

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 922

Press
Mis.

332-335

Dated

28.8.1868

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28th May 1863.*

No. 334. Read the following letter from CHARLES SANDERSON, Esq., Coonoor, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Madras, dated Coonoor, 20th May 1863:—

SIR,

1. I came from England in October last with a view to cultivate fibres in this Presidency, and having procured, personally, several hundred plants of the Assam Nettle from Rungpore, I introduced some of the recently exhibited and most improved scutching machinery into this country. But I have failed as yet in obtaining suitable land on these Hills, partly owing to press of business up here, and partly to the competition with Natives at the public auction.

2. I applied in January last for 100 Acres of grass land (about a mile from Coonoor) in which were interspersed a few Acres of Shola, my intention being to leave as much timber standing as possible for shading the Neilgherry Nettle. It appears, however, that the scarcity of firewood on these Hills induces the Natives to bid for the bits of Shola, and thus in a few years the upper plateau will be denuded of timber.

3. For fibres I want a large surface of grass land at a cheap rate; for only a moderate profit can be derived from an Acre of fibre, as compared with Coffee.

4. The land put up to auction yesterday fetched Rupees 32 per Acre. There are no bandy roads near it, and much of it is unproductive soil.

5. Considering the importance of the subject of fibre cultivation in India, and the probability of much waste land being taken up for that purpose, I suggest that the pioneers of this branch of agriculture should have aid from Government in the way of grants of land, either at a nominal rental or absolute gift.

6. I shall feel obliged, therefore, if you can get me a grant of 100 Acres of waste grass land on easy terms, say within 3 miles of Coonoor, I will undertake to leave all large trees standing, and if the fibres prove too expensive to cultivate, I would restore the land to Government. I am now renting 16 Acres to go on with and to catch the sowing season, and I find that Rupees 70 per Acre is the cost of preparing and sowing with Nettle seed, so that land granted for fibre growing would be improved when handed back to Government.

7. Mr. Grant, the Collector, has facilitated in every way my efforts to commence operations on these Hills, and I am indebted to that gentleman for getting my land put up by auction within four months of the application, but the price was altogether beyond the fibre profits, which I fear must be small for some years, or at least until the Neilgherry Nettle is known in the English Market.

No. 335. ORDER THEREON, 28th May 1863, No. 922.

1. The Neilgherry Nettle is indigenous to the Hills and grows wild in great profusion in many parts of them, the only question is whether it will prove remunerative if *cultivated*; or in other words, repay the cost of culture as well as that of preparation, &c. This question, however, will be no nearer a practical solution than it now is, if Government provide land for the experimental cultivation of the plant on lower terms than are paid under ordinary circumstances. However profitable the cultivation might be to Mr. Sanderson on such conditions, no other settler would have any assurance therefrom that it would be profitable when the proper value of the land cultivated with it had to be paid. It certainly would not be sound policy for Government to grant land on easier terms for the Nettle than for any other product, and the general public might complain with reason of land fetching at open auction as much as Rupees 30 per Acre being granted at a nominal price.

2. On the other hand, Mr. Sanderson may fairly expect that he may, in such an experiment, be saved some of the risks incident to it; and it seems to the Government that the following would be an equitable arrangement. Mr. Sanderson, in communication with the Collector, to select a hundred Acres of Government land such as was lately sold, not reserved for public reasons nor already applied for by others, and to hold it on payment of the annual assessment* for five years, at the end of which period he will be allowed the option of purchasing it on paying the average price which such land fetches; the price in order to avoid future

* 2 Rupees per Acre for Shola land.
1 Rupee " " " " Grass land.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28th May 1863.*

disputes being now settled, and being independent of the annual assessment which will continue payable as usual under the Waste Land Rules. Mr. Sanderson may of course throw up the land either at the end of the five years or previously if his experiment proves unsuccessful. By this arrangement Mr. Sanderson will be saved the risk of sinking capital in land until he sees his way more clearly. Of course if he finds that the culture of the Nettle will not pay unless he is provided with land at a lower price than others are willing to pay and are actually paying for it, the question will be definitively settled, for Government cannot as a matter of policy or in justice to the public give lands on favorable terms to encourage the culture of products which can only be cultivated on such terms.

3. The Government presume that though the land selected by Mr. Sanderson and recently sold fetched so much as Rupees 32 per Acre besides the annual assessment, there must be plenty of land in the neighbourhood of Coonoor which would not fetch so high a price and would be well suited to the culture of the Nettle.

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

*to experience & cultivate I would
rester the land to Government.
I am now renting 16 acres to go
on with and to catch the sowing
season, and I find that Rs 70
per acre is the cost of preparing
and sowing with nettle seed. So that
land granted for fibre growing, would
be improved when handed back to
Government.*

*Mr. Grant, the Collector has
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to commence operations on these hills
and I am indebted to that gentleman
for getting my land put up by auction
within four months of the application
but the price was altogether beyond the
fibre profits, which I fear must
be small for some years, or at least
until the Neilgherry nettle is known
in the English Market.*

I am Sir

*Yours very obediently
Charles Sanderson*

in great profusion



JO

For Baker

up forwarded with care
for early report.

14

I think it would be well to
 examine Mr. S. who I am told
 is both a more & better man - & the
 same who has been lately

We may hear of this
case here & there
causing a strike
which tells us in
fact that the
laboring class is
in a position

and the fact that the legs of the plant are not 100% covered with 20 new, etc.

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ever profitable the cul-
tivation may be
to Mr. Sanderson
on such conditions,
no other letter would
have any assurance
therefrom that it
would be profitable
~~without~~ when the
proper value of
the land culti-
vated with it had
been paid. It cer-
tainly would not
be sound policy
for Govt to purchase
land on easier
terms for the settler
than for any other
product and the
prevalence of the right
complain with the
loss of land fetch-
ing open auction as
much as \$30 per
acre being wanted.

at a nominal² price.
~~for~~
On the other hand
Mr. Sanderson may
fairly expect that
he may, in such an
experiment, be
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risks incident to
it - and it seems
to the Govt that the
following would be
an equitable ar-
rangement - Mr.
Sanderson in com-
munication with
the Col. to select
a hundred acres
of ^{Govt} land, ^{such} as
has lately sold, not
reserved for public
waters nor already
applied for by others,
and to hold it
on payment of the

annual assess-
ment for 5 years -
at the end of which
period he will be
allured the option
of purchasing it
on paying the average
price which such
land fetches - the
price in order to
avoid future dis-
putes being now
settled - and being
independent of
the annual assess-
ment which will
continue payable
as usual under
the Waste Land Rules.
Mr Sanderson may
of course throw up
the land either at
the end of the 5
years or previously
if his experiment
proves unsuccessful.
- But - By this ar-

2 Rs per acre for 5 days
1 Rs - - - per day

2/ 2 and per cent Mr
Sanderson will be
saved the risk of
sinking capital
in land until he
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clearly. Of course
if he finds that the
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The fact presume
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derson and recently
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acre the price, the
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there must be plenty
of land in the
neighbourhood of
Coimbatore which would
not fetch so high
a price and yet
would be equally
well suited to
the culture of the
Kettle -

[Signature]

14 Chapin to the B of Revs. 29th
in Collr of Coimbatore 128th
1st Mr C. Sanderson Esq

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[Faint handwritten notes and signatures at the bottom of the page]

Revenue 1863 Deptt.
Pro: of Govt for May

N^o 922.

Pro: of the Madras Govt.
D^y 28th May 1863.

From Charles Sanderson Esq.
C^o N^o 305 of 1864 on Pro 17 Feb 61,
N^o 722
From the Collyer of Comptrolr
D^y 5 April 1861 C^o N^o 909 in Pro.
21st April 61 C^o N^o 188
From the Collyer of Comptrolr d^y 18 April 61
C^o N^o 1038-
From C. Sanderson Esq 16 April 61
C^o N^o 1075

Mr C. Sanderson's
application for a grant of
100 acres of waste grass land
near Coonoor for fiber culti-
vation, with orders thereon.

N^o 334 & 335