

ORDINARY, MS.

<i>Public</i> DEPARTMENT	
G.O., DATED	<i>5-9-91</i>
No.	<i>760.</i>

INDEXED.*When given for copying*

[Despatch Abstract.]

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), dated 27th July 1891, Forest No. 620, Mis. :—

THE HON. H. W. BLISS.

Read—the following letter from the Collector of Nilgiris, dated 13th June 1891, No. 481 :—

With reference to Board's Proceedings, No. 707, dated 16th December 1890, paragraph 23 (page 31), and G.O., No. 208, Revenue, dated 19th March 1890, I have the honour to bring to the notice of the Board the difficulties which retard forest settlement work on the Nilgiris under existing conditions.

2. When the Head Assistant Collector was appointed Forest Settlement-officer in addition to his other duties, it was not anticipated that there would be much more forest settlement work to do; but now that the orders contained in the Board's Proceedings first referred to *supra* have to be carried out, settlement work will be enormously increased.

3. In addition to this work, it has further been recently discovered that many important sholas, which ought most decidedly to have been reserved, have been omitted, whilst in many of the reserved forests already notified, the boundaries are so extremely irregular, that it will be necessary to notify several small additions solely in order to obtain straight boundaries.

4. The statement showing the progress of settlement work submitted to the Board on the 9th January last, No. 1286, shows the amount of settlement work still to be done in connection with blocks selected or notified *before* the beginning of the official year. In addition to this work there are the village forests (500 in number) still to be notified and settled besides several fresh selections, the exact number of which cannot be given at present.

5. Mr. Cobb, as Head Assistant Collector and Magistrate as well as District Munsif, Gúdalur, has his own work to attend to, and in consequence of there being no magistrate of a higher grade than third class in his division, is frequently summoned away to dispose of magisterial cases. The result is that forest settlement work, as at present carried on, necessarily interferes, to a serious extent, not only with Mr. Cobb's legitimate work, but also with the duties of the District Forest-officer.

6. Three of the reserves remaining to be settled, viz., Segur, Melúr and Pillur slopes are of very large area and are situated in localities both difficult of access and highly malarious. Inspection by the Forest Settlement-officer should take place only in the non-feverish season just commencing, and, if it is to be of any value should be continuous and not subject to constant interruptions.

7. Under these circumstances, I request that Mr. Cobb, who has considerable knowledge of the district, may be placed on special duty for at least six months in order that he may complete the work now pending as rapidly as possible.

Endorsement by the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, dated 22nd June 1891, No. 792.

Submitted with the Conservator's earnest recommendations that effect may be given to the Collector's request that Mr. Cobb may be placed on special duty at an early date for forest settlement work to which it is impossible he can do justice along with his other numerous duties.

2. The frequent changes in plans involved by his magisterial work seriously interferes with the District Forest-officer's ordinary duties and inspections, and it would be impossible for Mr. Cobb to comply with the instructions regarding settlement contained in Board's Proceedings, No. 168, dated 20th April, unless he is relieved of his other work.

3. I have already represented that forest settlement on the Nilgiris is unfortunately by no means so complete as we had been led to suppose. A great deal of new work has to be undertaken and old work rectified which will drag on for years unless a special Forest Settlement-officer is appointed.

4. From what I have seen and heard Mr. Cobb takes great interest in and trouble over the work, doing it thoroughly well, and I wish his services could be made available to settle North Coimbatore also.

5. It would indeed be true economy to employ half a dozen such officers to push on the forest settlement work district by district if only to admit of the Survey of India Party completing the work in one district before going on to another.

Resolution—dated 27th July 1891, Mis. No. 620, Forest.

Submitted for the orders of Government.

2. The statement referred to in paragraph 4 of the Collector's letter is enclosed for the information of Government (and return). It shows that, besides the 500 village forests still to be notified and settled, there are about 90 square miles of forest to be dealt with by the Forest Settlement-officer, much of which is in large blocks and in localities where work can only be safely carried on during the non-feverish season. There are also additional sholas to be taken up, badly drawn boundaries to be rectified and fresh selections to be made, as mentioned in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Collector's letter.

3. It is evident that if this work is to be left in the hands of the Head Assistant Collector for the time being, in addition to his other duties, it must be years—perhaps many years—before it can be completed; and that in the meantime the forest settlement work will interfere with the proper performance of the regular duties of the Head Assistant Collector, while the necessity of constant attendance on the Settlement-officer will prevent the District Forest-officer from devoting adequate attention to the protection and development of the forests. A continuance of the present system, while nominally economical, will therefore, in all probability, involve, in the long run, a considerable sacrifice of revenue.

4. The Board, therefore, strongly supports the Collector's and Conservator's recommendations that Mr. Cobb, who knows the localities and is acquainted with the work, shall be placed on special duty for such period as may be necessary for the completion of the work of forest settlement in the Nilgiri district. The Collector and Conservator recommend his deputation to this duty for six months, and this might be allowed to begin with, though, the Board much doubts, whether six months will suffice to complete the work.

5. The early orders of Government are requested, so that full advantage may be taken of the non-feverish season.

6. As regards the Conservator's suggestion, that from the Nilgiris Mr. Cobb should proceed to take up the forest settlement of North Coimbatore, the Board begs to state that it has under consideration measures for expediting forest settlement not only in North Coimbatore, but also in other districts which will be shortly taken

up by the Survey of India Department, and hopes to be able to report thereon at an early date.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) W. S. MEYER,
for Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with a statement, in original, to be returned.
,, ,. Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle.
,, ,. Collector of Nilgiris.

READ—also the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), dated 30th July 1891, Forest No. 635, Mis.:—

THE HON. H. W. BLISS.

Read—the following letter from the Conservator of Forests, Northern Circle, dated 15th July 1891, No. 1021:—

I have the honour to report that, when directed through the Collector of the Godáviri district, to assume acting charge of the office of Conservator of Forests, Northern Circle, I handed over the District Forest office to the Treasury Deputy Collector, Mr. Koralla Subbarayadu, who held similar charge during six weeks after Mr. Lushington's departure prior to my arrival and again for six weeks while I was absent on leave in May and June. It is now for consideration what arrangements are to be made to fill the post.

2. On Mr. Battie's transfer to Ganjam, Mr. Lushington was posted as District Forest-officer, Godáviri, in December 1890, and if, as may be anticipated, he returns from his leave on its expiry in January 1892, he would rejoin at Cocanada so far as present arrangements are concerned. It therefore remains to decide upon filling it for the ensuing half-year. Mr. Homfray's bad health has forced him to extend his leave, otherwise on his return in August he would, I think, have been a fitting officer for the post.

3. Mr. McIntosh is the only gazetted officer in the circle not holding charge of a district, but he only came to the country in January, and I could not recommend his employment yet in any district charge, for we are now finding out how fatal it is to good administration to appoint men to districts before they gain administrative experience.

4. Among the senior non-gazetted officers, two Sub-Assistant Conservators are in charge of minor districts, a third Sub-Assistant Conservator, Mr. Gaudoin, is a Sub-divisional Officer in Cuddapah where his services are required by Mr. Lodge, and a fourth, Mr. Hearsey, is already in Godáviri district, but I cannot recommend his being put in charge of the district, for he is young and lacks the experience necessary to control what is really one of the most important forest districts of the circle. He is, besides, in very ill-health, and, because also of urgent family reasons, has applied for leave for three months.

5. Any arrangement by which an upper subordinate officer would be appointed to act as District Forest-officer, Godáviri, would result in having one non-gazetted officer subordinate to another, possibly his junior, unless a gazetted officer were transferred to Godáviri from another district and his place taken by an upper subordinate.

6. The Godáviri district forest charge includes the Bhadrachalam sub-division which has been Mr. Hearsey's appointment. During the ensuing three months, timber floating will be at a standstill and the sub-divisional work in consequence very slight; the district charge will also be lighter than at other times of the year, but with the opening of the season in November a Sub-divisional Officer will again become a necessity and the District Forest-officer will require the whole time of an experienced officer until Mr. Lushington joins on 1st February.

7. Without interfering materially with the present organization and arrangements in several districts, which is to be deprecated in the interest of forest settlement, I can, I regret to say, propose nothing for filling up the vacancy.

Resolution—dated 30th July 1891, Forest No. 635, Mis.

Submitted for the orders of Government.

2. There is no District Forest-officer at present in the Godávári district, the forest charge of which is temporarily held by the Treasury Deputy Collector. Mr. Hooper, lately District Forest-officer, is now acting as Conservator, and Mr. A. Lushington, the proper District Forest-officer, is on leave. He returns in January 1892, so that for some six months an Acting District Forest-officer must be found to take charge of the district under the Collector.

3. The Acting Conservator, however, can suggest no one in the department, and the Board regrets that it is also unable to do so. The only unattached officer of the superior grades is Mr. McIntosh, but he has only been in the country for six months, and apart from his complete inexperience and want of preparation for such an important charge as that of Godávári, it is, as the Acting Conservator points out, most inadvisable, from the point of view of the future, that young assistants should be forced too soon into independent charges and should lose thereby the opportunity of being grounded and trained under the eye of an experienced senior.

4. Nor is there any superior officer who will become available before next January on returning from leave. Mr. Homfray will probably continue his sick leave. Mr. P. Lushington sets free Mr. Ward only. Mr. Douglas relieves Mr. Stanbrough, and the latter relieves Mr. Wontersz in South Arcot. Messrs. Sweet and Somersmith will probably not return in time, and Messrs. Porter and Brasier set free Mr. Moss and Mr. Thornton, the former wanted where he is and the latter too young for Godávári.

5. Among Sub-Assistant Conservators, Mr. Hearsey is in the district, in charge of the Bhadráhalam sub-division, but both the Collector and Conservator agree that he is not fitted to so heavy a charge as that of the whole district, and Mr. Gaudoin in Cuddapah cannot be spared by Mr. Lodge, who needs all the assistance he can be spared.

6. The Board can only suggest that Government should depute a junior civilian to the work for the six months. Such an officer of the grade of Acting Head Assistant Collector could probably be spared, and under article 98 of the Civil Service Regulations, it appears open to Government to grant him a salary equal to that which he would get in the regular line, so that he would not lose pay by the duty assigned to him. The experience to such an officer would be an excellent training, and, as a civilian, he would carry a weight and influence which a Deputy Collector, the only other alternative, would be wanting in.

7. Godávári is such an important district, from the forest point of view, that the Board thinks that it should not be left for six months in the charge of the Treasury Deputy Collector, as it is now.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) W. S. MEYER,
for Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to the Conservator of Forests, Northern Circle.

ORDER—dated 10th August 1891, No. 731, Revenue.

Forest, No. 174.

In the first of the papers read above, the Board brings to notice the unsatisfactory progress, made during recent years, in the work of forest settlement on the Nilgiris, and recommends that Mr. Cobb, the

present Head Assistant Collector, who is now Forest Settlement-officer in addition to his other duties, should be put upon special duty to complete the settlement. In G.O., No. 208, dated 19th March 1890, proposals for reserving eighteen fresh blocks of forest in this district were accepted, and it was declared that, with these additions, the process of forest reservation on the Nilgiri plateau would be completed: a small extension was contemplated for the South-East Wynaad. Since the issue of this order it has been decided to abandon the idea of village forests, and the classification of the 8,140 acres already taken up for this purpose must, therefore, be revised, these blocks being either notified under section 4 of the Act, or thrown out of reservation altogether. This will involve additions to the work of settlement, but the information now furnished shows that the work already done is of so unsatisfactory a nature that considerable labour will have to be expended in putting it into proper shape, and the Board fears that, unless some special agency is employed, several years will elapse before forest settlement on the Nilgiris is completed.

2. The Government agrees with the Board in considering that the results of the forest settlement on the Nilgiris are not satisfactory, but the full strength of the covenanted service is at present required for the purposes of the general administration, and no covenanted officer can, therefore, be spared for this special duty. His Excellency in Council, however, desires to be furnished with fuller information in regard to the causes which have resulted in such tardy progress being made with the settlement in the past, and the Board should, moreover, report who is responsible for the bad work said to have been turned out. In the meanwhile, the present Forest Settlement-officer must push on with the work as speedily as possible, and the Government looks to the Collector to see that the present season is utilized to the utmost.

3. In the second paper read above, the Board suggests the deputation of a junior civilian for the forest charge of the Godávári district on the ground that a competent forest officer is not at present available for this duty. It has already been pointed out that no covenanted civilian can be spared for a special appointment of this nature, and His Excellency in Council accordingly regrets that it is impossible to comply with the Board's suggestion. It is, however, observed that the Acting Conservator, in his letter forwarded with the Board's Proceedings in question, admits that the charge of this district is lighter at present than at other times of the year. Moreover, Mr. Hearsey, the Sub-Assistant on the spot, is stated not to possess the requisite experience, and has applied for leave on the ground of ill-health and urgent private affairs. The Government, therefore, resolves to direct that the Treasury Deputy Collector be put in charge of the District Forest office until some more suitable arrangement can be made. It is hoped that Mr. Popert, the new Conservator, will join his appointment in October next and this will strengthen the controlling staff of the department. Further proposals should then be made for filling up Mr. A. W. Lushington's vacancy in the Godávári district.

(True Extract.)


Secretary to Government.

To the Commissioners of Land Revenue.
" the Public Department.

Copy to the Collector of Nilgiris.

Exd. S. J. Pereira.

50 Copies.

Gobt. of {1891} Madras.
REVENUE.

C.S.
Mis

Order 5th Sept 91 No 760

Recorded

C.S.
4.9.91

8
Sept

Issued.

Recd. 2/9

Encl.

G.O., 10th August 1891, No. 731.

AUGUST.

Forest Settlement.

Agreeing with the Board of Revenue in considering that the results of the — on the Nilgiris are not satisfactory, but stating that no covenanted officer can be spared for the work, and directing that the Treasury Deputy Collector be put in charge of the District Forest office, Godavari district, until some more suitable arrangements can be made.

BACK PAPER, No.

of 18

FURTHER PAPER, No.

709

of 18

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READ AGAIN ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, DATED
18 , No. , MISCELLANEOUS.

ENCLOSURES.

CURRENT No.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

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