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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
14th August 1873.

No. 93. Read the following letter from Major R. H. BEDDOME, Inspector of Forests, to the Hon. R. A. DALYELL, Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Ootacamund, 12th August 1873, No. 1,862 :—

WITH reference to paragraph 8 of Mr. Wedderburn's letter, No. 54, of the 18th April last, recorded in the Proceedings of the Board, No. 1,254, dated 11th July last, and to paragraph 13 of the same Proceedings now before Government, I have the honour to suggest that it is very necessary that Government should lay down some rules by which the ryots' rights to timber beyond their own village-limits (if any such rights exist) can be defined, as at present such rights are very vague and not understood by any of our officers or by the Revenue Authorities.

2. The Collector of Coimbatore informed me that the ryots were only entitled to timber and firewood, free of any seigniorage, in cases where such existed in jungles within their village-boundaries, and that where they have cleared away and cultivated all their wood-lands such rights, of course, ceased to exist; upon which I reported* to the Board that *free passes* would not be required in villages situated in the jungles. Some other Collectors hold quite similar views, and do not recognize any rights beyond village-boundaries. If, therefore, such rights are to be allowed, it is important that it should be clearly laid down to what distance from the jungles they extend.

* *Vide* Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, No. 1,415, dated 28th July 1873.

3. With reference to paragraph 16 of the Proceedings alluded to, and to paragraph 3 of Colonel Morgan's Memorandum recorded in the same, I think that it would be a very good plan that a portion of the Trichinopoly forest officer's time should be given to the floating operations on the Cauvery, if he can be spared by the Collector of that district. At present the planting operations in the padugays are not, I think, such as to occupy all his time; but, if this planting was undertaken on a scale which I now think it ought to be, it is very doubtful if his services could be spared. I have already reported to Government that I consider the planting operations in the vicinity of the Trichinopoly line of railway require the earnest attention of the Collectors of Trichinopoly and Tanjore.

4. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Board's order, I believe that nearly all the required area has now been taken up and reserved, and I hope shortly to have maps prepared, showing the area and situation of all the blocks. In the Salem District much more has been taken up than was at first proposed, as we could not get the nine square-miles required for Coimbatore within that district: the reservation and demarcation was long ago finished in this district, and maps prepared. In North Arcot we are still, I believe, six square-miles short of the required area. A block of this extent, selected by the Revenue Authorities, has been twice handed over to us, and partly fenced in by our department; but on both occasions it has been taken back, and now finally† disallowed by Government upon a petition from the ryots of the district; though, I believe, that this block was selected out of a very large area of grazing ground, as being the portion of least benefit to the ryots; and the Collector himself reported that its reservation would in no way trench upon any communal rights. This has delayed the settlement of the reserves in this district,

† *Vide* G. O., No. 591, of the 11th June 1873.

and I have not heard if anything further has been done to secure this required area elsewhere. In Cuddapah several large blocks have been taken up, but here also several hitches and disputes have occurred, and, at the date of my last visit, the fourteen square-miles required had not then been reserved; but the Collector promised to give the matter immediate attention, so I presume the question has been settled ere this, but a map and final report is still wanting. Near Walyar, on the confines of Coimbatore and Malabar, a tract has been, or is about to be, purchased; but the arrangement of this is entirely in the hands of the Collector of Malabar. In Tinnevelly and Madura a sufficient area has, I believe, been taken up; but Imperial and local reserves are mixed up together and under the same management, and a final report and map, clearly showing all the former, are both required, and the question requires immediate attention in the Trichinopoly and Tanjore Districts.

5. I am not now in correspondence with any of the forest officers, and I do not even see any of the monthly reports (except Tinnevelly, which is forwarded by the Collector), so that I am much in the dark as to what is going on, and Collectors of districts are so constantly changing that, even in cases where they are able to give some time and attention to forest-work, there is often much hindrance, as a new man generally has views quite at variance to those of his predecessor.

No. 94.

ORDER THEREON, 14th August 1873, No. 844.

Forests, No. 3.

REFERRED to the Board of Revenue for their observations.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Forests
Referred to the Board of Revenue for their observations
No. 844.
Extract
14 Aug 1873
3/25

Recd 1873-74. Dept
Forest Department

From No. 2440

The Inspector of
Forests.

To,

The Actg Secy. to Govt.

Referred R.D.

Dated 12th "
Received 13th } August 1873.

No. 1862.

Enclosure Nos.

Subject

Submits certain suggestions
with reference to Board's
Proceedings No. 1354 of the
11th ultimo.

No. 93-94