M.R.O. 14—13,000—27-9-24

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1318 Press Mis.

228-79
Dated 12-5- 1868.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Rev
1318

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 12th May 1868.

No. 278. Read the following letter from the Acting Commissioner of Police, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 6th May 1868, No. 25:—

1. With reference to the Proceedings of Government, Revenue Department, No. 1,123 of 27th April, I have the honor to report that one of the plots of ground in question is that on which the tomb of one Roshan Ally Shah Khadry was said to be, the other is close to it, and I think it would be very undesirable to sell either of them by auction.

2. In November 1867, one Meer Cossim Ally, an inhabitant of Madras, was sick, and in a dream was told to go to this spot, eat some sand and grass and be well. He did so.

3. Out of gratitude he at once raised a mound-like grave, about the miraculous properties of which he daily expatiated to eager listeners.

4. A crippled old woman soon turned up, cured like Meer Cossim Ally, and that individual then began to make more out of his grave than he had even dreamt of, by selling doles of sand to the credulous crowds who daily resorted to it.

5. It was announced that Thursday was a peculiarly efficacious day, and accordingly, the gatherings thereon doubled or trebled his receipts, which probably amounted to 20 Rupees on ordinary days, and twice as much on specials.

6. Mahomed Esoph, a Lubbay, grandson of the original Puttahdar, with two others now came forward and claimed the collections, on which Meer Cossim Ally immediately charged them with robbery. The Magistrate dismissed the case, fined the plaintiff Rupees 18, to be paid to defendants. The Lubbays then charged Meer Cossim Ally with making a false complaint, which was also dismissed.

7. After this they settled their difference amicably and joined partnership in the swindle.

I could not touch them legally, though I warned them I would whenever possible.

8. They accordingly began to make preparations for a permanent settlement; a well and a road were both commenced, a flag-post erected, a railing and a pandal were put up round the grave, and sand being a dry article of food, water was added.

9. I need scarcely say, that on Thursdays particularly these gatherings soon became a public scandal.

The South Beach, the only evening resort or walk of the upper classes in Madras, was covered for miles with natives of the lower classes and castes going to and returning from the swindle.

In the immediate vicinity the noise, hubbub, and confusion were indescribable and the Police powerless.

Private property must shortly have become valueless, one European gentleman having already had to vacate his house.

The leaders of the movement were ready to purchase it, but fortunately it has not been sold.

10. The title-deeds of the property produced before me, now appear to have lapsed owing to non-payment of quit-rent.

Accordingly, on the receipt of the Government Order under reply, I took instant measures to stop the imposture, and I trust my having done so will meet with approval.

I personally on the spot warned the leaders that they had 24 hours to clear off. During the interval they presented the enclosed petition, which is a tissue of falschoods. At the given hour I insisted on the removal of all their things, and took possession of the ground on behalf of Government.

I have also levelled the grave, and have dug in vain about it for traces of a tomb.

The farce is, therefore, for the present at an end.

11. I believe the spot years ago was used as a Mahomedan burial ground, but has long been abandoned as such.

12. A very high price for the land would no doubt be realized, but the eventual loss to the credulous public would be far greater than the gain to the treasury. I would suggest that these plots be both retained by Government.

13. The daily crowds in the immediate neighbourhood would unquestionably prevent the residents resorting to the latrines.

No. 279. ORDER THEREON, 12th May 1868, No. 1,318.

Miscellaneous.

1. Ordered to be communicated to the Board of Revenue, with reference to G. O. dated 27th April 1868, No. 1,123, Revenue Department.

2. The land in question will be retained as Government property.

3. The proceedings of the Acting Commissioner of Police appear to have been judicious, and are approved.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Inspector General of Police.
„ the Commissioner of Police, Madras.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Pt. 1318.

Communicated to the Board of Rev. with Extn. from P.C. of 27th Apr. 68 No. 1123. P.D.

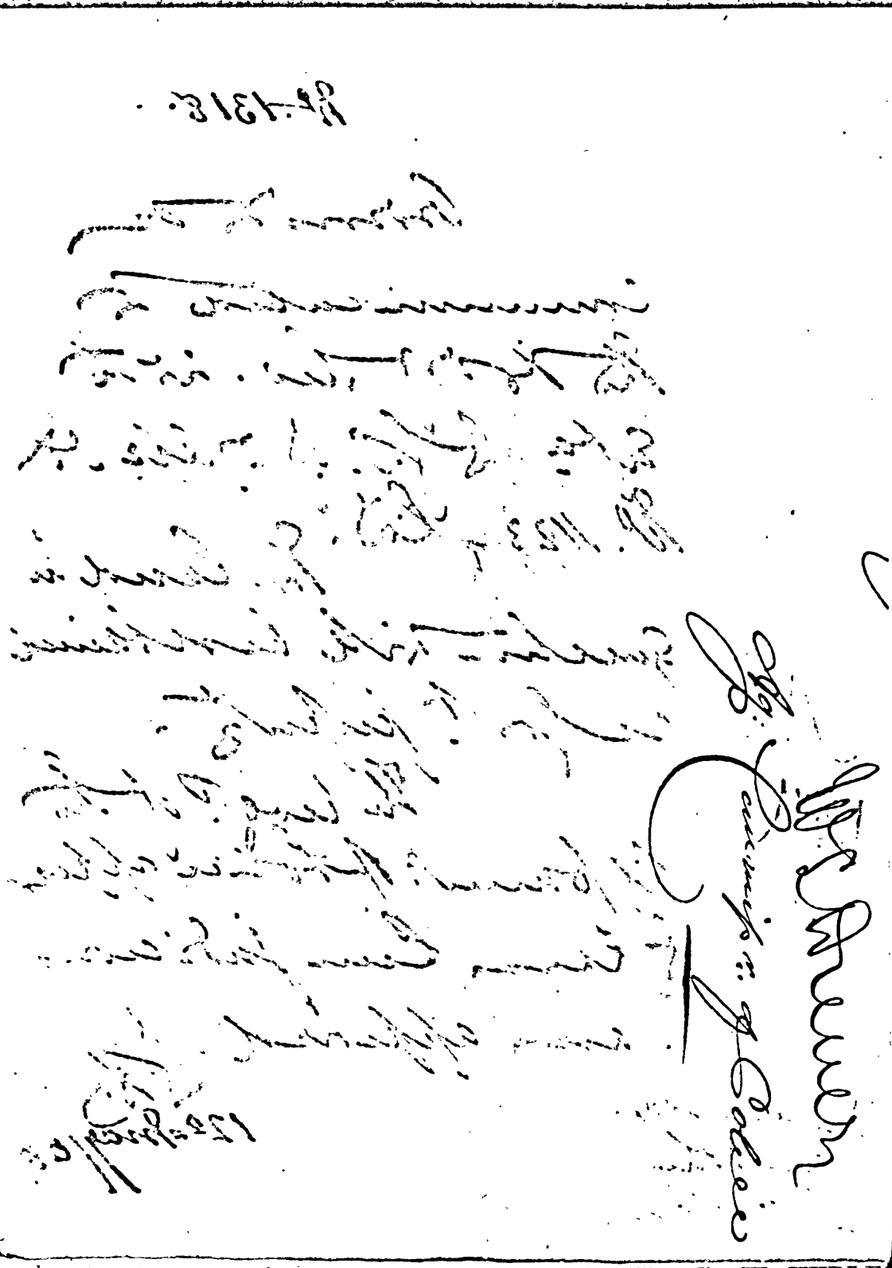
The land in question will be retained as Govt. property.

The proceedings of the Actg. Commnr. of Police appear to have been judicious & are approved.

12th May/68.

14/5 to Board Revenue
4 " Insp. Genl. Police
2 Commnr. of Police Madras

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(Signed) W. HUDLE
Secretary to

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Inspector General of Police.
„ the Commissioner of Police, Madras.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.