M.R.O. 1—89,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 3145 Press Mis.

273-24 Dated 18-12- No 1868.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 273. Read the following letter from the Officiating Conservator of Forests, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Camp at Coimbatore, 30th October 1868, No. 1,003 :—

1. With reference to the Government Order No. 2,108, of the 6th of August 1868, I have the honor to forward a letter just received from Mr. Lowry.

2. With regard to Mr. Lowry's statement, that much timber hasprobably been burnt since he handed over the valley to our department, Lieutenant Gosling, the Deputy Conservator in charge of the Range, has reported as follows :—

"Mr. Lowry's letter to yourself, accepting the Government terms for "relinquishing the forest in the Ponachy valley, is dated the 24th February 1868. "Your letter to me, requesting that the timber should be cleared round and secured "from fire, is dated the following day. I immediately despatched Assistant Overseer "Mootoosawmy Pillay to carry out your orders, and on the 6th March received a "letter from the Head Overseer, Mr. Truter, as follows":—

"Overseer Mootoosawmy Pillay reports the clearing of brushwood is being "pushed on vigorously on the Ponachy Hills, and that there is no danger of fires. "On the 14th March, Overseer Mootoosawmy Pillay returned to Anamallay and "reported having carefully searched Mr. Lowry's teak timber in the forest at "Ponachy, and found only 760 pieces, out of which 310 were squared logs of the "first sort, 51 round logs, and 399 refuse pieces of side slabs. All these have been "thoroughly cleared. On the 7th April, I directed Mr. Storey, Head Overseer, to "proceed to the Ponachy valley and measure the timber lying there. He was "engaged two days on the work, residing during that time in the hut built by Mr. "Lowry in the valley. Mr. Storey reported that the Kaders informed him there "were sixty-one depôts, or spots where timber was lying, uncleared, and I, therefore, "sent up Assistant Overseer Sied Gholam Sheffie Saib to complete the clearing of "them, who was engaged for some weeks solely on that work, which proved of "great difficulty, as the timber lay in distant places far apart, just where it had "been felled, and was overgrown with grass and dense undergrowth. I had issued "strict orders, through the Overseers, to the Kaders that I would hold them res- "ponsible if the grass was fired before the timber was cleared, and this they impli- "citly obeyed. On the 25th April, the Assistant Overseer reported that about seven "or eight planks, which were lying at a spot unknown to the Kaders, concealed under "a clump of bamboos, had been burnt the previous evening, and applied for "elephants to drag in the timber to central depôts, as it was lying in great disorder "all over the valley. *Up to this date no fires had taken place, and this was the only* "*timber burnt since the forest had* reverted to Government. Mulcers were at once "employed to cut drag holes in the logs, and two elephants despatched to the valley "to drag in all outlying timber. On the 7th May heavy rain fell, and all danger "from further fire ceased. The timber thus collected consisted of 70 round logs, "362 sleepers, and 385 refuse pieces, containing, respectively, 2,003 cubic feet, 9 "inches, 6 parts, and 3,369 11′ 11″ and the refuse pieces 4,526 6′ 8″ superficial "measurement."

3. It is very clear from this report that little or no timber has been burnt since we took charge, and I cannot recommend that a higher sum than the Rupees 3,000 should be given, as I feel certain we shall not realize this amount when the

timber is brought out and sold; the greater bulk consists of refuse pieces, and will probably not pay for the removal. I would, however, suggest that in the event of the sale proceeds realizing a profit of 5,000 Rupees, after deducting expenses and the 2 Annas per cubic foot seigniorage, that the extra Rupees 2,000 should in that case be paid to Mr. Lowry.

4. When Mr. Lowry states that he refused the offer of a capitalist at Madras to take over the forest contract, he appears to forget that by the terms of his agreement this was not admissible, and that his contract could only hold good whilst he was residing on the spot.

From R. J. LOWRY, Esq., Assistant Engineer in charge of No. 7 Range, Madras District, Department Public Works, to the Officiating Conservator of Forests, dated Chembrambaukam Tank, 20th October 1868, No. 233.

1. I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of G. O., No. 2,108, dated the 6th August 1868. I must apologize for the delay that has taken place in replying to your letter communicating the same, which delay has arisen from the necessity I was under of asking the opinion of my partners on this order, and as you know they (my partners) reside in Bombay.

2. I accept the offer of Government, as I am virtually without other choice; but I would beg of Government to reconsider their decision reducing the amount, Rupees 5,000, offered in G. O., No. 197, of 23rd January 1868, and again in G. O., No. 917, of the 7th April last, to the sum (Rupees 3,000) offered in the G. O. now under reply. I make this request for the following reasons:—

Firstly.—It is probable that more than half the timber has been burned in the annual fires occurring in February and March, because it was very difficult for any one not acquainted with the *locale* of the felled logs to find them, scattered over some thousand acres in grass seven and eight feet high.

I know your Overseers at Tumycavadoo feared this valley to such an extent that they never in my time would sleep in it, as they have told me they believed to do so would be to get fever and die. They used to sleep at Mallyandyputnam, eight miles from the foot of the ghaut, and to leave this place in the morning and walk up the ghaut, as it cannot be ridden, walk three miles further into the valley, and, when they had got there, it was time for them to think of going back again, instead of looking for the felled trees in the long grass. You will, I am sure, allow that the finding some 300 logs scattered about singly, under those circumstances, was a mere matter of chance to men who did not know the whereabouts of each.

Secondly.—As the grass is never all burnt off, I am convinced that there is much timber that has escaped both the Overseers and the fire, for the same reason given above, namely, they have not been found by either.

That there was more timber felled than I stated in my estimate I am certain, as I had it all measured, and as I hope to get leave to accompany Colonel Walker, Superintending Engineer of No. 7 Division, next month, in going over the trace I cut up to the valley, I hope you will depute Lieutenant Gosling to accompany me, when I have no doubt I shall be able to show him either a large number of logs, or the ashes of what have been left all right in the valley on my departure thence.

Lastly.—I would submit that the sum of Rupees 5,000 was not given solely as the purchase money of the felled timber, but also in some sort as compensation for the relinquishment of my rights to the forest. It was on the faith of this offer of Rupees 5,000 that I gave up the documents conferring those rights, and it was also the principal consideration which induced me to reject an offer made me by a capitalist in Madras, who offered, if I would give him a month to consider the matter, that he would probably take the forest business upon my own terms.

3. I need not tell you that even this sum of Rupees 5,000 is altogether inadequate to compensate my partners and self for our large outlay on this scheme, and as Malabar teak is likely to be more in demand, and command higher prices than it has ever before done, and the Government will in consequence derive a large profit from the timber in the valley, and the difference between the first and last offers (Rupees 2,000) being such a paltry sum to Government, but a large one to myself and partners, impoverished as we are from our connection with this forest, I would again most respectfully beg that the decision come to on your last letter be favorably reconsidered by Government.

4. May I request that you will be good enough to lay this letter before Government for their consideration.

No. 274. ORDER THEREON, 18th December 1868, No. 3,145.

Forests, No. 8.

Under the circumstances reported in the Acting Conservator's letter, the Government must adhere to the decision contained in their Order under date 6th August 1868, No. 2,108. They accordingly authorize Major Beddome to disburse to Mr. Lowry Rupees 3,000, as full compensation for the surrender of the lease with the timber.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Officiating Conservator of Forests.
,, the Board of Revenue,
,, the Public Works Department, } with Proceedings, 6th August 1868, No. 2,108.
,, the Accountant General,

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Rev. Dept.

Govt. of {1868} Madras.

REVENUE.

To

THE OFFICIATING CONSERVATOR

OF FORESTS.

Dated December, 18th.

Recd. Encl.

G. O., 18th December 1868, No. 3,145.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 273-274.

Timber felled by Mr. Lowry in the Ponachy Range.—Rupees 3,000 to be disbursed as full compensation for the surrender of the lease with the timber.

Rev. Dept.

Bt. 3145

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Under date the 18th December 1868.

Read the following

letter from the Officiating

Conservator of Forests.

Forwards an letter from

Mr. Lowry in which he accepts

the offer of 3000 Rs for the

Ponachy timber, Hangs at

the same time he asks Govt.

to reconsider their decision.

(P.C. 30th Oct 68 No 3)

Under the circum-

stances reported in the

Acting Conservator's

letter, the Government

must adhere to the dec-

cision contained in their

order under date 8th

August

August 1868, Ltr 2108, and
They authorize Major
Beddome to disburse to him
£ 3,000, as compensation
for the surrender of the
lease with the timber.

13 Copies to be sent to Conservators of Forests Dep[t]s
14 " " Ag[t] Govt
6 " " Secretary Govt
21 " " Accountant G.

30/4/5

Revenue 1868 Dept.

№ 3145

Proceedings of the
Madras Government

Dated 18th Dec. 68.

273 & 274