M.R.O. 1—39,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1683 Press Miss
48-49

Dated 17-12-1859

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 48. Read the following letter from E. B. THOMAS, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 5th December 1859, No. 53.

1. I request the Orders of Government on the point involved in Mr. Rohde's letter;* whether the whole Hill on which the old Jail now stands, should be appropriated by the Jail and few prisoners, or be left open for other public purposes.

* *Copy enclosed, dated 28th November* 1859, *No.* 510.

2. Mr. Rohde would seem to claim it on the strength of its being *called* "Jail Hill," that is purely accidental, the old Jail being the only building then on it, it went conveniently by that *name*, but the Jail neither claimed nor possessed a foot except the ground it stood upon, any more than the Post Office, which also stands on a Hill, occasionally so designated, though it has no claim on land beyond its walls. It† is the only public land now left within Ootacamund, at Government disposal for buildings or other public purposes; Mr. Rohde proposes to take the greater part of it, and make gardens for the prisoners; it is for Government to decide how the few prisoners at Ootacamund, can be best employed. I should, with all deference, employ them, if under my control, in mending the public roads of the place, breaking stones for metal &c.; gardening I should think too light and unsuitable an employment, but the question for Government now to decide is whether, under the great scarcity of public land in Ootacamund, the only remaining space belonging to Government, and available for public purposes, should be devoted to prisoners' gardens, or reserved available, in such an increasing and growing locality. I think the quantity (3 cawnies) I suggested,‡ ample for all practical purposes, whether of Jail or Hospital.

† *The Hill on which the Jail stands.*

‡ *See letter enclosed of 27th October* 1859.

3. Under former Orders to reserve some public land in central spots for Government purposes, I have carefully kept open this Hill. The whole area of the Hill is about 20 cawnies, chiefly above the road Mr. Rohde indicates. The Orphan asylums and other possible public offices may come to the Hills. I conclude when Mr. Rohde's new Jail is built, the present old building will be given up. I think we must not only look to present but future purposes and wants, and that the Jail (only I believe a local, not a general one) should occupy only such land as it really requires. If land for gardening is required, it can be found *out* of the Cantonment. I can meet and confer with Mr. Rohde, if the Government desire.

From J. ROHDE, Esq., Inspector General of Jails; to E. B. THOMAS, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, dated Ootacamund 28th November 1859, No. 510.

In reply to your letter of the 27th October, enquiring how much of the Jail Hill I propose to attach to the Jails, I have the honor to state that it never occurred to me that the Jail Hill was not attached to the building on it; and my intention was to lay it out in part as a vegetable garden, for the employment of convicts, each of whom should cultivate and keep in order a quarter of an acre: I see no objection, however, to the occupation by Government of such portions as may be needed and for the present I would arrange with any officer proposing to occupy with regard to the object in view. In general I should think that no inconvenience would arise from any Government building being placed below the southern ascent of the new road to the present Jail, this land would probably be the most eligible for any public office or building and more than sufficient for present purposes.

2. I may best describe the ground I allude to by that to the south of a line* drawn from the northern boundary of the old dispensary compound to some point 100 feet to the south of the present Jail.

3. I find on enquiry that several cawnies of what I thought was attached to the Jail, remains the property of the late Moossa Sait's Estate, and this would not therefore be available.

4. I believe Moossa Sait consented to exchange it, but it does not appear that any exchange was effected or any consideration given; if therefore I am rightly informed on this point, the land remaining will not much exceed what may be required, if the prisoners are employed beyond the walls.

5. It will probably be sufficient that any proposal for the occupation of any portion should be subjected to the opinion of the Officers in charge of buildings in occupation before final arrangements are made. All that I would for the present propose is that the land north† of the line indicated should not be occupied without my concurrence; should any thing more definite be necessary, I will mark off what I should wish reserved; much, however, must necessarily depend on the purpose for which a neighbouring site is needed.

† *Which includes most of the Hill.*

(True Copy.)

(Signed) E. B. THOMAS,
Collector.

From E. B. THOMAS, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore; to J. ROHDE, Esq., Ootacamund, dated 27th October 1859, No. 355.

1. I observe you have closed up several paths long used by the public on Jail Hill. I request that one at least be re-opened, (the zig-zag bridle path, the only access from the west that comes out on the top of the Hill and far from the Jail.)

2. I also beg to know how much of the Hill called "Jail Hill" you wish to appropriate to the Jail in your Department; this Hill is now almost the only available public land left in Ootacamund, and many occasions and requisitions for it may yet arise. I have always retained it from sale or occupation with this view; a new Hospital is at this moment contemplated, and the *present* Jail (on the top of the Hill) should have some compound beyond the walls, when restored as is probable, to use as a Court House, the Hill contains about 20 cawnies. I should think if 3 were allotted to each of these public buildings, the Court House, the new Jail, the new Hospital (proposed by Doctor Mackay near the Jail), it would be ample and space would then be left for other public purposes.

No. 49. ORDER THEREON, 17th December 1859, No. 1683.

Resolved that the consideration of the above letter be postponed until the Honorable the Governor has had an opportunity of inspecting the locality referred to on his visit to Utákamund in the course of his approaching tour.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

Order thereon 17 December 1859. No. 1683.

Resolved that the consideration of the above letter be postponed until the Honorable the Governor has had an opportunity of inspecting the locality referred to on his visit to Utakamund in the course of his approaching tour.

To the Collector of Coimbatore. Dispd 23d