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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue. DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1107	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.

Dated 1 - 9 - 1874 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
1st September 1874.

Read the following papers:—

No. 1. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 13th September 1873, No. 1,818, Forest No. 51.

Read the following letters:—

From J. F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Mallapadi, 24th June 1873, No. 183.

I HAVE the honor to inform you, with reference to paragraph 9 of the Proceedings of Government, Revenue Department, No. 240, dated 1st March 1873, that I have been making inquiries regarding forest-products, *etc.*

2. I have also written privately to a member of one of the large European Firms at Madras, and have ascertained that it is willing to enter into negotiations for the purchase of the more important products which are now becoming articles of trade in the English market.

3. The chief forest-products obtainable in the district are given below with their prices. We have hitherto sold most readily all that we have collected:—

Name.	Estimated quantity obtainable.	Price realised.
Gall-nuts ... ... (Myrobalans)	20,000 Maunds of 25 lbs. each...	Rupees 1-3-0 per Maund.
Shiekai ... ... (Soap-seed)	5,000 Maunds	„ 0-12-0 do.
Kappilli ... ... Powder	2,000 lbs.	„ 0-14-0 per lb.
Pappilli bark	20,000 Maunds	„ 2-0-0 per Maund.
Wax	200 „	„ 15-0-0
Honey	600 „	„ 1-0-0

4. *Gall-nut.*—The amount of this product is very great, and the tree which bears it is found on all the hills of the district. The value in the English markets is from 10*s.* to £1 per cwt. The Chetties from the plains go up to the hills with two or three bullocks laden with condiments and salt, and they give these to the hillmen in payment for gall-nuts, the collection of which (in the way in which they conduct it) causes infinite damage to the trees. They then return to the plains with their pack-bullocks laden with the nuts, which they sell to the traders in the larger towns, and these people, in their turn, send them on to Madras where they are sold to the merchants for export.

Shiekai.—This is, I believe, not yet exported to Europe, but it finds a ready sale in the local market, and it may probably in time be found, from its detergent properties, of use in manufactures. The Deputy-Conservator thinks that it is not worth collection; but if we are to systematically gather forest-products, it might as well be included.

Pappilli.—The value of this in the English market is, I believe, 3*s.* per pound. It is a valuable red dye. When I last visited the Central Jail at Salem, I found that this article, which is used in coloring wool for the manufacture of carpets for export to England, was of a very inferior description, and much adulterated with sand and wood-dust. The Superintendent proposes to purchase it direct from us.

Kappilli.—This is the bark of a creeper which abounds all through the jungle. It is a fine brown dye, and does not appear to be known outside the local market. I have been asked to get samples for transmission to England. The price, which it brings here, is such as would render its collection remunerative.

Wax and Honey.—These are products of which comparatively small quantities could be obtained; but the hillmen are in the habit of collecting them, and it would, therefore, be advis-

able to take them off their hands. The wax could be disposed of for the English market, and the honey would command a ready sale here.

5. I have personally consulted both Mr. Brougham and Mohamed Alli Sahib, the Forest Overseer of the Denkanicottah Range, and I agree with them, from my own knowledge of the Denkanicottah jungles which is pretty extensive, that the estimates made regarding the forest-products above alluded to are rather under than over the mark. The prices set down are actuals and not estimates, and the probability is that, dealing without the intervention of middlemen, we could get more. The total gross value of the estimated quantity of forest-products mentioned by me is Rupees 68,495, not very far short of the whole income of the forests of the district in 1871-72.

6. The estimate which I have made is, I believe, not very far from correct, and a market for what can be obtained is assured. I have not entered into the question of collection, but I am aware that the cost of it would not exceed 50 per cent. at the very highest. I unfortunately forgot to note what it was in the case of the products which we sold last year, but my impression is that it was not more than 25 per cent.

7. If the Board approve of my views, I will see what arrangements can be made, and report the estimated cost of extended collections.

8. I have not touched upon the subject of forest-fruits, as I wish to know the Board's decision upon the question of the formation of village jungles. I am also of opinion that it would not pay us to collect them, as a very large number of people would have to be employed, and there are not enough junglemen for the purpose. I am in favor of renting out this class of products in all unreserved jungles, and leaving it to the hill-people in all such as are reserved. With regard to drugs, I am aware that many valuable ones are procurable in the forests of this country. I have directed my Apothecary to get me a list of them, with the Vernacular names, and when I have obtained this, I will set about inquiries on the subject.

9. The mode in which I have stated that Myrobalans find their way into the market holds good with regard to other forest-products. The petty trader, generally a crafty Komati, goes into the hills with tempting provisions and a few trinkets, and these are his means of barter. The hill simpletons are cheated right and left, the Chetty manages to make them out in debt, and keeps them so; he screws out of them double or treble the value of what he supplies, and he takes every opportunity to set his victims against the Forest Department, and to prevent their selling to us. It is only of late, by a system of advances and by judicious treatment, that the hillmen have come to the conclusion that every one connected with the "Circar" is not their born enemy. I believe that now we could easily retain the whole of the jungle-tribes of the sub-division, and Mr. Brougham thinks that he could do the same in the rest of the district as collectors of forest-products for Government.

10. As to the extent of the present traffic, it is difficult to make any estimate, as it is carried on by a large number of petty traders, who either collect for some richer man or else do so to sell again. What I have already said will give some idea of the direction of the trade, and, if the Board desire it, I will ask the Traffic Manager of the Madras Railway to let me know the quantity and nature of forest-products carried from the stations in this district during the past year.

11. I consider that the present system of allowing the Chetties to come up to the hills and employ the jungle-people in gathering the forest-produce wherever they think fit is a very great evil. They break the branches off the trees, destroy the fruit-bearing twigs, and very often by their carelessness produce fires. A group of gall-nut trees which has been operated upon under their superintendence looks as if it had been subjected to the influence of a severe gale of wind. I think, too, that they cheat and oppress the hill-people, and prevent, as much as possible, our being on good terms with them; and I am strongly in favor of their not being allowed in any but the unreserved jungles.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
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12. I would submit, with reference to paragraph 11 of the order of Government above alluded to, that a system of rentals to either one person or a body of ryots of a particular tract of forest, containing natural products, would be preferable to the issue of licenses. The forests are so extensive and the watchers so few that there would be unceasing theft, with an almost positive certainty of nondetection, and the consequence would finally be that the license system would become a dead-letter. In the case of rentals, the parties taking them would be quick enough in looking after their own interests, and would save Government the expense and trouble of watching those parts of the forest let to them.

From J. F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 18th August 1873, No. 237.

In continuation of my letter marginally noted, I have the honor to report, for the information of the Board of Revenue, that the Deputy-Conservator of Forests has ascertained by the books of the five Tannahs of Rediyur, Alavgayam, Andayapanur, Chetteri, and Mathupallé on the Jawadi Hills, all of which are on the Vaniembadi and Tripatur sides, that the following forest-products, for which Government did not receive a pie of revenue, passed through them during the year 1872-73 :—

24th June 1873, No. 183.

Myrobalans, 1,12,000 Madras measures, valued at Rupees	14,000
Kappilli dye, 1,600 lbs., valued at .. .. .. „	12,000
Pappilli dye, 3,00,000 lbs., valued at .. .. .. „	3,600
Taggarai seeds (dye), 32,000 Madras measures, valued at .. .. „	2,000

No account was kept of wax.

2. The total market value of the products above alluded to, at the average rates, amounts to Rupees 21,800.

3. Large quantities of these articles are taken down on the North Arcot and South Arcot sides; and besides this, still more are never collected at all. When calculating the value of the forest-products of the district, I took the value of the outturn, excluding the sub-division, at Rupees 34,000, and Rupees 21,800 of this amount has been accounted for on one face of the Jawadies alone.

4. We are now engaged in obtaining statistics regarding the forest-products brought down from the Sherveroys, Kolimalais, Patchémalais, Yallagherries, and Periakulroyans. Mr. Brougham has learned that great quantities of Myrobalans are carried from the Sherveroys, and it is known that there is very much forest-produce on the Kolimalais and other hills.

5. The Deputy-Conservator has been making inquiries on the Jawadies, and the head-men there have engaged to collect produce, but have represented that they are about 7,000 Rupees in debt to the Chetties who thus keep a screw upon them.

6. Mr. Brougham and I have gone into the results of our limited transactions in forest-produce, and we are of opinion that we can make a *clear profit* of 60 per cent. at the very least and that for an outlay of Rupees 10,000 we can give Government a return of a lakh of Rupees or thereabouts.

7. I most strongly advocate the opening up of this branch of trade. I have thought and talked the matter over a good deal, and have seen much for myself; and I feel assured that, with the assistance of an officer of Mr. Brougham's stamp, I can realise from the forests of this district,—and that without the least oppression of the hill-tribes, but, on the contrary, with an improvement in their present condition,—an extremely handsome revenue. I may not be able to show these results for the first year; but I will undertake to do so in the second, and I will undertake that the return for the first year's outlay shall, at the least, be satisfactory.

These letters will be submitted to Government, with reference to G. O., dated 1st March 1873, No. 240.

2. The Acting Collector of Salem shows that the jungle-products of the district are of considerable value. In his first letter they are estimated as worth about 70,000 Rupees a-year, and in the second letter he states that it has been ascertained that products worth Rupees 21,800 passed the forest tannahs on the Salem side of the Jawadi hills alone.

3. The trade is at present in the hands of itinerant merchants who visit the hills with goods for barter, and, it is said, cheat the hillmen and exercise a bad influence over them, which, however, is now beginning to be undermined. Mr. Price writes as if there were already considerable transactions between the forest officers and the hillmen, but no details are given as to the nature of the purchases made or of the terms. He is requested to report further on the point.

4. His proposals for renting the collection of jungle-fruits appear to the Board objectionable, and paragraph 12 of his first letter is written as if Government interests were the sole consideration. This point has already been so fully discussed that no more needs be said upon it.

5. The Board, however, agree with him in thinking that the traders should be entirely excluded from any but the unreserved jungles. They see no objection to the collection of forest-products for Government being undertaken, but the operations of the forest officers should be strictly confined to purchasing produce brought for sale at depôts to be established in convenient places. Traders might, if it be thought advisable, be admitted to visit the hillmen at their places. The latter would then have the alternative of dealing with them or with Government, and would be secured from oppression. If the Government approve, the detailed arrangements will be reported. Mr. Price estimates that for an outlay of Rupees 10,000 a profit of a lakh can be secured to Government. The Board can scarcely think that such a result would be consistent with fair treatment of the hillmen, though possibly they might still be as well off as when the trade was in private hands. The chief object should be the improvement of the status of the people rather than the realisation of a revenue.

No. 1A. MINUTE BY THE HON. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

I have gone carefully into Mr. Price's proposals, and I think that the practicability of raising a revenue from the forest-products of the Salem District merits serious consideration. Mr. Price shows that the value of the trade is very considerable, and he knows the district well and is a good observer and safe informer.

2. The jungle-products of the Salem District were rented out by Government up to 1864. Similar rents existed in other districts, and were given up in 1854, not because it was even *supposed* that the State had no right to such products, but because it was then found impossible to protect the hill-tribes from oppression and ill-usage, while the revenue realised was small. The Government of India, who had, in 1848, directed that the right of the State to the products of unclaimed and unappropriated plains and forests and to a portion of the profits derived from them should not be renounced if it could be exercised without oppression, at first demurred; ultimately, however, they assented to the abandonment of the rents. But, on the recommendation of the Madras Government, the headmen of the hill-tribes were required to pay annually a small tribute in kind, as a token of fealty to Government and as *an admission of liability to taxation*. Mr. Price's proposals, therefore, involve no invasion of any rights possessed by the hillmen, and this is otherwise self-evident; for if these tribes have a right to the fruit of a tree, they must surely have a right to the tree itself,—so far at least as its existence goes,—and no one, I believe, has advanced the theory that Government cannot cut down any tree in these forests without the permission of the hill-tribes. Certainly, under the Native régime, no hillman could have advanced such a claim, and it should be remembered that when we speak of "prescriptive" and "immemorial" rights and privileges, we have to go back to times when a man could scarcely call his head his own. I yield to none in deep respect for rights of every kind; but I like to be assured that what is *called* a right really *is* one. In India, I may say,

that we have ourselves created "rights" in the sense of privileges, which the ruling power itself must and does respect with scrupulous fidelity; but India is still a country in which many privileges are enjoyed unchallenged without attaining the status of *rights*, and I hold that, in the interests of the community at large, we are bound to be careful how we allow such permissive usances to be magnified into *rights*. Beside the State on the one side and the hillman on the other, I do not see who else can lay claim to the products of these forests. The only other person here concerned is the trader, and he, I maintain, can have no right to them. He is merely the go-between; he buys from the gatherer to sell to the consumer, and if the former has no indefeasible right to what he gathers free of tax, neither can the latter have to what he simply buys to sell again.

3. So far, therefore, as *rights* go I maintain that Mr. Price's proposals are not assailable.

4. The question then arises whether the State should exercise its rights in this matter.

5. I maintain that it should.

I. In the interests of the public at large. I do not think that in these days of increasing financial difficulties we are justified in renouncing any legitimate source of revenue, such as I hold this to be.

II. In the interests of the hill-tribes themselves. I believe their welfare is safer in the hands of Government officers *now* than in those of the traders with whom they have to deal. I wish I could think that the dealings of the astute Chetties of the plains with these wild men of the woods were as liberal or even as fair as my Honorable Colleague Mr. Robinson believes, and that when it comes to a trial of "cuteness" between them the untutored savage generally has the best of it. All the world over, I think, experience has shown that the latter,—be he Red Indian, African Negro, or Australian savage,—is no match for the more civilised trader. The 7,000 Rs. mentioned by Mr. Price and noticed by Mr. Robinson may, indeed, be a mere banking account; but I confess that I am rather sceptical of Chetties so freely accommodating denizens of the forest, who have no possessions beyond their scanty coverings and rude implements at all events, such "accommodation" implies large profits in the long run. My opinion inclines to that expressed by Mr. Price; but be this as it may, I maintain that if the hillman can hold his own with the Chetty, he can do the like with the Government subordinate, supervised closely as the latter now is.

6. In the days when these jungle-rents were given up, because it was found impossible to protect the hillman from ill-usage, a district had but a Collector, a Sub-Collector, and two Assistants at most, and the native subordinates were not of a high class; *now* it has also Deputy-Collectors, Forest officers, a well-organised Police, *etc.*, and the "tone" of our native subordinates has immeasurably improved. What was impossible then is possible now. If, however, the hillmen of Salem, notwithstanding free trade and intercourse with these liberal traders for ten years, are unequal to a contest with a forest subordinate, it is high time that we should try some other method of raising them to some degree of independence. It seems to me that it is opposed to all knowledge of human nature to expect these traders to attempt to civilise the hillmen; their interest is quite the other way; it is to keep them as they are,—"hewers of wood and drawers of water." Our forest officers,—at least the higher grades, European and Native,—would be actuated by higher motives, and though a subordinate here and there may fleece them, the general influence of the department would, I believe, be decidedly in favor of the hillman's elevation in the scale of civilisation.

7. Mr. Robinson considers that there is no loss of these jungle-products, and little injury to the forests themselves in their collection. As to the former Mr. Price says there is, and the forest officers agree with him; and I can myself say that members of the mercantile community at Madras have assured me that trade with England in such valuable products as gums and resins is almost precluded by the wretched condition in which they are brought to them, and the uncertainty and difficulty of ensuring supplies to order. As to injury to the forests in the collection of such articles, I beg attention to paragraph 11 of Mr. Price's letter to the Board, dated 24th June 1873, which I am sure will be corroborated by every forest officer in the Presidency.

8. I recommend, therefore, that in the reserved tracts the forest officer, Mr. Brougham, be allowed to employ the hillmen in collecting the forest-produce, paying them for the work just as when they are employed in felling timber and other forest-operations. The Government, so far back as 1869, directed that the reserved forest should be closed to others than the forest-tribes living in them. I see no reason why any change should now be made in the absence of any complaint from any one; and for my part I cannot realise the idea of a "reserve" into which any one can enter at his own will and pleasure.

9. I would impress on the Collector that the employment of the hillmen is to be purely voluntary; that they are to be liberally paid; and especially that their civilisation and reclamation are to be considered objects of paramount importance.

10. The unreserved tracts I would leave alone for the present until it be seen how Mr. Price's experiment succeeds; but such hillmen as engage themselves in collecting their produce should be allowed the option of selling what they gather to Government, at fixed prices, if they see fit to do so.

(Signed) J. D. SIM.

No. 1B. MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

MR. PRICE lays before the Board of Revenue proposals to enable the Collector of Salem to become the monopolist of all small forest-products in the district of Salem.

2. He proposes to work the reserved hill-forests so as to supplant the old hill-trader, who has hitherto carried on the convenient barter by which the hill-tribes get their food, clothing, salt, *etc.*, with practical good faith between the two; and he is in favor of farming the products of all unreserved jungles—in fact, of all the village woodlands throughout the length and breadth of his district—to middlemen contractors who will "be quick enough in looking after their own interests and save Government the expense and trouble of watching".

3. Mr. Price estimates that for woodlands stretching from Denarkencottah to Javady and some hundred miles from north to south, he will get some Rs. 70,000 a-year from gall-nuts, *etc.* It would be more, he thinks, could he work his district and people "without the intervention of middlemen;" but their profits, he sees, must go off Revenue gains. Mr. Price seems to forget that there is a popular side of the "middleman," and that, from this point of view, the parcelling out the district amongst a host of middlemen must lead to serious disorder.

4. It is not averred that nature's products are lost; nay, they are probably collected with care, and form in private hands, I believe, a valuable popular industry which I would greatly regret to see destroyed and superseded by the trade becoming the monopoly of Government.

5. As regards assuming the exclusive trade with the denizens of reserved forests, I simply do not believe (and I have had much to do with hill-tribes when they were less free than they now are) that the hill-traders oppress the hill-tribes in the manner which is so frequently averred. The existing free-trade conditions on which it is conducted prevent this: and taking cheating for cheating, I believe that the hillman has often by no means been the worst of it. The fact is, hill-trade is a very difficult branch of trade, and very precarious. It requires considerable capital*, and it is subject to long credits and many bad debts. These hill-merchants and bankers are real benefactors by enabling the forest-tribes to tide over the occasional difficulties to which they are subject. The Rs. 7,000 alluded to in Mr. Price's second letter is no doubt a quasi-banking account, and it is well that these poor hill-tribes can get accommodation. I should consider that a change for the worse had been inaugurated if hard and fast Circar monopoly had taken the place of an ancient well-understood and natural course of trade in those hills. Considerable exaggeration occurs as to harm done to forests by breaking twigs, *etc.*, in gathering the fruits, honey and the like; none necessarily follows, and probably little or none occurs.

*N.B.—I observe that the Collector wants a capital of Rs. 10,000 to start with.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
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6. On the whole, I deprecate meddling with these things, but most of all the proposal to shed a flood of middlemen over the country, or set up hosts of local farmers—be they ryots or who they may—to collect the petty woodland berries, barks and the like, over the whole unreserved woodlands of the country. It would, I think, cause a feeling of resentment in every village, and do so with reason.

7. I do not altogether see under what law or prescription it is proposed to acquire and appropriate the monopolies now recommended. It is true that it is proposed to deal with these things under the new Forest law, and where foreclosure by the State of popular usages and servitudes is thought desirable, a procedure is laid down to regulate compensation. But the law has not been passed; and I think that we cannot anticipate the action of the legislature.

8. I would refuse to entertain the proposition.

30th October 1873. (Signed) W. ROBINSON.

No. 1C. MINUTE BY THE RIGHT HON. THE GOVERNOR.

I ENTIRELY agree with Mr. Robinson, and consider these proposals to be altogether objectionable.

2nd November 1873. (Signed) HOBART.

No. 2. ORDER THEREON, 1st September 1874, No. 1,107.

Forests, No. 1.

IN their order of the 27th February 1874, No. 267, the Government approved the proposal of the Board that 10,000 Rupees should be placed at the disposal of the Collector and the forest officer in Salem, in order that the experiment of buying forest-produce from the hill-tribes on behalf of Government might be tried.

2. On a further and fuller consideration of the subject in connection with the paper above recorded, His Excellency the Governor in Council now resolves to recall that order, and to direct that the experiment, if already commenced, be brought to an early conclusion.

3. His Excellency in Council is averse to supplanting or seriously interfering with the traders who have for long carried on the special traffic with the hill-tribes, and the scheme proposed by the Acting Collector would affect injuriously transactions which, if lucrative, are already sufficiently precarious, and which, on Mr. Price's own showing, require a considerable permanent outlay.

4. It does not appear that there is any material loss or waste of the natural products of the forests, and it seems probable that the damage done in their collection is more apparent than real.

5. His Excellency is of opinion that the traffic should be left to follow its natural channels, undisturbed by the competition of Government, and that no restriction should at present be placed on the privilege of entry into the forests hitherto enjoyed by the traders.

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Acting Secretary to Government.

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7. If the Board approve of my views, I will see what arrangements can be made, and report the estimated cost of extended collections.

8. I have not touched upon the subject of Forest fruits, as I wish to know the Board's decision upon the question of the formation of village jungles. I am also of opinion that it would not pay us to collect them, as a very large number of people would have to be employed and there are not enough jungle men for the purpose. I am in favour of renting out this class of products in all unreserved jungles, and leaving it to the hill people in all such as are reserved. With regard to drugs, I am aware that many valuable ones are procurable in the Forests of this country. I have directed my Apothecary to get me a list of them with the Vernacular names, and when I have obtained this, I will set about enquiries on the subject.

9. The mode in which I have stated that myrobalons find their way into the market, holds good with regard to other Forest products. The petty trader, generally a crafty Komati, goes into the hills with tempting provisions and a few trinkets, and these are his means of barter. The Hill simpletons are cheated right and left, the chetty manages to make them out in debt and keeps them so; he screws out of them double or treble the value of what he supplies, and he takes every opportunity to set his victims against the Forest Department and to prevent their selling to us. It is only of late, by a system of advances and by judicious treatment, that the Hill men have come to the conclusion that every one connected with the "Circar" is not their born enemy. I believe that now we could easily retain the whole of the jungle tribes of the Sub-Division, and Mr. Brougham thinks that he could do the same in the rest of the district, as Collectors of Forest products for Government.

10. As to the extent of the present traffic, it is difficult to make any estimate, as it is carried on by a large number of petty traders, who either collect for some richer man or else do so to sell again. What I have already said will give some idea of the direction of the trade, and if the Board desire it, I will ask the Traffic Manager of the Madras Railway to let me know the quantity and nature of Forest products carried from the stations in this district during the past year.

11. I consider that the present system of allowing the Chetties to come up to the hills and employ the jungle people in gathering the Forest produce wherever they think fit is a very great evil. They break the branches off the trees, destroy the fruit-bearing twigs, and very often, by their carelessness produce fires. A group of gall-nut trees which has been operated upon under their superintendence, looks as if it had been subjected to the influence of a severe gale of wind. I think too that they cheat and oppress the hill people and prevent, as much as possible, our being on good terms with them, and I am strongly in favour of their not being allowed in any but the unreserved jungles.

12. I would submit, with reference to paragraph 11 of the Order of Government, above alluded to, that a system of rentals, to either one person or a body of ryots, of a particular tract of Forest containing natural products, would be preferable to the issue of licenses. The Forests are so extensive and the watchers so few, that there would be unceasing theft, with an almost positive certainty of non-detection, and the consequence would finally be, that the license system would become a dead letter. In the case of rentals, the parties taking them would be quick enough in looking after their own interests, and would save Government the expense and trouble of watching those parts of the Forest let to them.

From J. F. PRICE, Esq., Acting Collector of Salem, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 18th August 1873, No. 237.

In continuation of my letter marginally noted, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Revenue, that the Deputy-Conservator of Forests has ascertained by the books of the five Tannahs of Rediyur, Alavgayam, Andayapanúr, Chetteri, and Mathupallé on the Jawadi Hills, all of which are on the Vaniembadi and Tripatur sides, that the following Forest products, for which Government did not receive a pie of Revenue, passed through them during the year 1872-73.

24th June 1873, No. 183.

2. Myrobalons 1,12,000 Madras measures valued at Rupees 14,000.

	Rs.
Kappilli Dye 1,600 lbs. valued at	12,000.
Pappilli Dye 300,000 lbs. valued at	3,600.
Taggarai Seeds (Dye) 32,000 Madras measures valued at	3,000.

3. No account was kept of wax.

4. The total market value of the products above alluded to, at the average rates, amounts to Rupees 21,800.

5. Large quantities of these articles are taken down on the North Arcot and South Arcot sides; and besides this, still more are never collected at all. When calculating the value of the Forest products of the district, I took the value of the outturn, excluding the Sub-Division, at Rupees 34,000, and Rupees 21,800 of this amount has been accounted for on one face of the Jawadies alone.

6. We are now engaged in obtaining statistics regarding the Forest products brought down from the Sherveroys, Kolimalais, Patchémalais, Yallagherries and Periakulroyans. Mr. Brougham has learned that great quantities of Myrobalons are carried from the Shevaroys, and it is known that there is very much Forest produce on the Kolimalais and other Hills.

7. The Deputy-Conservator has been making enquiries on the Jawadies and the Head-men there have engaged to collect produce, but have represented that they are about 7,000 Rupees in debt to the Chetties who thus keep a screw upon them.

8. Mr. Brougham and I have gone into the results of our limited transactions in Forest produce and we are of opinion that we can make a *clear profit* of 60 per cent. at the very least, and that for an outlay of Rupees 10,000 we can give Government a return of a lakh of rupees or thereabouts.

9. I most strongly advocate the opening up of this branch of trade. I have thought and talked the matter over a good deal, and have seen much for myself, and I feel assured that, with the assistance of an officer of Mr. Brougham's stamp, I can realize from the Forests of this district, and that without the least oppression of the Hill Tribes, but on the contrary with an improvement in their present condition, an extremely handsome revenue. I may not be able to show these results for the first year, but I will undertake to do so in the second, and I will undertake that the return for the first year's outlay shall, at the least, be satisfactory.

THESE letters will be submitted to Government with reference to G. O., dated 1st March 1873, No. 240.

2. The Acting Collector of Salem shows that the Jungle products of the district are of considerable value. In his first letter they are estimated as worth about 70,000 Rupees a year, and in the second letter he states that it has been ascertained that products worth Rupees 21,800 passed the forest tannahs on the Salem side of the Jawadi Hills alone.

3. The trade is at present in the hands of itinerant merchants who visit the hills with goods for barter, and it is said cheat the hill men and exercise a bad influence over them, which however is now beginning to be undermined. Mr. Price writes as if there were already considerable transactions between the Forest Officers and the hill men, but no details are given as to the nature of the purchases made or of the terms. He is requested to report further on the point.

4. His proposals for renting the collection of Jungle fruits appear to the Board objectionable, and paragraph 12 of his first letter is written as if Government interests were the sole consideration. This point has already been so fully discussed that no more needs be said upon it.

5. The Board however agree with him in thinking that the traders should be entirely excluded from any but the unreserved Jungles. They see no objection to the collection of forest products for Government being undertaken, but the operations of the forest officers should be strictly confined to purchasing produce brought for sale at depôts to be established in convenient places. Traders might, if it be thought advisable, be admitted to visit the hill men at their places. The latter would then have the alternative of dealing with them or with Government, and would be secured from oppression. If the Government approve, the detailed arrangements will be reported. Mr. Price estimates that for an outlay of Rupees 10,000 a profit of a lakh can be secured to Government. The Board can scarcely think that such a result would be consistent with fair treatment of the hill men, though possibly they might still be as well off as when the trade was in private hands. The chief object should be the improvement of the status of the people rather than the realization of a revenue.

(True Copies and Extract)

H Elton

Acting Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
,, the Acting Collector of Salem.
Copy to the Inspector of Forests.

Exd. G. A. Turton.

Proof for approval

Minute by the Hon. J. D. SIM, C.S.I.

I have gone carefully into Mr. Price's proposals, and I think that the practicability of raising a revenue from the forest-products of the Salem District merits serious consideration. Mr. Price shows that the value of the trade is very considerable, and he knows the district well and is a good observer and safe informer.

2. The jungle-products of the Salem District were rented out by Government up to 1864. Similar rents existed in other districts, and were given up in 185-, not because it was even supposed that the State had no right to such products, but because it was then found impossible to protect the hill-tribes from oppression and ill-usage, while the revenue realised was small. The Government of India, who had, in 1848, directed that the right of the State to the products of unclaimed and unappropriated plains and forests and to a portion of the profits derived from them should not be renounced if it could be exercised without oppression, at first demurred; ultimately, however, they assented to the abandonment of the rents. But, on the recommendation of the Madras Government, the headmen of the hill-tribes were required to pay annually a small tribute in kind, as a token of fealty to Government and as *an admission of liability to taxation*. Mr. Price's proposals, therefore, involve no invasion of any rights possessed by the hillmen, and this is otherwise self-evident; for if these tribes have a right to the fruit of a tree, they must surely have a right to the tree itself,—so far at least as its existence goes,—and no one, I believe, has advanced the theory that Government cannot cut down any tree in these forests without the permission of the hill-tribes. Certainly, under the Native régime, no hillman could have advanced such a claim, and it should be remembered that when we speak of "prescriptive" and "immemorial" rights and privileges, we have to go back to times when a man could scarcely call his head his own. I yield to none in deep respect for rights of every kind; but I like to be assured that what is *called* a right really *is* one. In India, I may say, that we have ourselves created "rights" in the sense of privileges, which the ruling power itself must and does respect with scrupulous fidelity; but India is still a country in which many privileges are enjoyed unchallenged without attaining the status of *rights*, and I hold that, in the interests of the community at large, we are bound to be careful how we allow such permissive usances to be magnified into *rights*. Beside the State on the one side and the hillman on the other, I do not see who else can lay claim to the products of these forests. The only other person here concerned is the trader, and he, I maintain, can have no right to them. He is merely the go-between; he buys from the gatherer to sell to the consumer, and if the former has no indefeasible right to what he gathers free of tax, neither can the latter have to what he simply buys to sell again.

3. So far, therefore, as *rights* go I maintain that Mr. Price's proposals are not assailable.

4. The question then arises whether the State should exercise its rights in this matter.

5. I maintain that it should.

I. In the interests of the public at large I do not think that in these days of increasing financial difficulties we are justified in renouncing any legitimate source of revenue, such as I hold this to be.

II. In the interests of the hill-tribes themselves I believe their welfare is safer in the hands of Government officers *now* than in those of the traders with whom they have to deal. I wish I could think that the dealings of the astute Chetties of the plains with these wild men of the woods were as liberal or even as fair as my Honorable Colleague Mr. Robinson believes, and that when it comes to a trial of "cuteness" between them the untutored savage generally has the best of it. All the world over, I think, experience has shown that the latter,—be he Red Indian, African Negro, or Australian savage,—is no match for the more civilised trader. The 7,000 Rs. mentioned by Mr. Price and noticed by Mr. Robinson may, indeed, be a mere banking account; but I confess that I am rather sceptical of Chetties so freely accommodating denizens of the forest, who have no possessions beyond their scanty coverings and rude imple-

G.O. to Madras 13.9.73-2

Price 10.3 Oct 1873

1873.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

Proceedings, 13th September 1873, No. 1,818.

Dept 2 Sept 1873

Encl.

Received 24 Sept 1873

FOREST No. 51.

Forest products—of Salem District.—Collector's report on — submitted to Government, with remarks.

SO / Septr 74

Ac 1107

Rec'd from Board of Rev. Ac 7 Sept 73 - Dept 2 Sept 73 - Rec'd from Govt. Ac 20 Sept 73 - Dept 29 Sept 73 - Rec'd from Govt. Ac 30 Oct 73 - Dept 30 Oct 73

ments of industry and defence; at all events, such "accommodation" implies large profits in the long run. My opinion inclines to that expressed by Mr. Price; but be this as it may, I maintain that if the hillman can hold his own with the Chetty, he can do the like with the Government subordinate, supervised closely as the latter now is.

6. In the days when these jungle-rents were given up, because it was found impossible to protect the hillman from ill-usage, a district had but a Collector, a Sub-Collector, and two Assistants at most, and the native subordinates were not of a high class; *now* it has also Deputy-Collectors, forest officers, a well-organised Police, *etc.*, and the "tone" of our native subordinate has immeasurably improved. What was impossible then is possible now. If, however, the hillmen of Salem, notwithstanding free trade and intercourse with these liberal traders for ten years, are unequal to a contest with a forest subordinate, it is high time that we should try some other method of raising them to some degree of independence. It seems to me that it is opposed to all knowledge of human nature to expect these traders to attempt to civilise the hillmen; their interest is quite the other way; it is to keep them as they are,—"hewers of wood and drawers of water." Our forest officers,—at least the higher grades, European and Native,—would be actuated by higher motives, and though a subordinate here and there may fleece them, the general influence of the department would, I believe, be decidedly in favor of the hillman's elevation in the scale of civilisation.

7. Mr. Robinson considers that there is no loss of these jungle-products, and little injury to the forests themselves in their collection. As to the former Mr. Price says there is, and the forest officers agree with him; and I can myself say that members of the mercantile community at Madras have assured me that trade with England in such valuable products as gums and resins is almost precluded by the wretched condition in which they are brought to them, and the uncertainty and difficulty of ensuring supplies to order. As to injury to the forests in the collection of such articles, I beg attention to paragraph 11 of Mr. Price's letter to the Board, dated 24th June 1873, which I am sure will be corroborated by every forest officer in the Presidency.

8. I recommend, therefore, that in the reserved tracts the forest officer, Mr. Brougham, be allowed to employ the hillmen in collecting the forest-produce, paying them for the work just as when they are employed in felling timber and other forest-operations. The Government, so far back as 1869, directed that the reserved forest should be closed to others than the forest-tribes living in them. I see no reason why any change should now be made in the absence of any complaint from any one; and for my part I cannot realise the idea of a "reserve" into which any one can enter at his own will and pleasure.

9. I would impress on the Collector that the employment of the hillmen is to be purely voluntary; that they are to be liberally paid; and especially that their civilisation and reclamation are to be considered objects of paramount importance.

10. The unreserved tracts I would leave alone for the present until it be seen how Mr. Price's experiment succeeds; but such hillmen as engage themselves in collecting their produce might be allowed the option of selling what they gather to Government, at fixed prices, if they see fit to do so.

(Signed) J. D. SIM.

MINUTE BY THE HON. W. ROBINSON, C.S.I.

MR. PRICE lays before the Board of Revenue proposals to enable the Collector of Salem to become the monopolist of all small forest-products in the district of Salem.

2. He proposes to work the reserved hill-forests so as to supplant the old hill-trader, who has hitherto carried on the convenient barter by which the hill-tribes get their food, clothing, salt, *etc.*, with practical good faith between the two; and he is in favor of farming the products of all unreserved jungles—in fact, of all the village woodlands throughout the length and breadth of his district—to middlemen contractors who will "be quick enough in looking after their own interests and save Government the expense and trouble of watching".

3. Mr. Price estimates that for woodlands stretching from Denarkeneottah to Javady and some hundred miles from north to south, he will get some Rs. 70,000 a-year from gall-nuts, *etc.* It would be more, he thinks, could he work his district and people "without the intervention of middlemen;" but their profits, he sees, must go off Revenue gains. Mr. Price seems to forget that there is a popular side of the "middleman," and that, from this point of view, the parcelling out the district amongst a host of middlemen must lead to serious disorder.

4. It is not averred that nature's products are lost; nay, they are probably collected with care, and form in private hands, I believe, a valuable popular industry which I would greatly regret to see destroyed and superseded by the trade becoming the monopoly of Government.

5. As regards assuming the exclusive trade with the denizens of reserved forests, I simply do not believe (and I have had much to do with hill-tribes when they were less free than they now are) that the hill-traders oppress the hill-tribes in the manner which is so frequently averred. The existing free-trade conditions on which it is conducted prevent this: and taking cheating for cheating, I believe that the hillman has often by no means been the worst of it. The fact is, hill-trade is a very difficult branch of trade, and very precarious. It requires considerable capital*, and it is subject to long credits and many bad debts. These hill-merchants and bankers are real benefactors by enabling the forest-tribes to tide over the occasional difficulties to which they are subject. The Rs. 7,000 alluded to in Mr. Price's second letter is no doubt a quasi-banking account, and it is well that these poor hill-tribes can get accommodation. I should consider that a change for the worse had been inaugurated if hard and fast Circar monopoly had taken the place of an ancient well-understood and natural course of trade in these hills. Considerable exaggeration occurs as to harm done to forests by breaking twigs, *etc.*, in gathering the fruits, honey and the like; none necessarily follows, and probably little or none occurs.

*N.B.—I observe that the Collector wants a capital of Rs. 10,000 to start with.

6. On the whole, I deprecate meddling with these things, but most of all the proposal to shed a flood of middlemen over the country, or set up hosts of local farmers—be they ryots or who they may—to collect the petty woodland berries, barks and the like, over the whole unreserved woodlands of the country. It would, I think, cause a feeling of resentment in every village, and do so with reason.

7. I do not altogether see under what law or prescription it is proposed to acquire and appropriate the monopolies now recommended. It is true that it is proposed to deal with these things under the new Forest law, and where foreclosure by the State of popular usages and servitudes is thought desirable, a procedure is laid down to regulate compensation. But the law has not been passed; and I think that we cannot anticipate the action of the legislature.

8. I would refuse to entertain the proposition.

30th October 1873. (Signed) W. ROBINSON.

Proof for approval

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30*th October* 1873. (Signed) W. ROBINSON.

Proof for approval &c.

MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

I ENTIRELY agree with Mr. Robinson, and consider these proposals to be altogether objectionable.

2nd *November* 1873.

(signed) HOBART.

Minute Paper

Gd 1 September/74 No 1107

8 P
1107

Minute

I have gone carefully into Mr Price's proposals and I think that the practicability of raising a revenue from the Forest Products of the Salem Distruct merits serious consideration. Mr Price shows that the value of the trade is very considerable and he knows the Distruct well - and is a good observer, and safe informer.

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I recommend therefore that in the reserved tracts the Forest officer Mr Brayne be allowed to employ the Hill men in collecting the Forest produce, paying them for the work just as when they are employed in felling timber and other Forest operations. The Govt so far back as 1869 directed that the reserved Forest should be closed to others than the Forest tribes living in them. I see no reason why any change should now

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J. D. Sim

Minute by
Hon. Mr. Saw

Minute

Rec'd 1 September 74 No 1107

3 Copies sent to Hobbs for Lieu
21/9/74

1 A.

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No 2967/08

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are ~~sacked~~ with the
great

must lead to ~~Mr~~
serious disorder

first care and form
in private hands the Hillmen
[illegible] valuable
which [illegible] great respect
popular industry [illegible]
the destroyed & superseded by
the trade [illegible] legally
monopolized in
the [illegible] of Government.
assuming the exclusion
6/ As regards Foreign
with his denizens
the trade of reserved
forests, I simply do not believe [illegible] that the
Hill traders oppress
the Hill tribes. The
existing free trade
[illegible] prevents
this and cheating for
cheating the theories
that the Hill man has
no means he wont
the best of it. I am
[illegible] to

(I have had much to do with Hill tribes how they were less free than they now are) (Blank)

in the manner which is frequently observed

conditions on which it is conducted

Steps by

W.D. Gibbons has the Cold
wants a capitalist
to start him

to do with this matter
than I have and I have
always found the allegation
of the oppression &c
towards Hill tribes
came from those who
desired to deal with a
nice little thing on their
own account and this is
what Forest menials
desire. The fact is
the Hill trade is a branch of trade
very difficult and
very precarious. It requires
considerable capital
and is subject to long
credits and many bad
debts. These Hill merchants
and bankers are real
benefactors in enabling
the forest tribes to tide
over the occasional
difficulties to which
they are subject.

The

The Rioters alluded to in Mr Innis's 2 letters no doubt ~~were~~ making a ~~great~~ ranking ~~Report~~ and ~~Exposition~~ to ~~with~~ ~~that~~ that these poor creatures can't accommodation. I should consider that a ~~serious~~ change for the worse had been inaugurated ~~did I know that~~ if hard and fast circumscription, ~~duplication with~~ ~~Corruption and bribery~~ had taken the place of an ancient well-understood and natural course of trade in these Hills. ~~Consequently preparation occurs~~ as to harm done to

to forests by breaking twigs &c in gathering the fruit Honey and the like - ~~It~~ is the ~~rich~~ poor necessarily follows ~~&c~~ ~~Anyone~~ little or more occurs may heaven forbid that ~~it~~ who visit ye out into the Shrubs and get some berries or flowers off the old trees

8/ ~~I can conceive a thing more oppressive and saddening than~~ the proposal to shed a flood of middlemen over the Country or set up hosts of local Farmers, be they Rajahs or who they may, to collect the petty woodland harvests, baits & the like over the whole unreserved woodlands

Or Mr Sole Despotic middleman will rest steps but most of all

woodlands of the
Country. It would
cause the most
just feeling of resentment
and Contempt in Every
Village & door of Mason

As Neither the Price
the Board of Managers
See
taken under what
Law or prescription
it is
they propose to acquire
the right to appropriate
now
the monopolies ~~the~~
recommended
desire. It is true
It is
that ~~it~~ proposed
to deal with Forestry under the new
Forest law ~~now in force~~
~~the amendments~~ intends
to deal with the two
matters and where
acquisition by the
foreclosure
State of popular
usages

usages & servitudes.
is thought
~~one~~ desirable - a procedure
is laid down by which
Compensation is to
It thinks
~~It is clear~~ that we
cannot anticipate
the action of the Legislature
and usurp their
rights and enforce
monopolies or trades
without intervention
of legal proceedings
or proper Compensation

I return herewith
the Petition &
consider that
proposals be
attended to. Yrs faithfully

[illegible]

Nov 2/25

10. Prescription is not
even pretended to - the
proposal traverses
all usage & prescriptive
immunity.

I wanted ~~to~~ to
refuse to entertain the
proposition.

30/10

[illegible]

Minute by the
Hon: Mr Robinson
dtd 8th August

Revenue Department.

No 1107

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Dy. 1 Sept: 1874.

Read the following papers.

Pros Board of Revenue
Submitting with remarks
Collector's report on forest
products of Salem District

} H.E. 13 Sept: 1873, No 1818.

Minute by the Hon: Mr Sim. H.S.
Minute by the Hon: Mr Robenson - H.S.
Do by the R.H. the Governor

In their order of the 27 February 1874, No 267 the Govt approved the proposal of the Board that 10,000 Rs should be placed at the disposal of the Collector and the Forest officer in Salem in order that the experiment of buying Forest produce from the Hill tribes on behalf of Govt might be tried.

On

Revenue
GO 1 September/74 No 1107

3 Copies sent to Hobble Mr Robinson and Govt

2/9/74

Seen
1 Sept
Secretary

2/9

1 B. & 1 C.

C. 30/10/73 Rd from Sec. Rev. 11/73. R.C 7 Encl. Rd. Rd Encl

2. On a further and fuller consideration of the subject in connection with the papers above recorded His Excellency the Governor in Council now resolves to recall that order and to direct that the experiment if already commenced be brought to an early conclusion.

3. His Excellency is averse to supplanting or seriously interfering with the traders who have for long carried on the special traffic with the Hill tribes, and the scheme proposed by the Acting Collector would affect injuriously transactions which if lucrative are already sufficiently precarious and which on Mr Price's own showing require a considerable permanent outlay.

4. It does not appear that there is any material loss or waste of the natural products of the forests, and as it seems probable that the damage done in their collection is more apparent than real there is no call for interference on these grounds.

5. His Excellency is therefore of opinion that the traffic should be left to follow its natural channels, undisturbed even by the competition of Govt and that no restriction should at present be placed on the privilege of entry into the Forests hitherto enjoyed by the traders.

To Board of Revenue
Inspector of Forests
&c &c 15/9/74

60

Forest products of Salem District

Note for the Hon'ble Mr Nobinson

Papers on Salem Forest Product Question forwarded with reference & conversation of today -

G.O. 27 76/74 & No 267 practically disposes of the matter but, as explained at the

01/3/2/74-3
27/11/74-3

C 25th Aug 74 R 31st

time, it was then
overlooked that
Board Proceedings
13 Sept 1873 No 1518
had not been dis-
posed of. The
order of 27 Feb 74
No 269 was first
subsequently the
Mr Robinson's
permission was

allowed to go out.
C/ll
31.7.74

C 25th Aug 74 R 31st

No 2769
Forest-products 13 Sept. 73. No 1818.

31/107

The GO now the act dec
sation of the B.C. Res: 7/13 Feb
1873. must not Draw the in
terim rule GO 27. Feb 1874
No 267. R must take occasion
in Sending out this G.O. that
the Stock taken was under
the impression & it must be
cancelled so far as regards that
3/8. with the Secretaries
Comp. [illegible]

Pro. Bd. of Revenue
Collectors report on Forest products of Salem District.

No 2969
13 Sept 73 No 1818.

Duties for Orders.

In Gd. 1st Guards 73 No 240 the Government disposed of the question raised by the Forest Department as to the Government making a monopoly of Forest products. Proposal generally to levy a duty But they still in para 4 desired Collectors to obtain information as to the valuable Forest products in their Districts; as to the nature & extent of the trade in them; as to the mutual position of the Forest Rules & the dealers; & as to the necessity interference & protection of people in the Forests or "to develope a valuable material Resource."

Lie up note

2. The collector of Salem (Mr. Price) [illegible] secretions the disposable products of the forests in his District & their long acquaintance with the latter makes him an authority on this subject on which we have two letters from him. In the earlier he states that at the actual prices realized by such produce the estimated quantity of product procurable would be worth Rs 70,000 of which 50 per cent would be ample for cost of collection: in the latter he reports that he has ascertained that from "one face of the Gaudiers alone" products worth 21,000 Rs passed the Forest Barracks in 72-73. Without the Government

× Sugrobalus
Soap-nut.
Kappilli powder.
Kappilli bark.
Wax.

+ in round numbers.
"Just for that of the whole income of the Forests in the District in 71-72."

as withheld a private Zamindari

× as proposed in para 11 of the G.O. quoted above.

being gainers.

3. His inclinations are to employ the Forest Tribes as collectors of products for Government. The Traders cheat the hill-men & injure the Forests. He would therefore excluded them from Reserved Forests. He would not issue licenses to gatherers but would elect tracts of forest as this would save the expense of watchers & stop by that fact.

4. Forest fruits he distinguishes from Forest Products & would let them in unreserved jungles & leave them to the hill-men in Reserved Forests.

5. The Board condemn it; they would exclude Traders from Reserved jungles, and would allow Forest

officers to purchase
forest products from
the Hillmen at such
depots to which the
traders also should
be permitted to
resort so that the
Hillmen might
deal with whom they
pleased but would
be secure from oppression.

6. It is recommended that
these suggestions may
be approved and it is
observed that the
Forest officers already
appear to have con-
siderable dealings
with the Hillmen on
the details should
however. Bill has been
directed to report.

7. It is noted that
these jungle products
find a ready sale

Sal.

Memo for Orders

Collectors report on Fa
protests of Salem D

107

RC 31st July/76

RC 7th Jan/73. R 28th RC & Memo rec'd 28th Reg'd July/76
C. 27 Oct 93 R 30 Oct RC 30/10/73. R 6th Nov/73