MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Political DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 181 Press ~~Mis.~~

Dated 12-3-1888

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 49. From PAUTHYIL COCHOO KRISHNA MENON, and others Inhabitants of the Cochin State; to the Right Honorable GEORGE FRANCIS ROBERT Lord HARRIS, Governor in Council, Fort Saint George, dated Cochin, February 1858.

The humble and respectful Memorial of Pauthyil Cochoo Khrishna Menon and others, Inhabitants of the Cochin State.

SHEWETH,

That your Memorialists most humbly beg leave to submit for the earnest and special consideration of your Lordship in Council, the accompanying Translations of Petitions marked, from A. to D. presented to His Highness the Rajah of Cochin and the British Resident regarding the gross misconduct of the present Dewan Vencat Row, who has during his brief administration of one year entailed heavy losses on the Sirkar Finances by the most fraudulent and shameful practices, and extorted money from the Inhabitants by intimidation and other corrupt means.

That the Memorialists' representations to His Highness the Rajah have not received due consideration, and their appeals to General Cullen as the British Representative have been equally unavailing. The Memorialists' representations have not only been unanswered but have been put into the very hands of the Dewan himself, who has thereby been enabled to exert all the influence of his position to block up the Channels of evidence against himself and to neutralize the Memorialists' views of obtaining redress. Some of your Memorialists were unjustly arrested and brought before the Dewan at his private house and means were employed by starvation and other acts of cruelty to coerce them into a retraction of their complaints.

That the Memorialists are prepared to prove their charges in the most satisfactory manner, if they are allowed a fair field, and no partiality is manifested on the other side, and they earnestly pray in conformity with the tenor of their application to His Highness the Rajah and the Resident, that the Dewan may be suspended and brought to trial before Commissioners duly appointed, and that should the gross and shameful atrocities alleged be brought home to him, he may be visited with exemplary punishment, (as in the case of Edamana Shungra Menon, a former Dewan,) or that failing to substantiate the charges the Memorialists may be visited with the penalties they would in such case justly incur.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

A. B.

IN No. 507 OF 1858.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of Cochin.

SHEWETH,

That your Highness' Petitioners beg leave to submit a few of the principal instances in which Vencat Row, the present Dewan of Cochin, has during his brief administration of less than a year, caused loss to the Sirkar, and grievance to your Highness' subjects. Your Petitioners humbly pray that the following circumstances may receive your Highness' best consideration with a view to the adoption of measures to prevent these evils in future.

1. That your Petitioner will first speak on the subject of the Revenue derived from Salt. That the quantity of Bombay Salt annually required by the Cochin Sirkar is about 3,000 Coombs (70 Indian Maunds a Coomb) which was obtained through Hadjee Jacob, Hadjee Moosa and others of the family of Adam Sett, and other men of wealth and consideration at a fair price, without loss, either to the Sirkar or the Contractors. That under this practice which obtained during the 18 years' administration of the late Dewan Shungra Warrior, Salt was never purchased

at a higher rate than from 25 to 30 Rupees for 100 Indian Maunds. Immediately on the appointment of the present Dewan, Vencat Row, he discontinued all connection with Hadjee Jacob and other respectable Merchants, and sent for a few of the name of Elia Rabbi, residing in the Jews' Town of Cochin, for the purpose of dealing with the Circar, in Salt; and offered him a higher price than what had formerly ruled, on the understanding that the profits were to be divided between the Dewan and Elia Rabbi. In pursuance of this arrangement, Elia Rabbi entered into a Contract for the supply of a certain quantity of Salt, for last years' consumption. On the other hand Hadjee Jacob and others, who refused to supply the article on the infamous terms proposed by the Dewan, made no arrangements for its importation last year, and the result was that Elia Rabbi committed a breach of contract to the extent of 500 Coombs of Salt; and the penalty of 40 Rupees per Coomb upon the above quantity short delivered, has not been enforced through the connivance of the Dewan, the consequence of which is the loss of 20,000 Rupees to the Circar. This improper leniency towards Elia Rabbi has formed a president for extending a similar indulgence towards certain other defaulters to the extent of 300 Coombs, by which also the Circar lost 12,000 Rupees, as penalty, fairly forfeited and thus there was a loss of the sum of 32,000 Rupees to the Circar upon the last year's contract. In consequence of the above extensive breaches of contract, a general scarcity of Salt has prevailed, thus enhancing the retail price from 6 measures or Nauhies per Putten to less than one measure. A state of things which was a source of severe suffering to the poorer classes.

2. Even after the severe experiences of the past year, the Dewan has, in utter disregard of the highly favorable terms offered by Hadjee Jacob, and others, renewed the contract with Elia Rabbi himself for the present year, at an advance of 8 and 9 Rupees per Indian Maund above the price at which the article was supplied in the time of late Shungra Warrier, so that the Sirkar will incur a loss of upwards of 20,000 Rupees upon the whole Contract.

3. Independent of the above procedure which the Dewan has adopted for his own self interest, he has resorted to still more infamous conduct to fill his Coffers. Several sums of money amounting in the aggregate to Rupees 20,000 had been paid into the Treasury by different retail Merchants for the purchase of Salt; and as the article could not be delivered owing to the default on the part of Elia Rabbi and other Contractors, the depositors prayed that the money may be retained and Salt delivered to them from the supplies of the present year. The Dewan, however, determined to make Capital even out of this transaction, and sent for one Irroomban through Elia Rabbi and offered to give him Salt to the amount of 20,000 Rupees if he paid the Dewan a premuim of 5,000 Rupees, which being accordingly given, the previous deposits of the other retail dealers, who should have received their supplies last year, were ordered to be returned. After the issue of such orders, overtures were made on their behalf by one Panakel Eapen, and a similar contribution of 5,000 Rupees having been levied by the Dewan, the Circar Accounts were corrected as if the above deposits were received into the Treasury from some other Merchants. The other retail Merchants finding that Iroomban, as well as Eapen and his party were to have the sole Monopoly of Salt this year, offered terms to the Dewan through Elia Rabbi; when a further sum of 40,000 Rupees was received into the Treasury from them for the purchase of Salt. The Dewan having obtained a reward of 6 per cent upon that amount or Rupees 2,000. By the above transactions the Sircar incurred a loss of 52,000 Rupees on the purchase and 12,000 Rupees in the sale of Salt, or a total loss of 64,000 Rupees, which should be well considered by His Highness.

II. 1. In the matter of Jaffna Tobacco, the annual quantity required by the Circar is 500 Candies of good quality.. In this year the 1st sort is obtainable at prices not exceeding 65 Rupees, but the Dewan without sending for and making enquiries with all the Merchants, entered into a contract with some favoured individuals at an advance of 10 Rupees per Candy above the Market price, by which the Circar has clearly been a loser to the amount of 5,000 Rupees and this has been done in the face of more favorable tenders which were rejected. The Tobacco already supplied is not of the best quality, and should it prove unsaleable it must either be committed to the flames or the value of it written off the accounts, thus entailing a heavy loss on the Sirkar. These results will be developed hereafter.

2. The late Dewan sent one Chathoo Panikar and other Sirkar Officers to Tuticoreen to weigh and receive charge of certain Tobacco on account of the Sirkar, but when the article arrived at Cochin there was a deficit of 31 Candies amounting to Rupees 9,060 and odd, which the late Dewan ordered to be debited to the said Chathoo Panikar and others. The present Dewan has however omitted to enter into any enquiries to ascertain the cause of the deficiency or to institute legal proceedings against Chathoo Panikar and others, by which the amount in question is virtually lost to the Sirkar.

3. The usual rate at which Jaffna Tobacco is sold on behalf of the Sirkar is 187½ Rupees per Candy to all inhabitants, but a great partiality is manifested towards one Achooda Prabhoo, a favorite of the Dewan, who is allowed to purchase the freshest supplies at 150 Rupees, and that, upon credit, and by such unfair preference the Dewan derives a profit. On the other hand he gave orders to sell the inferior sort of Tobacco to other Merchants at the higher rate of 187½ Rs. per Candy together with old Tobacco, and this for ready cash. The Sirkar accounts will prove the fact.

4. The Dewan also permits his favorite the said Achooda Prabhoo to land contraband Tobacco, on his own account and sell it together with the Tobacco purchased from the Sirkar, the profit of this illicit trade being shared by Achooda Prabhoo and the Dewan.

III. 1. With regard to the sale of Sirkar Timber for 1032, the high Tenders of certain Merchants were rejected, and the unfavorable Tender of the Dewan's favorite Achooda Prabhoo was accepted, thus causing a loss of 10,000 Rupees to the Sirkar. The said Achooda Prabhoo had never been a dealer in Timber and had no experience in that branch of Trade, but the contract was entered into in his name, as the Dewan had a personal share in the profits of the Contract, and the Timber which fell to the Dewan's share was employed by him in the erection of a private Pagoda for his own use.

2. The late Dewan having advertised for Tenders for the privilege of hewing Teak Timber of above 8 inches, from the Chittoor Forest, one Vengadashura Putter of Nellashary Grammom, offered 8¾ Rupees per Candy, and his Tender was accepted as the most advantageous, and it also received the sanction of the Resident. The Contract was not however completed owing to a dispute as to the period for which the privilege in question was to be exercised, the late Dewan allowing only 3 years and the said Vengadashura Putter requiring five. The negociations remained unsettled at the time of the late Dewan's death, but the present Dewan through interested motives assigned over the privilege to the said individual for an indefinite period on those terms, although the value of the Timber has been considerably enhanced, and is still increasing every year. With a view to obtain the above favorable terms and to prevent the Tassildar and other principal Officers, from being present at the measurement of the Timber, and thereby to enable him to defraud the Sirkar, the said Vengadashura Putter presented the Dewan's Gooroo or Master (the Shastry of the Appeal Court) with 20 Sovereigns and a Suit of clothes for the purpose of tampering with the Dewan. He also sent to the Dewan through the Shastry, 1,000 Venetians, a Carpet of the value of 50 Rupees, besides Teak Timbers for the erection of a Barn, &c., on an Estate belonging to the Dewan near the Chittoor Forest. These douceurs had the effect of obtaining an order from the Dewan to the effect that the presence of the Tassildar was not necessary at the measuring of the Timber hewn by Vengadashura Putter, and a private Servant of the Dewan was appointed to superintend the measurement.

3. The Nelliampathy and Parambicoolam Forests produce Teak of very large size. These Forests were subject to frequent depredation by one Shesham Putter and the sons of one Anayen Chetty, who farmed the adjoining Forests in the Company's Territory. The Dewan has now made an arrangement very prejudicial to the interests of the Sircar, by receiving a bribe of 8,000 Rupees from the sons of Anayen Chetty. He has allowed their Agent Shamy Putter the privilege of lopping off the upper part of the Teak trees in the said Forests on payment of 2 $\frac{8}{16}$ Rupees per Candy. The upper parts of the trees in the said two forests are by far thicker and more valuable than the Teak of the Chittoor Forest and are actually sold at Ponany at 16 Rupees the Candy, whereas no tenders were invited or the sanction of the Resident or your Highness obtained in this case, as was done in respect to the less valuable Teak of the Chittoor Forest.

4. That the Police Ameenadar employed in the detection of smuggled articles was dismissed without any cause, and one Jemaldeen appointed to that duty, under the supervision of Elia Rabbi, Achooda Prabhoo, the Dewan's Brother Rama Row, and one Wallia Anayen, who receive

20 Rupees upon each Candy of smuggled Pepper or Tobacco which they allow to pass. The said Jemaldeen has made a profit of 4,000 Rupees during the 4 months he was employed on the above duty and although he was discharged by the Dewan, he was reappointed upon paying 1,000 Rupees to the Dewan. Considerable quantities of Tobacco and Pepper are daily allowed to pass by Jemalthee and Elia Rabbi and others, and large sums of money received by them for the same to the injury of the Sirkar.

Having detailed a few instances of the Dewan's conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Sirkar, your Petitioners will now proceed to state some instances of oppression towards the Inhabitants.

1. The Dewan has afforded every facility and aid in suppressing the murder case against the Pardyees and has received a bribe of 20,000 Rupees in connection with that affair. Ex-Dewan Peishkar of Travancore Ramen Menone may be examined as an evidence on this point, and that Officer also possesses vouchers bearing on the case.

2. That the Sons of the late Jogia Rinny of Cochin having been convicted of knowingly receiving stolen property, were in consideration of their youth sentenced to pay a fine by the Appeal Court. At the suggestions of the Dewan who was then attached to the Resident, an order was sent to the Appeal Court expressing a strong and decisive opinion that the fine was inadequate, and that imprisonment should be awarded. After Vencate Row's appointment, as Dewan, the sons of Jogia Rinny gave the appeal Court Shastry 300 Rupees for himself and 200 Sovereigns, 2 pairs of Diamond Earings and one pair of Ruby Earings of the value of 2,500 Rupees for the Dewan. This induced the Dewan to make a further representation to the Resident and thus obtained the confirmation of the original sentence of fine. This will be proved by the examination of Jogia Rinny's sons and their account Books, and by the Dewan being required to give a satisfactory account as to how he came by the Earings.

3. While the Dewan was attached to the Resident's Office he received a bribe of 3,000 Rupees from one Gooroosawmy on the promise of getting him from the Travancore Government, the Contract for Coimbatore Tobacco for 1031, but as he failed to fulfil his promise, the said Gooroosawmy has become Insolvent and reduced to great extremities. This will be proved by examining the said Gooroosawmy, Jogia Shetty Gheer, and the documents in their possession.

4. That the Dewan, while with the Resident's Office at Courtallum, received 1,000 Rupees from Keshava Shenoy Gheery and obtained an order to the Appeal Court against their decree in his case, and gave the said Gheery a private copy of the said order. After the Resident's arrival at Cochin, the Dewan Vencate Row and Nanoo Pillay of the Resident's office received 2,000 Rupees from the opposite party Paramashura Menon and, by misrepresentation, obtained another order in direct opposition to the former one. In consequence of the above Kishava Shenoy Gheery, an honest and respectable man, was forced to quit the country.

5. The Tassildar of Cranganore having embezzled Funds belonging to the Cranganore Devassom, the Dewan's Mother received 2 Chodenas of Ghee, his Brother 200 Rupees and the Dewan himself 1,000 Rupees from the said Tassildar and suppressed the matter without any enquiry.

6. That an equitable decision having been passed by the Appeal Court in the case of Angaratoo Manady, *versus* the Chondathoo family, the former who is employed in the Huzzoor Cutcherry proceeded to Courtallum without leave, presented a forged Petition in the name of his Carnaven and gave the Dewan (who was then attached to the Resident) a bribe of 1000 Rs. and obtained an order in opposition to the said Decree. The Agent of the Chondathoo family hearing of this adverse order, sent a bribe of 1,500 Rs. to the Dewan, through Letchmana Pillay, the Melelootoo Pillay of the Assessment Department. The Dewan has thus exacted money from both parties to their prejudice and ruin.

7. In the case of the Tiroomala Bimboom, the Dewan intimidated the Devassom people and received from them 10,000 Rs. and two Silver Salvers, he also demanded 1,500 Rs. more, and has taken security from the parties that they would assign over to him the Micharom receipts for the property called Pullypoorathoo Cadoo on account of the additional sum demanded by him. This will be proved by the accounts of the Devassom, and by examining the Devassom people,

Fort Saint George, Political Consultation, 12th March 1858.

and also by calling upon the Dewan to account how he came by the two Silver Salvers which are of a construction peculiar to Devassom property.

8. That while the prosecutrix in the case of murder charged against the Parayees, was on her way to Trevandrum, the Dewan sent the Duffadar to seize her boat, and both she and the men who accompanied her were lodged in Jail on a pretext that they were smuggling Tobacco, and they were only released after the Dewan's Brother had received 200 Rs. and the Dewan 1,000 Rs. through one Vylithanah. The facts are well known to many Public Officers at Ernacollum, and will be proved by an investigation with them as well as with Vylitharrah and others.

9. That in the dispute relating to the Syrian Churches the Dewan intimidated one Panakel Eyapen and received from him at Koonamkolungard a Silver Salver containing money and a Cap worked with gold tissue. He subsequently received from the same party at Ernacollum a Golden waist Jewel. The Dewan also received from the opposite party, the Metropolitan, 4 or 5 Gold Bracelets, besides money and other articles, nominally as a present to his children. If the parties are duly sworn on the Bible, the facts will be brought to light.

10. The Dewan has received 1,000 Rs. from one Jenarthanen of Ayikal, by charging him with assaulting a writer of the Huzzoor and others deputed to detect smuggling and thus putting him under the influence of fear, this will be proved by enquiring how Jenarthen's case has been disposed of, and also by examining certain parties from whom Jenarthen had obtained the extorted money by mortgage.

11. That through the means of Elia Rabbi and Achooda Prabhoo the sum of 1,000 Rs. for the Dewan and a Lustre for the value of 200 Rs. for his Brother Rama Row, were exacted from one Elia, a respectable black Jew, by falsely accusing him of complicity in a case of high-way robbery. Besides the above Elia Rabbi, Achooda Prabhoo and the Cochin and Sambreathy obtained 1,000 Rs. for their own use. This will be proved by putting Elia on his Oath, and also examining Vanaroo Proboo who lent Elia the money and also by calling the Dewan to account for the presence of the Lustre which is suspended in the central room of his Bungalow.

12. In the matter of the disputes connected, with the Edacochee Church, the Dewan's Brother received 500 Rs. from the minor part of the Parishioners, and the Dewan himself after his return from the North received 3,000 Rs. from the major Party through Elia Rabbi, and which has caused great hardship to the entire Congregation of that Church. This can be proved by examination of the Church records and by putting the Parishioners upon their oaths.

13. That with reference to the Surveys for Assessment, the Dewan intimidated Palliet Achen and extorted from him money and Ornaments to the amount of 15,000 Rs. The Palliet Achen will not admit this from a feeling of shame, and from fear of losing his property, but the matter will be proved by examining the Survey reports originally prepared in respect to the Palliet Estate jointly with other property, and the order returning those reports for revision, and also from the fact of the subsequent confirmation of the original reports themselves.

14. That one Canaden, a Moplah, having committed homicide by misadventure while in pursuit of a monkey, the Dewan had him apprehended by the Parwaticar, and extorted from him through the said Parwaticar the sum of 1,000 Rs. This fact will be proved by examining Canaden, the Moplah, as well as his Brother, a Roman Priest.

15. That for the purpose of hushing up a case of murder, one Chembagacherry Achen and Vallen Macky bribed the Dewan the sum of 1,500 Rs. through the Cochin Sumbroothy Pillay, and one Manadiar of the Huzzoor Rayasom Department as will be apparent upon enquiry made on the spot where the murder occurred, and from the fact of no investigation whatever having hitherto been made.

Fort Saint George, Political Consultation, 12th March 1858.

D.

From PANTHIL COOCHOO KRISTNA MENON, and Nineteen others, Inhabitants of the Cochin State; to Lieutenant General W. CULLEN, British Resident of Travancore, dated Cochin, 8th February 1858, No. 507 of 1858.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Cochin Rajah's Territory.

SHEWETH,

That the present Dewan of Cochin having since his Appointment practised grievous extortions upon the Inhabitants, and caused heavy losses to the Sircar, the Petitioners made representations on the subject to His Highness the Rajah, but they have obtained no redress or even an answer to their Petitions.

That has the British Government is the only Authority to which they can appeal, against the injustice and oppression for which they can obtain no remedy from the local Sovereign, your Petitioners have no alternative but to seek your Honor's protection, and in doing so, they beg most respectfully to submit copies of the Petitions addressed by them to Highness on the dates specified in the margin.*

*24th Dhanoo 1033.
28th do. „
21st Magarom „

Your Petitioners beg leave to submit that a former Dewan Eddamana Shungra Menon having practised similar misconduct and oppression, the Inhabitants sought redress from the Sovereign of the day, but in vain, and as a last resource they appealed to the British Government, who deputed J. A. Casmajor, Esq., as Resident to take up the matter. It is well known that through the active interposition of that Officer His Highness was induced to constitute a special Committee to enquire into the charges brought against the said Eddamana Shungra Menon, and the same having been fully established he was required to disgorge his illgotten gains and was moreover subjected to ignominous punishment.

That as the conduct of the present Dewan is parallel in atrocity to that of the Dewan above referred to, your Petitioners seek your Honor's protection under the circumstances, and solicit you will be pleased to exert your powerful interposition in causing the present Dewan to be brought to trial, and your Petitioners are prepared to substantial their charges, or abide the consequences of failing to do so.

The Petitioners further pray that your Honor will furnish them with an endorsement on this Petition.

And Petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.

No. 50. ORDER THEREON, No. 181; dated 11th March 1858.

The Government resolve to forward this Petition to Lieutenant General Cullen, who will be pleased to enquire and report whether there are any serious grounds for the charges brought by the Petitioners against the Dewan of Cochin.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. J. A. Wilson.

16

Pol. Dept

No 181

E. M. G. D/11th March 1858.

Read the following Petn from Panthyil Cochoo Kistna Menon, & others, inhabitants of the Cochin State. } here enter No 507/58.

The Govt resolve to forward his petition to Lt Genl Cullen, who will be pleased to enquire & report whether there are any serious grounds for the charges brought by the Petitioners against the Dewan of Cochin.

D. F. L. 8/3-58

To the Resident of Trav & Cochin with a Malayalam Petn } Disp'd 20th

Political 1858 Dep 94

No 181

Extract Mins Cons

d/11 March 1858.

Petition.

For orders.

No 507 of 1858

From Pauthyil Cochoo Krishna Menon and others Inhabitants of the Cochin State.

Accuse Vencata Row the Dewan of peculation in the Cirkar revenues derived from Salt, Tobacco and Timber, also of bribery and corruption in several scandulous cases, both since his accession to the Dewanship, and while he was employed in the Resident's Office.

State that on complaining to the Rajah and Resident, their Petition was made over to the accused, who took means to suppress the evidence that was forthcoming and shamefully maltreated the petitioners.

Pray for the appointment of independent Commissioners, as was done in the case of E. Swinger Menon a former Dewan

No correspondence can be found in the Record office as to the trial & conviction of the former Dewan referred to by Petitioners - All here is about him is highly laudatory.

D. F. C. 3/3/58

Same any much indisposed to interfere with the interior economy & administration of these small states.

But these appeals might be sent to Genl Cullen - & he might be called on to state - if there is reason to suppose there are any grounds for the serious charges brought in the petition to the Rajah.

[illegible]

Dewan, who, during the Residency of Mr. Casmajor of the M.C.S was at the suggestion of that gentleman.

In Dy 4 Cons: 12 March 58
Political 1858 Deptt

Political Letter to Engd d/24th August No 18
f 1858

No 181

Extract Minutes Consultation

Paras 7 & 11

Dd 11th March 1858

Forward Petition from the inhabitants of Cochin to Lieut General Cullen to enquire and report whether there are any serious grounds for the charges brought by the Petitioners against the Dewan of Cochin.

49 & 50