

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	758	Press
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Dated	8.5.40	18/3

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
8th May 1863.*

No. 90. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd April 1863,
No. 2,316:—

Read the following letter from J. SHORTT, Esq., M.D., Zillah Surgeon, to W. HUDLE-
STON, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chingleput, 26th March 1863.

SIR,

1. I have the honor to submit the accompanying samples of flax straw, fibre seed, and refuse fibre prepared and grown by me at Chingleput, and beg to request that you will be pleased to lay the same before the Board.

2. For the last three years I have been growing a few plants here as an experiment from seed procured in the bazaars originally, but on the last occasion, in consequence of fresh stable manure being used without my knowledge, most of the plants withered off after attaining a couple of inches in height, leaving but a few plants in the bed. I then applied to Mr. Brown, late Superintendent of the Horticultural Gardens at Madras, for seed. Mr. Brown gave me a very small quantity of Punjaub flax seed. I had this put down, but only about 50 plants grew. I had about 50 plants of my own, and these grew up side by side with those from the Punjaub seed, and I could discover no difference whatever between the two.

3. During the last flower show at the Horticultural Gardens at Madras, I transferred into pots one plant of each a week before, and sent them to the show to the care of Dr. Hunter. At the time the plants were sent they were vigorous and healthy from 12 to 15 inches in height, and covered with flowers and bolls; up to the present I have neither seen nor heard any notice or report of these plants. In consequence of the death of most of the plants, those that survived grew far apart, and attained some 15 inches in height; had they been grown closer, it is probable they would have attained a greater height.

4. As soon as some of the earlier bolls had ripened, I had the plants pulled up and ripped of their bolls by the hand; after allowing the straw to dry a few hours, it was steeped in fresh water, for which purpose I had the sheaves in handfulls laid crosswise (the root ends crossing the tops) in a cistern which was covered with straw, and a large stone placed over it to keep the straw under water. In the course of some 12 hours, fermentation set in, and continued for four days; as soon as it ceased the straw was tested by breaking the shone in two places to see if the woody part or shone would come off free without breaking the fibre, and as soon as this could be done they were taken out and allowed to dry a few hours in order that the moisture might be absorbed, when breaking or scutching was commenced by the hand. The result I beg to submit in the small quantity of fibre sent. I also forward a handful of the shone to show the height the plants had attained. From the bolls 14 oz. of linseed was obtained, 6 oz. of which I now submit for the inspection of your Board. The manufacture of flax is much more difficult than the culture of the plant which might be conducted by any person conversant with the common principles of agriculture; whereas the manufacture of the flax requires a combination of scientific knowledge, great practical experience, and tact in watching the different operations, and in the various manipulations, much skill and delicacy of handling is required to render the operation successful.

5. From various causes my experiment was on a very small scale, the manipulation hurried, and to a certain extent imperfect, from want of the practical experience so necessary for success, which will account for the large amount of broken fibre among the refuse.

6. The plants also were of different ages; in the earlier ones the bolls had ripened and the straw had become fully dried which I think made the fibre brittle. This small experiment was conducted more for my own satisfaction. Having observed reports of the failure of flax on the hills, I submit this rather lengthy communication on the subject the importance of which will plead my excuse for troubling you with it.

1. Ordered to be submitted for the information of Government, and that copy with the samples be forwarded to the Curator of the Madras Government Museum.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
8th May 1863.*

2. Copy will also be furnished to the Chamber of Commerce, the Agri-Horticultural Society, and to the Collectors in whose Districts the experimental growth of flax has been attempted.
3. The Board are much obliged to Doctor Shortt for his communication.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON, *Secretary.*

No. 91.

ORDER THEREON, 8th May 1863, No. 798.

The Board will convey to Doctor Shortt the acknowledgments of Government for his useful experiments and interesting report.

(Signed.) J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

No. 2,316.

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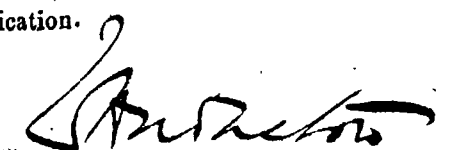
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(A true Copy and Extract.)


Secretary

To J. D. Sim, Esq., Secretary to Government, R. D.

- „ Captain J. Mitchell, Curator Madras Government Museum, with samples.
- „ J. B. Key, Esq., Chairman Chamber of Commerce.
- „ A. Hunter, Esq., M. D., Secretary to the Agri-Horticultural Society.
- „ P. Grant, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore.
- „ Honorable D. Arbuthnott, Collector of Salem.
- „ V. H. Levinge, Esq., Collector of Madura.
- „ Honorable R. S. Ellis, C. B., Acting Collector of Madras.
- „ Doctor J. Shortt, M. D.

Exd. J. Wright.

Paris - 1863. Department.
 P. O. of Post for delay

No. 974-

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

Dated 22nd April 1863.

Despatched. 28 5--

Received. 29 Dec. 1901

No. 2,316.

Submitting for information a letter from J. Shourt Esq., M. D. Zillah Surgeon, forwarding samples flax straw, fibre seed, and refuse fibre prepared and grown by him at Chingleput.

2298-8' Mass.

Wm. J. F. F. F.

Ms. B. 798

The Board will convey
to Mr. Wood the acknowledgment
of lost for his safe and
sincerely and respectfully

Ward-At George
80 May 1863

W. Edwards & Co. Boston

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W. H. C.

1890-91.

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