No. 122. Read the following despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, (Revenue—Forests,) to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated India Office, London, 31st December 1872, No. 5:—

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch dated October 4th (No. 7), 1872, requesting that the authorities in Her Majesty's Dockyards may be communicated with on the subject of the supply of teak-timber which is available from the Anamallai forests.

2. I now transmit a copy of a letter* from the Secretary to the Admiralty, together with a report from the Visiting Inspector of Timber. You will perceive that the report is unfavourable, and that the Inspector is of opinion that the Anamallai teak is not suitable for the Navy. His ground for this adverse decision is that in the reports on Anamallai teak-timber it is stated that it cannot be sawn, but must be split with wedges in the direction of the heart-shake, and would thus be of irregular form and thickness, requiring to be dressed and faced to make it fit for use.

*Dated 12th December 1872.

3. It is desirable that I should be furnished with any reply that can be made to these objections, which do not appear to me to be conclusive. On the receipt of any further reports on this subject I will cause the Secretary of the Admiralty to be addressed, with a view to this decision being reconsidered.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From VERNON LUSHINGTON, Esq., Secretary of the Admiralty, to the Under-Secretary of State for India, dated Admiralty, S.W., 12th December 1872, No. 5,184-8,461.

WITH reference to your letter of the 15th ultimo, proposing to furnish teak-timber from the Anamallai Hills for use in Her Majesty's Dockyards in England, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you for the information of the Secretary of State for India a copy of a report on the subject, which has been received from the Visiting Inspector of Timber to the Admiralty.

Report by T. LASLETT, Esq., dated 5th December 1872.

I HAVE looked carefully over the correspondence of the past twelve years on the subject of a supply of teak-timber from Anamallai forests in India to the Royal Dockyards, in order to see whether the timber now offered by the Madras Government would be suitable for the service of the Navy, and upon the following extracts of reports in the papers referred to, I have based and appended my report:—

(1.)—I find that in 1860 the India Office reported the teak-timber of the Anamallais to be the best for ship-building, and much more durable than the Moulmein wood.

(2.)—The Conservator of Forests in his report for 1862-63, paragraph 38, says, "it has been proposed that this forest should supply teak for the English Navy, and the subject has been referred to the British Admiralty."

(3.)—Captain R. H. Beddome, Officiating Conservator of Forests, writing to the Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, in letter dated Ootacamund, 21st March 1864, says, "the Anamallai forests are regularly worked by an officer of this department, and the timber is felled, carted, and floated to Ponany on the Malabar Coast by the department."

"The teak-trees are large and are trimmed up into planks for Dockyard purposes of very various dimensions, care being taken to avoid the heart-shake in the centre of the tree; the timber therefore is generally very free from heart-shake, and fetches a much larger sum in the market than the Burmah teak, which is squared up with the heart-shake in the centre. Burmah teak is also ringed and felled dry, whereas the Anamallai teak is always felled green.

"The dimensions of the planks are as follow:—

Length 12 to 25 feet.
Depth 4 to 12 inches.
Breadth 9 to 15 ,,

"The present market-rate is about an average of Rs. 2 per cubic foot all round (outside measurement). If therefore the whole season's felling were taken, it could be delivered at Ponany on the coast at £10 the load or ton (*i.e.*, 50 cubic feet).

"40,000 to 60,000 cubic feet can be supplied annually. The timber can be handed over at Ponany in February, March, and April."

(4.) The Honourable R. Dundas, late Storekeeper-General of the Navy, reported (24th July 1865) on letter from the India Office, dated 2nd June 1865, relative to the supply of teak-timber for the Naval service from the Anamallai forests.

That "the present quantity of timber available is 2,000 loads sided contents, and the annual produce of the forests is about 1,000 loads.

"The Madras Government do not engage to provide freight or to ship the timber; the price delivered at the port of shipment is about £10 per load. To this must be added the expense of shipping the timber on board and the freight including delivery into the Dockyards in England which may be estimated at about £7 per load, making a total cost of £17 per load, exclusive of sending a Purveyor from England to select the timber for shipment.

"It is, however, to be observed that the Officiating Conservator of the Forests in his report of the 21st May 1864 speaks of the timber provided as being trimmed into planks of from 4 to 12 inches depth and 9 to 15 inches broad in order to avoid heart-shakes. The Moulmein teak-timber heretofore supplied under contract has been square timber of larger dimensions, and the average price paid under the present contract (1865) is £13-5-0 per load delivered at the Dockyards in England.

"Looking at the limited supply of the timber available from the Anamallai forests compared with the expenditure of teak-timber in the Dockyards, and to the expense and uncertainty of obtaining the supply under any arrangement that can be made by the Admiralty, I would submit for their Lordships' consideration whether it would be worthwhile to entertain the proposal of the Government of Madras."

On the 25th July 1865 their Lordships informed the Storekeeper-General that they had declined to offer the Anamallai teak-timber, in consequence of the cost of the timber offered so greatly exceeding the price at which it could be procured in the market.

The foregoing extracts of the correspondence referred to considered with the present offer of a supply of teak-timber from the Anamallai forests has enabled me to draw these conclusions.

(1.) That it is not clearly shown in my opinion that Malabar teak-timber is superior in quality to much of the teak grown in the Tenasserim Province of Burmah. The reports bearing upon it having been made by officers who had very little practical knowledge of the two woods; and further that experience has shown there are certain districts in Burmah yielding teak quite as good in quality as that worked into the *Dalhousie* Frigate (partly built at Bombay) and in some other of the teak ships of the Royal Navy professedly built of Malabar wood.

(2.) That as it appears to be characteristic of the teak-trees of the Anamallai forests to have injurious heart-shakes, they are far less useful than those of Burmah (shipped at the port of Moulmein) which are comparatively solid trees, and are available for conversion on pits or mills

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
19th February 1873.

in England to any thickness of plank required without usually greater loss than the centre plank; while it is stated in the reports* of the former that it cannot be sawn, but must be cleaned or split with wedges in the direction of the heart-shake, and from the flitches thus obtained planks of various thicknesses are produced by skilled men; it very naturally follows from the process that nearly the whole so worked would be of dressed or facing forme nd s to make it fit for employmen which would involve a heavy loss.

* *Vide* papers relating to Forest Conservancy in India, Part 2, Madras page 56.

I submit on these grounds and apart from the question of cost per load that the Anamallai teak-timber is not, in my opinion, suitable for the Navy.

No. 123. ORDER THEREON, 19th February 1873, No. 194.

Forests, No. 4.

COMMUNICATED, with copy of the enclosures, to the Inspector of Forests for report.

2. Major Beddome's recent letter† relative to the cost of the timber in question and the difficulty of arranging for its export to England has been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State in despatch dated 21st January 1873, No. 3.

† In G. O., 18th January 1873, No. 71.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

To the Inspector of Forests.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.

Ext. F. R. Bantleman.

5784.
8461.

Admiralty, S.W.
7th Dec, 1872.

Sir,

With reference to your Letter of the 7th ultimo, proposing to furnish Teak Timber from the Andamallan Hills for use in H.M. Dockyards in England, I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you for the information of the Secretary of State for India a Copy of a Report on the subject which has been received from the Visiting Inspector of Timber to the Admiralty.

I am Sir
Your obed. Servt.
(Sd.) Vernon Lushington

The Under Secretary
of State for India.

Sept.

Revenue Department

No. 194.

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Under date the 19th February 187

Read the following Despatch

from the Secretary of State

Transmitting copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Admiralty together with a report from the Visiting Inspector of Timber on the subject of supplying the dockyards with teak timber from the Annamallay Forests.

H. E. 31st December 1872 No. 5.

Communicated to the Board with copy of the enclosures to the Inspector of Forests for report.

Major Beddome's recent letter relative to the cost of the timber in question and the difficulty of arranging for its export to England, has been brought to

* M. G. O. 18th June 1873 No. 71.—

to the notice of the Secretary of State in Despatch dated 21st January 1893 No. 3.

8 To the Inspector of Forests dr. 20 Feb
14 " the Board of Revenue "
21 " the Public Works Dept "

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