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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	500	Press ~~Mis.~~
Dated	25-4-1870	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
25th April 1870.

No. 167. Read the following letter from the Collector of South Arcot, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Villapooram, 13th April 1870, No. 55.

I have the honour to submit, in original, the explanation of Mr. Gribble, called for in the orders of Government under date 4th instant, No 383, Public Department.

From J. D. B. GRIBBLE, Esq., Assistant Collector of South Arcot, to the Collector of South Arcot, dated Cuddalore, 11th April 1870, No. 121.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Government Order, No. 383, dated 4th April 1870. I find it somewhat difficult to make any explanation which Government may deem satisfactory in the face of the distinct contradiction recorded by Mr. Norfor. I will, however, do so as best I can.

2. In paragraph 3 of his letter, Mr. Norfor denies, *first*, that I was present during the mustering of the Ship *Eugenie*, and *second* that I examined the men on board the ship. The time for mustering the emigrants was fixed, so as to meet your convenience, for you had to drive over from Cuddalore; as far as I can remember, it was fixed either for half past 7 or 8 A.M. On the morning of the day in question I went over to your house at half-past five, and we both drove to Pondicherry in your carriage and pair of horses, starting a few minutes after my arrival. The distance to Pondicherry is about fourteen miles, and on arriving at the town I expressed some fear that the time fixed for the mustering of the emigrants had either struck, or was on the eve of striking. I, therefore, drove straight on to the office near the beach; when I arrived M. duChampmoren had not arrived; he came after a few minutes delay. Kantwall, the clerk of the Emigrant's office, must remember this. The tables were then arranged, and the men were brought up in batches of from fifteen to twenty each. They handed in to Mr. Ernev or M. duChampmoren their paper tickets, and after having been inspected by that Officer then went on to the second table where Kantwall the clerk was sitting. Their names were then entered in a Register, and I from time to time passed from my seat near the first table to Kantwall's table in order to put questions to the emigrants. This must have lasted about one hour and a half. During the time I talked with the Captain of the ship, and also with Mr. Keess, the doctor. After the coolies I had seen had been mustered, I went inside the office and signed the *procés verbal* with M. duChampmoren, who signed it, I think, after me. It is possible that what I saw may not have been a mustering of emigrants. This was the first time I had ever seen one, but I believed it to be such, and the details are distinctly impressed on my mind. I then returned to you, and remember telling you expressly that I had been in time. I took a hurried breakfast and started off for the ship. This visit took me about two hours. I do not pretend to say that I examined all the coolies; what I say is, that the Captain and myself walked through the ship, and at every few steps I stopped and asked the men several questions relative to their willingness to go, and to the money they had in hand. Of course this is only my bare statement, but it may be taken as worth something when it is remembered that you ordered me to put those questions to the emigrants, and that I went on board for that very purpose. As it regards the denial of the Agent for the Emigration, I can only remark that that gentleman's stomach was upset by the surf and smell of the cabin. He certainly did come below with me, but after about two minutes, he pressed me to go on deck as he could stand no longer. I refused and he went up alone. From the state that gentleman was in, I very much doubt whether he could have known any thing had he been close to my side the whole time. On our return to shore he declared that nothing should induce him to visit another ship, nor did he visit the *Anna*.

3. As regards the *Anna* I did not state in my first letter that I was present during the whole muster. I merely stated that I visited the ship and questioned the coolies. A delay occurred on the road between Cuddalore and Pondicherry, and on arriving at Pondicherry we were somewhat late; it was, I believe, about 8 A.M. I went immediately to the office, and I am of the opinion that all the coolies had not gone. I know I waited there more than half an hour, and signed the *procés verbal*, and I remember complaining to the French Secretary that he might have waited so as to give some grace considering the length of the journey I had had to come. He told me that signing

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25th April 1870.

the procès verbal was a mere form, and that it was not necessary for the British Officer signing it to have inspected the emigrants, &c. I cannot distinctly state whether any coolies were then examined, but I firmly believe there were some. I then went on board the *Anna* alone. Mr. Erney had suffered too much on the first visit to venture on another. I addressed the same questions to the coolies and received the same answers, namely, that they had from seven to ten rupees. Some of their notes I took down in my pocket book, and I informed you of the result immediately I returned. This is all I can state in explanation of the denial recorded by Mr. Norfor, and I declare upon my honour that what I have stated is, to the best of my belief, the truth. In my letter to you, dated 4th January 1870, No. 4, I did not state that I was present during the mustering of the emigrants of the *Anna*. I stated that I was present during the mustering of the *Eugenie*, and that I visited both the *Anna* and the *Eugenie* and questioned the emigrants. This I now solemnly repeat is the truth. This is the same statement as I made in my previous letter, and was made in consequence of Mr. Blair's assertions "that on neither occasion were the men examined as to what money they had in hand," and that "no assistant was present when the *Anna* embarked her emigrants."

4. I would here bring to your notice that the statements advanced by me are contradicted by the two gentlemen interested in the reforms you introduced, and from whom you met with considerable opposition in introducing those reforms. When handed over by you as the Protector of Emigrants to the French Authorities, the emigrants had each a certain sum in hand. If on arrival at the Mauritius they had not that sum, it follows that it must have been taken from them during their stay either in the French Dépôt at Pondicherry, or on board the ship. If the money had been taken from the coolies in the French Dépôt the coolies would doubtless deny this fact whilst still on board a French ship in French waters. I could do nothing more than question the men. I could not personally examine them, and tell them to show me the money, but I asked them in Tamil and received their answers in that language, and reported the result to you. It has been seen that emigrants who have appeared before the Protector of Emigrants at Pondicherry, (previous to the reforms you introduced,) and who said to that gentleman that they did actually owe to the maistries sums of money on arrival at the Mauritius have stated that they had been defrauded of that money, so perhaps there is not much reliance to be placed upon the truth of the answers I received, but I submit that I could do no more than put the questions. With several I entered into details, and asked them particularly what they were going to do with the money on their arrival in the Mauritius, &c.

5. I think it will be seen that the two gentlemen who have denied my statements are deeply interested witnesses, and I can only regret that on such hearsay evidence Mr. Norfor, who, as he admits, knows nothing of the matter, (being absent at the time,) should have thought fit to make so flat a contradiction of my statements. I was perfectly uninterested in the matter. I had never mustered an emigrant before, nor have I since. I was expressly ordered by you to perform a certain duty, and I think it is only fair to presume that I did so perform it, and did not fabricate statements as Mr. Norfor wishes Government to think.

6. Should Government still see reason to doubt the reliance of my statements, I can only say that I am most willing and anxious that a full and thorough inquiry should be made into their truth.

No. 168. ORDER THEREON, 25th April 1870, No. 500.

The Government consider the explanation given by Mr. Gribble in the letter above recorded to be satisfactory.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Collector of South Arcot.

Ed. J. Wright.

Obt. of 1870; *St. Louis*.

PUBLIC.

To

THE COLLECTOR OF SOUTH ARCOT.

Dated April, 25th.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 25th April 1870, No. 500.

APRIL.
Nos. 167-168.

Considering the explanation given by Mr. Gribble of certain discrepancies between his statements and those of the Commissaire for Emigration, regarding his presence on board the Ships *Anna* and *Eugenie* on the occasion of the embarkation of emigrants, to be satisfactory.

No 55
From,

C. W. Reade Esquire
Collector of South Arcot.

To

Honorable R. J. Ellis C. B.
Chief Secretary to Government.
Fort Saint George.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit
in original the explanation of Mr.
Gribble called for in the orders of Go-
vernment under date 4th Instant N: 200.
Public Department.

I have the honor to be
Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

Charles Reade
Collector.

South Arcot
Camp, Villapooram
13th April 1870

Govt. of [1870] Madras.

Public

To
The Collr of South Arcot.

Dated April 25.

Recd.

End.

G. O. 25 April 1870, No. 500.

Nos. 167. 168.

Considering ~~the~~ the ex-
planation given by Mr. Gribble of
certain ~~discrepancies~~ between his
statements & those of the Commissioner
for Emigration, regarding his presence
on board the ships Anna & Engine
on the occasion of the embarka-
tion of Europeans, to be dated
1st April.