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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	621	Press.
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Dated	14.2.1879	197.

 Not to be folded or roughly handled

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

5th February 1879, No. 233.

Coffee Stealing Prevention Act.

Read the following paper :—

No. 26. *From W. LOGAN, Esq., Collector of Malabar, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, dated Calicut, 27th January 1879, No. 10.*

I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of a letter, dated 24th instant, addressed to me by the Honorary Secretary to the Wynad Planters' Association, and to observe that the ordinary law does not suffice for the protection of the Planters' interests.

2. Every planter before sending off his coffee takes an agreement from the carrier that any deficiency in the quantity delivered at the coast shall be made good by the carrier at a price which leaves the latter no profit on the transaction if he merely sells the quantity abstracted. In doing this, the planter does every thing that is possible for him to protect his interests, and yet the "sweaters," as I called them in my previous letter, live and flourish. How they manage to do so is explained in Mr. Yonge's letter; they levy a contribution of good coffee from each parcel, and substitute for it refuse of various sorts, so that the *bulk* of the coffee is but little affected by their operations.

3. I have reason to believe from inquiries made since receipt of the G.O. under reference that every *honest* dealer would hail with satisfaction the extension of the Act to low country taluks, and that, on the other hand, every *dishonest* dealer has been emboldened by the fact that he is free to operate on the coffee as soon as it has passed the ridge of the ghauts.

4. I have asked the Superintendent of Police to apply the ordinary law vigorously, but it does not give him sufficient power.

ENCLOSURE No. 6.

From G. L. YONGE, Esq., Honorary Secretary, Wynad Planters' Association, to the Collector of Malabar, Calicut, dated Vythery, 24th January 1879.

I have the honor, by direction of the Committee of this Association, to express their thanks to you for your co-operation in the endeavours to procure the extension of Act VIII of 1878 to the Kottayom, Kurumbranad, and Calicut Taluks.

2. The Committee note with much regret that the Government in the G.O., dated 21st December 1878, and numbered 2587, have declined to extend the Act to the low country taluks. The subject, however, is one of such vital importance to the interests of the coffee districts that the Committee feel that it is impossible to accept this decision as a final one, and I am requested to lay their views before you once more and through you before His Grace the Governor in Council.

3. It is needless for me again to enter into the arguments that have been before adduced as to the necessity that has so long existed for such a special enactment. The Government have recognised that our staple product required such special protection, and have passed an Act to give it that protection, and, so far as private individuals can judge, the enforcement of the Act within its present limits has had the best results, and the Association are grateful for the care so far taken of their interests.

4. But although this has been the case during this the first season of the Act, the Committee cannot conceal from themselves the great temptation that will be afforded to the gangs of dishonest bazaarmen who line the road from the foot of the ghauts to the shipping ports during the next and following seasons when they become fully aware that the special protection

which the transit of coffee receives above the ghauts absolutely ceases on the rendering of the passes at the various toll-bars, and that they are at liberty to pursue the same nefarious practices with the impunity to which they have hitherto been accustomed. In fact, it becomes open to argument whether it would not have been more to the interests of the coffee districts had no such Act as that for the prevention of coffee stealing been called into existence, rather than to afford to our greatest thieves that increased feeling of security which the abrupt stopping of the operation of the Act at the tops of the ghauts must undoubtedly engender.

5. The Government in the G.O. above alluded to express their opinion that our produce requires protection in transit when it is tampered with by substituting inferior for superior coffee, and it is to prevent this nefarious practice that we have asked for the extension of the Act to the low country taluks. In my letter of the 1st November 1878 I had the honor of informing Government that it was notorious that such a practice obtained that estate coffee was bought and sold along the roads in the low country taluks, and that inferior coffee, husks, &c., was collected at their various bazaars to replace the stolen coffee. I cannot repeat those statements too emphatically. Year after year our cherry and clean milled-coffee is changed in transit and replaced by empty husks and cherry and black coffee, and nothing but a special enactment such as the enforcement of Act VIII of 1878 will put a stop to the heavy losses we annually incur.

6. The Committee understand that petitions for the extension of the Act have been forwarded by the merchants of Calicut and Tellicherry, and they feel confident that every honest merchant and dealer in coffee will hail with satisfaction any extension that will put a stop to the thievish roguery of the low country bazaar-men.

7. The Committee desires me to request that you will forward this letter to Government, and with the firm hope that our representation will receive the earnest attention which the Committee feel strongly that they deserve.

No. 27.

ORDER THEREON, 5th February 1879, No. 233.

The Government see no need to alter the opinion expressed in G.O., dated the 21st December 1878, No. 2587.

(True Extract.)

G. H. Carter
Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Collector of Malabar.

„ Honorary Secretary, Wynad Planters' Association.
„ Revenue Department.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

62/2

102

