Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 7th June 1872.

No. 60. Read the following letter from Major E. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Ootacamund, 21st May 1872, No. 1,224 :—

In reference to the Government order, dated 18th [illegible] 1872, calling for remarks on the last annual report of this department, and calling for information on various points, I have the honour to report as follows :—

2. *Paragraph 5.*—No felling of *timber* for our depots took place in the Cuddapah Range. The surplus in the stock was entirely roots and stumps of red-wood ; there is always a good demand for this, and it was never intended to stop its collection. The stock has all since been sold.

3. *Paragraphs 6 and 9.*—In districts where "*Departmental Felling*" and "*License and Voucher Felling*" are both in force, the former is confined to the reserved and better sorts of durable timber, and the latter restricted to jungle-woods and all inferior and perishable timbers. A comparison, therefore, between the two systems is of no value, as the former would have reference to timbers worth three or four times more per cubic foot than the latter. To bring all the inferior timbers under departmental working would be very difficult in large straggling districts like Cuddapah, North Arcot, and Salem ; in fact, it would be impossible with the existing agency and under our present rules. Stricter forest rules and much larger establishments would be necessary in the first place, and then we should have [illegible] and all collections of jungle-produce. I should be delighted to see it tried in one or more districts, as it would be real conservancy, and the results, I am sure, would be grand both as to revenue and conservancy ; but I much doubt if Government would sanction all that would be necessary. It would be useless to attempt it, unless there was a thorough check upon smuggling and all wasteful felling, as it would never pay ; and to secure this a stop must be put to all free-felling on the part of ryots and villagers—an old established custom—and in lieu thereof, they must be granted their necessary supplies from our depots on payment only of the cost of felling and transport. The Board and some Collectors will cry out against such an innovation as this, and Government will probably say it is premature ; but, with fifteen years' observation on the condition of our forests, in the face of railways and their results, I can assure Government that it will before long become imperative. No one but forest-officers know the fearful amount of damages done to our forests by reckless free-felling ; if a man wants a plough or a rafter, he can cut down a large tree to procure it, remove what he wants, and leave the rest to lie burnt or destroyed ; or he may cut down any number of trees till he gets one to satisfy him ; or to make a small fence, he may cut down 50 or 100 saplings, etc., etc. If our officers or their subordinates detect waste like this they can say or do nothing ; and, even if they were empowered to check it, our tracts are so large and scattered that probably not one case out of twenty would come under notice ; and this same free-felling, of course, checkmates any attempts against placing a proper check upon smuggling and illicit felling.

4. *Paragraph 11.*—Up to 1865 the Bombay Dockyard took annually all the teak that we could fell in the Anamallays. In that year the demand ceased, and

we found ourselves with a large stock on hand. Felling was, of course, put a stop to, and little or no felling took place again till 1869, when it became necessary to increase our stock, as indents for more dockyard timber than we had in our depôts were forwarded by Government.

3. With reference to the withdrawal of the Bombay Marine indents, Mr. Douglas, the officer in charge of the Range, informs me that in March or April 1870 the Bombay Marine indented for a large quantity of timber for 1870-71 and 1871-72, very much more than we could possibly supply in two or even three years; amongst other things a number of huge crooks 10 to 12 candies each. Mr. Douglas was obliged to point out the impossibility of supplying the quantity they expected; upon this they cancelled their indent for 1871-72, with the exception of 350 tons which has been supplied this year.

6. The results in the Annamallays during the last six years or so do not contrast favourably with former years, as far as revenue is concerned; but this is very easily accounted for; labour of all description has nearly doubled in price; annually we have had to go deeper into the forests and farther from our market; the demand for dockyard timber has declined, and was nil for four or five years; and we pay more attention to conservancy than of yore, which, of course, adds to the expenditure and superintendence. The working of this forest at the outset and for a series of years was most profitable; labour and transport were abundant and cheap; and the Bombay dockyard took every stick we could fell and get to the coast at very handsome prices. The forest was rich in gigantic trees close to our communications, and attention was given to nothing but making a large revenue. The closing of the dockyard entirely put a stop to our market for some years, but it was also found out that the supply was diminishing, and that we had to go deeper and deeper into the forests to procure good trees, and that the forests required rest, and the introduction of conservancy; and that even if the demand had continued, we could not have met it as the forest required rest; and it was absolutely necessary to reserve large trees here and there for seeding the ground, and to spend money in rearing saplings, etc., etc.; and about the same time the price of labour of every description began to rise tremendously, and soon doubled itself. Though little attention was paid in former years to anything but revenue, it would be unfair to state that the forests were worked on any very wrong principle. They were full of immense trees (10 to 20 feet in girth), fully in, if not passing, their prime, and felling was restricted to these large ripe trees which could not have improved by being left standing. Upwards of twenty years' felling, however, has made a great difference in the Annamallays, though they are still rich in teak of smaller dimensions, and I would strongly recommend that both the Collector and the forest-officer should be empowered to treat this tract as a strict reserve, excluding all traders from the plains, and others who have no real right in the tracts, besides cattle, so that our department can stop the fires, preserve the saplings, and introduce stricter conservancy. As long as there is a market for teak and rose-wood, the forests can pay all expenses, and give an annual revenue of Rs. 20,000 to 25,000, but we cannot expect the large profits of earlier years.

7. *Paragraph* 12.—I have not considered Captain Gosling's suggestions about planting denuded tracts on the hills in the Bolampatty and Sholay Karay Range with teak and black-wood as practicable. Mr. Douglas, [illegible] of the Range, has also given attention to the subject, and we have considered and discussed the matter together, and he is equally opposed to it. The tracts in question are "Kumari" ground on which teak will not answer. The eradication of the present rank growth would be very costly; labour is scarcely procurable; and the tracts are so feverish that, even if the other conditions were favourable, it could hardly be undertaken with a chance of success. Mr. Douglas is of opinion that the present growth if left to itself will, in a few years, suffice as a protection to the water-supply. Captain Gosling's suggestions were made at random without a knowledge of the subject, or without any consultation with the head of the department or other officers of more experience.

8. *Paragraph* 19.—This will be reported on shortly.

No. 70. ORDER THEREON, 7th June 1872, No. 891.

Forests, No. 5.

THE Government accept Major Beddome's explanation. His remarks will be communicated by the Board of Revenue to all Collectors, who will doubtless give them the careful consideration [illegible] entitles them. Such [illegible] those at the close of paragraph 3 are, however, to be regretted.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

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

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 1224.

Office of Conservator of Forests
Colombo 21st May 1875

Sir,

I have the honor to be
Your obedient Servant
Conservator of Forests.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary to Government
&c &c &c

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, that the following Fellings have taken place in the Crown Forests of the Central Province during the month of April last, viz:-

2.- Pera 5.- Felling of timber for sale took place in the Kandapola range, the following

on the stock was entirely sold and
stumps of Red wood, there is al-
ways a good demand for these and
if was never intended to stop this
collection, the stock has all since
been sold.

3. Leases &c. &c. Architect's Depart-
ment Letting and Licence

Clerk's Letting are both in force,
the former continued to be Reserved
and better sorts of Leases timber;
and the latter restricted to simple
woods and all engines and re-
strictive Covenants, as to repairs
&c. &c. between the two systems
of no value as the former would

have

[illegible] reference to Counters No 1 th. 30 of
Leases more per centage for than the
latter. Letting and the engineer
Counters under Department ...
working agreed to very effectual
in Leases Letting Clauses like
Cecil Leases, Scilly Leases and Salem
in fact extended to enforceable
with Letting regency and
under the Letting regency and
Lease, Director
General Clerk and merchant
Collectorship would be neces-
Sary as the Lease Place and then
are stated to come to the under take
of the Letting of Leases, Counters
Clerk and Collectors of simple

produce I should be obliged to
to see the Board in one or more districts
as she would be real Conservancy
and the results I am sure would
be grand both as to Revenue and
Conservancy but I much doubt
if Government would sanction
all this I would be necessary if
we could be relieved of attending
to such petty matters as
price of Eggs and Poultry &c
&c this I am of opinion could
be done by Police Magistrates
or Collectors

Rule

custom) and in lieu thereof they
must be granted their necessary
subsistence from our depôts on
payment only of the cost of selling
and transport. The Board and
some Collectors will cry out against
such an innovation as this and
Government will probably say it
is premature, but with 15 years'
observation on the condition of
our forests in the face of Railways
and these results I can assure
Government that she will before
long become imperative. No one
of course is more alive to the general
amount of damage done to our forests

by reckless free felling, if a man
wants a plough or a rafter he can
cut down a large tree to procure it,
remove what he wants & leave the
rest to be burnt or destroyed or
he may cut down any number of
trees till he gets one to satisfy him
or to mortise, & recall hence he may
cut down 50 or 100 & perhaps
of more officers or their subordi-
=nates, clutch, waste take thus they
can day or do nothing, and even
if they were employed to check,
any fraud or wrong and scattered
stem protection, not one could out of
twenty two recall come under notice
and free access free felling & course

of course. the right & duties of Kind of amusement it is also found change from this other to this, with

check-mate any attempts against him
a proper check upon smuggling and
illicit felling.

2nd Para. Up to 1865 the Bombay
Dockyard took annually all the
teak that we could fell in three
Agra allays, in that year the de-
=mand ceased, and we found our=
=selves with a large stock on hand,
felling was of course put a stop to
and little or no felling took place
again till 1869, when it became ne=
=cessary to increase our stock, we =
=undertook for more dockyard timber
than one had in our depôts were
forwarded by the Bombay Marine

5.— With reference to the with-
=drawal of the Bombay Marine
indents — Mr Douglas the Officer
in charge of the range informs
me that in March or April 1870
the Bombay Marine indented for
a large quantity of timber for 1870-71
and 1871-72, more trees were marked than
were needed, possibly in 2 or even 3 years
consequent other things remaining of
large growth 10 to 12 candies each, Mr
Doug has been obliged to secure
the compliance of supplying the
quantity they expected, upon this
being cancelled. There remains for 1871-72
exactly the exception of 350 tons which
has

been supplied this year.—

6.— The results in the Anamallays
during the last 6 years or so do not
contrast favorably with former years
as far as Revenue is concerned, but
this is very easily accounted for;
labor of all description has nearly
doubled in price, annually we have
had to go deeper into the forests and
farther from our markets, the demand
for dockyard timber has declined
and was nil for 2 or 3 years and we
have more attention to Conservancy
than of yore which of course adds
to the Expenditure and Superintendence
of

The working of this forest at the outset and for a series of years was most unprofitable, labor and transport were abundant and cheap, and the Bombay Dockyard took every stick we could fell, and got to the coast during the season at our own prices, the forest was divided into yearly coupes, the yearly coupes close to each communications and attention was given to nothing but making as large a revenue, the closing of the forest entirely for a term of years, but after a few years of this the supply was found unequal to the demand, and it was then that the forests required rest and the introduction of Conservancy, and that even if the demand had continued we could not have met it as the forest required rest, and it was absolutely necessary to reserve large trees here and there for seeding the ground, and to spend money in sowing, planting saplings &c., &c., and about the same time the price of labor of every description began to rise tremendously, and soon doubled itself although little attention was paid in former years to anything but Revenue it would be unfair to state that

that the forests were worked on any very wrong principle. They were full of immense trees (10 to 20 feet in girth) fullgrown, if not decaying, their prime and felling was restricted to these large ripe trees, which could not have improved by being left standing, afterwards of 20 years felling however was made a great difference in the Income days though they are still nicely Teak of smaller dimensions and would strongly recommend that both the Collector and the Forest Officer should be employed to treat the tracts as Teak Reserve by selecting all trades from

from the plains and others who have no real right in the tracts, besides cattle, so that our Departments can stop the fires, preserve the saplings and introduce stricter Conservancy. As long as there is any market for Teak and rose-wood the forests can pay all expenses and give an annual Revenue of 20 to 25,000 Rupees but we cannot expect the large profits of earlier years.

7. Para 12. I have not considered Captain Gordon's suggestions about planting denuded tracts on the hills in the Balaghaut and Salem

Shelley Range with Peak
and Blackwood as practicable. Mr.
Douglas the Officer now in charge
of the range has also given atten-
tion to the subject and we have con-
sidered and discussed the matter
together and he is equally opposed
to the tract in question as we
Mr. Blackwood proved which Peak
will not answer the Gradication
of the Reserve Range would
be very costly, labored scarcely pro-
ctable and the tract are to sever-
ch that even if the other Conditions
were favorable it could hardly be
undertaken

undertaken with a chance of succes
Mr. Douglas is of opinion that the
present growth of Left to itself will
in a few years suffice as a protector
to the water supply. Captain Gosling
suggestions were made at random
without a knowledge of the subject
or without any consultation with
the head of the Department or other
Officers of more experience.
8. On Para 19. This will be reported
on shortly.

I have the honor to be,
Your most Obedt Servt

Colonel Engrs
Commanding Troops

Rec'd 1872-73. Doc's

Forest Department

No 1790

From

The Conservator

To

The Secretary to Govt.

Dated 21st

Received 25th ditto 1872

No 1224

Enclosure None

Subject

Submits with petition

for permission to fell

trees to CO No. 669

of the 16th Sept 1872

No 8911 of Jan 2 1873

Forwarded

No 669-70

No 34

To the Secretary to Government

Sir

I have the honor to submit herewith a petition from Messrs Buckingham & Carnatic Paper Mills Co. Ltd. praying for permission to fell certain trees in the Nellore District.

2. The Conservator reports that the trees applied for are not required for Government purposes, and that he has no objection to the grant of the permission applied for.

3. I accordingly recommend that the petitioners be allowed to fell the trees applied for on the usual terms.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

Conservator of Forests