

Revenue (1898) Department.

PRESS SERIES.

G.O., No. 363

Dated 28th June 1898.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Free Grazing. Recording Board's Proceedings
passing to discuss the question whether the
margins round the small village forming
enclosures to the husband's fields in the hill
forests of the North Comtat are sufficient
to provide — for the agricultural cattle of the
poorer ryots, and, if not, whether steps should
be taken to enlarge the margin.

BACK PAPERS.

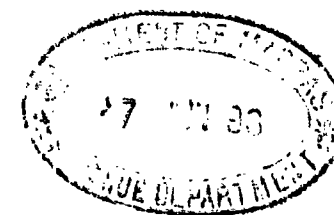
G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Revenue (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 4099



5/20/18/98

Pl. 24.6.98

From the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue
G. Order No. 167 dated 25.5.98
153/636/25.5.98

Recorded

For No. 167

To the S.D.R.

11/12/6.18

Dated 5 May 1898

Received 7 June

Registered 10 n

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Passing orders on the question of allotting lands for free grazing for the cattle & goats of the population of the villages forming enclosures to certain reserved forests in the upland taluhs of the Coimbatore Dist.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
10	648	Rev	22-7
~	587	Rev	5-11

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Stacy
Jb
25-7-16

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1898.

Board of Revenue

(Land Revenue),

MADRAS.

Printed June th.

Proceedings, Forest No. 167, 5th May 1898.

MAY.

Passing orders on the question of allotting lands for free grazing for the cattle and goats of the population of the villages forming enclosures to certain reserved forests in the upland taluks of the Coimbatore district.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE
(LAND REVENUE).

READ—the following letter from A. BUTTERWORTH, Esq., Acting Collector of Coimbatore, to the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue (through the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle), dated Coimbatore, 2nd November 1897, Ref. on C. No. 1091-For.:—

In paragraph 4 of Board's Proceedings, No. 198, Forests, dated 17th May 1897, I was directed to report whether the unreserved margins round the small villages forming enclosures to the reserved forests in the hill tracts in the north of the Coimbatore district are in all cases sufficient to provide free grazing for the agricultural cattle of the poorer ryots and it was stated that if the reply to this question should be in the negative, steps might be taken to enlarge this margin.

2. On the authority of my District Forest-officer, I can inform the Board that the unreserved margins are not in all cases large enough for the purpose indicated. When the forests in these tracts were reserved, margins were left round the villages to allow for free grazing and extension of cultivation, but the natural result of a growth of population has been that in some cases the whole of the margin or almost all of it has now passed under cultivation. If we are now to demarcate a fresh margin, the same result will no doubt be seen. The new area intended for grazing will be absorbed into the cultivated area and the process of encroachment on the forests will be unending.

3. Another objection to the proposed enlargement of margins is that, on and around a great number of the village enclosures, the sandalwood tree grows abundantly. It is very difficult to protect the tree on an area thrown open to grazing and the extension of the margins would, therefore, result in a diminution of the supply of sandalwood. In consequence of this objection, the Government have, in certain cases, in the Bhavani and Satyamangalam taluks (*vide* Government Order, No. 587, Revenue, dated 3rd November 1896, quoted in Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 519, dated 16th November 1896), ordered portions of the margin to be taken up with a view to the better protection of the sandalwood growth.

4. It is within the knowledge of the Board that the cattle on these northern hill tracts mainly belong to cattle-breeders on the plains and I do not think that the agricultural cattle of the villagers are sufficiently numerous to render it necessary to attempt to make special provision for them. Such an attempt is sure to end in failure or in great damage to the forests, because grazing land only exists so long as it is not more profitable to cultivate it and as population increases either the circle of grazing margin must continually widen or the grazing area will disappear under the plough. As it is, the agricultural cattle of the people of these villages are no worse off than those of the inhabitants of the ordinary villages on the plains. I do not think it necessary to make special efforts to improve their position.

5. In paragraph 7 of the same Proceedings, the Board has requested the Collector to consider the question of goat-browsing and to report whether any hardship would be caused by prohibiting it altogether.

As regards this point, I think, I may assure the Board that no hardship will be caused through the adoption of Mr. Bradley's proposal, because, as a fact, the browsing of goats in reserves in this district has always been prohibited. I do not think that the existing prohibition should be withdrawn, because goats are stated to be excessively fond of sandalwood leaves and great damage would consequently result from admitting them into the areas adjacent to the village enclosures where the sandalwood tree flourishes. I am informed that goats are to a considerable extent kept not for domestic purposes but for the sake of their skins. This being so, there is not much reason for granting special concessions to the keepers of goats. If it were a question of closing the reserves to goats, I should very likely have reported against it in spite of the above arguments, but, as it is merely a question of not opening the reserves to those animals, I accept the opinion of the District Forest-officer Mr. Lushington that no change in system should be effected.

Endorsement by H. A. GASS, Esq., Acting Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, dated Coimbatore, 11th November 1897, C. No. 2011.

Forwarded.

There is no doubt that in parts of North Coimbatore, the margins are altogether too small, and I believe I may say that in some they hardly exist at all; and as the Collector points out, they are diminished by extension of cultivation and this process would continue, as often as they are added to by fresh land and the District Forest-officer objects to giving up any more land, because of the abundance of sandalwood in and around village enclosures. In such cases, it would apparently be necessary to set aside a special area away from a village for the free grazing of cattle belonging to poorer ryots. As regards goat-browsing, the possible hardship can only be estimated by knowing roughly the number of goats maintained. Where village margins are too small, it might be necessary in this case also to set aside a special area for them.

Reference on the above, dated 24th November 1897.

The Conservator's endorsement read above will be forwarded to the Collector for remarks.

2. The Collector is also requested to state whether arrangements might not once for all be made for the free admission of the cattle of the existing pattadars in enclosures on half the scale on which they were formerly admitted at reduced rates. This privilege should not be allowed in the case of extension of cultivation.

(Signed) R. C. C. CARR,
Secretary.

To the Collector of Coimbatore.

Copy to the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle.

READ—the following letter from J. A. CUMMING, Esq., Ag. Collector of Coimbatore, to the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue (through the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle), dated Coimbatore 16th March 1898, Ref. on Cur. No. 1091:—

I have the honour to reply to Board's Reference on Forest No. 3391, of 1897, dated 24th November 1897, as follows:—

(1) With reference to the Conservator's remarks I would point out that they are based on a misapprehension of the facts for the simple reason that the poor ryot does not exist in these hills. This is proved by careful enquiries which have been made by the District Forest-officer in Kollegal and the Sub-divisional officer in Satyamangalam.

The land in the enclosures is entirely in the hands of a few well-to-do men and the Sholagars, Lambadies, Ooralis and Kurumbers who form the poorer part of the population are not as a rule land-holders, but servants of the big ryot either cultivating his land or grazing his cattle.

There may, in a few instances, be small land-holders, but there are usually wealthy men who have settled there not for the sake of cultivation but for the purpose of breeding cattle. Many instances have come to light where land has been on patta for years—not cultivated but used as a cattle camp. If therefore a special area were set apart as suggested by the Conservator, it would not benefit the persons for whom it was intended but would prove a loop hole by which the large cattle-breeder would escape paying fees for the bulk of his cattle.

(2) As regards the suggestion of the Board in paragraph 2 of the reference, I have the honour to point out that it is opposed to paragraph 2 of Government Order, No. 553, Revenue, Forest No. 224, dated 14th August 1895.

Not only would it involve all the dangers that were pointed out by the Board with respect to the distinction between privileged and non-privileged cattle, but it would not, as pointed out above, serve any useful purpose.

2. I may further point out that in doing away with the distinction and lowering the fees from 4 to 3 annas for non-privileged cattle, we have not obtained as was anticipated a loss of Rs. 3,100 (*vide* Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 66, dated 4th February 1895), but a gain of over Rs. 6,000 in the present year. It is not easy to say exactly to what this is attributable, but it is certain that part of it is due to the better check of cattle in the craals and is also in part due to the increasing size of the herds grazed in these fine pastures.

3. It is found that the goats as a whole are kept in large herds by the wealthy cattle-breeders and that they are in a great measure confined to certain localities—thus on the Talamalai plateau they are confined to the western portion where there is a large area of unreserved forest, in Kollegal they are confined to the villages outside the reserves and to the large enclosures where there is a considerable area of waste and this is also the case on the Satyamangalam plateau with the exception of three villages—Hassanur, Gairmalla and Kurumbur—where there is still a good deal of unreserved land left outside the forest though not so much as in the other places named. I see no reason, however, for encouraging goat-breeding in these two places where they are a constant source of danger to the sandalwood growth which surrounds the villages.

Endorsement by C. E. BRASIER, Esq., Acting Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, dated Coimbatore, 24th March 1898, No. 2011.

Forwarded.

The confusion and abuse arising from differential rates has already been prominently brought to notice. There is therefore no necessity to further remark thereon, while it would appear that the well-to-do cattle-breeders of the locality referred to can easily afford to pay the maxima rates now in force of As. 3 per head of cattle.

Far from lowering the rates, therefore, it would appear to be worthy of consideration whether these upland grazing tracts should not be placed on a similar basis as the corresponding localities of Salem district, viz., the forests of Hosur and Dharmapuri taluks where the four-annas rate is to be levied next year and was only temporarily reduced to three annas during the current grazing season under special orders on the subject.

As regards the browsing of goats in the special circumstances pointed out there appears to be no necessity to set aside separate areas for them at least in ordinary years. In years of excessive drought, however, it may be found advisable to set aside such areas for short periods at least, in order that these animals may be able to tide over such times of scarcity of fodder in their ordinary grazing-grounds outside reserves.

RESOLUTION—Forest No. 167, dated 5th May 1898.

In paragraph 4 of Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 198, dated 17th May 1897, the Board recommended that the hill forests of North Coimbatore should be treated as special tracts in which enhanced grazing fees might be levied, but called on the Collector to report whether the unreserved margin round the small villages forming enclosures to the reserve was sufficient to provide free grazing for the agricultural cattle of the poorer ryots, and in approving the Board's proposal, Government directed that the report thus called for should be submitted as soon as possible.

2. On the 11th November 1897, the Collector reported on the authority of the District Forest-officer that the margin was not in all cases large enough, as a large portion of that originally provided had passed under cultivation, but he deprecated any extension as it would no doubt be followed by a further expansion of cultivation and the process of encroachment on the forests would be unending. As a further objection, the Collector dwelt on the necessity for protecting the sandalwood growing round the villages, and added that the agricultural cattle of the villagers were not sufficiently numerous to call for special provision, while any attempt to make such provision would be sure to end in failure since either the circle of grazing area must continually widen or the grazing area would disappear under the plough. He further expressed the opinion that the agricultural cattle of the hill villagers were no worse off than those of the villagers on the plains.

3. In forwarding the Collector's letter, the Acting Conservator Mr. Gass confirmed the Collector's statement that in parts of North Coimbatore the margin allowed is altogether too small, but in deference to the objection that an extension involved danger to the adjacent sandalwood growth suggested that special areas situated at a distance from the villages might be assigned for the free grazing of cattle belonging to the poorer ryots.

4. The Conservator's endorsement was forwarded to the Collector for remarks, and he was asked to report at the same time whether arrangement might not be made for the free admission to grazing of the cattle of the holders of patta lands lying within enclosures.

5. In his letter of the 16th March, the Collector objects to Mr. Gass' proposals on the ground that poor ryots are unknown on the hills, the enclosures being either in the hands of a few well-to-do men who employ servants to cultivate their lands and graze their cattle, or of wealthy cattle-breeders who do not cultivate their holdings but use them as cattle camps. The Board's proposal to allow free grazing to certain cattle is also deprecated by both the Collector and the Acting Conservator, Mr. Brasier, on the ground that the differential treatment of grazing cattle has, after full consideration, been negatived by Government in Government Order, No. 224, dated 14th August 1895.

6. As reservation has been carried out on a very large scale in the upland tracts of North Coimbatore, the Collector's argument that the extension of the grazing margin would fail to secure the objects for which such margin was originally granted as they would soon fall under the plough, raises the question as to whether some special steps are not necessary to give effect to the policy emphasized by the Government of India (in paragraph 6 of the resolution recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 32, dated 24th January 1895), viz., that, subject to certain conditions, the claims of cultivation are stronger than the claims of forest preservation. These conditions are given in paragraph 7 of the same resolution and the Board is disposed to think that if the principles therein laid down are applied to most, if not all, of the enclosures in the North Coimbatore reserves, it will be found that extension of cultivation must be provided for otherwise than by extending the margins around them. Nothing would be gained by encouraging scattered cultivation throughout these magnificent pasture grounds, while large areas of land well suited for cultivation still remain waste outside the reserved forests. The Collector should, however, cause the larger enclosures to be inspected by a Revenue officer in view to the submission of a special report in any case in which facilities for the extension of cultivation seem to be called for.

7. In supposing that the Board would desire the continual renewal of grazing margins absorbed in the cultivated area, the Collector misunderstands the position. The question under consideration is whether these forests shall be treated as special tracts in which the grazing fee may be gradually raised to one rupee, and it is merely proposed to show some consideration to the local villagers at the time of making the change, for which they can hardly have been prepared. If they afterwards choose to divert to other purposes land assigned for grazing, no new claim arises for special consideration. The Board attaches no importance to the Collector's remark that they are no worse off than the ordinary villagers on the plains. Villagers on the plains have many compensating advantages, and a succinct statement of the grounds on which special facilities should be afforded to the residents of forest tracts will be found in paragraph 5 of the resolution of the Government of India to which reference has just been made.

8. For the present, sanction has only been accorded to the levy of a fee of 4 annas, a rate which is already in force in several districts, and so long as this rate continues, no special measures need be taken, but any application for sanction for the enhancement of this rate must be accompanied by a statement of the cultivated area of each enclosure and the extent of the grazing margin together with proposals for relief of some sort in all cases where the existing margin is insufficient. The prohibition of the differential treatment of cattle in the ordinary grazing rules does not, in the Board's opinion, preclude a measure of this character in the limited tracts where special grazing rates are levied. It has, however, no preference for this method of dealing with the difficulty and merely suggested it as the Collector seemed so opposed to the idea of increasing the grazing margin. The proposal to protect the sandalwood growth by assigning distant areas for free grazing does not commend itself to the Board and seems hardly necessary now that special sandalwood transit rules have been introduced.

9. In the same papers a report was called for as to whether the exclusion of goats from the special tracts would cause special hardship to the people concerned. It would seem that there need be no anxiety on this score. The grazing of goats within the reserves has not hitherto been allowed; there is a considerable area of unreserved lands in the villages in which the largest numbers of goats are found; they are not kept mainly for agricultural or domestic purposes, but for the sake of their skins; and there is no special reason for encouraging their increase in tracts which are so well suited for cattle-breeding as those now under consideration.

(True Copy and Extract.)

Lonel Dardem
Acting Secretary.

To the Collector of Coimbatore in MS.

" Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, in MS.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department. ✓

Exd. Md. Pahilvan.

B.P. For No 167 & 5.5-98
(C. No. 4099)

See Please see the
notes with G.O. 648
of 29 July 97 flagged A.

In that G.O. the
Govt while approving
of the collector of
Coimbatore proposal
to charge maximum
Sanctioned rates for
grazing in the hill
forests of the upland
Taluk of the Pala
malai Salgamanglam
Bharani & Kollegal
Ranges of the N. Coim
balore Division, asked
that the further
reports called for
from the collector
as to (a) whether the
unreserved margin on
the small villages
forming enclosures
to the reserves (in their
tracts) was in all

provide free grazing
for the agricultural
cattle of the poorer
nypols; & (b) whether
any hardship will
be caused by prohibiting
goat browsing in these
tracts.

From the reports
now submitted it does
not appear that any
hardship is to be
apprehended. ~~from either~~

As to (a), ~~there~~ it seems
true that the margins
are in parts scanty but
it seems also clear
that the pastures
are used almost solely
by rich breeders for their
cattle & that there are
no poor nypols who
own cattle. The rate
sanctioned by the Govt
is as the Bd point
out only the maximum
sanctioned rate & not
special rate. ~~over~~

goats have not hitherto
been admitted into
these reserves & that
no hardship ~~will~~ ^{is to be expected} if
they are kept out in
the future.

~~Very~~
Sd/-

No action

seems to be required
on the current which
mag. I submit, to
records. Please
see draft on docket.

approved
M
24.6.98

~~Very~~
H
8/23/98

Government {1898} of Madras.
REVENUE.

Recd.

Regd.

1898.

Enclosures

Spare copies

G.O., No. 363, 28th June 1898.

JUNE.

Free Grazing.

Recording Board's Proceedings passing orders on the question whether the unreserved margins round the small villages forming enclosures to the reserved forests in the hill forests of the North Coimbatore district are sufficient to provide — for the agricultural cattle of the poorer ryots and, if not, whether steps should be taken to enlarge the margin.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), Forest No. 167, dated 5th May 1898:—

Read—the following letter from A. BUTTERWORTH, Esq., Acting Collector of Coimbatore, to the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue (through the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle), dated Coimbatore, 2nd November 1897, Ref. on C. No. 1091-For.:—

In paragraph 4 of Board's Proceedings, Forest, No. 198, dated 17th May 1897, I was directed to report whether the unreserved margins round the small villages forming enclosures to the reserved forests in the hill tracts in the north of the Coimbatore district are in all cases sufficient to provide free grazing for the agricultural cattle of the poorer ryots and it was stated that if the reply to this question should be in the negative, steps might be taken to enlarge this margin.

2. On the authority of my District Forest-officer, I can inform the Board that the unreserved margins are not in all cases large enough for the purpose indicated. When the forests in these tracts were reserved, margins were left round the villages to allow for free grazing and extension of cultivation, but the natural result of a growth of population has been that in some cases the whole of the margin or almost all of it has now passed under cultivation. If we are now to demarcate a fresh margin, the same result will no doubt be seen. The new area intended for grazing will be absorbed into the cultivated area and the process of encroachment on the forests will be unending.

3. Another objection to the proposed enlargement of margins is that, on and around a great number of the village enclosures, the sandalwood tree grows abundantly. It is very difficult to protect the tree on an area thrown open to grazing and the extension of the margins would, therefore, result in a diminution of the supply of sandalwood. In consequence of this objection, the Government have, in certain cases, in the Bhavani and Satyamangalam taluks (*vide* Government Order, No. 587, Revenue, dated 3rd November 1896, quoted in Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 519, dated 16th November 1896), ordered portions of the margin to be taken up with a view to the better protection of the sandalwood growth.

4. It is within the knowledge of the Board that the cattle on these northern hill tracts mainly belong to cattle-breeders on the plains and I do not think that the agricultural cattle of the villagers are sufficiently numerous to render it necessary to attempt to make special provision for them. Such an attempt is sure to end in failure or in great damage to the forests, because grazing land only exists so long as it is not more profitable to cultivate it and as population increases either the circle of grazing margin must continually widen or the grazing area will disappear under the plough. As it is, the agricultural cattle of the people of these villages are no worse off than those of the inhabitants of the ordinary villages on the plains. I do not think it necessary to make special efforts to improve their position.

5. In paragraph 7 of the same Proceedings, the Board has requested the Collector to consider the question of goat-browsing and to report whether any hardship would be caused by prohibiting it altogether.

As regards this point, I think, I may assure the Board that no hardship will be caused through the adoption of Mr. Bradley's proposal, because, as a fact, the browsing of goats in reserves in this district has always been prohibited. I do not think that the existing prohibition should be withdrawn, because goats are stated to be excessively fond of sandalwood leaves and great damage would consequently result from admitting them into the areas adjacent to the village enclosures where the sandalwood tree flourishes. I am informed that goats are to a considerable extent kept not for domestic purposes but for the sake of their skins. This being so, there is not much reason for granting special concessions to the keepers of goats. If it were a question of closing the reserves to goats, I should very likely have reported against it in spite of the above arguments, but as it is merely a question of not opening the reserves to those animals, I accept the opinion of the District Forest-officer Mr. Lushington that no change in system should be effected.

Endorsement by H. A. GASS, Esq., Acting Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, dated Coimbatore, 11th November 1897, C. No. 2011.

Forwarded.

There is no doubt that in parts of North Coimbatore, the margins are altogether too small, and I believe I may say that in some they hardly exist at all; and as the Collector points out, they are diminished by extension of cultivation and this process would continue, as often as they are added to by fresh land and the District Forest-officer objects to giving up any more land, because of the abundance of sandalwood in and around village enclosures. In such cases, it would apparently be necessary to set aside a special area away from a village for the free grazing of cattle belonging to poorer ryots. As regards goat-browsing, the possible hardship can only be estimated by knowing roughly the number of goats maintained. Where village margins are too small, it might be necessary in this case also to set aside a special area for them.

Reference on the above, dated 24th November 1897.

The Conservator's endorsement read above will be forwarded to the Collector for remarks.

2. The Collector is also requested to state whether arrangements might not once for all be made for the free admission of the cattle of the existing pattadars in enclosures on half the scale on which they were formerly admitted at reduced rates. This privilege should not be allowed in the case of extension of cultivation.

(Signed) R. C. C. CARR,
Secretary.

To the Collector of Coimbatore.

Copy to the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle.

Read—the following letter from J. A. CUMMING, Esq., Ag. Collector of Coimbatore, to the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue (through the Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle), dated Coimbatore 16th March 1898, Ref. on Cur. No. 1091:—

I have the honour to reply to Board's Reference on Forest No. 3391, of 1897 dated 24th November 1897, as follows:—

(1) With reference to the Conservator's remarks I would point out that they are based on a misapprehension of the facts for the simple reason that the poor ryot does not exist in these hills. This is proved by careful enquiries which have been made by the District Forest-officer in Kollegal and the Sub-divisional officer in Satyamangalam.

The land in the enclosures is entirely in the hands of a few well-to-do men and the Sholagars, Lambadies, Ooralis and Kurumbers who form the poorer part of the population are not as a rule land-holders, but servants of the big ryot either cultivating his land or grazing his cattle.

There may, in a few instances, be small land-holders, but there are usually wealthy men who have settled there not for the sake of cultivation but for the purpose of breeding cattle. Many instances have come to light where land has been on patta for years—not cultivated but used as a cattle camp. If therefore a special area were set apart as suggested by the Conservator, it would not benefit the persons for whom it was intended but would prove a loop hole by which the large cattle-breeder would escape paying fees for the bulk of his cattle.

(2) As regards the suggestion of the Board in paragraph 2 of the reference, I have the honour to point out that it is opposed to paragraph 2 of Government Order, No. 553, Revenue, Forest No. 224, dated 14th August 1895.

Not only would it involve all the dangers that were pointed out by the Board with respect to the distinction between privileged and non-privileged cattle, but it would not, as pointed out above, serve any useful purpose.

2. I may further point out that in doing away with the distinction and lowering the fees from 4 to 3 annas for non-privileged cattle, we have not obtained as was anticipated a loss of Rs. 3,100 (*vide* Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 66, dated 4th February 1895), but a gain of over Rs. 6,000 in the present year. It is not easy to say exactly to what this is attributable, but it is certain that part of it is due to the better check of cattle in the craals and is also in part due to the increasing size of the herds grazed in these fine pastures.

3. It is found that the goats as a whole are kept in large herds by the wealthy cattle-breeders and that they are in a great measure confined to certain localities—thus on the Talamalai plateau they are confined to the western portion where there is a large area of unreserved forest, in Kollegal they are confined to the villages outside the reserves and to the large enclosures where there is a considerable area of waste and this is also the case on the Satyamangalam plateau with the exception of three villages—Hassanur, Gairmalla and Kurumbur—where there is still a good deal of unreserved land left outside the forest though not so much as in the other places named. I see no reason, however, for encouraging goat-breeding in these two places where they are a constant source of danger to the sandalwood growth which surrounds the villages.

Endorsement by C. E. BRASIER, Esq., Acting Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle, dated Coimbatore, 24th March 1898, No. 2011.

Forwarded.

The confusion and abuse arising from differential rates has already been prominently brought to notice. There is therefore no necessity to further remark thereon, while it would appear that the well-to-do cattle-breeders of the locality referred to can easily afford to pay the maxima rates now in force of As. 3 per head of cattle.

Far from lowering the rates, therefore, it would appear to be worthy of consideration whether these upland grazing tracts should not be placed on a similar basis as the corresponding localities of Salem district, viz., the forests of Hosur and Dharmapuri taluks where the four-annas rate is to be levied next year and was only temporarily reduced to three annas during the current grazing season under special orders on the subject.

As regards the browsing of goats in the special circumstances pointed out there appears to be no necessity to set aside separate areas for them at least in ordinary years. In years of excessive drought, however, it may be found advisable to set aside such areas for short periods at least, in order that these animals may be able to tide over such times of scarcity of fodder in their ordinary grazing-grounds outside reserves.

Resolution—Forest No. 167, dated 5th May 1898.

In paragraph 4 of Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 198, dated 17th May 1897, the Board recommended that the hill forests of North Coimbatore should be treated as special tracts in which enhanced grazing fees might be levied, but called on the Collector to report whether the unreserved margin round the small villages forming enclosures to the reserve was sufficient to provide free grazing for the agricultural cattle of the poorer ryots, and in approving the Board's proposal, Government directed that the report thus called for should be submitted as soon as possible.

2. On the 11th November 1897, the Collector reported on the authority of the District Forest-officer that the margin was not in all cases large enough, as a large portion of that originally provided had passed under cultivation, but he deprecated any extension as it would no doubt be followed by a further expansion of cultivation and the process of encroachment on the forests would be unending. As a further objection, the Collector dwelt on the necessity for protecting the sandalwood growing round the villages, and added that the agricultural cattle of the villagers were not sufficiently numerous to call for special provision, while any attempt to make such provision would be sure to end in failure since either the circle of grazing area must continually widen or the grazing area would disappear under the plough. He further expressed the opinion that the agricultural cattle of the hill villagers were no worse off than those of the villagers on the plains.

3. In forwarding the Collector's letter, the Acting Conservator Mr. Gass confirmed the Collector's statement that in parts of North Coimbatore the margin allowed is altogether too small, but in deference to the objection that an extension involved danger to the adjacent sandalwood growth suggested that special areas situated at a distance from the villages might be assigned for the free grazing of cattle belonging to the poorer ryots.

4. The Conservator's endorsement was forwarded to the Collector for remarks, and he was asked to report at the same time whether arrangement might not be made for the free admission to grazing of the cattle of the holders of patta lands lying within enclosures.

5. In his letter of the 16th March, the Collector objects to Mr. Gass' proposals on the ground that poor ryots are unknown on the hills, the enclosures being either in the hands of a few well-to-do men who employ servants to cultivate their lands and graze their cattle, or of wealthy cattle-breeders who do not cultivate their holdings but use them as cattle camps. The Board's proposal to allow free grazing to certain cattle is also deprecated by both the Collector and the Acting Conservator, Mr. Brasier, on the ground that the differential treatment of grazing cattle has, after full consideration, been negatived by Government in Government Order, No. 553, dated 14th August 1895.

6. As reservation has been carried out on a very large scale in the upland tracts of North Coimbatore, the Collector's argument that the extension of the grazing margin would fail to secure the objects for which such margin was originally granted as they would soon fall under the plough, raises the question as to whether some special steps are not necessary to give effect to the policy emphasized by the Government of India (in paragraph 6 of the resolution recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 32, dated 24th January 1895), viz., that, subject to certain conditions, the claims of cultivation are stronger than the claims of forest preservation. These conditions are given in paragraph 7 of the same resolution and the Board is disposed to think that if the principles therein laid down are applied to most, if not all, of the enclosures in the North Coimbatore reserves, it will be found that extension of cultivation must be provided for otherwise than by extending the margins around them. Nothing would be gained by encouraging scattered cultivation throughout these magnificent pasture grounds, while large areas of land well suited for cultivation still remain waste outside the reserved forests. The Collector should, however, cause the larger enclosures to be inspected by a Revenue officer in view to the submission of a special report in any case in which facilities for the extension of cultivation seem to be called for.

7. In supposing that the Board would desire the continual renewal of grazing margins absorbed in the cultivated area, the Collector misunderstands the position. The question under consideration is whether these forests shall be treated as special tracts in which the grazing fee may be gradually raised to one rupee, and it is merely proposed to show some consideration to the local villagers at the time of making the change, for which they can hardly have been prepared. If they afterwards choose to divert to other purposes land assigned for grazing, no new claim arises for special consideration. The Board attaches no importance to the Collector's remark that they are no worse off than the ordinary villagers on the plains. Villagers on the plains have many compensating advantages, and a succinct statement of the grounds on which special facilities should be afforded to the residents of forest tracts will be found in paragraph 5 of the resolution of the Government of India to which reference has just been made.

8. For the present, sanction has only been accorded to the levy of a fee of 4 annas, a rate which is already in force in several districts, and so long as this rate continues, no special measures need be taken, but any application for sanction for the enhancement of this rate must be accompanied by a statement of the cultivated area of each enclosure and the extent of the grazing margin together with proposals for relief of some sort in all cases where the existing margin is insufficient. The prohibition of the differential treatment of cattle in the ordinary grazing rules does not, in the Board's opinion, preclude a measure of this character in the limited tracts where special grazing rates are levied. It has, however, no preference for this method of dealing with the difficulty and merely suggested it as the Collector seemed so opposed to the idea of increasing the grazing margin. The proposal to protect the sandalwood growth by assigning distant areas for free grazing does not commend itself to the Board and seems hardly necessary now that special sandalwood transit rules have been introduced.

9. In the same papers a report was called for as to whether the exclusion of goats from the special tracts would cause special hardship to the people concerned. It would seem that there need be no anxiety on this score. The grazing of goats within the reserves has not hitherto been allowed; there is a considerable area of unreserved lands in the villages in which the largest numbers of goats are found; they are not kept mainly for agricultural or domestic purposes, but for the sake of their skins; and there is no special reason for encouraging their increase in tracts which are so well suited for cattle-breeding as those now under consideration.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) LIONEL DAVIDSON,
Acting Secretary.

To the Collector of Coimbatore.

" Conservator of Forests, Southern Circle.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

ORDER—No. 363, Revenue, dated 28th June 1898.

Forest No. 110.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. S. FORBES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue).

Ed A. F. Eccleston.

40 Copies.

First copy sent to Press

Returned for signature.

Despatched in print.

HEAD OFFICE G.O., NO. 120.

PRESENT NO.

ENCLOSURE TO G. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Print in full.
B = Not to be printed.
F = Print abstract only.
Q = Print heading only.

ORDER COMPLETE
Letter only.
Order complete with Letter.