

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	262	Press
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Dated	26 - 2 - 1959	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort St. George, Judicial Consultation, 1st March 1859.

No. 7. Read the following letter from JAMES OUCHTERLONY, Esq.; to the Secretary to Government, in the Revenue and Police Department, dated Goodaloor, February 4th, 1859.

SIR,

I have the honor to request you will bring the following circumstances having reference to the Police of this District under the (I would fain hope) serious consideration of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, and I shall endeavour to confine myself, as well as I can, to the simple recital of a few facts.

2. In the year 1845, my attention was first drawn to this remote corner of the Wynad District as offering promising features for the cultivation of Coffee. The then Collector, the late Mr. Conolly, gave every encouragement to the experiment—for experiment it then was—and, although at the outset I did not look for material aid in the shape of public roads and Police and other facilities of civilization, still I deemed that these must follow in the track, if success in the experiment tended to develop and improve the District.

3. I had then many of the worst disadvantages of an early settler to contend with: There was no resident labouring population, no food procurable on the spot, no village that could be called such within 40 miles. Every thing had to be imported, the most difficult being labour, for there was then a great prejudice to overcome in the dread of fever and of the wild animals with which the forest was considered to be infested. Further there were neither high roads that could be traversed, Police to keep the peace and protect property, nor law within accessible reach. The nearest place to us, having a name, was Goodaloor, at the foot of the Pass of that name leading to Neddimmuttum, and it consisted of 3 or 4 miserable huts and a shed to house a belated traveller, but, which, by a public notice, every one was warned against sleeping in owing to the deadly fever engendered by the locality.

4. Since the period of time named I have introduced and brought forward various Coffee Estates. I have paid a large sum as direct Revenue to the Government in the shape of export duty on Coffee. I have given occupation to a labouring population, always increasing in numbers, and latterly reaching from 800 to 1000 persons. I have paid many lakhs of Rupees to these in wages and food, I have paid large sums to another class, the carriers of produce; and I have further expended largely amongst the labouring population of Calicut and Beypoor. In all this I submit that, indirectly, a large benefit must have accrued to Government.

5. I would now crave the consideration of Government to what I have experienced in return.

6. Notwithstanding the fair shew made in the work published by an Officer of the Quarter Master General's Department, of the high road by Carcoor and that by Tambercherry, neither of these is one whit better than in 1845, or, if any thing, worse; wheeled conveyances cannot pass along them, and the only means of transporting any thing is on bullocks and men, the former with an imminent risk of injury as I have found by the experience of this and of former years, and the latter at a risk of being drowned in some of the streams, a contingency which has happened too often.

7. In respect of law, the nearest Judicial Court, and the nearest Magistrate, are upwards of 100 miles off, without even a postal communication to the station.

8. The state of the Police, however, it is, which has dragged from me the communication I have now the honor to address to the Government.

9. Simultaneously with the advance of my Coffee Estates, Goodaloor has grown from its miserable condition into a village of some extent. It has a long row of tolerable habitations, a bazar, and the unfailing arrack shop at which my labourers debase for the benefit of the public revenue. The jungle is now all cleared away from around it, and there are numerous little Coffee gardens, these latter forming the convenient plea for the possession of Coffee.

10. There is no doubt that I have been largely robbed every year, this Goodaloor forming the harbour for the robbers or the ready mart for disposing of the stolen property. It is in fact notorious over the country. An officer told me once he had found my Coffee largely on sale at Tippecaudoo!

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11. Besides this, amongst so many people collected together as there is on the Estates, disturbances can hardly fail to arise occasionally. They *have* done so, and of a serious kind, such at times as might have resulted in the loss of life or serious injury to the person.

12. I can state Goodaloor to be the resort of bad characters from my experience in the Court at Ootacamund. In certain cases of robbery, the articles stolen found a ready sale at Goodaloor. There is a large increase of these characters at the place at the time of the Coffee crops ripening.

13. To keep the peace and protect the interests at and near Goodaloor, there is stationed at the place *one Police Peon!* It were superfluous to add that robbery, disorder, and drunkenness riot in impunity.

14. The nearest Police station is at Gunnipuddyvuttum 40 miles from this. References on occasions have been made to this but have only elicited proceedings, which I may justly characterize as monstrous. On one occasion a long and important deposition was wholly suppressed; and on another a party accused of robbery was allowed to absent himself, the prosecutor sent away, and then the case disposed of in the latter's absence. The other day I sent to this place for Peons to enquire into threats of violence towards an East Indian Assistant and attempts to foment disturbance. A verbal message said my letter was referred to Manantoddy, and the result is nothing. This neglect, torpidity and misconduct is so much the normal condition of Police in Wynaad, that I should hardly trouble the Right Honorable the Governor in Council with complaint about it; but that I have now had such ruinous evidence of the consequences to my interest of the absence of all efficient Police in the District, that I am driven to request that his Lordship will sanction some reform of the existing state of things. A very extensive robbery from one of my Coffee stores has just been discovered, and, though its extent has not yet been determined, it threatens to involve a loss of perhaps 7 or 8,000 Rupees. It cannot have occurred without the connivance and agency of the persons in charge of the stores and of many of the labourers. A searching Police investigation is necessary, and many arrests, while all the means within reach for accomplishing this, consist of one miserable ordinary Mofussil Police Peon, who only the other day sent word to a Superintendent that he could not come to him on a complaint, because Goodaloor was full of brinjaries who were all drunk, and he must stay there to prevent disturbances!

No. 8. ORDER THEREON, No. 202; dated 26th February 1859.

Ordered to be communicated to the Acting Magistrate of Malabar, who will be requested to state what measures he can propose for strengthening the Police at Goodaloor.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

In Dy. to Louis 1st March
Judicial. 1859. Sept.

Your James Buchanan Esq
 Collier Estates near
 Goodaloor.

L.A.B.H.T.
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2/12 Feb/59.

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Brings under the serious consideration of Govt. certain Circumstances having reference to the Police of the District. in view to some reform being effected.

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with an Order.

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Ordered to be communicated to the Acting Magistrate
Gallablan, who will be requested to state what measures
he can propose for strengthening the Police at Goodablon

Feb 26 George B
27 February 1897

The Acting Lieutenant Governor. (Signed) 29.



16 Feb.
1875