

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1744	Press
		~~Mis.~~
Dated	3-11-1918	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
3rd November 1866.*

No. 38. Read the following letter from the Magistrate of the Kistna District, to the Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Masulipatam, 20th October 1866, No. 336.

With reference to the Order of Government of the 10th instant, No. 1584, I have the honor to forward, herewith, copy of a report just received from the Acting Joint Magistrate of this District, regarding the grain riot occurred in Vattapallem.

From the Acting Joint Magistrate, Kistna District, to the Magistrate, Kistna District; dated Guntoor, 13th October 1866, No. 69.

I have the honor, in reply to your demi-official of the 4th current, which reached me only yesterday, to submit the report requested on the late disturbance in the Town of Vattapallem.

2. Late on the afternoon of the 14th, I learned, by special messenger from Bapatla, that the Comatics' shops and godowns of Vattapallem had, on the 13th, been looted by a large mob of the inhabitants. I immediately communicated with the Assistant Superintendent of Police, with whom I arranged to ride down next morning. The distance is 46 miles, and we could, with the short notice, only manage the first 31 to Bapatla on the 15th; on the morning of the 16th we arrived at Vattapallem, to find 72 persons in the custody of the Police, who, under the direction of Mr. Inspector Sharkey, were busily engaged in inquiring into the matter. I resolved to take up the case myself; and the result of my inquiry was that 70 of the persons arrested by the Police were committed to the Court of Session, before which they are to be tried on the 22nd instant, and two were discharged. The charges against them were house-breaking, under Section 454, and dacoity under Sections 395 and 397, Indian Penal Code.

3. From my inquiries, I learned that for about three hours, say from 10 A. M. to 1 P. M. of the 13th, a mob of Jandras, Salis, and other Weaver castes, who form the chief part of the population of this part of the country, estimated variously from 2, to 10,000 surged along from bazaar to bazaar, rifling of their contents every Comaty's shop and godown that they could get into. Their entrance they effected either by violence or by threatening the owners if they did not open. The

* Adjoining suburbs of the united Police Town of Vattapallem. course of the rioters was from Vattapallem* to Nayanapilly* and thence to Anoomillypettah*.

In the first, 11 shops and 2 godowns; in the second, 10 shops and one godown; and in the 3rd, one shop, were thus pillaged. The object of the looters was grain. Allegations of the theft of other articles have indeed been made, and doubtless much else may have been stolen. These charges have, however, received but scant confirmation from the subsequent inquiries of the Police. The value put upon all the property returned as lost is between 3 and 4000 Rupees. The Police (there were at first but two, and finally only six) were, of course, powerless to stop the riot, but they had the good sense to note down, then or immediately after, while the occurrences were fresh in their memory, the names of those they knew and recognized.

4. I have been favored with the perusal of a special report made by the Assistant Superintendent of Police on this matter. In his report of the cause, Mr. Briggs has, by his information, been led into an error. The day of this riot is stated to have been that of a great annual festival, and the desire for grain, for use in this feast, is put down as the primary cause of the outburst. This is incorrect; the feast was on the 12th, the outbreak on the 13th. The news of the grain riots in Madras had, I was informed, been communicated to the town by the Comatics themselves. These persons, by their own selfish conduct, doubtless, had brought the evil upon themselves. They closed their shops for three or four days before, refusing to sell at any price, and there came the storm. The high price to which grain had risen, and the news from Madras may have had considerable effect in exciting the populace, but the refusal to sell doubtless put the last spoke in the wheel. Huge quantities of grain were taken, but little has been recovered. The Coondaroo, then running in flood to the sea, is said to have received the great bulk of it; if this is so, the mob, who

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are not of the class usually called Criminal, may have had the idea of serving the Comaties out for their selfishness, more than any thing else. While it is impossible to sympathize with the Comaties, it is as impossible to excuse those through whose lawlessness they suffered.

No. 39. ORDER THEREON, 3rd November 1866, No. 1744.

To be recorded.

(True Extract).

J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

Ed. J. H. Barna

10th October 1866. No. 100 & 101.

17th 1866

Judicial Department

From

The Magistrate of Pudukottah

To The Secretary
to Government
in the Judicial Department
Madras.

Dated 20th October
Return 30 - " } 1866

No 336

Enclosure 1

No 2369

Forwarding Copy of a
Report from the Acting Joint
Magistrate of the District
regarding the grain riot which
occurred in Patafallam -

3rd November 1866 No. 1744

Of. Recorded
Wm. W.

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