

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	4 27	Press Mis.
305-306. Dated	15 - 2 - 18 68.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1868.

No. 305. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 30th January 1868, No. 756.

Read the following letter from the Officiating Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Camp at Munrood, South Canara, 4th December 1867, No. 405:—

1. In forwarding the accompanying letter* from the Collector of Malabar, and its enclosures, I have the honor to observe that it would be very advantageous if our department could obtain a lease of the Tract No. 6 mentioned in

Mr. Cameron's report, that is, the forest belonging to the Emur Bagavati Devasom. I am well acquainted with this tract, which adjoins our Chenat Nair forest, some portions of it could not be worked very easily, and are at a considerable distance from the line of railway; but if we could obtain the lease, and work this forest in connection with the Chenat Nair tract, it would probably answer to lay down a cheap tramway to the foot of the hills, as an enormous amount of firewood would be available.

2. If the Collector negotiated the lease with caution, it might perhaps be obtained on reasonable terms, and Government could afford to pay more than any contractors could. If our department took the matter in hand, I am sure that it would be a failure, as the proprietors would ask such high terms that the scheme would not be remunerative.

3. The supply of Railway fuel from our forests is a subject of great importance; the price paid at present by the Company is certainly less than the cost of re-production, and I am in communication with my Assistants and the Railway Officers on the subject of an increased rate of seigniorage. If a supply is to be kept up, it will be necessary to lay down tramways, so that wood can be brought from some of the dense forests at the foot, and on the slopes of mountain tracts too distant to bear the cost of ordinary carriage.

From the Collector of Malabar, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 22nd November 1867, No. 264.

1. Adverting to the correspondence noted, I have the honour to observe that there is no probability of private enterprise doing much in this district towards meeting the requirements of the Railway and public for fuel.

Government Order, dated 20th June 1868.
Board's Proceedings, dated 5th July 1868, No. 4,558.
Do. do. 15th August 1868, No. 6,709.
Do. do. 11th March 1867, No. 1,494.

To make the growth of firewood or timber remunerative, operations must be conducted on a considerable scale; continuous attention must be paid; and capital to some extent must be sunk for several years without intermediate return.

If anything effectual is to be done, it must be done by Government.

2. Throughout great part of Malabar, there is no lack of firewood.

In the more populous and more open parts increased supplies would be very acceptable. But the scarcity has nowhere become sufficiently great to overcome the objections to private enterprise taking action to afford supply.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1868.*

3. I have constantly pointed to the people that fuel and common timber preserves might be easily established, and that much benefit would probably be derived from them. A notice to this effect was published in the District Gazette last year, and separate copies of the Memorandum distributed.

Vide District Gazette, dated 4th August 1866, page 206.

I have particularly requested some of the landholders in Calicut and Ernad to fence in the tops of some of their waste hills, on which there has been natural wood, but which have been denuded, by the jungle having been cut for timber, fuel, and manure, whilst the constant pasturage of cattle prevents re-growth. I am convinced that the simple fencing in of many of these hill tops, so as to secure the exclusion of cattle and the prevention of fire and promiscuous felling and lopping, would, with the abundant rainfall, produce a speedy growth of natural wood of more or less useful varieties, and that most useful supplies of ordinary timber, fuel, and vegetable matter for manure, might thus be obtained.

I have a few promises that experiments of the nature I proposed will be made this year; but if anything is done, it will at first, and for some time, be rather to please the Collector, than because any real impression in favour of the step exists.

4. If the landlords cannot be induced to make the experiments, I propose obtaining several suitable sites, (which will be done with little difficulty,) and having them fenced in from Jungle Conservancy Funds.

5. I have been speaking above with reference to the wants of the community generally, and not to special wants as of Railways.

Towards providing for these, as pointed out by Mr. Grant, the Walliar jungles in the vicinity of Palghaut seem to afford field for an abundant supply. An extensive tract of land between Palghaut and the hills to the north appertaining to Government as portion of the Chenat Nayar's Escheat is now and has been for some time under the Conservator of Forest.

6. Mr. Cameron, Acting Head Assistant Collector, in a report, copy of which I enclose, gives the names of six of the large proprietors of the Walliar jungle tract, and recommends that Government should obtain several of the most extensive jungles on lease, in order that it may effectively control the conservancy.

This report I sent to Doctor Cleghorn demi-officially sometime ago. He replied demi-officially, (June 28th, 1867,) but said I was at liberty to make use of the letter; so I enclose it. It will be seen that Lieutenant Gosling was requested to visit Tract No. 6 mentioned by Mr. Cameron and report. I spoke to Doctor Cleghorn when here in August last on the subject, but nothing definite was settled; nor if I remember right had he then received any report. I have not heard from the Forest department on the subject since.

I also requested Mr. Cameron to make inquiries as to the terms on which Government might obtain leases.

But without more definite information and authority it is impossible to come to any real results.

7. I think, however, that there can be but one opinion that it is very desirable that Government should obtain a lease of No. 6, and perhaps of some of the other tracts; and I would suggest that the Acting Conservator, or such Officer of sufficient standing as he may depute, should visit the tracts, (if Lieutenant Gosling has not yet reported on them,) and after a correct opinion has been formed as to their value should meet Mr. Cameron or myself at Palghaut with full powers to negotiate leases if possible within such limits as Government may see fit to fix.

I send this through the Acting Conservator of Forests, in order that he may forward it with such remarks as he may have to make on the subject. From what I have heard very lately, I think that leases of some of the tracts may be had, and that if they are to be taken up by Government it would be well to take active steps at once.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th February 1868.*

From the Acting Head Assistant Collector, to the Collector of Malabar, dated Palghaut, 14th February 1867, No. 58.

1. I have the honour to reply to your Memorandums of 10th July and 20th August last, calling for a report on the subject of forming plantations for fuel and timber, and regarding the possibility of introducing systematic felling and measures of conservancy and restoration in the Walliar jungle.

2. As far as this Division is concerned, there is no probability whatever of private enterprise being sufficient to meet the growing demand for fuel of Railways and the general community. It is true that the extent of jungle available is very large, but most of what was near enough to the Railway to pay the expense of carriage has been cut down, and the owners state that they are unable and unwilling to go to expense of planting; neither is there any probability that they will, if left to themselves, take any steps to preserve what remains, or to assist the growth of new jungle. Very great quantities of timber and firewood have been cut of late years, especially in the low lyings and easily accessible portions of the Walliar jungle near the Railway line between Palghaut and the Coimbatore boundary. It is stated by the Railway authorities that 10,000 tons have, on an average, been taken annually from this part during the last three or four years. The consequence is, that a large extent of the jungle has been quite cleared, and the owners find that it pays them better to lease the land for cultivation to substantial ryots, than to lease it to grow firewood for Contractors, who only give from two to four annas per bandy load. The firewood on the hills that extend north to the Coimbatore boundary, and north-west to Kalladikode and Mauarghat, are almost untouched. But these hills are, for the most part, inaccessible to bandies, and though the owners are quite willing to sell the wood, the market value of firewood is not so great as to pay either owner or contractor the expense that would be incurred in bringing it by elephants to the nearest road, and thence by bandies to the Railway.

3. Running west from Palghaut Railway station and almost parallel to the line, on the north side are a series of small jungly hills. They are very conveniently situated for supplying the Railway as they are all within five miles distance of it: but at present they are almost destitute of timber of firewood, and are all of comparatively small extent; the largest not exceeding 300 or 400 Acres. The owners state that, as their quantity of firewood is small, they are unwilling to sell to the Railway, and there is no contract existing with any one of them for the supply of firewood. It appears very desirable that Government should obtain a lease of some of the largest of these jungles at different spots along the line. Individually they are small, but in the aggregate they would contain several thousand acres. It would not, I imagine, be difficult to conserve them for six or eight years, when they would, under the influence of the Malabar monsoon, begin to produce large quantities of firewood.

4. There is a vast extent of forest beyond the Kalladikode Hill, and lying north and east of the road from Palghaut to Mauarghat. Part of it, on the low grounds near the road, is quite accessible, but most of it is practically unavailable at present. There is no contract with any one to supply firewood from these forests. The owners demand one rupee from each bandy load uncultivated, and the addition of cartage, for a distance varying from twelve to twenty miles or more, raises the expense of delivering a load at the Railway so much that the current price (Rupees 1½ to 1¾) must increase very considerably before much firewood is brought from these parts.

5. The jungles extending from a few miles east of Palghaut to the Coimbatore boundary, known as the Walliar jungle, are the most conveniently situated for supplying the Railway. There is very little jungle on the south side of the line, but it extends northwards for many miles. On the low grounds most of the firewood has been cut however, and the chief supplies are now to be got only from the higher and more inaccessible grounds. Almost the whole of the jungle belongs to five or six individuals, most of whom have entered into contracts for the cutting of firewood or timber, or both, for the use of the Railway. The following are the chief proprietors, beginning from the eastern extremity of the jungle:—

I. Rama Sing.—Jungle on both sides of the Railway; extent six or eight square miles; contains firewood chiefly and very few trees useful as timber; a contract to cut firewood from the low grounds ended in November 1866.

II. Iti Chata Manadyar.—Jungle extends ten miles north of the Railway and four miles south; extent about 100 or 120 square miles, and calculated to contain at present about 50,000 tons of firewood; there is no contract to cut firewood; a contract to cut timber will expire in 1875.

III. Iti Kombi Atchan.—Extent about twenty square miles; nearest boundary about two miles north of Railway; a contract to cut firewood on a part will expire in 1867-68. Another contract to cut both timber and firewood on the remainder will expire in 1872.

IV. Shivarama Ayyan.—Extent of about seven or eight square miles, situated four miles north of the Railway; no contract.

V. Nannu Putter.—About one square mile close to the Railway; no contract.

VI. The Emur Bagavati Devaswam.—Extent about seventy square miles from two to ten miles north of the Railway; contract just expired.

It does not appear that the Contractors are bound to fell on any system, and it is as likely as not that they fell everything in their way. Neither does it appear probable that any satisfactory arrangements could be made with the proprietors with a view to their undertaking conservancy, and systematic felling. No arrangement of the kind would be sufficiently binding on them. The only effective method is for Government to obtain several of the jungles on lease as soon as opportunity offers, and introduce measures for conservancy and restoration by its own agency.

6. Government already possesses a large extent of forest adjoining the last mentioned jungle of the Emur Bhagavati Devaswam, and extending from the Kalladikode hill south-east to within four miles of the Railway. It is part of the escheated estate of Chenat Nair, and comprises at least seventy or eighty square miles. There has been no felling in it, and it is calculated to contain at present about 50,000 tons of firewood. The Devaswam's forest which bounds it on the south east, and one or two of the others would, if leased, form a valuable addition to it; and I would suggest that the very earliest opportunity should be taken of leasing them. I would also suggest that several of the largest detached jungles that skirt the Railway westward should also be obtained on lease, and there would thus be a large extent of ground within easy reach. The larger jungles might be managed by the Forest Department in connection with the Chenat Nair Forest, and the smaller detached ones by the Revenue authorities. The management of them, however, would be an after consideration, and one, I think, which it will not be difficult to arrange.

1. In the foregoing letters, both the Conservator of Forests and the Collector of Malabar urge the expediency of the leasing and reserving to Government certain jungle tracts in the vicinity of the Railway, for the purpose of keeping up a supply of firewood for fuel.

2. The Board resolve to submit the correspondence to Government, and to recommend that the Collector be authorized to treat with the owners of such tracts as he and the Conservator of Forests deem it desirable to lease on such terms as those Officers may mutually fix upon as reasonable and proper.

3. The Board would also suggest that the Collector be authorized to secure as much of the Walliar jungle as may be desirable for the purpose of a firewood reserve. He has already, they believe, been authorized to secure some 3,000 acres there, but much more is available, and the larger the tract the more economical will be the working.

4. The Board also recommend that Dr. Cleghorn's proposal in paragraph 1 of his letter, relative to obtaining a lease of the forest belonging to the Emur Dhagarah Devasom, be carried out.

5. As Government will, in the event of these proposed schemes being carried into effect, be assuming in a great measure the task of supplying the Railways with

fuel, the Board are of opinion that the price of wood should be fixed so as not only to cover its cost including carriage, &c., but also to afford a reasonable profit; otherwise not only will Government be losers by the transaction, but private enterprise will be completely shut out, as no one will be likely to plant or expend capital on timber, if Government compete in the market at prices which leave no profit.

No. 306.

ORDER THEREON, 15th February 1868, No. 427.

Forests, No. 7.

1. The Government desire that the Officiating Conservator of Forests will at once place himself in communication

with the Collector of Malabar, in view to obtaining a lease on reasonable terms of the Jungle tract belonging to the Emur Bagavati Devasom, adjoining the Chenat Nair Escheat forests, and of such other similar tracts in the vicinity of the Railway as it may be desirable to secure for fuel reserves. Captain Beddome has already been directed to take into consideration the whole question of the charge to be made to the Railway Company for wood-fuel supplied by the Forest agency, and the Government desire to receive his proposals without loss of time.

2. The Government entirely concur with the Board as to the principle which should guide in determining the rate of charge.

3. Every means should be adopted for enlisting the aid of the landholders in developing and maintaining the supply of fuel, and none are more likely to prove efficacious than shewing them practically how by foresight and at slight expense they can convert unculturable tracts into sources of steady income.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Officiating Conservator of Forests.

„ the Collector of Malabar.

„ the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 15th February 1868.

Read the following
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Recommending that folk
of Malabar be authorized
to take on lease and reserve
to Govt. certain jungle
tracts in vicinity of Railway

H. C. 30 January 1868.
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L. J.

24th Oct 1877

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Dec. 1868 O. J. T. W.
Prof. J. W. H. H. H. H.

Feb 27.

Prof. W. C. H. H. H.
Government

2/15/68 H. H. H. H.

Des. H. H. H.

Jan 1868