

and the merchants know that nothing is done but at my instance. Even if they don't, can you not make them understand? Who will contradict you? Have I ever broken my word? But that is what you and they are afraid of.' The Governor also made some more severe speeches, and then I answered, 'I well know that you are thinking how you may benefit us in spite of having passed the resolution in Council. Both the merchants and I know this. But I had to speak about the matter, for there are many of us; they dispute; and so business is delayed. Were there only one, there could be no such disputes'.—'Ask them if they can believe me,' the Governor said; 'if they can, let them sign the contract and tell them I will try to get them their nine per cent.; but if they cannot, I won't trust them either, and will require immediate payment for all they have bought of me. If they don't pay, they shall be imprisoned and disgraced. I will ruin them and make them confess that misfortunes happen when people will not listen to me. It shall be spoken of for generations.' He said this very angrily, and to appease him I answered, 'May that never come to pass! The merchants call their children by your name. Since God has so favoured you, why think that they will ever disobey you? Your fame has spread to Delhi. Even people in distant places

¹ The French at Pondichery, like the English at Madras, provided a considerable part of the Company's investment through a body of merchants organised on a joint-stock basis.

give your name to their children so that it shall never be forgotten.'

He heard me with pleasure and asked me what terms I was on with the padres of St. Paul's Church¹. I answered, 'Now I seldom go there. They used to flatter me publicly for doing good to Christians. They even said that they had sometimes prayed for me so that I might not be separated from them in Heaven. When I went to see them at the New Year, they would call me from out of the crowd and flatter me for an hour and a half together. But as soon as I became Chief Dubâsh on the death of Kanakarâya Mudali,² they began to say they would be better off if a Christian were appointed, and that they could not expect help from a Hindu; that they could exercise seven-eighths of the power of Government if the Dubâsh were a Christian, but if he were a Hindu they had difficulties; that the King had ordered that the Dubâsh

¹ i.e. the Jesuits. They are often called 'Paulists' by early travellers, less from the great Jesuit College of St. Paul at Goa, as some have said, than from the fact that they were reckoned peculiarly 'the apostles to the Gentiles.' Loyola, after becoming General of the Society, renewed his vows in the great basilica of St. Paul's at Rome. The Capuchins had the cure of Europeans, and the Jesuits of Indian Christians at Pondichery.

² M. Vinson gives the date as June 25, 1745, *Les Français dans l'Inde*, p. 1 n., but in a letter *Cons. Sup. à la Compagnie*, February 20, 1746, it is said, 'notre courtier est mort depuis quelques jours.' (P.R.—No. 7.) Ranga Pillai gives Feb. 12 as the date, i, 310 *supra*. Ranga Pillai did not become Chief Dubâsh immediately on the death of Kanakarâya Mudali. On January 10, 1749, the *Conseil Supérieur* wrote to the *Compagnie* that no formal appointment had yet been made. (P.R.—No. 7.)

should be a Christian,¹ but the Governor ignored the order; and that though Dumas, who unlike you, supported the Christians, was dead, there was still La Bourdonnais; that they had written to the King and would write again unless they soon received a favourable reply. So they have persuaded the Christians that their claims are just. Till now I have said nothing about this, lest you should think I spoke out of self-interest, but as you ask me I cannot avoid saying a little. You have only to make inquiries to learn all about them.—‘They are deceitful people,’ the Governor said, ‘and can be overcome by nothing but deceit. You must pretend outward respect for them, and win their confidence.’ As I remained silent, he went on, ‘You must take occasion to visit the Superior, and tell him how you have till now always behaved to their satisfaction, how you have always experienced kind treatment from them, and how you have been

¹ The religious policy pursued in the early part of the century at Pondichery is remarkable. It appears to have been ordered that no mosque or temple should be repaired; Nainiyappan was ordered to be converted within six months under pain of losing his post as Chief Dubâsh; Hindu festivals were prohibited on Sundays and the principal Christian feasts; even when these regulations had caused the greater part of the town to be deserted, the Jesuits urged that a temple should be pulled down instead of conciliatory measures being employed. *Régistre des délibérations du Conseil Souverain*, i, pp. 125, 140, 142, 153, etc. (This valuable collection of documents is being printed by the ‘Société de l’Histoire de l’Inde Française’ at Pondichery.) It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in this zealous proselytising policy lies one reason why Pondichery was far inferior to Madras as a commercial centre; and perhaps the same cause also contributed to the absolute failure of Dupleix’ efforts to induce the Madras merchants to settle under the French,

surprised to hear from some Christians that they now speak differently about you. Say all this with a smiling face, and tell him that though you have always been ready to serve him, your feelings will change if he believes what common people say about you and if he too speaks ill of you. You must let me know how he answers. If he speaks roughly, you will know how to close his mouth. You alone are capable of doing me this service, and so I have selected you for it instead of any one else¹.’ I said I could only visit the padre on business. He replied that some excuse would turn up and then I could go. I agreed to do so. The Governor then went into Madame’s apartment; and when he came back he said the priests were clever people, but I was cleverer. He told me to go to them, find out what they really meant, and make them confess their errors. He then went in again, but came back to tell me to persuade the merchants to sign the contract.

*Wednesday, September 20.*²—This morning I went to the Fort and spoke with M. Cornet. As M. David, the Governor of Mascareigne, desired, I sent for the painters and was settling with them the cost of making bed-curtains, having given them the cloth for it, when the Governor sent a peon for

¹ Apparently Dupleix wished to ascertain what was the Jesuits’ attitude towards some order regarding that ancient bone of contention—the Vêdapuri Îswaran Temple. See below p. 151.

² 7th Purattâsi, Prabhava.

me. He showed me a letter from a padre at Pôlâr, who said that Muhammad 'Alî Khân's son, J'afar 'Alî Khân, was preventing the Christians from building a Church, and oppressing them, and the padre therefore desired a letter to be written to J'afar 'Alî Khân asking him to permit the building of the Church and to treat the Christians better. The Governor said, 'This gives us just the opening to carry out what we resolved on yesterday. Take it to the padre and ask him what should be done. Then bring the conversation to what we spoke of and find out what he really thinks.'

I took the letter at once and went to St. Paul's Church; but as the priest was out and would only come in at eleven, I went back to the Governor and told him I would go about four. I then went to M. Cornet, and, after talking a while with him, I went home, had a bath and my dinner, and lay down. At half-past four I rose again, went to M. Cœurdox's, and sent in word of my arrival. Prakâsan told me he was alone in his room, so I went and paid my respects. 'What! is this the gate of Heaven?' he asked; 'What has brought you here? What was the matter with you? Are you better now?' I answered that so long as I had his blessing there was no doubt of my getting better. 'What is our blessing to you?' he exclaimed; 'It was the Brâhman's blessings that cured you.'—'I have always acted,' I rejoined, 'impartially between Hindus and Christians. You must have heard

from your catechists that I always give immediate attention to their complaints. Till recently you have always been very gracious to me, but for the last few days you have been speaking of me unkindly. I can only ascribe it to my bad fortune.'—'If we had a Christian as Chief Dubâsh,' he said, 'we could trust him; and before you became Dubâsh, you were favourable to us; but as soon as you were appointed you began patronising Hindu temples, giving them privileges, but quite neglecting the Christians. Brâhmans and Hindus have received honour while we have suffered.'—'It is true,' I answered, 'that there has been much distress these last three years, because no European ships have arrived, because trade has been bad, and because the famine has brought rice to only half a measure per fanam. But no one is to blame for that. Had it not been for the genius of M. Dupleix Mahârâjâ the town would have been utterly ruined.'—'Does not M. Dupleix favour you?' he asked.—'It is not M. Dupleix alone who favours me,' I said; 'Ever since my father's time, for the last twenty-three years, I have been treated with respect. Even when Kanakarâya Mudali was Chief Dubâsh in name, I enjoyed three times as much power as he. Do not think that the present Governor alone respects me, or that my power and honours only began with my appointment as Chief Dubâsh.'—'We all know that you belong to a respectable family,' he answered, 'that has been held in esteem

for two generations. You have held important places and won the good will of Europeans. But if you had been a Christian, many others would have become so too.—‘Your words astonish me,’ I said. ‘The Christians form only a sixteenth of all the people here, and all are poor save the family of Kanakarâya Mudali and his brothers¹. It is only of late years that a few have been able to keep themselves in comfort as Europeans’ dubâshes or in other employments; they have been able to build themselves brick houses and to save fifty or a hundred or two hundred or three hundred rupees. The rest are all servants and coolies. You know this well and that it is not so with the Hindus. They are the Company’s merchants; they are employed at the beach, in the choultry,² in the Fort,³ and in the cloth, iron, rice and wheat godowns. They even supply the provisions for the barracks in the Fort. Such are the big appointments that they hold. Some private merchants are rich enough to obtain ten or twenty thousand pagodas’ worth of goods on their own credit in dealing with the Councillors and other Europeans. All the renters of the out-villages are Hindus. Christians hold no such posts. But as Hindus hold all the high employments, how can you suppose that I could convert

¹ ‘Encore ne seroient ce que des gueux.’ *Registre du Cons. Souv.* (September 3, 1705), i. 25.

² That is, in the Sea and Land Custom-houses.

³ In the Accountant’s and other offices.

them? Those of my caste and family who are dependent upon me would suffer if my hands grew weak; but the merchants are all Chettis, Kômuttis, Brâhmans and Guzarâtis; those in the Company’s service are mostly Brâhmans and Vellâlas. All the shepherd caste except Muttayya Pillai graze sheep, and have no other means of livelihood. But each is his own master and does not trouble about the rest. So if one turns to another religion, the rest will not follow him. Though you can see this as plainly as a nelli-berry² in your hand, yet you ask me such a question. I must think that you are not in earnest, but are only sounding me. Though Kanakarâya Mudali was a Christian, and was dubâsh for twenty years, Arumpâtai Pillai, Sadayappa Mudali and many others of the Agamudiyans³ never were converted. His family was converted in his father’s and grandfather’s time; they have increased by marrying with people in the country districts; but he made no converts after he was employed. I only say this by way of reply, for you know the whole truth. Kanakarâya Mudali died a year and a half or two years ago. But it is only lately, in the last month or two, that there has been this general distress such as we have never seen before.’—‘Say what you will,’ said the Superior, ‘I am sure that all would become Christians if only you

¹ To which Ranga Pillai belonged.

² The fruit of the *Phyllanthus emblica*. The saying is proverbial.

³ See Thurston’s *Castes and Tribes*, s.v.

would set the example. We should be quite satisfied with you as Chief Dubâsh if you were a Christian. As you are not, we have had several times to urge M. Duplex to appoint one. We have written to Europe, and we will write again. We will do our utmost, we will speak in the Council, for we have got a letter from the King that the post must be reserved for Christians.'—'I never asked for the appointment,' I answered. 'When the Governor offered it to me, I refused at first and then only accepted in consideration of the future. Even when Kanakarâya Mudali was alive, I had a palankin, and torches,¹ much influence and a great trade. Thus it is clear that I did not seek the appointment at all, but was obliged to take it as I lived in the Governor's town. This is known to you, to the Council, and to all who live here. You know even better than the others. I don't depend upon being dubâsh.'—'Quite true,' he said; 'and you are more capable than any one else; but I think that if a Christian were Dubâsh, even though he were a fool, many Christians would prosper. If you were a Christian, you would make many converts. If only Kanakarâya Mudali had been as clever and persuasive as you, he would have made many. May God bless you and take you to Himself.'—'If it be so decreed,' I said, 'it will surely come to pass.'

¹ Marks of dignity which only the principal inhabitants were allowed to use within the Fort, alike in English and French settlements.

On this there was a little silence, and then he asked me if what he had heard from the Governor was true, that I was to explain to the heads of castes the orders about the Vêdapuri Îswaran Temple. I answered that I should do my best to carry out the order, and he rejoined that God would reward me for my service. I said, without committing myself, that I would spare no pains in the matter, so far as it was in my power. I then showed him the letter from the Pôlûr padre to the Governor, and said I was sent to ask what answer should be made. He said, 'I have not heard anything about this letter. There is a village called Pushpagiri, in the Vellore country, near Pôlûr. A letter should be sent to Muhammad 'Alî Khân's son, J'afar 'Alî Khân, who lives near Pôlûr, asking him to treat the Christians and the padre kindly.' I then took my leave and departed. On my way home I went to my nut-godown, thinking that I would go to-morrow and tell the Governor what had passed.

*Thursday, September 21.*¹—When I went to the Governor this morning, he asked me what the padre had said yesterday. I told him exactly as I have set it down in my diary. He then said contemptuously, 'So you must either become a Christian or cease to be Dubâsh! Does the man suppose himself to be the Governor? He is childish; he can do

¹ 8th Purattâsi, Prabhava.

nothing. Their power all disappeared with M. Hébert.¹ Even in Europe people know they are liars and pay no attention to what they say. Did he say anything besides? At all events, you need not be alarmed at what he said.' Just then the padre Cœurdoux came in and said that no reply should be sent to the Pôlûr² padre until he had made inquiries. The Governor said, 'Very well, Rangappa, you may write when you are told to.' I then left the room while the Governor and the Padre spoke together. Presently the Padre came out onto the verandah where I was, and said to me, 'I will send you word, my dear Ranga Pillai, as soon as I hear from Pôlûr.' I paid my respects and said I would wait till then, and he saluted me and went away.

*Saturday, September 30.*²—To-day I carried to the Governor the Râjâ of Travancore's messenger, Sorâ Mudali Marakkâyar³. I gave the Governor a letter written in *Parangi*⁴ and said that a cadjan letter had also come. After looking at it, he said, 'I think the Tamil letter will be the same as this. But

¹ Hébert was Governor of Pondichery 1708-13 and 1715-18. These with the intervening years when Dulivier was Governor, formed the period when the Jesuits received most support from the Government. See p. 144 *supra*.

² 17th Purattâsi, Prabhava.

³ The Marakkâyars are a class of Muhammadans living on the East Coast. To judge from his name, the man here mentioned must have been a convert from Hinduism.

⁴ *i.e.*, *Firingi*, I presume here, Portuguese.

you had better go through that and explain it to me. I will read through this one; we will see what differences there are, and then reply. Please send these people to their lodging to rest.' So I sent them away.

OCTOBER 1747.

*Sunday, October 1.*¹—At three o'clock this afternoon, eight English ships and a sloop—nine in all—came to anchor in the roads just opposite the town. The cannon were loaded on the sea-wall and then on the ramparts to the north and south also, and everything was in readiness. The Governor only went home from the Fort at half-past six. As it is St. Mary's day, there was a festival at the Capuchins' Church, and twenty-one guns were fired in the evening. I note this because it is not usual; it was done to-day in order to frighten the English ships that are here.

*Thursday, October 5.*²—At half-past six this evening five officers—M. Mainville,³ M. Changeac, M. Gorlier,⁴ M. Mose,⁵ and another whom I do not know—set out for Mahé, with five palankins and forty bearers, two bullocks loaded with provisions, three Brâhmans and four of 'Abd-ul-rahmân's sepoys who have often been to Mahé. They took 100 pagodas for their expenses, and besides 1,000 pagodas in two half-bags. I gave the bearers and others batta

¹ 18th Purattâsi, Prabhava.

² 22nd Purattâsi, Prabhava.

³ Mainville arrived in India in 1739; was promoted *sous-lieutenant* in 1741; lieutenant 1743; captain 1746. His account of his career in India is printed in Dupleix' *Réponse à la Lettre du Sr. Godeheu*, 1763, p. 240. It is not entirely accurate.

⁴ The name is conjectural.

⁵ Ranga Pillai writes 'Môsu.' There was a Pedro Mousse, a Topass, among the employés of the Company.

for fifteen days' journey. The Europeans have orders to recruit five hundred sepoys and lascars, and to return by January; if they can, however, they are to return by December. So they departed.

Before the Governor went to Olukarai to-day, Kâlingarâya Muttayya Mudali, and Muttu, the son of my Virâ Pillai, came and said to me as follows:—'On Tuesday night we heard from Swâminâthan, Sadayappa Mudali's son, and we actually saw in Tamil, the contents of a petition that has been written against you by the Master Gunner, but it has really been done by the Christians and was planned by that fellow Varlâm, Malaikkolundu Mudali's son; Muttukumaran, the son-in-law of Kanakarâya Mudali's sister, and a few others.'

I think Varlâm would not have done this without Madame's consent. The cause of this is perhaps that Manilla Latour¹ told the Governor that Madame a fortnight ago had received 500 or 700 pagodas from that rogue Tiruvêngadam in connection with Rangi's suit. What he told the Governor was this:—'Rangi the dancing girl died, and, having no heirs, she left her money to a teacher of dancing. Madame has taken 650 pagodas from him; and every one in the European quarter is talking about it. I am

¹ I presume, the son of a French surgeon established at Manilla; he was entertained as a 'sous-commis' in 1739. Dupleix observed of him that 'his capacity, conduct and appearance' would preclude his rising above the rank of 'Sous-marchand.' *Cons. Sup. à la Compagnie*, December 31, 1741, (P. R.—No. 6), and *Ministère des Colonies* C² 15. I suppose he was called 'Manilla Latour' to distinguish him from the officer of the same name.

ashamed that while you acquire such fame, your wife should be acquiring as great notoriety. I know you will be angry with me for mentioning this, but I cannot refrain from doing so.' As the matter is being tried by the Second,¹ he also has come to know of this bribe, and so have M. Coquet² and M. Delarche.

The Governor called the *Procureur Général* M. Lemaire, and the Second, and sent for M. Coquet and M. Delarche. He also sent for me and asked me if I knew anything about the matter. I told him I didn't, that I knew nothing of the dancing girl's death or of her leaving her property to the teacher of dancing. The Governor then told me to ask Lazar and let him know; but Lazar also knew nothing. The Governor then asked Madame about it, and she, understanding the matter, sent word to the Second, Lazar, and others, not to mention her name. When the Second was questioned, he accordingly said that he himself had had the case decided by arbitrators. 'Did Madame mention the matter to you?' the Governor asked. He said, 'No.' But when the Governor was sending for M. Coquet, the Second said, after some hesitation, 'I am here; I know the whole

¹ i.e., in the Choultry Court. No records of the Choultry Court have been preserved at Pondichery for this period.

² He was the son of a lawyer, and was sent out by the Company in 1740. Ranga Pillai has already related an escapade of his. *Ante*, i. 411. In 1750 Dupleix observed of him that, although formerly given to wine, he had reformed. *Ministère des Colonies* C² 15.

affair; it was I that ordered the case to be settled by arbitration. What is the use of sending for him?' On this the Governor understood the delicacy of the matter and left it alone. Under the circumstances, I think Madame believes that I spread the report about her in the European quarter and got a European to carry it to the Governor; Varlâm, a Topass, and others in her service have prejudiced her against me; and that is why charges are now being made against me.

In order to forewarn the Governor, I went to him to-day and said, 'You will receive a petition against me. Be pleased to make full inquiries and punish whoever is shown to be guilty.'—'Why should there be any petition and who would write it?' he asked.—'I will say who the authors of it are,' I answered, 'as soon as it is received. I believe the Christians have sent it. It is said to accuse me of making money out of the painters, because I have got people from Madras instead of employing Pondichery painters, and it is said that I do not pay them in full; they accuse me of arresting gamblers and releasing them after getting as much as I can out of them; and they say I take one or two thousand [pagodas?] out of the peons' pay. In Kanakarâya Mudali's time, they say, affairs were managed with justice; but as things are left solely to me, I do as I please, and have made much money. If you appoint a Christian instead of me, they say, God will grant you salvation and crown

your doings with success. That is what I hear. I don't know if they have written anything else.'—The Governor answered, 'When it is received, we will give them a lesson.'

*Friday, October 6.*¹—News came to-day from Madras that the eight English ships, which passed by here from Fort St. David four or five days ago, are at anchor off Tiruvâmiyûr. At noon, M. Bussy and M. d'Auteuil² were despatched to Madras with the European cavalry and some Mahé horse under Shaikh Hasan.

Besides this Shaikh Ibrâhîm was sent with a hundred sepoy to escort M. Miran³ who is on his way from Kârikâl by Gingee. These men were sent after I had reported the Fort St. David news, that on Wednesday Malrâjâ had gone out with some English troops towards Panruti and Tiruviti, hearing that some Europeans were coming up from Kârikâl.

The news from Madras is that the *Neptune* has been captured and burnt in the roads by the English ships at night. The captain, M. Flacourt, is

¹ 23rd Purattâsi, Prabhava.

² Louis Hubert Combault d'Auteuil was born in 1714. He came to India in 1739 as ensign ('à la suite de quelques folies' M. Cultra says, p. 241). In 1741 he married Marie Aumont née Albert. At this time he commanded the troop of dragoons which Dupleix had raised some time before.

³ I think this must be the younger brother (see above, p. 53 n. 3). He had gone to Kârikâl, it appears, to supervise the lading of a Danish ship for Manilla at Tranquebar. *Le Riche to Dupleix*, September 8, 17, and 21, 1747, (P. R.—No. 88.)

an incapable man.¹ The captain of the other ship that is in the roads² was on the alert and fired as soon as the English approached her, on which the Fort began to fire also, and the English had to withdraw. It is by reason of this that the horse have been sent to Madras.

On the way a sepoy was thrown off and injured near Nainiya Pillai's Choultry. He could not walk and was brought in to the hospital in a palankin.

Thirty peons have been posted to-day, in sets of three men to every ten miles, from here to Madras.

I sent Shaikh Ibrâhîm to M. Duquesne to fetch me a thousand sheets of paper. After getting it, he asked M. Duquesne, 'Where have we to go?' Ranga Pillai told me nothing—only to get the paper.' As M. Duquesne did not know, he took him to the Governor, and asked where the hundred peons were to go. The Governor asked Shaikh Ibrâhîm if I had not told him. He said, 'No,' adding that I had promised to do so when he had got the paper. On this the Governor told him to go to me and get his orders. He then said to M. Duquesne, 'See what excellent good sense Ranga Pillai has! He is fit to be trusted with important matters.' Shaikh Ibrâhîm himself related this to me.

¹ 'Il n'y avoit sur le *Neptune* que les lascards et un mestice pour le commander.' *Cons. Sup. à la Compagnie*, November 30, 1747, (P. R.—No. 7).

² The *Princess Amelia*, the English prize. She was saved, not by artillery fire, but by being run ashore. *Cons. Sup. à la Compagnie*, November 30, 1747, (P. R.—No. 7.)