

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	22	Press ~~Mis.~~
⁴¹⁻⁴² Dated	6 - 1 -	19 1868

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
6th January 1868.*

No. 41. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Public Department:—

Recording Progress Report of the Commissioner }
for investigating the Ravages of the Borer } (Here enter 17th December 1867, No. 1,590.)
in Coffee Plantations of Mysore and Coorg. }

No. 42. ORDER THEREON, 6th January 1868, No. 22.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Revenue Board.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) F. BRANDT,

Under Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue, with Proceedings Public Department, No. 1,590.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 112. Read the following letter from the Commissioner for Investigating the Ravages of the Borer in Coffee Plantations of Mysore and Coorg, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Veerajpettah, 6th December 1867, No. 8.

I have the honor to send herewith, for the information of the Government, copy of a monthly report of progress forwarded by me to the Commissioner for Mysore and Coorg.

From the Commissioner for Investigating the Ravages of the Borer in Coffee Plantations of Mysore and Coorg, to the Secretary to the Commissioner for Mysore and Coorg; dated Veerajpettah, 2nd December 1867, No. 5.

I have the honor, with reference to my letter of the 7th November, to report, for the information of the Commissioner, that I have, since the 12th November, been engaged in investigating the ravages of the Borer in Coorg.

2. The printed questions calling for information on the subject from European Planters in the District were circulated on my arrival, and replies are now coming to hand. The Canarese questions have just been received, and will be sent out immediately.

3. In the neighbourhood of Mercara my attention was directed to another insect called the "Ringer," which has done a good deal of damage on some estates. It chiefly attacks young plants, and lives in the ground at the foot of the stem, coming up during the night and feeding on the bark. When a complete circle of the bark is thus destroyed, the whole of the plant above that point dies, but the root throws up shoots which in time become productive. The "Ringer" seems identical with the "Black Grub" of Ceylon plantations, which is the larva of the Dart Moth. It, or a nearly allied species, is also well known to the English farmer, being very destructive to corn and other crops.

4. From Mercara I proceeded to this station, and have since been busily engaged in going over estates, and from the information thus collected, and observations made, find that a great deal of what has been published in the newspapers regarding the Borer is incorrect.

5. Some of the estates lying west of Veerajpettah have suffered a great deal from the Borer, while those to the south and south-east, beyond Periambody, have escaped. On the Periambody estate the insect has been very active, while on the adjoining one of Curria Mullay, on the left of the Cannanore road, I have not as yet found a single tree containing White Borer; and the owner, Mr. Rose, believes that his property is free from the pest.

6. In a Native garden in Veerajpettah I found twenty year old stems in which the Borer had been observed at work for five years at least, and various Coorgs have informed me that they have noticed the Borer occasionally during the last eight or ten years. Two gentlemen engaged in planting have also told me that they now and again found Borer in coffee trees upwards of four years ago. In many of the Native gardens near this I find that some rodent (probably the coffee rat), has begun to destroy the pupa and beetle of the Borer, by cutting down and extracting them for food. Red ants also to a small extent prey on the larva and pupa.

7. I am now trying to discover whether the White Borer did or does exist in indigenous trees, as such a discovery might lead to some valuable results.

8. On some estates I have found the Red Borer prevailing. It also is capable of doing a vast amount of damage, as I have found stems, 1½ inch in diameter, completely destroyed by it, but fortunately it has not as yet appeared in such numbers as to cause any anxiety. It appears to be the larva of a moth, and I am at present watching several of the insects in order to identify it. Unlike the White Borer its presence in a plant can invariably be detected, as it makes a visible hole in entering the stem and discharges from this every night a little pile of pellets of wood dust.

9. I have not as yet ventured to recommend any preventive for White Borer, beyond the removal and destruction by fire of affected trees as soon as the presence of the insect can be detected. When the roots have been tunnelled they should also be removed, but when safe the stem may be cut across with a saw, a few inches above the ground, and the stump will then throw up

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
17th December 1867.*

shoots that will bear coffee in two years. In this way a considerable per centage of trees may be saved to the planter. Some of them are carefully following this system, but others are allowing the pest to have its own way. I think this would form a fit subject for the consideration of the local Planters' Association, with a view to a general combination for the destruction of bored plants being organized, and I intend to bring the matter at once to their notice through the President of the Association. The question has been asked of me several times "whether the Government could not order the owners of estates to destroy plants containing Borer." It does not appear to me that such an order could be safely issued or carried out, but I submit the matter for the consideration of the Commissioner. In case, however, an estate owner may have abandoned his property on account of Borer, I think it would be highly desirable and quite practicable for the Government to adopt some measure that would effect the destruction of the plants, and trust the Commissioner will give the matter his consideration.

10. With reference to your letter, No. 43, 1867-68, dated the 6th November, to the Superintendent of Coorg, I have the honor to state that I have been furnished by him with a copy of the same, and will, in due course, when I have seen more of the forests and the clearings that have taken place, submit my opinion on the subject.

11. I have already visited fifteen estates in Southern Coorg, and I will go over the others as soon as possible. Thereafter I purpose seeing the Native estates about Nakanad, as they are the oldest in Coorg, and thereafter will proceed to the northern parts of the country.

QUESTIONS.

1. How many acres are under cultivation on your estate?
2. Was the land when taken up covered with heavy jungle, or what is called bamboo land?
3. Are there any springs or streams of water on the estate, and do these run throughout the year, or get dry during the hot season?
4. Have you noticed any change in springs or streams on the land since the jungle was cut down?
5. What is the general nature of the soil and sub-soil, and what is the exposure of the estate?
6. What is the ordinary amount of the annual rainfall, and in what months of the year do you get rain?
7. Can you give any information as to the mean temperature, daily range of temperature, and degree of atmospheric moisture in each month of the year?
8. What are the prevailing winds in each month of the year, and does the coffee appear to be injured by any of them?
9. Have you of late years observed any change in the seasons, with reference to temperature, moisture, &c.?
10. Have you lately or in past years observed any diseases, such as bug, rot, &c., in the coffee plant; and if so, can you attribute them to any cause, or suggest any remedy?
11. Have you noticed any signs of degeneracy in the coffee plant?
12. Is the Red Borer common in your neighbourhood, and when did you first observe it?
13. What parts does it attack, and what are the symptoms and effects of its ravages in the coffee plant?
14. Do you know of any remedy that will keep away or kill the insect?
15. Is the White Borer prevalent on your estate, and when was it first observed by you?
16. Does it appear to be on the increase or decrease, and can you ascribe its appearance to any particular cause?
17. State any facts which you may have observed regarding the natural history of the insect, such as the months of the year in which it is to be found in the grub, pupa, and beetle states, the period that it remains in each of these conditions, and the habits, &c., of the beetle?
18. Do you know of anything likely to obviate the attacks of the borer now, or to prevent its appearance in future years?

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19. Have you tried the cultivation of coffee under shade; and if so, what is your opinion regarding that system?

20. Do any other insects besides the borer, animals, such as rats, or vegetable parasites, such as fungi, mosses or lichens, injure the coffee plant in your district?

21. Have you seen the White Borer in any other kinds of trees besides the coffee?

22. Have you observed of late other cultivated plants or jungle trees suffering from disease or attacks of insects; and if so, give all the information you can on the subject?

N. B.—Specimens of diseased plants, and animal and vegetable parasites, are much wanted, and if sent to my camp will be duly acknowledged.

No. 143. ORDER THEREON, 17th December 1867, No. 1590.

To be recorded.

(True Extract).

R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

Revenue Department.

Exd. J. Talloch.

Order

Recd May 1861.
To of Govt of the 3400

Pro: MacDonnell
and Dept.

8/14th Dec 1867
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Resolving Pro.

Present Agent of the
Council for the
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US. 110 Order

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Committed to the
Revenue Board

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