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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1985	Press Mis
197-98 Dated	9 - 12 - 1870

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th December 1870.*

No. 197. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 12th July 1870, No. 4,840 :—

Read again Board's Proceedings, No. 8,770, of the 29th November 1869.

Read also the following letter from the Acting Collector of Tinnevely, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Trichendur, 13th May 1870, No. 202 :—

REFERRING to Board's Proceedings, dated 29th November 1869, No. 8,770, I have the honour to submit the result of the further inquiries directed by the Board :

(1.) As to the existence *now* of any division between the Tenkalai and Vadalalai sects; and,

(2.) On the advisability of increasing the number of Temple Committees throughout the district.

2. As to the first point. The reports of Mr. Pennington and Venkat Row, who have both considerable experience, are conclusive that there is considerable division in certain parts of the district between the two sects, and that such division did not exist in April 1864 when Mr. Silver reported on the matter, but has sprung up within the last few years.

3. As to the second point. Although I am prepared somewhat to modify the opinion expressed in my letter to Government of the 19th October last, that no change is required in the present system of one Central Committee sitting in Tinnevely, still I am not prepared to advocate Taluq Committees, as they exist in other districts. The great blots in the present system appear to be that the supervision of the Central Committee at Tinnevely is defective, as regards the numerous temples at a distance; that it is difficult to get men of respectable position to serve as Managers of outlying Devasthanams under the Central Committee as at present composed, and, lastly, that the Home expenditure is excessive.

4. To remedy these defects, I propose that each taluq should depute at the least three persons from the Taluq Managing Committee to represent them with the Head or Central Committee in Tinnevely, from whom rules for the general management of the Devasthanams throughout the district would emanate. This plan, if adopted, would meet the wishes of the people connected with the outlying Devasthanams, who now complain that their interests are neglected by the Central Committee.

5. I concur generally in the views expressed by my late Sub-Collector, that a member of the official element, in the person of the Tahsildar, will greatly conduce to the good working and harmony of the Committees. I speak from experience when I say that the Municipal Commission of Tinnevely has worked far more harmoniously and done much more real work since the Tahsildar has been on the Commission; I quite think that some official check is necessary in the management of these Devasthanams, and I can assure the Board that in Tinnevely, at any rate, the people would hail with delight any measure which would place the management of their pagodas again under the superintendence of Collector.

6. The petition which accompanied the Proceedings under reply is herewith returned.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th December 1870.*

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From J. B. PENNINGTON, Esq., Sub-Collector, to the Acting Collector of Tinnevely, dated 29th December 1869, No. 12.

I HAVE the honour to reply as follows to your letter, No. 2,022, dated 11th December 1869.

2. I must premise, however, that I have not actually canvassed the opinions of Dharmakartas or any one else for the express purpose of answering your letter, because I do not think such a course at all calculated to effect the object in view. I am simply reporting the result of my own observations, and what I have heard, from time to time, during the last three years.

3. I am satisfied then that the present system of one Central Committee supervising *all* the Devasthanams has many defects, and is not at all satisfactory to the generality of the people.

4. I will enumerate some few of the defects I have heard noticed:

(1.) That, under the present rules, it is difficult to get *respectable* men to serve as Managers subordinate to the Central Committee.

(2.) That in consequence, men of inferior position are appointed as managers, and their conduct is subject to no efficient supervision on the part of the Central Committee.

(3.) That, under the present administration, the service in the distant temples is neglected, as a matter of course, the menials not being properly superintended, or even *regularly paid*.

(4.) That a Central Committee sitting in the head-quarter station of the district incurs too much expenditure in the shape of pay to Peons with silver belts, Duffadar's pay, and the pay of the Ameens, etc., great part of which would be saved if there were local Committees who would be able to superintend constantly without so much show.

5. On the other hand, the plan of having Taluq Committees is not without its probable evils.

6. The first difficulty to be overcome would be the selection of really competent men of position and respectability, who would take some interest in their work without any hope of gain.

7. I have heard that in some districts the plan of having Taluq Committees has been adopted, and is not working satisfactorily. There are divisions and petty quarrels among the members, (as is the case also with our Central Committee,) and, as a consequence, the Devasthanams are neglected.

8. The best course, therefore, lies, I think, between the above two systems.

9. It might be of some benefit to have Taluq Committees, but then they should not be left to themselves.

10. I think a representative Committee composed of one or two members of the Taluq Committee and some respectable men at Tinnevely should be formed to discuss general matters affecting the Devasthanams *without any distinction of Sects*, and the resolutions thus come to, based on the opinion of the majority should be the rule of practice to be observed by the Taluq Committees. Such Committees on the representative system should meet as often as may be convenient and necessary at Tinnevely.

11. The proceedings should be held openly, and *published in the Gazette*; and any one wishing it should have free access to the meeting place.

12. The appointment of the Tahsildar as an ex-officio member of each Taluq Committee would be of great benefit; but it might no doubt be objected that such an arrangement would be an improper deviation from the spirit that has prevailed of late years in respect of Government interference in matters of religion.

13. The fact is, however, that people in the mofussil are not yet prepared to govern themselves; and if there is to be no *official* check, the result *must* be injurious to the interests of Devasthanams.

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9th December 1870.*

14. The above is *not* my own individual opinion. It is simply what I have heard from people of much greater experience than myself. Whether from ignorance or from whatever cause, the people secretly condemn the Government for giving up the management of the temples, and misrepresent their intentions in doing so.

15. I am as determined an advocate of the principle that Government should hold a neutral position in matters of religion as any one can be; but I must admit that our ignorant people in the mofussil, where there is no public opinion, no free press, and no high principled society, have not yet attained to such a state of civilization as to admit of their being so *entirely* left to themselves. The time has not yet arrived for putting such a policy in practice without giving room for practically unlimited corruption and abuse.

16. As to the latter part of your letter, inquiry shows that at the time when Mr. Silver wrote his report, there was no perceptible difference or noticeable feeling of dissent or dispute between the Vadakalies and Tenkalies.

17. There is no doubt whatever that such feelings do exist now, the plain matter of fact being that the Vadakalai Sect has been exalted to unusual dignity by the presence of two Sheristadars in its ranks, and has consequently waxed fat and kicked. I may instance a dispute at Tirukurungudi which once manifested itself most openly in 1868, (with some danger of a breach of the peace,) on the occasion of the celebration of an annual festival called "Tiruvadhiana Utsavam," the Vadakalies being anxious to repeat the name of the author of *their* sect, while the Tenkalies insisted on repeating the name of their founder.

18. The result of that particular dispute has been that the repetition of either name is stopped, but of course not finally.

19. The same party feeling exists, I hear, in other parts of the district, in Strivilliputtur for instance. It appears there was no distinction whatever observed between these two sects in this district some twenty years ago. Even intermarriage was then allowed, and it still obtains, I am told, in certain parts of the Sankaranainarkovil and Ottapodaram Taluqs.

20. The existing wide separation of the two sects is, I believe, of quite recent date. In the year 1867, when a procession was passing in the streets of Nanguneri where there are scarcely any Vadakalies of note, some of the Vadakalies of Tirukurungudi began in the most uncalled for manner to repeat their Vedas after the procession along with the Tenkalies, and were very severely handled in consequence.

21. The following case has been reported to me lately. In the Nanguneri Pagoda, a Vadakalai and a subordinate official was openly disgraced by being served with the sacred water, etc., after it had been distributed to the Sudras.

Happily there were only two Vadakalies present at the time, or it is believed the consequences might have been serious.

22. These instances must be sufficient to convince any one that the feeling of estrangement between these two sects is in existence in this district, if not in the exaggerated form displayed at Kanjivaram and Tiruvendrapuram in South Arcot.

From the Acting Head Assistant Collector, to the Acting Collector of Tinnevely, dated Tuticorin, 19th January 1870, No. 15.

I HAVE the honour to report, in reply to your letter, No. 2,021, dated 11th December 1869, regarding the appointment of Temple Committees for each taluq.

2. The question was referred to the Tahsildars for report. Both of these officers are in favour of such an arrangement as it will then be possible for the Committees to exercise some supervision over the Pagoda matters, which is practically not the case now.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th December 1870.*

3. The Ottapedaram Tahsildar, however, reports that owing to the remoteness of the localities where several of the Pagodas are situated, complaints are never made, and thus too often the Pagodas are sadly mismanaged.

4. The only objection which I see to the establishment of Taluq Committees is, that it is likely to lead to quarrels and disputes. Unless the members are men of great influence, their interference is sure to be objected to and resisted; the result will be litigation in either Civil or Criminal Courts. Whether, however, this objection is sufficient to counterbalance the evident advantages of the creation, I am not prepared to say, but merely moot the question.

5. In conclusion, I beg to state that both Tahsildars report that no division exists between the Vadakalies and Tenkalies.

From T. VENCAT ROW, General Charge Deputy-Collector, to the Collector of Tinnevely, dated Strivilliputtur, 31st January 1870, No. 15.

With reference to your letter, dated 11th ultimo, calling for my opinion as to the advisability of establishing Temple Committee in each taluq, and also to report particularly as to the existence of division or otherwise between the Vadakalies and Tenkalies, I have the honour to inform you that I convened a meeting of the principal inhabitants of Strivilliputtur and certain neighbouring villages, and canvassed their opinions.

2. Forty-three persons are in favour of a Committee being established at Strivilliputtur, and four are opposed to it. Of the former, five are Vadakalies, eleven servants of the Natchiar Temple, the celebrated Vyshtnava Pagoda here, twenty-five Tenkalies, and three Sivaites, who have also much interest in the said Pagoda. Of the latter, one is the late Dharmakarta of the Strivilliputtur Pagoda, a very trustworthy man, and two are the present Dharmakartas, and the fourth is a Smarthiva Brahmin. Those who wish for the change complain that at present the Tirupani or repairs of the temple have been entirely neglected, notwithstanding there is an annual income of 2,000 Rupees to it; that petitions addressed to the Committee at Tinnevely are not answered; that the members do not meet there regularly for the despatch of business. Notwithstanding, complaints are made to them at a considerable expense and personal inconvenience of the complainants, and that the tanks, which are the principal source of the income to the pagoda, have likewise been neglected. They say that a Committee on the spot might have averted this state of things. On the other hand, those who hold an adverse view state that a Taluq Committee would not work well, as the members would quarrel, and would not be able to overcome local influences.

3. As a Committee at a distance cannot understand the requirements of the Pagoda and the real state of affairs so well as a Taluq Committee, I am inclined in favour of the proposition of establishing Taluq Committees, it being also the wish of the great majority of the inhabitants; much depends upon a careful selection of the members to compose the Committee. Under the vigilant superintendence of a Committee well chosen, complaints against Dharmakartas would rarely occur.

4. With regard to the second question, I beg to state that there does not appear to have been any open hostility formerly between the Vadakalies and Tenkalies, but since the appointment of two Vadakalai Dharmakartas to the Natchiar Pagoda in Strivilliputtur in the year 1868, a spirit of jealousy and ill-feeling appears to have been engendered in the minds of the influential part of the Tenkalies, who form the great majority of the Vyshtnavas in this part of the district.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th December 1870.*

SUBMITTED to Government, with reference to their endorsement No. 2,151 of 1869, dated 13th September last.

2. The above endorsement was passed on a petition from some people in Strivilliputtur, objecting to the management of the affairs of the temples in Tinnevely by the Central Committee, and Government ordered the Collector to report through the Board as to the propriety of instituting more Committees.

3. He replied that he did not advise the establishment of many Committees; that he had canvassed all the principal Dharmakartas, and that the people generally prefer the present arrangement.

4. He ascribed the petition to party spirit between the two sects of Tenkalies and Vadakalies.

5. The Board to whom it was referred observed that his letter contradicted a report of a late Collector, that there was no such party spirit, and they further expressed a doubt whether a single Committee could properly supervise all the temples, and accordingly requested him to inquire further.

6. The letter now under consideration is his further report, enclosing letters from the officers in charge of divisions.

7. All these officers (except the Head Assistant in whose division the dissension has never been noticed) affirm the existence now of dissension between the two sects.

8. The Collector (and all the division officers agree with him on this point) then modifies his opinion as to Taluq Committees so far as to recommend that each taluq should have its Committee subordinate to the Central Committee, and that each Taluq Committee should send at least three members to represent them at the Central Committee. He does not say how often; the Sub-Collector says "as often as may be convenient and necessary."

9. The Collector concurs with the Sub-Collector in thinking that the Tahsildar or other official should be a member, and both agree in thinking that the people generally would approve of such an arrangement.

10. The Board, however, are strongly opposed to this proposal. They consider the appointment of officials in every way objectionable as contravening the spirit of the Legislature and the policy under which the law was adopted, and also as calculated to take up too much of their time and involve them in business of a very objectionable character.

11. They observe also that the question of appointing District or Taluq Committees was fully discussed in 1863 and 1864, and the appointment of the former Committee was finally sanctioned by Government in their Order of the 1st April 1864, No. 535, and it seems unnecessary for the Board to state their views more fully at present, because, while they admit that the interests of the people are probably compromised by the narrow basis on which the management of the religious institutions of that large and wealthy district has been placed by the appointment of a single District Committee, it is apparently not in the power of Government to alter the constitution of the management adopted "once for all" in their Order No. 535, quoted above, under the provisions of Act XX. of 1863, Sections 7 and 9.

15 3-91

Colt. of 18703 Madras.

15-3-91

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Ac, Ac, Ac

Dated December, 9th.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 9th December 1870, No. 1,985.

Amster Petition Rev-6/12

2020/71

DECEMBER.
Nos. 197-198.

*Temple Committees in Tinnevely District.
-Proceedings Board of Revenue relative to their
establishment, with orders thereon.*

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th December 1870.

No. 198.

ORDER THEREON, 9th December 1870, No. 1,985.

Miscellaneous.

THE Government concur in opinion with the Board that they are by law debarred from now modifying arrangements made some years ago "once for all" under Section 7, Act XX. of 1863. The petitioners will be informed that their remedy is by legal proceedings in the established Courts, if they have grounds to complain of breach of trust, or neglect of duty by the Temple Committee.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
.. the Petition Department.

Exd. F. R. Pantlemon.

The Act & the fly are there

Unusual

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following. *Proceedings of the Board of Revenue.*

Subj: with remarks collected further report relative to establishment of Temple Committee in each Talook of Tinnevely Dist. as proposed in Resolution No. 2151 of 1869.

H.E. 12 July 1870. No. 4840

A reference to the Law Officers seems to me quite unnecessary. & the further agitation of the matter is inexpedient. The words "once for all" in Sect VII of the Act - combined with the permission in Sect. IX & X show clearly that with the establishment of a Committee or Committees the business of the Dist. Sect. XIV of the Act & properly can therefore

The Govt. do not consider that much improvement in the present state of affairs would be wrought by the adoption of Mr. Longley's proposal to the effect that each Talook should possess a Committee, but that the general management of all the Derastanums in the district

district should be vested in one General Committee. Such a course would almost certainly impede the despatch of business and would besides introduce a mode of administration never contemplated by the Act.

2. The Govt, however, are very far from coinciding in the general opinion expressed by the Board in para 11 of their Proceedings. As a preponderance of testimony would appear to indicate, the experience of five years has shown that one General Committee is insufficient for the requirements.

any person interested in a temple to the Trustees or Committee for any kind of trust or neglect of duty. The letter should be taken to the Comdant.

as the Comdant prescribed by the Law. The Act was in my judgment, too hurriedly introduced. but it is the Law - and a change could be long in coming.

I. D. S.
There is no doubt in my mind that the Law is also I have no doubt but the present

arrangement does not work satisfactorily, in any district. I must think it must be a good plan to have our various native officials on our Committee.

A. D.

I think it better on the whole to leave the matter alone until a general act can be introduced in the Legislative Council amending the present Law. Such an act should originate with the Native Members. I think it is now under consideration among them. I agree with Mr. Ashurst that the Sabudor 3. or some other

6- requirements of the District, steps must be taken for the appointment of Sub-committees. The words "once for all" which, occur in Sec. VII, Act XX of 1863 appear to interpose a legal difficulty, and the Advocate General will be requested to express his opinion whether a change in the Law is necessary in order that the Govt may at this stage constitute fresh Committees, withdrawing portions of the District from the jurisdiction of the existing Committee. In the meantime the

The Board are requested to submit a report shewing how the system of Taluk Committees is found to work in districts other than Tinnevely. It is in any case advisable that one system should be in force throughout the Presidency.

W. H.

Handwritten flourish or signature.

Native official should be in office in the committee whether local or central.

CLW

1985



Proceedings of the Madras Government Under date the 9th Decemr 1870

Read the following Pro. of the Board of Revenue.

Submitting Colbr's further report relative to establishment of Temple Committees in each Taluk of Tinnevely Dt. as proposed in Petition No. 2151 of 1869.

H. E. 12th July 1870 No. 41840

Handwritten initials and signature: B. A. J. O. S. N.

The Government concur in opinion with the Board that they are by law debarred from now modifying arrangements made some years ago 'once for all' under Section 7 Act 20 of 1863. The Petitioner

will be informed that their
remedy is by legal proceedings
in the established Courts if
they have grounds to complain
of breach of trust or neglect
of duty by the Simple Com-
mittee.

L.A.

14. To the B of P. Res. 410
1. — Petition Depl. with and made ✓