

(1) Number of Pages 30
 (2) Date of repair 13.11.1967
 (3) Initials of the Referencer 22.2.68

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	930	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	18.6.1968	196

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
18th June 1875.*

No. 147. Read the following letter from the Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner for Coorg, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, Ootacamund, dated Bangalore, 15th June 1875, No. 180/2:—

In accordance with the instructions contained in paragraph 6 of the letter from Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, No. 382, dated 13th April 1875, a copy of which is stated to have been sent direct to you, I have the honor, by desire of the Officiating Chief Commissioner, to forward the

marginally-noted Proceedings on the
subject of Cardamom and ghat forests
in Coorg.

No. 665/F 48, dated 12th January 1875.

Enclosure No. 1.

From the Conservator of Forests, Mysore and Coorg, to the Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Coorg, General Department, dated 9th July 1874, General No. 956.

Has the honor to forward, for information and orders of Chief Commissioner, Mr. Ludlow's report on the condition of the Cardamom forests in Coorg, in original, together with notes thereon by the undersigned.

From the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Nandydroog Range, to the Conservator of Forests, Mysore and Coorg, dated Bangalore, 19th June 1874, No. 126.

On the 21st November 1873, in accordance with instructions conveyed in your letter, No. 2,592, of 17th November 1873, I left my Range on special duty to report on the condition of the Cardamom forests of Coorg. I returned to it on the 14th February 1874, and the arrangements I made before leaving for the carrying on of work during my absence appear to have been all that was necessary.

1. Having visited (in company of Mr. Jellicoe, the Assistant Conservator, Hassan Range) Mr. Middleton's extensive Cardamom estate situated on the Manjembad ghats, several representative Cardamom forests of Coorg, and conferred with the Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Hassan, the Superintendent of Coorg, also with several gentlemen (European and Native) conversant with the subject of Cardamom cultivation, I have the honor to submit the following report.

2. Departing from the custom by which Cardamom cultivators had, up to his time, been guided when opening out a forest, Mr. Middleton, instead of felling large trees here and there, and trusting to the spontaneous growth of the plant on the clearings, thinned out the whole of his forest, leaving, however, a shady canopy scarcely penetrable by the sun, and planted up the land thus partially cleared with Cardamom plants obtained from plants growing wild in the forest. Many of these plants have borne several crops, and are still doing well; but, in course of time, the soil must become exhausted, and its renovation will be, I consider, his chief difficulty.

3. The Cardamom forest renters of Coorg gather the whole crop of a garden at one picking; while on Mr. Middleton's estate the capsules are picked as they ripen, whereby much crop is saved; but, as the whole of his land is under cultivation, the extra cost incurred by this careful system of working is not proportionately so great as it would be in Coorg, where the gardens are at some distance from one another. Moreover in Coorg, probably owing to the influence of the direct action of the sun's rays, the whole crop of a garden ripens at about the same time, which, I am assured by Mr. Middleton, is not so much the case in his estate. The lay, too, of

Mr. Middleton's land is generally very good; and, he having gone to considerable expense in making roads all over it, it is easy to traverse.

4. Mr. Middleton pays much attention to weeding and supplying vacancies. Fortunately, too, in possessing an abundant supply of labor, he has also made himself independent of the weather, as regards the drying of his crop, by the construction of large buildings, where the capsules, after being carefully washed, are rapidly dried by the passing of heated air through them.

5. Mr. Middleton estimates that an acre of land under Cardamom cultivation will, on an average, yield over 2 mounds of 27½ lbs. each of the spice.

6. Mr. Wilson of Barabanhalla, also a Cardamom cultivator, kindly showed me some plants he had put down a few years ago in a ravine on his estate. Their luxuriant growth was most remarkable.

7. In Coorg the greater portion of the forest suitable for Cardamom cultivation has been opened out according to the native fashion of making clearings and leaving between them untouched belts of forest; consequently Mr. Middleton's method of cultivation, even if thought better of than the Coorg system, could not be introduced there. Before even the belts of forests, now uncultivated, could be planted up, the undergrowth at least would have to be cleared away, and whether thereby the moisture of the forests would be decreased to an injurious extent experience only can prove, but the experiment is well worth trying.

8. As regards those forests, still wholly uncultivated, I think that it is safest to open them out after the Coorg fashion; for the thinning of a forest on these ghats, where the monsoon is unusually severe, is a work of a very delicate nature; as, if at all overdone, the wind would get in and soon destroy the forest. Moreover, I have observed that Cardamom plants, partly exposed to the direct action of the sun's rays, bear more fruit than those grown entirely in the shade.

9. The benefits that would accrue from weeding, filling up vacancies, &c., have been fully pointed out in my memorandum written in 1869. On one Cardamom estate that I visited in Coorg the private property of R. Aiyappa, the treasurer, I was much pleased to see that a beginning in this direction had already been made. A visit to this estate would well repay any one interested in the subject of Cardamom cultivation.

10. The forest officer in charge of the Coorg Range would do well to explain all these matters to the Government tenant, and might even, with advantage take in hand a Government forest and work it up. I may here mention that in Travancore an experienced forest officer is in special charge of the Cardamom hills.

11. The Coorg divide the Cardamom forests into two classes, viz., "Village Forests" and "Boundary Forests." The Village Forests, of which there are only a few, are those situated close to their villages, which are all on the eastern side of the ghats. The "Boundary Forests" are those found on the western side close to the boundary between Malabar and Coorg. These are very difficult of access. The "Village Forests" are the more valued, and those "Boundary Forests" that are right on the frontier are the least valued of all, as the inhabitants of Malabar frequently make raids into them, steal the Cardamoms, and otherwise injure the forests.

12. Several Cardamom forests are the property of private individuals, who pay the same revenue tax on them as do the Coffee planters on their lands. These, as well as the jamma Cardamom forests, of which there are a few, have an assessment on them having been fixed long ago at about Rs. 4 for every mound, they were supposed to be capable of yielding; but, as they are carefully worked, whereas the condition of most of the Government Cardamom forests

is most deplorable, not from the renters' point of view, who, as a rule, have made more out of them than they should, but from that of the Government, who have a permanent interest in them. Their deterioration has not been brought about by their being neglected, but rather by their being overworked by the tenants, who, according to the present system of leases, have but a temporary interest in them; and, to prevent their total abandonment by the Cardamom cultivators, a better system of leasing them out must be introduced.

13. These forests, covering as they do the sides of the ghats, are of the greatest value to the country for climatic reasons. Cardamom cultivation properly conducted does not affect them injuriously, and the presence of the renters, who, in their own interests, do their utmost to prevent their being injured by outsiders, is most beneficial; especially as, owing probably to their inaccessibility, they are not well guarded by the forest department.

14. The only inhabitants of these forests are some Kadiyas, and in Yedayanad a few impoverished Gaudas, whose associations and superstitions lead them to prefer a precarious existence in this wild forest region to working on coffee estates, or taking service in the Coorgs' houses; even, though at times they are so straitened by want of food as to have little else to live on than sago, the prepared pith of the toddy palm (*Corypha urens*), these poor people do not injure the forests, are most useful as guides, and might be found serviceable as forest-watchers. As it is, they occasionally work for the Cardamom cultivators.

15. I cannot approve of any of the tenants being allowed to throw up their leases, for, if they are poor hard-working Coorgs who solicit this favor, these are just the men whom we should be anxious to retain as tenants, and it would be wiser to let them take a longer lease of the forest on easier terms; on the other hand, if they are rich Coorgs or merchants, they can well afford to abide by the engagements they voluntarily entered into.

16. The pernicious system of putting these forests up to public auction will, I trust, be discontinued, for they are far too valuable to the country on climatic grounds that Government should run any risk of their falling into bad hands, and I therefore strongly recommend that arrangements should be made to lease them out hereafter in perpetuity to the Coorgs,—their proper custodians,—on a jamma tenure at moderate rates, which should vary according to the fluctuations in the state of the Cardamom market. A settlement of the annual rent to be paid might be made once in every five years by the Superintendent of Coorg, subject to the Chief Commissioner's approval.

17. Special provision should be made for the existing system of cultivation being continued, and for the resumption of any tenements that are being worked in a manner considered by the Government likely to lead to the destruction of the forests, and the tenants should be prohibited from mortgaging, transferring, or even giving over their forests to be worked by others, except with the consent of Government.

18. All minor forest produce should be understood to be the property of the lessee; but the Forest Department should retain the right of working the timber in the forests at any time if thought advisable in the Government interest, giving compensation for any injury done to the cultivated portion of the forest.

19. Every forest should, as a rule, be leased out to those Coorgs whose houses adjoin it. 20. Before, however, this system could be introduced, it would be necessary to obtain an accurate knowledge of the value and condition of each forest, and with this view a forest officer should be annually deputed to inspect and report on them during the working months, viz., from September to February, until the work is completed.

21. I would particularly beg to suggest that, in many parts where a tract of forest that forms naturally one block has been divided into several estates, these might be again advantageously incorporated and terms might also be come to with the owners of private Cardamom forests to ensure their remaining cultivated with Cardamoms.

Memorandum, page 14, line 20 to 31.

22. The injury accruing to these evergreen ghat-forests from fires is great, yet, although we cannot hope to prevent their recurrence, much might be done to control their fury.

Fires.

Being in these forests during the fire season, I had many opportunities of witnessing their calamitous effects, and I noticed that fires are specially disastrous when they find their way into a forest in which *Wottees*, the only species of bamboo common on these hills, have died *en masse*, as they usually do. The Coorg villages are, as I have already stated, all on the eastern side of the ghats, and I recommend that the inhabitants of those nearest to the forests be directed to burn the grass (when it burns readily, but not fiercely) around not only the belts of forest, but also around the isolated saplings springing up in hollows, the nucleuses of those small patches of forest so useful in fostering springs. They already adopt similar measures for the protection of their Coffee estates from fire, and would cheerfully receive and attend to any Government Order of the nature I have suggested.

23. Greater precautions than exist at present should also be taken to prevent the felling of forests near streams. During my tour I noticed that the Coorgs were felling and planting up with Coffee many such lands, and I reported at once to the Superintendent on the subject. When I was Assistant Conservator in Coorg, I urged on Captain Cole the necessity of conserving the ghat forests, and he issued strict orders about this, yet for all that some of these forests have since been felled. I am fully aware that Major Thomson is most anxious to ensure their conservation; but I consider that nothing short of a measure converting the whole of the Government forests on the ghats into State forests will have the desired effect. Many of the native Coffee plantations now under formation will not be worth their upkeep should the price of Coffee fall, which it ere long probably will, to its former level, and then the Coorgs will bitterly regret as they did once before the reckless destruction of their forests.

Memorandum, page 9, line 52, to page 10, line 2.

24. Licenses are granted by the Forest Department, which permit the holder to fell and remove *poon trees* (*Calophyllum elatum*) from these ghat forests; but as, in order to get out of the forest one *poon tree*, the license holder has often to fell fifty other fine trees, I would recommend that the area in which *poon trees* may be felled be circumscribed, and that within it regular elephantal paths be made. Allowing persons to fell and remove *poon trees* indiscriminately tends to a destruction of the forest, which is by no means compensated for by the small amount of revenue obtained from this source.

25. To prevent complications arising the boundary between Malabar and Coorg on this side should, I think, be properly demarcated. At present it is merely indicated by a blazed tree line, and small heaps of stones placed at long intervals, and is not readily discernible.

26. None but the Coorgs and those accustomed from their youth to traverse these forests can be got to work in them, and their superstitious will not allow of the lowest castes picking the Cardamom fruits. Some of the forests are held so sacred that no one even dare venture into them. The ordinary cooly or dweller of the plains dreads the leeches, scorpions, snakes, and poisonous insects, which are common in the Cardamom forests, and more than all the demons whose abode they are believed to be. Owing to the inaccessibility of these forests, the work of Cardamom cultivation is of a most laborious nature, the practical knowledge required is great, and not easily acquired. The Coorgs possess the necessary qualifications, they have the welfare

of the forest deeply at heart, and I feel sure it would be a wise measure on the part of Government to give them a permanent interest in them.

27. One of the chief points I was directed to inquire into was the remission of rents for the past and future, solicited by the Cardamom forest tenants on the score of low prices and alleged short crops of 1872-73 and the few previous years. In 1868 the Cardamom forests were leased out at public auction by the Superintendent of Coorg for ten years for Rs. 31,000 and odd per annum. The remissions now claimed are for 1872-73 Rs. 11,000 and odd; for 1873-74 and for every successive year up to the end of their leases in 1877-78 an indefinite but evidently a much greater amount than that solicited for 1872-73.

28. In 1867 the price of Cardamoms had risen to Rs. 30 per maund, it having been but Rs. 40 a few years previously. The rise was due both to the increased demand and to the destruction of many Cardamom forests for Coffee cultivation.

29. The Coorgs are always ready to give fancy prices for Cardamom forests; but at the auction of 1868-69 fully believing that the prices would at least keep up, they bid very highly for them. Many of the successful competitors were men of small means, and to open out and work up the forests, which, owing to the system of one-year leases, had been much neglected, they had recourse to the local money-lenders. These having equal faith in the good prospects of Cardamom cultivation, not only gave them what they required for opening out their forests and paying the Government rent, but pressed them to purchase cloths, &c., on credit, and to borrow money wherewith to build better houses and otherwise improve their condition. As might be expected, their offers were readily accepted, but unfortunately for all parties concerned, the prices after a year or so instead of rising fell year by year until in 1873 no more than Rs. 40 per maund could be obtained for the best Cardamoms.

30. When in 1868 I was engaged on my "Memorandum on Cardamom Cultivation in Coorg," being anxious to know whether there was much more land in India likely to be opened out for the cultivation of the spice, I applied to the Superintendent of Coorg to obtain this information for me, chiefly from the Travancore Government; but receiving no reply, I presumed that no special attention was being paid in other parts to Cardamom cultivation, and that, as the lands in Coorg were nearly all taken up, and the demand for Cardamoms increasing, the prices would keep up. In reality, at that time, both in Travancore and Wynnad, where the "true Cardamom" grows spontaneously, persons encouraged by the great rise in value of the spice were bringing large tracts of forests under cultivation, and their success brought about the great fall of late years in the value of this commodity.

31. In Coorg the poorer ryots pressed by the usurious money-lenders on the one hand and by the Government on the other were in despair. They worked their forests up to the utmost, handed over the produce of their small Coffee plots to their creditors, in many instances mortgaged to them their houses, pledged their family jewels, cloths, and even their knives, which to a Coorg being a part of his national costume implies the very depth of poverty. I am even assured on the best authority that for some years past many of these unfortunate tenants appeared before their Superintendent at *jamabandi* time, when also the feudatories are mustered with knives and kammushandis borrowed of their more prosperous countrymen. No doubt they would even have mortgaged their rice-lands; but the peculiar tenure in Coorg prevents this, as also do their customs, from hiring themselves out as laborers or removing to other countries. Land, too, is the only industry of the country in which the Coorgs engage.

32. The market price of the spice still keeping low, the tenants applied to the Superintendent for a remission of rents, and I regret to say that, after careful inquiry, I can only conclude that many of them, probably badly advised by their creditors when called upon for their reasons for soliciting this favor, falsely stated that the seasons having been unfavorable, the forests no

longer produced Cardamom crops as of old, thinking no doubt that the Government would be more likely to take this into consideration than any other reasons they could urge.

33. They should not, however, be too severely judged, for, from time immemorial, the Coorg "Yajman" has considered it a duty he

Memorandum, page 12, line 26 to 29.

owed to the members of his house to depreciate the value of their Cardamom property. They had, too, I am told, some fears about the impost of an additional income-tax.

34. Eventually the Superintendent of Coorg in 1873 applied, on the behalf of the Cardamom tenants, for a remission of rents, and the Conservator having consulted me I told him that I did not believe the seasons had been so bad or the crops so short as they represented, and suggested to him that the Superintendent should be asked to furnish statements giving details of the losses sustained, &c. These statements, which were submitted in September 1873, were drawn up by certain of the headmen of the Coorgs, and based on the statements of the Cardamom renters, which they evidently did not know how to check. These are, I have no hesitation in saying, most unreliable, and display, in a marked manner, the ignorance on the subject under report of those who framed them. As owing to the peculiar circumstances of the case (a thorough knowledge of Cardamom cultivation being ascribed to the generality of Coorgs) corrupt motives might be imputed to these responsible advisers of the Superintendent, I desire to state that I do not entertain any such opinion; indeed, I must do them the justice of saying that, according to their statements, in many instances the losses sustained by the renters are far less than the renters then and even up to the date of my visiting Coorg declared was the case.

35. I am not surprised that the Superintendent was led to believe in these statements. He saw before him unmistakeable signs of poverty among the Cardamom tenants, and could not but be influenced by the fact that their assertions were, to a great extent, accepted as true by the leading Coorgs. Without having made a special study of the subject which, considering the inaccessibility of the forests, the want of opportunity and of time, it would be unreasonable to expect of the Superintendent, he could not have attained that knowledge of the subject which alone would have enabled him to judge for himself in the matter. Some of the headmen being themselves proprietors of Cardamom estates, would naturally be supposed to know all about the general condition of the Cardamom forests; but as I have stated above such is not the case, and this ignorance I attribute to the fact that for many years past the leading Coorgs have gradually amassed wealth from Coffee cultivation and other sources, and no longer care, as did their forefathers, to personally supervise the whole work of their Cardamom forests.

36. I received my orders to proceed to Coorg on the 17th November last, by which time the Cardamom harvest of 1873-74 having been unusually early, all the crops had been gathered in, and the difficulty of testing the accuracy of the renters' statements as regards alleged short crops was thereby considerably increased.

37. Before starting for Coorg, I informed the Conservator that I could do no more during the short time he could only allow me to be absent from my Range, than endeavour to ascertain generally for him the true state of affairs, and that to report exactly on the condition of each forest would be a labor of years.

38. My previous knowledge of the capabilities of many of these properties, acquired when I was Assistant in Coorg, and when I also made the subject of Cardamom cultivation a special study, stood me in great stead.

39. I will now detail the measures adopted to test the accuracy of the renters' statements, and my reasons for arriving at the conclusion that, in many instances, they are not worthy of belief.

1stly.—A general inspection of these forests has convinced me that, though from a Government point of view, their condition is deplorable, the renters as a body can have had no reason to complain as they did of the Cardamom crops they obtained from them, but rather directly the reverse. I noticed, too, that their estates are now only coming into full bearing,—a point not even

alluded to in the correspondence that has passed on the subject of remission of rents, although a remission for the future is solicited.

2ndly.—A thorough inspection of certain representative forests was made, and certain tests which suggested themselves to me, and which may be called the "acreage test" and "raceme stalk test" were applied to them.

40. In former years having been at considerable pains to ascertain the average yield of an acre of forest land under Cardamom cultivation,

Acreage Test.

I now selected one of the best properties, a "village forest" (P. Annaiya's Umalle, said by the proprietor to have given in 1873-74 a crop of 19 maunds) and made a complete survey of it. The area of the good land only under cultivation was shown to be 83 acres. The number of gardens was found to be 198, and their condition was generally good. Altogether I was convinced that the estate had given a crop of considerably over 40 maunds in 1873-74, that is to say, that the tenant had understated the amount of his crop of 73 by more than one-half. The marks on the stems of the plants still plainly distinguishable where the fruit bearing racemes of 1872-73 had been broken off showed, too, that the crop of 1872-73 had been much better than P. Annaiya wished the Government to believe. An application of the raceme test hereafter alluded to was, for obvious reasons, not applied till afterwards; but then the result fully confirmed the opinion I had already been led to form.

41. I next visited a very valuable boundary forest called Kuniamballe, the property of eight partners, chiefly Coorgs. After satisfying myself as to the condition of the forest, counting the number of gardens, noting their general condition and size, and making a rough estimate of the

Raceme Stalk Test.

area of good land under cultivation (about 250 acres), I proceeded to the "Bidars" or places where, at harvest time, the racemes are collected and the capsules picked from them, and directed that all the raceme stalks (peduncles) that had then been thrown aside should be collected into heaps. I at once stated that it appeared clear to me from the quantity obtained that a crop of between 200 and 250 battis (which judging by the quality of the fruit the estate produced would give from 100 to 125 maunds of dry Cardamoms, worth Rs. 4,000 to 5,000) had been gathered in 1873-74. The managing partner had previously signed a written statement to the effect that he had picked only a crop of 100 battis, which, he afterwards added, came when dried to about 25 maunds of Cardamom, and would be worth Rs. 1,000.

42. I further took measurements of these heaps of raceme stalks found at the "Bidars," so that I might compare their contents with those of the heaps of stalks that would be found on a private property, the amount of crop obtained from which in 1873-74 had been previously made known to me by the Coorg gentleman who had gathered it.

43. None of the Cardamom renters had any idea that any such information could be made use of as a basis on which to form an approximative estimate of the crops of other estates.

44. At the same time, I adopted measures to prevent the racemes of 1873-74 crop on the private property above alluded to and on P. Annaiya's estate, being tampered with.

45. Results of comparison showed that I was right in my estimate as to the crops obtained, both from the large Kuniamballe and from Annaiya's estate.

46. But before I had even an opportunity of visiting this private property, which was several days' march from where I then was, anxious to measure the raceme heaps obtained on it, the managing partner of the Kuniamballe estate confessed to the Head Shemstadar who accompanied me on my tour that the raceme test, which has not been expected by him, was so conclusive a proof that a larger crop had been gathered by him than he had declared to be the case, that he would no longer attempt to conceal the fact that a crop of 200 battis giving some 112 maunds worth 4,480 Rs., had been gathered in 1873-74.

47. On being questioned by the Head Shemstadar as to why he had previously made such a false statement, he replied that it was the custom to withhold from others the truth concerning the amount of their Cardamom crops.

48. Instead, therefore, of the tenants of Kuniamballe being this year, 1873-74, losers to the extent of Rs. 1,813, irrespective of cost of collection, as they pretended, they are not losers at all, and their statement regarding the crops of the past year, judging from the marks of last year's, 1872-73, crops still visible on the stems, is similarly an under-statement of the amount of their crop.

49. The thorough inspection of one estate (T. Melaiyas) right on the boundary, and a visit to the adjoining portion of the Malabar District formerly covered with magnificent forest, since destroyed for Kumper cultivation, made it evident to me that the tenant had suffered loss, and that from circumstances over which he had no control, which, however, would affect only the boundary forests, viz., the raids of the Malabar ryots and the injury accruing to our forests from the scorching heat of the fires of the Kumper cultivators of Malabar.

50. The Madras Government might be addressed, with a view to this state of matters being remedied, for, whatever the Malabar ryots may choose to do with their own properties, they have no right to injure those of their neighbours.

51. The tenant of this forest, T. Medu, is deserving of a partial remission of rent, both for the past and future. His rent might, I consider, be reduced to Rs. 50 per annum.

52. He is entitled by our rules to a considerable reward for giving information to the Patilagar of Nalland at the end of last moon regarding the theft from his forest of many valuable palm trees by a gang of Moplahs, which led to the recovery of the wood and the capture of the several of the gang. I brought this to the notice of the Superintendent and of the Assistant Conservator of the Range.

53. I addressed the two first marginally-named officers to ascertain the quantity of Cardamom exported into Malabar from Coorg since 1868-69 up to the end of 1872-73. They were not in a position to give me the exact information I required; but, from a careful examination of the statements of export they were good enough to furnish me with I think it evident that during that period about 1,316 cwt., or four times as great a quantity of Cardamoms was actually exported from Coorg into South Canara and Malabar than the statement submitted by the Superintendent of Coorg would show to have been produced in Coorg during that period. The quantity thus exported from Coorg during those years must have been the produce of Coorg forests during that period; for Cardamoms are not stored up in Coorg, nor do any Cardamoms of other countries pass through Coorg in transit to the Western Coast. I am well aware that a considerable quantity of Cardamoms grown in Coorg are not the produce of Government forests; but, as a set off for this quantity, I have not taken into account the very considerable amount that is not sent to the Western Coast for exportation.

54. In Manjerabad, Nagor, and Wynand, a large increase of production has taken place, and I am informed by Mr. Mearns the same is the case in Travancore. It would, indeed, therefore, be passing strange were it true that in Coorg only the amount of Cardamom produce had fallen off.

55. The toll-gatherers on the frontier of Coorg might be directed to take note of the quantity of Cardamoms exported hereafter. The information thus obtained would, however, only give an approximate idea of the quantity produced; still it would be useful and its collection would not entail any extra expense.

56. Ample opportunities of stating their grievances to me were afforded to all the Cardamom tenants.

57. Several of their estates certainly are not bearing well, some have been neglected by their actual owners, chiefly rich men, who, seeing the price of the commodity going down, did not even sow them up.

58. On others the soil is so poor that nothing but very high prices would pay to work them; but this the tenants knew of at the outset, and a few estates on the frontier have been rendered almost valueless for Cardamom cultivation, owing to the depredation of the Malabar

ryots. These enter them to steal timber, canes, &c., and thereby decrease the moisture of the forests, so essential to the healthy growth of the Cardamom plants.

59. Others' estates have been injured through the felling of the trees in the neighbourhood for Coffee cultivation.

60. Some tenants have suffered loss through the desertion of their coolies at crop time, owing to the outbreaks of small-pox, which of late years has been unusually virulent in Coorg.

61. Many complained of deficient rain-fall, but from inquiries I made I do not think that matters in this respect have been any worse than usual.

62. A few stated they had suffered loss through elephants visiting their forests. These animals certainly do occasionally come to the forests in search of wild fruits and young wotees; but seldom injure the Cardamom plants. Indeed, there is a Coorg saying to the effect that an elephant walking over a garden does it as much good as if a tree had fallen across it.

63. In a few instances, estates, I believe, have been neglected, the tenants being so hopelessly embarrassed as to have quite lost heart to labor on them.

64. The unfortunate circumstances of some of them, whatever may have been the cause, point them out as fit objects for the most lenient consideration of the Government. On the other hand, many others who solicited remissions are well able to pay the rents due by them.

65. Whose circumstances bring them under the one category, and whose under the other, the Superintendent of Coorg, aided by the Head Sheristadar who accompanied me through the forests, can now best determine.

66. My views on the subject of trade prospects have already been given to the Conservator and embodied by him in his letter, No. 659, of 6th June 1873; I would only add that I do not

think that the price (now at Rs. 40 per maund of 27½ lbs.) can fall very much lower.

67. Mr. Middleton, who is so largely interested in the matter, agrees with me that, when the mutual intercourse of the inhabitants of India and Central Asia has been strengthened, the Cardamom cultivator will again obtain high prices for his produce.

68. The Conservator being desirous of obtaining my opinion regarding the leasing out of certain forests of Manjerabad, fit for Cardamom cultivation, some papers on the subject, including the rules in force since 6th January 1873 for the taking up of such lands (which do not appear to have met the wishes of the inhabitants of Manjerabad generally) have been sent to me for perusal.

69. Considering the facility with which in these wilds the hatat-tax can be avoided if, for no other reasons, I disapprove of this mode of collecting the revenue. I think, too, that blocks of forest possessing good natural boundaries should be given out, irrespective of size, and that all minor forest produce should be the property of the lessee. The preservation of these forests on climatic grounds is a matter of the greatest consideration, and to ensure this I hold that, if leased out, they should be rented in perpetuity, or for lengthened periods to persons who may be trusted to bestow on them that care their welfare demands, and on terms similar to those on which I recommend the leasing out of the Cardamom forests of the neighbouring province of Coorg.

70. In the correspondence sent to me for perusal regarding both the Manjerabad and Coorg forests, there are many inaccuracies which I have passed over unnoticed, as I cannot see any advantage in commenting upon them, especially as this report contains necessarily a résumé of the whole subject.

71. In conclusion, I desire to offer my sincere acknowledgments to the Superintendent of Coorg for the cordial assistance rendered me. The services of K. Appachu, the Head Sheristadar of Coorg, kindly placed by Major Thomson at my disposal, were invaluable. K. Charypatt, who for a short time was sent out of Malabar to assist me in obtaining certain information from the ryots, exerted himself to the utmost and to my satisfaction. N. Rangarao, the Bangalore District Ranger, whom, at my special request, the Conservator permitted to

accompany me, worked well. His knowledge of surveying proved most useful, and I beg to bring his name to the Conservator's favorable notice.

Letters received with dockets, No. 2,582, of the 21st January 1874. Letters and statements as per margin are herewith returned.

Note on Mr. EDGAR LUDLOW'S (Assistant Conservator of Forests) Report on the Cardamom Forests in Coorg by the Conservator of Forests, dated 9th July 1874.

In February 1873 the Conservator drew the attention of the Superintendent of Coorg to the serious falling off in the collection of rents due on Cardamom jungles; and the Superintendent, replying in March, stated that it was in great part due to the loss sustained by the renters of the jungles, and in a subsequent letter in April stated that he was afraid that "the outstandings would in many cases be irrecoverable," and that there would probably have to be considerable reductions made in the rents, and asked the Conservator's opinion. The revenue outstanding at the close of 1872-73 was Rs. 11,127-7-2, and the Conservator, while submitting the matter for the information of the Chief Commissioner, made the Superintendent acquainted with his opinion, which was that, considering the conditions under which the forests had been leased out, he (the Conservator) could not but dissent to the proposal that reductions should be made in the rents (saving in very exceptional instances); and also suggested that statements showing the losses sustained by each renter might be framed, and certain inquiries made to ascertain the true state of affairs.

2. The Government Cardamom forests in Coorg were, up to the year 1868-69, rented out by the British Government on yearly leases. In that year they were put up to auction, the term of the leases being extended from one to ten years; Cardamoms were then selling well, and this fact, combined with the natural wish of the old lessees to retain forests hitherto worked by themselves, or which had been in the possession of their families for many years, caused the bidding to be brisk. The forest leases were sold for a total sum of Rs. 3,16,210, payable in ten annual instalments. The price of Cardamoms had in 1867 risen to Rs. 80 per maund from Rs. 40, at which price they had stood a few years previous. But shortly after the auction prices began to fall, and the lessees, who had borrowed money to carry on their operations, felt the pressure, and this resulted in applications for remissions.

3. The Superintendent of Coorg sent the Conservator in September 1873 "two statements: one showing the quantity of Cardamoms produced in certain jungles during the past year, and comparing the value of the produce with the rent, excluding cost of production;" and another statement showing approximately the loss sustained by the same renters in addition to the cost of cultivation since the commencement of their leases in 1868-69." These statements were submitted to the Chief Commissioner by the Conservator, with a memorandum giving reasons for not receiving them as statements which afforded really good information. The crops were put frequently at so low a figure that the Conservator thought some errors must have crept in. The Chief Commissioner then directed that an officer should be specially deputed to inspect and report on the forests.

4. Mr. Ludlow, Assistant Conservator in Nundydroog, was some years ago employed as Assistant Conservator in Coorg, and before that had personally worked Cardamom forests himself. He was directed to proceed to Coorg, and to report on the whole matter. He left Nundydroog on the 21st November 1873, and returned on the 14th February 1874, having gone round at the Conservator's request, viz., Mangarabad, to visit the Cardamom plantations there. His report was submitted in dated 19th June 1874, and is late. It should have been in earlier.

5. In Mangarabad a Mr. Middleton is the largest cultivator of Cardamoms; compared with him the other cultivators grow insignificant quantities of the spice. Mr. Middleton has partially cleared a large extent of forest land and planted it with Cardamom tubers taken from wild plants. The capsules are picked as they ripen, not as in Coorg at one picking. This advantage Mr. Middleton gains by his holding being in one large continuous block. His Cardamoms

also being partially shaded, do not ripen at one time as do those grown as in Coorg in totally felled clearings between blocks of forest. Mr. Middleton has also erected large buildings in which he can independently of the weather dry his Cardamoms well and thoroughly. He estimates his average yield at 51 lbs. of spice per acre, and his plan shows what can be done by regular and careful cultivation. His plants have been in bearing for some years, and are still doing well, but as Mr. Ludlow points out the soil must, in course of time, be exhausted, and "its renovation will be his chief difficulty."

6. In Coorg Cardamoms are grown in small clearings between untouched belts of forest. Mr. Ludlow shows that owing to this circumstance Mr. Middleton's mode of cultivation could not be adopted in the greater portion of the Coorg gardens, and raises the question whether it would be safe to thin out virgin forests, situated on the ghats, and exposed to the full force of the monsoon. He also notes, as the result of his own observation, that Cardamoms grown in land exposed to the sun produce most fruit. It would, the Conservator thinks, be unadvisable to introduce Mr. Middleton's system into Coorg, as a general rule. The forests have for so many years been worked on a totally different system that they are, for the most part, unsuited to it, and the effects of the wind on thinned out forest on the ghats would doubtless be both very considerable and disastrous. Where land is assessed on the acre, and in forests more distant from the ghats, Mr. Middleton's system might be frequently adopted with advantage to the occupant of the land. There can be no question as to the advantages of weeding under either system.

7. The Conservator does not advocate the plan proposed by Mr. Ludlow in his paragraph 10, viz., that Government, working through the Assistant Conservator, might with advantage take in hand a Government forest and work it up. Such experiments, for many and good reasons, are not likely to succeed. The special officer, who in Travancore has charge of the Cardamom hill, has not, the Conservator thinks, any such work to do.

8. Mr. Ludlow, in his paragraph 11, speaks of the two kinds of Cardamom forests, the "Village" and the "Boundary;" the former being near the villages, the latter which are difficult of access and not so much sought after, being on the boundary and in the ghats. Further on he says that the condition of the Government Cardamom forest "is most deplorable, not from the renters' point of view, who have made too much out of them." He considers that "they have been over-worked by the tenants, who, according to the present system of leases, have but a temporary interest in them." It has already been stated that up to 1868-69 the forests were let out on yearly leases, but now on leases of ten years' duration. So far the more has been in the right direction, but the proposal to make a change in the arrangements whereby private individuals may work the Cardamom forests will be discussed further on.

9. The present system is an advance on the older one, but the system of leases for short periods of property like Cardamom forests will always present serious difficulties. The Government, in leasing out its forests, may say that nothing is to be done to damage the forests, but where is the line to be drawn beyond which an enterprising and moneyed tenant is not to advance? He may have bought his particular lease at a high rate. The forest may be one advantageously situated and well suited to the growth of Cardamoms. The tenant naturally is desirous of making what he can out of it. To the Assistant Conservator or any other officer of Government to step in and say, "In my opinion your forest is being over-worked. It is detrimental to the interests of Government and to the interests of the public that more should be felled, and you must be content with the area already planted up by you." Who is to decide the question? One officer may take a very different view from another, and both may be wrong. The Conservator thinks that the attempt to force a tenant to work up to a limit, which is to be fixed by a forest officer, who may very possibly have been but a short time in the division, will practically be found most difficult, and give rise to serious complications.

10. The proposals made by Mr. Ludlow in his paragraph 16 are, the Conservator thinks, well worth of attention. They were brought forward by Mr. Ludlow in Coorg, and discussed by the Conservator and the Superintendent, and they are apparently well suited to meet the case. The advantages gained by the greater hold the Coorg Government will have over the forests and the

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tenants (if the latter are resident Coorgs), and the almost certainty that the Coorgs will work them with more care and more attention to the general interests of the country than other tenants are so great that the ordinary objections that a larger sum *might* be realised if the leases were thrown open to general competition disappear. The Conservator has already adverted to the practical difficulties in the way of a Government officer regulating the cultivation of a Cardamom forest. These difficulties will, however, be far less if the forests are leased out to Coorgs in the manner now recommended. The provision to prevent the tenant mortgaging or transferring the forest, or the cultivation of them, is necessary. Minor forest-products should be the property of the tenant, but should equally be taken into account in fixing the assessment.

11. The Forest Department has no establishment sufficient to control fires in these great forests, and their situation in localities generally remote from human habitations makes the attempt to do so still more difficult. The system of leases now suggested would make the control of fires more feasible.

12. The sale of poon trees from the forests is not great. The department possesses no elephants, and till it is able to take up the working of the ghat forests for timber with a reasonable prospect of a good market, poon, wild jack, and ivy trees must be felled on license, and in removing these, trees of the commoner kinds will suffer. The want of a properly demarcated boundary line is felt in other localities than the forests under report, and the subject is one which might be advantageously taken up and dealt with.

13. Mr. Ludlow gives reasons for suggesting that poor tenants who are unable to pay up their rents should not be allowed to throw up their leases. This latter course was suggested by the Conservator before the whole matter had been gone through, and before the alteration in the tenure of the forests was mooted. Poor men able to pay should, of course, be forced to do so; exceptional cases of distress being dealt with on their own merits. The distress has, the Conservator believes, been great in some cases, and the unfortunate men deserve all consideration. (See Mr. Ludlow's paragraph 41.)

14. Mr. Ludlow's remarks regarding the difficulties in the way of obtaining reliable data to the Superintendent's Office, showing the nature of the crops, and that no corrupt motives could be attributed to the officials entrusted with the actual preparation of the statements which proved to be faulty, are fully endorsed by the Conservator.

15. The "raceme stalk test" applied by Mr. Ludlow was most successful; the manner in which it was applied and the results obtained are detailed in his paragraphs 41 to 48, and are most creditable to him. His acquaintance with the subject gained by his previous experience has enabled him to show clearly and in an original manner that in two instances at least the estimate of crops was greatly understated, and that the lessees were not losers as reported by them. The investigation also showed (see paragraph 49 of report) that in one instance the lessee suffered greatly from unavoidable causes. The great extent to which kumon cultivation is carried on in Malabar is very marked.

16. The statements made by Mr. Ludlow in his paragraphs 53-54 are based on grounds which can be upheld, and the export of Cardamoms from Coorg has doubtless been understated by those concerned in keeping back the real facts.

17. The Conservator trusts that the matter is now sufficiently ripe to admit of the Superintendent settling what remissions for the next year may be made, and of an approximation to the probable revenue of 1875-76 being calculated for the Budget-estimates for that year. With the remissions made in this memorandum the Conservator submits the Assistant Conservator's report in original for orders.

No. 505, Forest No. 48, dated CAMP HASSAN, 12th JANUARY 1875.

ORDER THEREON.—The completion of the reports on the condition of the Cardamom forests in Coorg received with the above, was deferred until the Chief Commissioner had had an opportunity of conferring with planters and Coorg officials best acquainted with the subject, and

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his recent tour through that Province having enabled him to do this, the Chief Commissioner proceeds to record the following observations.

2. There can, he considers, be no doubt that—

- (1.) The rates realised at the sales of Cardamoms were wholly based on the high prices then in the market;
- (2.) The prices have since fallen by 50 per cent. and appear to be still falling.

3. There is further no prospect of an improvement in the market, which appears to have been seriously overstocked by the largely-increased production of the spice.

4. All these facts combined point to the conclusion that it is desirable, in the interests of both Government and the renters, that the rates of assessment should be revised, and that such a reduction authorised as is warranted by the facts.

5. But Mr. Ludlow's report shows that the position and for the remission of the arrears that have accumulated since the rates were raised, and that, except in a few cases, there has been no such falling off in the crops as has been alleged.

6. The Chief Commissioner, therefore, for should be dealt with individually, and in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this order.

7. Mr. Ludlow's report with the Conservator's original (to be returned), with as little delay as possible, what general sanction should be sanctioned, as really called for under the circumstances.

8. Such reduction should have general effect from the termination of the term of the existing contracts, and if the contractors are unwilling to retain the contracts on these conditions, they should be again put up to auction.

9. The question of remission of arrears will be dealt with according to the special merits of each case, and the measure will be carefully carried out without delay, and being submitted, with a concise statement of the grounds of the Conservator to judge of the grounds of the Superintendent's recommendation in each case.

10. It is particularly and earnestly requested that the above orders, the question being one of great importance, should be promptly dealt with.

11. The measures advocated by Mr. Ludlow for the future treatment of the Cardamom forests in Coorg will be separately considered. His suggestions are entitled to careful attention, and the Chief Commissioner in which he has carried out the inquiry is

to do this, the Chief Commissioner

were excessive, and that they were not that

a 50 per cent. and appear to be still

in the market, which appears to have

that it is desirable, in the interests of the Government, that the rates of assessment of the case.

on which the necessity for such revision has been urged, as also the statement's Office in support thereof, are not in cases, there has been no such falling

the cases in which relief may be called for, and the circumstances mentioned in

thereon is referred to the Superintendent that he will consider and report, and a reduction in the rates of 1867-68 off in the market rates of Cardamoms

in the beginning of 1874-75 till the present contractors are unwilling to be permitted to resign them, in which case

arued prior to the beginning of 1874-75 in case, which will be investigated and the facts stated by Mr. Ludlow. This list of the defaulters in each and or taking action as are needed to enable the Chief Commissioner's recommendation in each case.

no avoidable delay may occur in complying with the above orders, the question being one of great importance, should be promptly dealt with.

the future treatment of the Cardamom forests in Coorg will be separately considered. His suggestions are entitled to careful attention, and the Chief Commissioner in which he has carried out the inquiry is

ated) H. WELLESLEY,

Officiating Secretary.

No. 148.

ORDER THEREON, 16th JUNE 1875.

Forests, No. 10.

375, No. 930.

communicated to the Board of Revenue, Inspector of Forests for information, and for reference to G. O., 29th April 1875,

(True)

A. MACGREGOR,

Acting Secretary to Government.

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

Ed. F. R. Bantleman.

From the Conservator of Forests, Mysore and Coorg, To the Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Coorg, General Department, Genl. No. 956, dated 9th July 1874.

Has the honor to forward for information and orders of Chief Commissioner Mr. Ludlow's report on the condition of the cardamom forests in Coorg, in original, together with a note thereon by the undersigned.

From the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Nandya Range, To the Conservator of Forests, Mysore and Coorg, No 126, dated Bangalore, 19th June 1874.

On the 21st November 1873, in accordance with instructions conveyed in your letter No. 2502 of 17th November 1873, I left my Range on special duty to report on the condition of the cardamom forests of Coorg. I returned to it on the 14th February 1874, and the arrangements I made before leaving for the carrying on of work during my absence appear to have been all that was necessary.

1. Having visited (in company of Mr. Jellicoe, the Assistant Conservator, Hassan Range) Mr. Middleton's extensive cardamom estate situated on the Mingarabad ghats, several representative cardamom forests of Coorg, and conferred with the Offg. Deputy Commissioner of Hassan, the Superintendent of Coorg, also with several gentlemen (European and Native) conversant with the subject of cardamom cultivation, I have the honor to submit the following report.

2. Departing from the custom by which cardamom cultivators had up to his time been guided when opening out a forest Mr. Middleton, instead of felling large trees here and there and trusting to the spontaneous growth of the plant on the clearings, thinned out the whole of his forest; leaving however a shady canopy scarcely penetrable by the sun, and planted up the land thus partially cleared with cardamom tubers obtained from plants growing wild in the forest. Many of these plants have borne several crops and are still doing well; but in course of time, the soil must become exhausted, and its reinvigoration will be I consider his chief difficulty.

3. The cardamom forest renters of Coorg gather the whole crop of a garden at one picking; while on Mr. Middleton's estate, the capsules are picked as they ripen, whereby much crop is saved; but, as the whole of his land is under cultivation, the extra cost incurred by this careful system of working is not proportionately so great as it would be in Coorg, where the gardens are at some distance from one another. Moreover in Coorg, probably owing to the influence of the direct action of the sun's rays, the whole crop of a garden ripens at about the same time, which, I am assured by Mr. Middleton, is not so much the case in his estate. The lay too of Mr. Middleton's land is generally very good; and, he having gone to considerable expense in making roads all over it, it is easy to traverse.

4. Mr. Middleton pays much attention to weeding and supplying vacancies. Fortunate too in possessing an abundant supply of labor, he has also made himself independent of the weather, as regards the drying of his crop, by the construction of large buildings where the capsules, after being carefully washed, are rapidly dried by the passing of heated air through them.

5. Mr. Middleton estimates that an acre of land, under cardamom cultivation, will, on an average, yield over 2 maunds of 27½ lbs each of the spice.

6. Mr. Wilson of Parohemulla, also a cardamom cultivator, kindly showed me some plants he had put down a few years ago in a ravine on his estate. Their luxuriant growth was most remarkable.

7. In Coorg the greater portion of the forest suitable for cardamom cultivation has been opened out according to the native fashion of making clearings and leaving between them untouched belts of forest; consequently Mr. Middleton's method of cultivation, even if thought better than the Coorg system, could not be introduced there. Hence even the belts of forests now incultivated, could be planted up; the undergrowth at least would have to be cleared away, and whether thereby the moisture of the forests would be decreased to an injurious extent experience only can prove, but the experiment is well worth trying.

8. As regards those forests still wholly uncultivated I think that it is safest to open them out after the Coorg fashion; for the thinning of a forest on these ghats, when the season is unusually severe, is a work of a very delicate nature, as it at all overdone, the wind would get in, and even destroy the forest. Moreover, I have observed that cardamom plants partly exposed to the direct action of the sun's rays bear more fruit than those grown entirely in the shade.

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9. The benefits that would accrue from wooding, filling up vacancies, &c., have been fully pointed out in my memorandum written in 1868. On one cardamom estate that I visited in Coorg, the private property of K. Aiyappa, the Treasurer, I was much pleased to see that a beginning in this direction had already been made. A visit to this estate would well repay any one interested in the subject of cardamom cultivation.

10. The Forest Officer in charge of the Coorg Range would do well to explain all these matters to the Government tenant, and might even with advantage take in hand a Government forest and work it up. I may here mention that in Travancore an experienced Forest Officer is in special charge of the cardamom hills.

11. The Coorgs divide the cardamom forests into two classes, viz., "Village Forests" and "Boundary Forests." The Village Forests, of which there are only a few, are those situated close to their villages, which are all on the eastern side of the ghats. The "Boundary Forests" are those found on the western side close to the boundary between Malabar and Coorg. These are very difficult of access. The "Village Forests" are the most valued, and those "Boundary Forests" that are right on the frontier are the least valued of all, as the inhabitants of Malabar frequently make raids into them, steal the cardamoms and otherwise injure the forests.

12. Several cardamom forests are the property of private individuals, who pay the same acreage tax on them as do the coffee planters on their lands. These as well as the numerous cardamom forests, of which there are a few, (the assessment on them having been fixed many years ago at about Rs. 6 for every maund they were supposed to be capable of yielding) have been carefully worked, whereas the condition of most of the Government cardamom forests is most deplorable; not from the renters' point of view, who, as a rule, have made more out of them than they should; but from the Government who have a permanent interest in them. Their deterioration has not been brought about by their being neglected, but rather by their being overworked by the tenants, who, according to the present system of leases, have but a temporary interest in them; and to prevent their total abandonment by the cardamom cultivators a better system of leasing them out must be introduced.

13. These forests, covering as they do, the sides of the ghats, are of the greatest value to the country for climatic reasons. Cardamom cultivation, properly conducted, does not affect them injuriously, and the presence of the renters who, in their own interests, do their utmost to prevent their being injured by outsiders, is most beneficial; especially as owing probably to their inaccessibility, they are not well guarded by the Forest Department.

14. The only inhabitants of these forests are some Kudigas, and in Yedavand a few impoverished Gonds, whose associations and aspersions lead them to prefer a precarious existence in this wild forest region to working on coffee estates, or taking service in the Coorg houses; even though at times they are so straitened by want of food, as to have little else to eat on their scanty, though rich, prepared diet of the toddy palm (*Corchorus*). These poor people do not injure the forests, are most useful as guides and might be found as valuable as forest watchers. As it is they occasionally work for the cardamom cultivators.

15. I cannot approve of any of the tenants being allowed to throw up their leases, for if they are poor *hardworking Coorgs* who solicit this favor, these are just the men whom we should be anxious to retain as tenants, and it would be wiser to let them run a longer lease of the forest on easier terms; on the other hand, if they are rich Coorgs or merchants, they can well afford to retain the engagements they voluntarily entered into.

16. The pernicious system of putting these forests up to public auction will, I trust, be discontinued, for they are far too valuable to the country on climatic grounds, that Government should run any risk of their falling into bad hands, and I therefore strongly recommend that arrangements should be made to lease them out hereafter in perpetuity to the Coorgs, their proper custodians, on terms to be fixed at moderate rates, which should vary according to the fluctuations in the state of the cardamom market. A settlement of the annual rent to be paid might be made once in every five years by the Superintendent of Coorg subject to the Chief Commissioner's approval.

17. Special provision should be made for the existing system of cultivation being continued, and for the removal of any tenants that are being worked in a manner considered by the Government

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likely to lead to the destruction of the forests, and the tenants should be prohibited from mortgaging, transferring or even giving over their forests to be worked by others except with the consent of Government.

18. All minor forest produce should be understood to be the property of the lessee; but the Forest Department should retain the right of working the timber in the forests at any time if thought advisable in the Government interest, giving compensation for any injury done to the cultivated portion of the forest.

19. Every forest should, as a rule, be leased out to those Coorgs whose houses adjoin it.

20. Before however this system could be introduced, it would be necessary to obtain an accurate knowledge of the value and condition of each forest, and with this view a Forest Officer should be annually deputed to inspect and report on them during the working months, viz., from September to February, until the work is completed.

21. I would particularly beg to suggest that in many parts where a tract of forest that forms naturally one block has been divided into several estates, these might be again advantageously incorporated; and terms might also be come to with the owners of private cardamom forests to ensure their remaining cultivated with cardamoms.

22. The injury accruing to these evergreen ghat forests from fires is great, yet, although we cannot hope to prevent their recurrence, much might be done to control their fury. Being in these forests during the fire season I had many opportunities of witnessing their calamitous effects, and I noticed that fire, are specially disastrous when they find their way into a forest in which *Wattees*, the only species of bamboo common on these hills, have died *en masse*, as they usually do. The Coorg villages are, as I have already stated, all on the eastern side of the ghats, and I recommend that the inhabitants of those nearest to the forests be directed to burn the grass (when it burns readily but not fiercely) around not only the belts of forest but also around the isolated saplings springing up in hollows the enclosures of those small patches of forest so useful in fostering springs. They already adopt similar measures for the protection of their coffee estates from fire, and would cheerfully receive and attend to any Government order of the nature I have suggested.

23. Greater precautions than exist at present should also be taken to prevent the felling of forests near streams. During my tour I noticed that the Coorgs were felling and planting up with coffee many such lands, and I reported at once to the Superintendent on the subject. When I was Assistant Conservator in Coorg, I urged on Captain Cole the necessity of conserving the ghat forests, and he issued strict orders about this, yet for all that some of these forests have since been felled. I am fully aware that Major Thomson is most anxious to ensure their conservation; but I consider that nothing short of a measure converting the whole of the Government forests on the ghats into State forests will have the desired effect. Many of the native coffee plantations now under formation will not be worth their upkeep should the price of coffee fall, which it ere long probably will, to its former level, and then the Coorgs will bitterly regret as they did once before the reckless destruction of their forests.

24. Licenses are granted by the Forest Department which permit the holder to fell and remove poon trees (*Calophyllum elatum*) from these ghat forests; but as, in order to get out of the forest one poon tree, the license holder has often to fell 50 other fine trees, I would recommend that the area in which poon trees may be felled be circumscribed; and that within it regular elephant drag paths be made. Allowing persons to fell and remove poon trees indiscriminately tends to a destruction of the forest which is by no means compensated for by the small amount of revenue obtained from this source.

25. To prevent complications arising the boundary between Malabar and Coorg on this side should, I think, be properly demarcated. At present it is merely indicated by a blazed tree line and small heaps of stones placed at long intervals, and is not readily discernible.

26. None but the Coorgs and those accustomed from their youth to traverse these forests can be got to work in them, and their superstitious will not allow of the lowest castes picking the cardamom fruits. Some of the forests are held so sacred that no one even dare venture into them. The ordinary cooly or dweller of the plains dreads the leeches, scorpions, snakes and poisonous reptiles which are com-

man in the cardamom forests and more than all, the demons whose abode they are believed to be. Owing to the inaccessibility of these forests the work of cardamom cultivation is of a most laborious nature, the practical knowledge required is great and not easily acquired. The Coorgs possess the necessary qualifications, they have the welfare of the forest deeply at heart, and I feel sure it would be a very incalculable boon to the Government to give them a permanent interest in them.

27. One of the chief points I was directed to enquire into was the remission of rents for the past and future, selected by the cardamom forest tenants on the score of low prices and blighted crops of 1872-73 and the few previous years. In 1863 the cardamom forests were leased out at public auction by the Superintendent of Coorg for ten years for Rs. 51,000 and odd per annum. The remissions now claimed are for 1872-73, Rs. 11,000 and odd; for 1873-74 and for every successive year up to the end of their leases in 1877-78 an indefinite but evidently a much greater amount than that solicited for 1872-73.

28. In 1867 the price of cardamom had risen to Rs. 80 per madd, it having been but Rs. 40 a few years previously. The rise was due both to the increased demand and to the destruction of many cardamom forests for coffee cultivation.

29. The Coorgs are always ready to give high prices for cardamom forests; but at the auction of 1863-69, fully believing that the prices would at least keep up, they bid very highly for them.

Many of the successful competitors were men of small means, and to open out and work up the forests, which, owing to the system of one year leases, had been much neglected, they had recourse to the local money lenders.

These having opposition in the good prospects of cardamom cultivation, not only gave them what they required for opening out their forests and paying the Government rent, but pressed them to purchase clothes, &c. on credit, and to borrow money wherewith to build better houses and otherwise improve their condition. As might be expected, their offers were readily accepted, but unfortunately for all parties concerned the prices after a year or so instead of rising fell year by year until in 1873-74 more than Rs. 40 per madd could be obtained for the best cardamoms.

30. When in 1868 I was engaged on my "Memorandum on cardamom cultivation in Coorg," being anxious to know whether there was much more land in India likely to be opened out for the cultivation of the plant, I applied to the Superintendent of Coorg to obtain this information for me, chiefly from the Revenue Government, but receiving no reply, I presumed that no special attention was being paid to cardamom cultivation, and that as the lands in Coorg were nearly all taken up, and the demand for cardamoms increasing, the prices would keep up. In reality at that time both in Travancore and Mysore where the "true cardamom" grows spontaneously, persons encouraged by the great rise in value of the spice were bringing large tracts of forest under cultivation, and their success brought about the gradual fall of the price of the commodity.

31. In Coorg the proprietors possessed by the voracious money lenders on the one hand and by the Government on the other were in danger. They raised their hands up to the utmost, handed over the produce of their lands and other plots to their creditors in many instances mortgaged to them their houses, pledged their family jewels, cloths and even their wives, which to a Coorg being a part of his person, destruction implies the very depths of poverty. I am even assured on the best authority that for some years past many of these unfortunate tenants appeared before their Superintendent at Jannabandi (the village and the court where the matters are mastered with knives and karamabands borrowed of their more prosperous countrymen). No doubt they would even have mortgaged their rice lands; but the peculiar nature of Coorg payments (as also do their claims) has been turning themselves out as laborers for remission of their payments. Land tax is the only industry of the country in which the Coorgs engage.

32. The high price of the spice still keeping low the tenants applied to the Superintendent for a remission of rents, and I regret to say that after careful enquiry, I can only conclude that many of them are very badly affected by these creditors when called upon for their reasons for soliciting this favor. It is only to be feared that the tenants having once experienced the forests no longer produced cardamom and seeing no doubt that the Government would be more likely to take this into consideration than any other reason they could urge.

33. They should not however be too severely judged, for from time immemorial the Coorg "Yamma" has considered it a duty he owed to the members of his House to deprive them of the value of their cardamom property. They had too, I am told, from time to time the prospect of an additional income tax.

34. Recently the Superintendent of Coorg in 1873 applied on the behalf of the cardamom forest for a remission of rents, and the Conservator having consulted me I told him that I did not be-

lieve the seasons had been so bad or the crops so short as they represented; and suggested to him that the Superintendent should be asked to furnish statements giving details of the losses sustained, &c. These statements, which were submitted in September 1873, were drawn up by certain of the headmen of the Coorgs and based on the statements of the cardamom renters, which they evidently did not know how to check. These are, I have no hesitation in saying most unreliable, and display, in a marked manner, the ignorance on the subject under report of those who framed them. As owing to the peculiar circumstance of the case (a thorough knowledge of cardamom cultivation being ascribed to the generality of Coorgs) corrupt motives might be imputed to these responsible advisers of the Superintendent, I desire to state that I do not entertain any such opinion; indeed I must do them the justice of saying that, according to their statements, in many instances the losses sustained by the renters are far less than the renters then and even up to the date of my visiting Coorg declared was the case.

35. I am not surprised that the Superintendent was led to believe in these statements. He saw before him unmistakable signs of poverty among the cardamom tenants, and could not but be influenced by the fact that their assertions were to a great extent accepted as true by the leading Coorgs. Without having made a special study of the subject which, considering the inaccessibility of the forests, the want of opportunity and of time, it would be unreasonable to expect of the Superintendent, he could not have attained that knowledge of the subject which alone would have enabled him to judge for himself in the matter. Some of the headmen being themselves proprietors of cardamom estates, would naturally be supposed to know all about the general condition of the cardamom forests, but as I have stated above such is not the case, and this ignorance I attribute to the fact that for many years past the leading Coorgs have gradually amassed wealth from coffee cultivation and other sources and no longer care, as did their forefathers, to personally supervise the rude work of their cardamom forests.

36. I received my orders to proceed to Coorg on the 17th November last, by which time the cardamom harvest of 1873-74 having been unusually early, all the crops had been gathered in, and the difficulty of testing the accuracy of the renters' statements as regards alleged short crops, was thereby considerably increased.

37. Before starting for Coorg I informed the Conservator that I could do no more during the short time he could only allow me to be absent from my charge, than endeavour to ascertain generally for him the true state of affairs, and that to report exactly on the condition of each forest would be a labor of years.

38. My previous knowledge of the capabilities of many of these properties, acquired when I was Assistant in Coorg, and when I also made the subject of cardamom cultivation a special study, stood me in great stead.

39. I will now detail the measures adopted to test the accuracy of the renters' statements and my reasons for arriving at the conclusion that in many instances they are not worthy of belief.

1stly. A general inspection of these forests has convinced me that though from a Government point of view their condition is deplorable, the renters as a body can have had no reason to complain as they did of the cardamom crops they obtained from them, but rather directly the reverse. Instead too that their estates are now only coming into full bearing, a point not even alluded to in the correspondence that has passed on the subject of remission of rents, although a remission for the future is solicited.

2ndly. A thorough inspection of certain representative forests was made, and certain tests which suggested themselves to me, and which may be called the "arrange test" and "rodama stali test" were applied to them.

40. In former years having been at considerable pains to ascertain the average yield of an acre of forest land under cardamom cultivation, I now selected one of the best properties, a "village house" (P. Annaya's Umalle), and by the proprietor to have given in 1873-74 a crop of 12 maddis and made a complete survey of it. The area of the good land only under cultivation was shown to be 63 acres. The number of gardens was found to be 132, and their condition was generally good. Altogether I was convinced that the estate had given a crop of considerably over 40 maddis in 1873-74. That is to say that the tenant had under-rated the amount of his crop of 73 by more than one half. The marks on the stems of the plants still plainly distinguishable, where the fruit-bearing racemes of 1872-73 had been broken off, showed too that the crop of 1872-73 had been much better than P. Annaya stated the Government to believe. An application of the rodama test hereafter alluded to was for obvious reasons not applied, but still the result fully confirmed the opinion I had already formed to form.

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41. I next visited a very valuable boundary forest called Kumanaballe, the property of 8 partners, chiefly Coorgs. After satisfying myself as to the condition of the forest, counting the number of gardens, noting their general condition, and size, and making a rough estimate of the area of good land under cultivation (about 250 acres), I proceeded to the "Bidars" or places where at harvest time the racemes are collected and the capsules picked from them, and directed that all the raceme stalks (peduncles) that had then been thrown aside should be collected into heaps. I at once stated that it appeared clear to me from the quantity obtained that a crop of between 200 and 250 baskets (which judging by the quality of the fruit the estate produced would give from 100 to 125 maunds of dry cardamoms worth Rs. 4,000-5,000) had been gathered in 1873-74. The managing partner had previously signed a written statement to the effect that he had picked only a crop of 100 baskets, which he afterwards added, came when dried to about 25 maunds of cardamom and would be worth Rs. 1,000.

42. I further took measurements of these heaps of raceme stalks found at the "Bidars," so that I might compare their contents with those of the heaps of stalks that would be found on a private property, the amount of crop obtained from which in 1873-74 had been previously made known to me by the Coorg gentleman who had gathered it.

43. None of the cardamom renters had any idea that any such information could be made use of as a basis on which to form an approximate estimate of the crops of other estates.

44. At the same time I adopted measures to prevent the racemes of 1873-74 crop on this private property above alluded to and on P. Anaya's estate being tampered with.

45. Results of comparison showed that I was right in my estimate as to the crops obtained, both from the large Kumanaballe and from Anayya's estate.

46. But before I had even an opportunity of visiting this private property, which was several days' march from where I then was encamped, to measure the raceme heaps obtained on it, the managing partner of the Kumanaballe estate confessed to the Head Sheristadar who accompanied me on my tour that the raceme heap which had not been examined by him was as convincing a proof that a larger crop had been gathered by him than he had declared to be the case, that he would no longer attempt to conceal the fact that a crop of 200 baskets giving some 112 maunds worth 4,480 Rs. had been gathered in 1873-74.

47. On being questioned by the Head Sheristadar as to why he had previously made such a false statement, he replied that it was the custom to withhold from others the truth concerning the amount of their cardamom crops.

48. Instead therefore of the tenants of Kumanaballe being this year 1873-74 losers to the extent of Rs. 112, in respect of cost of collection, as they pretended they are not losers at all, and their statement respecting the crops of the past year being from the marks of last years 1872-73 crops still visible on the stems, is really an understatement of the amounts of their crop.

49. The thorough inspection of one estate (P. Medalyar) right on the boundary and a visit to the adjoining portion of the Malabar District formerly covered with magnificent forest, since destroyed for kumri cultivation, made it evident to me that the tenant had suffered loss, and that from circumstances over which he had no control, which however would affect only the boundary forests, viz. the raids of the Malabar rascals and the injury accruing to our forests from the searching bees of the kumri cultivators of Malabar.

50. The Malabar Government might be concerned with a view to the state of matters, being removed from the scene the Malabar government chose to do with their own properties, they have no right to injure those of their neighbours.

51. The tenant of the forest of Meda is deserving of a partial remission of rent, both for the past and future. His rent ought to be reduced to Rs. 30 per annum.

52. He is entitled to have some compensation for the loss of his property to the Pargattegar of Malabar at the end of last year, and for the loss of his property from his forest of kumri valuable property by a gang of rascals which led to the destruction of the forest and the capture of the several of the gang. I brought this to the notice of the Superintendent and of the Assistant Conservator of the Forests.

53. I addressed the first meeting of the Coorgs to ascertain the quantity of cardamom exported from Malabar from Coorg since 1863-64 up to the end of 1874-75. They were not in a position to give me the exact information I required, but from a careful examination of the statements of ascertaining how good enough to furnish me with, I think it is evident that

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during that period, about 1,316 cwts or 4 times as great a quantity of cardamoms was actually exported from Coorg into South Canara and Malabar than the statement submitted by the Superintendent of Coorg would show to have been produced in Coorg during that period. The quantity thus exported from Coorg during these years must have been the produce of Coorg forests during that period; for cardamoms are not stored up in Coorg, nor do any cardamoms of other countries pass through Coorg in transit to the Western Coast. I am well aware that a considerable quantity of cardamoms grown in Coorg are not the produce of Government forests; but, as a set off for this quantity, I have not taken into account the very considerable amount that is not sent to the Western Coast for exportation.

54. In Manjarnahad, Nagar and Wynad, a large increase of production has taken place, and I am informed by Mr. Munro the same is the case in Travancore. It would indeed therefore be passing strange were it true that in Coorg only the amount of cardamom produce had fallen off.

55. The toll gatherers on the frontier of Coorg might be directed to take note of the quantity of cardamoms exported hereafter. The information thus obtained would however only give an approximate idea of the quantity produced; still it would be useful and its collection would not entail any extra expense.

56. Ample opportunities of stating their grievances to me were afforded to all the cardamom tenants.

57. Several of their estates certainly are not bearing well, some have been neglected by their actual owners, chiefly rich men, who seeing the price of the commodity going down did not care to work them up.

58. On others the soil is so poor that nothing but very high prices would pay to work them; but this the tenants knew of at the outset; and a few estates on the frontier have been rendered almost valueless for cardamom cultivation owing to the depredation of the Malabar rascals. These enter them to steal timber, canes, &c. and thereby decrease the moisture of the forests so essential to the healthy growth of the cardamom plants.

59. Others' estates have been injured through the felling of the trees in the neighbourhood for coffee cultivation.

60. Some tenants have suffered loss through the desertion of their coolies at crop time owing to the outbreak of small-pox, which, of late years, has been unusually violent in Coorg.

61. Many complained of deficient rain-fall, but from enquiries I made, I do not think that matters in this respect have been any worse than usual.

62. A few stated they had suffered loss through elephants visiting their forests. These animals certainly do occasionally come to the forests in search of wild fruits and young wootches; but seldom injure the cardamom plants. Indeed there is a Coorg saying to the effect that an elephant walking over a garden does it as much good as if a tree had fallen across it.

63. In a few instances, estates I believe, have been neglected, the tenants being so hopelessly embarrassed as to have quite lost heart to labor on them.

64. The unfortunate circumstances of some of them, whatever may have been the cause, point them out as fit objects for the most lenient consideration of the Government. On the other hand many others who solicited remissions are well able to pay the rents due by them.

65. Whose circumstances bring them under the one category, and whose under the other, the Superintendent of Coorg aided by the Head Sheristadar who accompanied me through the forests, can now best determine.

66. My views on the subject of trade prospects have already been given to the Conservator and embodied in him in his letter No. 659 of 6th June 1873. I would only add that I do not think that the price (now at Rs. 40 per maund of 37½ lbs.) can fall very much lower.

67. Mr. Middleton, who is so largely interested in the matter, agrees with me that when the mutual intercourse of the mountain of India and Central Asia has been strengthened, the cardamom cultivator will again obtain high prices for his produce.

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68. The Conservator being desirous of obtaining my opinion regarding the leasing out of certain forests of Manjarabad, fit for cardamom cultivation, some papers on the subject, including the rules in force since 6th January 1873 for the taking up of such lands (which do not appear to have met their wishes of the inhabitants of Manjarabad generally) have been sent to me for perusal.

69. Considering the facility with which in these wilds the halat-tax can be evaded if for no other reason, I disapprove of this mode of collecting the revenue. I think too that blocks of forests possessing good natural boundaries should be given out irrespective of size, and that all minor forest produce should be the property of the lessee. The preservation of these forests on climatic grounds is a matter of the greatest consideration, and to ensure this, I hold that, if leased out, they should be rented in perpetuity or for lengthened periods to persons who may be trusted to bestow on them that care their welfare demands, and on terms similar to those on which I recommend the leasing out of the cardamom forests of the neighbouring Province of Coorg.

70. In the correspondence sent to me for perusal regarding both the Manjarabad and Coorg forests, there are many inaccuracies, which I have passed over unnoticed, as I cannot see any advantage in continuing upon them, especially as this report contains necessarily a résumé of the whole subject.

71. In conclusion I desire to offer my sincere acknowledgments to the Superintendent of Coorg for the cordial assistance rendered me. The services of K. Appachu, the Head Sharnistidar of Coorg, kindly placed by Major Thomson at my disposal, were invaluable. K. Ganapati, who for a short time was sent out to Nulnad to assist me in obtaining certain information from the vettis, exerted himself to his utmost and to my satisfaction. N. Kanna Rao, the Bangalore District Engineer, whom at my special request the Conservator permitted to accompany me, worked well. His knowledge of surveying proved most useful, and I beg to bring his name to the Conservator's favourable notice.

Letter received from Mr. No. 204
at Manjarabad, 12th January 1875.

Letters and statements as per margin are herewith returned.

Statement by Mr. Edgar Ludlow, (Assistant Conservator of Revenue) Report on the Cardamom Forests of Coorg, by the Conservator of Revenue dated 31st July 1874.

In February 1875, the Conservator drew the attention of the Superintendent of Coorg to the serious falling off in the collection of rents due on cardamom jungles; and the Superintendent, replying in March, stated that it was in great part due to the loss sustained by the owners of the jungles, and in a subsequent letter in April, stated that he was afraid that "the outstandings would in many cases be irrecoverable," and that there would probably have to be considerable reductions made in the rents and asked the Conservator's opinion. The revenue, commencing at the close of 1872-73, was Rs. 1,12,75-12, and the Conservator, while acknowledging the matter for the information of the Chief Commissioner, made the Superintendent acquainted with his opinion, which was, that considering the conditions under which the forests had been leased out, the Conservator could not but dissent to the proposal that reductions should be made in the rents, (except in very exceptional instances), and also suggested that statements showing the losses sustained by each owner might be framed, and certain enquiries made to ascertain the true state of affairs.

The Government cardamom forests in Coorg were up to the year 1868-69 rented out by the British Government on yearly leases. In that year they were put up to auction, the term of the leases being extended from one to ten years; outbidding was then selling well, and this fact coincided with the natural wish of the old lessees to retain forests which they had worked by themselves, or which had been in the possession of their families for many years, caused the bidding to be brisk. The forest leases were sold for a total sum of Rs. 2,10,000, payable in ten annual instalments. The price of cardamom in 1867 rose to Rs. 10 per maund from Rs. 40, at which price they had stood in 1865 years previous. But shortly after the auction prices began to fall, and the lessees who had the opportunity to carry on their operations for the present, and this resulted in applications for remissions.

72. The Superintendent of Coorg sent on 10th September 1874, "two statements and a statement showing the revenue received in certain jungles during the past year, and comparing the same with the revenue which would be received if the same were worked by themselves, and another statement showing the loss sustained by the same owners in addition to the cost of cultivation since the

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commencement of their leases in 1868-69." These statements were submitted to the Chief Commissioner by the Conservator, with a memo, giving reasons for not receiving them as statements which afforded really good information. The crops were put frequently at so low a figure, that the Conservator thought some errors must have crept in. The Chief Commissioner then directed that an Officer should be specially deputed to inspect and report on the forests.

4. Mr. Ludlow, Assistant Conservator in Nundydroog, was some years ago employed as Assistant Conservator in Coorg, and before that had personally worked cardamom forests himself. He was directed to proceed to Coorg, and to report on the whole matter. He left Nundydroog on the 21st November 1873, and returned on the 14th February 1874, having gone round at the Conservator's request to Manjarabad to visit the cardamom plantations there. His report now submitted is dated 19th June 1874, and is late. It should have been in earlier.

5. In Manjarabad a Mr. Middleton is the largest cultivator of cardamoms, compared with him the other cultivators grow insignificant quantities of the spice. Mr. Middleton has actually cleared a large extent of forest land and planted it with cardamom tubers taken from wild plants. The capsules are picked as they ripen, not as in Coorg at one picking. This advantage Mr. Middleton gains by his holding being in one large continuous block. His cardamoms also being partially shaded do not ripen at one time as do those grown as in Coorg in totally tolled clearings between blocks of forest. Mr. Middleton has also erected large buildings in which he can independently of the weather dry his cardamoms well and thoroughly. He estimates his average yield at 51 lbs. of spice per acre, and his plan shows what can be done by regular and careful cultivation. His plants have been in bearing for some years, and are still doing well, but as Mr. Ludlow points out, the soil must in course of time be exhausted, and its removal will be his chief difficulty.

6. In Coorg cardamoms are grown in small clearings between untouched belts of forest. Mr. Ludlow shows that owing to this circumstance Mr. Middleton's mode of cultivation could not be adopted in the greater portion of the Coorg gardens, and raises the question whether it would be safe to thin out virgin forests, situated on the plains, and exposed to the full force of the monsoon. He also gives as the result of his own observation that cardamoms grown in land exposed to the sun produce most fruit. It would, the Conservator thinks, be inadvisable to introduce Mr. Middleton's system into Coorg as a general rule. The forests have for so many years been worked on a totally different system that they are for the most part unsuited to it, and the effects of the wind on thinned out forest on the hills would doubtless be both very considerable and disastrous. Where land is exposed on the hills, and in forests more distant from the ghat, Mr. Middleton's system might be frequently adopted with advantage to the occupant of the land. There can be no question as to the advantages of weeding under either system.

7. The Conservator does not advocate the plan proposed by Mr. Ludlow in his para 10, viz., that Government working through the Assistant Conservator might with advantage take in hand Government forests and work them up. Such experiments for many and good reasons are not likely to succeed. The Special Officer who in Travancore has charge of the cardamom hills has not, the Conservator thinks, any such work to do.

8. Mr. Ludlow in his para 11 speaks of the two kinds of cardamom forests, the "Village" and the "Boundary," the former being near the villages, the latter, which are difficult of access and not so much sought after, being on the boundary and in the glades. Further on he says, that the condition of the Government cardamom forests "is most deplorable, not from the rentier's point of view who have made too much out of them." He considers that "they have been overworked by the tenants who according to the present system of leases have but a temporary interest in them." It has already been stated that up to 1868-69 the forests were let out on yearly leases, but now on leases of ten years duration. So far the more has been in the right direction, but the proposal for more alterations in the arrangements whereby private individuals may work these cardamom forests will be discussed farther on.

9. The present system is an advance on the older one, but the system of leases for short periods of property like cardamom forests will always present serious difficulties. The Government in leasing out its forests may say that nothing is to be done to damage the forests, but what is the hind to be drawn beyond which an enterprising and moneyed tenant is not to be allowed. He may have bought the privilege of lease at a high rate. The forest may be one admirably situated and well suited to the growth of cardamoms. The tenant naturally is desirous of making what he can out of it. To the Assistant Conservator or any other Officer of Government to then in and say "In my opinion your forest is being overworked. It is detrimental to the interests of Government, and to the interests of the public that you should be allowed, and you must be content with the area already planted up by you." Who is to decide the question? One Officer may take a very different view from another, and both may be wrong. The Conservator thinks that the attempt to force a tenant to work up to a limit which is fixed by a Forest Officer, who may very possibly have been left a short time in the Division, will practically be found most difficult, and give rise to serious complications.

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10. The proposals made by Mr. Ludlow in his para 16 are, the Conservator thinks, well worthy of attention. They were brought forward by Mr. Ludlow in Coorg, and discussed by the Conservator and the Superintendent, and they are apparently well suited to meet the case. The advantages gained by the growers hold the Coorg Government will have over the forests and the tenants, (if the latter are resident Coorgs), and the almost certainty that the Coorgs will work them with more care and more attention to the general interests of the country than other tenants, are so great, that the ordinary objections that a large sum *might* be realized if the leases were thrown open to general competition disappear. The Conservator has already adverted to the practical difficulties in the way of a Government Officer regulating the cultivation of a cardamom forest. These difficulties will however be far less if the forests are leased out to Coorgs in the manner now recommended. The provision to prevent the tenant mortgaging or transferring the forests, or the cultivation of them, is necessary. Minor forest products should be the property of the tenant, but should equally be taken into account in fixing the assessment.

11. The Forest Department has not establishment sufficient to control fires in these great forests, and their situation in localities generally remote from human habitations makes the attempt to do so still more difficult. The system of leases now suggested would make the control of fires more feasible.

12. The sale of poor trees from the forests is not great. The Department possesses no elephants and all it is able to take up the working of the great forests for timber with a reasonable prospect of a good market, poor wild jack and fruit trees must be felled on license, and in removing these trees of the commoner kinds will suffer. The want of a properly demarcated boundary line is felt in other localities than the forests under report, and the subject is one which might be advantageously taken up and dealt with.

13. Mr. Ludlow gives reasons for suggesting that poor tenants who are unable to pay up their rents should not be allowed to throw up their leases. This latter course was suggested by the Conservator before the whole matter had been gone to, and he had the allegation in the tenure of the forests was invalid. Richer men able to pay should of course be forced to do so; exceptional cases of distress being dealt with on their own merits. The Conservator has the Conservator believes, been great in some cases, and the unfortunate men deserve consideration. (See Mr. Ludlow's para 31).

14. Mr. Ludlow's remarks regarding the difficulties in the way of obtaining reliable data in the Superintendent's Office, allowing the uncertainty of the crops, and that no corrupt abuses could be attributed to the policy of entrusted with the actual preparation of the statements which proved to be faulty, are fully endorsed by the Conservator.

15. The "entire audit test" applied by Mr. Ludlow was most successful; the manner in which it was applied and the results obtained, are detailed in his paras 41 to 43, and are most creditable to him. His acquaintance with the subject, gained by his previous experience, has enabled him to show clearly and in a convincing manner that in two instances, at least, the present turn of crops was greatly understated, and that the losses were not those as reported by them. The investigation also showed, (see para 44 of report) that in one instance the losses suffered greatly from preventable causes. The great extent to which forest cultivation is carried on in Malabar is very marked.

16. The statements made by Mr. Ludlow in his paras 50-54 are based on grounds which can be upheld, and the extent of cardamom forest in Coorg has doubtless been understated by those concerned in keeping back the real facts.

17. The Conservator trusts that the matter is now sufficiently ripe to admit of the Superintendent making what estimate for the past year may be made, and of an approximation to the probable revenue of 1875-76 being calculated for the Budget estimate for that year. With the remarks made in this memo, the Conservator encloses the Assistant Conservator's Report in original for orders.

No. 665—FOR 43, DATED CAMP HANAY, 12th JANUARY 1875.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER.—The consideration of the reports on the condition of the cardamom forests in Coorg, received with the above, was deferred until the Chief Commissioner had had an opportunity of conversing with planters and Coorg officials best acquainted with the subject and he then came forward that Province having enabled him to do this the Chief Commissioner proceeded to record the following observations:

1. There can be considered, be no doubt that—

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(1) The rates realized at the sales of 1867-68 were excessive, and that they were wholly based on the high prices then ruling; and that—

(2) The prices have since fallen by more than 50 per cent, and appear to be still falling.

3. There is further no prospect of an improvement in the market, which appears to have been seriously overstocked by the largely increased production of the spice.

4. All these facts combined point to the conclusion that it is desirable, in the interests of both Government and the renters, that the rates sanctioned in 1867-68 should be revised, and such a reduction authorized as is warranted by the circumstances of the case.

5. But Mr. Ludlow's report shows that the grounds on which the necessity for such revision and for the remission of the arrears that have fallen due has been urged, as also the statements that have been furnished by the Coorg Superintendent's Office in support thereof, are not borne out by the facts, and that, except in a special class of cases, there has been no such falling off in the crops as has been alleged.

6. The Chief Commissioner therefore considers that the cases in which relief may be called for should be dealt with individually and with special reference to the circumstances mentioned in paras 2 and 3 of this order.

7. Mr. Ludlow's report with the Conservator's remarks thereon is referred to the Superintendent of Coorg in original (to be returned), with a request that he will consider and report with as little delay as possible, what general percentage reduction in the rates of 1867-68 should be sanctioned, as really called for under the falling off in the market rates of cardamoms, in justice to the renters.

8. Such reduction should have general effect from the beginning of 1874-75 till the termination of the term of the existing contracts, and if the present contractors are unwilling to retain the contracts on these conditions, they should be permitted to resign them, in which case they will be again put up to auction.

9. The question of remission of arrears that have accrued prior to the beginning of 1874-75 will be dealt with according to the special merits of each case, which will be investigated and reported on by the Superintendent with due attention to the facts stated by Mr. Ludlow. This measure will be carefully carried out without delay, a list of the defaulters in each Nad or Taluk being submitted, with a concise statement of such particulars as are needed to enable the Chief Commissioner to judge of the grounds of the Superintendent's recommendation in each case.

10. It is particularly and earnestly requested, that no avoidable delay may occur in complying with the above orders, the question being one that should be now promptly dealt with.

11. The measures advocated by Mr. Ludlow for the future treatment of the cardamom forests in Coorg will be separately considered. Several of the suggestions in his able report are entitled to careful attention and the Chief Commissioner's acknowledgments are due for the manner in which he has carried out the enquiry in this matter entrusted to him.

H. WELLESLEY,
Offg. Secretary.

To—The Superintendent of Coorg,
Conservator Forests.

1675.

ADMINISTRATION OF COORG.

FORESTS.

To

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COORG.
" CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS

Dated January 12th.

Dispatched

Received

Genl. No. 665.
Forests, 49

Recd 22/5/75

Recording certain observations by the
Chief Commissioner on the condition of the
Cardamom Forests in Coorg and requesting
the Superintendent of Coorg to consider and
report with as little delay as possible what
general percentage reduction in the rates for
1867-68 should be sanctioned, in justice to
the renters.

Coorg Chief Commissioner's office.

Bangalore 15 June 1875

From

The officiating Secretary

To the Chief Commissioner for Coorg.

The Chief Secretary to Government

Fort St. George

Cardamom.

Sir,

In accordance with the instructions
contained in paper 6 of the letter from
Government of India, Department of
Revenue Agriculture and Commerce,
No 382 dated 13th April 1875, a copy of
which is stated to have been sent direct
to you, I have the honor by desire of
the Offg. Chief Commissioner to forward
the marginally noted Proceedings on
the subject of Cardamom and other
Products in Coorg.

No 665 dated
Feb
12th January 1875

I have the honor to be

Sir
Your Most Obedient Servant

Wm. Hall

Offg. Secretary

137

COORG DEPT.

REG. No.

To *Chick*

The Secretary to Government
Fort St George

Sd/-

Ant. J. [illegible]

Ваше почитание

Dated, Bangalore, 15th June, 1896.

Described

Hand 178

Enclosures No. *One*

General No. 180

1997

1975-76

Annals of the

Ms. 665 dated 12th June

7/1/44

any 1875 on the subject of

Cardamon und Thal

Presented by the County

Ch 900. 15 June 1871

With order