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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Judicial DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.		Press.
B.P. No.	233	Mis.
Dated	12. 2 - 1868	197.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
12th February 1868.*

No. 152. Read the following letter from the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Nagpore, 28th January 1868, No. 226-17.

In continuation of this office No. 62-425, dated 8th instant, forwarding copy of a detailed report by Major Steuart, regarding infanticide and murder among the Bunjara tribes, I am directed to transmit, for the information of the Government of Madras, a copy of a report, No. 270, dated 14th instant, from the Inspector General of Police in these provinces on the subject.

2. I am to state that, in the opinion of the Chief Commissioner, the Bunjaras, as a body, are an enterprising and respectable class, and Mr. Campbell hopes to succeed in preventing the dacoities which they may sometimes have considerable temptation to commit.

Copy of a letter, from the Inspector General of Police, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, dated 14th January 1868, No. 270.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 333, dated 21st September 1867, forwarding certain papers received from the Madras Government regarding the Bunjaras of Central India. From these it would appear that it has been brought to the notice of that Government, chiefly by a Native Moonsiff and by Dr. Shortt of that Presidency, that the Bunjaras of Central India are addicted to the crimes of human sacrifice, wife murder, infanticide, child-stealing, and other atrocities, and that they believe in witchcraft and practise sorcery, and the Chief Commissioner has ordered me to inquire into and report upon the subject.

2. I would premise that my attention was called to the subject of practise of infanticide by Bunjaras in the month of July last by seeing in one of the Madras newspapers a notice of the information which the Moonsiff above referred to had given to the Madras Government, and that I thereupon called upon the Police Superintendents of Districts most frequented by Bunjaras to have a census taken of all the Todas that were encamped in their respective districts during the rains. Agreeably to this order a census of 549 Todas, located in twelve districts of the Central Provinces, was taken by the Police, and I herewith forward an abstract of the result.

It shows that the 549 Todas consisted of 29,006 individuals, of whom 18,270 were adults, and 10,736 were children between the age of 1 and 14 years; of the adults 10,000 were males, and 8270 were females; and of the children 6027 were males, and 4709 females. Of the total number, viz., 29,006, there were 16,027 males, and 12,979 females.

From the above the following proportions are deduced—

Males to females...	...	...	100 to 81
Adults to children...	...	...	63 to 37
Male to female children...	...	...	55.5 to 45.5

According to the recent census the following are the corresponding proportions in the entire population of the Central Provinces :—

Males to females ..	...	...	100 to 95
Adults to children...	...	...	60.5 to 39.5
Male to female children...	...	...	53 to 47

In the Punjab the proportion of males to females is 100 to 81, or the same as that given above for the Bunjaras. Considering the life of exposure and hardship led by these people it might be expected *prima facie* that the proportion of children to adults amongst them would be smaller than that of the entire population, and the above figures show that in reality it is so. The census was carefully taken by the Police, and although in some of the returns error was evident, yet the amount of error was not sufficient to materially affect the general return, which, I believe, may be accepted as tolerably correct.

3. I have made extensive inquiries throughout the Central Provinces regarding Bunjaras—both from European Officers who have had much experience of Natives, and from Native gentlemen and officials of respectability and intelligence—and I will now proceed to state the result.

4. First as regards human sacrifice. No one whom I have consulted on the subject has ever heard that it is practised by Bunjaras, and as this crime is unknown in the Khalsa portion of the Central Provinces, there does not seem to be any reason to charge these people with it. Possibly

in the feudatory States of Bustar and in Orissa, where the crime is not altogether unknown, they may sometimes commit it, but I have no means of ascertaining this.

5. In common with the large majority of the population of the Central Provinces, the Bunjaras no doubt believe in witchcraft, and when epidemic sickness breaks out either amongst themselves or their cattle, it is probable that they commit the crimes to which this belief gives rise, to at least an equal extent, as the general population when excited by the same causes. Major Stuart, the District Superintendent of Raepore, in paragraph 13 to 16 of his report on Bunjaras, to which I will more particularly refer hereafter, is of the same opinion.

6. I understand that in some parts of India child-stealing is carried on to a considerable extent by the Bunjaras. That class or caste known as Mooltanees are said to be specially addicted to this crime, but I believe it is very rarely practised in the Central Provinces: were it otherwise, reports of children being stolen or missing would be frequent—as it is, they are very rare, and yet for many months of every year the province is traversed in every direction by bands of these wandering people, who in their journeys must have frequent opportunities for kidnapping children were they inclined to do so.

7. With regard to the murder of their women for infidelity, I have not been able to obtain any certain information that this is their practice. Certainly no instance of such a crime being committed has come to my knowledge during the six years that I have held my present appointment; every Native whom I have consulted has told me that he never heard of such a practice; and Major Stuart mentions (paragraph 24 of his report) that their caste rules provides for the adjudication of cases of the infidelity of the wife, and that punishment by fine is frequently inflicted. Another of my informants states that the man is punished with a fine, and that the woman loses caste, and is either turned out of the Tola, or, if she remains in it, is compelled to work as a servant. Still I am aware that there is a general impression that unchastity is usually punished by the death of the female, and it is also generally believed that the Bunjara females are remarkable for their chastity, and that this arises from the fear of the punishment which a departure from virtue would entail. Perhaps there is some foundation for this popular belief. Possibly the Bunjara husband, when he discovers infidelity on the part of his wife, may more frequently than other husbands take her punishment into his own hands and destroy her. In the solitude of the jungle he would have ample opportunities for such vengeance, and the reticence, and probably the approval of his tribe, would secure him from detection, but there is nothing to lead to the belief that this crime, if practised at all, is of frequent occurrence; indeed the chastity of the women, which is notorious, would render the occasions for its perpetration very rare.

8. Next as regards infanticide. None of the persons, officials or others, either English or Native, whom I have consulted, believe that this crime is practised by the Bunjaras of Central India, and hardly any of them have ever heard that it has been ascribed to them, and I can discover no good reason why they should be believed to commit it. If it was practised, it would surely be known to, or at least suspected by, some of our most experienced officers. There is no apparent object for its commission, for the Bunjara girls are a source of wealth to their parents, (see paragraph 20 of Major Stuart's Memorandum). The returns of the census taken of the Bunjaras during last rains do not indicate its prevalence. The larger proportion of males to females, as compared with the general returns of the province, are no doubt attributable—

- 1st.—To inaccuracies in the return.
- 2nd.—To the fact that with some of the Tolas, whose census was taken, all the females belonging to them were not present.
- 3rd.—The greater mortality amongst female children, owing to the hardship incident to their manner of life. Any one who has been long in the Central Provinces must have observed that female children are numerous in the many Tolas met with on the roads during the marching season, and these children are employed in grazing and tending the cattle quite as generally as the male children. If the Bunjaras wished to get rid of their female children, they would probably sell in preference to murdering them, especially as the offence of trading in children is by no means unknown amongst them. During the last seven years many thousands of Tolas have been escorted by the Police

through the province, and during that period there has not been one instance of a charge of infanticide being brought against them.

9. The conclusions then at which I have arrived, regarding the crimes practised by these people, are the following:—

- 1st.—That they may possibly commit wife murder somewhat more frequently than other races inhabiting the Central Provinces.
- 2nd.—That they do not practise infanticide nor offer human sacrifices.
- 3rd.—That some of their tribes are addicted to child-stealing and dacoity.
- 4th.—That they commit the crimes which result from a belief in witchcraft, at least as frequently as those other inhabitants of the province amongst whom this belief is most prevalent.

10. Major Stuart, the District Superintendent of Raepore, has submitted a very full and interesting report upon the Bunjaras of Chutteesgurh. As a copy of this has already been submitted to the Chief Commissioner through the Commissioner of the Division, it will be sufficient for me to give here a brief abstract of the information it contains.

According to Major Stuart the Bunjaras are divided into five divisions or castes as follows:—

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Chowhan. | 3. Rhatore, | 5. Poorce. |
| 2. Powar. | 4. Burthya. | |

Each of these divisions is again sub-divided into a number of families or ghotes, there being six families in the 1st Division, twelve in the 2nd, seven in the 3rd, twelve in the 4th, and three in the 5th. Bunjaras of different divisions marry with each other, but individuals of families belonging to the same division do not intermarry. These, as above enumerated, are the pure Bunjaras, but there are other castes or tribes employed as carriers who are popularly known as Bunjaras, but not recognized as such by the original tribes. Some of these are Mooltanees and Mookerycees, both Mahomedans. The Mooltanees have an evil reputation and are addicted to dacoity. The following are:—

- | | | |
|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Hindoos. | Mutrya Subhanas. | Morce Bunjaras. |
| Subhanas. | Jogee Bunjaras. | |
| Howascees. | Mochee Bunjaras. | |

Some of the peculiarities of each of the above are given by Major Stuart.

11. The Bunjaras properly so called, of Kalowtee or Chutteesgurh below the ghats, have no priests or gooroes attached to their Tolas; but they all recognize three priests as endowed with peculiar sanctity. These are Bugwandoss, who is more particularly the high priest of the Burthyns, and who at present resides in the Belaspore district; Bhingee Naick, who belongs to the Rhatorees, and resides in the Nizam's territories; and Siwadoss, who lives at Gullee where the Bunjaras go for salt. Their office appears to be hereditary, and they are not interdicted from marriage. Major Stuart mentions a fourth who is held in high repute, viz., Nursing Bhuggut of the Rhatore Division, who appears to have raised himself to his position of influence. He resides in the Belaspore district.

12. The Naiks or heads of Tolas are persons of great importance in their respective Tolas.

13. Major Stuart gives some interesting particulars of the customs and ceremonies attendant upon marriages, births, and deaths, and the practice to which the belief in witchcraft gives rise.

14. The deities chiefly worshipped by the Bunjaras are Deola Deo, Bowancee, and Maslee or Bunjara Devec; the worship paid to each is briefly described.

15. In conclusion, I beg to add that for the last six years the Bunjaras of the Central Provinces have been closely watched by the Police; when it is practicable a Constable accompanies each Toda, but at some seasons the Tolas are too numerous to admit of this being done. The Police have always been cautioned not to interfere with the people of the Tolas in any way; they merely accompany them as a protection to the inhabitants against dacoity, which, when the Police was first organized, was frequently committed by Bunjaras. During the last few years instances of this crime committed by them have been rare. This, I think, may fairly be attributed to the Police surveillance, and as no complaints have been made against the Police by the Bunjaras I think it may be assumed that the surveillance has not been vexatious or inquisitorial.

(Signed) C. R. KRISHNAKA,
Offg. Supt., for Insp. Genl. of Police, C. P.

— GAZETTE OFFICE, CENTRAL PROVINCES,
BOMBAY. 1972. GAZETTE OFFICE, 14th January 1933.
BOMBAY.

No. 153.

1st.—That although the crime of murder arising from conjugal jealousy may occur among the Bunjaras more frequently than among other races inhabiting the Central Provinces, there is nothing to prove that there is in these tribes any established custom or rite requiring the punishment of death for adultery.

3rd.—That some of their tribes are addicted to child-stealing and dacoity.

2. The excellent control which is now exercised in the Central Provinces these people will, it is hoped, effectually check the dacoities which have been occasionally committed by them, and for which their wandering lives afford them usual facilities.

Chief Secretary.

Inspector General of Police.

Magistrate of the Kistna District.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

No. 226

17.

FROM

THE SECRETARY TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER,

Central Provinces.

TO

The Chief Secretary to the
Government of Madras

SIR,

Dated Nagpore, the 28th of January 1868

Judicial
Comm

In continuation of this
Office No. 25, of 8th Instant,
forwarding copy of a detailed re-
port by Major Stuart, regard-
ing infanticide & murders among
the Banjara tribes, I am di-
rected to transmit for the
information of the Government of
Madras a copy of a report, re-

and other atrocities and that they
believe in witchcraft and sorcery
and the Chief Commissioner
has asked me to give into an
report upon the subject.

I would promise that
my attention was called to the
subject of practice of witchcraft
by Bujarias in the month of July
last by seeing in one of the Indian
Newspapers a notice of the in-
formation which the Munsiff at
ferred to had given to the
Government, and that I thereupon
called upon the Police Department
of districts most frequented by
Bujarias to have a census

of all the Tondas that were ³ in-
camped in their respective districts
during the rains. Accordingly to this
order a census of 549 Tondas located
in 10 districts of the Central Provinces
was taken by the Police, and I
herewith forward an abstract of
the result.

It shows that the 549 Tondas
consisted of 29,000 individuals, of whom
18,270 were adults, and 10,730 were
children between the age of 1 and 14
years. Of the adults 10,000 were males
and 8,270 were females, and of the
children 6,270 were males and 4,460
females. Of the total number

Inspector-General of Police
in these Provinces, on the subject.

2. I am to state that
in the opinion of the Chief-
Commissioners, the Bhangas, as
a body, are an interfering, and
respectable class, and Mr. Camp-
bell hoped to succeed in pre-
venting the sacrifices which
they may sometimes have con-
siderable temptation to commit.

I have the honor to be
Yours most obt. Servant,
Lip.

Blissfield
A. J. L. L. L.

2
Copy of a letter No. 270, of 11th January 1868,
from the Inspector-General, of Police C. P.
to the Secretary to Chief Commr. C. P.

I have the honor to
acknowledge the receipt of your letter
No. 270 of 21st September 1867, con-
-sisting of certain papers received from the
Madras Government regarding the
Bhangas of Central India. From
these it would appear that it has
been brought to the notice of that
Government chiefly by a native
missionary and by Report of
that Presidency that the Bhangas
of Central India are addicted to
the crimes of human sacrifice, wife
stealing, child-steal

females:-

From the above the following proportions are deduced:-

Males to females 100 to 81

Adults to children 65 to 27

Male to female children 55.5 to 44.5

According to the recent census the following are the corresponding proportions in the entire population of the Central Provinces.

Males to females 100 to 75

Adults to children 60.5 to 39.5

Male to female children 55 to 45

In the Project the proportion of males to females is 100 to 81, as the census is that given above for the Project.

experience, and hardship led by these people it might be expected prima facie that the proportion of children to adults amongst them would be smaller than that of the entire population, and the above figures show that in reality it is so. The census was carefully taken by the police, and although in some of the returns error was evident, yet the amount of error was not sufficient to materially affect the general return, which I believe may be accepted as tolerably correct. —

I have made extensive enquiries throughout the Central Provinces regarding Buzanas. —

from European officers in the land
I had much experience of natives
and from native gentlemen in office
I easily ascertained that in all the
provinces and I will now present the
state of the result.

4. First as regards human
sacrifices - no person whom I have ever
consulted on the subject has ever
heard that it is practised by the
Punjarees - and as this crime is
unknown in the whole portion
of the Central Provinces, there
does not seem to be any reason
to charge these people with it.
Not only in the Punditry state
of Quater and in Cifra and

5. crime is not altogether unknown
they may sometimes commit it, but
I have no means of ascertaining this.

In common with the large
majority of the population of the
Central Provinces, the Punjarees no
doubt believe in witchcraft, and when
epidemic sickness breaks out either
amongst themselves or their cattle, it
is probable that they commit the
crimes to which this belief gives rise,
to at least an equal extent as the
general population when excited by
the same causes. Major Stewart,
the District Superintendent of Raipur
in paras 43 to 45 of his report on

the whole of India.

particularly refer hereto is of the
same opinion.

6. I understand that in some
parts of India child-stealing is
carried on to a considerable extent
by the Brahmins. That class, as we
know, are the classes who said to
be specially addicted to this crime.
but I believe it is now rarely
practised in the Central Provinces,
even if, otherwise, reports of children
being stolen & missing would
be frequent, as it is, they are
very rare, and yet for many months
of every year the Province is traversed
in every direction by bands of these
wandering people who in

must have frequent opportunities
for kidnapping children were they
inclined to do so.

7. With regard to the murder
of Chiv woman for infidelity, I have
not been able to obtain any certain
information that this is their practice.
Certainly no instance of such a crime
being committed has come to my
knowledge during the 6 years that
I have held my present appointment.
every native, whom I have consulted,
has told me that he never heard of
such a practice. and Major Stewart
mentions (para 28 of his report) that
their caste rules provides for the
trial of cases of the infidelity

of the wife, and that punishment
by fire is frequently inflicted;
another of my informants states that
the man is punished with a fine
and that the woman loses caste,
and is either turned out of the
Pinda, or if she remains in it is
compelled to work as a servant.
Still I am aware that there is a
general impression that such chastity
is usually punished by the death
of the female - and it is also gener-
ally believed that the Bengara
females are remarkable for their
chastity, and that this arises from
the fear of the punishment which
a forfeiture of virtue would

7
Perhaps there is some foundation
for this popular belief. Possibly the
Bengara husband when he discovers
infidelity on the part of his wife
may more frequently than other hus-
bands take his punishment into his
own hands and destroy her. In the
solitudes of the jungle he would
have ample opportunities of such
vengeance, and the retrieval, and pro-
bably the approval of his tribe
would secure him from detection. But
there is nothing to lead to the belief
that this crime, if practiced at
all, is of frequent occurrence, and
the chastity of the women which
is so much boasted of, would render the

for its perpetration very rare.

8. Next as regards infanticide, none of the persons, officials or others, either English, or Native whom I have consulted believe that this crime is practiced by the B. Am. Jannas of Central India, and hardly any of them have ~~ever~~ heard that it has been ascribed to them, and I can discover no good reason why they should be believed to commit it. If it was practiced it would surely be known to, or at least suspected by some of our most experienced Officers. There is no apparent object for its commission; for the B. Am. girls are a lowly class, and the

8
ascribed to their parents (see para. 20 of Major Stewart's Memorandum). The returns of the census taken of the B. Am. during last year do not indicate its prevalence. The larger proportion of males to females as compared with the general returns of the Province are no doubt attributable

1st To inaccuracies in the return
2nd To the fact that with some of the B. Am. whose census was taken, all the females belonging to them were not present.

3rd The greater mortality amongst female children, owing to the hardness of their summer of life.

one who has been long in the Central
Provinces must have observed that
female children are numerous in the
many tandas met with on the roads
during the marching season, and these
children are employed in grazing and
tending the cattle quite as generally
as the male children. If the British
wished to get rid of their female
children, they would probably kill
in preference to murdering them, es-
pecially as the offence of killing
in children is by no means unknown
amongst them. During the last 7
years many thousands of tandas have
been escorted by the police through
the provinces, and during that pe-
riod the British have not observed

instance of a charge of infanticide
being brought against them.

The conclusions then, at
which I have arrived regarding the
crimes practiced by these people are
the following:-

1st That they may possibly commit
infanticide somewhat more frequently
than other races inhabiting the Central
Provinces.

2nd That they do not practice in-
fanticide nor offer human sacrifices.

3rd That some of their tribes are
addicted to child-stealing and sorcery.

4th That they commit the crimes which
result from a belief in witchcraft, as

burning to death as they do
the children of the dead.

inhabitants of the Province, amongst whom this belief is most prevalent.

10. Major Stewart the District Superintendent of Nagpore has submitted a very full and interesting report upon the Bujarias of Chattergumb. as a copy of this has already been submitted to the Chief Commissioner through the Commissioner of the Division, it will be sufficient for me to give here, a brief abstract of the information it contains.

According to Major Stewart the Bujarias are divided into 5 Divisions or castes as follows:-

1. Chowhan
2. Puar
3. Khelore
4. Buntia

10
each of these Divisions is again subdivided into a number of Families or Ghats. thus being 5 Families in the 1st Division. 12 in the 2nd in the 3rd - 13 in the 4th and 5 in the 5th. Bujarias of different Divisions marry with each other - but individuals of Families belonging to the same Division do not intermarry. Some are uneducated, and the poor Bujarias, but there are others who are educated, employed as clerks who are properly known as Bujarias but not recognized as such by the original tribes. Some of these poor Buntias and the Khelores - both the Buntias and the Khelores have an evil reputation.

and are addicted to dissipation. The following are

- Chindos
- Subhanas
- Hewaspos
- Atatras Subhanas
- Jago Bunjoras
- Mahee Bunjoras
- Alere Bunjoras

Among the various tribes of each of the above are given by Major Stuart

11. The Bunjoras properly so called of Malabar, or Chattergale, below the state have no priests and are devoted to their Pandas but they all recognize the Christians as superior with peculiar sanctity. There is a Bugmandos who is much feared by the Bunjoras and Chattergale.

and a high priest resides in the Belaspore district. Bhingee, who belongs to the Chattergale and resides in the Nizam's territories and Sivadoos who lives at Gulla where the Bunjoras go for salt. Their office appears to be hereditary and they are not interdicted from marriage. Major Stuart mentions a man who is called in high respect, Narsing Bhagant of the Chattergale Division, who appears to have raised himself to his position of influence. He resides in the Belaspore district.

12. The Kats, or Kats of Pandan and persons of great importance in the region.

13. Major Stewart gives some interesting particulars of the customs and ceremonies attendant upon marriages, births, and deaths and the practices to which the belief in witchcraft gives rise.

14. The duties chiefly discharged by the Bujarias or Coolies (the Bujarias are Bujarias, Bujarias, Bujarias) are described. The wages paid to each is highly detailed.

15. In conclusion they add that for the last five years the Bujarias of the Central Province have been closely watched by the police; and it is probable & probable accomplices such as the Bujarias, but at some seasons the Bujarias are the main accomplices.

this being done. The Police have, as we have mentioned, not to interfere with the people of the Tandar nor any way they merely accompany them as a protection to the inhabitants against robbery, which when the Police was first organized was frequently committed by Bujarias. During the last few years more of this crime committed by them have been rare. This I think may fairly be attributed to the Police surveillance, and as no complaints have been made against the Police by the Bujarias I think it may be assumed that the Bujarias are not the main accomplices.

J. M. Carey
Leicester, Mass.

received 071864

1000

1 day C.R. Krishna Rao
Offg. Secy. of
for Insp. Genl. of B. C. C.

14
Judicial Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from the
Secretary to the Chief Commissioners, Central
Provinces.

Here under 28 July 1868. N^o 226
17.

Order thereon 12 July 1868 N^o 233.

The Governor in Council
has read with much
interest the reports which
have been communicated
by the Chief Commissioners
of Central Provinces on the
Bunjara tribes. The careful
and very complete inquiry
which has been made by
the Police of the Central
Provinces establishes in a
satisfactory manner that
there has been no considerable
misconception as to the nature of

Wm

in public 287/68.

Pro. A. H. H. No. 1132

of this wandering race,
and much exaggeration re-
garding certain crimes said
to be frequent among them.

The result of the inquiry
made under the orders of
the Chief Commissioner is

1st That although the
Banjars are popularly
known as a wandering
tribe, and are frequently
found in the Central Provinces,

there is
nothing to prove that there
is any established custom
or rite requiring the punish-
ment of death for adultery.

2nd That they do not practice
infanticide nor offer human
sacrifices.

3rd That some of their tribes
are addicted to child-stealing
and dacoity.

4th That they commit the

the crime of murder
arising from personal
jealousy may occur
among the Banjars
more frequently than
among other races

crimes which result from
a belief in witchcraft, at
least as frequently as those
other inhabitants of the
province amongst whom
this belief is most prevalent.

2. (The Governor in Council
entirely concurs with the
Chief Commissioner in the
opinion which he has formed
that the Banjars are, as
a body, an enterprising and
respectable class. The excellent
control which is now exercised
in the Central Provinces
over these people will, doubtless,
effectually check the practices
which have been occasionally
committed by them, and for
which their wandering
lives afford them unusual
facilities.

By Commr Central Provinces
and Chief Secy.
to the Govt.

1562. 1562. 1562.

No. 233

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Dated 12th February 1863.

152. 153.

152.153

Proc. 23^d Jan^y 1858 No. 172-179.

Proc. 12th Feb^y 1858
Jan^y 1858 Dep^t

From

Asst. Secy. & the Chief
Commissioner,
Central Province
10th Feb^y 1858

8/28 Aug^y 3 1858
19th Feb^y 3

Rec^d: 10th Feb^y 1858

Forwarded Report
of the Super. Genl. of
Police, Central Province,
regarding infanticide
& murder among the
Banyan tribe.

C7L
R11

152