M.R.O. 1—39,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Political DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 373 Press Mis.

Dated 18. 6. 1880

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 48. Read the following letter from H. D. PHILLIPS, Esq., Commissioner of Tanjore, to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 5th June 1860, No. 1,177.

I have the honor to report on the subjects mooted in a communication from Mr. J. B. Norton, Agent for certain of the late Raja's widows, as required by the Order of Government 12th April last, No. 212.

2. "Papers of account have been burnt, to the alarm of his clients." This is true. I caused to be destroyed by fire, the contents of about 28 large boxes. The contents were lists in Mahráttá for some sixty years back, of the daily distribution of the Raj sepoys. The sepoys have been disbanded and pensioned. The barracks are temporarily occupied as a Civil Hospital. The boxes were rotting. The papers of accounts were semi-putrid and offensive, besides being utterly useless even if the Raj be restored to the Agent's clients. Before their destruction I personally tested the papers by a selection at random from one box or the other, and am satisfied that Mr. Norton's alarms are, in this instance at least, wholly unnecessary and unfounded.

Agents letter, paragraph 1.

3. I also caused to be burnt a large mass of rotten, torn, partially defaced, and illegible papers of account in the Arsenal. This mass was also tested by myself. It had lain untouched for many years past and related to European Military stores and the expenditure of them which took place during the reign of the late Raja's father.

4. Assuming the utmost success for the Agent's present endeavours on behalf of the widows, these ladies will never be affected by the disappearance from their archives, of documents that formed an annual registry of live rockets and empty shells; round, case, and canister shot; bullets, Lancer's caps and spears cuirassier's helmets and Dragoon's leather breeches.

5. Muskets such as disciplined troops carry, but useless from the rust and deterioration of a long series of years, have been broken up under my orders, and the pieces have been sold by public auction. So also with pistols and swords of the same class and value. A measure of the kind was under consideration when the injunction of Her Majesty's Supreme Court was in force. It formed the subject of correspondence with the Government in the middle of 1858, but eventually was ordered to be carried into effect only in the event of the Magistrate deeming it necessary on political grounds.

Paragraph 2.

6. I also caused to be broken up many other miscellaneous articles of military equipment. None of these could by any possibility have been rendered serviceable for their original purpose, and were worth only their value as old metal. I believe this step, which I had in contemplation when the Honorable the President of the Council was at Tanjore, received his approval.

7. The Agent is premature in the expressions of fear relative to a meditated sale of houses in the Fort. I have but very recently* been required by Government to state, in communication with the Government Agent, what I would propose to do with them; and certainly I have not as yet formed any conclusion as to the course which is best for adoption.

* 14*th May* 1860, *No.* 312.

8. I know nothing beyond what has appeared in the public prints, of the intended appropriation of the old palace at Combaconum.

9. The debts of the Raja have been enquired into and reported on. The opinions which I have submitted rest on the accounts kept in the Palace. I do not apprehend that any one sent by Mr. Norton's clients to cut down false claims would have thrown more light on the truth of the debts than that which was extracted by my own careful examination of them, aided by the experienced Gumástás who wrote the accounts and could trace the different items as doubts arose. The widow's pruning knife could have been applied to the debts only with the aid of the accounts and Gumástás by whom my own impartial enquiry has been assisted.

Paragraph 3.

10. A short tour in the country recently made by Sakkaram Sahib and the Princess his wife, seems to have caused the anxiety about encroachment on royal prerogative from which Mr. Norton's clients are suffering. Before they set out I myself referred to an old order as to the insignia with which the Princess might adorn her palankeen and the men, women and animals who were to form her cortege, and am satisfied that as the daughter of the late Raja, this young lady used only what she was entitled to use on the precedent established by a tour undertaken by a daughter of her grandfather. Her husband, being in her company, on a richly caparisoned grey horse, may have benefitted by the prestige attaching to the ornaments displayed in decking out the Princess' camels and elephants; but I apprehend it will be difficult to define the means of checking such joint enjoyment. Sakkaram Sahib himself had in pay certain Chóbdárs whose chóbs were of gold. The late Raja accorded the privilege of using these to only a favored few, and, considering the terms of affectionate, brotherly and friendly intimacy on which he and Sakkaram Sahib lived, it is extremely probable that the chóbs in question were the gift of the Raja himself. Were it otherwise, I am under the belief that any private individual would be at liberty to use such chóbs without subjecting himself to the liability of legal interference, and I see no good reason why Kámákshi Bháí's objections should be recognized.

Paragraph 4.

11. Respecting the Carnatic palankeen set with lion's heads to which Kámákshi Bháí specially adverts, I can only remark that if, as I conclude, this lady refers to the head of a fabulous animal termed "Simhamokam" I am free to admit that the late Prince was excessively jealous of its use by any one other than himself and would not permit it, though he has been known to give presents of ornaments bearing the design of this head. The spell which enveloped this ornament has, however, been dissolved and seems to have been little or no wise thought of since the Government allowed it as a decoration to the ends of the poles of the honorary palankeen which they presented, at the end of 1857, to the late Sarishtadar of the residency, who, by birth a Bramin, was not of royal descent. Even in respect of this symbol, I doubt whether the Magisterial authorities could enforce a prohibition against its use, unless its exhibition by Sakkaram Sahib or any one else, in a public thoroughfare, was likely to be attended by a breach of the peace; and certainly any order against its display which the Government Agent might give in the matter, would not be binding if the person addressed resolved to risk his pension by setting it at defiance.

12. Sakkaram Sahib is not likely to go to even an approximation of these lengths, and it will suffice, I am quite sure, that he be requested to abstain from using what the late Raja deemed only himself entitled to wear.

13. The Government, I presume, will not feel called on to impose a limit on either the extent or character of any alms which the Mahráttá noblemen in the Tanjore palace may be disposed to distribute.

14. The course taken by Sakkaram Sahib in this respect, during the festive tour adverted to, is not likely to be imitated by many. Certainly, the Agent's clients are not in a position to do likewise and so far as one can judge of human nature, they ought to be pleased that some of the poor of the District derive some slight benefit from a stipend that does not go the way theirs does. Whether or not, I am not aware what legal restriction can be applied to a Mahráttá gentleman's determination to give to the poor, Bramins or others, cash, pice, silver Annas, or gold 5 rupee pieces; and it seems to me that interference in this matter with Sakkaram Sahib, would be an insult, for it is quite obvious that the complaint is merely intended to annoy and teaze.

Paragraph 6.

15. When Sakkaram Sahib's first wife was alive, it rested entirely with the Raja to permit *his* wives and concubines to visit her. Now that Sakkaram Sahib has been united to the young lady whom all the females of the late Prince's establishment have known as a child, I apprehend they should be allowed the exercise of their own discretion in regard to calling on the young bride in her husband's palace. I am unable to appreciate its impropriety whether the practice be novel or old, and certainly the Agent erroneously believes

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Political Department,
18*th June* 1860.

that I have been so indiscreet as to constitute myself a *custos mórum* in regard to the female inmates of an establishment containing 57 Hindu widows, whose ages range from 19 to 33 years, Kamakshi Bhai spoke to me about what she declared was an indelicate breach of decorum and Darbar etiquette. I replied that I could not see it and believed the visits must be regarded as harmless and innocent so long as the Princess was (and she admitted she had been) present.

16. At the same time I agreed to mention to Sakkaram Sahib that some of the elderlies of the family were averse to his seeing so much of his wife's mothers; but I did not fail to point out to Kamakshi Bhai, the inconsistency of her present objections, seeing the assertions regarding Sakkaram Sahib's fitness for married life, which her Agent had been instructed to advance as a strong reason for rejecting his suit for the hand of the Raja's daughter.

Paragraph 7.

17. As respects the jewels claimed by the Avúsahibá, the Government are aware that I have recommended* the restoration to her of some of those known as the property of the late Sydambá Bháí Sahib; but I distinctly deny that my appreciation of the Avúsahibá's claim would have been in any way assisted or improved by the delegation on her behalf, of a person to point out the articles she claims as her own. I was fortunate enough to lay hands on an old account which proved the identity of certain jewels; but in the absence of this it would have been extreme folly to acknowledge jewels as hers, on the mere assertion of a delegate or on her own statement to that effect.

* 7*th April* 1860, *No.* 975, *paragraph* 9.

18. I am of opinion that she may deem herself extremely lucky if the Government assign to her the several jewels which I believe to have been hers many years ago.

No. 49. MINUTE by the Honorable the PRESIDENT.

The tone of this letter I consider most objectionable, it is flippant and unbecoming Mr. Phillips' position as Commissioner.

Mr. Phillips' acts referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6, were unauthorized and unjustifiable.

(Signed) W. A. MOREHEAD.

No. 50. ORDER THEREON, 18th June 1860, No. 373.

Ordered that the foregoing papers be recorded.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Pol & 1860 Dept.

Minute by the Hon'ble the President -

R/- 15th & June 1860.
P. 16th & June 1860.

No 444.

Comments on the letter from the Commr of Tanjore reporting on matters of complaint from some of the Tanjore ryots ...

Jud Dept
W. Morehead

Pol 20 April/60 No 394
20 " " 15017
30 April " 14065
13 3 17

The Govt of Mad
letter Tanjore
Mr Hypothecation
Dist in Tanjore
2 Jan & enclo 2
forwarding Mr Pelly's
Report on Mr
Petitioners 2
Petitioners -
Mr Pelly's reply
referred to the Board
5 & 6 - copies 2
Cll Lim Mortgage & enclo 2
R 15.
48@50.

Pol 5 June 1860

Political Department

From
The Commissioner
Tanjore

To The Chief Secretary
to Government
Fort Saint George

Dated 5th June 1860
Read 9th

No 1177

P. 426.

Reports on matters of complaint from some of the Tanjore ryots received by their Agent Mr Norton in a letter to Government dated the 3d April 1860.

J.C. No 373 - 18 June 60.

J. h recorded
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