

CHAP. XI. He handed the communication to me, and asked that I would furnish a report upon it.

1745.
Hands him
petition
for report.

Diarist
visits
Governor.

Who
informs
him that
matter
of the
petition
settled.

Wednesday, [29th September 1745, or] 17th Purat-tâsi of Krôdhana.—When I presented myself before the Governor this morning, he said as follows: “I have received a letter from Kârikâl to-day, in which it is stated that the matter in dispute between Prakâsa Mudali and Tiruvêngada Pillai has been settled.” He showed me the paper. I replied: “I informed you once that Tiruvêngada Pillai had written to me that during the period of M. Febvrier’s administration he paid the entire sum of 1,700 pagodas. It is not known what has become of it.” He then asked whether Tiruvêngada Pillai had not now addressed me on the subject. I answered in the negative.

Remark-
able occur-
rence at the
church in
Pondichery.

Saturday, [16th] October 1745, or 3rd Arppisi of Krôdhana.—At 8 this morning the church was the scene of a remarkable occurrence. The priest of Kârikâl, who is on a visit to Pondichery, noticed the distinction made between the Pariah and caste Christians when attending to perform their devotions. A wall has been erected, as a barrier, on the northern side of the interior of the church. On one side of this, the Pariahs collected for worship, and on the other, caste Christians, Eurasians, and Europeans, assembled during the service. This privilege was obtained by the Native Christians at some former time; and the distinction of castes has been maintained up to now. The priest of Kârikâl, however, was offended at this

Distinction
made
between
Pariahs and
others.

and instigated the Pariah Christians living at the Panni Parachêri, the Big Parachêri, the Burning-ground Parachêri, and the Ozhandai Parachêri; and also the other Pariah and toti, or village service Pariah Christians, to remonstrate. They all went in a body to His Reverence the senior priest, and complained in these words: “If we are really your disciples, it behoves Your Reverence to treat us all alike. The Lord makes no distinction amongst his worshippers. The caste Christians have, however, thought fit to keep us without the pale, and you have acceded to their demand. We submit that this is a partial proceeding, and we request an explanation at the hands of Your Reverence.” The priest, having listened to all this, declared that their complaint was just, and immediately ordered the demolition of the barrier wall. Addressing the assembled people, he said: “You are all my children; you may, at your pleasure, mingle with the rest of the congregation, and attend divine worship.” So saying, he dismissed them with his blessing.

An evening service was held to-day in the church. No distinction of caste was made, but Pariahs, Eurasians, Europeans, and Tamilians, all mingled together, and attended it. Native Christian females also came. The wife of Âsârappa Mudali, the sister’s son of Kanakarâya Mudali, who is in good circumstances, went to the church, decked with all the ornaments that are worn by the women of her caste, and arrayed in muslin gauze, which was

CHAP. XI.

1745.
Priest of
Karikal
instigates
Pariahs to
complain.

They do so
to senior
priest.

He directs
removal of
barrier.

Service
held at
church
without
distinction
of castes.

A native
lady
attends
church
gaily clad.

CHAP. XI.
1745.

perfumed. She approached the altar where the senior priest was ministering, knelt down, and was absorbed in listening to his exhortations. As soon as he smelt the sweet odour diffused by the lady's clothes, he stopped preaching, held his nose, thrust the cane which he had in his hand into her hair-knot, and angrily addressed her thus: "Art thou not a married woman? Art thou a dancing woman? Has thy husband no sense of shame? Can chaste ladies appear at church, dressed in muslin gauze, and exhibit their limbs, bosoms, and the very hair on their bodies? Thou art a blessed woman indeed! Thou hast attended divine service quite enough! Rise, and begone to thy house!" Having thus spoken, he commanded her to go away. Afterwards, he summoned all the caste Christians, and enjoined on the women that hereafter they should not dress themselves in thin cloths, that they should not deck themselves with ornaments of the kind worn by the Tamilians, that they should tie their hair after the manner of Eurasians, and that they should not use any perfume. Thereupon, the Christians went in a body to the church, and argued the matter with him. Gavinivâsa Mudali came forward, and opposed any change being made in the old order of things. He said that the recent orders were not agreeable to the entire body of the community. Directions to expel this speaker by force were then given: when these were about to be carried out, he stepped forward, seized the priest by the cloak,

Anger of officiating priest at this.

Directs lady to depart.

Forbids the use of gay clothing, etc., by women of congregation.

Consequent fracas.

CHAP. XI.
1745.

used abusive language, and then departed saying: "We will not hereafter enter your church." The Christian people then complained to Kanakarâya Mudali. He pacified them, and went to see the priest, to whom he explained the difficulties of the case, and he consented to allow things remain as they were. After Kanakarâya Mudali had left, however, the priest went to the Governor, and told him that the Christians were rebelling against his authority, were meeting in large numbers, and were setting him at defiance. He begged that an order compelling them to attend the church might be issued. The Governor sent for Krimâsi Pandit, the subordinate chief of the peons, and commanded him to arrest and imprison any Christians whom he might find assembling in a body of four or more persons, and talking with each other. Thenceforward, crowds ceased to gather in the streets.

Kanakarâya Mudali attempts mediation.

Priest appeals to Governor against conduct of his flock.

Police directed to prevent assemblies of the people.

Sunday, [17th October 1745, or] 4th Arppisi of Krôdhana.—A few people went to church this morning. A barrier of chairs was put up, to separate the Pariahs from others. It is doubtful what course things will take.

A few of congregation attend church. Barrier restored.

[Monday], 18th October 1745, or 5th Arppisi of Krôdhana.—This afternoon at about 3, the Governor ordered his accountant Ranga Pillai to despatch two peons to fetch Vîrâ Chetti, who came in company with Tiruvêngada Pillai from Kârikâl. He was accordingly seized, and brought before the Governor. Orders were at once given that he

Vîrâ Chetti imprisoned by order of Governor.

CHAP. XI.

1745.
Cause
unknown.

should be cast into the prison at the western gate of the fort. It is not known what has led to his confinement. People here are in an excited state about it.

W. Tiru-
vengada
Pillai dines
with diarist.

Tuesday, [19th October 1745, or] 6th Arppisi of Krôdhana.—This morning, Wandiwash Tiruvêngada Pillai, who had arrived from Kârikâl, conversed with me when I was on my way home. As he came along with me as far as my house, I invited him to dine with me.

Vira Chetti
placed
before
Governor.

Yesterday at 2 o'clock, the Governor sent for Virâ Chetti, who had been incarcerated in the fort prison, and addressed him thus: "The wife of Trichinopoly Kastûri Rangaiyan, a woman who deserted her husband, remained at Kârikâl for four months, and has since come here, alleges that Tiruvêngada Pillai owes her 1,000 pagodas. Are you aware of this?" He replied that he knew nothing about it. He was thereupon tied to a post, and beaten. On being thus pressed, he admitted that the woman's statement was true. She is said to have asserted that Tiruvêngada Pillai had asked of her a loan of 1,000 pagodas; that on her agreeing to lend this amount, he sent a note through Virâ Chetti applying for it; that she thereupon, retaining this, sent through Virâ Chetti the sum required; and that the whole truth would come out if this man was closely interrogated. She further sent a petition to the Governor enclosing the note, with an expression of her doubts whether the signature to it was actually that of

Interro-
gated as to
a debt due
by Tiru-
vengada
Pillai.Denies
knowledge
of it, but
being
beaten
confesses.Details of
transaction.

Tiruvêngada Pillai, or whether he had caused it to be written by another. On seeing this paper, the Governor summoned Tiruvêngada Pillai and inquired whether he had borrowed 1,000 pagodas from the woman, or not. He replied: ". . . * If that note contains my signature, or if she can otherwise prove that I received the loan, I will not only pay ten times the amount, but will also acquiesce in any penalty that may be inflicted on me. Please let me see the letter." The Governor rejoined: "Why should it be shown to you? I have investigated the matter. You must repay the money within eight days." Four of the Company's peons were detailed to collect the amount.

Thursday, [4th November 1745, or] 21st † Arppisi of Krôdhana.—Pondichery was last night visited by a hurricane, which commenced immediately after sunset. It blew the whole night. The destruction caused by it cannot, even approximately, be estimated. During the night, the avenues of margosas and portias growing in the town were uprooted. Many trees were twisted out of shape. The cocoa-nut, mango, and other trees in orchards and gardens were all laid low, and many persons have thereby been ruined. On the banks of the Uppâru river, people had erected houses on the ground allotted to them, and were dwelling in these. During the

CHAP. XI.

1745.
Tiru-
vengada
Pillai ques-
tioned.Repudiates
claim.Governor
decides
against
him.Cyclone at
Pondi-
chery.Great
damage
caused
thereby

* Perished in the original.

† Sic. But the correct date is 22nd.