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TAMIL NÁDU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1566 Press
~~B.P. No.~~ Mis.

Dated 26-4-1877 ~~197~~ .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 651. Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel E. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Ootacamund, 18th April 1877, No. 33:—

In reply to paragraph 5 of the G.O., No. 1,257, of the 28th of March last, I have the honor to inform you that I brought the destruction of the Red Sanders in the Cuddapah District to the notice of Government as long ago as 1862,* when I was on my first tour of inspection in this range, and that it has constantly been before Government in many of our Annual Reports since that date.

* *Vide* G.O., No. 1,318, dated 16th June 1862.

Punishment seldom follows where cases of forest mischief are brought to notice, or if it does, it is of the mildest description and not likely to check the practice. Without a Forest Act and more stringent rules, our officers have all along been reporting that they have no power to keep these malpractices in check, and very much has been written on the subject. The tract alluded to by the Collector of Cuddapah is open forest and not reserved in any way, but our officers, as things now stand, find it almost impossible to prevent similar mischief in our reserves.

2. Early in November last I received a letter from the Acting Collector of Cuddapah stating that on account of the famine he had thrown open all the reserves in his district; this was without any previous reference to me or without even consultation with the forest officer of the district. I know that this meant much felling and lopping of trees and much mischief, and I immediately addressed the forest officer to bring to bear all means in his power to reduce the damage to a minimum, and I informed the Collector of my views on the subject†. Considering the fact of there being a severe famine, I should probably have been censured if I had attempted to oppose the Collector, and the present position of our department and the view that the Board of Revenue generally take of ryots' privileges were not such as to encourage me to do so. I received no reply from the Collector, and in December, when I visited this district on a tour of inspection, I went into Cuddapah to see him personally on the subject, and I then learnt that he did not know that our reserves were small, restricted areas in large tracts of forest, but that he was under the impression that they comprised all the forests on the hills; in fact, that he had issued his orders without any knowledge of the facts of the case, and he promised me that, in future, the grazing privileges should be entirely under the forest officer's orders. On subsequently visiting these reserves, I found that not only were they thrown open to the cattle of the district but that hundreds of head had been driven across from Nellore. I then stopped the admission of any cattle, except those of the neighbouring ryots, but allowed grass to be cut by others, and ordered Mr. Yarde to keep me informed whether the privilege was abused or otherwise. In January I received Mr. Yarde's letter, No. 498,‡ and I addressed my letter, No. 1,658,§ to the Collector, to which I received, as a reply, No. 467‖ from the Collector.

† *Vide* copy of my letter to the Collector, No. 1,319, dated 17th November 1876. Enclosure No. I.

‡ Enclosure No. II.
§ Enclosure No. III.
‖ Enclosure No. IV.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,

26th April 1877.

Some Collectors see the importance of forest reservation, and are anxious the department; others again are much opposed to reservation, and would like to see everything give way to ryots' privileges, so that when a Collectorate changes hands several times in the year, which it often does, our officers are much perplexed.

4. I am every year more impressed with the importance of forming close reserves, particularly in railway districts like Cuddapah, North Arcot, &c., where the forests are fast disappearing. It has lately been proved that plantations, except under very favorable circumstances (such as are obtainable in paduga lands or tank-beds), are too expensive and not likely to be a decided success; but there is no doubt about the reserves, and if our rules were strict enough, and the assistance of the Native Revenue officials such as to enable us to effectually exclude fire, they would, without doubt, in time be of great benefit to the country in a climatic point of view, and, as the unreserved forests disappear, which they probably must in time, of very great advantage to the inhabitants in many ways. Some of our reserves have improved very much under conservancy (one in Cuddapah is now estimated to have upwards of 19 tons to the acre against some 4 or 5 tons only in the open forest); but they are none of them any thing like what they should be. We require a Forest Act, more stringent rules, always acted up to, and more assistance from the Native revenue officials; if we had these, the benefit of these reserves in times of famine would be immense; there would be large supplies of grass, and we might grow many trees, the pods of which are of great value as fodder. We have lately introduced the West Indian Prosopis and other trees which are valuable in this way, but expenditure of this nature is unsatisfactory, unless we are sure that we can exclude cattle.

5. I have reported very fully upon the reserves and forests in this district in my inspection tour report submitted to Government through the Board in February last.

No. 652.

ORDER THEREON, 26th April 1877, No. 1,566.

Forest, No. 14.

COMMUNICATED to the Collector of Cuddapah, through the Board of Revenue, for remarks.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Officiating Chief Secretary.

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

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Office of Conservator of Forests
Coimbatore 17th November 1876

No. 1319

From

Lieut.t Colonel R. H. Beddome
Conservator of Forests

To

J. R. Daniel Esqr.
Acting Collector of
Cuddapah

Sir,

Referring to your letter No. 190 of the 13th Instant, I have the honor to inform you that I think you should consult the Forest Officer of your District before giving orders of the nature alluded to.

2. The Reserves would not be available as grazing grounds unless our Department had gone to great expense in their up Keep and I think we should be credited with the amount of any damage done.

3. It would I think be a better plan to allow the villagers to enter to cut the grass instead of allowing the ingress of the cattle themselves, if the

be kept that axes, bill hooks and fire are not taken inside, and goats must on no account be allowed to enter.

I have &c.

Signed) R. H. Biddome, Lt Col
Conservator of Forests.

True Copy

R H Biddome Lt Colonel
Conservator of Forests

I
Conclusion
In a letter No 33, 9/18 Feb 1877 from the Conservator of Forests to the Additional Secretary to the R.D. -

Rec 1/2224/77
Rec 26-4-77 vide 1506.

Extract No 467.

Camp Gandlore Pallam 23rd March 1877.

136/H

From

J. J. Dick Esquire
Acting Collector of Cuddapah

To

Lieutt Colonel R. H. Biddome
Conservator of Forests.

Sir,

Referring to your letter No 1658 dated 23rd Ultimo, I have the honor to state that after having inspected some of the Reserves and received a report from the Head Assistant Collector I have arrived at the conclusion that it is advisable to withdraw the Special and temporary concession of permitting the grazing of cattle or cutting of leaves and grass in the Jerrimood Reserves of this District granted by my predecessor and that I have issued orders accordingly

2.

2

I agree with Mr Yeade in consider-
ing that the ryots have in a most
wanton way committed great damage
to the forests of this Division.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. I. Price
Ag. Collector.

(True Copy).

H. H. Beddome Lt Colonel
Conservator of Forests.

IV.
Enclosure
to a letter No 38 dated 15th
April 1877 from the Commissioner of
Forests to the Additional Secretary
to Govt. No 19.

Rev: 2/2224/77
G.O. 26-4-77 No 1566.

Deputy Conservators Office
Camp Balapulley
No 498. 26th January 1877.

From

H. H. Yeade Esquire
Deputy Conservator of Forests
Cuddapah Division.

To

Lieutt. Col. R. H. Beddome
Conservator of Forests.

Sir,

I have the honor to bring to
your notice that since the ryots have
been allowed to cut grass in the Reserves
for their cattle, owing to the scarcity
of pasturage, they have been commit-
ting serious damage to valuable trees,
these villagers instead of cutting the
grass, or collecting the leaves, have
entirely destroyed whole trees some of
them being of high seignorage. When
prevented by our watchmen, the villagers
being stronger in number threaten vio-
lence, and our men are unable to check
them.

tent [illegible] allusion to the indulgence
alluded to about the suspension of the
Fuel Tax is giving great trouble as
the ryots seemingly from ignorance,
think this measure of Government
confers on them the right of entry
into the Reserves for the indiscriminate
felling of trees. I have written to the
Collector on the subject, with the
request that he will depict the Village
authorities to assist our men, but
for the better supervision of the reserves
and for the preservation of the valuable
trees, I beg to request you will be
good enough to sanction the employ
ment of 2 extra watchers to each of the
Reserves, as a temporary measure,
till such time the present distress
exists and the privileges granted to
the ryots are in force. The cost
being met from 'Working charges'

Yours &c
(Signed) H. M. Gyngell
Dy Conservator of Forests.

(True Copy.)

J. H. Beddome Lt Colonel
Conservator of Forests.

Office of Conservator of Forests
Camp Rayatmurray
2nd February 1877

No 1658

From

Lieutt Colonel R. H. Beddome
Conservator of Forests

To

The Collector of
Cuddapah

Sir,

The forward Reserves of your District are a very small area compared to the whole forest tracts but when the late Acting Collector of your District threw them open to grazing I did not object if it was under proper restriction I have the honor to forward copy of a letter from Mr Garde by which you will perceive that very great mischief is likely to accrue and I trust that you will now shut them up again as Government have spent large sums in their formation and upkeep and

Encl.

Ltr. a letter No. 33 dt. 18th Jan. 1877 from the Commr. of Govt. & the additional Sanitary Commr. R.D.

Rec: 3/2/77

Ans: 6-4-77 N. 1-5-64

and they will apparently be quite destroyed if kept open to the people.

I have &c

(Signed) R. H. Beddome Lt Col
Conr of Forests

(True Copy)

H Beddome Lt Col

Conservator of Forests

III

Enclosure

to Conr letter No 337 / 18 dated 26th April 1877
from the Commissioner of Forests to the
Additional Secretary to Govt No 8

Rec: 26-4-77 No 1868.

Office of Conservator of Forests
Cotacamund 18th April 1877

No 33

From

Lt Colonel R. H. Beddome
Conservator of Forests

To,

J. H. Garstin Esqre
Additional Secretary to Govt R.D.
Fort St George.

Sir,

In reply to para 5 of the Govern=ment order No 1257 of the 25th of March last, I have the honor to inform you that I brought the destruction of the Red Sanders in the Cuddapah District to the notice of Government as long ago as 1862, when I was on my first tour of Inspection in this Range, and that it has constantly been before Govern=ment in many of our Annual reports since that date.-

Punishment seldom follows where cases of Forest mischief are brought to notice, or if it does, it is of the mildest description and not likely to check the practice; with=out a Forest Act, and more stringent rules, our officers have all along been reporting that

* Vide G.O. 1318 dated 16th June 1862.-

that they have no power to keep these mal-
-practises in check, and very much has been
written on the subject. The tract alluded to
by the Collector of Cuddapah is open forest
and not reserved in any way, but our Officers,
as things now stand, find it almost im-
-possible to prevent similar mischief in
our Reserves.

2. Early in November last, I received
a letter from the Acting Collector of Cuddapah
stating that on account of the famine he
had thrown open all the Reserves in his
District, this was without any previous pre-
-ference to me or without even consultation
with the Forest Officer of the District, I
knew that this meant much felling and
lopping of trees and much mischief, and I
immediately addressed the Forest Officer
to bring to bear all means in his power to
reduce the damage to a minimum, and
I informed the Collector of my views on the
subject,* Considering the fact of there being a
severe famine, I should probably have been
censured, if I had attempted to oppose the

*Vide Copy of my
Letter to the Collector
No 1319 dt 17 Nov 1876
Enclosure No 1.

Collector, and the present position of our
Department and the view that the Board
of Revenue generally take of Ryots privi-
leges, were not such as to encourage me to
do so. I received no reply from the Collector
and in December when I visited this Dis-
-trict on a tour of Inspection, I went into
Cuddapah to see him personally on the
subject and I then learnt that he did not
know that our Reserves were small restricted
areas in large tracts of forest, but that he
was under the impression that they com-
-prized all the forests on the hills in
fact that he had issued his orders with-
-out any knowledge of the facts of the case
and he promised me that in future the
grazing privileges should be entirely under
the Forest Officers orders, on subsequently
visiting these Reserves, I found that not
only were they thrown open to the cattle
of the District, but that hundreds of
head had been driven across from Nellore,
I then stopped the admission of any cattle

except

of those of the neighbouring ryots, [illegible] allowed grass to be cut by others, and ordered Mr. Garde to keep me informed whether the privilege was abused or otherwise. In January I received Mr. Garde's letter No. 198* and I addressed my letter No. 1658 to the Collector to which I received as a reply No. 467 from the Collector.

* Enclosure No. II.

* Enclosure No. III

* Enclosure No. IV

3.— Some Collectors see the importance of forest preservation and are anxious to support the Department, others again are much opposed to preservation and would like to see everything give way to Ryots' privileges, so that when a Collectorate changes hands several times in one year which it often does our officers are much perplexed.—

4.— I am every year more impressed with the importance of forming close Reserves particularly in Railway Districts like Cuddapah, North Arcot &c. where the forests are fast disappearing, it has lately been proved that plantations except under very favorable circumstances (such as are obtainable in Paduga lands or tank beds) are too expensive and not likely to be a decided success, but there is no doubt about the Reserves, and if our Rules were strict enough, and the assistance of the Native Revenue Officials such as to enable us to effectually exclude cattle and fire, they would, without doubt in time be of great benefit to the country in a climatic point of view, and as the unreserved forests disappear, which they probably must in time, of very great advantage to the inhabitants in many ways. Some of our Reserves have improved very much under Conservancy (one in Cuddapah is now estimated to have upwards of 1 ton to the acre against some ¼ or ½ tons only in the open forest) but they are none of them anything like what they should be, we require a Forest Act, more stringent rules, always acted up to, and more assistance from the Native Revenue Officials, if we had

had these the benefit of these Reserves in times of famine would be immense, there would be large supplies of grass and we might grow many trees, the pods of which are of great value as fodder. We have lately introduced the West Indian Prosopis and other trees which are valuable in this way, but expenditure of this nature is unsatisfactory, unless we are sure that we can exclude cattle.-

5.- I have reported very fully upon the Reserves and Forests in this District in my Inspection tour report, submitted to Government through the Board in February last.-

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your Most Obedt. Servt.

Alb. Sedelmeyer Lt. Colonel
Conservator of Forests

Revenue (1877) Department
Forest Department

From

The Conservator of
Forests.

To,

The Additional Secretary
to Government
R. D.

Dated 18th April 1877
Recd 21st

No. 33.

Enclosures No 4.

Subject.

Submits reply to Para 5
of G.O No 125 of the 28th
of March 1877, about the
destruction of Red Sanders
in Cuddapah District -

Order No 1086
Communicated to the
Collector of Cuddapah this
16th day of Apr. - for
remark 26-4-77 24/4/77

14 Encl to No 33 of Revenue 4-1877
21 " Com. & Forests "

C. 26/4/77. A 26/4/77