M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	1261	Press / Mis.
269-270		
Dated	27 — 6 —	1861.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 27th June 1861.

No. 269. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 30th May 1861, No. 2,743:—

Read letter from the Acting Collector of North Arcot, dated May 3rd 1861, No. 83.

(In Cons. 8th May 1861, No. 2,843.)

In Cons. 25th April 1861, No. 2,569.

1. Resolved that the above letter be submitted to Government, with reference to their Order, dated April 24th 1861, No. 927.

2. The Acting Collector, from information obtained on the spot, reports that the Red Sanders-wood of the North Arcot forests is not sufficiently valuable as an article of trade to bear the proposed seignorage of Rupees six per bandy load. He is, therefore, averse to the measure, as he considers that such an impost would have the effect of entirely putting an end to the trade, and so depriving of their means of subsistence, a large portion of what he terms "the dangerous "classes" of society, who are now engaged in procuring the article for the native merchants from whom they receive advances.

3. The Board observe that in paragraph 2 of the Government Order under reply by Mr. Robinson, he is requested to give his opinion as to whether it is advisable to place the jungles of his District, which are contiguous to the Cuddapah border, under the charge of the Assistant Conservator of Forests, a course which would not of necessity involve an increase in the rate of seignorage, and in paragraph 12 he states that he has no objection to such an arrangement, but gives no opinion as to whether it is necessary, confining himself chiefly to the question of seignorage.

4. The Acting Conservator of Forests states that it is as much a question of conservation as of seignorage, and the Board concur with him, as they think it of considerable importance that what appears to be a valuable article of trade, should not be permitted to be recklessly exhausted. They are, therefore, in favor of the superintendence of these jungles being given to Mr. Morrison, as proposed in Captain Morgan's letter to Government, dated April 9th 1861, No. 436, but the rate of seignorage to be levied should not, they think, be decided on till information is obtained why the value ascribed to Red Sanders-wood in Cuddapah is so much in excess of that in North Arcot.

Vide from Government, dated 24th April 1861, No. 927, R. D.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL, *Sub-Secretary.*

No. 270. ORDER THEREON, 27th June 1861, No. 1,261.

The Government desire that the jungles of the District of North Arcot, contiguous to the Cuddapah border, be placed under the charge of the Conservator of Forests, who will make further inquiries on the subject of the seignorage to be levied on the Red Sanders-wood, and fix the rate in communication with the Board of Revenue.

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

In Cons. 8th May 1861, No. 2,843.

From J. D. ROBINSON, Esq., Acting Collector of NORTH ARCOT,
dated Chittoor, 3rd May 1861, No. 83.

The Proceedings of Government noted in the margin reached me whilst encamped in the neighbourhood of the very jungles of the conservancy of which there is therein question; and I had thus an opportunity of making immediate inquiry in reference to the points connected with the growth, trade and protection of the Red Sanders-wood, on which my opinion has been called for.

9th April 1861, No. 436, communicated in Board's Proceedings, dated 26th idem, No. 2,181.

2. The *Pterocarpus Satalinus* is to be met with among the mountain gorges and jungle tracts lying north and south of the Tirumale or sacred Tirupati range. There is no large sized wood of this kind in the forests on this side of the border, but saplings and half-grown trees are, I am informed, still tolerably plentiful.

3. From what I could gather, it would appear that upwards of 20 years ago, a sudden demand for this dye-wood arose in the European markets when a very active exportation took place from these and other jungles where the tree grew. The demand, however, appears to have been short-lived, and with it died out for a time the local trade, leaving considerable quantities of the wood ready cut and prepared for exportation to the sea board.

4. Within the last five or six years, the article has again come into request; but the first drain on the more accessible forests appears to have exhausted all the full sized wood, and the trade in the case of the particular forests of which I am now speaking, has been principally confined to clearing out the dead logs of former cuttings, and when these too failed the old stumps and roots have been hewn out piece-meal and sent to the market.

5. The trade seems to be in the hands of one or two native merchants of Madras who have their agents on the spot, and make advances on account. These local agents pay on each cart-load of from 42 to 45 maunds delivered at their village depôt, Rupees 3 for cutting, and Rupee 1 for carriage, and charge their employees eight Annas commission on the same quantity. Thus the cost per bandy-load including seignorage Rupee one, amounts to Rupees 5-8-0 before it even leaves the local depôt, to which if we add as much more (a moderate estimate) for its transport thence by cart and rail, it can rarely be delivered at Madras under Rupees 12 the load.

6. The highest market value, I have heard named for this quantity is Rupees 16; but my local informants, men who once thought of engaging in the trade themselves, tell me that the net profits on a cart-load of the article, such as found in our jungles, will rarely be more than from Rupee 1 to Rupees 2, and in proof that the trade cannot pay a heavier tax than is now levied, assert that since seignorage was imposed, transactions have almost ceased.

7. I cannot account for the different state of matters over the border otherwise than by supposing that full grown trees are still procurable in the Kadapa forests, and that the logs which can pay so heavy a seignorage as Rupees 6 are not exported as dye-wood, but for the carved cornice work and pillarets with which the wealthier class of natives ornament their dwellings.

8. Be this as it may, it would certainly appear from the foregoing remarks that the article found in these parts could not be taxed more heavily than it now is, without annihilating the trade and depriving a considerable body of work people thereon dependent of the means of subsistence; and it is on this latter consideration that I most strongly deprecate a heavier rate of seignorage. In fact the question as it concerns this district involves so small an amount of revenue, that it should be considered rather on its moral, than its financial bearings.

9. Now the very class which earns a livelihood in this way comprises the most dangerous element of our more out-lying rural population. Sturdy Pariahs from the adjoining hamlets,

Yenadis, a forest tribe who wander about with their families in quest of wild honey and wax, and such like out-siders of society, comprise the material of these working parties, and acquire from their very habits of life, lawless and predatory tastes, which take criminal activity according as the means of subsistence are easy or difficult.

10. If travellers' tales may be credited, crime of the more violent type was never more rife than it now is on the other side of the border; and the question naturally enough suggests itself whether too rigid a system of conservancy may not have something to say to this state of things.

11. With us happily gang and highway robbery is now, even in the wilder and less accessible parts of the district, of comparatively rare occurrence; but I should be wanting in my duty as Magistrate, if I did not record my earnest protest against any measure which tended to stimulate crime by withdrawing the means of subsistence from any section, however small, of the dangerous classes.

12. I have not the smallest objection to the officers of the Forest Department extending their control and supervision to the jungles on this side of the border; all that I do deprecate is that our rates of seignorage should be assimilated to those of a district, where the quality and size of the timber may possibly bear a heavier taxation, without pressing too hardly on the poorer classes, who have been accustomed to look to it for their daily bread.

13. If the Board will permit things to remain as they are, I shall be prepared on the results of a year's trial to give a more confident opinion than I now can, as to how far the system can be improved and extended with reference alike to moral and financial considerations.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

1861 Aug. 12

Enclosure in Proceedings of the Board of Revenue & Secretary to Government dated 30th May 1861 No. 2743

Collr. North Arcot to the Collector of South Arcot to the Board of Revenue dated 3rd May 1861 No. 83 regarding the price of Red Sanders Wood.

Rd. 13 Sept. 1861

Rep. 20 Sept. 1861

No. 2,743.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 30th May 1861.

Read letter from the Acting Collector of North Arcot, dated May 3rd 1861, No. 83.

(In Cons. 8th May 1861, No. 2,843.)

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1. Resolved that the above letter be submitted to Government, with reference to their Order dated April 24th 1861, No. 927.

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3. The Board observe that in paragraph 2 of the Government Order under reply by Mr. Robinson, he is requested to give his opinion as to whether it is advisable to place the jungles of his District, which are contiguous to the Cuddapah border, under the charge of the Assistant Conservator of Forests, a course which would not of necessity involve an increase in the rate of seignorage, and in paragraph 12 he states that he has no objection to such an arrangement, but gives no opinion as to whether it is necessary, confining himself chiefly to the question of seignorage.

4. The Acting Conservator of Forests states that it is as much a question of conservation as of seignorage, and the Board concur with him, as they think it of considerable importance that what appears to be a valuable article of trade, should not be permitted to be recklessly exhausted. They are, therefore, in favor of the superintendence of these jungles being given to Mr. Morrison, as proposed in Captain Morgan's letter to Government, dated April 9th 1861, No. 436, but the rate of seignorage to be levied should not, they think, be decided on till information is obtained why the value ascribed to Red Sanders-wood in Cuddapah is so much in excess of that in North Arcot.

Vide from Government, dated 24th April 1861, No. 927, R. D.

(A true Extract.)

S. Baly

Sub-Secretary.

To J. D. Sim, Esq., Secretary to Government, R. D.

Copy to J. D. Robinson, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot.
" Captain H. R. Morgan, Acting Conservator of Forests.

Exd. J. Wright.

R- 24th April/61 Nos 413-
411

R- 16th April/61 Nos 241-242

Revenue 1861 Department
Proc: of Govt for June

No. 1383.

PROCEEDINGS of the BOARD of REVENUE.
Dated 30*th May* 1861.
Despatched. 11 June
Received. 12th

Encl: 1 Copy
Ro of Do 24th July/61
Ct No 1850 in Ro 23 Aug 1861

No. 2,743.

Submitting with reference to Government order 24th April 1861, a letter from the Collector of North Arcot, and recommending that the superintendence of the Red Sanders wood forest be given to Mr Morison as proposed by Captain Morgan.

Withdrawn order

From the 1st Asst Conservator of Forests
27 February/62 C No 853 in 28/3/62
Ro of Board of Revenue 1st/3/62
C No 2583 in Ro
No 1261. 27th June

No 269 & 270.

C-18 June 824

No 1261

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in communication with the Boa
of Revenue.

Sd/ H. Geo
27th June 1861

JRS

To Collrs & Boards of Revenue Circ 228
& " Conservators of Forests &c &c