M.R.O. 14—13,000—27-9-24.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 906-907 Press ~~Mis.~~
304-306

Dated 27 - 5 - 1986

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 27th May 1863.

No. 304. Read the following letter from ROBERT COLE, Esq., Principal Inspector General, Medical Department, Fort Saint George, to the Honorable A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Chief Secretary to Government, Public Department, dated Fort Saint George, 19th May 1863, No. 93 :—

SIR,

No. 255, dated 25th April 1863. I have the honor to forward for the information of Government the accompanying communication from Assistant Surgeon Bidie, regarding eligible sites for Chinchona plantations in Coorg.

From G. BIDIE, M. D., Assistant Surgeon, Public Cattle Depôt, to the Secretary Principal Inspector General, Medical Department, Fort Saint George, Madras, dated Hoonsoor, 25th April 1863, No. 255.

SIR,

1. I have the honor to inform you that while recently on a pedestrian tour through Coorg, I was struck with the suitability of a large tract of that country for the cultivation of Chinchona, and have thought it my duty to send this communication for the information of the Principal Inspector General, in case he should consider it necessary to bring the matter to the notice of Government. I entered Coorg towards its southern extremity, and gradually moved northwards, exploring the forests east and west as I proceeded.

2. Coorg is the central portion of the great mountain chain that separates Malabar from Mysore and the Carnatic, and varies in elevation from 3,500 to 4,500 feet above the level of the sea. Its climate is remarkable for its great perennial humidity, its heavy rain-fall varying from 100 to 150 inches, and its cool equable temperature ranging from 55° to 75°. It may be said to be entirely covered with dense lofty forest, except the small portions cleared by the farmer and coffee planter. The soil throughout is a vegetable mould generally resting on decayed primary rocks, rich in felspar. The larger forests on the slopes of mountains and in gorges are characterized by *Myrtaceæ, Artocarpaceæ, Ebenaceæ, Guttiferæ, Enonymus, Canarium, Calophyllum, Dillenia, Lagerstrœmia, Myristicaceæ, Cinnamomum, Cedrelaceæ, Michelia, Monosis, Polygaleæ, Araliaceæ, Areca*, &c., and in their shade we have numerous Orchids, Cardamoms, two species of Callamus and Piper. In more open parts we have *Melastomaceæ, Ardisia, Rubus, Rosa, Callicarpa, Bamboos, Artocarpus, Jasminaceæ, Salix, Toddalia, Vaccinium, Caryota tree* and other *ferns, Lycopodiaceæ*, &c., characteristic of the vegetation.

3. In judging of the fitness of a place for the culture of Chinchona, we must consider the nature of the soil and of the rock formation, the temperature and humidity of the climate, the elevation and the characteristics of the local flora. Undoubtedly the most reliable data are to be gained from the characteristics of the local flora, as constant relations exist between the flora and the climate and geological formation of a country. On the other hand, nothing can be more unsafe as a guide than the mere elevation of a District, for we find plants growing, say at 3,000 feet on the eastern flanks of the Coorg mountains, which would not live through a single season at the same height on their western slopes, and while in one range of hills in India the temperature diminishes at the rate of 1° for every 300 feet of elevation, on the Neilgherries the proportion is 1° for 340 feet, and in Khasia but 1° for 380 feet. Again, on the Andes the range of low land cultivation extends to nearly 6,000 feet above the sea, while in Teneriffe it does not exceed 3,000 feet, and in Southern India it certainly does not pass 4,000 feet. Impressed with these facts while investigating the flora of Coorg, the conviction was borne in upon me that although at a mean elevation of but 4,000 feet above the sea, I was nevertheless surrounded with a vegetation identical in its leading features with that of the bark districts of South America. There the characteristic plants are said to be *trees, ferns, palms, gigantic climbers, Bamboos, Plantains, Aroideæ, Cecropias (Artocarpaceæ), Melastomaceæ, Myrica*, &c. ; and in the opener parts of Coorg a similar flora, of which we have already spoken, prevails. The next questions that arose in my mind had reference to temperature, humidity and soil. In the region of the Chinchonas the mean temperature ranges from 62° to 68° and the humidity is said to be excessive. In the higher parts of Coorg the mean temperature is probably from 65° to 68°, and these vast forests of which we have spoken give sufficient evidence of great perennial

humidity of atmosphere. As to the soil and geological structure they agree exactly with those of the Chinchona zone of the Andes, where the soil is chiefly a vegetable mould, and the rocks of primary formation and rich in felspar.

4. The District of Coorg which I consider especially suited for the cultivation of Chinchona may be said to extend from the Brummagherries in the south, to Mercara in the north, and from the crest of the Ghâts on the west to the longitude of Anandapoor on the east. At present all the better parts of the land in this tract are being secured by coffee planters, and in a few years, if matters go on as at present, the greater portion of it will be under coffee. If, therefore, I may be permitted to offer such a suggestion, I would strongly impress on Government the necessity of at once securing as much of it as may be considered necessary for Chinchona plantations, for the districts in India suitable for such are neither numerous nor extensive, and the day is certainly approaching when we must be dependent on our own resources for a supply of the priceless bark. With apologies for trespassing on your time.

No. 305. ORDER THEREON, 27th May 1863, No. 906.

Dr. Bidie's letter will be forwarded to the Commissioner for Coorg.

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

Ordered that the following letter be despatched.

No. 306. From J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Fort Saint George, to the Commissioner for Coorg, dated 27th May 1863, No. 907.

SIR,

I am directed to forward for your information the accompanying letter from the Principal Inspector General of the Medical Department, dated 19th instant, No. 93, giving cover to one from Assistant Surgeon Bidie regarding eligible sites for Chinchona plantations in Coorg.

No. 93.

OFFICE OF PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR GENERAL MEDICAL DEPARTMENT,
Fort St. George, 19th. May 1863.

From

Robert Cole Esqr.
Principal Inspector General,
Medical Department,
Fort St. George.

To

The Honorable J. J. Arbuthnot
Chief Secretary to Government,
Public Department,
Fort St. George.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward for the information of Government the accompanying communication from No. 255 dated 25th April 1863. Assistant Surgeon Bidie regarding eligible sites for Chinchona plantations in Coorg.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most obedient Servt.

Principal Inspt. Genl.
Med. Depot.

Compd. A.D.C.

Revenue 1863.
Rec'd Govt for May Sept
No 1164.

From

The Ag. Surgeon
Mad. Dept.
Fort St. Geo.

To

The Chief Secretary
to Government
Public Dept.
Fort St. Geo.

Dated 19th May
Rec'd 20th

E-1 No 93

Forwards communication
from Asst. Surgeon
Bidie regarding eligible
sites for Chinchona
plantations in Coorg.
With an order
to
Mr. Secretary Maclean
for Coorg.

Sir

I have the honor
to forward for your information
and the necessary
orders the accompanying
letter from the Principal
Superintendent Medical Establishments
Madras dated 10th instant
forwarding one to me from
Assistant Surgeon Bidie
requesting to be supplied with
copies of certain
papers connected with
the Chinchona plantations
in Coorg.

I am
Sir
Your most obedient
humble Servant
[illegible]

No 906.
Dr. Bidie's letter will
be forwarded to the Commissioner
for Coorg.
Fort St. George
29th May 1863

To the Comr. of Coorg Dated 28th
Pl. Asst. Gen. Medical Depr.

No 304 to 305.

Revenue 1863 Septr.
Res: of Govt for May

No: 907.

To
The Commissioner of
Coorg.
Dy 27th May 1863.

Forwarding letter
from the Principal Inspec-
tor General of the Medi-
cal Deptt giving cover
to one from Assist Surgeon
Bidie regarding eligible
sites for Chinchona plan-
tations in Coorg.

No: 306.

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