole amounted to 120 Rupees.

8. He sealed two bills for travelling allowance and advanced contingent expenses due to myself without any authority from me; and part of these sums has likewise gone.

9. I have been absent from Madras with my whole office establishment ever since the 6th April, have kept much on the move, and consequently less able to watch the frauds of the Head Writer in Madras. Mr. Jenkins had thus an opportunity for embezzlement without immediate detection.

10. On Sunday the 26th Ultimo, I however was aware as I think that all was not right. Lieutenant Fennant happened to be with me at Chittoor, having come to consult me on some matters connected with his Pioneers at Salem. He (Lieutenant Fennant) had been in charge of my office during my absence in Calicut and immediately before the suspected irregularities took place and I requested him to go down by sea to Madras and see what his suspicions were well founded before joining his Regiment. I was in hopes that he would not be detained 48 hours.

11. The exposure of the above systematic fraud has been the result, and Lieutenant Fennant's discretion the further consequence.

12. I considered it advisable to take legal advice and Mr. Bayne advised prosecution. Lieutenant Fennant has accordingly preferred the charge against Mr. Jenkins for embezzlement, the result of which I have not yet learned

12. I trust the Government will view in a favourable light my conduct in this matter, and award to our Lieutenant Tennant's services as temporarily for the fortnight that the unfortunate business has occupied.

13. All sums that have been paid and other defrays make good as a cost to one of those Pagans.

14. Absence from Madras and early intelligence of what has been done here prevented my submitting the matter to Government before Mr. Bryant's affair was acted upon. I therefore thoroughly understand that the step has been undertaken on my personal responsibility and at my own risk. I will however submit a further report on the subject for the consideration of Government.

No. 13. Order passed, 17th June 1839, No. 826.

Under the circumstances, Government approve of the Chief Commissioner having employed Lieutenant Tennant in the manner explained.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT.
Chief Secretary.

Ord. Chron. No. 13 of 1839 Proceedings of 17th June 1839.

Under the circumstances, Govt. approves of the Chief Commissioner having employed Lieut. Tennant in the manner explained.

The Chief Commissioner of Coorg & Superintendent of Police

Lith. E. Cartwright.