

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
16th February 1871.*

No. 175. Read the following letter from the Officiating Under-Secretary to the Government of India, (Home Department—Public,) to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Fort William, 31st January 1871, No. 577 :—

In continuation of the endorsement from this department, No. 4,043, dated the 6th September 1870, I am directed to forward copy of a further despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, No. 75, dated the 22nd December 1870, and of its enclosures, regarding the transmission of Ipecacuanha plants to India.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, dated India Office, London, 22nd December 1870, No. 75.

In continuation of my despatch No. 69, dated the 16th ultimo, I forward to you herewith a copy of further letters which have been received from Dr. Christison and of the reply which I have caused to be addressed to him. I also forward a copy of a letter from Dr. Farquhar, begging to decline the charge of conveying the plants to India.

2. The letter to Dr. Christison will explain my decision upon the points submitted to me.

3. With respect to the terms on which Messrs. Lawson have given trouble and attention to the cultivation of the plants with them, the Inspector-General of Forests should be directed to send to them a "good allowance" of fresh deodar seed according to their request.

From R. CHRISTISON, Esq., to Her Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for India, dated Edinburgh, 40, Moray Place, 26th November 1870.

SINCE receiving your letter and queries respecting the Ipecacuan plants under cultivation in the Royal Botanic Garden and in Messrs. Lawson's nursery, I have several times considered with Mr. Macnab the question of the transport of the plants to India; and two days ago I had also the advantage of the opinion of Dr. Farquhar of the India Medical Service, who had much to do with suggesting to the Government at Calcutta the introduction of the Ipecacuan culture.

The result is that both Dr. Farquhar and I concur with the opinion of Mr. Macnab, that it would be hazardous to remove the plants in the winter season; that the most advisable course is to wait till the beginning of June, so as to secure them against exposure to cold in this country; and that they will thus arrive at the most favourable season for transport up-country in India, namely, when the dry heats are over, and the wet season begins. The reason for this preference is that not only Marcgrav and Riso, who first described the Ipecacuan plant in 1648, but likewise every successive Brazilian traveller who has noticed the subject, represents the plant to grow in a damp atmosphere under the shade of woods and exposed to full tropical heat. It is also under conditions equivalent to these that their cultivation has proved eminently successful equally in the Botanic Garden and in Messrs. Lawson's hands.

If the botanical and horticultural advisers of the Council for India adopt Mr. Macnab's suggestions, it is time enough to settle what precautions should be taken for securing the transmission of the plants to their ultimate destination when the period of their departure approaches. It is evident from Mr. Macnab's experience of the transmission of plants by sea, and that of Dr. Farquhar as to the transport up-country in India, that, although they prove very hardy in our stoves, and even stood the voyage hither from Brazil well, various precautions will be necessary both on the voyage to Calcutta and on the journey into the interior by the Indian railways.

I beg to add that Mr. Macnab sees no reason whatever why such plants as were received last July from Rio Janeiro should not be shipped thence direct to Calcutta. He even thinks they might very well be at once forwarded hence for multiplication in India, should any further consignment arrive here from Dr. Gunning. I will gladly learn what the opinion of the advisers of the Council is on that question, and will write in conformity with it to Dr. Gunning. I have been expecting for some time a further arrival of plants from him, and ought to write to him soon that no others have come since his first consignment four months ago.

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I have had a conversation with Mr. Charles Lawson, junior, of the Messrs. Lawson's firm, about the footing on which they have been cultivating their plants for Government; and he informs me that his firm understand they are doing so on the usual footing of exchanges, and that they will be very glad to receive in exchange for their plants "a good allowance" of deodar seeds.

From R. CHRISTISON, Esq., to C. B. PHILLIMORE, Esq., dated Edinburgh, 15th December 1870.

ANOTHER consignment of Ipecacuan plants from Dr. Gunning of Rio Janeiro, arrived at the Botanic Garden here yesterday afternoon, and I have examined them this morning with Dr. Balfour and Mr. Macnab.

A box with mould contained a few plants in good condition for multiplication by cutting. Had they been numerous enough, Mr. Macnab would have proposed to send the box off to India at once. But unfortunately the plants are too few in number, and Mr. Macnab is persuaded, from various circumstances, that the box must have been tampered with, and that it had contained many more. He proposes, therefore, to retain these plants for multiplication here.

There came also, at the same time, a large paper parcel of roots and stems, probably a hundred plants altogether. Had they been put simply into the box with the mould, they would have arrived fit for multiplication; but packed as they were, they have dried up merely into good pharmaceutical specimens without vitality.

No letter has come in explanation, but I shall write by the first post to Dr. Gunning, and tell him the result of his second attempt to supply us.

The nursery of growing young plants continues to thrive excellently.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., Under-Secretary of State for India, to R. CHRISTISON, Esq., dated India Office, 20th December 1870.

I AM directed by His Grace the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo on the subject of the Ipecacuan plants now under cultivation at Edinburgh in the Royal Botanic Garden and the Nursery of Messrs. Lawson, and reporting the result of a consultation which you had held with Mr. Macnab and Dr. Farquhar as to the best time of removing the plants to India. An additional intimation, dated the 15th instant, of the arrival of a further supply from Dr. Gunning has also been received at this Office from you.

In reply, I am to inform you that, under the representations made by you, His Grace is quite satisfied that the plants should not be removed from Edinburgh until the end of March or beginning of April, so as to reach Calcutta in June—the time decided upon at your consultation with the above-named gentlemen. You will have learned from Dr. Farquhar that he has been forced to decline the charge of conveying the plants to India, and therefore some other arrangement will be necessary. Should there be no person returning to India to whom the charge of the plants could be safely consigned, it seems to the Duke of Argyll that they might, if properly packed in cases, be despatched in safety from Glasgow or Liverpool through the Suez Canal to Bombay, and thence sent overland to Calcutta. The Secretary of State quite agrees that any further consignments from Rio might now be sent off direct to India as your letter proposes, and he regrets to learn that the last box has been so tampered with that that course cannot be taken with it.

With respect to your account of the footing on which Messrs. Lawson are cultivating the plants they possess for the Government, it accords entirely with what the department had understood to be the arrangement with Dr. Anderson, and the Government of India will be directed to transmit to Messrs. Lawson such a quantity of deodar seeds as they request.

I am not to conclude without again asking you to accept the hearty thanks of the Secretary of State in Council for the kind and disinterested manner which your love of science has led you to render your assistance to the department in this matter. I am also to ask you to convey to Dr. Balfour and to Mr. Macnab the acknowledgments of the Secretary of State for the successful attention which they have so zealously given to the introduction of this important plant into India.

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From Surgeon-Major J. FARQUHAR, M.D., to Her Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for India, dated 16, Rubislaw Terrace, Aberdeen, 30th November 1870.

In reply to your letter of the 10th November, referring to Ipecacuan plants for India, I beg first to acknowledge with thanks the proposal that I should be deputed to convey them to Calcutta.

I beg, however, that I may be allowed to decline the duty, for which a suitable man may, I trust, be very readily found.

I have since seen you on the subject in London, and in Edinburgh, where I had the (along with Dr. Christison and Mr. Macnab) of seeing the plants in the Horticultural Gardens, and of going over the questions as to the season and plants most suitable for their removal to India.

Several facts in regard to the plants struck me as interesting:—

First.—They are in a most satisfactory and, indeed, flourishing state in the Edinburgh Gardens under Mr. Macnab's care.

Second.—This opinion should be accepted as final that they should not be removed till spring, but allowed to remain in Edinburgh that they may go through a system of hardening.

Third.—Mr. Macnab clearly demonstrates the most acceptable fact that the Ipecacuan plant can be readily multiplied by cutting up the fresh roots into small pieces, which readily bud.

It therefore appears that, instead of considerable expense being incurred in securing plants, and transmitting them in expensive cases across the sea, many hundreds of them can be raised from a few pounds of fresh roots.

The Edinburgh plants that will be ready for shipment in spring should, however, still be sent, for, on being forwarded to different parts of India, it will at once be seen in what localities, and under what conditions, root plants are most likely to thrive.

It would be likewise of the first importance that some of the Natives of India should be interested in the subject of the cultivation of the plant, so that it may become, at as early a date as possible, a commercial commodity, and find its way into every bazaar in the country.

P.S.—On reading over Dr. Christison's letter as to the season of the year at which the plants should be sent to India, I beg to say that, in talking over the matter in Edinburgh, I meant him to understand that the beginning of June would be the best month in which the plants should arrive in India.

This would lead to their being despatched from this country in the end of March, which would give them a more favourable season for their passage through the Red Sea.

No. 176.

ORDER THEREON, 16th February 1871, No. 291.

Miscellaneous.

COMMUNICATED to the Board of Revenue, the Agri-Horticultural Society, and the Commissioner of the Neilgherries.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,

Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

„ the Agri-Horticultural Society.

„ the Commissioner of the Neilgherry Hills.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

W. 291.

Committee to the
Board of Revenue - the
Agricultural Society and the
Commissioner of the Newberry

16th July 1871.

14th to the Board of Revenue 1871 Feb
1st to the Agricultural Society S
2nd to the Commissioner of the Newberry 1871 S