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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 3129

Press
Mis.

212

Dated 23. 11. 1836.

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28TH OCTOBER 1886, No 931, REVENUE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 16th June 1886, Forest No. 331:—

Read—the following letter from J. S. GAMBLE, Esq., Conservator of Forests, Northern Division, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Ootacamund, 31st May 1886, No. 587:—

In G.O., No 6513, of 24th November 1885 (Board's Proceedings, No. ¹⁰⁷⁹⁸ Forest 169), of 4th December 1885), I was directed to report on the question of forest conservancy in the Jeypore zemindari referred to by the Collector of Vizagapatam in paragraphs 72 to 77 of his annual report on the administration of the agency tracts of his district for the year 1884-85.

2. In paragraph 72 Mr. Turner reports that the chief export route is by Motu, which is only about 2 miles north of our frontier toll-station at Kalér on the Saveri. I imagine that for woods which, like the ironwood of the country (*xylin dolabriformis*) and sál (*shorea robusta*) (if there is any sál in Malkangiri), the Saveri and Sileru rivers above Kalér are of little use for floating. The Sileru, where I have seen it at Kothapali, about 12 miles above Kalér, would be too rocky for boats and for rafts of heavy wood. Teak logs would come down easily enough, but scarcely sál or ironwood. So that, I presume, the carriage from the forests to Motu is by cart or by dragging.

3. In paragraph 73 the Collector mentions that the Raja promised not to alienate his sál forests without reference to Government, and suggests that Government should negotiate with the Raja for the acquisition of all his best sál forests, if a moderate figure can be arrived at. He considers that immediate steps are necessary.

4. In paragraph 75 Mr. Turner describes the podu cultivation as practised: his opinion about the decrease of population is exactly what I noticed myself in Goomsur. There, in the heart of the forests, under trees over 100 years old, were traces of cultivation, and I believe that, if records could be found and examined, it would appear that at a date previous to about 200 years ago the hill country of the circars maintained a very large population and a large area of permanent cultivation, and that owing to famine or epidemic diseases or wars, the people disappeared and the cultivation reverted to jungle. It is strange that we have so little history of what happened, even only from 100 to 300 years ago, in this country. Sál forest reproduces most luxuriantly, and a field where it has once been will, I have often noticed, if left fallow for a year or two, reconvert itself, as if by magic and with no aid from seed, into a flourishing growth.

5. In paragraph 76 he discusses the question of what to do to prevent destruction, and I am very glad to see that at the end he says, with reference to Government taluks, that he approves of demarcation and the reservation of such blocks of forest as are likely to afford a permanent supply of valuable timber for the future. Glad as I am to see these words, I cannot help contrasting them with his persistent opposition to all my attempts to select and demarcate reserved forests in Pálkonda and Golconda which must be the very country he refers to. Perhaps now he will really be induced to withdraw the obstacles he has made and allow the orders of Government to be carried out.

6. I am inclined to agree with Mr. Turner that "podu" is not *always* a harmful practice. I made some remarks on the subject in paragraph 13 of my report on the forests of the Upper Godáviri, but all the same it is most necessary to guard oneself from generalizing on such a subject and especially is it necessary to add the rider that while "podu" *without* cattle may not much really harm the forests, "podu" *with* cattle to eat the shoots and seedlings is only disastrous. "Podu" can be stopped directly, as it was stopped in Goomsur and other places, but such a stoppage may confer a hardship—it is better to stop it gradually and to act by the gradual opening up of the country to civilization which His Excellency the Governor said should be kept prominently in view. Improved prices for produce induced by facilities of communication will make the hillmen work harder and gradually improve their system of agriculture. The reservation of forest lands, valuable either for the protection of streams, &c., or for timber or both, has a good effect in gently restricting the area available and causing the people to gradually convert temporary into permanent cultivation. I am convinced that reserved forests can be made both in the Agency tracts of Vizagapatam and those of Ganjam quite as easily as they have been made in the taluks of the Upper Godáviri, without interfering more than very slightly with "podu" cultivation. This is the opinion, too, which Mr. Horsfall has expressed in regard to the Ganjam Agency, and it will be seen from the report by Mr. Willock, referred to in the next paragraph, that he too considered that the reservation of large blocks in the valley of the Vamsadhari was quite feasible.

7. The forests of the Jeypore country are not very well known. The only good description of them occurs in Colonel Beddome's report of 29th March 1877 (Revenue Department order, No. 2521, of 17th August 1877), which I would suggest might now be reprinted with advantage with the supplementary information given by Messrs. Goodrich and Willock and the orders on the subject. Even if during the nine years which have elapsed since Colonel Beddome visited Jeypore, the destruction of forest has proceeded far, it will always be most interesting to compare the condition of the forests then with what is now.

8. It will be seen from Colonel Beddome's report that in Malkangiri there is no *sál*, and indeed I should have been surprised if there were, for I suspect that Malkangiri is very like Rekapalle, and that the chief tree is ironwood. Nor does he report any but a few small patches of *teak*, though here I cannot help thinking that an examination of the range of hills north of the Siléru might result in the discovery of mixed forests in which *teak* is not uncommon, like those of the low range of hills south of the Siléru where I found some very fair *teak* patches last year. *Teak* is never gregarious to any great extent like *sál* is and if there is any forest in Malkangiri worth preserving it will be in the hills to the south-east, where it will serve the double purpose of protection and timber.

9. On the plateau Colonel Beddome found no old forest, only patches of mixed forest which had once been under "podu." It would be most advisable if the Raja would reserve the best portions of the small hills which form the sources of the rivers, and it would pay him directly and indirectly to do so: directly, by ensuring the supply of locally required forest material, indirectly, by maintaining the water-supply and mitigating the hot winds.

10. The real *sál* forests all lie in the north in the valleys of the Langulya and Vamasadhara down which valleys export to the coast ports of Calingapatam and Bimlipatam should be easy. Mr. Willock's description of these forests in 1877 is very interesting and it may be hoped that some of the most important of the forests he describes still remain to Government.

11. I now come to the main question raised in regard to the Jeypore forests, viz., the means to be taken for their preservation.

The hill range of the Eastern Ghats, so far as this presidency is concerned, may be said to stretch from the Bengal frontier to a little south of the Godáviri, in a south-westerly direction, approximately parallel to the coast line approaching it closely at the Chilka lake, again in the Mohiri hills near Berhampore, again in the Mahendragiri hills near Barwah, again in the Pálkonda hills near Chicacole, then receding back and

again coming to the coast in the hills of Tini, whence it recedes again gradually to fade off on the northern edge of the Ellore taluk. The nearest point to the coast is about 10, the furthestmost about 60 miles. The length of the range is about 300, the average breadth about 60 miles, so that roughly speaking there are about 18,000 square miles of hill country. Of this area, Government has control over the Goomsur, Chinna Kimedi and Mohiri hills of Ganjam, the Pálkonda hills in the north of Vizagapatam, the Golconda hills in the south of that district adjoining the Juddengy and Talápalle hills of Godáviri, the Rumpa hills and the hills of Rekapalle and part of those of Yernagudem, probably about one-tenth part of the whole. The rest is zemindari. The largest proprietor is, of course, the Raja of Jeypore, the next the Zemindar of Parlákimedi, the others are comparatively small.

12. In vegetation these hills present three groups—the northern or "sál group," which may roughly be said to be north-east of a line drawn from Chicacole to Jeypore, the central or "mixed group" north-east of a line drawn from Yellamanchili to Malkangiri, and the southern or "ironwood group" to the end. It is naturally in the northern group where *sál* prevails and in the southern group where the ironwood is the chief tree, but where there are also patches of *teak*, that the best forests are found and those most likely to be valuable. In the south Government possesses already, including Rumpa,* the chief forests. In the north it also holds the best *sál* forests of the Ganjam district and

* Note.—I may here incidentally remark that we have yet to settle what is to be done about the Rumpa forests which contain an immense area of nearly untouched ironwood with other valuable trees and some *teak*.
(Intld.) J. S. G.

the only others of value are those of the Rayagadda and Ganapur valleys described by Mr. Willock and later by Mr. Welsh.

13. The advantage of the maintenance of a proper proportion of forest throughout the range can scarcely be contested. On the slopes of the hills, forests of protection should be formed, while in the valleys and on comparatively flat ground should be the chief areas reserved for large timber growth. Elsewhere cultivation, especially permanent cultivation, should be encouraged for the country is unhealthy and it will be sure to improve if permanent cultivation is extended. These reservations must chiefly be done by Government, for not even the Zemindar of Jeypore is likely to keep up high forests for the growth of timber whose term of rotation is at least 100 years. Consequently I agree with the Collector of Vizagapatam in advocating that an endeavour be made to put under Government management the best of the forests of the Jeypore State, both large hill areas for climatic purposes and supply combined and smaller lower areas for the yield of timber. How this is to be done is the question.

14. The chief ways in which Government can obtain control over the chief forest areas of Jeypore (and I hope, not only Jeypore, but some of the other estates as well) are—

- (1) By obtaining a perpetual lease at a fixed rate of rental yearly.
- (2) By obtaining a lease like that of Sandúr for twenty-five years at a time renewable on the same terms and at the same rates.
- (3) By getting the Zemindar to place his forests under section 32 of the Forest Act.
- (4) By taking up the forests under section 29 of the Forest Act.

The last way could not be applied except to the hill slopes, not to forests in the plains, which are required more for timber than for protection. Numbers (1) and (2) are practically the same, and the question really reduces itself to either taking a lease or managing the forests on behalf of the Zemindar. So far we have only a few small precedents to go upon in the latter course, the chief obstacle to which is that it would be almost certain that sooner or later the Zemindar would complain that the forests were not being managed so as to yield him the revenue he would like to get. For the lease of forests we have many precedents both in this presidency and elsewhere.

15. There is now the question as to how we are to set about doing anything. I would protest most emphatically against the District Forest-officer of Vizagapatam being

taken away from his present work of the selection and demarcation of reserved forests in the Government taluks. I consider that before Government takes up the question of managing or leasing private forests, it should first see that its own estate is secured and at any rate well started on the way to improvement and systematic working. The present District Forest-officer of Vizagapatam is a young inexperienced officer; he will, I hope, do good work in the proper selection and settlement of reserved forests in the Government taluks, but a more experienced officer would now be required to make the arrangements in Jeypore and such arrangement as well as the selection should, if now done, be conducted by a competent and experienced officer. At present there is no one to spare; we have not even officers enough for our current work, and it would be a great mistake to attempt too much. If Mr. Sweet works hard this cold season and if Government allow the Pálkonda and Golconda forests to be settled under the Act, such settlement ought easily to be completed before the cold season of 1887-88, and then it should be possible to make some officers' services available to spend that cold season in Jeypore (November to March) and make a careful selection of forests for reservation. And the Conservator could also visit the district and settle matters with the Collector and the Zemindar. It is possible that the Collector can persuade the Raja to issue strict orders for the temporary reservation of the best sal and teak tracts, allowing no trees under six feet in girth to be felled, and the Collector might also endeavour to settle with the Raja the preliminaries as to whether he would prefer to avail himself of section 32 of the Act, or to receive a fixed rate per acre. Government could not afford to pay a high rate as in Sandúr, for it would have to make roads, spend considerable sums on fire-protection, demarcation and houses, and entertain an establishment before it could attempt to start felling works, so that either way there would probably be a loss to it for some years.

Resolution—dated 16th June 1886, Forest No. 331.

Submitted to Government, in reference to paragraph 2 of G.O., dated 21st November 1885, Mis. No. 6513.

2. The Board agree with the Conservator in thinking that a perpetual lease of the area required is the only course likely to prove satisfactory, and they suggest, therefore, that the Government Agent should first of all visit the Maharaja and ascertain from him if he is willing to grant such a lease.
3. If he is, the next step will be the selection of the areas required, and for this the deputation of an experienced officer will probably be necessary: how much that officer should select will depend wholly on how much the Maharaja is prepared to grant; if little, the selection must be confined to areas necessary for climatic purposes and for the protection of the water-supply; if much, it may be extended to areas likely to prove profitable as a source of timber supply.
4. In any case, care should be taken to avoid hampering Government with areas the protection of which is likely to be interfered with, either now or in the immediate future, by the necessities of adjacent villages.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) H. A. SIM
Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Conservator of Forests, in charge of Northern Division.
" " Collector of Vizagapatam.
" " Conservator of Forests, in charge of Southern Division.
" " Examiner Forest Accounts.

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th June 1886, Forest No. 359:—

Read—the following letter from H. G. TURNER, Esq., Agent to the Governor in Vizagapatam, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 27th February 1886, No. 252:—

I have the honor to submit to His Excellency the Governor in Council that the order issued by the Government marginally noted may be reconsidered. I venture on this step as I think that all the facts of the case may not have been before Government when the order was passed. I address myself directly to the Governor in Council because the order directly affects the agency in which I am vested as Agent with full powers of collection and superintendence of revenues of every description (Act XXIV of 1839, section 3).

2. The Government Order above quoted directs that the order proposed by the Board prohibiting the cutting and sale of timber from the Golconda and Pálkonda agency tracts, except in accordance with the customary privileges of the hill inhabitants, should issue, and that any timber felled for sale should be confiscated. The Board proposed this in paragraph 3 of their Resolution, dated 22nd August 1885, No. ²⁴¹⁰ Forest 456, which paragraph deals with the remarks made by me in my letter, dated 16th June 1885, No. 786, paragraphs 14 to 18. I proposed, however (paragraph 15), that people who live outside the tracts should be absolutely prohibited from cutting wood or gathering produce for sale *without license*.

The Board said nothing about the license, and the Government has given effect to this proposal of the Board also without the mention of the license. Consequently the effect of the Government Order will be to prevent any sort of felling in the hill tracts by the people of the plains, whether under pass or not under pass.

3. I do not think that the Board meant this, but if they did, perhaps they gathered from my letter that people who live in the plains do not cut jungle for sale in the hills to any great extent. This, however, is not the case, so far as regards Pálkonda. The Golconda agency tracts would not be effected by the order. There are so many mokasadors who own forests in the Golconda agency that the people of the plains go and cut as much wood as they need in those jungles and do not want to trespass on Government property. But in Pálkonda the case is different. I have had a long talk on this subject with Mr. Sweet, the District Forest-officer. He has drawn up a note for the information of the Conservator, in which he says:—

"In Pálkonda the case is different, as the agency forests supply the whole taluk and also that of Chicacole and a large part of the Bobbili zemindari. The ryots of Pálkonda get 5 bandy-loads of timber for every Rs. 100 assessment they pay. This arrangement was originally made by the renters, Messrs. Arbuthnot and Co., and has been continued by the deputy tahsildar, so that there is considerable felling of timber in the taluk. Should the Collector order that no timber is to be cut for sale on any condition, there will be considerable hardship for the inhabitants of Bobbili and Chicacole and also for the ryots of Pálkonda, who may need more than the allowance they receive free."

He suggests that Government should sanction felling for sale in certain selected parts of the Pálkonda agency and to prohibit it in others; and he then rather leaves the particular subject of felling by the low-country people and touches on the difficult question of the kondapodu, which I think had better be dealt with separately.

4. The Government will understand from this that I think it would be a harsh measure to absolutely prohibit the felling of timber by the low-country people, and that I hope they will modify their order and authorise felling by license, but only in those parts that may be selected for the purpose by the District Forest-officer. All felling is now done by license, so there will be no new thing here. The customs and right of the hill people as regards kondapodu and all other felling by them should not be

interfered with at present, except in so far as to prevent the destruction of the sál-wood forests at certain specified spots. I would add that in November last I held a *bhat* (gathering) of the hill-people at Sitampeta, in which they betrayed the greatest alarm lest their kondapodu should be interfered with, promising, nevertheless, that a certain valuable sál-wood forest would be left intact—one or two persons only objecting that they had certain rights therein, which I said should be duly inquired into. Probably the people of the Pálkonda hills have as much right to cultivate their immemorial *podus* (hill fields) in their peculiar way of leaving them fallow for from 7 to 10 years as the Khonds are said to have in the parallel case of the Ganjam hills.

5. The moot point noticed by Government in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Government Order under answer is decided according to the view taken by the Board and not according to my view. Certain sections of Forest Act have been extended to the Godávári, and very probably the gloss of the Board that a Punjab Local Act could likewise be extended to the scheduled districts by the extraordinary power vested in Government under the Scheduled Districts Act is also correct. I am unable to see where the power stops, or to what end Mr. Mackenzie composed his letter.

6. But I think that Government will not make use of the power to extend the Forest Act to the agency of Vizagapatam. To do so will traverse the law of Act XXIV of 1839, which distinctly states that the collection and superintendence of revenue of every description is vested in the Agent. Further, as I pointed out in a similar question that arose regarding the extension of the Abkári Act to the hill tracts, Government can always proceed by rule, and while they can always alter their own rules if burdensome to the people, they cannot rescind the Act without special legislation. As Collector, I sincerely wish that the whole administration of the district was guided by Government rule and not by statute. Having the privilege of administering a part of the district by rule, let us do our best to guard the boon, for it is a beautiful thing in the eyes of the Executive officer.

7. Paragraph 3 states that the Government approve the investing Forest-officers with powers of the Agent when in the agency tracts. But this is, I apprehend, not what is meant. The powers of the Agent are very extensive powers and comprise all sorts of things from capital sentence and exile downwards. The Board suggested that the District Forest-officers in the agency tracts should be invested with the powers of Assistant Agents for forest purposes, and this is no doubt what Government intend to do. Perhaps it will be necessary to notify this investiture in the *Fort St. George Gazette*. The precise powers these Assistant Agents for forests exercise will be on me to decide for the present. When we know more about the matter, we can frame a few rules for their general guidance, but there should be no hard-and-fast procedure such as might involve us in difficulties with the easily aggrieved mountaineer.

8. The Government will, I think, be glad to hear that the forest operations are by no means in a backward state in this district. The greatest care has always been taken by the Agents of the Government forests in Golconda and Pálkonda. Conservation of these tracts did not begin with the passing of the Forest Act. In both taluks the forest has been conserved by us according to settled system, and no valuable timber has been felled either in Pálkonda or in Golconda without a license for years past. From what I have said above, the Government will see that it is perfectly easy for the Agent to issue any orders regarding the conservation of timber and to have those orders carried out. This he has always done. Restriction has been effected by simple orders issued to the tahsildars, who carried them into effect by means of their peons. These orders are still in force and no harm is being done to the timber. The Governor in Council may rest assured that this duty has not been neglected by his Agents in Vizagapatam, and that wherever it has been possible to preserve forest without interfering with the customs of the people, the forest has been preserved. If it had not been so there would not now be a valuable piece of timber in any of these forests, whereas the fact is that Golconda is full of good timber and there is a good reserve of pure sál timber in Pálkonda. With regard to the forest of Sarvasiddhi, the delay has not been occasioned by any remissness on my part or on the part of my office as I explained to the Board in my letter, dated 16th June 1885, No. 786, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

G.O., Mis. No. 2216.

Forwarded to the Board of Revenue for remarks. The opinion of the Conservator, Northern Division, should also be obtained and submitted to Government.

2. With reference to his claim to address Government direct, the attention of the Agent will be drawn to rule 29, clause 2 of the rules for the guidance of the Governor's Agents in Ganjam and Vizagapatam. Future communications on forest matters should be submitted through the Conservator of Forests and the Board of Revenue.

FORT ST. GEORGE,
7th April 1886.

(Signed) J. F. PRICE,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

„ the Agent to the Governor in Vizagapatam.

Reference on the above, dated 5th May 1886.

Referred to the Conservator, Northern Division, for remark.

(Signed) H. A. SIM,
Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Conservator of Forests, in charge of Northern Division,
with G.O., Revenue Department, dated 7th April 1886,
Mis. No. 2216, in original (to be returned).

READ—the following letter from J. S. GAMBLE, Esq., Conservator of Forests, in charge of Northern Division, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Ootacamund, 31st May 1886, No. 593:—

I have the honor to report as follows on the reference made by the Board on G.O., No. 2216, Revenue Department, of 7th April 1886. I do not propose to discuss the question of the powers of the Agent to the Governor in Vizagapatam, for that, I think, is beyond my province. I shall merely remark on the question which concerns the forests.

2. I consider that the order of Government prohibiting the cutting and sale of timber in the Golconda and Pálkonda agency tracts to be now almost a necessity. Had action been at once taken by the Collector on my inspection note of 20th April 1884 directing my recommendations to be carried out, as he did not express to the Board his want of concurrence, by now the reserved forests I proposed to make in Pálkonda would have been selected, and I think without difficulty, and such an order need not have issued.

3. Immediately it was understood that such reservations were proposed, there was a "run" on the forests by outsiders to their very great detriment as reported by the District Forest-officer, and their condition is daily getting worse and worse. Consequently the effect of the Government Order will be to prevent further damage until the areas selected for reservation have been demarcated. The state of the Pálkonda forests was bad enough when I saw them; it is gradually getting worse and worse, and this is, I think, due to the Collector's opposition. All I propose to do is detailed in my two inspection notes recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. ³⁴²² Forest 692, of 19th December 1885; it consists in selecting and demarcating such areas of reserved forest as can be obtained with as little interference as possible, if any at all, with the villagers and with the lands they are in the habit of cultivating. I do not propose that the department should have anything to do with the forest lands or side

the reserves, though I should like to see these lands left as a sort of village forest for the people of the hills and the reserved forests only worked systematically for outside supply so far as they are capable of meeting it.

4. I have not yet visited Golconda, but I believe the same remarks will apply. I am glad to see from another communication (his annual report for 1884-85 on the management of the agency tracts) that the Collector now agrees to the formation of reserved forests in Golconda. I trust, therefore, that advantage will be taken of this to secure their speedy formation as agreed to by the Board and sanctioned by Government.

5. I strongly recommend the extension of the Act to Golconda and Palkonda, as I have already recommended it for the neighbouring lower agency tracts of the Godavari district and notably Juddengy. If only chapter II is extended it would suffice, for I do not think the rules under section 26 would be suitable for the areas not reserved. I would prefer that the department secured its reserved forests and worked them to the best advantage for supply and for improvement and nothing more. I feel sure that it will be far better for the forests to go through the process of forest settlement under the Act; but even if this is not done, I trust that Government will allow the reserves to be made as reserves were made prior to the Act, demarcated and protected. If the present system of permits continues a few years longer, in Palkonda at any rate, there will be nothing left. I have since regretted extremely that I did not remain longer there, select the reserves and draw up the notification, but I had to leave, for the whole of my camp was ill with fever.

6. In regard to the Collector's remarks in his paragraph 8, I think I had best confine myself to saying that, speaking as a professional officer, I cannot agree with him at all. The forest conservancy that I found going on in Palkonda was practically confined to two areas, the so-called "topes" of Voni and Lakshmipuram, aggregating "51 acres." These were patches in a sal forest on which all trees, but the sal had been carefully cut out. The sal trees were poles, mostly coppice shoots from old stools and in themselves of bad quality, injured by fire and fit for little. An establishment of, I think, four or five guards was employed on these patches, and the day I arrived they were found to be in the act of burning all the dead leaves which had been carefully swept together—an operation which, I need scarcely say, was not the very best for maintaining moisture in the soil and increasing the "humus," the natural manure of a forest. To my mind the forest growth outside was better than that in the "topes," which are, I presume, the "good reserve of pure sal timber in Palkonda" to which Mr. Turner refers.

7. I would beg of Government to give instructions for no further hindrance being made to the selection and demarcation of the reserved forests I proposed for Palkonda, and to the similar selection of the best areas available in Golconda which they have already approved. And I would further beg that, when considering the question of extending the Act to Juddengy, they will also consider the advisability of extending it also to the agency tracts under Government in Golconda and Palkonda. The original papers received are returned herewith.

READ—the following letter from H. G. TURNER, Esq., Collector of Vizagapatam, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 31st May 1886, No. 551:

With reference to para. 5 of G.O., dated the 14th November last, No. 1262 R, directing the formation, in the Sarvasiddhi taluk, of twenty-one reserved forests as proposed by Mr. Gamble, I have the honor respectfully to request a reconsideration of the order.

2. Knowing as I do the importance which Government attach to the formation of reserved forests, I should not have ventured to suggest a reconsideration of their orders had I not been fully convinced of the impracticability of carrying them out without inflicting incalculable inconvenience and annoyance on the people of an entire

taluk, and had I not been assured by the Board of Revenue in their Proceedings, No. ²⁴⁹³ Forest 197, dated the 21st July 1884, that it is my duty to protect the interests of the ignorant masses whom the Government have been pleased to commit to my care. I moreover conceive that the particular point on which this petition for reconsideration turns has not yet passed under the final and exhaustive scrutiny of Government; at least, I cannot find any order on it directly, though here and there an *obiter dictum* bearing on the question is no doubt to be extracted from the file of forest papers with which I have been furnished.

3. On receipt of the above order of Government, I requested my Principal Assistant Collector, Mr. Power, to make minute inquiries into the circumstances of the taluk so as to be sure as to the feasibility of carrying out the Conservator's proposals approved by Government; and I have now the honor to enclose, for the perusal of the Board, Mr. Power's very interesting report on the subject. From this the Board will be pleased to observe that it is utterly impracticable to constitute the forest reserves proposed by the Conservator without causing an amount of present inconvenience, annoyance and oppression to the people of the taluk, which is out of all proportion to the benefits which these reserved forests might confer on them in the distant future. Administration indeed stands confounded before a proposition which is equivalent to the depriving of the people of an entire English country of their common grazing grounds and of their rights to wood and fuel.

4. The entire Sarvasiddhi taluk consists of 152 villages with a population of 131,754 and an area roughly calculated at 347 square miles; of these villages, 65 containing 137 square miles and 64,000 inhabitants belong to Government, and it is the lands appertaining to these villages only that are the subject of the following remarks. Mr. Power has made a census of the cattle in these Government villages, and he finds their number to be 44,358 head as particularised below:—

Cattle, i.e., oxen, buffaloes, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	30,556
Sheep and goats...	...	...	...	...	...	13,482
Horses and asses	...	...	...	...	...	320
Total	...	...	...	...	...	44,358

5. The area of jungle and waste land in these villages, according to the rough estimate made on the spot by the tahsildar of the taluk and his revenue inspectors, is Acres 16,445. The statistical return A submitted with the Administration report gives the aggregate area of waste and jungle to be 28,268 acres. But this figure is allowed on all hands to be wrong; and we have also to deduct porambokes, such as village-sites, burial-grounds, tank-beds, roads and the like, so that the safest figure to adopt is the one now given by Mr. Power. Now if we take the horned cattle alone (leaving out of calculation the sheep, &c.), we find that there is little more than half an acre of pasturage available for each head of cattle. Mr. Gamble is of opinion that

Paragraph 2 of Mr. Gamble's letter to Board, No. 1401, dated 21st October 1885, printed in Board's Proceedings, dated 11th November 1885, No. ³⁰⁹⁸ Forest 617.

Paragraph 3 of Mr. Gamble's letter to Board, No. 1549, dated 10th November 1885, printed in Board's Proceedings, dated 21st January 1886, No. ¹⁶⁹ Forest 30.

Paragraph 15 of Mr. Gamble's letter to Board, No. 95 C, dated 31st August 1885, printed in Board's Proceedings, dated 28th September 1885, No. ²⁷⁴⁸ Forest 541.

5 acres per head of cattle is required for pasturage purposes (*vide* marginally-noted letters). The pasture in Sarvasiddhi is of the poorest description, and I think that in this country, where cultivated grasses are almost unheard of, even 5 acres per head of cattle is an inadequate allowance. As matters now stand, the cattle of Sarvasiddhi have got but a little more than half an acre per head. The area of the twenty-one reserved forests proposed by Mr. Gamble is estimated by the Principal Assistant Collector at 10,180 acres. Deducting this from the whole

available waste in the taluk, there remains 6,265 acres for the formation of village reserves which gives about one-fifth of an acre per head of cattle or one-seventh per head of all kinds of the stock. Besides providing pasture for this large number of

animals, this small extent of land must also supply the domestic and agricultural wants of no less than 64,000 people.

6. In para. 12 of his letter, dated the 30th April 1885, No. 265, and recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. ²²⁹⁵ Forest 430, of the 8th August 1885, Colonel Campbell Walker says that areas not exceeding 33 per cent. on the cultivated land, which is the proportion adopted by the Revenue Settlement department, should be set apart for grazing purposes of the villagers. The cultivated area of the Government villages in the Sarvasiddhi taluk is 42,421 acres, 33 per cent. or one-third of this amounts to 14,140. Deducting this figure from the gross area of jungle and waste land which we have adopted, we find only 2,305 acres are left for the formation of reserved forests. It is therefore alarming to propose that there shall be 10,000 acres of reserved forest in this taluk. I think myself that 33 per cent. is merely an arbitrary allowance, for I can find no argument sustaining it. The proportion should be fixed with reference to the number of cattle and the nature of the growth of fodder in each taluk. But supposing we adopt the 33 per cent. scale approved by the Board, we find that 44,000 cattle have to be depastured on 14,000 acres of waste. This gives less than $\frac{1}{4}$ acre per head, and assumes moreover that all this waste is fit for grazing purposes, which is, of course, a preposterous assumption. I think that in a taluk like Sarvasiddhi, where the rainfall averages only 27.3 inches per annum, it is not all prudent to adopt so low a figure as 5 acres per head of horned cattle, and I accept the figure as the *né plus ultra* of restriction.

7. Mr Power has, on personal inquiry, found that the ryots and other inhabitants of every Government village in the taluk have, from time immemorial, been in the habit of grazing their cattle and cutting wood, fuel, brushwood, &c., over all the waste land in their villages. He says that every one asserts a right to these ancient customary privileges. I have no reason to question the correctness of his statements. On the contrary, it is altogether vain to suppose that the people of so densely populated a tract as Sarvasiddhi have not been in the habit of exercising these rights, and that they will not assert them when they are informed of our proposal to deprive them of so intimate a necessity of their life. If, therefore, it be decided that these forests are to be demarcated, either the Forest Settlement-officer must admit these grazing and cutting rights and allow them to be enjoyed by the village community, or Government must buy them up at an expense frightful to contemplate. For, if they be not bought, the exercise of these rights alongside the Forest laws will be tantamount to an entire obstruction to forestry measures. In their Order, dated 14th July 1885, No. 817, published in Board's Proceedings, dated 8th August 1885, No. ²²⁵⁵ Forest 430, Government declare the amended rule regarding village areas being set apart to be of urgency, and although the point is rather obscured by the subsequent order of Government, dated 19th September 1885, No. 1070, I cannot but think that it is the intention of Government that the claims of the villagers to grazing grounds and timber and fuel reserves are in all cases to be ascertained and provided for before any steps are taken to reserve forests.

8. I believe that Mr. Gamble takes an opposite view, and I hope that the Board may be pleased to seek from Government a distinct order on the point which I consider to be of the first importance and absolutely of vital value to all village communities. For it is perfectly plain that, unless the villagers are to enjoy a priority of hearing, it will be impossible for the Divisional officer to exercise his functions of Settlement-officer without the interests of reservation clashing with the interests of the village privileges. This is the position that Mr. Power now finds himself in. As my *alter ego*, he is enjoined to set apart areas for village enjoyment; as Settlement-officer, he is supposed to find those areas already set apart and to consider what claims the people have in the remaining parts which are to be reserved. Mr. Gamble directs attention to this matter in his note, but I do not go with him in his view that the Divisional officer is more a Forest Settlement-officer than a Collector. This then is the point on which I venture to propose that the Government be solicited to pass definite orders, that is to say, to lay down that in all cases it is desirable to set apart village reserves before forest reserves come under consideration.

9. The objection taken by Mr. Gamble is somewhat technical and depends on the nice interpretation of the Government orders and of their applicability to procedure rather than on the broad question which I have treated of in the preceding paragraphs. It is of course not to be presumed for a moment that Government will take advantage of the premature publication of the reserves to prejudice the rights of the villagers. Mr. Gamble says that the publication was not premature, but it was so undoubtedly in the sense that Government have never yet had before them the cogent arguments against the measure that are now supplied by Mr. Power. It is to be observed, too, that the Board of Revenue approved of the proposal of the Collector of Cuddapah to make up the quantities required for the village areas by taking pieces from the reserved forests—Board's Proceedings, 31st March 1886, No. 799, Forest 155. Hence Mr. Gamble's argument that those areas cannot be formed in this way has not the sanction of authority; but I wish to be understood that I take a yet broader ground, viz., that the wants of the villagers are to be supplied before the reserves are constituted.

10. In conclusion, I must strongly and respectfully—with full knowledge that I am possibly urging a measure which may be distasteful to Mr. Gamble, but nevertheless with the certainty that my views are in harmony with the entire spirit and tradition of the cautious and element policy that characterises the administration of the Madras Presidency—I say, I most respectfully recommend that the notification under section 4 already published in respect of all the twenty-one blocks proposed as reserved forests be amended, and that all idea of forming all the reserved forests contained in the notification be given up. Still, not to be accused of blind perversity to the policy of Government, I propose the following measure in modification of the wholesale relinquishment of forest reserves that my argument leads me to assert. It will be observed that Mr. Power regrets he is unable to advise that even one block of forest be reserved. Viewed logically, I have no doubt his argument is right. But in order that there may be in the Sarvasiddhi taluk one block of sufficient dimensions to make it worthwhile being reserved, I would submit that the Peddapallee jungle only (No. 1 in the notification issued with G.O., 14th November 1885, No. 1262) be reserved, if the compensation claimed by the villagers be not found prohibitory. I trust that the question raised in this letter may be speedily settled. In view of the fact that the question has already gone before Government, though in an incomplete form, I have not deemed it proper to stop the demarcation now proceeding, and the Forest Settlement-officer has already issued the proclamation prescribed in section 6 of the Forest Act, and in respect of all the twenty-one proposed forest reserves.

11. In forwarding the "Note" * I discuss in this letter, to me, Mr. Gamble draws attention to the want of progress in the

* This is printed in Board's Proceedings, 21st April 1886, No. 211. forest work in this district. Mr. Gamble frequently mentions this, and the complaint has been re-echoed by Government. I have only to observe that so far as my office is concerned forest papers pass through it as quickly as possible, and I can discern no delay at all in their disposal. The questions regarding Palkonda forests, to which Mr. Gamble draws attention in paragraph 5 of his note, are under consideration by the Board. I have to point out that if Mr. Gamble really thinks that the business could be pushed on, it would be to our advantage if he gave us some personal help in these matters. But little will be done by inditing notes. What is wanted is personal inspection and discussion with the District officers.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From G. POWER, Esq., Acting Principal Assistant Collector, to the Collector of Vizagapatam, dated Dharakonda, 6th May 1886, No. 156.

In reply to your letter, No. 620, dated 28th April 1886, I have the honor to say that in my opinion if the areas in Sarvasiddhi taluk, notified in the *Port St. George Gazette* of 9th December 1885, are constituted reserved forests, there will certainly not be enough jungle and other waste left for village reserves under rule 7 of the rules framed under section 26 of the Forest Act.

2. My opinion is, I think, based on good grounds. I have made a rough census, the approximated accuracy of which I do not doubt, of the cattle, sheep, &c., in the Government villages of the taluk, and I find the numbers to be as follow:—

Cattle, i.e., oxen, buffaloes, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	30,556
Sheep and goats	...	...	...	...	...	...	13,482
Horses and asses	...	...	...	...	...	...	320
Total...							<u>44,358</u>

3. I have also ascertained as well as I can in the absence of a regular survey, the area of the waste land in these villages. The existing village accounts are not very trustworthy guide in this matter, the area of waste being in many villages manifestly understated, and in many others manifestly overstated.

I have therefore had a rough estimate made on the spot of the waste in each village by the tahsildar and his revenue inspectors, and this, though it cannot, of course, pretend to exact accuracy, is not, I think, very far out.

4. Excluding assessed unoccupied fields (the area of which is insignificant), and such poramboke as village-site, burial-ground, tank-bed, roads and the like which are manifestly unfitted either for reserved forests or for village reserves under rule 7, I find that the total area of waste is 16,445 acres.

5. I have also personally made inquiries of the ryots and other inhabitants of every Government village in the taluk, and in every case I have been told, and I see no reason to doubt, that they have for a long time been in the habit of grazing their cattle and cutting wood, fuel, brushwood, &c., over all the waste land in their villages. Every one asserts that this is so, and there is absolutely no evidence to the contrary, and no reason to believe the contrary.

6. Now, if you take the number of cattle alone (to say nothing of sheep, &c.) in the Government villages in the taluk and the number of acres of available waste land, you will see that there is rather more than $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of pasture available for each head of cattle; and any one who knows Sarvasiddhi taluk must be aware that this pasture is of the poorest description, and that $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per head of such pasture is certainly not a liberal allowance.

7. Assume that my estimate of the area is too low, and even go so far as to multiply it by two, you will even then have only a little more than one acre per head of cattle, which would not be over-liberal if the pasture consisted of cultivated grasses, instead of, as is the fact, for the most part of scanty scrub jungle and spear grass. In Queensland, I believe, an ordinary allowance on a sheep run is about 3 acres of pasture per sheep.

8. Under these circumstances, it appears to me that if the cattle of the Government villages in Sarvasiddhi taluk are to be provided with pasture, all the waste land at the disposal of Government must be reserved for that purpose alone, and nothing can be made reserved forest. And it must be borne in mind that pasture for cattle is only one of many needs which village reserves under rule 7 are intended to supply. The population of the Government villages in the taluk is 64,000, and this population has to get its wood for agricultural implements and for building, firewood, thorns for fencing, &c., from these same village reserves. The conclusion then seems to be inevitable that, if we are to have village reserves providing for the wants enumerated in rule 7, the reserved forests proposed by the Conservator must be given up altogether, because, all the waste land available will not even be sufficient to provide adequate village reserves. I thought at one time that the first of the Conservator's proposed reserved forests, viz. the Peddapalle reserved forest, might perhaps be retained, but since I have gone more thoroughly into the question I have come to the conclusion that this too must be given up if village reserves providing timber, fuel, &c., for the population, as well as pasture for their cattle, are to be selected. The jungle in the proposed Peddapalle reserved forest is the only Government jungle in the taluk where timber can be procured at all, and there is very little jungle besides this where firewood can be got in any quantity. The jungle elsewhere is principally very poor and scanty scrub. As I have already said, I estimate the total amount of available Government waste at about 16,000 acres, and even if you consider my estimate too low, and double it, I do not think that 32,000 acres can be considered more than is needed to provide timber, fuel, &c., for a population of 64,000, and pasture for 30,000 cattle and 13,000 sheep and goats. The village reserves to be formed under rule 7 are apparently intended to consist of as much jungle and other land as is reasonably required to provide for these purposes, and therefore it seems to me that if we are to have village reserves in Sarvasiddhi, none of the waste can be spared for reserved forests. There is of course the alternative of retaining the proposed reserved forests and giving up the village reserves, but I cannot think that this alternative can be preferred by any one, except perhaps a very prejudiced Forest-officer.

And I really cannot believe that even the most prejudiced of Forest-officers could, if I knew all the facts of the case, wish or expect all the twenty-one blocks which it is now proposed to constitute reserved forest to be so constituted. The area contained within the boundaries

of these twenty-one blocks is altogether (according to my estimate) 10,180 acres, or about five-eighths of whole available waste in the taluk. Forty villages are affected by these proposals, and if the proposed reserved forests are really reserved, these forty villages will have no waste at all left for pasture and other purposes.

9. The boundaries of the proposed reserved forests contain all the hill and other jungle in these villages, and leave none for the villagers. You will see that this is so if you look at the notification in the *Port St. George Gazette*, where the boundaries given are either zemindari and proprietary land, or actual cultivation and occupied waste, or (in a few cases) salt swamps, or the sea.

10. The Conservator of Forests in his office note, dated 26th March 1886, which has been sent to me for perusal, and which I now return, says in effect (paragraph 3) that as village reserves must be formed out of land "not included in a reserved forest," none of the land included in the areas which it has been proposed to constitute reserved forest can be selected for a village reserve. I do not think this can be right. If it is I can only say that the Conservator's proposals have made the selection of village reserves an impossibility in forty villages. In the same office note the Conservator says that Government published the notification "after full consideration of all sides of the question," and he apparently thinks that Government is not likely to change its mind on this subject now. But I venture to think that neither the Government (which attaches importance to the formation of village reserves), nor even the Conservator of Forests, can have been fully aware that the areas specified in the notification included five-eighths of the whole available waste of the taluk, and all the waste in these forty villages which the notification affects, and that the proposals contained in the notification are absolutely incompatible with the formation of any village reserves in these forty villages, or (since these villages contain the best jungle and pasture) of adequate village reserves for even the other village, in the taluk. It is not too late, however, to reconsider the matter, and I hope that Government will see fit to reconsider it if they are asked to do so. I regret that I cannot at once submit the fuller statement asked for in the 2nd paragraph of your letter. I have indeed the materials necessary for the preparation of such a statement, or for the answering of almost any question on the subject, as I have gone into it thoroughly, and have noted all information that appears to me useful or relevant, but it is not at present in the form required by you, and as I am now in the jungle at the far end of the Golconda Agency and have only one clerk with me it will take time to put it into that form; and I understand from your letter that you wish my reply to it to be sent without unnecessary delay. I hope, however, that you will consider that all the information you deem essential is to be found in this letter, and that you will be able on this information to ask Government to reconsider their proposals as to reserved forests.

READ—the following G.O., dated 2nd June 1886, Mis. No. 3251, Revenue:—

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 21st April 1886, Forest No. 21r:—

ABSTRACT.—Passing orders on inspection note of the Conservator on the Vizagapatam district forests, and requesting Government to issue necessary orders for the survey of the Palkonda reserved forests being done by the survey party now at work in that taluk.

Order—dated 2nd June 1886, Mis. No. 3251, Revenue.

The Collector of Vizagapatam should be directed to report why he has not issued the order regarding the cutting and sale of timber from the Golconda and Palkonda Agency tracts as directed in G.O., dated 14th November 1885, No. 1262, R.

2. The settlement of the Sarvasiddhi forests which it is proposed to reserve should be proceeded with without delay.

3. The Government await the promised communication from Mr. Gamble regarding the extension of the Forest Act to the Vizagapatam Agency tracts.

4. The question of surveying the Palkonda forests will be referred to the Superintendent, Madras Survey, for very early report.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. F. PRICE,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Superintendent, Revenue Survey.

Resolution—dated 25th June 1886, Forest No. 359.

Government, in their order of 2nd June 1886, No. 3251, called on the Collector of Vizagapatam to report why he had not issued orders, as directed, in regard to the cutting and sale of timber from the Gdgonda and Palkonda taluks, and further ordered him to proceed without delay in the settlement of the blocks proposed for reservation in the Sarvasiddhi taluk.

2. At the same time as they received that Government order, the Board received also the letters read above from the Collector and from the Conservator dealing with the very subjects under discussion; they resolve, therefore, without the delay of further reference to the district, to submit those letters as the reply called for by Government.

3. The matter in dispute is the forest organization of the three Government taluks of the Vizagapatam district—Golgonda, Palkonda and Sarvasiddhi; for the two first the Conservator proposes, as a preliminary step, to wholly prohibit the cutting of timber for sale, and for the last he selects twenty-one reserves and leaves the balance for village forests and grazing lands: the Collector, on the other hand, demurs to the former on the ground that it will cause considerable hardship to the neighbouring ryots, and to the latter on the ground that the "balance" which has been left for the formation of the village forests, on which so much stress has been laid by Government, is non-existent.

4. The Board can only think that all this delay, argument and recrimination in the partial settlement of three small taluks has been mainly due to the fact that that settlement has been carried on so far by correspondence only; Mr. Turner is no forger, nor is Mr. Gamble a mere tree-grower only, that things should have come to the pass at which they have arrived; a fortnight's tour together in the tract in dispute would clear up many difficulties, and would probably result in a "give-and-take" arrangement, as satisfactory to all parties, as in the present state of the forest concerned, can be expected, and this the Board recommend.

5. That the Collector's letter shows ground for such a recommendation they do not think can be doubted; about Golgonda there is little dispute, because Golgonda has hardly been touched as yet, but for Palkonda and Sarvasiddhi the views of the two officers appear to be diametrically opposed: nor is either officer without grounds for his opinion; the Conservator, from the standpoint of a forester, recommending and rightly so, judging from the accounts of the forest growth, reservation in some form or other; the Collector, from the standpoint of a revenue officer, opposing and quoting facts and figures for his opposition, a reservation which he fears will be too extended and too strict.

6. It appears to the Board that a personal discussion upon the spot is the only way to reconcile matters; further correspondence they would deprecate, and a settlement carried out on lines of which the district officers unite in disapproving they would consider unwise; the question of kondapodu, the claims of the hill ryots, and the advisability of applying the Forest Act to the agency tracts, are matters that could be definitely disposed of at the same time.

7. As a *modus vivendi* in the meantime, they would suggest on the lines laid down by Government the closing of the Golgonda forests to cutting for sale, the limitation of such cutting in the Palkonda forests to areas selected by the District Forest-officer and the commencement of settlement upon some of the larger reserves of the Sarvasiddhi taluk; but at the same time they would point out that the two former are mere preliminaries only, and that even if Government are disposed to decide that the Conservator's further presence in the Sarvasiddhi taluk is unnecessary, it will surely not be so for the Golgonda and Palkonda taluks, and the difficult questions to which the process of reservation in them will assuredly give rise.

8. They are disposed to think that the rival claims of forester and villager, and the difficult question of village forests, as opposed to State forests, are (since sufficient land to provide for each *separately* does not exist) likely to be finally settled only by such a combination of the two as will reasonably satisfy both; if the Forest department could arrange to supply either on indent or under control such free timber, pasturage and petty produce as Government may hold to be the full equivalent of a ryot's free

privileges under rule 7, the Board think that the idea of village forests might be given up, and the Forest department thus be allowed greater freedom of action in the matter of reservation and professional management.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) H. A. SIM,
Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Conservator of Forests, in charge of Northern Division.
" " Collector of Vizagapatam.
" " Conservator of Forests, in charge of Southern Division.
" " Examiner of Forest Accounts.

ORDER—dated 28th October 1886, No. 931, Revenue.

Forest, No. 113.

His Excellency the Governor in Council deferred passing orders on these papers in order to allow Mr. Gamble to meet Mr. Turner on the occasion of his visit on duty to Madras. This Mr. Gamble has now done, and some additional information regarding forest matters in Vizagapatam has been furnished by Mr. Turner.

2. The Government cannot acquit Mr. Turner of all blame in connection with the that has occurred in forming forest reserves in his district. Admitting that his objections to the proposals for the Sarvasiddhi taluk were such as he ought to have placed before them, the Government consider that, pending the issue of orders on that matter, the District Forest-officer should have been ordered to proceed to select reserves in Golgonda instead of being permitted to do little or no work for several months.

* Paragraph 4 of Mr. Turner's letter to the Board of Revenue, dated 16th June 1885, No. 786.

On the other hand Mr. Turner appears to have done more in the Palkonda taluk than was supposed, while Mr. Gamble is responsible for a delay of eight months in connection with the Sarvasiddhi proposals.*

3. No reserves have yet been selected in the Golgonda taluk, although Mr. Sweet, the District Forest officer, has, in company with Mr. Turner, made a general inspection of the forests in the Agency portion of it. No difficulty is anticipated from the hill-people in this taluk as there are vast stretches of forest with no villages in them, and the practice of *podu*, or temporary cultivation in forests, does not obtain. The District Forest-officer should, therefore, at once proceed to select as many blocks as he and the Agent may consider advisable, and on this selection receiving the approval of Government, the Agent will issue an executive order forbidding all unauthorised cutting in these blocks. In the remaining portions of the Agency part of the taluk the present practice of allowing no valuable timber to be felled without a license should be continued.

4. The Government consider that the figures given by Mr. Turner show conclusively that the proposals for the Sarvasiddhi taluk go too far. No action should, therefore, be taken for the present on the notification appended to G.O., dated 14th November 1885, No. 1262, Revenue, and the Collector should submit revised proposals for reserving an area not exceeding 5,000 acres.

5. With reference to his remarks on the question of forming village forests before reserved forests, Mr. Turner will be informed that the Government do not consider that that course is necessary. The wants of the people should, of course, always be considered, but while Mr. Turner would apparently consider only the wants of the present, the Government would look also to the needs of the future. Nor can the Government admit that, as a rule, the people have any rights in the waste lands of our villages. These lands are at the absolute disposal of Government and they are instantly given to private persons for cultivation and other purposes. There can be no doubt that the "customary privileges" referred to by Mr. Turner are privileges only and not rights, and that the community are not entitled to any

compensation when the Government direct that the exercise of these privileges shall cease.

6. Turning now to the Pálkonda taluk, the Government understand that the

* Paragraph 8 of his letter to the Board, dated 27th February 1886, No. 252. "good reserve of pure sál timber" referred to by Mr. Turner,* lies well within the hills and was not seen by Mr. Gamble.

The Government also understand that certain blocks of forest in this taluk have been set aside for the people from the plains, who are allowed to fell timber, &c., only in these, while in the remainder of the forests the hill-people alone are allowed to cut, but only for their own consumption. This arrangement is satisfactory, but it is necessary that in these portions of the forests blocks should be selected and defined in which *all* cutting and *podu*, or temporary cultivation, should be forbidden. The forest along the face of the hills forming the main range also demands strict reservation of this kind. The Agent will issue the necessary orders in the matter.

7. With reference to the proposal that the forests of the Maharaja of Jeypore should be leased, the Government observe that their staff of Forest-officers is too limited to allow of their making so large an addition to their forest estate. It is, however, very desirable that these valuable forests should be saved from ruin by indiscriminate and excessive felling, and the Government think that the best way to secure this end and at the same time ensure the Maharaja the revenue he may fairly expect from this part of his estate, would be for him to enter into a contract for the working of the forests with some respectable firm. The contract should be submitted to the Agent for approval, and he should advise the Maharaja to stipulate that no tree of less than 4½ feet in girth should be felled, and that payment should be by stump-fees. The two provisions will prevent the cutting of immature trees, and this in itself will be a considerable step in the direction of restoring these forests to a proper condition.

8. In conclusion His Excellency in Council desires to express a hope that forest matters in Vizagapatam will now progress rapidly and smoothly. He feels sure that Mr. Gamble will always be ready to assist the District officers with professional advice, and that Mr. Turner will always be willing to place his great knowledge of his extensive district at the disposal of the Conservator.

(True Extract.)

Ag. Secretary to Government.

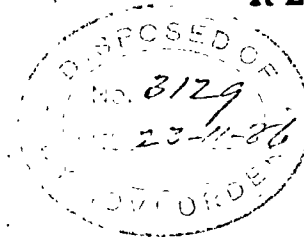
To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Judicial Department.

Exd. W. H. French.

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REVENUE.



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G.O., 28th October 1886, No. 931.

OCTOBER.

Forests in Vizagapat

Passing orders on papers relating

Go 23rd Nov 1886. 3129

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