

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1197	Press
38-39	~~Mis.~~
Dated 30 - 8 - 19 1858	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

✓

Fort St. George, Judicial Consultation, 31st August 1858.

No. 38. Read the following letter from H. A. BRETT, Esq., Magistrate of Salem; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Ossoor, 18th August 1858, No. 235.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Extract Minutes Consultation, under date the 19th July 1858, No. 937, reviewing the Returns from the several Magistrates of cases of Gang and Highway robberies for the 1st quarter of 1858, and calling on the Magistrate of Salem for any explanation it may be in his power to offer regarding the extent of crime in his District during the latter half of 1857, and the first quarter of the present year.

2. I beg to point out in reply, that the chief increase is in the crime of gang robbery in fields. Both last year and the present one have been marked in this District, by high prices, and very short crops; and it is, I believe, owing chiefly to this circumstance that there has been so great an increase in the number of robberies in fields. It will be observed, that the number of cases in the 3rd quarter of 1857, was 15 against 32 in the 4th quarter, and 40 in the 1st quarter of the present year. The number of cases in the 2nd quarter was 25.

3. During the same period the increase in gang robberies in houses, which is much the more serious crime of the two, was much less in proportion than the increase of the same crime in fields. In gang robbery in houses, there was an increase of 4 cases in the 4th quarter as compared with the 3rd, and an increase of 6 cases in the first quarter of the present year as compared with the 3rd quarter in the preceding year. During the 2nd quarter of the present year, the number of cases in houses amounted to 16, or rather 15, for in one case, the charge was evidently a false one.

4. On comparing the state of crime in different Talooks during the first half of the present year, it appears that gang robbery, particularly in fields, has prevailed to a much greater extent in some Talooks than in others. This is the case in the two Talooks of Ahtoor, and Tengaracottah. In the former there were 5 cases of gang robbery in houses, and 18 cases of gang robbery in fields. In the latter, the number of cases in houses was 7 and in fields 17. The whole number therefore in these two Talooks amounted to nearly 44 per cent. of the whole number of cases in the District. These two Talooks are frontier Talooks. They have long contained large numbers of Coravurs, and in one of the two, the Talook of Ahtoor, there was a more extensive failure of the crops last season than in any other Talook of the District.

5. There was no considerable increase in the crime of highway robbery. The number committed in the 3rd quarter was 18, in the 4th quarter 16, in the 1st quarter of the present year 24, and in the 2nd quarter again 16.

6. With regard to the continued prevalence of gang robbery in the Salem District, I believe, that this crime cannot be put down effectually until in this District and in the neighbouring Districts a better system of Police has been introduced. The crime is one of long standing in this part of the country. The present Police force is unable to resist the attacks of robbers, when engaged in the act; and up to the present time there has been no proper agency for procuring the information which must be procured before the gangs which are spread over this part of the country can be broken up. I therefore trust that the newly appointed Commissioner of Police will soon direct his attention to these Districts.

7. Since making my special report to Government under date the 19th July 1857, on the subject of gang robbery and highway robbery in this District, the Police Officers have been ordered to register all persons residing within their several ranges, who belong to the wandering tribes. These classes have been required to take out passes when they may have to move from one village to another; and measures have been taken to restrict the different classes, who convey salt or grain through the District to specified lines of road. The object of these steps was, to bring all these classes under the strictest surveillance of the Police. I regret to find that no apparent improvement is observable, but that is owing to a certain extent to the special circumstances already adverted to.

No. 39.

ORDER THEREON, No. 1197; dated 30th August 1858.

Ordered to be communicated to the Chief Commissioner of Police whose attention will be called to para. 6.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

W

1197-

Ordered to be communicated to the
Chief Commissioner of Police whose atten-
tion will be called to para 6.

To the
George
21 August 1858
H Robinson Esq Chief Comr of Police
Gipps St

The manner in which
the police returns as very
defective. Robberies in
fields are not called
Grand Robberies at all, but
rather agrarian outrages
or some similar term which
does not clearly show their nature.

Wm
(Signed) Wm

have to move from one village to another,
and measures have been taken to
reducit the different classes who
carry salt or grain through the
District to specified lines of road.
The object of these steps was to bring
all these classes under the strictest
surveillance of the Police. I regret
to find that no apparent improvement