859

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

No. 121. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 11th July 1873, No. 1,254, Forest No. 34 :—

Read the following letters :—

From A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 18th April 1873, No. 51 :—

1. Collector's Memorandum to Colonel Morgan, No. 28, dated 5th March 1873.
2. Colonel Morgan's reply, No. 6-17, dated 4th April 1873.
3. Colonel Morgan's Memorandum, dated 4th April 1873.

I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Board of Revenue, copies of correspondence regarding fuel reserves for the Great Southern of India Railway Company.

2. The letter of Colonel Morgan was preceded by a Memorandum from myself on the subject of the Northern Forests of this district, which I inspected in considerable detail on the line of the Burghoor river and adjacent valleys above and below Nadacavul and to six miles above Cauveripuram.

3. I was not of opinion that the so-called Northern Forests were capable of much reduction; the country is more of a grazing than a tree-producing one, and though of immense extent, yet the trees are small, sparse, and distances great. I consequently cautioned the Deputy-Conservator against reliance on these tracts as capable of supplying a demand for the Railway; anticipating that clearances in this pasture land (it grazes cattle by the thousand) might be attended with results as in the Cuddapah Hills.

4. I have not as yet inspected the amount of available wood between the Palmallai range, a long high ridge of Hills subtending Nerinjipett and the Cauvery; so, am not in a position to offer an opinion as to the amount that can be annually cleared in the Cauvery valley. I have heard that it is mostly scrub. If at all like the jungles I have inspected on the Burghoor Range, it will have to be worked with caution, and its having recovered from ravages made more than fifteen years ago, is no argument for its standing annual clearances.

5. I lately refused an application, though supported by the Deputy-Conservator, for 3,800 acres, in this very Nerinjipett valley, for cowle ostensibly for cultivation, but which would simply have been a clearance of the wood, and the land thrown up after the expiry of the favourable cowle.

6. As yet there seems to have been no conservancy; only the seignorage collection on wood let out to contractors, some of whose operations I detailed in my letter of the 24th March 1873, No. 37.

7. The most favourable prospect of conservancy, as regards the replenishment of wood for fuel, appears to be in the reclaimed banks of the Cauvery, where nanul grass or rushes protect the banks from the erosion of the river. The Babool, a hardy tree, which survives partial immersion, might well be planted in these padugays.

8. Looking to the present actuality as well as future possibility, of an increased rate for coal, greater demand and consequently, enhanced price for wood, its consequent destruction, and slow process of restoration, I would seriously urge the abolition of the free license to ryots not living in Hill jungles; the collection of a revenue which will enable us to make plantations which are futile if not fenced

and watched, the abolition of the wasteful system of collection of seignorage by leasing out jungles, and replacing it by collection by tannahs.

9. Conservancy in its true sense can only be effected by reserves; when every one cuts and collects from a common ground, there is, in time, an end of such resources, and the establishment of reserves is as a granary against future famine.

10. I may add that I saw nothing in my lengthened inspection of the Burghoor river and its tributaries to justify a proposed scheme of a tramway or pontage mooted by Mr. Nordmann—*vide* Proceedings, Madras Government, dated 15th June 1872, No. 1,484.

11. The Burghoor river is a Hill stream which is several times in heavy fresh during the rainy season, and at others almost dry, with a few pools; and in the hot season water is got by digging in the sand. The banks were fringed by some good trees, the cutting of which I would deprecate; and the surrounding hills were of the character I have before stated, not fitted by nature to carry heavy timber, and more of a pasture land than a forest.

12. As regards Colonel Morgan's proposal to give an insufficiently worked Assistant at Tanjore or Trichinopoly, the charge of Nerinjipett Forests in addition to the fuel reserves of the Trichinopoly and Tanjore Districts lower down the river, there is only this objection, that he being attached to another district, I should not have that control over his proceedings that might be attained by leaving the conservancy with the Collector of Coimbatore.

Enclosure No. 1.

No. 28.

Collector's observations in the Jungles in the Bhowany Division from Andyoor to Nadacavul.

The Burghoor ghaut is very bare of trees, and unshaded for the most part, till near the top. Bamboos are plentiful all over the Burghoor plateau, and the wood grows in ravines of a shola character. There is no dense forest. On the north side of the Burghoor range, the trees become thinner and smaller all about Nadacavul; over the hills, they are small and scanty; the Burghoor river is fringed with some fine tamarind and a soft wood tree called Maroottha. Although there is an immense tract of country on which trees are growing, yet they are by no means thick, quite the contrary, and if further thinned, will have an effect on the rain-fall, and grass which they partially protect. If the trees growing in this stony soil be cut, they will not be re-placed by a like vegetation, but probably some Euphorbia will take their place, as on the barren stony hills of Cuddapah, which once were covered with forest.

2. I advocate therefore, only selling dead wood, as fuel to the Railway Company, and carefully collecting the drift timber on a fresh, as there is a great deal as I saw. Some was cut wood sticking about the Burghoor river and its affluents. Once it gets into the Cauvery it may be said to be lost, as it cannot then be identified.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. WEDDERBURN,
Collector.

Colligul,
5th March 1873.

Enclosure No. 2.

From Colonel H. R. MORGAN, Deputy-Conservator of Forests, to A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, dated Ootacamund, 4th April 1873, No. 6-17.

In reply to your observations on the Burghoor and Nadacavul Jungles, I have the honour to inform you, that I do not propose to cut in the drier parts, and where the trees are scanty, and quite agree that the results might be such as you anticipate.

2. We are now cutting between the Pala Hill, near Nerinjipett and Cauveripuram, over an area of twenty-four square miles of low jungle. We take out about [illegible] acre, this is equal to a supply of 15,000 tons annually, without encroaching too much on the re-productive powers of the land. I may mention that for twenty miles on either bank the jungle was felled some twenty years ago to make charcoal for the Iron works at Nerinjipett, huge brick-kilns were built, and the consumption must have been enormous, yet the jungle has grown up, and shows no signs of having been heavily cut into.

3. The cut wood that you saw near Nadaavul was sent down the river as an experiment, to ascertain where the obstructions were, in order to have them removed, the lower part of the river is better wooded than the upper.

4. To attempt to catch wood that has been cut and in the Cauvery would be, as you say, a hopeless task; in a former correspondence with Government I pointed this out.

5. The dead wood that you allude to would not be accepted by the Railway, they will take none but the best fuel, and that freshly cut. Certain Acacias we cut, but soft woods are all rejected.

6. I forward a Memorandum on the subject of Railway fuel as the subject is a very important one.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. WEDDERBURN,
Collector.

Enclosure No. 3.

Memorandum on the supply of fuel to part of the Madras line and the Great Southern of India Railway Company line.

Having lately inspected the whole of the line from Nerinjipett to Negapatam, I am in a position to propose a definite plan for the suppy of fuel to the Railway at present, and for future years. From inquiries that I made, it appear to me that the question of Railway fuel urgently requires attention. The Great Southern of India Railway Company were content to rely upon coal so long as it could be delivered at 15 Rupees the ton at Negapatam, that cheap source of supply has, I presume, been cut off for ever. Australia was tried, the coal was approved of, and the price 18 Rupees a ton was no bar to its use but the steady rise in the price of coal in England will, of course, influence the price in Australia. This is the present position of affairs, what it will be ten years hence, it would be difficult to determine; but one thing is certain that the Railways, if economy of working is to be consulted, must use wood. The question remains to be answered as to where the wood is to come from.

2. I have in various reports shown that west of Coimbatore, fuel at a cheap rate can be provided, and I believe the Collector of Malabar intends utilizing the felled timber at Nellumbore for Railway fuel by sending it down in basket boats to Beypore. At present the greater part of the wood is burnt. From Metapoliyam to Coimbatore there is abundance of fuel. From Errode to Coimbatore we can supply fuel from the river, we can also supply twenty-five miles of the line on the Salem side of Errode; and the Great Southern of India Railway Company as far as Caroor forty miles. Beyond this point the price of wood fuel would rise so much that, unless coal was 30 Rupees a ton, wood could not be used. Wood can be floated as far as Trichinopoly, and would cost us to deliver about 8 Rupees a ton. At present the estimate for the supply of 140 miles of line is 7,000 tons annually. This represents at 6 Rupees a ton 42,000 Rupees. The supply of fuel below Caroor devolves upon Trichinopoly and Tanjore. At present I see no hope of any fuel worth speaking of coming from those quarters. The Padugay land of Trichinopoly which are being planted up, must be a dead failure, as they are infested by hundreds of semi-wild cattle who eat down every thing, and unless this nuisance is put a stop to by the Revenue authorities, the result must be a waste of money. I consider these Padugay lands as capable of affording an important source of supply of Railway fuel if properly managed. Below Trichinopoly there are

several hundreds of acres of waste land abutting on the line, which, if fenced in, and the bare places sown with germinating seeds during the rainy season, might afford a supply of fuel (taking 50 acres to equal a mile of Railway) for twenty or thirty miles of line. In Tanjore the ground seems nearly all private property, but at Negpatam I am informed, there are several hundred acres of sandy soil suitable for Casuarina plantig. These should be taken up at once for planting. I cannot suggest anything for the present suply of fuel between Trichinopoly and Tanjore. I believe the demand of a few thousand tons would bring the price up to 9 or 10 Rupees a ton. Up to this the Great Southern of India Railway Company have only used wood fuel for lighting up their fires; indeed on this line they thought they were independent of wood altogether, but from a conversation I had with Mr. Bertram, the Agent, and Mr. Sheward, the Engineer, their views are now quite altered, and they are fully alive to the emergency of the case.

3. Last year we were only able to deliver 1,100 tons of fuel at Errode, but I trust this year to get down some 5,000 tons at least. My Head Overseer, Mr. Grant, just as the freshes commenced, fell sick, the floating Overseer neglected his work, hence instead of at least 3,000 tons we had but 1,100. The delivery of even 4,000 Rupees of firewood is an important matter, and as I understand that the Collector of Trichinopoly does not consider there is sufficient work for a Deputy-Conservator in his district, I would suggest that for half the month he be paid out of the working charges for Bhowany and employed under me in supplying fuel to the Railway. He might also have charge of any fuel reserves that may be made available in Tanjore, and a Casuarina plantation at Negapatam with a Seond Class Overseer under him. He would thus have to travel up and down the line from Nerijipett to Negapatam planting up the Padugays, fencing in reserves, planting at Negapatam, and delivering fuel at Errode.

4. In conclusion, I would observe that the enormous rise in the price of coal completely alters the aspect of the fuel question and invess it with an importance that it did not possess before. To the above may be added the chance of a war, when coal would certainly rise to a prohibitive price.

(Signed) H. R. MORGAN,
Deputy-Conservator of Forests.

OOTACAMUND,
4th April 1873.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. WEDDERBURN, Collector.

From J. B. PENNINGTON, Esq., Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 27th May 1873, No. 93.

IN the Lalpett Padugay, which forms one of the self-grown Railway fuel reserves of this district, there is a considerable quantity of babool ready to be cut for which the Railway Company offer Rupees 5-12-0 a ton, delivered at the adjoining Station of Lalpett. By actual experiment I find that it costs Rs. 1-8-6 to cut and cart a ton of the wood to the Station, so that the net profit to Government per ton is Rupees 4-3-6.

2. Some time ago I invited tenders for cutting and delivering the wood, (as per enclosed notice); and the highest price offered by any Contractor was Rupees 2-2-0 a ton *on the spot*, so that by departmental working there is a saving of Rupees 1-1-6 a ton, *if we can sell the wood at once:* if it has to wait till it is dry, we shall only save about Annas 15 a ton or so less.

3. The actual market value of *similar* firewood in Trichinopoly (if it could be got) at the present time is Rupees 2 a bandy load, or about 5 Rupees a ton, and the rate at which coal is now obtainable in Negapatam, is officially stated to be Rupees 16½ a ton.

4. I trust therefore that the Board will approve of my selling this wood at the rate mentioned (5-12-0). It is *not* artificially grown, and has cost us next to nothing, and must be cut that another crop may spring up.

5. As to *artificially* grown firewood, I agree with Mr. Puckle that we cannot sell it nearly so cheaply; so that the Railway Company must eventually be driven again to private proprietors and Zemindars for a supply, until the low country generally has been denuded of all scattered wood; and it is not till then that there will be any demand from the Government reserves. Even now the Udaiyarpoliyam Zemindar's Lessee has got a practical monopoly in supplying Combaconum and the neighbourhood with firewood, as he only charges 8 Annas a bandy load, whilst the Government rate is 1 Rupee; and when the new Railway through Combaconum is begun, the demand from the Udaiyarpoliyam Taluq will be enormous, so that he may be expected to clear more than half the extensive jungles of that Taluq with the utmost expedition.

6. What effect this clearance of wood in the plains may have, we have really no means of ascertaining with any degree of accuracy; though it will probably be universally admitted in a general way, that extensive clearings in a dry parched up-country like India, are likely to be injurious rather than otherwise; and, (as I think I have shown,) the attempt to *grow* wood in *Reserves* will not sensibly diminish the evil whatever it may be.

7. It appears to me, therefore, that the time has come to obviate further abnormal denudation by prohibiting the Railways from burning any wood, in accordance with what I believe has long been the very sensible practice of the Bombay Government on the Great Indian Peninsula line.

8. The Agent to the Great Southern of India Company at Negapatam informs me, that coal is generally purchased at the rate of 16 or 17 Rupees a ton, so that it would be no disadvantage to him even pecuniarily to be compelled to burn coal; and it probably only requires so much pressure to ensure his supplying himself with coal either from Australia or the Godavery.

9. Even if coal were much more expensive than it appears to be, I should strongly recommend its being made compulsory to burn it; for we can calculate the loss in reduced dividends pretty fairly, but no one has yet been able to estimate with any approach to accuracy, the damage that *may* be done by a systematic denudation of the low country, and I only see no other effectual safeguard against this danger.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Advertisement.

THESE papers refer to the supply of fuel to the Madras Railway on each side of Errode and to the Great Southern India line through Trichinopoly and Tanjore.

2. Colonel Morgan considers that the supply for the branch line from Coimbatore to Metapoliyam is amply sufficient, and that the Madras Railway from Coim-

tore past Errode for twenty-five miles towards Salem and the Great Southern India line from Errode to Caroor can be supplied from the northern forests of Coimbatore at prices which will suit the Railway Companies, *i.e.*, the Board presume at from one-third to one-fourth the price of coal. (The Board believe that the price at Errode is Rupees 6 a-ton.)

3. South of Errode Colonel Morgan is very doubtful whether sufficient fuel can ever be provided, and the Company see that the question is of importance, now that the price of coal is rising. He advises the fencing of the Trichinopoly Padugays, the reservation and sowing of the waste land south of Trichinopoly, which will supply fuel enough for twenty or thirty miles of railway, and the planting of Casuarinas at Negapatam.

4. He suggests that the Trichnopoly Deputy Conservator should have charge of the fuel supply at Errode (*i.e.*, the working of the forests along the Cauvery and Burghoor,) the padugay and reserves in Trichinopoly, and the Casuarina plantations at Negapatam; and that he should have a Second Class Overseer to help him.

5. The Collector of Coimbatore, in forwarding this Memorandum, expresses grave doubts as to whether the north frests will supply as much fuel as Colonel Morgan expects, and points out that he would have only a limited control over a Deputy Conservator attached to three districts. He suggests that the granting of free licenses to ryots and the leasing of seignorage collections should be given up, more reserves made, and the reclaimed banks of the Cauvery carefully planted.

6. The Collector of Trichinopoly asks for permission to sell 3,000 Babool trees in the Lalpett padugay to the Railway Company, who offer a better price than any body else; and in doing so, states a belief that wood from plantation can never be sold at prices which will dispace coal, which costs only Rupees 16-8-0 a-ton at Negapatam; that the Railway Companies, if permitted to use wood, will denude the country of jungles belonging to private proprietors; that this denudation may do harm; and that the Companies should, therefore, be prohibited from using wood.

7. In their Order of the 28th July 1870, No. 1,124, Government determined to plant or reserve a sufficient area to supply the whole of the railways of the Presidency with fuel. It was calculated that this area must be 100 square-miles, of which only twenty-six had been planted or reserved up to that time. Government ordered the reservation of seventy-five more square-miles, of which nine should be in Coimbatore and eight in Tanjore and Trichinopoly.

8. In their order of the 21st March 1871, No. 502, Government sanctioned planting 1,100 acres of padugay land in Trichinopoly and Kulatalai, buying and planting 264 acres of similar land held on joint putta, buying and planting 200 acres of tank-bed and tank-spread near the Trichinopoly station, the plantation under irrigation of 1 or 2 acres (as an experiment) nine miles from Trichinopoly, the plantation of waste near Tanjore belonging to the palace property provided it entailed no expense to Government and the plantation of 100 acres near Negapatam with Casuarinas. The Conservator characterized these operations as considerable, with a prospect of further extension, and a Range Officer was placed in

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

charge; but Colonel Morgan makes no reference to them. The Collectors of Trichinopoly; and Tanjore will report how much has been done up to date, and state their views as to Colonel Morgan's suggestions that waste land south of Trichinopoly should be fenced and sown with tree-seeds, and that more land should be planted with Casuarinas at Negapatam.

9. In Coimbatore the reservation of eighteen square-miles of forest (partly situated in the Nilgiri District) was sanctioned in G. O., June [illegible], No. 1,055.

10. Even if all the work projected in G. O., 21st March 1871, No. 502, has been completed, only two or three-square miles out of the eight considered necessary in Tanjore and Trichinopoly have been planted or reserved.

11. Before determining whether the remainder of the eight square-miles should be planted and reserved, the Board think it desirable that the price at which Government will be able to supply wood therefrom should be calculated. So long as coal is only Rupees 16-8-0 a-ton, which Mr. Pennington seems to think is the normal rate at Negapatam, there is no object in supplying the Company with wood, and it is, therefore, of little consequence that wood from reserves and plantations must cost more than one-fourth or even one-third of that sum; but the Board are informed that Rupees 16-8-0 a-ton is an exceptional rate; that the Great Southern India Agent is in great want of coal at the present moment, and has just purchased a large quantity at Rupees 30 a-ton; and that the price of coal is steadily rising. Hence, the price at which wood can be produced by Government is a matter of importance. The Board are not aware that it has ever been calculated. If it be more than Rupees 10 a-ton, the reserves will be useless so far as the Railway Companies are concerned, except in case of a war, unless the price of coal rises more rapidly than seems likely.

12. As regards the capacity of the northern forests of Coimbatore, which Colonel Morgan believes in, and Mr. Wedderburn doubts, nort fuher inquiry would do any good at present. The question is one which can only be determined by the experience of many years. It should be considered, however, whether the price charged at Errode, viz., Rupees 6 a-ton, is as much as it is worth the while of the Railway Company to pay.

13. Mr. Wedderburn's proposal to confiscate the rights of ryots to fuel, etc., without granting compensation is, of course, inadmissible.

14. Mr. Pennington's proposal to sell 3,000 Babool trees, which ought to be cut at once, to the parties who will give him the best price for them, is, of course, approved.

15. His suggestion that the use of coal on railways should be made compulsory is one that has been made before; but the question is more complicated than Mr. Pennington thinks. Coal costs Rupees 30 or Rupees 40 a-ton over a great part of the railways, and the supply might be altogether stopped in time of war.

16. The Board think that Colonel Morgan's suggestion as to the employment of a Deputy Conservator and Second Class Overseer should be referred to the Inspector of Forests before it is disposed of.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

No. 122. ORDER THEREON, 15th August 1873, No. 859.

Forests, No. 5

THE Governor in Council desires that the remarks of the Inspector of Forests on these Proceedings may be submitted to him through the Board of Revenue, at an early date.

(True Extract.)

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

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

No. 123. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th June 1873, No. 1,106 :—

Read the following letters :—

From J. H. MASTER, [illegible]

Forests 2705

13

Pro. Board of Revenue

Supply of fuel to Madras Railway on each side of Erode to Southern of India line through Trichinopoly and Tanjore.

11 July 1873. No. 1252.

No. 859. 15 Aug. 73

The G in C desires that the remarks of the Inspector of Forests may be submitted to him through the Board of Revenue, at an early date

5/15

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I&S

I suppose we should now receive these Proceedings further reference to J.O. 24 June 73

D.D.
for Secy to Govt of Madras
Inspector of Forests

Taluq Cutcherry at Pennakondah.

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Supply of gunny to Madura
Railway on each side of
Erode & to the G. S. I. Line
through Dindigul & Trichy

Gen

Govt

Despatch

Nos. 121-122

C. S. Aug. 73 2 13 Aug.

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

No. 123. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th June 1873, No. 1,106 :—

Read the following letters :—

From J. H. MASTER, Esq. (Coll...

Secretary
No. 133 :—
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required for those now being erected at Madrug and Pennakondah as reported in my letter No. 133 of yesterday.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Copies of Correspondence with the District Engineer.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.—Copy of Report to accompany Estimate for constructing a 1st-class Taluq Cutcherry at Pennakondah.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
15th August 1873.

No. 122. ORDER THEREON 15th August 1873, No. 859.

Forests, No. 5

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28 July / 30 No 234 - 37.
21 March / 73 - 290 - 91.
14 June / 73 - 173 - 74.
20 June / 73 - 86 [illegible]
18 June / 73 - 129 - 30.

Rev 1873 Dept
No 2242

1873.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 11TH JULY 1873, No. 1,254.

Dep 24 July 73
Encl. 1

Received 28 July 73

Nos. 121-122

JULY.

Forest No. 34.

Fuel — Supply of — to Railway.— Certain papers relating to supply of fuel to Madras Railway on each side of Errode and to Great Southern of India line through Trichinopoly and Tanjore, submitted to Government with remarks. Collectors of Tanjore and Trichinopoly requested to report how much has been done in formation of certain fuel plantations sanctioned by Government, etc.

20-15 August 73
No 854.

C. & Dept 9 & 13 Augt

C. & Dept 9 & 13 Augt