

*" Diary of the Proceedings of William Gamull Farmer, Esquire,
Supravisor and Chief Magistrate of the Province of Malabar.*

" This day, by appointment of the Honorable Major-General Robert Abercromby, President and Governor of Bombay, the gentlemen of the Civil Service present at Calicut were summoned to attend at the Government House, late the English Factory, where the Commandant of the troops likewise attended with a numerous assemblage of officers and other gentlemen.

" The Battalion of grenadiers, forming two lines, was drawn up on the road leading from the General's encampment to the Government House ; the General was saluted with nineteen guns from six field-pieces in passing through the lines.

" Being arrived at the Government House, Major-General Abercromby read before all the persons assembled the following letter of instructions, which was then delivered to the Supravisor :—

" ' To WILLIAMS GAMULL FARMER, Esq.

" ' SIR,

" ' You are apprised of the reasons that have induced me to form a temporary Government for the ceded country, and the motives that have actuated me in the choice of a Chief Magistrate.

" ' The sovereignty acquired in these Provinces by the Honorable Company imposes serious duties on their representatives ; it is their duty to protect the persons and property of all ranks of subjects to administer unbiassed justice according to ancient laws and customs, but meliorated by the influence of our milder institutions, to respect religious opinions and established customs, to provide for the exigencies of Government by a fair and equal assessment, to diffuse the blessings of free intercourse and commerce, to preserve the rights of the superior class of subjects as far as is consistent with the general good, in fine to introduce good order and government where anarchy, oppression, and distress have long prevailed.

" ' These, Sir, are the duties imposed on the Honorable Company's representatives ; a knowledge of these duties actuated the Commissioners in recommending a system of government, and these must actuate you in the execution of it.

“ ‘The general rules by which you will be guided are clearly defined, and particular instructions will be framed for the several Departments under your control. In addition to those instructions, I have to request you will remember that abuses are more easily prevented than remedied. The principle of the present Government is not to seek emolument or create places for persons, but to grant moderate salaries, and hold out to the hopes and ambition of the younger servants the honorable and liberal situations that superior stations admit of. You will also recollect and impress it on the minds of the gentlemen under you that it is an arduous task, and requires zeal and exertion to fill with propriety newly established officers under a Government recently formed. This zeal is expected from you ; without it every effort to establish will but weaken our influence, and where merit is so indispensably required, it will be properly noticed and rewarded.

“ ‘To enable you to enter on the execution of your office, I have only to add that by authority of powers vested in me, I hereby appoint you to assume the temporary management of the ceded countries under the name and title of Supravisor and Chief Magistrate of the countries henceforth to be denominated the Province of Malabar.

“ ‘You will be subject to such orders and directions as you may receive from Government, or the Commissioners may think proper to give you, and at the termination of the Commission you will assume the same powers over the Chiefship of Tellicherry as are now held by them.

“ ‘Wishing you success in the execution of your duty,

“ ‘ I have, etc.,

“ ‘ (Signed) ROBERT ABERCROMBY.’

“ ‘After the delivery of this letter the Government thus established was saluted by twenty-one guns from the field-pieces placed in front of the Government House.

“ ‘The following oaths were then taken by the Supravisor ;—

“ *Revenue oath.*

“ ‘I, William Gamull Farmer, do promise and swear that I will, to the utmost of my endeavours, well and faithfully execute and discharge the duties of an officer of revenue reposed in and committed to me by the United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, and that I will not demand, take or accept, directly or indirectly, by myself or by any other person for my use, or on my behalf, of or from any Raja, Zemindar, Talukdar, Poligar, Renter, Ryot, or other person paying or liable to pay any tribute, rent, or tax to, or for the use of, the said United Company, any sum of

money or other valuable thing by way of gift, present or otherwise, over and above, or besides and except the actual tribute, rent, or tax authorized to be taken by and for the use of the said United Company, and that I will justly and truly account and answer for the same to the said United Company.

"So help me God !

"(Signed) W. G. FARMER.

"CALIOUT, }
"18th March 1793. }

"Sworn to before me.

"(Signed) ROBERT ABERCROMBY.

"Phouzdarry oath.

"I, William Gamull Farmer, Supravisor of the Province of Malabar and entrusted as the Chief Magistrate with Phouzdarry jurisdiction, do solemnly promise and swear that I will exert my best abilities for the preservation of the peace of the District over which my authority extends, and will act with impartiality and integrity, neither exacting or receiving, directly or indirectly, any fee or reward in the execution of the duties of my office other than such as the orders of Government do or may authorize me to receive.

"So help me God !

"(Signed) W. G. FARMER.

"CALIOUT, }
"18th March 1793. }

"Sworn to before me.

"(Signed) ROBERT ABERCROMBY.

"Sadar Adalat oath.

"I, William Gamull Farmer, Supravisor and Chief Magistrate of the Province of Malabar, do swear that I will administer justice to the best of my ability, knowledge and judgment, without fear, favor, promise or hope of reward, and that I will not receive, directly or indirectly, any present or nuzzer, either in money or in effects of any kind, from any party in any cause, or from any person whatsoever, on account of any suit to be instituted, or which may be depending, or have been decided in the Court of Sadar Adalat under my jurisdiction, nor will I knowingly permit any person or persons under my authority, or in my immediate service, to receive, directly or indirectly, any present or nuzzer, either in money or in effects of any kind, from any party in any cause, or from any person whatsoever, on account of any suit to be instituted, or which may be

depending, or have been decided in the Court of Sadar Adalat under my jurisdiction, and that I will render a true and faithful account of all sums received for deposits on causes, and fees of court, and of all expenditures.

"So help me God!

"(Signed) W. G. FARMAR.

"CALICUT,
"18th March 1793." }

"Sworn to before me.

"(Signed) ROBERT ABERCROMBY.

"James Stevens, Esquire, next took the necessary oaths as Superintendent of the southern Districts. Mr. Augustus William Handley, Senior Assistant to the Supravisor, and, as such, Judge of the Court of Adalat at Calicut, then also took the oaths appointed.

"After this Major-General Abercromby withdrew with the same ceremony he entered, the field-pieces saluting him with nineteen guns.

"The principal natives paid their respects. It was remarked as a propitious omen that the day of fixing a government for the Malabar Coast was the anniversary of the day on which it was ceded by Tippu in consequence of the treaty concluded with Earl Cornwallis at Seringapatam on the 18th March 1792."

The Governor, before his departure from the coast, further issued a circular¹ to all the Rajas and Chiefs explaining the purport and object of the measure which had thus taken effect. Agreeably to the plan, the ceded country was called the "PROVINCE OF MALABAR" and divided into two superintendencies, with a middle division directly under a Supravisor, as he was called, with superior political, revenue, and judicial powers and full control over the two Superintendents. His seat was fixed at Calicut. The Superintendents had revenue and magisterial powers. The headquarters of the Northern Superintendent were fixed at Tellicherry, with the districts from Chirakkal to Kurumbranad and Coorg under his control. The Southern Superintendent was stationed at Cherappullasseri, in charge of the districts from Parappanad to Chetwai together with the Cochin tribute. The military force stationed on the coast was subject to the sole requisition of the Supravisor, except in cases of "serious emergency." The Supravisor and Superintendents had also a number of assistants under them, and the Senior Assistant was Judge and Magistrate at Calicut. There was to be only one mint for the whole country, under the control of the Supravisor at Calicut. All interior customs were to be abolished and duties on foreign exports and imports were to be collected

¹ *Treaties, etc.*, ii. XXXII.

by Government. The Senior Commissioner, Mr. Farmer, was made the first Supravisor, and he thereupon vacated his seat on the Commission. Messrs. Galley and Stevens were appointed Northern and Southern Superintendents respectively and Mr. Handley as Senior Assistant. The remaining members of the Joint Commission then continued their labours with Mr. Jonathan Duncan as President.

The Coorg tribute was next settled¹ at Rs. 24,000 per annum. But disputes early commenced between this Raja and Tippu relative to their respective boundaries, and the latter's vakils complained also of the Kottayam Raja taking Wynad, which district the Commissioners were then of opinion was not ceded by the treaty. Two of them, Mr. Duncan and Major Dow, next proceeded to Cannanore to enquire into the alleged mortgage of the Laccadive Islands to Chovakkara Mussa and the land taken from the Bibi by the Chirakkal Raja. There they were joined by Mr. Page from Palghat, and engagements² were taken on the 11th and 13th April 1793 from the Bibi, binding her to pay up arrears and to pay a "moiety of whatever is the produce of my country according to the funds thereof, and out of the Rs. 20,000 annual profit which I reap from my trade with the Laccadives, I am also to pay the half to Government." And further stipulations provided for the future revision of the estimate of income, and for the sequestration, if need be, of the whole of the produce of the islands and of the islands themselves.

The pepper monopoly³ was next abolished in the south, while in the north it was limited to one-half of the produce to be taken in kind. Owing to some clashing between the authority exercised by the Joint Commission and by the Supravisor respectively, a uniform system of dealing with the pepper produce throughout the province was not introduced.

The Commissioners next turned their attention to the affairs of the Honourable Company's mortgaged district of Randattara, and an agreement⁴ was on 26th April 1793 entered into with the Achchanmar or Chiefs of that district, that on condition of the revenue of their estates being estimated at 20 per cent on garden produce and 15 per cent on rice lands, the rates which had prevailed since 1741, when the province was first mortgaged⁵ to the Company, and with an exemption in favor of temple lands and of their own houses, they renounced all future right to manage the district after the native fashion, with its fines and mulcts and presents and succession duties.

The waste lands of this district having been thus placed at the disposal of Government, a number of Native Christians who had fled from Canara and Mysore in consequence of Tippu's persecutions