Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
17th November 1871.

No. 169. Read the following telegram from Collector, Coimbatore, to Revenue Secretary to Government, Madras, dated 17th November 1871 :—

Novel bridge between Coimbatore and Pothanore apparently unsafe from heavy fresh. No report yet from Engineer, but I have stopped bandy-traffic in the meantime.

No. 170. Order thereon, 17th November 1871, No. 1,959.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Department Public Works and Board of Revenue.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Public Works Department.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Editor's Table.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Commenced

apparently unsafe from ice
heavy fresh - No report yet
from Engineer but Shanklin
stopped heavy traffic
the meantime -

Signature E. Beale

Signaller in charge.

No enquiry respecting this Message can be attended to without the production of this paper.

Rev: 1871: Dept
No: 3686

Telegram

From

Collr of Coimbatore

Dated 17th
Recd - 17th & 3 Nov: 1871

Reporting Novel
Bridge as apparently unsafe
for heavy traffic
That he has stopped heavy
traffic for the present in
consequence

No 2909 - 17th December 1871

Written Order

No 169 - 170

Copy communicated

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169

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
17th November 1871.

No. 171. Read the following letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce, (Forests,) to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, dated Simla, 31st October 1871, No. 2-C.:—

I AM directed to forward the accompanying copies of two memoranda by the Officiating Inspector-General of Forests and the Consulting Engineer for State Railways on the subject of seasoning planks and timber generally, and to request that, with the permission of His Excellency the Governor in Council, the Government of India may be favoured with any remarks or suggestions by officers competent to give an opinion on the subject.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Memorandum by Major G. F. PEARSON, Officiating Inspector-General of Forests, on seasoning of planks and timber generally, dated 29th July 1871.

As much inconvenience and loss are continually resulting from the cracking of timber, especially in planks, sleepers, and other small scantlings, the Officiating Inspector-General of Forests desires to offer a few hints on the subject collected from information kindly supplied by Messrs. Dykes & Co., and Lazarus & Co., Calcutta, and the officer in charge of the Carriage Department of the East Indian Railway, all of whom, in the daily practice of their profession, have to deal with timber when cut into planks and other small scantlings.

2. It is generally considered by practical men that the thicker the plank the less liable it is to split, and that, under similar conditions, a 1½-inch plank is stronger in this respect than a 1-inch plank; there seems, however, to be no absolute certainty on this point, and there is some difference in the opinion of practical men about it. It is, however, allowed on all hands that the denser the wood the less liable it is to split, *e.g.*, teak is less liable to split than deodar or any of the firs. Opinions differ as to the advisability of applying artificial methods, such as boiling or steaming, to hasten the process of seasoning. If such should be employed, steaming is said to be preferable, and in all cases, where either plan is used, the planks must be dried very slowly for some weeks, or even months, under cover, in a place airy, but not exposed to the sun. It is recommended that, if time will allow, the planks should be allowed to pass through a rainy season after boiling or steaming, packed on edge, so that the rain may run freely through them; and it is said that confidence might be felt in planks which have gone through this process.

3. But, if possible, the logs should be seasoned before they are cut up into planks, sleepers, or other scantlings. To this end it is advisable that they should, where possible, be immersed in water for a year as in England, and then allowed to dry in the open air and, if practicable, in the shade as long as possible previous to being sawn up. Logs if cut up into planks when still green *must split*, and for this reason, *viz.*, that the wood, which is composed of laminæ of hard woody fibre with soft matter between, is suddenly, by the process of sawing, exposed to the air, and dries and contracts too quickly, thereby causing a split first at each end, but soon extending all through the wood, which also warps and loses its shape in a very short time. It is on this account that a regular and gradual process of drying is necessary, and the first thing is to get the sap out of the wood; but this is not enough, for there is an inherent dampness in the wood, which remains after the sap is withdrawn, and renders it liable to split.

4. The following simple plan is recommended for seasoning logs. For logs of moderate bulk select a good tree standing, and round it range the logs in the form of a pyramid with their butts downwards, and their tops resting against each other, taking care that the tops only touch, and that sufficient spaces remain between the logs for the air to pass freely between them. If the tree can be got on the summit of a small mound, with the ground inclining from the tree to some distance,