M.R.O. 14—13,000—27-9-24.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1309 Press ~~Mis.~~

316-317

Dated 16-7- ~~19~~ 1868

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 16th July 1863.

No. 316. Read the following letter from H. A. BRETT, Esq., Member of the Board of Revenue, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 7th July 1863:—

SIR,

1. With reference to paragraph 12 of the Proceedings of the Madras Government, dated 1st May 1862, No. 933, I beg to forward a Memorandum expressing my opinion on the subject referred to.

2. I regret that this paper was not submitted at an earlier date.

MEMORANDUM.

1. The Collector of Salem has already submitted for the information of Government an abstract Statement, showing the receipts and charges on account of the Salem forests for the last three years prior to the organization of the Conservancy Department, and for each of the subsequent years.

2. The Collector of Salem explained that, prior to 1858-59, when the District was placed under the Conservancy Department, no tax was levied on timber in the Salem District, except in one Talook, viz., Denkincottah. (This Talook comprises a considerable extent of table land on the same level as Mysore, with extensive hills and forests sloping down to the lower table land of the Baramahl, which is from 1,000 to 1,400 feet above the level of the sea.)

3. In the Denkincottah Talook, the right to levy a tax on timber, including bamboos, and a tax on certain forest products, as honey, wax, and bark or roots used as dyes, was formerly farmed out at an annual rent of about 1,700 Rupees. From the year 1854 till when the Conservancy Department took charge of the Denkincottah forests,* the Collector was permitted to keep forests partially under his own management, and was furnished with a small Establishment for that purpose. That is to say, the Collector levied the tax on timber and bamboos, while the farming out of the other products referred to above was continued.

* The rest of the District was taken over in 1858.

4. The right to cut Sandal-wood in the Denkincottah forests was also farmed out in former years, but in 1854 this farm was discontinued, for, by that time the supply of trees fit to cut was exhausted. When, therefore, the Conservancy Department assumed charge of the Denkincottah forests, no Sandal-wood had been cut for some years.

5. The Conservator's report for 1861-62 shows that Sandal-wood to the estimated value of 20,000 Rupees has since been felled. The average annual revenue from the Sandal-wood farm for the last five years before the farm was given up was Rupees 1,694.

6. The actual revenue receipts and charges on account of timber and bamboos for the four years under which the tax on these items was paid direct to the Collector, are shown in a Statement annexed to this Memorandum. The same Statement also shows at what annual rent the other products of these forests, viz., wax, honey and dyes were farmed out during the same period. The average annual receipts in the latter case was Rupees 1,020. In the former the average annual receipts up to 1857 amounted to Rupees 633. Subsequently the receipts under this head rose considerably, but this was owing only to the fact that timber was felled in the Denkincottah forests between the years 1858 and 1859 for supplying the Railway Company with sleepers.

7. It will be seen from the above particulars to what extent a profit was derived from the Denkincottah forests, before the present Conservancy arrangements were adopted. The receipts from timber and bamboos, the produce of these forests, left comparatively but a small net profit, but to take this fact as evidence that the Collector's management was bad or ineffective would not be just, for it is only within the last few years that the demand for timber, and with it the price of timber, has so much increased. The chief object for which the Collector was allowed in 1854 to levy the timber tax in Denkincottah, and to entertain an Establishment for the purpose, was to collect the tax on ordinary timber felled in the Denkincottah forests, and

specially to guard the young growth of Sandal-wood. No attempt was made to define what trees (ordinary timber) were fit for felling and what not.

8. Major Morgan, in his report for 1861-62, states that the profit for that year was Rupees 42,947. This profit must be composed chiefly, if not entirely, of sums paid for licenses to cut timber, firewood or bamboos. It does not, I believe, include the price of any wood felled by the Department itself, nor has much been done as yet by the Department to restrict the felling of timber to trees that are really fit to be felled. If the Salem forests are to be effectively conserved, the Department must give up the license system, except perhaps for firewood and bamboos, and must fell trees under their own superintendence. If this system is not to be given up, the mere work of granting licenses might certainly be performed without difficulty by the Revenue Department, but the license system is, in fact, inconsistent with proper conservancy, and is open to the same kind of objection as the old farming system, under which the Sandal-wood in the Denkincottah forests was swept away. I would not, therefore, recommend that the management of the Salem forests should be transferred to the Revenue Department, merely on the ground that license might be issued with some saving of Establishment, by transferring that kind of work to the Collector.

9. The Conservator appears to think that before long he may be able to discontinue the issue of licenses, and to sell wood from his own depôts, in the same way as he is now actually doing in the case of Sandal-wood. If this latter practice can be adopted, it would, I think, be preferable to leave the management of the forests under a separate Department than to place it under the Collector.

10. The chief reasons for this conclusion are, first, that such an Officer as the Conservator rests must with his experience be better qualified, speaking generally, than a Collector to age the Conservancy Establishment; and secondly, that our Subordinate Revenue Officers d their Establishments would not possibly superintend a proper system of conservancy *thin the forests themselves*, in addition to their proper revenue duties. At the most they could lect revenue under a license system, but that system is useless for conservancy so long as ny one taking out license either has expres permission, or has the power, to cut forest trees at will. In either case, whether the Conservator or the Collector should have the general superintendence, a separate local Establishment must be kept up at the same cost as at present, if the main objects of conservancy are to be maintained.

11. I would also remark with regard to what are called, in a general way, forest products, that honey and wax were formerly farmed out over the whole District. The whole revenue from this source never exceeded 1,000 Rupees, nor did any single farm of this kind ever bring in a higher rent than Rupees 150, excepting the Denkincottah farm, which included, as before explained, different barks and roots used as dyes. The Conservator of Forests thinks it expedient that these products should in future be collected by the Conservancy Department. It is feared that persons may enter the forests to fell timber under the pretext that they are collecting honey and so on. It may, therefore, be necessary, in the case of any forest or jungle actually under conservancy, to leave these products in the hands of the Department, but in every other case a Government monopoly in such products, while it yields an insignificant amount of revenue, is open to this special objection, that it confers on contractors an objectionable extent of power over the very poor and very ignorant people whose habits induce them to seek a scanty livelihood by collecting these things. It seems also unadvisable to tax such substances as dyes when used merely for native manufactures. The chief dye substances collected in the Denkincottah forests are Puply Chuckay, Cupalapody and Muddi Chuckay. The first two are noticed in the report of the Juries of the Madras Exhibition of 1855, page 46, Nos. 12 and 13. The last in the native name for bark of Citrifolia.

(Signed) H. A. BRETT,
Late Collector of Salem.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
16*th July* 1863.

Beriz of the Giddagavel Farm during the ten years prior to the year in which it was placed under the Collector's management			Revenue Receipts and charges on account of Timber and Bamboos for the four years during which the tax on these items was paid direct to the Collector.			Annual rent of Honey, Wax, and Dyes from Fasli 1264 to 1270 during which these items were separately rented out.	
Faslis.		Amount of the Rent.	Faslis.	Receipts.	Charges.	Faslis.	Amount of the Rent.
1		2	1	2	3	1	2
		Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.
1	1254 ...	1,750 0 0	1264 ...	1,043 9 0	217 7 9	1264 ...	1,458 9 0
2	1255 ...	1,761 0 0	1265 ...	1,434 2 4	293 9 4	1265 ...	1,928 5 4
3	1256 ...	1,400 0 0	1266 ...	577 10 8	351 0 0	1266 ...	1,033 14 0
4	1257 ...	1,250 0 0	1267 ...	575 0 8	324 0 0	1267 ...	1,037 3 8
5	1258 ...	1,660 0 0	1268 ...	1,568 13 8	297 8 0	1268 ...	475 0 0
6	1259 ..	1,970 0 0	1269 ...	1,383 13 4	296 8 0	1269 ...	810 0 0
7	1260 ...	1,525 0 0	First half...			...	
8	1261 ...	1,860 0 0	of 1270* ...	712 0 8	189 8 0	1270 ...	400 0 0
9	1262 ...	2,150 0 0					
10	1263 ...	1,750 0 0	Total... ...	7,295 2 4	1,969 9 1	Total... ...	7,143 0 0
	Total.....	17,076 0 0	Average. ...	1,042 0 0	281 0 0	Average. ...	1,020 0 0
	Average...	1,707 0 0					

* In January of Fasli 1270 the Denkinkottah forests were made over to the Conservancy Department.

(Signed) H. A. BRETT,
Late Collector of Salem

No. 317. ORDER THEREON, 16th July 1863, No. 1,309.

Communicated to the Acting Conservator of Forests for his remarks. Captain Beddome will state whether it would be advantageous to work the forests of Salem in the same manner as the Annamallays are worked, and whether at least the Department cannot mark the trees to be cut under licenses.

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

N. 1509.

Com.d of the Asst Conservator
of Forests for his remarks.
Capt Reed down mills
State whether it would be
advisable Expedient to work the
Forests of Salem in the same
Manner as the Kennamelly
JP are worked — and whether
at least the Dept. Cannot
Mark the trees to be cut
under Licences.

Asst-Lt. George
16th July 63. S. I. N.S

4 Copies To the Conservy Forests Deputy
14 do — Bs of Revs

Pro: 1st May/62 No 1 & 3.

Rev: Pro: of Gov't 1863 Depart. for July/63

No. 1630. 8 July/63

From,

The Members of the Board of Revenue

To, The Secretary to Government Rev. Dept.

Dated 7 / Recd. 7 / Read. 10 } July 1863.

E-2.

No.

Forwarding a Memo: expressing his opinion on the subject of the receipts and charges on account of the Salem Forests for the last 3 years prior to the organization of the conservancy Department.

No. 1309-16 July With one Order

From The Asst. Conr. of Forests Salem 7th July/63. Co. 1791

No 316 & 317.

Rd 11th July/63