

M. Dubois was much annoyed at these exemptions and ordered the three Muchiyars to be sent for. On their entrance, he said, 'Pay your share of the tax, according to the list; or you will be put in the dungeon.' They replied that they were but coolies and could not pay. They were ordered to be shut up in the dungeon unless they paid their share, namely, 7,000 rupees. Accordingly they are in the dungeon. I then said, 'Nothing is procurable in the town now, and nothing is being brought in in spite of the proclamation by beat of tom-tom that the duties are remitted. Owing to this tax those who have gone away will not return, and those who are still here will go away. If for another 15 days people are to be troubled for money like this, there will be nothing in the town, and you will perceive that my words have come to pass.' It would take 20 sheets to write what is going on. When I had had my say, M. Leyrit told M. Dubois that, if people were asked to pay according to this list, there would be a panic in the town and hell would be let loose. M. Dubois asked whether in that case, the list should be abandoned. M. Leyrit observed that it would not induce even those mentioned in the original list to pay. It was then twelve. Before coming home I told M. Leyrit that I could not attend to-morrow as

I was not willing to be responsible for this reproach any longer, and desired him to appoint another for the work. But M. Leyrit replied very respectfully that I should not trouble about that and that I should come. Then I took leave and came home.

*Thursday, June 12.*¹—I went to the Fort at half-past eight this morning. M. Leyrit, the Governor, was going upstairs after hearing mass at the church. M. Dubois came hastily to ask the Governor about the new list and talked with him. M. Courtin came at half-past ten and ordered the people mentioned in the list to be sent for. Those present were brought, and, when questioned, each explained his circumstances. I pleaded for them in the proper manner and said, 'These are very poor and cannot pay. Vadamalai and others belong to Sônâchalam and Râmalingan has included [them] out of jealousy.'—'Is this true?' they asked. I rejoined, 'Am I telling a lie? A mere glance at them will convince you.' Thereon they omitted many persons on the ground that the statements were false. I then gave an account stating therein that some had gone out and that others were not known. Then they questioned Saravanan of the dancing-girls' caste. He replied, 'I belong to

¹ 2nd Ani, Vikrama.

the dancing-girls' caste, the members of which dance in the temples and live by selling their body to a certain man for two or four fanams a night. That is all we have to live on. Is the Company so poor as to need money collected from us?' Thus he replied plainly and I spoke with greater force in their favour. But M. Leyrit, thinking that Saravanan must have much money as he is the brother of a dancing-girl, said, 'This Seigneur¹ wants to collect money from you and pay it to the Company, so 1,000 rupees has been set against your name; you must give at least 500 rupees.'—'Nothing,' he replied. 'You must give something at least,' M. Leyrit continued. Again the other answered that he had nothing. When M. Dubois was informed, he replied roughly, 'You only speak thus because you want to get rid of the tax altogether,' and he ordered Saravanan to be imprisoned. Then the rest were questioned and sent away. As M. Leyrit's real object is to get the present list cancelled, he said mockingly to M. Dubois that the man who made the list, could only have meant to disgrace him¹ and falsify his statements. M. Dubois' face fell at this remark. M. Leyrit and M. Courtin offered, if M. Dubois thought he had a case, to speak to M. Lally

¹ i.e., Dubois.

along with him. It was then twelve; when they set out to go home, they saw peons and others who had been assessed gathered outside. They asked who they were, and on learning that they were those who had been assessed, they ordered them to go away. Thus M. Leyrit and M. Courtin have excused many from the tax. M. Dubois' face fell yet more at this and he went away.

The Governor then turned to me and said, 'Don't stay away, but come daily.' I thanked him, saying that, with his favour, I would come, and told those there who had been taxed to thank the Governor and pray that God should bless him. They did so to the Governor's great pleasure. Then I came home. There is a list which may be seen of persons who have been exempted from the tax.

As the Chettis had been unable to pay more than a half or a quarter of their share of the tax, the *nattâr* who made out the list was sent for and questioned and he replied that it was true. M. Leyrit said, 'How can we expect them to comply with our demand for 100 or 200 when they can't even pay six rupees out of every ten rupees set upon them?' Thus he remitted their tax also. I was then asked about Chenji Chetti's affair. I replied, 'As the son agreed yesterday to pay 4,000 rupees according to the old list, can the father be