

I have heard and I have read in books also, extraordinary accounts of the cunningness of women. But Madame Dupleix surpasses them all a thousand times. The Europeans, both men and women, and Hindus and Muhammadans alike, all curse her as a pupil of the Devil who will ruin the town. M. Dupleix sometimes remembers what she is, but often he forgets. So affairs are carried on at a venture, not according to wise management.

At half-past ten the Second visited the Governor; and when he had gone, the latter, calling me into the hall, said, 'Have you heard about the accusations against you? Your enemies say you are moving your goods away to your uncle's house and that you yourself are only awaiting an opportunity of deserting us. They say that you and Mutta-yappan are to share the money made by robbery, deceit and theft at Madras, and that is why you wish to leave.'—I replied, 'Sir, consider this. They bring false charges against me in order to make you suspect my conduct and to drive me from your favour. They tried before, but failed. They have done this only to involve me in trouble. If only your honour will be pleased to hear me for a quarter of an hour, you will see who is guilty—I or my accusers—and whence these stories spring.'—'I know where they come from,' he answered; 'they are childish, and you need not worry over them. Ten thousand such charges cannot injure you, so long as you serve the Company diligently with all your heart.'—

'But, sir,' I exclaimed, 'let not the matter be so dismissed. If you will be pleased to hear me, in two words—' But he cut me short. 'It's a childish matter,' he said. 'I know all about it. You may go.' And he went into his private room. I feared he would grow angry if I said more, and so I thought it best to wait till later. I had meant to tell him that his wife was the cause of all this; that because he had treated me with great favour, my name was spread abroad to Mysore, Aurangabad, and even Delhi; that even one like the Nawâb of Arcot did not pronounce it lightly and that Nizâm-ul-mulk himself regarded me with respect; that all this was because I was his slave; and that if Madame Dupleix was angry and slighted me, it would reflect upon him and other people would cease to respect me or pay heed to my words. That was what I had meant to say, but as the very words were in my mouth, the Governor said, 'I know all about it. Am I Dumas?' And so he left me. I must therefore speak about this another time.

But how malicious must she be to invent such lying stories! She tells all she meets, Europeans, men and women, that I have bewitched her husband and closed his eyes, that I plunder the town and bribe him, that he no longer looks after business but leaves all to me, that I have become Governor instead of M. Dupleix, and that she has never seen a man so fond of any one not his wife. Such are her accusations. God alone must look to this; there is no other help.

*Tuesday, November 28.*¹—When I went to the Governor's this morning, he asked what news there was. I told him that three or four hundred bullock-loads of paddy were coming in daily, and that the price was steadily falling; that one could get five measures and a half more of Manakattai,² five more of Kâr,³ and four and a half more of Sambâ⁴ than before; and that the prices⁵ would be lower still in ten days, for the Kâr harvest had been good. He said that it was too early to fix the price. I agreed that if it was fixed, less might be brought in, and that it would fix itself. I then told him that the only news from Fort St. David was that Mr. Griffin, the Commander, had been ashore for a day, and that his three ships were cruising off our roads; also that they were finding work for the poor people in fixing and moving guns on the walls of the Fort and town.

As it was then noon, I came home. At about six o'clock I went to M. Delarthe. We spoke of Madame Dupleix' false and unreasonable charges against me, and he said that he had heard from Europeans that whenever she meets any of them, she begins at once to tell them that I plunder the town and bribe her husband with my spoils, and that I have so blinded him that I am practically master of

¹ 16th Kârttigai, Prabhava.

² A coarse variety of rice harvested in October.

³ A kind of rice harvested in October.

⁴ Fine rice, harvested in January and February.

⁵ Prices of food-grains are still quoted in so many measures for the rupee. As prices fall, the number of measures increase. Ranga Pillai probably refers to the number of measures sold per pagoda.

the place. I told him I thought it would be wrong to tell all the groundless charges she had made against me, and mentioned only two or three which were well-known. When I took leave, I asked him to tell M. Legou not to listen to Madame's false reports. He gave me a two-edged dagger, with many compliments, and said, 'If you had seen the Council's despatch to the Company about your appointment as Chief Dubâsh, you would understand your position,' and thereon he read a copy of it to me. I thanked him and came home at nine o'clock.

*Wednesday, November 29.*¹—The Governor sent for me this morning and I went to him at half-past seven. He got up and took me into his room. He said to me, 'You know that from the time M. Dulaurens went to Madras, he constantly disobeyed my orders, and that his fraud in the matter of the cotton sale was brought before Council². He has

¹ 17th Kârttigai, Prabhava.

² By a resolution of the next day Dulaurens and Gosse were excluded from the Council and Panon was suspended, for this cotton business. The charge was that, although 22 pagodas (at 345 rupees per hundred) was offered per bahar at the outcry, the cotton was sold privately to one Bâlu Chetti for 22 pagodas (at 320 rupees per hundred) per bahar. In other words they sold the cotton at 70.4 rupees the bahar instead of 75.9. Dulaurens, etc., declared absolutely that no more than 20 pagodas was offered at the outcry, but admitted that after the sale Bâlu Chetti had allowed them to take a share in the bargain. *Cons. Sup. à la Compagnie*, November 30 and December 24, 1747; also Dulaurens, etc. *au Cons. Sup.* November 26, 1747. (P.R.—Nos. 7 and 16). If the accused were not guilty, they were extraordinarily imprudent; but Dupleix' efforts to make matters appear worse are very characteristic. According to La Bourdonnais, Dulaurens had had a dispute with Dupleix over the charges the latter wished to bring against La Bourdonnais. *Mémoire pour La Bourdonnais, Pièces Justificatives*, No. cxxx.