JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

No. 1684, Judicial, 10th August 1895.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total ..	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total ..	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code ..	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 8
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
		RS.
1894.		
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	..	..
February	..	..
2nd March	5	30
2nd „	5	40
2nd „	4	36
2nd „	5	36
30th „	1	3
April	..	..
Total ..	20	145

Order—No. 1684, Judicial, dated 10th August 1895.

Recorded, with the remark that the Government is gratified to note the great interest which Mr. Fawcett takes in his work and the satisfactory results which he has effected in regard to the prevention of coffee-stealing. A continuance of the same policy will, it is hoped, be accompanied with even more success in the ensuing season.

2. Copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of Statement A appended to it will be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector-General of Police.
„ Hony. Secretary, United Planters' Association.

Exd. A. Raitt.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper :—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290 :—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894-95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Natives						
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Total	20	145

Order—No. 1684, Judicial, dated 10th August 1895.

Recorded, with the remark that the Government is gratified to note the great interest which Mr. Fawcett takes in his work and the satisfactory results which he has effected in regard to the prevention of coffee-stealing. A continuance of the same policy will, it is hoped, be accompanied with even more success in the ensuing season.

2. Copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of Statement A appended to it will be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector-General of Police.
" Hony. Secretary, United Planters' Association.

Exd. A. Raitt.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

—	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
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The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

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a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

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The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant; the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

their

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

Order—No. 1684, Judicial, dated 10th August 1895.

Recorded, with the remark that the Government is gratified to note the great interest which Mr. Fawcett takes in his work and the satisfactory results which he has effected in regard to the prevention of coffee-stealing. A continuance of the same policy will, it is hoped, be accompanied with even more success in the ensuing season.

2. Copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of Statement A appended to it will be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector-General of Police.
„ Hony. Secretary, United Planters' Association.

Exd. A. Raitt.

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

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I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total ..	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total ..	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code ..	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 8
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
1894.		RS.
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	..	..
February	..	..
2nd March	5	30
2nd „	5	40
2nd „	4	36
2nd „	5	36
30th „	1	3
April	..	..
Total ..	20	145

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The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

No. 1684, Judicial, 10th August 1895.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

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The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib*. The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

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Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven. But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total ..	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total ..	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code ..	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 8
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
		RS.
1894.		
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	..	..
February	..	..
2nd March	5	30
2nd „	5	40
2nd „	4	36
2nd „	5	36
30th „	1	3
April	..	..
Total ..	20	145

Order—No. 1684, Judicial, dated 10th August 1895.

Recorded, with the remark that the Government is gratified to note the great interest which Mr. Fawcett takes in his work and the satisfactory results which he has effected in regard to the prevention of coffee-stealing. A continuance of the same policy will, it is hoped, be accompanied with even more success in the ensuing season.

2. Copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of Statement A appended to it will be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector-General of Police.
„ Hony. Secretary, United Planters' Association.

Exd. A. Raitt.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

CHIEF SECRETARIAT OOTACAMUND

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

—

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either [illegible] much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total ..	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

—	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total ..	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

—	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code ..	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 6
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
		RS.
1894.		
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	..	..
February	..	..
2nd March	5	30
2nd „	5	40
2nd „	4	36
2nd „	5	36
30th „	1	3
April	..	..
Total ..	20	145
	3	

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

CHIEF SECRETARIAT

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

It not being germane to this report, I do not, of course, stay to consider what might be the general effect on agriculture in Wynaad which might be induced through absorption of the hill folk by the coffee estates. That the subject deserves consideration goes without saying. And I am not prepared to say, in the face of the opinion of those who have had most experience that the people who live by agriculture are decreasingly poorer, that the effect would be the most beneficial of all for Wynaad.

My immediate consideration is preventing coffee-stealing; and there is no manner of doubt that improvement in the lives of those who steal coffee from the trees by night—a class of crime confined to one class of the people—will do much to relieve the estates from depredations.

It is now time to speak of the more special and direct methods which were adopted during last season. The difficulties to be encountered have been outlined. It will have been observed that the receiver has been in the habit of receiving all the coffee he could get, and that all who were engaged in the business had had their cunning and other faculties sharpened by much practice.

There was no means of check. If a man said he got his coffee from so and so there was no *proof* (as required by the courts, so danger through them was not apprehended)—there was no proof that he did not, as so and so had some coffee trees. There was no means of checking whether during the season so and so had not sold twenty times as much as his trees could have produced or of knowing whether any one had garnered ten times as much as he could possibly have gathered from his own trees.

To trust to prevention through convictions only would have been a very feeble policy. The game would not be worth the candle. Instead of being subdued, delinquents might be elated by the easy evasion of the law whose limits they knew so well. Moreover, the police could not possibly work with spirit at the sisyphean game perpetually. Minute sentences of imprisonment which never involved leaving Wynaad—being invariably within a month in duration—and trifling fines in the few instances of conviction, had had very little deterrent effect. So would they be powerful now? It was, therefore, necessary to do something else.

Nevertheless, it was by no means advisable to disregard cases and convictions. *Proper* sentences *must* be effectual and to a very considerable extent. While working for prevention it was really more than ever desirable that infringement of the Coffee-stealing Prevention Act as well as of the Penal Code in respect of coffee should be met with more than nominal sentences. Thanks to the action of the District Magistrate who determined that convictions should be impressive, the Sub-Magisterial horizon has been widened and those who were found guilty during the last season were punished as never before. There was not only enhancement in the fines but in terms of imprisonment. People had something to fear when they ventured to leap through the law. It is not too much to say that while prevention of offences is more important than conviction of offenders, it cannot be done without the latter; and not only that, the offenders must be made to feel the power of the law. Formerly while fines were trifling and sentences never involved leaving Wynaad and meant no more than restriction and good feeding for a week or two in a Wynaad sub-jail, the hand of the law was too feeble to be felt. It becomes a very different matter when fines are substantial and imprisonment the same, involving residence in Cannanore Jail for a few months. The very going to Cannanore is itself a serious punishment to the Wynaadee.

It will have been surmised already that prevention in its widest sense was our aim. In order that this might be done it was advisable first of all to obtain accurate information of the extent and quantity of native-grown coffee—the coffee grown in Wynaad outside the planters' estates. And this was gotten by the simple though tedious process of counting all the bearing trees and estimating the crop throughout Wynaad—outside the planters' estates, of course. It was done in a friendly way without arousing alarm. Let me say here, in case objection is taken to the manner of bringing about a good result, if "nothing succeeds like success" is put aside, that

the scheme for protection was extended to the owner of the smallest garden as to the largest estate and by the coffee-growers in the smallest way it was appreciated quite as much as it was by the planters.

The result of this survey was entered in each station in a register. The object of it was to hold in our hands the power to check stealing and receiving in the most positive way. No one could now grow a bushel and swear he grew a ton.

When the time came for plucking, the gardens were again visited and the quantity actually gathered in each was noted. For their own sakes the growers were induced to gather in their crop as soon as it was ripe. There was nothing in the way of opposition, for the people soon knew they were being well protected. These small growers have suffered much loss hitherto not only by theft, but by swindling, the wily buyer falsifying his accounts. This latter offence, too, we were able to prevent partially and the police have earned the good will of the small growers, who have last season been able to get a proper price for their produce.

It was possible, by examination of books showing purchases and of passes of coffee on transit, to exercise very considerable check. The law does not require a man to keep an account of the coffee he grows, but it compels him to account in his books for all that he buys. Our knowledge of how much each man had grown made it impracticable for any man to pretend he had grown, say, a ton when he had grown but a bushel or to pretend that he had purchased from another more than that other had grown. There was no vagueness on these points—the vagueness in which men had hitherto made themselves secure. Statements as to purchases could be checked and no man was able to possess more than he could legitimately.

By the same means, too, we were able to check the swindling of local growers by buyers and swindlers from the coast. We were able to exercise a check on every form of thieving, receiving and swindling through the facts at our command and acquaintance with the ways and wiles of coffee receivers and buyers; we were able to relieve Wynaad entirely of the six months' parasites. A few came early in the season, saw what was in hand, and, thinking it best to give up the game, went away. Wynaad was completely free from them during the last season. It need scarcely be added that many of the coast buyers were thereby much disturbed.

In order to prevent thefts by coolies on the estates, amicable arrangements were made with the maistries and others of influence so that petty pilfering by the coolies was prevented. Close watch was kept, too, on the markets when the coolies made their weekly purchases.

There were regular patrols by night along the roads to the estates and to other places requiring special watch and to the out-of-the-way passes and paths from the hills to the low country. For this purpose four head constables and fifteen constables were taken from the divisions of the district below the ghâts—an arrangement which brought with it no appreciable inconvenience and involved but the (extra) Wynaad allowances to the men. The general effect was that coffee-stealing was practically stopped. Very few planters lost *any* coffee and most of them lost none. The losses were very trifling and there are good reasons for the presumption that there were no more cases of theft than are entered in our registers. Of course, certain kinds of theft are unpreventable by the police; as when a few seers of coffee are stolen from an abandoned estate far from any habitation under the immediate care of no one; or as in a case of theft from a drying yard when the planter's watchmen are obviously guilty.

Full of difficulty is the matter of preventing theft from carts during transit of coffee to the coast. Cartmen will engage to carry coffee at a lower rate than they will carry cinchona or any other produce—a significant fact in itself. Their expertness in taking coffee out of the bags and turning up at the receiving station with the full weight is positively remarkable. Not only do they steal, but in order to make up the weight they wet what they do not steal and thus reduce its value very considerably. So clever are they through long practice that they are able (it is said all round) by a very ingenious process to increase the weight of the sample which is sometimes sent in a sealed bottle. To prevent losses on the road there were patrols, watch at halting places, and supervision of passes along with turning out and examining

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total ..	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total ..	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code ..	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 8
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
		RS.
1894.		
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	..	..
February	..	..
2nd March	5	30
2nd "	5	40
2nd "	4	36
2nd "	5	36
30th "	1	3
April	..	..
Total ..	20	145

Order—No. 1684, Judicial, dated 10th August 1895.

Recorded, with the remark that the Government is gratified to note the great interest which Mr. Fawcett takes in his work and the satisfactory results which he has effected in regard to the prevention of coffee-stealing. A continuance of the same policy will, it is hoped, be accompanied with even more success in the ensuing season.

2. Copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of Statement A appended to it will be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector-General of Police.
„ Hony. Secretary, United Planters' Association.

Exd. A. Raitt.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Inspector-General of Police, dated 12th July 1895, No. 4191.

I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government, a report from Mr. Fawcett, the Superintendent of Malabar, on the operations of the police in preventing and detecting coffee-stealing in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95. With it I submit the District Magistrate's covering letter.

2. The work of the police was, I believe, acknowledged by resident planters to have been effective, and they were, on the whole, satisfied with what was done. Mr. Fawcett's report shows that the matter was treated with intelligence and that the police worked hard. The report is unfortunately marred, as Mr. Moberly remarks, by comments on the settlement, about which Mr. Fawcett need not have said anything; and, if he did say anything, should have been careful to ascertain his facts first.

3. I do not ask, nor does Mr. Fawcett, for any rewards for the police. They have been rewarded for each case which showed any special ability or involved any special trouble. This, I think, is sufficient. The men who worked in the Wynaad received, all of them, the Wynaad allowances, which are fairly liberal. They did not really do more than the Government is entitled to call upon them to do. In next year, if necessary and if the results justify it, I will ask Government to grant a small reward to each constable who works in the Wynaad during the season.

I attach a statement showing the rewards granted from November to April 1895 for coffee work in the Wynaad.

Enclosures.

Copy of letter from the District Magistrate of Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, dated 19th June 1895, No. 1030-Magl.

I have the honour to forward a report, No. 832, dated 10th instant, from the Superintendent of Police, on the operations taken to prevent coffee-stealing in Wynaad during 1894–95. The paragraphs have unfortunately not been numbered. The report would have been a better one had Mr. Fawcett confined himself to matters about which he is expected to know something. His statement that since the late settlement of Wynaad was set flying (whatever that may mean) the revenue has decreased is grossly incorrect. Subjoined is a table prepared from records in the Collector's office showing the revenue of Wynaad taluk since Fasli 1290:—

Before Settlement.		*After Settlement.*	
Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.	Fasli.	Revenue demand. Rs.
1290	1,07,120	1298	1,28,095
1291	1,02,604	1299	1,44,535
1292	99,891	1300	1,58,244
1293	88,287	1301	1,70,939
1294	84,217	1302	1,82,602
1295	82,587	1303	1,75,234
1296	82,111		
1297	80,083		

The figures speak for themselves.

2. His statement, "It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture," does not agree with what I saw. I was on the Brahmagiris in December last a few days before Mr. Fawcett went there. The only paddy flat in Wynaad to be seen distinctly from the Brahmagiris is in the Tirunelli valley, and that certainly was cultivated in December, for Mr. Marshall and I rode through the paddy fields.

3. The statement that "an observed effect of the settlement seems to be that land which but for it would be cultivated is now fallow" is one easily made, but not easily proved in the face of the figures given in paragraph 1 *supra*.

4. These mis-statements spoil what is otherwise an interesting report. I very gladly testify to the excellent work done by the police during the last coffee season in preventing coffee-stealing, and I trust that it may be possible to grant some reward to those who worked in the Wynaad. The Tellicherry and Calicut police did not have such arduous work as their Wynaad brethren, so that I cannot recommend rewards to them.

5. Before the next coffee season commences, I hope that Mr. Fawcett and myself may be able to meet the Wynaad Planters' Association and to arrange for a still more effective prevention of coffee thefts.

Copy of report from the Superintendent of Police, Malabar, to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dated 10th June 1895, No. 832.

I have the honour to give you a brief account of the operations against the aggravating crime—coffee-stealing, the *bête noire* of the Wynaad planter; and in order that I may do so lucidly, I must beg your attention to the circumstances and to the modes of stealing before speaking of the methods for prevention which were adopted during last season.

Ordinarily, when there is a commodity valuable and easily stealable, there will be thieves who will steal it if they can; if they are not of one class or caste, they will be of another. There will be thieves of some kind. But this principle does not apply strictly to the coffee thieves of Wynaad.

Within its 956 square miles there is, besides the Nayar landlords and Chetties—the gentry whose family sport is spearing the tiger, very different to the over-fed, greasy people called Chetties in the eastern country—there is a mixed community of people from the east: Brahmins (a few), Muhammadans, Canarese and Tamil Paraiyas in plenty; and there are Mappillas and a few Hindus from the West Coast, as well as the class called comprehensively coolies, representing, however, very different peoples.

These form what may be called the foreign population, which, but for the coffee, would not probably be now in Wynaad.

Then there are the autochthonic folk—

Panniars,	Kurumbas,	Adiyans,
Muppans,	Kaders,	Erriwas,
Kurichas,		

some sub-divided, as the Kurumbas, who in their tribal divisions indicate what amounts to racial distinctions.

Now, some of these are in a condition of predial serfdom—such is the overwhelming superiority of the law of custom over the law of the Government. Adiyan means slave, or perhaps more correctly serf, for the two are different; Panniar means labourer. The condition is, of course, paralleled in the low country where there is genuine but not oppressive serfdom.

Through various causes, multiplied as they must be into more numerous effects, there has been considerable change in the general conditions, and one of these appears in the loss to the landlord of the Panniar to till his land for him and in the more

obvious fact that a good deal of arable land has been thrown out of cultivation. It is patent to any one standing on the Brahmagiris, that while in Coorg every single space in the bottom of the valleys—called commonly paddy-flats—is cultivated, comparatively few on the Wynaad side, where the lie of the country is just the same, show signs of agriculture. The reason commonly given is: "We do not cultivate as we have no Panniars." The late settlement, too, is imputed with mischief; and certainly, whatever the cause may be, since it was set flying the revenue has decreased, and last year it was, I believe, lower than ever. Whatever the ultimate advantages of that scheme, an observed effect of it seems to be that land, which but for it would be cultivated, is now fallow.

This prelude is in the way of accounting for a troublesome class of coffee-stealers—those who strip the trees by night—Panniars, who in the change of things have been the cat's-paw by which the assiduous Mappilla has drawn to himself the chestnuts—I mean the coffee of the European planters.

The Panniars never received much more than subsistence in kind—grain and a cloth or so from their masters—and they are now required to work for what is relatively less to enable their masters to pay more tax and for what is little by comparison with the average rate for labour. So the serfs sometimes break away in a night on some sign of oppression—for, savage though he is, the Panniar is very sensitive to treatment—and the paddy is left unreaped. It seems, by the way, out of the question for agriculture to be done while paying at the average rate of labour, which in Wynaad is high. Coercion has been resorted to, and in this the police have been used much, not only, although chiefly, by the native landlords, but sometimes by the European planter. Say, Panniars run away when paddy is to be ploughed or coffee plucked. Police are informed that such a thing has been lost, and the Panniars having run away are suspected. In many cases the very appearance of the police on the scene to ask the needful questions suffices to fulfil the purpose of the complainant: the police have appeared, and the wretched serfs, frightened into submission, return to work.

Having been for a short time in the district, I cannot pretend to account for the changes through which the conditions of existence of the hill peoples have been upset. That they have been, there is little doubt. Panniars and other autochthons derive their patronymic from the land to which they belong or on which they were born, bearing it with them wherever they go; or, in the case of some few, from that on which they live for the time being. Now one seldom finds, I think, the patronymic and the land the same; so the people have shifted and many are constantly shifting hither and thither. Nevertheless, there are some few who seem to be in the old groove, for they are available to be let out for hire by their masters—just as cattle.

It is not yet apparent why an oppressed Panniar thrown out of his regular line of life should steal coffee, but it will be made so presently. Let it suffice, for the present, to say that the Panniar, as well as others of his ilk, is a moonlighter—one who steals coffee by moonlight. Happily—the circumstance is rare—if he can be led into expenditure of his energy for other means of livelihood, he will not be replaced easily. People of the plains, as Tamil coolies or others, dare not, for fear of a thousand devils—to say nothing of its natural denizens—go through the forest by night; so they are not to be feared as night stealers. True they might go with a torch or by day, but either is much too dangerous.

Luckily all the hill people are not prone to thieving as the Panniar is undeniably. The Kurichas, for example, are absolutely honest, and almost equally so the Kurumbas.

But the estate coolies are thieves in a way. They have been accustomed to pilfer largely, annexing as a perquisite a seer or so of coffee every week to exchange in the market for tobacco, betel and other luxuries. This means a steady stream of loss to the planters, and is most serious.

Then there is stealing from the vats, from the drying yards, from the store-houses, from the carts during transit to the coast, and through the malpractices of dishonest writers who, after the manner of the unjust steward, are (in mixed metaphor)

a thorn in the flesh of their masters. The modes of thieving are legion—whether the coffee is in the state of the succulent berry, in its parchment or out of it—so many and varied that the planters have never known really what they lost.

Of course, where the thieves are, there will the receivers be also. An easier question than "Who are the receivers?" is "Who are not?" Anybody will receive coffee. The clumsiness of the law is well known, and, defying it, people have gone on from year to year receiving *ad lib.* The planters thought the police were so well paid by the receivers that they permitted the persistent villainy. I do not think they were right, basing my opinion, not on the superlative honesty of the police, but on the probability of the circumstances as well as in consideration of the difficulties in active opposition to suppress what had become a regular trade through which men became rich and through which a section of the community of Malabar earned its bread.

Not only is every petty shopkeeper a receiver, but many petty shopkeepers are receivers first and then shopkeepers. It has been customary for a swarm of Mappillas to come up to Wynaad from the Coast to *deal* in coffee, arriving just before the season begins and leaving after it is over; they erect temporary sheds wherein they live with their families sometimes, and regularly squat to receive coffee. When the planter sees a number of small shops put up just outside the entrance to his estate, he knows what to expect. A simple circumstance is sometimes enough to enable one to form a reasonable estimate of the truth. "If we see a Brahmin drinking under a toddy-tree we don't think he is drinking milk." But the planter has not been able to rid himself of these offensive parasites, although he knows quite well they are absorbing the tissue of his estate.

Many of these invaders receive large advances from wealthy Mappilla merchants on the Coast for nothing else than stolen coffee.

But these are not the only class of receivers. There are the regular resident receivers—some of them wealthy and influential—and these are, perhaps, the worst of all. Then there are many native estate owners, eminently respectable, who are also largely incriminated. Many of these are Chetties—as we discovered during last season—who have been supplied with stolen coffee by their Muppans, and they are almost, if not quite, as bad as the worst. The Muppans have been in this way quite as bad if not worse than the Panniars. Curiously, the Chetties steal from each other. It is fashionable to do so.

Conviction of receivers was considered to be so important that the Planters' Association offered (for years) a reward of Rs. 100 for every conviction of a coffee receiver. It has always been a difficult matter to realize such convictions. The munificent offer has not prevented loss of their coffee and, as I will endeavour to show presently, I do not think that working on the line of conviction of receivers produces the most potential deterrent to coffee-stealing.

To give a couple of instances of the difficulties in the way of opposition to receivers. When on special duty to prevent coffee-stealing the season before last, Inspector Mr. Sweeney, who did capital work, found a man in Vayittiri who made out that his little plot, containing a few coffee trees and which was not cultivated, produced at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, which is almost six times as much as the most sanguine European planter expects from his highly-cultivated estate. Of course, nine-tenths of the coffee was stolen coffee which he had received; but although this was obvious, there was no means of using the law to bring him to account. Again: There is a man in Meppati who, during every coffee season, used to receive cart-loads of coffee nightly, and throughout he was busy at work drying and cleaning. No doubt several tons passed through his hands. True he owned a small estate or two, but the produce of these was a small amount. As a ton of cherry coffee is worth somewhere about Rs. 1,000, he was doing very well. He who worked in this way plucked a bushel and received three or more, and to account for the coffee in his possession he pointed to his few wretched trees: these being used as a blind, while receiving stolen coffee was his business; and to keep up the game, he began plucking after the European planters had begun theirs, and carried it on little by little throughout the season.

The difficulties in the way of preventing coffee-stealing are not to be appreciated in a glance, and it may be as well to consider further the use of convictions—as they have been used in former seasons—for purposes of prevention. A very common kind of case is this. A man is found conveying coffee—it may be cart-loads. He is asked to produce his pass. He has none and gives some brilliant explanation. Charged and fined for being without a pass (if he is not, as too often, acquitted) he is fined a few rupees and the coffee which it is known he must have stolen or received illegally is returned to him. One of the cases of this kind during last season was of two cart-loads stopped near Manjéri; the coffee was measured and so on, and after much delay the owner (?) was fined and let go with his coffee. I discovered afterwards that this coffee had been stolen from the estate of Mr. Hamilton in South-East Wynaad (Coimbatore district). In the absence of a complainant a man cannot be charged for theft, and in the absence of theft a man cannot be convicted for receiving. And in all cases where coffee is concerned there is the supreme obstacle behind which the thief or receiver is so often safe—the unidentifiability of the stuff. Even if a man be convicted in one court he will probably be released if he appeals against his conviction. This is a fine shelter for the thieves; and they know it.

We will be better prepared to view the subject of prevention if we hark back to the Panniar and see how that, when oppressed and bullied, he is no more a labourer but a coffee thief. He and the crafty receiver assist each other mutually. The Panniar must live, and when he finds the yoke of bondage intolerable and throws it off, or while he remains under it and is provided with no money to buy liquor, tobacco, betel and the like luxuries, he is attracted to the Mappilla petty shopkeeper. From him he gets trifles on credit. By skilful lying the Mappilla augments the debt and soon has the wretched Panniar in his clutches. He frightens him and eventually allows the debt to be cancelled if he brings coffee. Thereby comes stealing from the trees by night. In somewhat similar style the Muppan steals for his Chetty master and, like the Panniar, gets about one-tenth of its value for the coffee he has stolen.

Now for prevention; and we will look at the indirect means first; it bears on prevention of stripping the trees by night.

To prevent the Panniar doing this we must work radically. With the word Panniar it is meant to include those others of the hill folk who are somewhat similarly situated. First of all, endeavour should be made to free him from oppression, not by any legislative measure (which might make it worse for him), but simply by taking care that his freedom is not inhibited. The freer they are the better; the more will they come and live on the estates and learn to appreciate good wage and good treatment. Year by year there is improvement in this direction to the advantage of the planter as well as to the hill people.

Therefore I have given the strictest orders to prevent police being used for oppression however slight and apparently inoffensive or reasonable. They are to be very careful indeed, even to absolute refusal to entertain complaint of a cognizable offence—further than registering it—until they have proper reasons for believing the complaint to be genuine.

Good treatment will do more to prevent the Panniar moonlighting than anything else. He must be free to work where he will. At present many Panniars are not. Many circumstances are brought to bear against his being a free agent; and to this are superadded his natural shyness of contact with Europeans as well as his dislike to work for six days out of seven But not only this—he must be prevented receiving advantage through coffee-stealing; and this we have endeavoured to do by working against the receivers.

There seems to be little likelihood of the Panniar returning to pristine conditions, even were the land-tax lessened. It seems that nearly all the landlords once rich are now paupers, retaining little more than their pride, which prevents them and their families turning their hands to field labour. The Drink Fiend has had a good hand in this.

and measuring the coffee. Copies of the passes were sent without delay to Wynaad, where it was comparatively easy to ascertain whether they were true ones and whether the coffee was legitimately come by. This was very necessary as too many of the impoverished landlords, ostensible dealers of respectability, and dishonest adikaris, are ready enough to give a pass to any one for a very small recompense in coin.

There were however—and it was inevitable—some small losses on the road, but very few in comparison with former seasons. The roads are dotted along with Mappilla harpies, with whom it is most difficult to contend. The cartmen, mostly Mappillas also, are no more keen to sell stolen coffee than are they to buy.

The arrangement for controlling examination of coffee on the road extended throughout the district except in the Palghat neighbourhood, where, owing to the coffee estates being in Cochin territory, it was impossible to exercise the best supervision. A proof of the vigilance exercised will appear in the following circumstance. In the month of February coffee worth about Rs. 1,200 was seized by the night beat constables within the limit of Calicut town while being transferred from boats to carts. The owners (?) absconded and never dared to claim it; and as it was proved from the appearance of the berry to have been grown in the Ochterlony valley (Coimbatore) it was handed over, with the Magistrate's order to do so, to the agent. Knowing the roads were well watched, the coffee had been carried down by river from somewhere above Nilambur. The individual who did this was highly respectable, doing a large trade in timber and other things.

This report gives but a general view of the coffee-stealing question and of the means adopted for protection during last season; and, though these were successful beyond expectation, it is by no means intended to offer the inference that they were complete absolutely. Far from it. We were, however, acquiring knowledge which will enable us to be better prepared for the next season, when it is hoped there will be no losses.

The planters have it in their power, it may be added, to prevent all thieving on the road—a kind of thieving by which they have always lost very largely and which the police can never cope with quite successfully unless the planters do more to help themselves. The means in their power is this, viz., to put up their coffee in certain bags which are practically seamless and which are tied and sealed on the estate and then placed upside down *inside* a bag belonging to their carrier, which is again sealed by the carrier in his presence. Some of the planters used these bags during last season and they lost nothing. If all will use these bags in future, the police will be able to almost guarantee no losses during transit by road, because no coffee can be removed from these bags surreptitiously. To remove coffee from the ordinary bag and leave no mark is quite easy. But no man will tamper with the other bags when his doing so is at once clear evidence against him of theft.

The more we know of malpractices in respect of coffee-stealing the more we should be able to meet them and to suppress them; but we can never hope to suppress them completely by supervision only. Precautions which are obviously necessary should be taken by the planters.

I will conclude this very imperfect report—written, as it happens, under continual interruption while moving rapidly hither and thither—by expressing my particular satisfaction in the admirable work done by third-class Inspector K. Raman of South Wynaad, and I hope you will allow what he has done against coffee-stealing to have some weight when promotion is in the air. A word or two more: the police of North and South Wynaad have done well; so, too, have those of Calicut and Tellicherry—others too. But they have not, I am sorry to say, had great encouragement in the way of rewards. But perhaps that is impossible. After next season if operations are very successful, I may ask you to move the Government to make the men a douceur of a month's pay all round. I am sure, if coffee-stealing is suppressed completely, they will deserve it.

P.S.—Attached are two statements which are interesting. "A" shows the amount of native-grown coffee in Wynaad last season. "B" shows the amount of coffee which left Wynaad. The account was taken at Peria on the road to Tellicherry; at Oliote on the road to Mysore; at Sultan's Battery on the road to Mysore; at the Kutiyadi

pass; and at Vayittiri. By far the most coffee passes through Vayittiri, but the account taken there is necessarily incorrect as much of the coffee which passes through Vayittiri was (we found) grown in South-East Wynaad of Coimbatore district. The arrangements made for collecting this information were, of course, imperfect. They will be better next time.

"C" is a statement of cases.

A.

Statement showing the number of coffee estates and the crop plucked during the season 1894–95.

	Number of estates, native.	Quantity plucked.
		SEERS.
South Wynaad	1,346	4,428,921
North Wynaad	3,017	2,361,282
Total	4,363	6,790,203

B.

Statement of coffee passed out of Wynaad. Season 1894–95.

	Parchment.		Cherry.		Clean.	
	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.	BUSHELS.	SEERS.
Europeans	78,057	10	7,739	26	2,055	16
Natives	2,565	19	3,399	2½	14,239	9
Total	80,623	1	11,139	½	16,294	25

C.

Statement of cases under the Indian Penal Code and Coffee Act. Season 1894–95.

	Reported.	Detected.	Arrested.	Convicted.	Lost.	Recovered.
					RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
Under the Indian Penal Code	34	19	46	28	1,223 8 8	925 10 8
Under Coffee-stealing Prevention Act.	67	54	..	58	..	..

Statement of rewards in coffee cases in Malabar from November last to April 1895.

Date.	Number of constables rewarded.	Amount.
		RS.
1894.		
November	..	..
December	..	..
1895.		
January	5	30
February	5	40
2nd March	4	36
2nd "	5	36
2nd "	1	3
2nd "	..	..
30th "	..	..
April	20	145

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

(Miscellaneous.)

G.O., No. 1684, 10th August 1895.

Coffee Stealing in the Wynaad.—Recording the report of Mr. Fawcett on the operations of the Police in preventing and detecting — in the Wynaad in the season of 1894–95, with remark, expressive of the satisfaction of Government; and directing that copies of paragraph 44 of the report and of statement appended to it be communicated to the United Planters' Association of Southern India.