

(1) Number of Pages 14
(2) Date of repair 23.11.66
(3) Initials of the Referencer DR

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	962	Press
~~B.P.~~ No.		Mis.
Dated	3. 8. 1874	196.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd August 1874.*

No. 3. Read the following extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India, in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, (Forests,) dated 23rd June 1874, No. 19/656—692:—

Read—

Circular Nos. 25/1286—1292, dated the 6th November 1873, from the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, inviting the co-operation of local Governments and Administrations to the proposed scheme for holding a Conference of forest officers at Allahabad in January 1874.

Letter, dated the 9th April 1874, from Mr. B. H. Baden-Powell, a.c.s., submitting copy of the report of the Forest Conference of 1873-74.

RESOLUTION.

THE periodical Conference of forest officers, which was first commenced in December 1870 by Mr. B. H. Baden-Powell, when Conservator of Forests in the Punjab, has this year been held at Allahabad, and has been attended by forest and civil officers from the Bombay Presidency and from different provinces under the Government of India.

2. Its proceedings have been reported in the volume submitted by Mr. Baden-Powell, which constitutes a valuable contribution to the forest literature of this country, well deserving the attention of all concerned in the administration of Indian forests. During the discussions which are recorded in this report many ideas were broached and resolutions passed which the Government of India is not prepared to adopt or endorse. Nevertheless, the Governor-General in Council cordially acknowledges the great value of the present publication, and desires to convey his thanks to the members of the Conference for their contributions and co-operation, and particularly to Messrs. Baden-Powell and Gamble for their careful report of the proceedings.

3. On several important topics discussed at the Conference, Mr. Brandis, the Inspector-General of Forests, who has since returned to this country, has recorded his remarks in a memorandum which His Excellency in Council desires should be circulated with the report.

4. The next Conference is intended to be held at Simla about the 15th September 1875. As many forest officers as can at that time be spared in the different provinces under the Government of India should be encouraged to attend, and His Excellency the Governor-General in Council also hopes that the Governments of Madras and Bombay may find it convenient to depute at least one member of their forest establishments. It also appears desirable to His Excellency in Council that a few civil officers and officers of the Public Works Department, the Survey Department, and other scientific branches of the service should be invited, if no additional expense will be incurred by their being absent from their ordinary duties.

5. Forest officers and others who wish to make communications at the next Conference should address the Inspector-General of Forests, with whom it will rest to arrange the programme of the meeting and fix the order in which the different communications shall be taken up.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd August 1874.*

Order.—Ordered that copies of this Resolution, together with copies of the report and of the memorandum by the Inspector-General of Forests, be forwarded to the Governments of Madras and Bombay and to the local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, with the request that a copy be furnished to every forest officer of the grade of Sub-Assistant Conservator and upwards who has not already received one as a member of the Conference.

Bengal.	British Burmah.
North-Western Provinces.	Mysore and Coorg.
Punjab.	Assam.
Oudh.	Hyderabad.
Central Provinces.	Ajmere.

General of Forests, be forwarded to the Governments of Madras and Bombay and to the local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, with the request

that a copy should be sent to each member of the Conference.

Ordered, also, that a copy should be sent to the Surveyor-General, the Superintendent, Geological Surveys, the Director of State Railways, the Inspector-General of Forests, and the Financial and Public Works Departments, for information.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. O. HUME,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 19/656.

To the Government of Madras.

No. 4. ORDER NUMBER, 3rd August 1874, No. 962.

Forests No. 1.

Ordered that thirty copies of the Report received with this Resolution be forwarded to the Board of Revenue for distribution among the forest officers.

2. Ordered, also, that copies of the Report be communicated to the Public and Public Works Departments of the Government Secretariat, with reference to paragraph 4 of the Resolution.

(True Extract.)

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

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

Edw. E. M. Dantlamin.

large and compact areas of teak-producing forest free of tobacco cultivation; in North China, private claims of various kinds will interfere with the demarcation of large and compact forest reserves; and the same obstacles to the formation of large reserves exist in all wooded districts in British territory.

Supposing a careful survey of the province of Coorg seemed to justify the conclusion that 20 per cent. of its area should be maintained under forest, what guarantee is there that that proportion will be found sufficient 20 years hence? The task which, according to the proposals of the Conference, the Forest Department is to undertake, seems to me impossible and unnecessary, for in most provinces the only difficulty is to get sufficiently large and compact areas of forest that will pay, at the disposal of Government, and free of forest rights; and in those districts where forests are in superabundance, as on the Arakan hills and in some parts of Assam and Eastern Bengal, we can afford to wait, until the demand for forest produce from those districts rises sufficiently, to give the forest question a final shape.

12. Pages 103 to 131 are devoted to the important subject of *forest rights and privileges*. The remarks made are right upon the whole, but I regret the undue prominence given to the conservation of the so-called *unreserved forests*. The forest policy of the Government of India must be as simple and as easily intelligible as possible, and there are two ways in which it has hitherto manifested itself. One plan was to declare certain trees as reserved, and to protect them wherever found. *Teak, black-wood, sandal-wood* were Royal trees in Southern India and *teak* in Burma under native rule, and to protect them by including them, together with others, in a reserved list, was in accordance with old established custom. The first attempts at forest conservation in India were all in this direction, and this plan should be maintained for the present in the unreserved or open forests, which are not included within the demarcated reserves.

13. The other plan is to demarcate forests which are at the disposal of Government, including some which are the property of village communities, but which, for public reasons, are desirable to place under the protection and control of the Forest Department. *Buzara forests*, sacred groves of Coorg, village forests in Mysore and South India, and to manage them as public estates for the benefit of the province and of the country at large. This is the system maintained in all countries of Europe which have a regular administration of their public forests, and it is the only one which is likely to have permanency in India. For the present, at least, we must concentrate all our efforts upon the selection and demarcation of the reserves, that is, upon the formation of State or village forests, and upon their protection and good management. The other public forests, which are not included within the limits of the reserves, and which are generally known under the name of *open forest*, *open or district forests*, may eventually be assigned to towns or villages, and in that case may fitly be demarcated, placed under the protection of Government, and subject to the control of the Forest Department. But that is a matter for later consideration. Our first task is to form and consolidate the *State forest zone*, and to place its management upon such a basis that it will steadily increase revenue and, while contributing largely to the well-being of the people, be a source of strength to Government. This is a plain, practical task, and quite as much as we ought to undertake at the present time, with our limited agents and the small number of experienced and really useful officers at our disposal. The selection and demarcation of these reserves demands time and energy, and must be done gradually; and for that reason we must retain a hold over the whole of the forest land, guard against the alienation of valuable portions, and make the first demarcation as far as possible. More we cannot for the present do, unless we can say, in our own hearts, it is the duty of Government to resist all attempts on the part of local authorities to flatter away the land and resources of forest officers in such matters. If we attempt more, the result will be that one step will be neglected. Moreover, as long as we confine strict conservation to defined areas of limited extent, flanking the hill sides within the reserves—Mankar, Gonda, Koorumbere, Karoni—under our special protection, we shall not interfere with the customs and privileges of the people, and at the same time we shall be able to preserve the great mass of waste and forest land not included within the limits of the reserves.

14. However, the spirit of the discussion at the Conference on this subject seems to have been quite the other way.

The Mailghat forest of Berar formed one of the main subjects of discussion. There is a demarcated reserve of 400 square miles, the Etmaghur reserve, which I examined in company with the local forest officers in March 1869. The result of my visit was, that I proposed that all work should be concentrated upon the protection and improvement of the more valuable portions of the reserve, and that, in order to provide for the supply of the western part of the Poorna valley, a second reserve should be formed in the western part of the hills; that the reserves should be strictly protected, without interfering with the cultivated and cultivable lands actually occupied; but that in the rest of the Mailghat, outside the reserve, no restrictions should be imposed, and the inhabitants should not be interfered with.

This policy has apparently not been followed, an attempt has been made to protect the whole of the Mailghat, and as a necessary consequence the protection of the reserve has been relaxed. Doubtless the circumstances in the Mailghat are peculiar; the number of villages in the reserve had gradually increased, and had rendered strict protection more difficult than was anticipated in 1869; nevertheless it would probably have been better to diminish the area of the reserve, or to divide it into a number of smaller reserves, than to give up the plain broad principle which I endeavoured to urge upon the local authorities in 1869.

15. I should not have entered so fully into this question if its bearing had always been correctly understood. I have seen it stated elsewhere, that the plan of forming reserves to be the permanent forest domain of the State (or of village communities under the protection and management of Government officers) was likely to cause more discontent than the attempt to protect all or a greater portion of the forest lands over which Government has rights. There is no greater fallacy than this. The trouble of effecting the settlement of forest rights and privileges on limited well-defined areas is temporary and will soon pass away, whereas the annoyance to the inhabitants by the maintenance of restrictions over the whole area of large forest tracts will be permanent, and will increase with the growth of population.

* Report to the Resident at Etmaghur dated April 1869.

1874.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE,
AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE.

FORESTS.

Memorandum by D. BRANDIS, Esq., Inspector
General of Forests, on several matters discussed
at the Forest Conference dated the 1st July
1874.

Recd 22/6/74
P.S. 7/3/74
Per B. P. 3

No. 10
113-113

Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue,
Agriculture and Commerce, dated the 23rd June 1874.

[FOURTH.]

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(True extract.)

R. K. S. S. S.

Secretary to the Government of India.

The Government of India