

P. W. D.

P. 3003 11/15 December 1885.

Govt. of (1885) Madras.

REVENUE.

Communicated to
Supty. Engineers for
information.

(Signed) J. J.

Issued

Encl.

G.O., 3rd December 1885, No. 1337.

P. 3003 11/15 December 1885.

DECEMBER.

Supty. Engineers
Ch. E. for Engrs.

Experimental Botanical Gardens.

Considering it sufficient to establish — at Guda-
lur and Kuttalam under management of trained
overseers, and Mr. Lawson directed to visit
Ramandrug and Yercaud and report in which
of those localities he would propose to establish
a garden.

With order

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—again G.O., dated 26th October 1885, No. 1188, Revenue.

ABSTRACT.—Referring to the Director of Government Cinchona Plantations, &c., for his remarks, Board's Proceedings suggesting places for the establishment of experimental botanical gardens.

Read—also the following letter from M. A. LAWSON, Esq., Director of Government Gardens and Parks, &c., Nilgiris, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Ootacamund, 13th November 1885, No. 313:—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 1st October 1885, No. 2783, together with G.O.,* dated 26th October 1885, No. 1188, calling for any remarks which I may have to make upon their proposal to establish experimental botanical gardens recommended by them at Gúdálúr, Kuttálam, Russellkonda, Hospet, Rámandrug, Yercaud, Chittoor and Palmanér.

* Enclosures herewith returned.

2. I will at the outset observe that the object of establishing experimental gardens is to discover in what particular districts plants of commercial and other value may best be cultivated, and therefore that the localities selected should differ from one another, as much as possible, in temperature, rainfall and character of soil; that it would be a waste of money and energy to establish more than one garden where the above conditions are similar.

3. Mr. Galton, Acting Collector of Bellary, writes that there is "a garden situated in a basin just below the plateau of Rámandrug, which was formerly a soldier's garden, and is the property of Government." This, so far as I can tell without actual examination of the site, would seem to be a most eligible place for a garden. It is in the plains, and the proposed site is already the property of Government.

4. The remarks made by Mr. Burrows, Collector of the Nilgiris, respecting Gúdálúr, I can corroborate from personal knowledge. It is about 2,500 feet above the sea, has a heavy rainfall, and would represent very fairly what might be grown upon the Wynaad plateau generally. Mr. McWatters, Collector and District Magistrate of Salem, strongly recommends a garden in the neighbourhood of Yercaud on the Shevaroy Hills, and he encloses a most practical and interesting letter on the subject from Dr. Shortt. I do not think, however, that the differences between the climate and the soil of the Shevaroy Hills and those of the Nilgiri Hills are sufficient to warrant my proposing to Government that a garden should be established here. I say this with a special regret, for no one who knows Dr. Shortt's botanical work would be willing to lose the experience and advice, which it is certain he would have been ready to give in all cases of doubt and difficulty.

5. Mr. Lee-Warner, Collector of Tinnevely, makes several very valuable suggestions. He points out how Government have been great pecuniary losers in past days by establishing spice gardens where their management had been neglected, and he most truly states that we should take the lesson which history teaches, and not attempt to establish any new garden unless a permanent expert cultivator can be guaranteed. I entirely agree with Mr. Lee-Warner, and it would be the business of the Central Botanical Department to train gardeners, who should be fitted to hold the head-overseerships of all gardens which Government may decide upon establishing.

6. Mr. Lee-Warner further gives it as his opinion that there are many planters who would be quite ready to assist any experiment which Government might wish to make. My obligations to gentlemen of this description are too many to allow me

to doubt for a moment Mr. Lee-Warner's statement; but the planter has generally too much upon his hands to pay that close attention to the cultivation of new plants which is so necessary, when the conditions of their growth, in a new country, are imperfectly understood. Mr. Lee-Warner speaks highly of the country about the falls of Kuttalam, and as this is a place of great botanical renown, I do not think that Government could do wrong in establishing a garden here.

7. In addition to the above, I think that a garden in the neighbourhood of Russellkonda in Ganjam would prove of use, as it is in the extreme north of the presidency and on the east coast. I do not however know anything of that part of the country.

8. I would suggest then that, in addition to the gardens at Ootacamund, Coonoor, Barliyar, and the one sanctioned at Calicut, there should be established four new ones, Rámandrug, Gúdálur, Kuttalam and Russellkonda. If these new gardens are sanctioned by Government, the cost of making them and the cost of their upkeep would be as much as Government would find advisable, while their proper inspection would occupy as much time as the head of the Botanical Department could conveniently afford.

ORDER—dated 3rd December 1885, No. 1337, Revenue.

Miscellaneous.

The Government consider that to begin with it will be sufficient to establish gardens at Gúdálur and Kuttalam under the management of trained overseers. Mr. Lawson should visit Rámandrug and Yercaud and report, after inspection, in which of these localities he would propose to establish a garden. Russellkonda appears to be too remotely situated to be convenient, and the question of establishing an experimental garden there may for the present be omitted from consideration.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. F. PRICE,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Director, Government Cinchona Plantations, &c.
„ the Board of Revenue, with fourteen enclosures returned.
„ the Director of Revenue Settlement and Agriculture, with copy of G.O., No. 1188.
„ the Superintendent, Government Central Museum, with do.
„ the Financial Department, with do.
„ the Accountant-General, with do.
„ the Honorary Secretary, Agri-Horticultural Society, with do.
„ the Public Works Department, with do.

Exd. W. H. French.

120 Copies.

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