

APPENDIX.

Extract from the Preface to the Madras edition of 1883 reprinted by permission of Messrs. Higginbotham & Co.

The Fifth Report of the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company * * * may perhaps without exaggeration be termed, the most valuable and the most generally accepted authority on the early history of Indian land tenures and revenue.

Sir COLLEY SCOTLAND,* in delivering the judgment of the High Court in a leading case on the position and rights of certain land-holders in this Presidency, said :—

“The learned counsel on both sides rested their arguments upon the 5th Report of the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, presented to the House of Commons in 1812 (Vol. 2 of the Edition of Report published by Messrs. Higginbotham), as setting forth the true historical view; and certainly we could hardly have a more authentic and instructive guide in forming our conclusion, containing, as the Report no doubt does, the substance of all the information derivable from the official records and reports in the possession or power of the Company's Government.”

The Right Honorable Sir BARNES PEACOCK, in delivering the judgment of the Privy Council which confirmed the judgment from which the above extract is taken, speaks of the Fifth Report as “a work of great research.”†

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (p. 351, Vol. XV, Calcutta Review, 1851) says of the Fifth Report :—

“This report is a mine of useful information. Some of Munro's best fiscal Statements were reprinted in the Appendix to the Report.”

The appendices to this celebrated Report form, to a great extent, the groundwork upon which the report itself rests. These appendices contain besides the writings of Sir THOMAS MUNRO, those of Sir JOHN SHORE; of Mr. C. N. WHITE, Secretary to Government and Member of the Board of Revenue, 1787-1800; of Mr. WILLIAM THACKERAY, Member of the Board of Revenue, 1806-10, Chief Secretary to Government, 1810-13, Member of Council, 1820-23; of Mr. JOHN HODGSON, Member of the Board of Revenue, 1803-18, Member of Council, 1819-20; of Mr. LIONEL PLACE, Collector of Chingleput, 1796-99, Member of the Board of Revenue, 1802, and of others of the same stamp. These are some of the “giants” amongst whom it was said of Sir THOMAS MUNRO, that he was “a head and shoulders taller than his brother giants.”‡

* Page 220, Vol. VI, M. H. C. R., 1871.

† Page 314, Vol. I, Law Reports, 1873-74.

‡ Page 203, Sir A. J. Arbuthnot's Memoir of Munro.

It is therefore not surprising that the Fifth Report is still recognized as one of the highest authorities which can be quoted.

It was issued just before the question of renewing the Company's Charter for the twenty years from 1813 to 1833 came before Parliament. If it is compared with the Reports of 1832 and 1853, which were issued with reference to the two subsequent renewals of that Charter, it will be seen how far it surpasses them both in depth of research and broadness of view.

To explain this, one or two facts may be mentioned. The Report was drafted by an official friend of Sir THOMAS MUNRO'S and at a time when Sir THOMAS MUNRO was at home and could give him the advantage of his experience. This gentleman was Mr. JAMES CUMMING. In 1812 he was a senior Clerk at the Board of Control, and was afterwards Superintendent of the Revenue and Judicial Departments of the Control Office. His great admiration for Sir THOMAS MUNRO finds expression in a letter quoted at p. 7, Vol. II, Gleig's Life of MUNRO. With reference to the

"Opposition which some of MUNRO'S measures encountered from Members of the Civil Service, and to the jealousy which at one time was felt in connection with his employment on duties considered to belong exclusively to them,"* it was natural that, in the days before he became Governor, he should keep up a correspondence with a friend at Court. This friend, it will be seen from pages 425-452, Vol. I, and p. 409, Vol. III, Gleig's Life of MUNRO, was Mr. JAMES CUMMING.

One of the Members of the Board of Control under whom Mr. CUMMING served, has borne testimony to his valuable services in connection with this report. The Right Honorable JOHN SULLIVAN, in his Paper on the Land Revenue of India, says of Mr. CUMMING:—

"He had largely contributed in preparing the Fifth Report presented by the Commons in 1812; his talents had been unremittingly devoted to the discharge of his public duties, and he died a martyr to his zeal and exertions."†

The remarks of Mr. J. C. MARSHMAN, C.S.I. (History II, 272) on the same subject are also interesting in this connection. He says:—

"The failure of Lord CORNWALLIS' institutions was for the first time exposed in the celebrated Fifth Report of the House of Commons, drawn up by Mr. CUMMING, one of the ablest officers in the Board of Control. It took the public, who reposed entire confidence in the perfection of the system, completely by surprise; but it produced a salutary effect. It disposed of the dream of optimism, in which the public authorities had indulged, and directed their attention to those reforms which have now been zealously and successfully prosecuted for half a century."

* Page 202, Arbuthnot's Memoir of Munro.

† Page 50, App. Vol. III, (Rev.) Rep. Sel. Com. 1831-32.

Being thoroughly impressed with the belief that an endeavour to add to the value of a work which embodies the fruits of such distinguished labor, would be appreciated by all officers of the Revenue Department in this country, we have spared no effort to attain this end in the edition now offered to the public. We have accordingly had it carefully compared with the original Parliamentary Edition of 1812. A number of typographical errors, which unfortunately disfigure the edition of 1866, have now been corrected.

A reprint of the original Glossary to the report published by order of Parliament in 1813, is a new feature which it is believed will much increase the usefulness of the present edition.

This Glossary is the work of the eminent orientalist, CHARLES WILKINS.

It is believed that even in the public offices no copy of it is now available. Owing to the courtesy of an officer of the Revenue Department, who became possessed through a connection formerly high in office in Madras, of what is believed to be Sir THOMAS MUNRO'S copy of the Fifth Report, we have been placed in a position to add the results of Sir CHARLES WILKINS' researches to those of the other great men whose writings made the Fifth Report what it is.

The following notice of Sir CHARLES is taken from "Men whom India has known":—

"WILKINS, Sir CHARLES, was born in 1750, in the county of Somerset, and proceeded to Bengal as a writer in the E. I. Company's Service in 1770. His first employment was in the Secretary's Office, and then at Malda, where the Company had factories. He soon saw how essential it was for Government servants to acquire a knowledge of the native languages, and having studied and mastered Bengalee and Persian, he aimed at a higher object—to learn the sacred Sanscrit, and to revel in its mysterious literature and science. In a few years his exertions were crowned with complete success, though at that time there was neither dictionary nor grammar to assist the student. The Governor-General, Warren Hastings, took a particular interest in WILKINS' labours, and was anxious to see the result. Mr. WILKINS first sent him his translation of the *Bhāgavad gītā*, or dialogue between the incarnate god Krishna and his pupil Arjun—one of the many episodes of the great national Hindoo epic poem the *Mahābārata*. Mr. Hastings was so pleased with this exquisite specimen of ancient Brahmin theology and metaphysics, that he sent it home to the Court of Directors, requesting that they should publish and make it known. They printed it in 1785 at their own expense, and distributed numerous copies with their usual liberality.

"On Sir William Jones' arrival in India, his ardour for Oriental studies re-kindled, and he obtained the assistance and advice of Mr. WILKINS. WILKINS showed him his translation of the first four of the twelve books of the Institutes of Menu, and Jones was so pleased with it, that he asked him to discontinue the work, and allow him to finish it, as its objects were so much connected with his own legal pursuits. His request was generously complied with.

“A great difficulty existed in bringing out vernacular works at that time for want of good founts of type. Encouraged by Hastings, WILKINS began to experiment in casting some. He succeeded admirably, and Halhed’s Grammar of the Bengallee language was printed in 1778, with type cast by WILKINS himself. In fact, in the execution of the work, he was “obliged to charge himself with all the various occupations of the metallurgist, the engraver, the founder, and the printer.” He soon afterwards prepared a Persian fount of types, which was used for printing the Company’s Regulations for many years.

“Ill-health compelled him in 1786 to return to England, where, soon after his arrival, he published his translation of the *Hitopadesa*, or Fables of Pilpay, from the Sanscrit. In 1800, the E. I. Company decided upon having a Librarian for the large collection of MSS. which had fallen into their hands on the capture of Seringapatam and from other sources, and WILKINS was appointed to the office, which he retained till the day of his death. In 1806, he was made a visitor to Haileybury College in the Oriental Department, and he examined twice a year the whole of the students in the various Oriental languages taught at that establishment, as well as at Addiscombe. For the benefit of the College he published his excellent Sanscrit Grammar, and from the same motive in 1806, edited the first volume of a new edition of Richardson’s Persian and Arabic Dictionary. The 2nd volume appeared in 1810. WILKINS’ Grammar was really the first, but Colebrooke’s and others appeared before it, as when he was printing it, his house was burnt down and he lost not only the impression, but also his type. This misfortune prevented him from printing his Grammar for several years. A few sheets of this first impression are in the Marsden Library, King’s College, London. His last work was published in 1815, the Roots of the Sanscrit language. He contributed several valuable papers to the *Asiatic Researches*, Dalrymple’s *Oriental Repertory*, and the *Annals of Oriental Literature*. He was a Fellow of the Bengal Society, a member of the Institute of France, and was admitted to the honorary degree of D. C. L. in the university of Oxford. In 1825, the Royal Society of Literature presented him with the royal medal, bearing the following inscription: “Carolo WILKINS Literaturæ Sanscritæ Principi,” and soon after he was made a Knight of the Guelphic order.

“A cold, accompanied by influenza, terminated his valuable and active life on the 13th June 1836, at Baker Street, Portland Square, London. He was twice married, and left three daughters.”

As the Glossary to the Fifth Report now added to it was published contemporaneously with the Report itself, and is stamped by the authority of so great a name as that of Sir CHARLES WILKINS, it will probably be admitted that it is likely to be more useful for the purposes of this Report than Professor WILSON’S Glossary published more than forty years afterwards. * * *