

*Judgment of the Lords of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on the Appeal of Burra Lall Opendronath Sahee Deo v. The Court of Wards, from the High Court of Judicature, Bengal; delivered 14th May, 1877.*

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Present :

SIR JAMES W. COLVILLE.

SIR BARNES PEACOCK.

SIR MONTAGUE E. SMITH.

SIR ROBERT P. COLLIER.

THIS is a suit brought to recover the possession of the estates, which are said to comprise 7,000 villages, belonging to the impartible Raj of Nagpore Khoord; and the question raised in it is the right of succession to the Raj upon the death of the late Maharajah Juggurnath Sahee Deo, which happened on the 9th July, 1869.

In view of the advice which their Lordships propose humbly to tender to Her Majesty, it will not be expedient to discuss, on the present occasion, the conflicting evidence which the case presents. It will be sufficient to state shortly the undisputed facts.

The original Appellant, who died during the pendency of this Appeal, which is continued by his son, was a nephew of the late Maharajah, being the eldest son of his only brother, Kowur Sreenath Sahee, and claimed to be his heir, disputing the legitimacy of two children, still minors, namely, Pertab Oodey Nath Sahee Deo, who is alleged to be the son of the late Maharajah by his wife Ranee Luchun Kowur, the first Respondent, and Juggut Mohun Sahee Deo, alleged to be his son by his wife Ranee Komul Kowur, the second Respondent. These

minors are represented in the Suit and the present Appeal by the Collector exercising the functions of the Court of Wards in Chota Nagpore.

The case was tried in the first instance by the Judicial Commissioner of Chota Nagpore (Colonel Rowlatt), who held that both the minors were illegitimate, and that the Appellant was entitled to the Raj. This judgment was reversed on Appeal by a Division Bench of three Judges of the High Court of Bengal.

The late Maharajah succeeded to the Raj on the death of his father, Gobindnath, in 1822, being then about the age of nineteen. His only brother, Sreenath, had three sons, Burra Lall, the Appellant, and two others, usually called Manjhil Lall, and Chota Lall. Sreenath died in 1848. The family was joint, and Sreenath and his sons lived with the Maharajah in the ancestral family residence at Palkote, until the Maharajah removed from it to Bhowro in 1865.

The affairs of the late Maharajah's zemindary were managed by his brother Sreenath, and on his death, Burra Lall succeeded him as manager. These facts appear from a petition presented by the late Maharajah to Government in 1848, in which he expresses great confidence in his nephew. In 1852 Burra Lall was dismissed from the management of the Raj, but was reinstated as manager in 1860. In 1863 he was again and finally removed from the management, and from that time enmity existed between him and the Maharajah.

It is asserted by Burra Lall in his evidence that his dismissal was on both occasions brought about by Gopal Sahee, an illegitimate son of the Maharajah, and Mahal Sahee, a Gomastah. These persons, it is alleged, acquired and exercised great influence over the Maharajah, obtained the management of his property, and were the principal actors in the conspiracy which is charged in the plaint, namely, to put forward two children born of other parents as the sons of the Maharajah, one by Ranee Luchun, the other by Ranee Komul.

At the time the Maharajah left Palkote to go to Bhowro he had four wives. The senior was the Maharanee or Burra Ranee, who was a lady of high rank, the daughter of a Maharajah. The next was

called the Koonwur Ranee; the third was Ranee Luchun; and the fourth Ranee Komul, who had then been married about ten years.

The Maharajah had no legitimate offspring when he left Palkote. The Burra Ranee had given birth to a son in 1834, who died on the day he was born; he was her only child. The Koonwur Ranee was childless. Ranee Luchun had had only one child, a daughter, who was born in 1856, about two years after her marriage, and died within a year of its birth. Ranee Komul had never given birth to a child.

The Maharajah left Palkote for Bhowro in July, 1865, taking with him Ranees Luchun and Komul, and leaving the Maharanee and his second wife at Palkote. He was then about sixty-two years old. On the 23rd March, 1866, nine months after leaving Palkote, Ranee Luchun, it is said, gave birth to Pertab Oodey; and in less than a month afterwards, namely, on the 19th April, 1865, Ranee Komul, it is said, gave birth to Juggut Mohun.

On the way to Bhowro, the Maharajah stopped at Nagpheni, and there married a girl of the age of twelve years, who accompanied him to Bhowro.

The Maharajah had no residence of his own at Bhowro, but occupied there a house belonging to one of his retainers.

A few months after the arrival of the party at Bhowro a report reached Palkote that the Ranees, Luchun and Komul, were both pregnant. This appears from a paragraph in a Petition in Lunacy, presented on the 30th December, 1865, by Burra Lall to Mr. Oliphant, the Deputy-Commissioner of the district, alleging that the Maharajah was then of unsound mind, and incompetent to manage his affairs, and praying that his estates might be placed under the management of the Court of Wards, under Act XXXV of 1865.

The application in lunacy failed.

The report that the Ranees were pregnant may have arisen from the fact that the *punchumrit*, a ceremony usual in the fifth month of pregnancy, had been performed. It took place in the case of Ranee Luchun in the month of November, and in that of Ranee Komul in December, 1865. It is common ground to both parties that all the ceremonies which

usually take place before and after the birth of a child were performed, that is to say, the *punchumrit* in the fifth month, and the *ugunasnan* in the ninth month of pregnancy; those after the birth being, the *chuttee* on the sixth, the *burrhee* on the twelfth, and the *ekaisi* on the twenty-first days. The birth of the first boy was notified by the Maharajah in several petitions to the officers of Government on the day following the birth, in which the child is styled "Doobraj" the usual title of a Maharajah's eldest son, and to these communications congratulatory answers were received. Similar notifications were made on the birth of the other boy. The Maharajah continued at Bhowro, the children living with him until his death in 1869.

The case of the Respondents is that the minors are the sons of the Ranees; that Ranee Luchun gave birth to the Doobraj in the presence of four of her own servants from Palkote, a woman called Puddum acting as midwife. That Ranee Komul also gave birth to Juggut Mohun, in the presence of her four Palkote servants, Puddum again acting as midwife.

The Appellant does not rest on a mere denial of the Respondents' case, but undertakes to show that the two boys were the children of other parents. He denies that either of the Ranees was pregnant at Bhowro. He affirms that Pertab Oodey was the son of one Gudaee, a man of low caste, and his mistress Oormilla, and that he was carried into the apartments of Ranee Luchun a few hours after his birth, and passed off as a child of which she had just been delivered; and that Juggut Mohun was the son of one Gungnath by his wife Ugundh, to whom she gave birth in Ranee Komul's apartments, and who was passed off as the son of the last-named Ranee.

This case, in its details, involves a charge of conspiracy against Gopal Sahee and the other persons, including the Ranees, who are alleged to have been concerned in putting forward these children. On the other hand, if that case be untrue, the Appellant and his partizans have conspired to make a false charge to deprive legitimate heirs of their succession. Each case, if the testimony of the witnesses in support of it is believed, is completely proved; but as both cannot be true, there has been on one side or the other a deliberate conspiracy,

supported by a mass of perjured witnesses. The difficulty of finding the way to the truth in this conflict of evidence is greatly increased by the undoubted fact, which is adverted to by both the Courts below, that there is much evidence on each side to which it is impossible to give credit.

This being the general position of the case, so far as regards the testimony of the witnesses, the evidence to be derived from the books which were brought into Court becomes of great value in determining the question on which side the truth lies ; but, unfortunately, from the manner in which the High Court has dealt with them, they have become an element of disturbance in the case, embarrassing to those who are called on to decide it.

The most important books are the rozenamchias, or journals, containing daily entries of the receipts and disbursements in the Maharajah's household. Besides the original journals, there is a book containing, not a literal copy, but a summary in more or less detail of the entries in the journals from 1st Assin, 1922, to 30th Bhadoon, 1923. (The dates are thus given in the Judgment of the Judicial Commissioner (Record, p. 572), but in the exhibit itself the latter date is 18th Bhadoon.) This last book was sent to the Court of Gya during the lunacy proceedings, and was made up from the original journals, for the purpose of being so sent.

The other books are a bhundar or storekeeper's book, and two registers of the attendances of servants.

All these books, except that sent to the Court of Gya, were taken possession of by Mr. Webster, the Commissioner, the day after the Maharajah died, and handed over to the Court of Wards.

It appears that the original books were brought into Court in the present suit on the 19th May, and that from the Court of Gya on the 29th June, 1870 ; but no attention appears to have been directed to the entries in them until all the witnesses on both sides had been examined. This appears from a Petition filed by the Respondents' Vakeel, alleging that "artifice" had been used in the book in which the names of Oormilla and Gudaee are entered ; that "it was only yesterday, that on the

book being opened, he came to know of this, or he would have filed several refutations of it," and praying that the book kept by the late Maharajah's Treasurer, Bachun Lall, might be sent for. On the 2nd September, 1870, the Judge made an Order rejecting the Petition, on the ground that it had been presented "after the case for the Plaintiff and the Defendant had been closed."

On the same 2nd September the Appellants examined Bhopal Ray, and on the 3rd Seetul Pershad, on the subject of the books; and on the latter day Mahal Sahee and Dabee Churn were examined by the Respondents respecting them.

It is to be noticed that Seetul Pershad had been examined in the suit by the Respondents, and it would seem from the exhibits in the suit that he had been appointed by each of the Ranees her agent to defend the present suit on her behalf. (Record, p. 141.)

The rozenamchas are said by Bhopal Ray and Seetul Pershad to be signed by the Maharajah and some of his officers (not always the same), and the one which is principally impeached, viz., that from 1st Cheyt, 1923, to 22nd Sawun, is said by both these witnesses to be "all written by Seetul Pershad." Both also say it bears the Maharajah's signature, but there is a difference in their evidence as to the other signatures. Bhopal says it is signed by Bhunjun Lall, the Treasurer, Mahal Sahee, and Kustooree Lall, whereas Seetal says it is signed "at the end" by the Maharajah, Gopal Sahee, and Bhopal. Speaking of another rozenamcha, however, Bhopal says, "it used to be signed daily," and the apparent difference in the evidence may perhaps be reconciled by the fact that Seetul is speaking of the signatures at the end of the book, whilst Bhopal may be referring to those in other parts of it.

Mahal Sahee denies that the rozenamcha commencing the 1st Cheyt was written wholly by Seetal Pershad. He says it has been written partly by Seetal, "the remainder by others whose hand-writing I do not recognize." He also says he recognizes some of the signatures in the book as the Maharajah's, but some he does not recognize. He admits that the book produced from the Gya Court, commencing 1st Assin, 1922, was that sent from

Bhowro to the Court, and that it has the signatures of the Maharajah, Bhopal Rai, and Gopal Sahee.

Dabee Chum denies that the book commencing 1st Cheyt is one coming from the Maharajah's office, but he is the only witness who says so.

Both the Courts in India have regarded the entries in these books as tests of the truthfulness of the case on the one side or the other, but have been led by them to directly opposite conclusions.

It would seem, from the Judgment of the Judicial Commissioner, that the genuineness of two only of the entries had been challenged before him, and that unsuccessfully. He treated the whole as genuine, and held that they disproved the truth of the Respondents' case, and confirmed that of the Appellant's. On the other hand, the Judges of the High Court came to the conclusion that a leaf in the book commencing 1st Cheyt, containing all the entries of the 26th Cheyt, which, no doubt, are of a most important character, had been interpolated; and that in the Gya book the name of Ughund had been fraudulently inserted, and a figure added to the entry in which her name appears. Thereupon they not only rejected these entries, but were led by the fraud they assumed to have been practised to disbelieve the whole case of the Appellants. Mr. Justice Norman rests his Judgment entirely on this ground, intimating that but for the discovery of the falsification of the books, he should have concurred in the Judgment of the Judicial Commissioner.

Having adverted to the importance attached, and rightly attached, by the Courts in India to these entries, their Lordships will now consider them in detail. They will first take the entries of 26th Cheyt (the day of Pertab Oodey's chuttee, and on which Oormilla is said to have left Bhowro). Among them are :—

	R. a. p.
“Hookumnamah and receipt, dated this	
day through Baboo Gopal Sahee, and	
Sowayah Bhundaree, for payment to	
Mussumat Oormilla, and Guddye of	
Sumbulpore .. .. .	310 0 0”

[This sum corresponds with Rs. 300 and travelling expenses, Rs. 10, Gudace says he received.]

Again :—

“Hookumnamah and receipt, dated this day through Sooburna Brahmin for the payment of the midwife Phoollc—

			R.	a.	p.
“Seeda—provisions	..	..	0	10	0
“Present on leaving	..	..	5	0	0
			<hr/>		
			5	10	0

[Phoollo is the name of the midwife who is said to have attended Oormilla.]

There are also on this leaf entries of payments to servants, who were said by the Ranees and other witnesses never to have been in their or the Maharajah’s service. These entries include payments to Sowayah Bhundaree, for Bhundar expenses, and to his two wives, Reori and Lungri, “for washing the room where the child was born.”

Also, under the head of “paid to Songstresses” (explained to be those who sang at the chuttee), and under the description of “Employés of the Saujhill Ranee” (Luchun) appear payments to

Dulgerea and  
Gowree,

and under the description of “Employés of the Chota Ranee” (Komul) appear payments to

Mungri,  
Besunee,  
Emrit, and  
Nunhakee,

also payments to two palkee-bearers—Dalla and Jolla.

The importance of these entries, if genuine, cannot be disputed. Mr. Justice Glover admits their force, but adds a remark which, perhaps, naturally arises: “it is a singular thing that the entries of this one particular day should, if correct, prove almost every one of the Plaintiff’s allegations.”

The extract from the Gya book of the 26th Cheyt, gives very imperfect, if indeed, any support to these impeached entries. The only entry relied on for this purpose is the following :—

			R.	a.	p.
“Present and Bedaye (on leaving)	..	..	311	0	0



This, it is said, represents the payment of 310 rupees to Oormilla and Gudaee, with 1 rupee added, which was paid to a bard.

There is indeed another entry :—

	R. a. p.
“Expenditure of the Chuttee of the	
Dobraj .. .. .	92 4 6”

but this affords no materials for a comparison with the detailed items of expenditure in the original book.

Seetul Pershad explains the entry of 311 rupees thus :—

“In the original book there is an entry of Rs. 310 to Mussamat Oormilla and Gudaee of Sumbulpore. In the copy there is an entry of Rs. 311 for a present on departure, and in this is included R. 1 paid to a bard, and that Rs. 110, the total being entered as Rs. 311.”

Whether this explanation be satisfactory or not, Seetul says the entry represents the payment to Oormilla and Guadee, and he does not appear to have been cross-examined as to the genuineness of the original entry. This witness also says to account for the details of the disbursements of the Chuttee not being entered in the copy sent to Gya, that a warrant came from the Court to Gopal Sahee, who directed it to be made quickly, so the total only was written in the copy.

The Judges of the High Court have, as already stated, come to the conclusion that the leaf in the original book has been interpolated. Mr. Justice Kemp and Mr. Justice Glover both say that it does not appear to have been written in the same handwriting as the other pages of the book; and Mr. Justice Glover points out that “the leaf contains not only the entries of the 26th Cheyt, but the two first entries of the 27th, the whole in the same handwriting, whilst the entries of the 25th and the remaining entries of the 27th in the next leaf are in a different hand, the hand apparently that wrote the whole of the rest of the book.”

The learned Judges seem to have come to this conclusion from their own observation of the books, without hearing evidence, or calling upon the parties for an explanation. It nowhere appears that the Advocate-General who was Counsel for the

present Respondents contended that the leaf had been interpolated, or did more than object to particular entries in it.

The Judges took the same course with respect to an important entry in the Gya book which affects the case of the younger minor.

The entry is as follows:—

“ 20th Bysack—

	R. a. p.
“ Present on leaving to Agundh	
Kowri .. .. .	112 0 0”

The 20th Bysack is the day on which Ugundh left Bhowro, and no doubt the entry, if genuine, would afford material confirmation of the Appellant's case regarding her. The Judges have found that the words “Agundh Kowri” have been interpolated, and the figure 1 added to the entry. They say that these additions are written “in a thicker hand and with different ink.” The entry without these additions would stand “present on leaving 12 rupees,” and would then be of no significance. The page in the Bhowro book which contains the entries of 20th Bysack is missing. The Judicial Commissioner has found that the pages containing the entries of the 16th to the 20th Bysack inclusive, have been removed; but he expresses no opinion, and, apparently, made no investigation as to this removal. It is difficult, however, to resist the conviction that they were designedly abstracted. However this may be, there can be now no comparison of this entry with the Bhowro book; but the judges say that the details of the Gya book do not correspond with “the terij” or summary of the different heads of account which was produced, and that in the terij for the month of Bysack neither the totals nor the daily account correspond with the books. They particularly point to the entry on 20th Bysack of the purchase of a horse, the price of which in the book is entered as 200 rupees, and in the terij as 300 rupees. It seems to have been urged before them by the present Respondents' Counsel, and Mr. Justice Kemp says, “with some show of reason,” that the difference of 100 rupees, is that added to the figures in the entry in which Ugundh's name appears.

This terij does not appear upon the Record, and

their Lordships are therefore unable to say whether any such inference properly arises from the variances between it and the books.

The entry of the payment to Ugundh was one of the two impeached at the hearing before the Judicial Commissioner, and his finding upon it is as follows :—

“It has, however, been objected by the pleader for the Defendants that the words Ugundh Kowur have been added afterwards to the previous entry. I have, however, examined the book attentively, and, although the words Ugundh Kowur are a little heavier than the words which precede them, they correspond in appearance with the way in which the figures 112 have been written, so that this objection is not of any avail.”

It does not appear that the suggestion that the initial figure 1 had been added was made to him. He thought that the name “Ugundh” corresponded with the way in which the figures (in the plural) were written, though it may be assumed from the terms of his finding that both differed from the writing of the rest of the entry.

The only other entry impeached before the Judicial Commissioner is that in which the name of “Jeetni Helin” appears. His finding upon it is as follows :—

“Regarding the tampering that has taken place in the name of Jeetni Helin, in the accounts of Bhobnath, it is clear even now that the name of Jeetni was the one originally entered in them, and as it has been proved that these papers reached the Deputy-Commissioner’s Office without any alteration in her name having been made, it appears evident that what has been done has been effected after they were received by him, and by some one in the interest of the Defendants, who wished to make it appear that the name of Jeetni had been substituted for that of some one else, but in this the person, whoever did it, has completely failed.”

If, however, the High Court are right in supposing that the books have been tampered with in the way they point out, this may not be a right conclusion.

The above are the only entries which have been directly impeached, but the conviction of the Judges of the High Court that they were spurious led them to distrust all the other entries, and indeed the whole of the Respondents’ case.

Mr. J. Norman says: “Coming upon this flagrant instance of the manufacture of evidence on

the part of the Plaintiff, I lose all confidence in the materials with which I have been obliged to deal."

And Mr. J. Glover says, "I think that where so many alterations have been shown, it would not be very safe to take any of the entries relied on by the Plaintiff for granted."

Their Lordships cannot but think that this, upon the evidence then before the Court, was too sweeping a condemnation of the books.

Mr. Justice Glover remarks that the Defendants (as is no doubt the case) strongly objected to the books being put in at such a late stage of the case without opportunity being given to them of producing rebutting evidence, and seems to consider there was a miscarriage of justice in their objection being rejected. Supposing this were so, it might be a reason for further investigation, but not for a conclusion adverse to the other side; and their Lordships cannot but regret that the learned Judges of the High Court, before overruling the Judicial Commissioner on a question of fact, which greatly influenced both his and their own judgments on the whole case, and formed the pivot on which Mr. Justice Norman's opinion entirely turned, did not take evidence and rehear the case on this point.

But, whilst their Lordships are dissatisfied with the manner in which the Judges of the High Court arrived at their conclusion, they do not feel themselves at liberty to disregard it, and give effect to the entries which they rejected.

The Judges below have decided upon their own inspection of books which are not sent over, and upon inferences from a terij which is not in the Record. All their Lordships can do under these circumstances is to consider whether the entries which are not directly impeached enable them to see their way to a final decision, or whether they should remand the case.

The most important of these entries affects the case of the elder minor. It is under the date of 8 Magh, 1922, and is as follows:—

	R. a. p.
"Paid to Moorli Brahmini and Sowayah	
Bhundaree for going to Sumbulpore,	
for urgent business .. ..	30 0 0"

A similar entry appears in the Gya book, except that the words "for urgent business" are omitted.

Mr. Justice Glover observes, on the entries generally, that it is incredible that the parties to the fraud should have made or passed entries of this kind, and Mr. Justice Kemp remarks that 30 rupees is too small a sum to have been given to these persons if they were going on the mission described in the evidence.

No explanation of this entry appears in the evidence.

The entry in the Gya book of the 26th Cheyt, "present and bedaye on leaving, 311 rupees," has already been commented on. This entry, taken alone, can scarcely be relied on to confirm the evidence that 310 rupees were paid to Gudaee on this day, for numerous entries of presents on leaving appear in the books. It requires Seetul Pershad's evidence to explain it.

The only entry in the Gya book which directly affects the case of the younger minor is the impeached one of the 20th Bysack, already noticed, which, omitting Ugundh's name and the figure 1, stands :—

	R.	a.	p.
"Present on leaving .. .. ."	12	0	0"

The next entry is—

	R.	a.	p.
"Subsistance to the people of Munho .. ."	1	8	0"

The first entry in this reduced state is, as already observed, of no significance. The other entry is supposed to refer to those who came from Munho with Ugundh. It may be so, but it would scarcely be safe to draw that inference from it.

The remaining entries in the rozenamchas are those in which the names of servants, whom the two Ranees and their witnesses deny were ever in their service, appear.

The entries are not of money paid to them, but of money, food, and other things paid or carried by them to others.

In this class of entries the following names appear :—

Lungri and Reori (the wives of Sowayah), the former twice and the latter once, and Mungri and Imrit (said to have been servants of Komul), the former twice and the latter once.

(The names of the other women said to have been servants of the Ranees, viz., Dulgeria, Besun, and Nunki only appear in the entries of the 26th Cheyt.)

Besides these, there are entries of payments to Sowayah and to the two witnesses Dele and Julha.

Sowayah's name also appears in the Bhundaree book, and the names of Dele and Julha in the servants' attendance book.

It is to be observed that the names of some of the Palkote servants whom the Respondent's witnesses deny were with the Ranees at Bhowro, appear in entries similar to those relating to the Bhowro women.

The gleanings thus made from the entries, which are not directly impeached, tend to confirm, so far as they go, the Appellant's case, but fall very far short of affording the confirmation it would receive if the entries rejected by the High Court were found to be authentic. Their Lordships, therefore, think that it would be more satisfactory, before coming to a final decision on the Appeal, that the true state of the books should be ascertained by a further inquiry, in which each party should be at liberty to adduce evidence with reference to the composition and state of the books, and of the entries in them, and with reference to the custody of the books, and the persons who could have had access to them.

If it should be found that the rejected entries are genuine, their value will have to be estimated by their Lordships in disposing of the case; whilst if it should appear that the books have been fraudulently dealt with by the agents of either of the parties, it may be necessary for them to consider how far, from the nature and extent of the falsification which may be shown to exist in them, the general case of the party whose agents may be found to have been guilty of the fraud ought to be discredited.

Their Lordships think that the remand should be for an inquiry and report by the High Court on the following points:—

Whether the leaf containing the entries of the 26th Cheyt in the rozenamcha of the 1st Cheyt to 22nd Sawun is the original or an interpolated leaf, and if the former, whether any, and, if any, which of the entries in it have been added or altered since it was first written; and by whom and when, if

such leaf is found to have been interpolated, such interpolation was made, or, if it is found to be the original leaf, but to contain added or altered entries, by whom and when such additions and alterations were made.

Whether the following entry in the book produced from the Court of Gya, under the date of 20th Bysack :

“ Present on leaving to Agundh Kowri . . . Rs. 112 ”

was originally written as it thus appears, or has been added to and altered in any and what particulars, and if so, by whom and when.

Whether the pages of the original rozenamcha, containing the entries of the 16th to the 20th Bysack inclusive, and which pages were found by the Judicial Commissioner to have been removed, were designedly abstracted, and, if so, by whom and when.

Whether the other entries material to the issues in the cause appearing in the extracts from the books set out in pages 22 to 24 (inclusive) of the Record, are original and genuine entries, or whether any, and which of them, have been added or altered, and if so, by whom and when.

Whether any other entries appear in the books brought into Court besides those set out in the present Record, which are material to the issues in the cause, and if so, what entries.

Their Lordships also desire that upon this remand it should be ascertained and found whether the petition alleged in the affidavit of Mr. Hawes (filed on the application for review) to have been presented in 1862 by the late Maharajah to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, praying that he might be allowed to adopt a son, was so presented, and if so, that such petition, and the reply thereto, if any, should be placed on the Record.

They also desire that it should be inquired into and found whether there is, or is not, any custom or practice in the Maharajah's family with respect to the adoption of a son.

Their Lordships will humbly advise Her Majesty to the above effect.

