M.R.O. 1—38,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1931 Press ~~Mis.~~

216-17.

Dated 11-7- 19 1868.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
11th July 1868.

No. 216. Read the following letter from Major R. H. BEDDOME, Officiating Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 30th June 1868, No. 793 :—

1. With reference to paragraph 2 of the Government Order, No. 1,554, of the 4th of June, I have the honor to inform you that the block of land mentioned in paragraph 2 of the Collector's letter, recorded in the Government Order, was given up by our Department under the impression that it was required for permanent cultivation, and that it would be at once cleared and cultivated; the block measured about 500 acres, and had apparently been cultivated many years before. Our Department received no compensation for it. The block, mentioned in paragraph 3 of the same letter, also 500 acres, was sold, as far as I can learn, without any reference to our Department; but we were subsequently credited with the sale proceeds, viz., Rupees 1,300. A person named Atchiah, who got the Durkhast for the first block, became the purchaser of the second, and he appears to have taken up more than 500 acres in excess of what he was entitled to, and soon afterwards to have set up a regular timber trade, and on the strength of being possessor of a small tract of forest, he issued licenses to wood-cutters to fell timber to an unlimited extent, and large quantities of timber were drawn from our forests; the wood was, in many cases, seized and confiscated by our Department, but Atchiah always managed to throw the blame upon the cutters, as he entered in the licenses that it would be at their own risk if they cut in Government land, so he evaded punishment, but must have known that he was receiving payment for much more timber than his whole land contained, and it was easy for him to sell any amount of licenses by fixing a lower rate of payment than that charged by our Department, and our small establishment might be constantly evaded.

2. If the Collector can compel the present holders of this land (Atchiah is now dead) to clear it at once for cultivation, for which purpose it was granted, it is not worth our while to give 1,500 Rupees for it, nor would it be worth annually the amount at which it is assessed; but if the present tenants can pursue the same course as Atchiah did, it would be worth while for the Forest Department to purchase it at almost any price.

3. Some rules should be laid down to prevent occurrences of this nature. Our Department can seldom refuse forest land (in the plains) when required for permanent cultivation, but when it has been given up, it is not our fault if it is not cultivated; the jungle or forest might revert to us if not cleared within a given period, or our Department might be allowed to clear the timber before handing over the land.

4. There were no reasons on which our Department could have refused the block in question. Supposing it to have been for *bonâ fide* cultivation, it is situated between Nundial and Yellagode, and there is an [illegible]ense extent of forest in the vicinity.

5. Our Department received no compensation for the land taken up in excess of the auction and durkhast allotments, though Atchiah seems to have been charged for it; if we now purchase the land, this sum should be credited to us.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
11th July 1868.

No. 217. ORDER THEREON, 11th July 1868, No. 1,931.

Miscellaneous.

1. Communicated to the Board of Revenue, who will, in communication with the Conservator of Forests, lay down rules for the prevention of such abuses as Major Beddome refers to.

2. Either of the plans proposed by him seems eligible. Land taken up out of forest tracts under the special department might either be cleared by the Forest Officers before transfer to the applicant, or the transfer might be conditional on the clearing being completed by the applicant within a limited time on pain of resumption.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Officiating Conservator of Forests.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obed.t Servant
R.T. Beddome - Major
Off.g Conservr of Forests
No. 1931.

Comm.d the Bd's Ltr. No. with in comm.n to the Conservr of Forests, lay down rules for the prevention of such abuses as Major Beddome refers to.

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No. 1931 dated 28th July 1868
69-9-27
Copies sent to Board of Revenue
" Offg Conservr of Forests
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