

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1407

Press
~~Mis.~~

3/7-3/8.

Dated 29-9-1865 ~~19~~

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
29th September 1865.*

No. 317. Read the following letter from W. ROBINSON, Esq., Inspector General of Police, to the Honorable A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Kotagerry, 23rd September 1865, No. 1881.

I have the honor to submit the accompanying letter from the Superintendent of Police of Tinnevely, relative to a band of Heeratees, Natives of Hyderabad, who are wandering through the District, committing irregularities. He asks for instructions.

2. This is not by any means a solitary case. The Districts of the Northern Circars have had several such visitations of lawless ruffians.

3. I am at a loss what steps to recommend; but I certainly think that passports should not be issued to them [by Magistrates, and that such obstacles as the law admits of should be put in the way of their wandering over the country.

4. It is quite true that, to get rid of such a threatening gang, country villagers contribute supplies, and wink at their illegal and oppressive acts.

From Lieutenant C. A. PORTEOUS, Superintendent of Police, Tinnevely District, to W. ROBINSON, Esq., Inspector General of Police; dated Tinnevely, 13th September 1865, No. 320.

I have the honor to bring the following to your notice:—

1. Some two months ago, I received information from the Superintendent of Police, Madura, that a party of about 105 Heeratees were travelling south; that they were inclined to be troublesome, taking fowls and other things from the villagers, without paying for them. He mentioned having sent four Constables to accompany the party, to prevent any abuse on their part in the Madura District, and requested me to relieve his men. Accordingly I did so, by a Deputy Head Constable and six Constables.

2. This was all the information I received about these people.

3. They came down to Palamcottah by the Trunk road (No. 4), and in several places through which they passed, there were outcries of *theft, after they had left the village*. The women of the party were accused of thieving by magic, and other sorts of nonsense, managing to take away jewels and money from houses that were closely locked; but nothing conclusive could be brought home to them.

4. While in Palamcottah, they were inclined to be troublesome, and had to be narrowly watched by the Town Police, who checked any oppression they attempted there.

5. They had received Passports from the Magistrates of several Districts through which they had passed, and these passports they appear to make use of, saying that they are "Queen's Orders", to enable them to do what they like.

6. They applied to Deputy Magistrate VencatRow of this District, for a passport, and he referred the matter to the Magistrate (Mr. Wedderburn), who consulted me, and I gave it as my firm opinion that furnishing these people with passports was the greatest absurdity. It could possibly be of no use, and would probably lead to great abuse. A band of Koravars or Yerkulus might as well obtain passports. The Magistrate decided not to furnish them with passports, and also came to the conclusion that the best thing would be to make them "move on." Accordingly this was done.

7. On leaving Palamcottah, the Heeratees separated into two parties, one going by Nanganary and Vullioor into Travancore; while the other set out for Tuticorin, purposing to embark there for Ceylon. With both parties, I sent Police Constables, in order that they might observe and prevent any oppression.

8. The party to Travancore was passed out of the District, but the Tuticorin party, instead of embarking there, came inland again, and went down South to Palayvellee, Valay-

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uddee, and other places. At the first mentioned place some of the women managed to effect an entrance into a rich man's house, and stole therefrom a box containing money, jewels, &c. The things stolen were first missed after the Heeratees women left the village, and on their being missed, a chase was at once set up by some of the villagers, a few Kavilgars, and Police Constables. The women were overtaken on a sandy desert, and in their possession were found all the stolen articles, besides a number of pick locks and false keys. The women are in custody, and will undergo trial. The men of the party were not with the women, when the latter were arrested;—had they been, there would probably have been some trouble in arresting the women. During the night, after the arrest of the women, a good deal of firing was heard in the direction of Vallyauddu, whither the men had gone, and it is presumed that they were firing to attract the women towards their proper whereabouts.

9. The men, with a number of other women and children, are still roaming about the country, and on consultation with the Magistrate, we have come to the conclusion that the best thing to be done is to make them "move on" out of the District. Such is the case.

10. There is no doubt that these Heeratees are a band of Marauders, and that they have abused, and do abuse most shamefully, the passports which were furnished to them in several Districts before arriving here.

11. Why these Heeratees have come down here, I cannot tell, they profess to barter in precious stones, &c., but this is only a subterfuge.

12. I bring all this to your notice, with a view to your taking any measures that you may deem proper to prevent such large gangs of desperate men and women, with firearms, to roam the country *ad libitum*, after obtaining passports, to use as a means of oppressing the poor ignorant village people; and, hereafter, should such gangs be permitted to pass on from District to District, I beg that some orders may be issued to enable me, or any Superintendent to whose District such characters proceed, to obtain correct and proper information as to the reason of such people leaving their own country, the reasons that they are furnished with passports, the object of their journeys, their final destination, &c.; for, with such information, these men might be more easily dealt with.

13. Finally, should these people remain any longer in this District, giving trouble, I have the honor to request instructions as to how they are to be dealt with. It may be said, and justly so, "if guilty of any offence, extortion, theft, &c., arrest, and have them punished under the Penal Code;" but it must be remembered that it is a very difficult matter to get the ignorant lower classes, on whom the oppression is generally practised, to come forward and complain *publicly* of their losses. They would rather, in most cases, lose sheep, fowls and other property, and let such go *quietly*, than be obliged to proceed to the Sub-Magistrate's Cutcherry, wait there for days, while the case is undergoing inquiry, and afterwards be obliged to leave their occupation for weeks, while they have to appear at Court, to give evidence against their oppressors.

14. For this reason, I believe, much of the injustice practised by such Marauders does not come to light; and it is only in a few instances, when the party plundered is an influential man, that we are enabled to get hold of, and bring such individuals under the lash of the law.

15. I have heard much privately, which never would be brought forward by the parties officially. Under these circumstances, I consider some special steps require to be taken against such people as these Heeratees.

16. I write this after consultation with the Magistrate.

(True Copy).

(Signed) M. W. CARR, Captain,
Assistant Inspector General of Police.

No. 318.

ORDER THEREON, 29th September 1865, No. 1407.

The Government understand the object of Mr. Robinson's letter to be to obtain general instructions as to the course to be adopted in the case of such gangs of sturdy armed beggars as he describes entering the British Territory, and wandering about living by begging, or rather extortion and theft; and he deprecates

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the practice of Magistrates furnishing them with passports, which are unnecessary for any good purpose, but are liable to be greatly abused.

2. The Government entirely concur with him on this point, and resolve to instruct all Magistrates, accordingly, that they are not to grant passports in such cases, and are to be specially careful not to allow such bands to pass through their Districts, but to send them back at once and warn them not to return.

3. The course generally to be adopted in such cases as are described is to compel the gang to quit British Territory, by the nearest route in the direction of their own country, and for this purpose to pass them back under Police surveillance, but certainly not to advance them further into our own Districts, unless with the view of reaching the coast, as the nearest point whence they may be deported.

4. The principles of the Foreigners Act, No. III of 1864, should be kept in view, and the attention of Police Superintendents should be drawn to that law.

5. The Government do not clearly understand, from the papers before them, whence these men came, and how far they had been passed on through British Territory; but they have reason to think that the same gang were expelled from the Mysore country, in a northerly direction, some months ago, and they desire to receive a full report as to the route by which they reached Tinnevely, and by the sanction of what Magistrates they penetrated so far south, and why none of the District Superintendents of Police, through whose ranges they must have passed, made any report of them.

6. Mr. Robinson styles the men Heeratees, natives of Hyderabad, and the Government would have assumed that he referred to Hyderabad in Scinde, but from his mention that "the Northern Circars have had several such visitations of lawless ruffians." If these gangs come from the Nizam's country it would seem desirable to address the Resident on the subject, and the Government wish to receive fuller information on this point.

7. As it is probable that this particular band is by this time in the Travancore country, copy of these Proceedings will be furnished to the Resident in Travancore and Cochin, with instructions to suggest to the Rajah's Government the advisability of deporting these men by sea, in the direction of their own country (whether Scinde or the Deccan), *via* Bombay, and in communication with the authorities there.

(True Extract).

Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Inspector General of Police.

" Magistrate of

" Commissioner of Police.

" Resident in Travancore and Cochin.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Read the following letter
from the Sup. Gen. of
India. d. 23 Sept. 1863.

28 September 1865 No. 1407-

The Govt. understands
the object of Mr. Robinson's
letter & he obtains
general instructions
as to the course to
be adopted in the case
of such gangs of
thieves & banditti.
He describes entering
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The Govt. is ready
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Wm

JH

Wm

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The consequence of the
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unless with the view of nearest point
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Act No. 3. of 1832 should be
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understand from the papers

to Haller
such trust
& pass this
their District
but I trust
them back
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not to return

Act 3. of 1832 relating
to Foreigners.

Has any notice
been given of this
prohibition in the
Supts. of Districts

The S. Supt. of
the District of ...
Police through whose
ranges they must
pass. I am ...
made any report
of them - WDU

x If they are natives of ...
Hyderabad province - but ...
decided ...

do. but the principles of the Act
are ... the Police
The Act itself ...
is ...

before them & since their
own country & how far
they had been passing
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but they have even
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the route by ... they
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of the Magistrate
they proceeded as far
south as ...

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as ...

If these ^{gangs} come from
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As it is probable that
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country. Copy of these two
letters be furnished to the
Resident at Travancore
Hochim with instructions
to request the Rajah's Govt.
the advisability of deporting
these men by sea & the direction
of their own Country (whether
Sinde or the Deccan) via
Bombay & to communicate
with the authorities there.

L.B.

27. 9. 65.

2 Insp: Ins. of Police
Majr of _____ (all)
Ch. Commr. of Police reading dispatch
Resident Travancore
Hochim.

Judicial 1805 Sept

No 1407.

Proceedings of the
Madras Government

Dated 29th Sept 1805.

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