

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
5th April 1861.

No. 15. Read the following letter from W. ROBINSON, Esq., Inspector General of Madras Police, to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 19th March 1861.

I should fail in my duty did I longer defer bringing before Government the shortcomings of Lieutenant Lavie, 3rd N. I., now Assistant Superintendent of Police (1st Class) in South Malabar.

2. He had been Adjutant to the Malabar Police Corps and became Assistant Superintendent on its amalgamation with the Police.

3. Lieutenant Lavie took charge of the Palghat range in May last, under Lieutenant Blomfield, the Superintendent. Nine months have since elapsed without any useful result having been produced. What he has done, indeed, and the impressions he has produced amongst the people have been, I am satisfied, a positive hindrance to the progress of Police organization in that District. I consider that his further employment would throw back this organization which it has so long retarded.

4. I had to censure Lieutenant Lavie severely in September last, for absenting himself from his District, and remaining on the Hills for the greater part of a whole month. I was at Calcutta at the time. I append a copy of a letter on the subject to the Superintendent. I must explain that I was not, at the time, in possession of all the particulars, or I should not have taken on myself to decide in so important a matter. Lieutenant Lavie went over to Coimbatore to learn some matters of duty; and thence took a wholly unauthorized trip to the Hills, where on the ground of having a galled foot, he absented himself for 3 weeks from his duty and Station; remaining on the Hills with his family. At the end of this time Lieutenant Lavie sent a Medical Certificate stating that he had been detained on the Hills by indisposition, the abovementioned galled foot. He was not under treatment by the Medical Officer of the Hills who passed the Certificate. Had he been an Officer of zeal and possessing a proper sense of duty and responsibility, he would have got into a *Mahoeal* and been within his District within two days. Lieutenant Blomfield was not to blame for this irregularity of his Assistant. He more than once directed Lieutenant Lavie to return, and the Magistrate informed Lieutenant Blomfield that if Lieutenant Lavie did not return forthwith, he should be obliged to report the matter. I have given Lieutenant Lavie credit for having thus acted under an error of judgment; but Lieutenant Lavie should have been very jealous of his own judgment where his inclinations were so likely to mislead him.

5. I have been exceedingly dissatisfied with Lieutenant Lavie's work for long. Month after month has passed and still nothing resulted. There are unavoidable difficulties to overcome in the early stages of an organization, and he has been utterly incompetent to grapple with these, or with the duty he undertook to do in raising and organizing the Police of that Division. He has done little, and has not acquainted himself with his duty or been judicious or careful in carrying out instructions.

6. I have twice inspected Lieutenant Lavie's work within the last 4 months: and can only characterize it as utterly unsatisfactory in every point of view, as affording no promise of improvement, or hope, that if the duty be still confided to him it will be done effectively even now.

7. On the last occasion, I recorded the accompanying Memorandum to which I beg the attention of Government. On this my second inspection, having carefully instructed Lieutenant Lavie, myself only a month before, I clearly saw that I could no longer trust him in the least, that prospects were worse, instead of better; and I was therefore obliged to desire Lieutenant Menzies, to proceed forthwith to Palghat, to arrest the anxiety prevailing in consequence of an unusual outburst of crime, for which Lieutenant Lavie was utterly unprepared, and to proceed himself to raise and organize the Police of that Division. He did so. The Superintendent has been obliged to neglect his own very important duty on the Coast and proceed to Palghat, where he has been detained for some weeks doing Lieutenant Lavie's work. The one Officer has been 3 years in the District, the other not 3 months; yet his success shows what results fair exertion and

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ability on the part of Lieutenant Lavie might have produced. Lieutenant Lavie had not, in 9 months, undertaken more than the range of one ordinary Inspector, and was conducting that in an indifferent manner. He was losing men and public confidence instead of gaining them. He failed to acquaint himself with the country even.

8. I have a report that on the 15th instant, the first *Taluk* of that Division will be undertaken—in other words the sum total of Lieutenant Lavie's work, as first Class Assistant Superintendent of Police, for 9 months, has been a single *Taluk*; and this charge has only been overtaken by the Superintendent himself, at great considerable detriment to his other duties, proceeding to his Division and doing the work himself. When another *Taluk* would be taken up, if Lieutenant Lavie were to continue there, it would be impossible to say. Certainly not till Lieutenant Menzies could again proceed there and do it for him.

9. Lieutenant Blomfield, his late Superintendent, had formed a very low estimate of Lieutenant Lavie's efficiency and zeal. Mr. Grant, the Magistrate, participates fully in the opinion I have expressed, that Lieutenant Lavie has not the capacity for organization, or gaining the confidence of the people or Officers of the District. And Lieutenant Menzies, who has had to do both his Assistant's work and his own, and has had the fullest opportunity of observing him, remarks in his Diary of 21st ultimo as follows:

"I am regularly sick at heart with the state of Police work here—at Palghaut. It is obvious to me, that the further continuance of Lieutenant Lavie here, can but be attended with 'positive evil' to the Department. Every body looks down on him. I went to Office in the Fort, and was much dissatisfied with every thing; and yet no one to blame but the Assistant Superintendent." He has since suggested his removal elsewhere and other measures. "In his last Diaries, of 4th March he mentions: 'Lieutenant Lavie appears to have entirely abandoned the ordered daily transmission of Diaries, (I had ordered this because his duty was so negligently, badly and so unpunctually performed) and I really know nothing of what is going on about Palghaut. As I consider it necessary that I should receive such information, and notwithstanding orders and repeated verbal and written requests, he persists in denying me information. I have to-day written to him ordering him to direct the transmission to me of his Inspectors' Diaries.' I had written to Lieut. Menzies relative to a notice in the Public Papers of the exceedingly unsafe state of the road between Palghaut and Coimbatore; and, to get ordinary information, his superior Officer has to obtain it direct from Lieut. Lavie's Subordinates. He adds again in his Diary of the 5th instant, 'there is certainly no question of the necessity of his quitting the Department: and it would be an inexpressible relief to me to get some one I could trust a little in, at Palghaut.' Mr. Grant writes on the 9th instant, that Gang Robbers are harassing the *Talugs* of Palghaut and Tennallapuram, both in the Division assigned to Lieutenant Lavie, both of which might well have been in full occupation of the Police months ago.

10. Lieut. Menzies is an Officer of no small degree of ability and experience. He was on the Pegu Commission and went to Malabar, anxious to give Lieut. Lavie a fair trial and his hearty aid. He has done it; but to no purpose.

11. In fine, I must now state that I do, after the most careful consideration and examination of Lieutenant Lavie's work, record, however painful it may be to me, the deliberate opinion that Lieutenant Lavie is unsuited to Police profession; and that I consider his employment a source of weakness to the young Department in Malabar, rather than of strength. Its continuance is not safe. I have foreborne bringing forward Lieutenant Lavie's failure for months after my own heart had misgiven me. The intelligence of him up to the latest date gives, the Government will observe, no improved hope or prospect. The district is too important, the public stake too large for me to defer it longer.

12. I took the precaution of writing a private note to Lieutenant Lavie, asking him to resign and save me the most ungrateful duty I now perform. His reply is appended, with a few handnotes of my own, and leaves me no other recourse, but to request Government to relieve him from his present appointment.

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From Lieutenant R. C. LAVIE, Assistant Superintendent of Police, South Malabar, to W. ROBINSON, Esq., Inspector General of Madras Police, dated Palghaut, 8th March 1861.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, this day, of your demi-official letter, dated 1st March; and beg in reply to state that feeling conscious of having performed my duty to the best of my power, and having worked hard for the good of the Police Service, notwithstanding the many discouragements and difficulties I have had to contend with, I prefer accepting the latter of the two choices you have kindly given, viz., to abide by the decision of Government, consequent on any representations you may make regarding my shortcomings for Police service. I do not say this with any disrespect, but I feel* that I have been hardly-used, and my actions misjudged, that I have been much neglected, not having been allowed proper assistance, and all the work which ought to have been done by Inspectors, Head, Deputy Head, Constables and Writers, has been thrown upon my hands, and this too, in a District that I unhesitatingly affirm to be the hardest,† in which to organize the new Police. If I accept the other choice offered me, viz., to resign, it will imply that I am afraid of the threat,‡ and will be a tacit acknowledgment that I have not tried to do my duty, and cannot stand the investigation of Government. I doubt not that Government, on your representation, will remand me to my Regiment; but I prefer placing myself in their hands, feeling confident, that I shall be impartially dealt with, and suffer no injustice.§ I am informed that you are going to bring to the notice of Government, first my error of judgment, for which I have already received censure and punishment from you, and, secondly, the four Gang Robberies that took place in the *Talug*, for which I was in no way responsible|| and could not have prevented. I also believe that the backward state of my District is to be a cause of complaint. I acknowledge with regret, many shortcomings, but do not think I am entirely to blame, many have been caused by the neglect¶ and treatment of

*Every opportunity has been afforded to Lieutenant Lavie to do his duty, and much patient consideration and instruction has been had. And his actions are judged by their results alone, and after long and most patient trial and observation. He has not been neglected. He had, like each Officer of the Force, to learn his duty, and to help himself, and these he has failed in. The assistance he alludes to, the petty Officers and Clerks of the Force he wanted, he had only to raise and instruct for himself, and make them do their proper duty, as all his brother Officers are doing and have been obliged to do. No one else could do this for him. All Officers are all engaged in raising men for their own charges. It was this precisely which he undertook to do when he accepted the duty of organizing the Police at Palghaut, with its responsibilities and demands on his resources and ability; and it is here that he has so signally failed.

W. R.

†Lieutenant Lavie is wrong in his estimate of the difficulties of his charge. I have held Police charge of these *Talugs* for years myself. They possess facilities quite superior to any in the District. Even after the check which Lieutenant Lavie's shortcomings have caused at Palghaut, Lieutenant Menzies has been able, by doing Lieutenant Lavie's work himself, to put things in train, in fewer weeks than Lieutenant Lavie has been months. To Lieutenant Lavie no doubt the task is hard. It is not in him. Indeed, but for Lieutenant Menzies doing his work, and organizing the Police of his only *Talug*, it never would have been done.

W. R.

‡No threat was held out. I merely asked him to withdraw.

W. R.

§I would not do Lieutenant Lavie an injustice. It is my duty to inform Government that his employment is disadvantageous to the Service. I would not lose the services of a moderately efficient Officer on any account.

W. R.

||Lieutenant Lavie must not be permitted to divert himself of the grave responsibility of not having done his duty—and the denial of his responsibility is the saddest indication of his want of that sense of what is required of an Officer undertaking what he did. The Government sanctioned the raising and organization of a sufficient Police for the prevention and detection of these outrages. Eight months previously to the unusual outbreak of grave Gang Robbery and crime, had Lieut. Lavie undertaken to raise and organize this Police—undertaking with the Office its responsibilities—within this long period, not only should the scene of these outrages, close around Palghaut (one of the heaviest occurred within 3 miles of Palghaut,) but the entire *Talugs* of Palghaut and Tennallapuram (which the Magistrate reports, on the 10th instant are still harassed by Gang Robbers) should have been fully organized and protected. I speak of a country of which I know every village, and which I have twice visited within this time. So little has Lieutenant Lavie done, that he has not and never would, but for Lieutenant Menzies doing it for him, have undertaken more than an Inspector's charge in a small town, which presented peculiar facilities. And an unprecedented outbreak of crime, almost within the sight of his house, finds him after 6 months, and even to this day probably, unprepared even to restore confidence to the country. To admit such a doctrine would cut at the root of all Police Administration. An Officer would only have, as Lieutenant Lavie has done, to fail to raise his force and he may then proceed to divert himself of all his grave responsibility to Government, to the Magistrate and to the Public. Lieutenant Lavie is responsible and should have been able to prevent these outrages.

W. R.

¶Lieutenant Lavie has had all the aid and assistance any Officer in his position can have—he got more far than most Assistants do. He is an Officer of some standing, and should have been able to get on for himself. When laying before Lieutenant Lavie, as I did at Palghaut on the 12th January last, very fully and freely his utter failure to realize expectation and the danger of keeping him longer, he attributed his falling in part to his first Superior Officer, Lieutenant Blomfield. His

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others, which I have before this brought to your notice. You are aware, that on two previous occasions, I have offered to resign* the Police service, but my resignation was not accepted, and I feel I cannot do so now with honor to myself, as I know of no disgraceful act nor gross neglect of duty I have committed to merit summary dismissal from the Police service.

From W. ROBINSON, Esq., Inspector General of Madras Police, to Captain C. G. BLOMFIELD, Superintendent of Police, South Malabar, Calicut, dated 15th September 1860; No. 824.

Lieutenant Lavie reports in his diary† having been absent at Utakamond from the 22nd July to 18th ultimo. (The days of going to Utakamond and return-
†Dated 27th August 1857. ing to Coimbatore inclusive.)

2. He had been a full week in Coimbatore before leaving for Utakamond. This was proper, and was done under your instructions, with a view to his informing himself of the system pursued in that jail, &c. &c. The week sufficed for the purpose.

3. He explains, that he went to the Hills, to observe the taking charge of the jail there, &c. &c. by the Superintendent of that District. The petty jail at Utakamond could afford little information or matter worthy of observation by an Officer who had ample opportunity of observing the Police system in full operation at the head jail at Coimbatore. Had I been advising Lieutenant Lavie, with a view to his acquiring a further and useful insight into the working of the Police as well as with a view to his acquainting himself with the localities on the border of his own District, I should have suggested a trip to Polachi, &c., in the opposite direction, and not to the Hills, where matters are in an immature and transition state.

4. You were quite right in considering that Lieutenant Lavie had greatly erred in judgment in, after so long an absence at Coimbatore, proceeding to the Hills, at so great a distance from his Station and to so little purpose. Further delay in undertaking the duty assigned to him at Palghat thus became unavoidable—you are therefore quite right in recalling him forthwith to his duty, on learning that he had proceeded to the Hills. Lieutenant L. neglected your frequent instructions to return.

5. Lieutenant Lavie found himself with a sore foot on the Hills, and he did not at once obey your instructions. The Surgeon certifies (dated 15th August) that he was detained at Utakamond as he explains.

6. The result is that Lieutenant Lavie has been absent a whole month from his district, when you intended that he should merely go over to the neighbouring station on business for a few days—a lamentable waste of public time has occurred.

excuse simply amounted to this, that he (Lieutenant L.) would have succeeded had his Superior Officer done his work for him, and failed because Lieutenant Blomfield did not do it. This is true; and I consequently, as I saw that there was no hope of Lieutenant L.'s succeeding even with his first Taluq by himself, I summoned Lieutenant Mensies to Palghat to do his work for him. But it is likewise true, as I pointed out to him, that this is not the object of Lieutenant Lavie's employment at Palghat. He was placed there to help himself, and his Superior Officer. In this he has failed and the further trial is I believe quite hopeless. The truth must be told. I have rarely met an Officer so devoid of resource, so unable to help himself, so wholly unapt for the duty he has assumed as Lieutenant Lavie; and as a natural consequence, he neglects himself neglected and complains because others don't do for him what he feels he can't do for himself.

W. R.

* There must be some want of recollection, possibly on my part, in this regard. I should have been glad to have been the medium of submitting Lieutenant Lavie's resignation any hour during the last six months, but have not received such application. I recollect that Lieutenant Blomfield once transmitted to me a private note to himself from Lieutenant Lavie, in which, with reference to his having absented himself on the Hills without leave, there was some ill defined allusion to resigning. I returned it with expression of a hope that it would come up in a form in which I could deal with it. This it did not. Lieutenant Lavie must have known that his Superior Officers and myself considered him utterly unfit for his post and that we would readily have relieved him had he given an opportunity.

W. R.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON,
Inspector General of Police.

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7. I cannot consider Lieutenant Lavie as having been absent on duty on the Hills, no travelling or halting allowance can therefore be passed for that time—and but for his assurance that public grounds only prompted his movements, I should have considered it my duty to have reported him absent without leave or "sick" for the greater part of the time.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. ROBINSON,
Inspector General of Madras Police.

PALGHAT SOUTH MALABAR, 12TH JANUARY 1861.

MEMORANDUM.

1. The Inspector General of Police would draw the immediate and most anxious attention of the Superintendent of Police to the state of crime in the Eastern Taluqs of his District, and impress on him the deep anxiety he feels in regard to the prospects of the country during the next few months.

2. The short coming of the Harvest can not fail to press the ill conditioned into criminal courses, and the partial cessation of Railway works adds to the anxiety of the crisis.

3. Four very serious and daring Gang robberies have occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of Palghat within the week that closes this day. People are naturally in a state of great anxiety, and I fear that this may be but the commencement of a series of outrages.

4. Nedunganaad has likewise been the scene of one grave Gang robbery, if not of more.

5. I consider that great blame attaches to Lieutenant Lavie, in regard to the backward condition of the Police arrangements here, and I feel the gravestodings for the future while this Officer is here.

6. He has been at this station fully eight months. I have not any record here to which to refer for the precise dates. He is an Officer of some standing, and has been classed as a First Class Assistant; but it is a fact, that the results which he has produced do not amount to the occupation of one ordinary Inspector's charge. He has undertaken the charge of this petty Town, occupying 30 men, and of a small Jail, and a Taluq Treasury; really scarcely the occupation of an Inspector.

7. He has failed to acquire any knowledge of the District to be entrusted to his charge; and I believe, till I took him out myself as far as Wuddakumcherry, in December, has scarcely left his home station. That he should not have established himself in the confidence of the people, and be able to get men is no source of surprise to me; and now that our most anxious time is coming, things are going back (although a body of men raised at Malliapporum have been sent to aid him), men are falling off, instead of coming in.

8. Within the time, an energetic vigorous Officer, should, beyond all question, have occupied the Palghat and Temulpuram Taluqs; we have several Officers in the Force who would have added the Nedunganaad Taluq to their half year's results. Had but one of these three Taluqs been organized and occupied, in all probability the four Gang robberies of the past week, all of which occurred within a few miles of Lieutenant Lavie's Head Quarters, might have been prevented.

9. I am aware of the vigorous exertions you are making in the principal Division, and of the importance of your personal Superintendence of the steps in advancing the general organization of the District. I would fain make each Officer do his own duty and hold him responsible for it; but I feel that the heaviest returns of crime for some months to come, will be from these Taluqs; and the experience of the past, and what I still observe—after the lapse of a month since I so earnestly pressed on Lieutenant Lavie's attention, his duty and responsibility—alike point to the necessity of an immediate visit of yourself to this station with a view to putting things in a position which may afford at least a hope that matters will better,

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10. I have informed Lieutenant Lavie of the serious view I take of his shortcomings, and I request you will communicate this to the Magistrate and do your best to meet these orders.

(Signed) W. ROBINSON,
Inspector General of Madras Police.

(True Copy.) (Signed) W. ROBINSON.

No. 16. ORDER THEREON, 5th April 1861, No. 453.

The Government have carefully considered all that is represented in the above letter and in its accompaniments and they are satisfied that Lieutenant Lavie cannot with advantage be retained in the Madras Police. Resolved therefore that his services be placed at the disposal of the Provincial Commander-in-Chief for Military duty.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd, T. O'Connor.

Judicial Department.

Proceedings of the Madras Government.

*Read the following letter
from the Inspector General
Madras Police.*

[Received 19 March 1861.]

Order thereon 5 April 1861. No. 453.

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for*

For Military duty.

JF

To the Hon. Sec. of War

Military Depart.

Sept 27-4-61.

Wm. A. R.

Recd of Madras

Proc of Madras

Judicial
Department 1867.

No. 453.

Proceedings of the Madras

Government.

Dated 5 April 1867.
For the Secretary to the

Containing that the services
of Lieut. James McIntyre
of Police in South Malabar
be placed at the disposal
the Provincial Commander
in Chief for Military Duty.