

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1276

Press
~~Mis.~~

138-139

Dated

10 - 6 - 1862.

Not to be folded or roughly handled.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th June 1862.*

No. 138. Read the following letter from Captain J. MITCHELL, Officer in charge of the Government Central Museum, to J. W. BREEKS, Esq., Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor, dated Madras, 29th April 1862:—

MY DEAR SIR,

With reference to the 16th paragraph of my letter of the 21st April 1862 to your address, I have now the honor to forward a table exhibiting the prices of the various samples of Cotton sent out by the Cotton Supply Association, opposite to which are black lines to show the average length of Staple, which lengths are also given in inches and decimal parts. To this I have added a short memorandum to show why the table has been prepared, and containing a few remarks having reference to some points to which it appears desirable to attract attention.

Will you do me the favor to ascertain whether this paper will meet the wishes of his Excellency the Governor, as conveyed to me in paragraph 7 of your letter of the 3rd April 1862.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th June 1862.

Number.	Description.	Price per lb.	Length,	Inches.
1	American Medium Cotton	* 12d. or 8 Annas.....		1.4 to 1.25
10	Sea Island Cotton	21d. " 14 "		1.65
11	Sea Island Cotton, stained	12d. " 8 "		1.7 to 1.6
12	Egyptian Cotton	12d. " 8 "		1.6 to 1.55
13	Pernambuco Cotton	11½d. " 7 " 8 Pie.		1.45 to 1.4
14	Fair Orleans Cotton	11½d. " 7 " 8 "		1.35 to 1.23
15	Middling Orleans Cotton	10½d. " 7 " 2 "		1.33 to 1.25
16	Broach Surat	8d. " 5 " 4 "		1.25 to 1.15
17	Saw-ginned Surat	7½d. " 4 " 10 "		1.2 to 1.1

* On the 20th November 1861 for this sample only.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
10th June 1862.

The white lines on this paper are intended to show, without having recourse to a scale, the average length of fibre in the several samples of Cotton sent by the Cotton Supply Association, being those in the greatest demand in the English market.

The plan of measurement adopted was to tease out repeatedly a small quantity of Cotton until a tuft was obtained with both extremities of the fibres as nearly as possible in line. It was then tied round the middle with a thread, and applied to a one-inch diagonal scale.

But as, notwithstanding, every care, there will remain a few fibres which project beyond the others, it is proper to note that the lines represent the length of the *principal body* of the tuft, and not that of these few extreme fibres.

There is a perceptible difference both to *sight* and *touch* in different Cottons, some are *very* soft and *silky*-looking, others feel somewhat crisp and look less brilliant. But it is probable that considerable experience is requisite before Cotton can be judged of in this way; therefore no attempt has been made to lay down rules on that subject here. It must, however, be observed that in cottons of Indian growth the Microscope shews a greater proportion of thin flat fibres than is found in the American grown cottons, and it is probable that much of the beautiful glossy appearance of the better class of Long cloths and Cambrics depends upon the comparative absence of these thin flat fibres from the cotton of which they are made; and it may be a question for scientific Agriculturists whether by alteration of the time of sowing or by some other means of which they will be the best judges, more time cannot be obtained for the accumulation of secondary deposits in the hairs of cotton seeds. Its absence, and perhaps the shortness of the fibre also, may be due to the too rapid ripening of the pods, or, is it owing to the poverty of the soil?

Some cottons present a considerable number of "specks" or "knots"; these are found to consist of fibres in which the secondary deposit is absent, that is, of the thin flat fibres, consisting of the cell-wall only.

The points to which the cotton spinner attaches the greatest importance is "LENGTH OF FIBRE" and "ABSENCE OF FOREIGN MATTERS" or in plain words "DIRT"; *uniformity* of length also, is of course assumed; a reference to the prices will show that they are in proportion to the *length of staple*. Thus on the 18th December 1861, Sea Island cotton which measured about one inch and two-thirds was worth 21d. say 14 Annas per lb. while saw-ginned Surat which measured one inch and one-fifth, say half an inch less, brought only 7½d. or a trifle more than one-third of the price of the former.

The point therefore to which the attention of the grower should be directed is, by improved cultivation to increase the length of staple, for we see that when the staple was one-half longer, the price was three times greater or increased from a trifle under five Annas, to fourteen Annas lb. It is true the *fibre* was also *better in other ways*, but it is likely that more careful cultivation would improve the cotton in *every way*.

The Cotton (No. 1) placed at the head of the list is that in greatest demand, and it will be seen that its length does not much exceed that of the Broach cotton. Knowing what careful agriculture has effected in Europe, Europeans have a right to expect that the same cause should produce the same effect in India, and an addition of one-half or 50 per cent. to the price should be an inducement sufficient to the Cotton grower to endeavour to effect such an improvement as would give India that command of the cotton market which is now held by America.

No. 139. ORDER THEREON, 10th June 1862, No. 1,276.

1. The Government are much obliged to Captain Mitchell for the Table, &c., submitted with this letter.

2. As the Table cannot but be of much use, the Government direct that copies of it and of the Memorandum annexed, as also of the papers recorded in the Order of 5th May 1862, No. 977, be furnished to the Board of Revenue for distribution to the several Collectors of this Presidency, and to such other persons as are interested in Cotton cultivation.

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

15th May

My Dear Sir

I have made
one or two trifling
corrections in the
paper. — The lines
are not altogether
true to measurement
but as the differences
are only about $\frac{1}{40}$ of
an inch
at most, it is
perhaps not of
much consequence

5th May 1862 No 95-96.

Received 1862 Debit
No. of Govt for same
7-1513.

James
Captn. J. S. Mitchell
Officer in Charge
of the Govt. Co. Prison
- - -

Dated 29th April 1862
Received 24th May 1862
No 95-10 June
with records
with notes to the

16th March and his letter
of 21st April 1862 for
wards a table calli-
-cating the prices of
the various samples
of cotton sent out
by the Cotton Supply
Association. - -

No 138 & 139.

8-1276

The Govt are now
obliged to Captain Mitchell
the table & as submitted with
this letter.

28th April 1862
10- June 1862

to Captain Mitchell

As the table contains
a great deal of material
that is of interest to
more than one of the
in the order of 5th May 1862
forwards to the Board of
for distribution to the
of the specimens are
persons are also
called to the
16th June 1862
on the 16th June 1862