

letters to him as ordered. I replied that the Company's letters were already in the box, and, as the time was opportune when I went to the Fort, I had put them in. He observed that the news contained in my letters had been written to him confidentially by one in Europe. I asked if he had not seen the Company's letters to the council. He replied that he had not, for the packet had not yet been opened.

*Saturday, September 17.*<sup>1</sup>—I hear that the Tamil, Telugu, etc. merchants at Cuddalore and officials, etc. have sent their wives, children and relations with their money to Ariyalûr, Udaiyârpâlaiyam, etc. places, so that only one or two remain in each house, and the Europeans who have sent their women and money to Negapatam, Tranquebar, etc. places are preparing themselves for war and collecting munitions. As this is a time of loss for them, the sight of our army will strike them with such alarm and fear, however ready they may be, that they will deliver up the fort and become prisoners of war. I have learnt this already. In Madras itself people are dashing one pot against another, just as they are at Cuddalore and Fort St. David, and are removing in great haste their goods, money, families and

<sup>1</sup> 5th Purattâsi, Îswara.

children to Pulicat, etc. places. The *Shâstras*<sup>1</sup> say that the English will lose all their factories in India; what is now happening confirms it. I conclude therefore that the French will conquer and rule the country up to Delhi. The French armies have marched fully equipped to the high ground at Perumbai Lakshmana Nâyakkan's *mantapam*. It is said that M. the Chevalier de Dure will set out to take command on Wednesday or Thursday.

*Sunday, September 18.*<sup>2</sup>—This morning I went to the Fort and paid my respects to M. the Chevalier de Soupire as he was entering the *Gouvernement* after hearing mass at church. I then went to the sorting-godown and stayed there. Two or three Europeans who came said, 'On the third, fourth, fifth or sixth January 1757 (corresponding with 23rd, 24th, 25th [or 26th] *Mârgali* last) two of the St. Paul's priests at Paris, having removed their usual *padré's* dress and put on layman's costume, with concealed weapons, went to the palace of King Louis XV as if to talk with him; but while the King was listening to their conversation, they stabbed him in the loins and he fell down before they could repeat the blow. Immediately these two

<sup>1</sup> i.e., astrologers learned in the *Shâstras*.

<sup>2</sup> 6th Purattâsi, Îswara.

were seized and imprisoned, their bodies cut with a chisel, and a corrosive substance poured over them. When they were still suffering from these burns, they were asked who had sent them to murder the King, but they replied that they themselves had resolved to do the act and had not been instigated by any. In spite of all their pain, they refused to betray those who had set them on to murder the King, and died; but as the King is destined to live long and enjoy more extensive dominions and fortune, he recovered from his wounds. News of this reached the King of Portugal. The St. Paul's priests have twice before tried to stab the King but in vain, but this time they have succeeded in wounding him. It is not known what has happened to the St. Paul's priests. This news has been brought by this Portuguese ship.<sup>1</sup> Having listened to this conversation, I went to my office in the flower-garden. In *Kârttigai*, *Krôdhana*,<sup>2</sup> Sîtârâma Jôsier of Vaippûr said that in the year *Krôdhana*<sup>3</sup> and in the 37th year of my

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the attempt of Damians on the King's life, at Versailles, January 5, 1757. He had been a servant of the Jesuits, and both that body and members of the *Parlement de Paris* were accused of complicity, though without ground. Damians was executed with great barbarity on March 28. The affair was one of a long list of events leading to the attack on the Jesuits a few years later.

<sup>2</sup> November-December 1745.

<sup>3</sup> 1745-1746.

age,<sup>1</sup> my life would be in danger by a weapon, and suggested means by which I might avert it. He again wrote that in the year *Dhâthu* and in the 48th year of my age,<sup>2</sup> danger would be caused by a weapon and added that his predictions never failed, but he could not suggest any means by which I could avert Brahma's writing, but that if my wife died, I might escape. He also read the leaf declaring that the King would be displeased in the time of the sixth Governor. He then made several calculations with cowries and said that, in the cycle of Saturn, there would be 56 side roots and 4 tap roots—60 roots in all, that by the year *Dhâthu* or the 48th year of my age,  $59\frac{3}{4}$  of the roots had been broken and only a quarter remained, and that too would be a portion of the southern tap-root, so that therefore I should live a long life because in Libra, Jupiter's influence was predominant. He again made more calculations with cowries, and asked if the present King of France, who is the lord of the Governor of Pondichery, was crowned and seated on the throne in the month of *Arppisi*. I mentioned his capture of Madras, his marriage, the number of children (male and female) in the King's household and

<sup>1</sup> Ranga Pillai was born in March 1709.

<sup>2</sup> 1756-1757.

the number of deaths every year, the marriages celebrated each year, the amounts spent in the town on cattle, poultry, wheat, bread, etc., and the number of houses and temples, and had written descriptions of all the members of the royal family with the dates of their births and marriages and the dates on which children were born to them. Books of this nature are often received and there were two such—one a short one, dated 1733 and the other dated [17]40. Both mentioned the King's coronation on the 25th October 1722. I therefore said that the date of the coronation was the 13th *Arppisi*, *Subhakrut*. He replied, 'According to your horoscope Jupiter in the cycle of Libra occupies the position of a crowned king seated on his throne. That is why I asked whether the month was *Arppisi*.' As I had not known why he was making such calculations, I had not understood why he put that question. On the 13th *Mârgali*, *Dhâthu*,<sup>1</sup> my single-tusked elephant ran at me, but I managed to escape. Again on the 26th of *Mârgali*<sup>2</sup> my palankin was broken in the Vellâla Street. He first said that the danger from a weapon was due to the influence of Jupiter and asked if the French King was crowned in the month of *Arppisi*. Although I had not understood at first why he

<sup>1</sup> December 24, 1756.<sup>2</sup> January 6, 1757.

questioned me, yet the escape of the French King when he was stabbed with a weapon in *Mârgali*, made everything clear to me. I am sure this King will enjoy more prosperity, and conquer the Muhammadan kingdoms in India, as Sîtârâma Jôsier has predicted. So the *Shâstras* are true; moreover what Subbâ Jôsier (Sîtârâma Jôsier's elder brother's son) has said will prove true also. I think therefore that I shall share the King's prosperity, that Appâvu, if it be his fate, will enjoy the like at the hands of the King's people who will conquer these countries; that this time of prosperity will begin, as the astrologers have said, from the end of *Mârgali* or beginning of *Tai* and continue increasing. I write what I believe.

*Thursday, September 22.*<sup>1</sup>—I hear that Sampâti Râo (Anwar-ud-dîn Khân's dîwân at Madras) has been seized and sent in a dhooli to Arcot and put in irons there<sup>2</sup> owing to information given by Muhammad 'Alî Khân (Anwar-ud-dîn Khân's son) at Madras, to Mr. Pigot, the Governor there. The cause of Muhammad 'Alî Khân's enmity against Sampâti Râo is this. Sampâti Râo always slighted Muhammad 'Alî

<sup>1</sup> 10th *Purattâsi*, *Îswara*.<sup>2</sup> Sampâti Râo was seized under a misapprehension by Captain Maskelyne at Arcot. Ranga Pillai seems quite misinformed about this episode. Cf. Orme, ii, 240, etc.