M.R.O. 1—38,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1031	Press Mis.
116-117		
Dated	16-8-	1860.

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 116. Read the following letter from H. D. RAE, Esq., Secretary to the Committee, Ootacamund, to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, Madras, dated 9th August 1860.

I had the honor to address Government, on the 30th June last, on behalf of the Committee appointed by the inhabitants of Ootacamund, at the Public Meeting of the 11th idem.

2. The Committee, in the above letter, brought under the notice of Government, the serious amount of drunkenness and crime that existed at this station, which, among other causes, they were disposed to ascribe to the working of the Abkaree Department; and they now desire to speak of certain facts, connected with the Abkaree Contract on these Hills, which have recently come within their knowledge and which seem fully to bear out their previous impression.

3. It appears that the Abkaree Contract here is held for a period of 5 years, from the 1st July 1856, and that it was purchased for the enormous sum of Rupees 24,500 *per annum!* To repay himself this preliminary outlay, the Contractor has no less than 12 shops open, viz:

At Ootacamund Bazaar.	8
„ Kandal „	3
„ Old Ootacamund „	1
	12

for the retail of spirits; and it appears that he is moreover unrestricted as to sale for *ready cash* only! In these two simple facts, the Committee discover an ample explanation of nearly all the irregularities that have caused so great an amount of excitement at this station and have so disfigured its social aspect.

4. It is the decided opinion of the Committee that the number of Arrack shops now open is very largely beyond what would reasonably suffice for any requirements of this place; and the temptation to drink which is thus afforded, when added to the circumstance that there is no restriction to prevent spirits being sold on credit, seems to account at once, as they have already observed, for most of the disorderly conduct and robbery that occurs.

5. The Committee would beg to bring to the notice of Government the above objectionable features of the existing Contract, and to solicit a full investigation with a view to the application, if possible, of an immediate remedy, or at least of what may ensure an altered character of Contract for the future.

6. The Committee need hardly observe that when spirit is allowed to be sold in retail on credit, it naturally leads to petty robberies (especially by servants,) for the settlement of such an account, and forms a temptation also to the Arrack seller to receive any sort of property that might adjust the debt.

No. 117. ORDER THEREON, 16th August 1860, No. 1,031.

Referred to the Revenue Department.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

No. 1031 — 16 August 1860 —

Referred to the Rev. Dep'ts.

The Rev. Dep'ts. Aug. 18th