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(2) Date of repair _____

(3) Initials of the Referencer GP

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Pension DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.

68

Press
Mis.

Dated

12-2-1874.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
2nd February 1874.*

No. 5. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 14th January 1874, No. 52:—

Read the following letter from R. K. PUCKLE, Esq., Collector of Tinnevely, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 20th November 1873, No. 652:—

I HAVE the honour to submit the map promised in my letter embodied in the Board's Proceedings, No. 1,940, dated 25th September 1873, and to furnish some further details as to the arrangements made for jungle conservancy in the Tenkas Taluq.

2. I have now nearly completed the revision of the land assessment of this taluq, and while engaged on the work have had an opportunity of conserving the banks of some of the more important tanks, of setting back encroachments on the bank foot of every tank in the taluq, and of allotting free grazing grounds and firewood jungles to each village at the foot of the hills.

3. There are 169 tanks in the Government villages of this taluq, and of these thirty-five have been taken up for jungle conservancy. These are marked with red ink in the accompanying map. A watchman is appointed to each of these tanks, and each bank is protected at either end by a fence in which there is a gateway wide enough to allow of the free passage of a man on horseback. The top of the tank is also kept clear for a width of two yards throughout, and the seeds of hardy trees, such as vagei, neem, and marudu are sown on the rear slope. The face of such embankments as have no stone revetment are sown in like manner along the water's edge, and the growth of grass and indigenous plants is encouraged to keep up the bank. I have also introduced the willow (nir-nuchi), the roots of which keep up a bank perhaps better than anything else with very great success, and bamboo, casuarina, and vinei (the reed used for writing), have been planted out here and there. Simply keeping the bank from cattle-trespass ensures its being covered with undergrowth in the course of a year or two, while the watchman on the bank is always ready to fill up a hole or to check any injury occasioned to the bank by the water by the prompt application of rollers of grass or brushwood behind which brushes or willow or screw-pine can hereafter be planted at leisure.

4. It may occur to the Board that but few tanks have been taken up as compared with the large number shown in the map, but I have had to consider the soil, situation, and present requirements of each bank, and enough has been done to commence with.

5. Setting back the encroachments at the bank foot of every tank is a very great point gained, and the Tahsildar deserves much praise for his exertions in this respect. Until lately the banks were scarped and cut into irregular shapes by the gradual extension of fields at the bank foot, and the Engineers were often opposed in their endeavours to restore the slope of a bank. Now the foot of every bank is defined by a small trench the earth from which has been thrown towards the bank, and ground sufficient has been acquired for laying out every bank with a slope of at least two to one. These trenches should never be allowed to be filled in as while they exist any attempt at encroachment can at once be detected and checked.

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6. There are ten Government villages in this taluq that abut on the hills, and to each of these as well as to two others (including Tenkasi itself), that do not abut on the hills, tracts of free grazing ground and firewood jungle have been assigned varying, according to circumstance, from 250 to 1,000 Acres in extent. One or more watchmen have been appointed to each village jungle and along the southern block of hills, the source of the Sitar. I have divided the village jungles from the reserved forest by a pathway cleared along the hill side to enable the watchmen to patrol. This path is fenced on its upper side and is shown by a red line in the map. This arrangement not only fixes the boundary line of the village jungles but is attended with the double advantage of providing the villagers with all that they can possibly need; in fact, with far more than they asked for, and preventing injury to the ghaut forests that protect the heads of the streams. Numerous gates are provided in the fencing for ingress into the forest at certain seasons, when the villagers usually cut the mountain grass for thatching, while enough timber to renew agricultural implements at the rate of twenty-five per cent. of those now in use will be annually cut in the forest and distributed in these seven villages, at the mere cost of cutting, to those who may find any difficulty in obtaining the proper-sized timber in the jungles assigned to their villages.

7. The cost of clearing a path ten miles long and fencing the grazing ground and firewood jungles of seven villages has been very trifling, as clearing the path provided thorns and sticks for the fencing and the people flocked to the work to finish it during the settlement and so to get rid of the ticket system and the restrictions lately imposed on their grazing and firewood cutting.

8. In this taluq there are now sixty watchmen paid from Jungle Conservancy. These are all Maravars, men of the predatory tribe, who not only do their work well but by employment are kept out of mischief. They each receive $2\frac{1}{2}$ Rs. per mensem, and this minimum salary is made up to a maximum of 5 Rupees per mensem, according to the results they show, and arrangements have been made for a quarterly inspection of their work.

9. In my letter, No. 518, dated 4th November 1872, I requested sanction for the entertainment of an Overseer to be paid from Jungle Conservancy; but my proposal was not sanctioned as the fuel reserves were then separated from Jungle Conservancy.

10. The operations of Jungle Conservancy have, however, now extended so very considerably that full employ could be found for an inspecting officer of the grade of a 2nd-Class Forester, and, if service in this capacity is allowed to contribute towards pension, Mr. Forester Theobald, now on the spot, who has rendered gratuitous aid so far, might be employed on this work and be paid entirely from Jungle Conservancy Funds.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Map.

THE Board approve entirely of the arrangements which Mr. Puckle has made for jungle conservancy in the Tenkasi Taluq, and think it very desirable that Mr. Theobald, now a Forest Overseer, should supervise them.

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2. His services cannot be made available in this way unless his service under the Jungle Conservancy Fund is allowed to count for pension. In their Order of the 29th August 1872, No. 1,149, Government ruled that the Jungle Conservancy Fund did not fulfil the conditions under which Local Fund service qualifies for pension; but the Board think that in this case Mr. Theobald might be allowed to secure his pension by paying one-fifth of his salary to the Government of India under Section 35 of the Civil Pension Code.

3. Mr. Theobald's pay is Rupees 80 a-month with Rupees 30 as travelling allowance. To enable him to keep the same pay while contributing one-fifth of it towards a pension he must draw Rupees 100 as pay and Rupees 30 as travelling allowance, or Rupees 130 altogether.

4. The Collector will report whether the Jungle Conservancy Fund is in a position to be saddled with this expenditure.

No. 6. ORDER THEREON, 2nd February 1874, No. 148.

Miscellaneous.

MR. PUCKLE'S proceedings are highly commended. The question of Forester Theobald's eligibility to pension will be decided in due course.

(True Extract.)

D. S. Puckle
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Financial Department.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

A. S. Puckle

19-17-1
Madras 1874 Sept 26
Bdlt. of 1874 Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

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Rs 80.

Dated February 2nd.

Encl.

Recd.

G. O., 2nd February 1874, No. 148.

FEBRUARY.

Nos. 5-6.

Jungle Conservancy in Tenkasi Taluk, Tanjore District.—Commending highly Mr. Puckle's proceedings regarding— and observing that the question of Forester Theobald's eligibility to pension will be decided hereafter.

Order Madras 1874 Sept 26

1/18