M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 121	Press ~~Mis.~~
236-237	
Dated 28 — 1 — 1862.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 236. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 18th December 1861, No. 7,086 :—

Read the following letter from J. SILVER, Esq., Collector of Tinnevelly, to W. HUDLESTON, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Chepauk, dated Panagudy, 28th November 1861, No. 516.

SIR,

1. With reference to the Proceedings of Government, dated the 7th instant, No. 2,129, forwarded to me by the Board under date the 9th idem, for full inquiry and report on the alleged over-valuation of goods at the Tuticorin Custom House, I have the honor to report that a copy of the Petition referred to was received by me on the 15th October last. The individual named Manuel Davote Motha, whose signature is first affixed to the Petition, is the brother of a man who had previously brought charges against the officials in the Custom House, and which had been under investigation before Mr. Underwood, the Deputy Collector in charge of the Salt and Sea Custom Departments, stationed at Tuticorin. I referred this Petition also to Mr. Underwood, who, after making the necessary inquiries into this and the other charges already pending before him, submitted to me a report with his decision, dimissing the case. Extracts from this report and decision are enclosed for the information of the Board, and from which it will be seen that the subordinate servants of the Choukey have been transferred to other stations, owing to some suspicions against them, and that no charge whatever was proved against the Choukidar.

2. When the Petition under notice was received by me, it appeared to me that not only the English, but many of the Tamil signatures were in one handwriting, and it is to be observed from paragraph 5 of Mr. Underwood's report that all the parties bearing those names are absent from Tuticorin.

3. The European merchants at Tuticorin have, I believe, a good opinion of the Choukidar, and as far as I know, he bears a good character and is a man of respectability.

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Extract from a letter from Mr. W. E. UNDERWOOD, Deputy Collector of Tinnevelly, dated 14th November 1861.

* * * *

5. The first signature in the Petition from Colombo, was signed by complainant's brother, the other signatures cannot be verified, for the parties, if residents here at all, are now absent ; the above witness watched the proceedings on behalf of his brother now absent in Colombo.

6. The witness has applied to me for a copy of the judgment, I have endorsed his Petition as dismissed, and referred him to you.

7. In conclusion, I beg to state that for the last eight days I have pitched one of my tents at the Custom House for the inquiry of this case, and also to see the manner business is conducted in the Custom House, the whole of which has gone through my hands. With one or two exceptions, which I have rectified, I believe all to be carried on in the most satisfactory manner.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. SILVER, *Collector.*

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Extract from a Decision passed by Mr. W. E. UNDERWOOD, Deputy Collector of Tinnevelly, under date the 13th November 1861.

* * * *

Again complainant left this for Colombo ; he could not have been there many hours, when a complaint was immediately sent over from thence, purporting to be signed by several merchants trading to this place, several of them his own relations and connections, the first signature being that of his brother. Surely if traders to this port, if as stated by them any high valuation or value above the market value of their goods imported by them, were charged, it would have been very easy for them to show this point by their return of sales ; but they cannot show a single fact.

Take the second paragraph of their complaint, "that having been *given* to *understand*," that great irregularities are at present taking place to the great loss and detriment of the Memorialists in the Custom House at Tuticorin, in the high valuation put on goods exported from and imported into that country, by Savidikar Nillapuli, such high value being divided between four persons in the Custom House, in the first place they give no clue from whence they got this information ; secondly, they cannot state a single fact to show that they are charged in excess.

8. With the exception of the fees for Port Clearance, I do not consider the complainant or witness have proved a single charge they have made, and this fee from all I learn has been an immemorial practice ; they now know it is not countenanced by Government, and if still received, the custom is ordered to be at once discontinued, and any Customs officer charged and proved of charging or accepting any fee for clearance, or for any purpose, or any sum of money above what is authorized to charge, knowingly receiving the same shall be at once suspended, and a recommendation sent to the Collector of the District, that he be dismissed from the Public Service. The present Choukidar bears a very high character from all the Europeans in this place, as well as from the different Officers he has served under ; and for the short time I have been in charge of the Customs, I can testify to his having conducted the duties entirely to my satisfaction ; and with the exception that I hardly think the fees for clearance could have been paid for so long time since he has been in charge of the Customs without his acquiescence, I consider the charges against him and the other subordinates, are groundless and vexatious. On the ground of the receipt of these fees, the Gumáshta is ordered to be transferred to Coolasegarapatam, the Gumáshta there being ordered to attend here ; and the two Peons doing duty at the Customs, one to be sent to the Salt pans at Palaycoil, and the other to Kottil Vaipar, two Peons from these pans being sent here in their stead. The Shroff to be moved to the Salt pans at Coilpatam, and on the same receipt of pay he now has.

9. The case is dismissed.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. SILVER, *Collector.*

Ordered to be submitted for the information of Government, with reference to their Proceedings quoted by the Collector. It would have been more satisfactory had Mr. Silver submitted a complete copy of Mr. Underwood's decision, but enough is shown to satisfy the Board that the Petition does not require further notice.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON, *Secretary.*

No. 237. ORDER THEREON, 28th January 1862, No. 121.

1. The Collector ought to have forwarded the entire report of the Deputy Collector instead of extracts from it.

2. The Board will instruct him to do so now, and also to notice Petitioner's allegation that proper receipts are not granted for payments made at the Sea Custom House.

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,

Deputy Secretary to Government.

No 3887

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

Dated 18th Dec. 23d Rec. 24 } December 1861.

No. 7086.

Pro. of the Bd. of Rev. 1st. March 1862 C. No 680 in

Submitting for information a letter from the Coll. of Tinnevelly reporting on the alleged over-valuation of goods at the Tuticorin Custom house.-

No 236 & 237.

No 121. 28 Jany 1862. Letter and Order

No. 121

No 121

The Collector ought to have forwarded the entire report of the Deputy Collector instead of extracts promiscuously.

The Board will instruct him to do so more carefully, to notice Petitioners allegation that proper receipts are not granted for payments made at the Sea Custom House.-

Jud. 4th George 28th Jany 1862. 14 Copies to the Bd. of Rev. Cert. 29th

J. A. L.