M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 159 Press ~~Mis.~~

118—119

Dated 30—1— 1860.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 118. Read the following letter from H. NEWILL, Esq., Director of Revenue Settlement; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, dated Trichinápali, 19th January 1860, No. 48.

I have the honor to enclose a copy of a letter, I have addressed to the Magistrate of South Arcot, regarding a highway robbery which was attempted upon me on the way from Madras to Trichinápali, as the insecurity to person and property on the great southern trunk road thus manifested seems of sufficient importance to be brought to the special notice of Government.

Dated 9th January 1860, *No.* 5.

From H. NEWILL, Esq., Director of Revenue Settlement; to H. WOOD, Esq., Magistrate of South Arcot, dated Trichinápali 9th January 1860, No. 5.

1. I have the honor to bring to your notice a daring highway robbery which was attempted upon me in your district, at ½ past 10 on the night of Saturday, 7th instant, within a few yards of the 149th mile stone on the Trichinápali road, and about half a mile north of the Vellár river, and the frontier of the Trichinápali district.

2. I was travelling by the ordinary bullock transit, and was suddenly aroused from sleep by a disturbance, and found the inside of the transit coach was being searched by the hands of two or three natives through the window. This rude intrusion I repulsed as best I could, by a few smart blows on the faces of the men, who retired a little distance, and then threw a volley of stones against the carriage, one of which penetrated into the thick canvass side and remained fixed there.

This was followed by some of the party (how many they were altogether, I cannot tell, but there were several), rushing upon the carriage and beating it with sticks, evidently with the view to drive me out of it, and to enable them thoroughly to ransack it. My aim was, however, to secure a pistol I had in the carriage, but unloaded, and to load it if possible without observation, and to gain time I kept talking to the men, telling them to desist, and of the consequences that would follow. They may not have understood much of this, as I spoke in Telugu and they were Tamil men, one of them, however, caught a sight of the pistol as I was preparing to load and on his giving the alarm, the whole party ran off as quickly as possible, snatching a carpet bag from under my pillow in the transit coach, but throwing it away within a few yards after turning out the clothes it contained along with some books. The direction taken by the men was in a south westerly one, branching off from the road in the direction of what was described to me as the village of Toladúr.

3. I return from my own personal share in the matter, to what took place before I was awoke, I learnt from my servant and the man in charge of the transit (who is called a coachman) or rather lad by name Rámaswami that the robbers rushed up from behind, stopped the bullocks, dragged my servant and Rámaswami down from the driver's seat, asked them where my money box was to be found, and kept them sitting on the ground while they ransacked a basket of provisions, plates, &c., which was outside under the driver's seat. When I looked out on being roused, I saw the servant on the ground and the contents of the basket taken out. The bullock driver by name Cuppá Reddi who came this stage from Venganúr to the Vellár river, managed to make his escape, and ran onwards on the road and shouted out, and returned some little time after the robbers had taken their flight with 2 Talaiyáris from Ramanattam or Namanattam, a village a little way off, who said they were attracted by the cry of the bullock driver, and came over from their village. The robbers were foiled in their object of getting the money I had, and scrupulously avoided taking any thing else; even the cloths of the bullock driver and others which they tore off, were found scattered closely; and although they handled several articles of plated ware, I find that not a single thing has been missed.

4. When the bullock driver returned with the two Talaiyáris, we proceeded on the road and came to a Police Tháná within half a mile distance, but there was no peon there, and we were informed by some persons there with bandies that a Talaiyárí in charge of the Tháná (in the absence, as he afterwards told us, of the peon who was away on leave) had gone on to an en-

campment of bandies belonging to the Regiment 21st N. I. close at hand near the north bank of the Vellár river. We found the Talaiyárí in question there, along with a sepoy guard over about 20 bandies which appeared to be carrying the families of the above Regiment.

5. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to go beyond the above plain statement of the circumstances that transpired, as it will be evident to you that the existence of the Tháná within half a mile of the spot, on which the outrage was committed, has under its present arrangement no influence in restraining such marauders, or affording any security to travellers in person, or property; while I may venture to suggest the possibility of the complicity of the police servants with the robbers, as the coachman and my servant say, they recognized in the Talaiyárí belonging to the Tháná, one of the persons who attacked the bandy; and as it appeared to me also that the Ramanattam Talaiyáris made their appearance before sufficient time had elapsed for them to hear the bullockman's shouts and to come all the way afterwards from their village, and as the cry did not attract the attention of the bandymen at the Tháná or of the sepoy guard at a considerably less distance than Ramanattam, these Talaiyáris also do not seem beyond the reach of suspicion. These suggestions, however, are not stated with any degree of certainty, but appear deserving of your consideration.

6. I communicated with the Joint Magistrate of South Arcot, through the Válikondápuram Tahsíldár, who repaired to the spot in order to trace the robbers, in case they may have crossed the Trichinápali frontier. A copy of this more detailed account of the matter is also forwarded to the Joint Magistrate.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. NEWILL,
Director of Revenue Settlement.

No. 119. ORDER THEREON, 30th January 1860, No. 159.

Resolved that the Magistrate of South Arcot be requested to report to Government the measures which he may have taken for the detection and punishment of the perpetrators of the daring robbery referred to in this letter, and the degree of success that may attend those measures. The Government think it very important that such offenders should be brought to punishment.

2. The Magistrate will not have failed to notice the grounds of suspicion against the village Talaiyáris, of having taken an active part in this robbery; and should this suspicion be supported, he should dismiss the Talaiyáris from employment, even though legal proof of their complicity may not be forthcoming.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

From the Collr of South Arcot 3 Feby 1860
R. No 260 in Con 20 Feby No 69 470.

Copy to the Collr of Trichinopoly 15 Feb 1860 No 246.

No 118 + 119.

Revenue 1860 Department
Fort St George 21st January 1860
From
The Director of
Revenue Settlement
To, The Secretary to Government
Public Department
Fort St George

Dated 19th
Recd 26th January 1860

No
1. Encl:
No

Encloses copy of a letter addressed to the Magistrate of South Arcot regarding a Highway robbery attempted upon him, being of sufficient importance to be brought to the special notice of Government

No 159. 30th July

With an Order

* Omitted to mention the grounds of exemption against the village Talaimini, of having taken an active part in this robbery and murder. This exemption to be withheld, & a fresh decision from Government, on the report of this complaint, may not be forthcoming.

From Fort St George 30th July 1860

No 159.

Resolved that the Magte of South Arcot be requested to report to Govt - the measures which he may have taken for the detection & punishment of the perpetrators of the daring robbery referred to in this letter, & the degree of success that may attend those measures - The Govt - think it very important that such offenders should be brought to punishment -

2 The Magte will not have