M.R.O. 14 5,450—23-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1154 Press Mis.

Dated 15-5-52 1852

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 15th May 1866.

No. 265. Read the following letter from the Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 24th April 1866, No. 1,773 :—

1. Casuarina Plantations.—Adverting to Proceedings of Government, dated 5th July 1864, No. 1,155, in which the Officiating Conservator was instructed to take an opportunity of visiting the Nellore District, and conferring with the Collector as to the best means of conserving the timber in that District, and of restoring the tracts which have been denuded of timber, I have to report that I proceeded on the 20th February by the North Coast Canal, observing en route the numerous Casuarina plantations which have sprung up during the last few years at Ennore, Pulicat, Striharikota, (avenues nine feet apart,) Dugarazapatam (topes) and Kistnapatam ; these are generally thriving in a remarkable manner, and have much altered the appearance of the coast scenery. This tree is well suited to the locality, and grows freely in the loose and sandy soil ; wooded knolls are seen where a few years ago there was nothing but a barren tract of drifting sand. The belt of Casuarina constitutes a fringe and partial protection against the encroachment of the sea.

2. At Ennore and Pulicat the plantations are the result of private enterprize (European and Native). The great demand for fuel in Madras induced one or more companies to take up these plantations, as a pecuniary investment. Further north, the topes and avenues are planted by Government. The rate of growth is certainly rapid, and the tree should be planted on the coast, beside Salt Chowkees, Police stations, Dâk bungalows, and wherever there is a trustworthy person to watch them.

3. Kistnapatam.—At Kistnapatam there are several large topes planted by the Collector in pure sand, and the fishermen are extending the cultivation near their villages along the coast. I was assured that they had planted 60,000 trees. The appearance is various, in some places the stem is straight and promising ; in others the tree is "stagheaded." In no case was there a marked failure, but the plants require water during the first and second seasons ; this is easily obtained, being every where within three or four feet of the surface. Trees of four years' growth average eighteen feet in height, and fourteen inches in circumference, four feet from the ground. I agree with the Collector that this highly satisfactory growth of Casuarina does not affect the general question of fuel supply, *as regards Nellore*. The straight stems will be used in house-building or pile-driving; the wood is very hard and difficult to split, which firewood dealers consider an objection.

4. Striharikota.—I have examined the receipts of the Striharikota jungles for fifteen years, the results are very satisfactory. The average of ten years, viz., from 1850 to 1859 is Rupees 8,926, but for the last five years the average is Rupees 14,432, the particulars are as follow :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
1860-61	14,633	2	0
1861-62	6,924	14	2
1862-63	14,648	2	7
1863-64	15,740	13	4
1864-65	19,214	2	8

This result may be attributed partly to the rules which were passed in 1859 for regulating the felling by compartments, and partly to the enhanced value of fuel and the usufruct of the jungle products which the renter enjoys.

5. Mr. Dykes' proposal.—It is known to Government that Mr. Dykes has taken a lively interest in arboriculture, and proposed a scheme for providing firewood for the people of Nellore. The Government, recognizing the importance of the subject, sanctioned a series of systematic experiments on 10th November 1864. It is to be remembered that the population of the town is 27,000; that the climate is very dry; and the growth of jungle very slow; those who know the station will admit that there is no superfluity to warrant waste of fuel or neglect of conservancy. The principal trees seen in the vicinity are the Palmyra and Date trees, Tumma (Babool) Mango, Neradu, Neem, and Tamarind.

6. *Fire-wood experiment.*—I visited the place selected for the experiment four miles from Nellore, which may be described as a nearly level tract of 6,000 acres of unpromising aspect and entirely waste, (having a considerable resemblance to the Rukhs or fuel reserves at Mooltan,) belonging to the town and adjoining villages. The soil is poor, about 1½ foot deep overlying yellow laterite; here and there it is pure sand and gravel. At present the vegetation consists of low scrub jungle or copse, averaging three or four feet in height, and with only three mature trees standing in the whole area.

7. *Experimental acres.*—Seven experimental acres are marked off by boundary stones, with cart tracks at right angles; these are being treated in different methods, as described in Mr. Dyke's report, recorded in Proceedings of Government, 21st March 1866, No. 331, *the Cactus, Euphorbia, Cassus*, and other creepers being cleared away, and the more promising arborescent forms allowed to stand, these are

Neem	*Melia.*
Buckthorn	*Zizyphus.*
Babool	*Acacia arabica.*
White back	*Acacia leucophlea.*
Siriss	*Acacia speciosa.*
	Combretum.
Country Plum	*Eugenia.*

Mr. Dykes had a portion of the tract dourfed by neighbouring villagers, who reaped a crop of cholam,* seeds of Inga dulcis, *Cassia fistula* and *Acacia speciosa*, &c., were then sown broad-cast, and a thin crop of seedlings is the result; some have been killed by drought, others were looking yellow and delicate from the fierce heat. Altogether the Collector considers that conservancy is cheaper and more successful than planting. Mr. Dykes has arrived at the conclusion admitted by all Forest Officers, that the first essential to successful growth of timber or fuel is the strict exclusion of cattle and goats. The different appearance of the jungle simply shut up from that of the adjoining waste frequented by cattle is very striking, shewing the extent of reproduction when the natural shoots are allowed unrestrained growth.

* Sorghum vulgare.

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15th May 1866.

8. Fences there are none. The authority of the Collector and the pound are found to be a sufficient protection. There are four watchers, one at each corner of the tract, and a cart road is kept clear of brushwood on all the four sides. There are several cross roads or ventilating paths; one small Inám village stands in the tract.

9. The establishment consists of two gardeners, trained at the Madras Agri-Horticultural Society's Gardens, with four watchmen.

This firewood experiment carried on by Mr. Dykes is of great interest, and if successful will be most encouraging. The supply of fuel near many of our large cities is scanty, and is brought from great distances. By the formation of reserves, such as the one now being formed at Nellore, I believe that much relief may be afforded. All that seems necessary is that waste jungles be conserved in suitable localities, and not entirely given up to cultivation.

Note.—It would be of great matter if suitable tracts were taken up near other large towns, as Vellore and Trichinopoly.—H. C.

10. Government have repeatedly recorded their decision, that it is not their duty to grow firewood; but it seems incumbent upon the State to manage the jungle, so that they may continue indefinitely an adequate supply of fuel, and to allot lands specially suited for the growth of fuel as has been lately ordered at Wallair in this Presidency, and as has been sanctioned at Poona and Dharwar in Bombay, and in the Punjab and North-West Provinces. The old Rukhs and Shik Argahs of former days, the hunting grounds of Sikh Sirdars and Sind Amirs, being converted into reserves for steam fuel. Whenever private enterprize undertakes the work of raising fuel, Government should withdraw at once.

11. The oldest firewood plantation in the Madras Presidency is the Australian Acacia preserve, made near the Wellington Barracks, where the growth of fuel and financial returns are satisfactory.

Planting in Nellore District generally.—The result of Mr. Dykes' planting operations in the District generally up to 1865 are as follow :—

PALMYRA.

Actually grown.			Put down.	Cost.
				Rs.
20,000	Gudur Talook ...	Palmyra	76,805	268
1,300	Rapur Talook ...	Do.	5,330	
10,000	Nellore	Do.	36,357	109
4,000	Atmakaru... ...	Do.	7,085	39½
19,512	Karali Talook ...	Do.		

The sum paid is 25 Rupees for planting and watching 1,000 Palmyras.

The entire number of Casuarinas growing is not known, the expenditure was 519 Rupees.

Irrigation Company at Someshwar.—12. The resolution of Government that the Irrigation Company should pay for fuel at Someshwar Anicut the same rate as the general public, has acted well; this policy should be invariably adopted in all departments of the State and corporate bodies.

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Recording forest rights.—Mr. Dykes, with the sanction of the Board of Revenue, is employing six Native Inspectors to record, in a prescribed form, the forest rights of the villagers. The information so collected is to be at the disposal of the Forest Department.

Ghat forests.—It is only about Oodiagherry and in the ghats north-west of Nellore that there are forests of sufficient extent to be taken charge of by this Department. There is reason to believe that wood clandestinely felled in Kurnool is carried across to the Nellore District, and the best manner of preventing this has been the subject of correspondence with the Collectors of both Districts.

No. 266. ORDER THEREON, 15th May 1866, No. 1,154.

Forests, No. 9.

1. Communicated to the Board of Revenue and the Collector of Nellore.

2. The Government will be prepared to take into consideration any recommendations from the Conservator of Forests and Collectors for the reservation of jungle tracts.

3. The Board will impress on the Collectors of Maritime Districts the importance of planting Casuarina along the sea shore, and especially in the neighbourhood of salt stations, where the Salt Superintendents and Deputy Collectors can supervise operations.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Collector of Nellore.
„ the Conservator of Forests.

Encl. S. T. Augustin.

No. 1154.

To the Bd. of Rev.
and the Coll. of Nellore.
The Govt. will be
prepared to take
into consideration any re-
commendations from
the Conr. of Forests &
for the reservation of
jungle tracts.
L. & V.
15th May 1866.

The Govt. will require me the Collr. of Nellore to impress upon the Collectors of maritime districts the importance of planting Casuarina along the sea shore and in the neighbourhood of salt stations where the Salt Superintendents & Deputy Collectors can supervise operations.
W.D.M.

14 Feb 63 Bay Coast 15 Feb
1 and Gen Jan 31
4 Wh. Conservator of Forests

Rec: 1866 Sept 6
Pro: of Govt for Mary
Extract Reported in 1866

Rec'd Feb 1854 ad 57-72
- 21 March 1878. 331-332

Ref-1201-

From

The Conservator of Forests

To

J. W. Sim Esqre
Secretary to Govt. Rev. Dept
Fort St George

Date 24th
Received 25th } April 1866

ad 1857. 15 Aug

No 1773

Extract from Mr. [illegible]'s
Reporting the result of
his visit to Nellore,
and correspondence with
the Collector upon
Forest matters.

With Order

No 265-266

05 May 1866

" the Collector of [illegible]
" the Conservator of Forests.

Ed. S. T. Augustin.