M.R.O. 1—89,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	1630	Press Mis.
62-63		
Dated	15—12— ~~19~~ 1857	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 62. Read the following letter from E. B. THOMAS, Esq., Magistrate of Coimbatore; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 7th December 1857, No. 75.

SIR,

1. In accordance with the terms of Circular of Government, No. 798, I have the honor to report the detention of 7 individuals, as named in the margin*. The 1st and 2nd profess to be travellers to Palany, for religious purposes, and give references at Vellore. The 3rd and 4th state that they are returning from a pilgrimage, which they have just made from Coorg to Benares, and from Benares to Ramaswaram, and give references in Coorg. The 5th, 6th and 7th individuals state that they are making an annual pilgrimage from Cochin to Tripathy, in North Arcot, and give references at Cochin. In each of these cases, I have written to ascertain whether the references given, were satisfactory or otherwise.

*1 Porumpala Paradasy, Vellala caste.
2 Velaythum, Pully caste.
3 Hunnama Gownden, Oppeleya caste.
4 Appeya Reckhutty, Codaga caste.
5 Goondoo Conkun, Bramin.
6 Vencataswaram, do.
7 Bauboo, do.

2. These men are however able to speak either Tamil or Canarese, which precludes the idea of their having come from Bengal, but the practice of able-bodied men, idly roaming about the country, in such numbers, appears at all times so very objectionable, and is now fraught with such eminent danger, that I have deemed it best to take up these men as vagrants, and would suggest their temporary detention.

3. Such men may obviously be used for the worst purposes of disseminating sedition and treason among the people, and the influence which they have from their real or assumed character, is likely to be all the more dangerous. It is currently reported, that many of the disaffected from Bengal and elsewhere, are roaming in disguise, to evade detection or capture in the north-west. At all times, these "sturdy vagrants" (as most of them are) able-bodied and young men, without any honest means of livelihood, are a great evil and a public nuisance, they *profess* nothing better than a begging pilgrimage, and are frequently supposed to do much worse. Thugs and dacoits have been often found amongst them.

4. Two remarkable instances have fallen within my own limited knowledge, when in the Trichinopoly district formerly, I remember 2 notorious dacoits (leaders) and murderers, (afterwards hung in irons) being found at last, after long and fruitless search, disguised as pilgrims, with the usual saffron-cloth and Bramis beads, among a crowd of pilgrims at the great Seerungom temple. Again in Tinnevelly, one of these similar pilgrims, begging, was found on examination to have, under a ragged exterior, 700 Rupees in gold, concealed on his person.

5. Nearly all are hale, hearty, and many even young men, a few years ago I apprehended in this district, a body of 15 such travelling beggars, let go a few old men among them, and held the rest to 3 months' security as "vagrants," which they truly were, they were detained in Jail unfettered, and the district was clear of such gangs for nearly a year afterwards.

6. I submit, with all deference, it would be most salutary at *all* times, but especially now, if *all* such so-called religious *mendicants* and *Fakeers*, were *generally* more stringently dealt with than they are at present, especially where stout and able bodied, capable of active and honest livelihood; the community on whom they prey, would, I am sure, from careful enquiry, be thankful to be relieved from them, they give, only from fear (not from respect), and to get rid of them.

(Signed) E. B. THOMAS,
Magistrate.

No. 63. ORDER THEREON, No. 1630; dated 15th December 1857.

The Magistrate of Coimbatore will inform Government of the result of the references made to Vellore, Coorg and Cochin in regard to the men alluded to in the foregoing letter.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

2

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most Obed.t Servant

P. B. Beveridge
Magistrate

Coimbatore
1st December
1857

To
J. Pycroft Esqre.
Chief Secretary
to Government

Judl. Dept. to Engr. Dr. Monck
No. 2 of 1858 - Para. 9

15

Judicial
1857
Dft. Lawtenant
In Coms - 15th Decr.
From
The Magistrate of
Coimbatore
To The Chief Secretary
to Govt
Date 7th
Recd 11th Decr 1857
No. 75
No. 2055.
Reports the
temporary detention
of certain Suspicious
Characters.

Entered

No. 1630

The Magistrate of Coimbatore will inform Govt. of the result of the references made to Vellore, Coorg and Cochin in regard to the men alluded to in the foregoing letter.

Fort St George
15th December, 1857.

Copy to Magistrate of Coimbatore. } Dispd 19th

62 & 63

Letter and Order

C 12 Decr
R 15