

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public **DEPARTMENT.**

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Spare copies

G.O., No. 987, 14th August 1867.

AUGUST.

Nos. 85-86.

Oriental Manuscripts.

Further information called for before passing orders on the proposal made by the Rev. Mr. Foulkes, that a commencement should be made in transliterating in Roman characters certain collections of Sanscrit Manuscripts now in the Library of the old College.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper:—

No. 85. From the Rev. T. FOULKES, Chaplain of Vepery, to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 24th April 1867.

I have the honour to lay before your Lordship in Council the following extract from the last report of the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, page 13:—

“It will be in the recollection of the Society that, in the year 1828, Professor H. H. Wilson edited at Calcutta a descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Manuscripts collected by the late Colonel Colin Mackenzie. Amongst them many were in Sanscrit, some of great interest and rarity, which have since been deposited in the India Office Library. Another collection, chiefly formed by the late Dr. John Leyden, and purchased by the Court of Directors at his death, was transferred in 1844, on the application of the Madras Literary Society, to the custody of that body; and, soon after, a still larger body of Manuscripts was incorporated by Mr. C. P. Brown, with those already deposited in the Library of that Society, to which many additions were made by that gentleman up to the time of his return to England in the year 1855. The Sanscrit Manuscripts in these two collections alone amount to about two thousand volumes. Last, not least, the existence of a most remarkable Sanscrit Library belonging to the late Rajah of Tanjore is mentioned by Professor Goldstücker in the preface to Part I of the Sanscrit Text Society's publications. An estimate of the richness of these various collections may be found from a glance at the printed Catalogues, in which works are not unfrequently enumerated that would seem either to have wholly disappeared, or at least to have become very scarce, north of the Deccan. Moreover, it has been observed that Sanscrit Manuscripts written in the Deccan are, as a rule, very correct, and that, at the same time, they often differ so materially from the more generally received texts as to be calculated to supply essential assistance in supplementing and correcting them. The Council consider it right to draw attention to the great importance attaching to this class of Sanscrit Manuscripts, inasmuch as there has been much reluctance on the part of Sanscrit scholars to avail themselves of the aid derivable from the study of these resources so far as they are accessible in England. It is true the variety of rather complicated Dravidian alphabets in which they are written, and the minuteness of the writing itself, as it is traced on the palm leaves, are by no means inviting to the eye. But these drawbacks, serious as they may appear, cannot be held to stand in any just proportion to the value of the results to be gained, and may, it is hoped, by patience and perseverance, be gradually overcome. It would appear that, even in India, where no excuses of this nature could be pleaded, the three before-mentioned collections have not been turned to any substantive use; and the Council would, therefore, strongly advocate any scheme that might be set on foot to rescue those Manuscripts from the early destruction with which they are threatened by the ravages of the climate and of the white ants; by transferring them to London, where, with the new impetus that has been given to Sanscrit studies, they might be duly appreciated and turned to good account.”

2 I respectfully and earnestly hope, my Lord, that these Manuscripts, thus admitted to be so peculiarly valuable, will never be permitted to leave Madras. At the same time it will probably be admitted that European Philologists and Orientalists have much reason to desire that this rich store of Hindoo literature should be made accessible to them.

3. I have now the honour to submit for the consideration of your Lordship in Council that if these Manuscripts were carefully transcribed at Madras, where alone the “complicated Dravidian alphabets” written on palm leaves can be deciphered with facility, and a few copies printed in the Roman character for presentation to the different National and Oriental Libraries, this literature would be made even more available to European scholars than by transferring the Manuscripts themselves to England; and the frequent reproaches which the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society have at last gathered up into their Report would be no longer applicable; and, at the same time, a great stimulus would be added to the prosecution of oriental studies, and valuable assistance be given to all who wish to understand India and her requirements; while the honour of possessing the Manuscripts would still continue with Madras.

4. I should be willing, with competent Native assistance, to devote my leisure time gratuitously to superintend the work very minutely, and I would train Native writers to transcribe the Manuscripts from the different vernacular alphabets into the Roman character, if Government should see fit to bear the expense of the transcribers' salaries and of printing their work.

5. The services of the present Native Librarian in charge of the Manuscripts would also be needed to carry out this scheme.

I have read a good deal of Native Literature with this Moonshee in former years, and I know him to be an intelligent and conscientious man, and well fitted to undertake this duty, and the feelings of personal friendship which he entertains towards me would make his assistance all the more valuable to me.

6. My scheme would thus be as inexpensive as such an undertaking could well be made. The chief expense in carrying it out would consist of the printers' bill; and if Government could permit the printing to be done at the Government Press, much of this expense would be saved.

7. I have ascertained that a writer, such as I should employ, would be able to transcribe about two hundred pages a month; and that the ordinary cost of printing a hundred copies (see paragraph 11) of these two hundred pages in an economical but presentable form, similar to the numbers of the Bibliotheca Indica for instance, including paper and stitching, would be about two hundred and forty rupees. The writer's pay would be twenty rupees a month. There would also be a small charge for stationery.

8. The selection of the Manuscripts to be transcribed I would gladly leave to anybody whom Government might appoint for that purpose. Considering, however, that the Asiatic Society of Bengal are doing a very similar work in their Bibliotheca Indica, and that the Sanscrit Text Society have begun to publish similar works in England, I beg to suggest that it may be well to communicate with these Societies on the subject of selection, in order to act in concert with them, if possible, for the common good.

9. I should also wish to consult with some of the leading Orientalists in England upon the details of the scheme, so as to meet the wishes of European scholars as much as possible.

10. Meanwhile, I should propose to commence with a few of the shorter Manuscripts and to transliterate them after the method best known as Sir William Jones', with the amendment of the diacritical marks as adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society with the approbation of the most eminent Orientalists.

11. With regard to the distribution of the work when printed, I have the honour to propose that a copy should be presented to each of the National Libraries of Europe and America, and also to each of the Oriental Societies of Europe, America, and this country; and that Professors of oriental subjects, and other persons publicly interested in this literature, may be permitted to purchase copies at the cost price of their production.

From the best approximate calculation which I am able to make, I believe that a hundred copies would be sufficient for these purposes.

12. If Government should see fit to sanction this scheme, I have the honour to request that it may be permitted to be tried as an experiment for six months with one transcriber only, to commence from the time when the transcriber shall be reported fit to begin his work, which will probably be after about a month's training; and that the allowance for the transcriber's pay may commence from the day of his entering upon his training.

No. 86.

ORDER—No. 987, Public, dated 14th August 1867.

Before passing orders on the proposal made by the Rev. Mr. Foulkes, that a commencement should be made in transliterating in Roman characters certain collections of Sanscrit Manuscripts now in the Library of the old College, and under the control of the Director of Public Instruction, the Government desire to be informed what is the number of works which Mr. Foulkes considers to require and deserve of transliteration, and the probable time and cost involved in the work of transliteration and printing the selected Manuscripts.

(True Extract.)

R. S. ELLIS,
Acting Chief Secretary.

Handwritten: 12th April 1867.

My Lord
The Council of the Royal Asiatic Society have administered a sharp rebuke to this Government in their last Report, which I have just been reading, on the subject of the value of the MSS. in the College Library.

When our Bishop offered me one of the MSS. for publication, one amongst other reasons which led me to accept it was the hope that I might find these MSS. useful for my own purposes, and that I might try to do something.

towards making them of use
to Orientalists generally.

For the latter purpose the
plan which I intended to bring
before Government, as soon as my
own private duties began to settle
smoothly, is to offer to edit as
many of these MSS. as I may be
able to do, to be printed in an
inexpensive form, and only in
such a small number of copies
as may be needed for presentation
to the Oriental Libraries and public
professors of Oriental languages
in India, Europe, & America;
leaving the more extensively useful
of them to be subsequently reproduced
from these presentation copies in

the usual way of literary business.
I am engaged for several
years, in addition to other matters,
in preparing a voluminous Dictionary
of Hindu Proper Names of Persons,
embracing the Ethnology, History,
and Mythology of India, and I
am looking for great help from
some of these MSS. I am willing
to lay this aside for the present,
and to undertake to give any
leisure time which I may have, to
the publication of these MSS., if
Government will undertake the
actual expense. I should not receive
any remuneration for my own part
in the work; - it will be enough for
me to feel that I am doing
service to India, and that I shall

receive the gratitude of many of
those who are trying to maintain
and to do good to Indians. I am only
pecuniary, and which I should
need to be the pay of a sur-
plus of the Minister's bill.

Should your Lordship think
generally of my plan, may I
ask your permission to place it
officially before you in writing?
Perhaps the series of valuable
historical records which are being
collected in England under the
direction of the Master of the Rolls
might be regarded as some
measure as a precedent for
my scheme.

Probably your Lordship may
be aware that it seems to have
been at your Father's suggestion
that the most important of the
MS. referred to was made, viz.
the Mackenzie Collection. This
appears from a passage in
the Journal of the Hudson Literary
Society, which I cannot quote
because my books are not yet
arranged: and this fact has
suggested to me the hope that
your Lordship would be pleased
to take a personal interest
in the rescue of these valuable
Manuscripts from their present

state of affairs ~~and~~ decay.
I have the honor to be
very truly
Your most obedient servant
Wm. F. Walker
Chaplain of the Council

To His Excellency
The Right Honble. Lord Napier &c.
Governor of Fort Saint George &c. Council

My Lord,

I have the honor to lay before your Lordship
in Council the following extract from the last
report of the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society,
page 13:-

"It will be in the recollection of the Society that
in the year 1828, Professor H. H. Wilson visited at
Calcutta a descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental MSS.
collected by the late Colonel Colin Mackenzie. Amongst
them many were in Sanscrit, some of great
interest and rarity, which have since been
deposited in the India Office Library. Another
collection, chiefly formed by the late Dr. John Leyden
and purchased by the Court of Directors at his
death was brought in 1844 in the application
of the Asiatic Literary Society to the custody of
that body, and soon after a still larger body of
MSS. was incorporated by Mr. C. L. Brown with those
already deposited in the Library of that Society, to
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renowned Sanscrit Library belonging to the late Raja of Tanjore is mentioned by Professor Goldstücker in the preface to Part I. of the Sanscrit Text Society's publications. An estimate of the richness of these various collections may be formed from a glance at the printed catalogues, in which works are not unfrequently enumerated that would seem either to have wholly disappeared, or at least to have become very scarce, north of the Deccan. Moreover, it has been observed that Sanscrit MSS. written in the Deccan are as a rule very correct, and that at the same time they often differ so materially from the more generally received texts as to be calculated to supply essential assistance in supplementing and correcting them. The Council consider it right to draw attention to the great importance attaching to this class of Sanscrit MSS., inasmuch as there has been much reluctance on the part of Sanscrit scholars to avail themselves of the aid derivable from the study of these resources so far as they are accessible in England. It is true the variety of rather complicated Dravidian alphabets in which they are written, and the minuteness of the writing itself, as it is traced on the palm leaves, are by no means inviting to the eye. But these drawbacks, serious as they may appear, cannot be held to stand in any just proportion to the value of the results to be gained, and may it be hoped by patience and perseverance be gradually overcome. It would appear that even in India, there are excuses of this nature could be

pleaded, the three before-mentioned collections have not been turned to any substantive use: and the Council would therefore strongly advocate any scheme that might be set on foot to rescue those MSS. from the early destruction with which they are threatened, by the ravages of the climate and of the white ants, by transferring them to London, where with the new impetus that has been given to Sanscrit studies, they might be duly appreciated and turned to good account.

2. I respectfully and earnestly hope, my Lord, that these MSS., thus admitted to be so peculiarly valuable, will never be permitted to leave Madras. At the same time it will probably be admitted that European philologists and Orientalists have much reason to desire that this rich store of Hindu literature should be made accessible to them.

3. I have now the honor to submit for the consideration of your Lordship in Council, that if these MSS. were carefully transcribed at Madras, where alone the "complicated Dravidian alphabets" written on palm leaves can be deciphered with facility, and a few copies printed in the Roman character for presentation to the different National and Oriental libraries, this literature would be made even more available to European scholars than by transferring ^{the MSS. themselves} to England; and the frequent reproaches which the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society have at last gathered up into their Report would be no longer applicable; and at the same time a great stimulus

would be added to the prosecution of Oriental Studies, and valuable assistance be given to all who wish to understand India and her requirements; while the honor of possessing the MSS. would still continue with the MSS.

4. I should be willing, with complete native assistance, to devote my leisure time gratuitously to superintend the work very minutely; and I would train native writers to transcribe the MSS. from the different vernacular alphabets into the Roman character; if Government should see fit to bear the expense of the transcribers' salaries out of printing their work.

5. The services of the present native librarian in charge of the MSS. would also be needed to carry out this scheme.

I have read a good deal of native literature with this Monarch in former years; and I know him to be an intelligent and conscientious man, and well fitted to undertake this duty, and the feelings of personal friendship which he entertains towards me would make his assistance all the more valuable to me.

6. My scheme would thus be as inexpensive as such an undertaking could well be made. The chief expense in carrying it out would consist of the Printer's Bill; and if Government had permitted the printing to be done at the Government Press, much of this expense would be saved.

7. I have ascertained that a writer such as I should employ, could be able to transcribe

about two hundred pages a month; and that the ordinary cost of printing a hundred copies (see para: 11.) of these two hundred pages in an economical but presentable form, similar to the numbers of the Bibliotheca Indica for instance, including paper and stitching, would be about two hundred and forty Rupees. The writer's pay would be twenty Rupees a month. There would also be a small charge for stationery.

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approbation of the most eminent Orientalists.

11. With regard to the distribution of the work when printed, I have the honor to propose that a copy should be presented to each of the National Libraries of Europe and America, and also to each of the Oriental Societies of Europe, America, and this country; and that professors of Oriental subjects, and other persons publicly interested in this literature, may be permitted to purchase copies at the cost price of their production.

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I have the honor to be, My Lord,

Yours most obedient servant

Thos. Faulkner

Chaplain of Vepery.

1 Sandhills Road,

Vepery 24th April 1867.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following
letter from the Rev. J. Foulkes
Chaplain of Vepery.
Here, under 24 April 1867.

Order. 14 August 1867 N^o 139.

Before passing orders
on the proposal made by the
Rev. Mr. Foulkes, that a
commencement should be made
in transliterating in Roman
characters certain collections of
Sanskrit manuscripts now in
the Library of the old
College & under the control of
the Director of Public Instruction
the Government desire to be
informed what is the number
of works which Mr. Foulkes
considers ^{to require and} deserving of transliter-
ation and the probable time
and cost involved in the

work

Public 1867 N^o 139

From

Mr. Foulkes

Rev. J. Foulkes.

Chaplain of Vepery

N^o 139

24 April

14 August

No 538.

N^o 139 of 1867

Suggest that certain
collections of Sanskrit
MSs in the library may
be transcribed and
published

26 July
1867
85

work of transliteration and
printing the selected manu-
scripts.

11

To the Rev. S. Foulkes, — *in charge*
of Public Instruction,

u/9/10

W. H. H. H.

1867. Department.

No. 1287.

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

F. H. 1658

Dated. 14. August 1867.