

This evening a letter was brought to me, written by Arumpâtai Muttayya Pillai and Ariyappa Mudali to Varlâm. I read it and gave it back. It said: 'If with Madame's help you get the matter settled, you shall reap the fruit of the happy news that you will have to give.' Thus they wrote subtly, and added that they would not mind even if the affair cost a little more than had been agreed upon, for they desired it to be arranged and hoped they would be able to compliment Varlâm on his success, news of which they were anxiously awaiting. I will write on a future day the name of the man who brought me the letter.

*Friday, February 2.*¹—I went to the Governor's this morning when he returned from church. He asked me what I had heard about the Europe ships which arrived seven or eight days ago at Fort St. David. I answered, 'I hear that they left Europe last March; five have arrived; when they sailed, the news of the capture of Madras had not reached Europe, for they have brought three hundred men for the Madras garrison.'² When I said this, his anger was unspeakable. He said, 'You are not attending to the Company's business half so well as you used to do. Do you want to frighten me with news of the enemy's reinforcements?' With other

¹ 23rd Tai, Prabhava.

² See p. 338 *supra*. This is either an enormous exaggeration of the facts, or else a confused rumour of Boscawen's coming, news of which had already reached Fort St. David. See *Country Correspondence, 1748*, pp. 7-8.

angry exclamations, he went into Madame's room and I went into writer Ranga Pillai's office till the storm should blow over. But what would he have said if I had given him all the news in my letter? It says, 'Only five ships have arrived, but nine left in March; two hundred chests of silver, bales of broad-cloth, chests of coral and the other Europe goods they generally bring have arrived; the other ships will arrive in five or six days. Though the capture of Madras was not known, five hundred men have been sent, as Mr. Morse had previously written for reinforcements; out of those already arrived two hundred have been landed, more will come ashore to-day or to-morrow, and the rest will be brought by the other ships. Two or three Bengal ships have arrived with silk and other Bengal goods, bringing also the wives of Mr. Morse and Mr. Croke. As soon as the other ships arrive, they mean to attack Pondichery. Mutyâlu who was sent to Nâsir Jang is on his return, and they are arranging to send people to meet him either this side of the Dâmalcheruvu Pass or on his arrival at Arcot.'

If he heard these things, how angry he would be! Indeed his nature is such that one should always tell him his enemies are weak and helpless. But if I were to do so, he would afterwards ask, 'Why did you tell me this? Why did you deceive me?' So, knowing his nature, I appear to mock the enemy and speak lightly of their deeds, giving him the news little by little, that he may thus gradually

learn their strength. But this time he got angry at the very beginning of my story, and rushed into Madame's room before I could tell him all the news. His anger was unspeakable, so I went away, to await a more fitting time to tell him.

Besides this, for the last two months, and for the last month especially, Madame has been regularly sending men to get news from Fort St. David and writing the news in French. So I think I must not take too great an interest in the Fort St. David news or do much in it. I must only make suggestions now and then, for, if I appear too prominent in the matter, Madame will be angry, and I shall profit in neither wealth nor spirit. So I have resolved to have as little to do with it as I can.

Shâhji Râjâ,¹ son of Sarabhôji Râjâ, has sent hither,

¹ Who this man really was is obscure. It will be remembered that Sarabhôji was Râjâ of Tanjore from about 1712 to 1727, that he was succeeded by his brother Tukhôji who reigned till 1735, and was succeeded by his son, Bâvâ Sâhib (or Ekôji). The last named was succeeded by his wife, in 1737. She was driven out, apparently in the same year, by a person calling himself Shâhji. Her chief supporter was called Siddôji; and when the latter defeated Shâhji, Shâhji entered into the well-known negotiations with Dumas which resulted in the French acquiring Kârikâl. However Shâhji's party succeeded in driving out Siddôji, and Shâhji apparently continued to reign in Tanjore till he in turn was expelled (or killed) by Pratâb Singh in July 1739. Orme (i. 108) considers Shâhji and Pratâb Singh to have been both sons of Sarabhôji; Duff (ed. 1912, i. 462) says both were sons of Tukhôji; the Tanjore District Manual (p. 775) alleges that there were two princes between Bâvâ Sâhib's wife and Pratâb Singh—one Shâhji, son of Sarabhôji, and the other the 'Syajee' of Duff, son of Tukhôji. I do not know on what evidence this last is based; but I suspect it to be an attempt to reconcile Orme's and Duff's versions. It is moreover not supported by the Memoir which was written by Elias Guillot, Governor of Negapatam, in 1739. This indicates pretty plainly that the prince who drove out Bâvâ Sâhib's wife was the man whom Pratâb Singh drove out. I may further observe that neither

with a letter from M. Le Riche¹ at Kârikâl, Koyâjî Kâttagai, who is son of Sundarôji Kâttagai who was Shâhji Râjâ's maternal grandfather. Koyâjî Kâttagai reached Arumpâtai Pillai's Choultry, whence he sent his gumasta with the letter, that I might speak about the matter to the Governor. I did so, saying that if we made Koyâjî a daily allowance and would fulfil his desire, he would come into the town; otherwise he would return. The Governor said he would see about it. So to-day I said, 'It is [] days since Koyâjî Kâttagai arrived; he has no money and I have had to advance him 10 pagodas. If he is sent away now without anything being done for him, he should be given 100 pagodas for his expenses.'—'But why should I give him anything?' the Governor asked.—I answered, 'If we do not give, no one else will.'—'But,' he asked, 'what use can he be to us?' I said I could not tell until I

Orme nor Duff appear to be right. Orme was certainly wrong in calling Pratâb Singh, son of Sarabhôji; and Duff is opposed by all the authorities I am acquainted with in calling 'Syajee', son of Tukhôji, provided that 'Syajee' is to be identified with Shâhji. The Dutch Memoir already cited is strongly in favour of this identification, and the Dutch were exceedingly well informed on Tanjore affairs. I take it then that the Shâhji who reigned from 1737 to 1739 claimed to be a son of Sarabhôji; whether he was or not I cannot pretend to decide, nor yet whether the person whose uncle visited Pondichery was the actual prince who reigned. Guyon says that Pratâb Singh stifled his rival in a bath of milk; but Guyon's authority on such a point does not count for much; and I think it probable that the man who now was approaching Duplex and who at the close of the year 1748 was to visit Fort St. David with more success, was the Shâhji who had reigned over Tanjore.

¹ The letter is dated October 29, 1747. It is a mere letter of introduction. [P.R.—No. 83.]