

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1446	Press ~~Mis~~
37-38	
Dated 3 - 7 - 1862.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd July 1862.*

No. 37. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 9th April 1862, No. 2,361:—

Read the following letter from P. GRANT, Esq., Collector of Malabar, to W. HUDLESTON, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Fort Saint George, dated Calicut, 28th March 1862, No. 66.

SIR,

In reply to Board's Miscellaneous Circular,
dated 2nd October 1861, No. 5,310.
Dated 14th instant.

1. I beg to forward, for the information of the Board, a letter from Mr. F. C. Brown, of Anjarakandy, on the subject of the growth of Cotton in this country. The subject has engaged Mr. Brown's attention for many years, and the result of his matured judgment is, that large supplies of good Cotton wool can be raised. With his own letter Mr. Brown has forwarded portions of the "Gardeners' Chronicle" and "Agricultural Gazette," in which are contained a series of letters written by Dr. Wight, former Superintendent of Cotton Farms at Coimbatore on the Cotton question, more especially with reference to its cultivation in India. The result of thirteen years' practical experience, in connection with Cotton culture in Coimbatore, is given in these letters, which are on that very account full of interest to many people in this Presidency. I would recommend that they be printed for general circulation or sale; in either I shall be glad to receive half a dozen copies.

2. Mr. Brown's papers I request may be returned for re-transmission to him when no longer required.

"THE QUESTION OF COTTON SUPPLY."

From Mr. F. BROWN, to P. GRANT, Esq., Collector of Malabar, dated Anjarakandy, 14th March 1862.

SIR,

1. After a diligent search of our records, I regret much to say that those relating to the cultivation of Cotton by my father, the late Mr. Brown, can no longer be found. They must have shared the fate of his house, when, in 1803, it was burned to the ground with every thing it contained by the rebels of Cotiote, my father, mother and family escaping with bare life. But I have the distinct and oft repeated testimony of my father to myself, detailing the results of his careful Cotton growing experiments; that he tried every kind, native and foreign, of which he could procure the seed; that every kind flourished, flowered, and produced abundance of excellent Cotton, of more than average length of staple, all except the Pernambuco, the flower of which was always eaten up by an insect peculiar to the plant, brought apparently with the seed from Brazil, its parent country.

2. Of the foreign varieties tried, all perennial plants, the Bourbon Cotton proved best suited to the soil and climate of this part of North Malabar. The samples of this kind which Mr. Brown sent to London, sold readily at 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. a lb. This import must have taken place in 1801-2, sixty years ago. But the culture of Cotton over the face of our steep rugged hills, where manual labor can alone be used, proved too laborious and costly to be remunerative to an English grower. In 1800, the year after Tippoo's fall, and the acquisition of Coimbatore by the Company, Mr. Brown tried to export Coimbatore Cotton from Malabar to England, but first, the heavy land tax levied directly on all Cotton land, next, the utter want of roads from the Cotton Districts to the Coast ports, and last, but by no means least, a freight of £50 a ton, which the Company in those days charged to the private Englishman on every article of Indian produce he was suffered to export to England on the Company's ships, the only ships allowed to come to India, made this attempt to open the Cotton trade a ruinous one. The Englishman in India being thus driven by his own countrymen, from his natural Cotton market, the market of England, the American slave Cotton grower stepped in, took undisputed possession and has reigned supreme in it from that hour up to the hour of the disruption of the United States. Thus is, summed up, the history of the Cotton question as beheld in India and in America, at the present time.

3. To revert to our records their destruction, however much a regrettable personal loss, has now become of no moment publicly, inasmuch as I am in a position to place before you evidence of the freshest date, of official authority, and of the first scientific character, detailing the naturalizing and the successful growing of American Cotton in Coimbatore by the natives under English superintendence, during a period of thirteen consecutive years; and this not on a garden tract, but over some thousand acres of a soil in which India abounds, the well known black Cotton soil.

4. If the passing internal history of British India ever survived in Englishmen's memories for a dozen or a score of years at a time, it would be unnecessary to introduce this evidence with the following preface. In the year 1840, the notorious national Bank of the United States, which in a year or two more stopped payment, organized a scheme, under its Governor, Mr. Nics. Biddle, for monopolizing the whole Cotton crop of the States, and of selling it at the Bank's price to all the consumers of Europe. At this news, Liverpool Merchants, and Manchester manufactures rushed to Cannon Row and the India House, the manufacturers almost bent on storming the India House, unless a supply of Cotton were immediately obtained from India. Captain Baylis, who was on furlough in England, was sent to the Cotton States, with orders and money to engage ten American Planters on their own terms with all their own implements of Cotton cultivation and with a large supply of American Cotton seed, bring them to England, and take them to India, for the purpose of teaching the natives how to grow Cotton. Captain Baylis soon returned with his squad of recruits, armed with their own ploughs and cultivators, and speedily departed with them and with tons of seed for Bombay. Arrived there, the Americans were dispersed, generally two together, over the three Presidencies, an area of more than a million square miles.

5. Of the planters who fell to Madras, two were sent to Coimbatore. The Civil Surgeon at that time of the station was Dr. Wight, a Botanist of European as well as of Indian wide-spread scientific reputation. Dr. Wight received charge of the Americans to the following extent; he was to see them provided with the land they themselves should select, and furnished with every requisite they desired for its successful cultivation with American Cotton upon the American plan; he was to look on, attentively follow their operations, and report the result, but he was specially restricted from interfering in those operations, or in any manner directing them. Dr. Wight was further instructed to distribute American Cotton seed among the natives farmers of Coimbatore, and in order to stimulate them to make trial in growing this foreign Cotton, he was authorized to engage to buy from the farmers all the American Cotton they should produce. Simultaneously associated with Dr. Wight in the conduct of the mechanical part of the experiment, was an intelligent Scotch Engineer, named Petrie, who arrived from England plentifully stocked with the latest home improved gins for ginning Cotton, and the latest improved screws for screwing it into portable bales. These machines were set up at Coimbatore at considerable cost, and worked successfully throughout the duration of the experiment.

6. The American Planters thus furnished *ad libitum* with land, money capital, labour, plant, seed, manure and every improved instrument of American construction, began their cultivation of American Cotton upon the latest and best American plan. Side by side with them, the Coimbatore farmers proceeded to cultivate the same Cotton upon their land upon their own, or native, immemorial plan; the farmers not only not receiving one of the extrinsic aids supplied so liberally to the Americans, but being weighted in addition with the annual tax upon all their Cotton land.

7. This joint experiment was begun in the year 1840, twenty-two years ago, under Dr. Wight's special official supervision, was continued under it for thirteen successive years, and closed as regards him only on his resigning the service in the year 1853. It is from his retirement in England, and through the press of England, that in the year 1861, the Cotton public learn for the first time, in a shape that is accessible and readable by all, the undisputed results of this great experiment. Those results are summed up under the following heads:—

(1.) That at the end of three years, the American Planters completely exhausted the fertility of their soil by cropping it with Cotton year after year.

(2.) That in the fourth and fifth years, their Cotton crops were not worth gathering.

(3.) That at the end of the fifth year, the Planters retired from the field altogether, confessing candidly that they could not compete with Coimbatore farmers in growing equally good, and equally cheap *American Cotton* per acre.

(4.) That the Planters proved to be mere croppers of the soil, not farmers in any sense of the name.

(5.) That the Planters further confessed, that instead of *their* teaching, they had been taught by the Coimbatore farmers, by what system alone Cotton can be cultivated successfully for a series of years without exhausting the fertility of the land on which it is grown.

(6.) That in practical demonstration of this truth, whereas the American Planters were beaten out of the field in three years, the Coimbatore farmers, at the end of their thirteenth year of trial, produced from American seed of their own raising a Cotton crop as good and as abundant as was produced by the Planters the first year from the fresh seed they brought with them from the Cotton States.

(7.) That this Cotton, more than fully equal in quality and quantity, acre for acre, to the Cotton produced by the Planters, was produced *at one half the cost* of the Cotton of the Planters.

(8.) That the experiment was not a mere garden experiment, but a trial of years, carried on over some hundred acres of land; the end of which was, that the seed of American Cotton was naturalized with complete success in the soil, climate, and agriculture of Coimbatore.

(9.) That the Coimbatore farmers accomplished this great result by the simplest and at the same time, the most judicious means by growing Cotton upon the same land only in rotation of other crops, which long experience has taught them to select as best adapted to their soil and climate, and best suited to restore to the land the fertility of which it is exhausted by so, scourging a crop as Cotton.

(10.) That in the single province of Coimbatore, there are two millions of acres of the well known black Cotton soil, on which the naturalized American Cotton would thrive perfectly, and that "the plant not being fastidious in its tastes," succeeds on soils of other kinds, when it is grown with the requisite farming knowledge and skill.

(11.) Hence that the production of American Cotton in India, under these requisite conditions, may be said to be without limit.

(12.) That the indigenous Cotton of Coimbatore proved, after many trials, unsusceptible of any improvement, whether in quality, or in increased length of fibre, or in facility of parting with its seed, and that during a year of drought, when this Cotton failed altogether, the naturalized American lived through and gave a crop.

(13.) That for freeing Cotton from the soil without injury to the staple, the native Churka succeeds better than the English or American Saw gin.

(14.) Lastly, that besides following immemorially upon all dry land a judicious rotation of crops, calculated to restore and increase its fertility, the bases of Indian agriculture, for tens of centuries has been a practice which is now only becoming generally the basis of English scientific farming; namely, the complete stirring up and comminution of the soil, and its thorough aeration to as great a depth, as the best mechanical implements known in each country will penetrate.

8. Such is the decisive testimony given by so able and competent a witness as Dr. Wight, of the issue of growing American Cotton in the South of India by American Cotton planters side by side with native farmers. To add to its value, it is given to the world after he has carefully compared for eight or nine years his twenty years' observation of Indian farming, with modern English scientific agriculture, and satisfied himself what the one in its native domain has to learn from the other. The sum total is not great, when Dr. Wight states his belief that the native farmer, with his plough and bullocks, prepares his soil for his crop in quite as efficient a manner, as does the English agriculturist with his steam-plough, costing hundreds of pounds.

9. Do I at all exaggerate in calling this evidence of world-wide moment? After food, Cotton, at the present day, has become the next necessary of life to all men, whether barbarous or civilized. By what chance is it that this evidence finds the light after nearly a quarter of a century's oblivion? By the merest possible accident.

10. The Cotton Supply Association ventured last year to put forth in "The Times" some random assertions relative to the causes of the failure of the American Planters sent to India in

1840. These assertions were vigorously met by Mr. Petrie, the Cotton Engineer. The 'hot polemic waged between the parties on such a subject, naturally attracted the attention of Dr. Wight. He came to the aid of his quondam Coimbatore ally in refutation of the association; but carefully avoiding all controversy, and preserving the strict character of a scientific and cautious observer, he chose as his organ, for addressing more especially the practical and educated public whom he desired to inform and instruct on the capabilities of India to produce good, cheap, and abundant American Cotton, the columns of "the Agricultural Gazette," a weekly journal of modern English scientific Agriculture and Horticulture.

11. To this journal Dr. Wight sent a series of eight able and thoroughly reasoned letters, dated from the 21st October to the 9th December 1861, detailing at length the beginning, the progress, and the end, as long as he himself witnessed them of the Coimbatore American Cotton experiments, which I have taken upon myself to summarise very imperfectly. The last letter, in its conclusion one of most valuable of all, has only lately reached me. I have separated the series from the rest of the journal, and do myself the honor of sending them to you separately.

12. I need not invite *you* to read them, who take so great and active an interest in every matter calculated to augment the Agricultural wealth and productions of South India. After you have read, and perhaps re-read them, I think, I may rely upon your joining your strong recommendation to my humble and most earnest entreaty that the Government will see fit immediately to publish the letters in the cheapest form, and give them to the public as the most valuable manual which can be put into the hands of all persons in India, who are interesting themselves on the vital question of growing Cotton for England, whether they be Collectors, Merchants, or great area of the best black Cotton soil. The Collector of this fine Province gave very laudably, free grants for five years of this *waste* soil to the native farmers, to grow Cotton. The farmers took the land, and proceeded as usual to grow Cotton upon it, in rotation with other crops. What does the Collector on seeing this judicious course? He has the farmers up, and insists upon their cropping the land with Cotton during every one of the five years of the grant! The farmers naturally demur to ruin themselves as he bids them, while he has not a suspicion of the reason why they venture to demur, namely, because after the first year, their crop of Cotton the second year, and every year after, would be *nil*.

13. Again there are probably many Englishmen, who are rushing largely into Cotton planting on their own account, tempted by the present high price of the article, and the prospect of its remaining high for some time. To all such blind-fold experimentors, Dr. Wight's advice and warnings would prove of priceless value. They would save many perhaps from heavy loss, some possibly from absolute ruin.

14. As to myself, I made Mr. Petrie's acquaintance in 1818, immediately on his return to England, especially to learn from him personally the history and results of the Coimbatore American Cotton experiment, at that time fresh in his mind, and uppermost on his tongue. I heard him give his valuable evidence equally fresh pointed, and convincing before the Cotton Committee of that year, having taken a leading part in its preparation. I myself was examined by the Committee, and attended its sittings regularly. The only portion of Dr. Wight's letters absolutely new to me, are his observations on the laborious and costly processes of English agriculture, as compared with the simple and cheap practices of Indian farmers to effect the same result, the complete preparation of the soil to receive the seed to be sown.

15. There is a Clergyman in Northamptonshire who has grown a more than average crop of wheat upon the same 10 acres of land for fourteen successive years. This Clergyman is looked upon as a farming wonder. Setting wholly aside, the crops of rice grown throughout India in the same fields century after century in the same quantity and of the same quality, there are fields to be seen every where of such a plant as the sugar cane, grown successively and uninterruptedly in the same spot for a time to which the memory of man reacheth not. Facts like these stare in the face of every man who can use his eyes to see, and his reason to reflect; and yet ineradicable English prejudice and ignorance combined can coolly stigmatize the agriculture of a people, who unostentatiously perform this feat, son after father, as backward and barbarous.

16. The story of Cotton in India is not half told: how it was systematically depressed from the earliest date that American Cotton came into competition with it, about the year 1786: how for 40 or 50 years after, one-half the crop was taken in kind as revenue, the other half by the sovereign merchant at a price always much below the market price of the day, which was habitually kept down for the purpose, how the Cotton farmer's plough and bullocks were taxed, the Churka taxed, the Bow taxed, and the Loom taxed; how inland Custom houses were posted in and around every village, on passing which, Cotton on its way to the coast for sale was stopped, and like every other produce taxed afresh; how it paid export duty both in a raw state, and in every shape of yarn or thread, cloth or handkerchief in which it was possible to manufacture it; how the dyer was taxed, and the dyed cloth taxed plain in the loom, taxed a second time in the die vats; how *Indian* piece goods were loaded in England with a prohibitory duty, and *English* piece goods were imported into India at an *ad valorem* duty of 2½ per cent. I shall be told that these things are things of the past. Are export duties not *now* levied on all Indian piece goods? Is not this year, the year 1862, the first for 64 years, that we have ceased to demand from our wretched weavers the annual tax upon their looms? One of these looms takes 14 days to make a piece of cloth 16 yards long by 1½ wide. An untaxed Manchester power loom, with which this loom has to contend, turns out daily 5,000 to 10,000 yards, 1/10ths of which are made out of American Cotton. Small wonder is it that it was necessary to import from barbarous Arabia a word as barbarous, the word "Moturfa," which should hide from English eyes the nature of such an impost as an annual tax upon every Indian handloom, upon every tool of the pauper daily artizan, upon every boat, and every net of the sea and river fisherman, upon every mud hut they live in. This impost is now for the first time a thing of the past. But does not its life long existence more than explain things present? Are not its necessary effects a more rational, a more candid, a more humane explanation of the reason why India is not producing all the Cotton for which Manchester is clamouring, than the abuse heaped upon the nations for their sloth, their ignorance, their apathy, their prejudices, and to cap the climax of vituperation, upon their barbarous and backward agriculture? Would these clamourers now exist, if English wheat farmers, English country artizans, had been treated for years, as have the Indian Cotton growers, Indian weavers, Indian artizans? It is my firm conviction that the same treatment would long since have converted any, the finest, country in Europe into a wilderness. But the sun has continued to give forth to India its vivifying rays, the heavens to pour down upon the vast surface its tropical rains. These perennial gifts of the universal Father, it has not been possible to tax: India remains the abiding place of its million people, and the wide-spread scene of their patient, persevering, uncomplaining toil.

17. It is necessary that I should close this letter. Its length has grown under my pen, for it has vividly recalled a subject to which my mind has long been directed both in India and in England, though not a subject of direct local moment to Malabar, whose immediate welfare is affected by the greater or less production of Cotton, only as the province is a part of the general body politic of India. But England, the year before the disruption, paid 30 millions Sterling to the United States for the Cotton she consumed. This year, she is paying 14 millions Sterling *more* than this sum for the good and bad Cotton of all kinds, and from every quarter, which Manchester is now driven to consume. The value of the whole trade, import and export of India with Great Britain falls short of 20 millions a year. With these figures presented to every man's reflection, it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of what good and abundant Indian *American* Cotton might be, and ought now to be, to all India.

18. I have shown conclusively that this Cotton was completely naturalized and successively produced twenty-two years ago by native farmers possessed of no greater skill and experience, than is shown by the myriads of farmers who till the soil of their country; and hence proved that there is no impediment in the soil, the climate, or the want of farming knowledge in the people to the growing of the same Cotton to any extent, provided all natural, and all artificial impediments are swept from their path, and they can run the race of Cotton growing as free from restraint as are the growers of the countries they compete with. I therefore send this letter

as the best contribution I can make in answer to the question you have addressed to me, "the question of the Cotton supply," and it is with all diffidence that I venture to offer it.

NOTE PAGE 24.

This cloth, wove by the ordinary country weaver, is intended to make four cloths, or lower dresses called poddas, such as are habitually worn throughout the interior by women of the labouring class. The average price at which it sells in the piece is...
Its making costs as follows in money, time and labour, (the labour, being the labour of the weaver's family, men, women and children, who like him, can by caste do nothing else but weave, can only be given in time).

Going to the nearest coast town, there buying 8 bundles of English yarn, No. 20, and red dye for borders, cost...	2	4	0
Steeping yarn in fresh water, then in conjee, or rice water, dying, rinsing and drying it... 4 days.			
Preparing the warp (by the women)... 2 "			
Weaving it into cloth by two men... 8 "			
Remains for the subsistence of 17 persons, 9 men, 8 women for ... 14 days.	rs. 2	8	0

Out of this sum the weaver has had till now to pay his annual loom-tax 1 Rupee, his annual house tax 1 Rupee, over and above his land tax upon the cultivated or planted land round his house, how little soever it may be to eke out existence. This was his "Moturfa." The value of his loom may be from 3 to 4 Rupees. Of his house 10 to 12 Rupees.

Untaxed Manchester is calling upon heaven and earth against the enormity of the new import duties, which the bankrupt necessities of India compelled it to charge upon Manchester yarns and piece goods. If my memory is not quite at fault, there are import duties charged in England upon all the Cotton goods of India, besides the monstrous export duties charged in them in India itself. These duties levied in both countries are intended, we must conclude, to protect the Indian Cotton weaver against the competition of Manchester power looms, and to stimulate the Indian grower at the same time to grow more Cotton, and make Manchester independent of America.

As to Indian yarn, the native spinner no longer exists. He, or I should rightly say she, has been extinguished by Manchester yarn, which, spun out of American yarn, is flooding India in increasing quantity. Manchester has in yarn only cut India in three different ways, by preferably encouraging American Cotton, by discouraging *pro tanto* Indian Cotton, and by superceding Indian yarn.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) P. GRANT, Collector.

Ordered to be submitted for the information of Government. The Board regret that Mr. Brown's interesting communication and Dr. Wight's letters to the "Gardeners' Chronicle" are received too late to be placed at the disposal of Mr. Talboys Wheeler, his hand-book having been already completed. The Board doubt, however, whether they would be justified in re-printing Dr. Wight's letters without that gentleman's permission.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL, Sub-Secretary.

No. 38.

ORDER THEREON, 3rd July 1862, No. 1,446.

1. Mr. Brown's letter, with the exception of two objectionable passages in paragraph 4, will be recorded and placed on the Editor's table.
2. The newspapers will be returned through the Collector.

(Signed) A. J. ARBUTHNOT,
Acting Chief Secretary.

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survived in Englishmen's memories for
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it would be unnecessary to introduce
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the India House, unless a supply of
Cotton were immediately obtained
from India. The directors, ever
watchful to avert a public explosion
of any kind, threw a ready lib to the

furious whale, which the whale as gradually swallowed. The tub was, to send off a Captain of Madras Sepoys, Captain Baylis, who was at hand on furlough, to the Cotton States, with orders and money to engage an American Planter on their own terms with all their own implements of Cotton cultivation and with a large supply of American Cotton seeds, bring them to England, and take them to India, for the purpose of teaching the natives how to grow Cotton. Captain Baylis soon returned with his squads of recruits, armed with their own ploughs and cultivators, and speedily departed with them and with tons of seeds for Bombay. Arrived there, the Americans were dispersed, generally two together, over the three Presidencies, an area of more than a million square miles. Of this Riddle's Cotton Monopoly, astounded by its colossal magnitude,

there was in this corrective of the unique combination of Lilliput & Laputa. Of the planters who fell to Madras, two were sent to Coimbatore. The Civil Surgeon at that time of the Station was Doctor Wright, a Botanist of European as well as of Indian widespread scientific reputation. Doctor Wright received charge of the Americans to the following extent: he was to see them provided with the land they themselves should select, and furnished with every requisite they desired for its successful cultivation with American Cotton upon the American plan; he was to look on, attentively follow their operations, and report the result but he was specially restricted from interfering in those operations, or in any manner directing them. Doctor Wright was further instructed to distribute American Cotton seeds among the native farmers of Coimbatore.

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(True Copy & Extract)

W. H. Smith

Sub-Secretary.

To J. D. Smith Esq.
Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
With Enclosures.

W. H. Smith

to be used in the case of
the 1st and 2nd cases of 1830 & 1832

Dec 1832
Case of 1st case for July
1835

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The letter may I think be laid on the station table
the objectionable passage being first expunged

I think this is the interest that
can be done. I have looked into the paper
which seem but a
poor production
The 1st of the paper
3d July 1832

Mr. Brown
The 1st of the paper
3d July 1832