M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1151 Press / ~~Mis.~~

4667 1868

Dated 24 - 5 - 1862

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 24th May 1862.

No. 447. Read the following letter from Mr. G. WILLIAMS, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 9th April 1862 :—

SIR,

1. I take the liberty to submit for the consideration of Government, Extract from a letter that I addressed to the Collector of Madras offering my services in the cultivation of Cotton :—

" A remark of the Governor's regarding the cultivation of Cotton in His Excellency's letter " to the Horticultural Society " *that some of the better description of Cotton might be cultivated* " *with advantage in the sandy land bordering the sea coast,*" and that " *it might be well worth* " *while to make the experiment, &c.,*" gives an opportunity which I would take advantage of for " laying the subject before you in connection with my knowledge of the Isthmus between the " Bar at Coromandel, and Moonappolliam, where the Armogum Light House is placed. I am " fully persuaded that the soil of the low grounds between the backwater and the scrubby " jungle that pervades the country up to the sea beach at Streeharikota would be well adapted " by a little improvement to the culture of the country staple. Exotics might be introduced " after ascertaning the result of the first experiment. The belt of land between Cusbah and the " Bar at Dugarázpatam is kept moist by a continual exudation* which follows after the evapora- " tion of the monsoon waters, producing, as I am inclined to think, a suitable mould mixed with " indurated clay which forms the sub-soil, and which might easily be improved so as to render it " adapted in every way to the growth of Cotton. The whole length of this belt is well protected " from the drifting of the loose sands nearer the sea, on the east side of the dense scrubby jungle, " and on the west by the back water and extensive inland swamps, &c., &c."

2. In my letter, from which the foregoing passage is quoted, I asked Mr. Cunliffe, as Collector of the District, whether he could find me employment in such an undertaking; to which he replied† that " as " the Government have publicly declared that they will not " engage in Cotton cultivation or do more than assist generally the private trader by opening " out communications to the sea coast, publishing statistical information regarding the past culture " of the plant in India, &c.," he could hold out no hopes to me in the manner suggested. He agrees however in my opinion as to the suitableness of the locality, and offers to render assistance if I should undertake the experiment in my own behalf.

† Mr. Cunliffe's letter is herewith appended.

3. I would very gladly set about it, but I have not the capital required. It was just under such circumstances, when my efforts were crippled in carrying out my Railway contract, that Government assisted me with the loan of half a lac of Rupees (Messrs. Arbuthnot & Co. being my Sureties) seeing how dull the people were in coming forward to throw in supplies of timber for the commencement and progress of the Railroad; while (as a rule) no advances of money were even made to other Contractors of the Railway Company. I repaid the loan by entirely fulfilling my contract, although I suffered severe loss by the great rise in freights on account of the shipment of Salt from this Presidency to Bengal, and the breaking out of the Crimean War.

4. It is always extremely difficult in this country to stimulate capitalists to embark in enterprizes which do not present immediate advantage; if it were otherwise, the Government would not have been so readily persuaded by the Railway authorities to assist me; had a more active spirit prevailed, the whole country would present a very different aspect. Hence if it be not altogether opposed to the designs and objects of Government in relation to the present subject, I would respectfully beg, with the view of reclaiming the waste lands referred to by embarking in the experiment of growing Cotton there, that Government would grant me pecuniary aid for the purpose on the same terms, and on similar security; and I promise to attend to the due, faithful and persevering observance of the duties that the work would entail, so as that the trial shall inevitably end in the attainment of some practical result.

5. The lands so reclaimed would, at all events, prove of value to the State; for even should the experiment in Cotton fail, the soil will be prepared for the production of timber and other fruit trees; and the supply of fuel to the Madras market would be increased in proportion. The jungle that feeds nearly one half of the fires in Madras must naturally extend over the waste which the water overflowed before those improvements took place for securing the Canal: but the extension of the jungle would be very gradual indeed, and therefore any outlay for improving

*NOTE.—This is the sort of nurture that the plant requires; as it is not grown by irrigation, but depends only on the moisture which the earth retains after the rains; the surface soil will have to be raised in some place to prevent too great wet.

the soil can never be spent in vain so long as the land now unappropriated, becomes a useful constituent of revenue to the State by extending its resources of trade.

6. I would therefore, with all deference, lay the matter before Government, if I may do so with propriety; for it will be obvious, that I am not disinterested in my motives; but hesitation on this ground solely, may be equal to inaction where a public good might be accomplished; and if I lay aside that diffidence that should restrain me, I humbly trust that existing precedents may at least excuse my boldness.

7. Should the Government be disposed to assist me with an advance of money as requested, payable after a certain term, hereafter to be arranged, I would propose (after in the first instance securing the land by Cowle from the Collector) to proceed to some of the principal Cotton Districts, and acquaint myself with particulars connected with the soil and method of working in the respective localities, then I would secure the services of some one or two of the more experienced labourers of Tinnevelly and Rajahmundry, &c. The attendant expenses will not be much; and as far as it would go thereafter will be but gradual throughout; so that as the work progresses the expenditure will be kept in such check as to give my Sureties during its course, full command over the outlay. I would bring these men down to superintend the Ryots here, and by exercising a supervising co-operation in person, nothing which *might* be would remain to be tried.

Submitting these views for the consideration of Government.

From B. CUNLIFFE, Esq., Collector of Madras, to Mr. G. WILLIAMS, Vepery, Madras, dated Sydapet, 25th March 1862, No. 79.

SIR,

1. I am sorry that I can hold out no hope of employing you in the manner suggested in your letter of yesterday, as the Government have publicly declared that they will not engage in Cotton cultivation, or do more than assist generally the private traders, by opening out communications to the sea coast, publishing statistical information regarding the past culture of the plant in India, &c.

2. You are well qualified to superintend any experiment of the kind, and the locality which you mention appears suited to it, and should private parties wish to engage in Cotton cultivation in that or in any other portion of this District, they will find me ever ready to assist them.

NOTE.—I return, after perusal, your interesting report upon the Streeharikota Jungle.

No. 448. ORDER THEREON, 24th May 1862, No. 1,151.

Mr. Williams is requested to state more fully what assistance he desires from Government and what security he will give for any loan made to him. The Government cannot consent to enter upon such an enterprise, as he proposes, on their own account. If they ultimately approve of his proposition, the aid they would afford would be restricted to a loan of money on security; the grant of land for a term of years on easy conditions, and the supply of seed when available. Mr. Williams would of course be free to compete for the Government prizes.

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

I think it would not be unadvisable to make the advance to Mr. Williams on the security stated in his letter for the purpose of enabling him to experimentize upon the cultivation of Cotton at the locality mentioned or any other which he may consider preferable. — The Govt however will not enter upon the whole project at this stage with a view to any loan to Mr. Williams. The grant will be granted on easy terms — the Collector appointed to report on the Cotton seed, a portion of which might be given to Mr. Williams — who would also have the opportunity of competing for the Prizes offered by Govt

- I doubt the advisability of Govt making advances of money for purposes of this kind & the step seldom turns out satisfactorily - If Messrs Rothschild & Co will become security for Mr W. they should be asked to get funds from them instead of looking to Govt - but I doubt Messrs R & Co consenting to stand security.

The previous papers had better be circulated

Yrs
Edmond Hammond

nearly one half of the fires in Madras must naturally extend over the waste which the water overflowed before those improvements took place for securing the Canal: but the extension of the Jungle would be very gradual indeed, and therefore any outlay for improving the Soil can never be spent in vain so long as the land now unappropriated, becomes a useful contributor of Revenue to the State by extending its resources of trade.

6. I would therefore with all deference, lay the matter before Government, if I may do so with propriety; for it will be obvious, that I am not disinterested in any motives; but speculation on this ground solely, may be equal to inaction where a public good might be accomplished; and if I may trust that Obedience that should restrain me, of humble trust that existing precedents may not check exercise any boldness.

7. Should the Government be disposed to assist me with an advance of money as required, payable after a certain term, hereafter to be arranged - I would propose (after in the first instance securing the land by Cowl from the Collector) to proceed to one of the principal Cotton Districts and acquire Ryots with particulars connected with the Soil and method of working in the respective localities - then, I would secure the services of one or two of the more experienced labourers of Tinnevelly and Rajahmundry &c. - The attendant expences will not be much, and as fast as it would go thereafter, will be but gradual throughout; so that the work progressed, the expenditure will be kept in such check as to give my Director Charge its course, full command over the Outlay - I would bring three Ryots down, to superintend the Ryots here, and by exercising a supervising co-operation in person; nothing which might be, would remain to be tried -

Submitting these Views for the consideration of Government I have the honor to remain

Sir Your most obed Servt

Madras 9 April 1842 - [illegible]

Por 18 July / 57 & 58 10-11-Ind R
" 23d Nov / 54 - 112
" 16 Jan / 55 - 36-37.
" 4 Aug / 57 - 36-37
" 3d Dec / 55 - 12-13
" 18 Feb / 60 - 104-105
" 10 April / 61 - 151-152
" 12 Sept / 61 - 124-125

No 447 & 448.

27

Rev = 1862 Oct 11
Pro of Govt for Cotton
No 1338.

From Mr. G. Williams / Secy Madras.

Dated 9th Oct
Received 8th May } 1862.

Submitting for favorable consideration of Govt a proposal to undertake the experiment of growing Cotton and soliciting the pecuniary aid of Govt for the purpose on certain terms. — No 1151. 24 May Wd Mun order L

[illegible]

No 1151.

Mr Williams is explicit & states precisely what assistance he desires from Govt & what security he will give for any loan made to him. The Govt cannot consider & decide upon such an Enterprise, as he suggests, on these accounts. If they altogether