M.R.O. 14—18,000—27-9-24.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 302 Press ~~Mis.~~

280-287

Dated 4—2—~~19~~ 1864

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 19th February 1864.

No. 280. Read the following letter from J. J. CORBETT, Esq., Abkarry Contractor of North Arcot, and Proprietor of Palmanair Rum Distillery, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Palmanair, 10th February 1864:—

SIR,

1. I have the honor to address you these few lines, and trust you will kindly excuse the liberty I have taken in so doing.

2. Government having discontinued the issue of Alcohol (Spirits of Wine) by the Commissary General's Department from the 1st January to the several tradesmen and manufacturers, for the purpose of making varnish, &c., for the reason that they may obtain it from private sources, and having extended the indulgence to distillers of passing Alcohol methylated at 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty, by which means the trade of Madras may supply themselves.

3. I beg respectfully to submit that the consumption of Alcohol in itself, though absolutely necessary, is very small. Methylic spirit is not to be procured in Madras, it can only be imported from England; from the limited business to be done in the sale of Alcohol, it would scarcely recompense the trouble and difficulty in getting it out, as from its inflammable nature few Captains would consent to receive it in their ships.

4. I believe it was provided Methylic spirit, or any other ingredient, may be used so long as it renders the Alcohol unfit for human consumption. It was if I am not mistaken the practice in the Commissary General's Department, in issuing Alcohol to have it mixed with a small portion of the ingredients used for making varnish, such mixture being considered sufficient to prevent the spirit being consumed.

5. Deeming such a course would answer all the purposes required, I submitted a pint prepared in the same way to Dr. Wyndowe, Chemical Examiner. I have now the honor to draw your attention to his remarks embodied in his letter to me, dated 7th January 1864:—

"With reference to our conversation on the 27th December 1863, I have the honor to
"forward herewith a bottle of Alcohol, the product of the simple re-distillation of the sample of
"adulterated spirit received from you. You will observe that the addition of the substances you
"employ does not answer the purpose required, and cannot therefore be substituted for
"Methylic Alcohol.

"(Signed) S. J. WYNDOWE, M. D."

6. I am led to infer that nothing short of Methylic spirit will answer, and from the difficulty of obtaining that spirit, I presume we shall not be able to benefit by such a concession on the part of Government. Meanwhile, the trade and manufacturing classes will be driven to the necessity of importing their spirit from England, at great cost, and we distillers in the country have the spirit at our disposal, and we shall be deprived of the advantages the opening up of the trade will afford.

7. It may not be of any moment to the gentlemen, connected with distilleries, such as Messrs. Arbuthnot & Co., Binny & Co., and Parry & Co., to interest themselves, however limited the demand may be, but to one of my small means it is of great consideration. I beg respectfully to state I am the Abkarry Contractor of North Arcot, and I have a distillery at Palmanair, where I manufacture Rum with English stills in the European method.

8. I beg to submit that I shall be happy to supply Spirits of Wine of any strength and quantity, for all Government purposes, Hospitals, Government Medical Stores, &c. The spirits may be brought in the usual way under passes from the Collector and deposited in the Government Bonded Warehouse, and issued on Indents from each Department, and payment made once a month, and Government will be saved all the expense and trouble of an Establishment.

9. It is the practice in Calcutta and Bombay to permit spirits manufactured in the country to be removed for local consumption on the payment of 3 Rupees per Gallon duty, this rule

does not apply to Madras. I beg most respectfully to crave the same indulgence be granted to me, that I may be allowed on such payment of duty to sell the Alcohol to the various trades and manufacturers, as well as to the several Chemists and Druggists.

10. Even if we should have mythilated spirit it would not answer for medical purposes, nothing but the pure Alcohol is necessary, and as matters stand, the Chemists and Druggists will be driven to the necessity of importing their Alcohol from England, while we have it in the country. The duty Government will derive from imported spirits, and spirit passed from our Establishment will be the same, while the indulgence will be great to one like myself who has embarked largely in the country, investing capital and giving employment to many from the nature of my undertaking.

11. This indulgence, if I may presume to state, may be considered objectionable on account of the Abkarry laws here existing. The duty at 3 Rupees per Proof Gallon rateably enhanced, for Spirits of Wine, added to my price, will bring it up 6 and 6½ Rupees per Gallon. Good Brandy in Madras can always be purchased for less, and the rates fully protects any infraction of the Abkarry laws, as no person would care to pay such a price for Alcohol for consumption while, Brandy can be had cheaper.

12. The introduction of the duty payable Alcohol will answer Chemists and Druggists, trade and Cabinet makers and all classes, and at once remove the serious inconvenience the want of Alcohol is occasioning. It will further be a great boon conferred on distillers in this country, and open a new channel for our enterprize.

13. I have already stated I am prepared to supply Government with Alcohol. The arrangement will save all the expense and trouble of manufacture, save also the keep of an Establishment. The indulgence as exists to distillers at Calcutta and Bombay, to sell spirits duty paid, if extended to us, while the high price fully protects the Abkarry, it makes a fresh opening to distillers; gives all classes the opportunity of supplying themselves, on the spot, and saves them importing from England that mythilated spirit is not to be had in Madras, the want of sufficient inducement to have it imported; that its introduction will only do for varnish makers, while the Chemists and Druggists need the pure Alcohol, and are quite unprovided for. Under all these circumstances, I respectfully beg you will be pleased to lay my case for the favorable consideration of His Excellency Sir W. Denison, and with my best apologies for the trouble I have given you.

No. 281.

ORDER THEREON, 19th February 1864, No. 302.
Referred to the Board of Revenue for report.
(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Pro- 2 December/63 A 52-53

Rev= 1864. Dep^t.
Pro: of Gov^r for Feb^y
No. 397.

From
Arkarree Contract-
-tor of R- Arrack &
Proprietor of Pul-
-manair Rum
Distillery

Dated 10th Feby.
Received 13th " 1864

Board of Rev. 26 Feby/64
CA 565

No 302- 19th Feby

With reference to the G.O.
discontinuing the issue of
alcohol by the Comt Dept
states that he will supply
Spirits of wine of any strength
and quantity for all Govt
purposes and requests to
be allowed to sell alcohol
on the payment of 3 Rs 8 As
per Gallon according to the
practice in Calcutta
and Bombay-

Wm Faulkner

No 302.

Referred to the Bd of Rev.
for report. —

Fort St. George
19th Feby 64.

No 280 & 281.

14 Bd of Rev. Dep^t 20 Feby