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Proceedings of a Meeting of the Committee of the Agri-Horticultural Society of Madras, held at the Gardens on Wednesday the 6th November 1872.

PRESENT.

JOHN SHAW, Esq., *in the Chair.*

C. A. AINSLIE, Esq.
T. H. ALLAN, Esq.
Col. R. BENSON, F.L.S.
Sur. G. BIDIE, M.B., *Hon. Bot. Secretary.*
Sur. W. R. CORNISH, F.R.C.S.
Surg.-Major ALEX. HUNTER, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.
H. G. PRITCHARD, Esq.
W. W. MUNSIE, Esq., *Honry. Secretary.*

The Proceedings of last Meeting were submitted and confirmed.

The Honorary Secretary then intimated that the following contributions had been made to the Gardens and Library, and a vote of thanks was passed to the donors.

1. A few orchids from Tonghoo; presented by Captain John Ewing.

2. Several packets of seeds; from G. Thornhill, Esq., C. S., sent on the 25th and 30th October.

3. A packet; from Major R. H. Beddome, containing seeds of palms, creepers, &c., all from Ceylon.

I. Read letter dated 17th October 1872, from Surgeon Major John Shortt, M. D., accompanied by a Memorandum respecting the cultivation of cardamoms.

Resolved that this paper be printed.

MEMO. ON GROWTH OF CARDAMOMS.

A correspondent in one of the local papers lately called for information with regard to the cultivation of cardamoms, and as yet I see no response given. I do not believe cardamoms have been cultivated as a garden or plantation product, but it is the spontaneous growth of jungles at elevations ranging from 3 to 5000 feet above sea level in the districts of Travancore, Malabar, Coorg, Wynaad, South Canara, &c.

The latest work on the subject is a pamphlet by Edgar Ludlow, Esq., Assistant Conservator of Forests in Mysore. Mr. Ludlow

gives interesting accounts of Cardamom jungles in Coorg. Some information may also be obtained in "Balfour's Cyclopædia" and "Porter's Tropical Agriculturist," as to the varieties of cardamoms, &c. As far as my personal experience extends, I find that cardamom seeds take three months to germinate without reference to the mode of cultivation, in boxes or seed beds, and it requires elevation, moisture, and shade. In an experiment both with seeds and suckers at an elevation of 4000 feet above sea level, and under shade, they failed from the want of moisture; owing to the porosity of the soil, there was not a sufficiency of moisture in the locality for a greater part of the year. On the other hand, at a little above 3000 feet with moisture, but in the open, they failed, so that a combination of elevation, shade and moisture, is absolutely necessary for the successful cultivation of cardamoms.

It is difficult to procure good mature seeds. The Revd. Mr. Richter of Mercara, kindly sent me some seeds from Coorg. These failed altogether. I purchased some myself when passing through Mercara, on one occasion, a very small portion of which only germinated; but I obtained some excellent seeds from Travancore through the kindness of A. F. Sealy, Esq., of Cochin, all of which germinated. Good sound cardamom seeds should be of a dark brown colour, firm and plump. Seedlings take from 3 to 4 years ere they produce. Suckers bear earlier. I obtained suckers also from South Canara through the kindness of B. C. Leggat, Esq., and I procured some myself at Mercara, and obtained one sucker from Travancore, where cardamoms being a monopoly, this solitary sucker was sent me with fear and trembling by a kind friend. With good seed or suckers no particular care is necessary provided shade, moisture and the requisite elevation is present. It luxuriates in the vicinity of swamps that are well shaded, but the secret of success consists in first establishing a few plants; and when once established they can be readily extended by means of suckers.

Last year I saw a very nice cluster of cardamom plants in flowers at the Lal Bagh, Bangalore, which Mr. New, the Superintendent kindly shewed me; it was grown under rather dense shade of the mango tree, and it looked healthy and luxuriant. A second edition of Mr. Ludlow's pamphlet has been since published, and I believe copies can be procured at the Commissioner's office, Bangalore, at 6½ annas per copy, and as it contains much interesting information on the subject, I would suggest that all would-be cardamom planters supply themselves with a copy. The pamphlet contains a good illustration of the plant with flower and seed, a sketch of a cardamom jungle, and an excellent sketch map showing the distribution in Coorg of Cardamom, Poon, Teak and Sandal.

(Signed). JOHN SHORTT.

II. Read Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 30th September 1872, respecting the cultivation of the Ipecacuanha plant in the Sikkim Terai.

Resolved that these proceedings be printed.

Read the following letter from the officiating Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, (General Department, Industry and Science) to the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce; dated Calcutta, 30th August 1872, No. 3091.

With reference to your communication No. 271, dated 4th July 1872, I am directed to inform you that this Government is not as yet in a position to comply with the request to supply Ipecacuanha plants to the Government of Madras.

2. I am also directed to forward for your information the accompanying copy of an extract from a letter No. 364, dated 9th August 1872, from the Officiating Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens, Calcutta, containing a report on the cultivation of the Ipecacuanha plant in the Sikkim Terai.

Extract of a letter from the Officiating Superintendent Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta, to the Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal; dated Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta, 9th August 1872, No. 364.

I have the honour to inform you that the experimental nursery of Ipecacuanha at Sookner in the Sikkim Terai was only commenced some six weeks ago, and that it would be as yet premature to submit an opinion as to its ultimate success in that part of the terai. Towards the close of the year, or of completion of the rainy season's growth, a detailed report of the condition of the plants will be submitted. In the meantime I may say that the plants are fairly established, and apparently taking very kindly to their new quarters.

2. The propagation of the Ipecacuanha is being very successfully continued in the nurseries at Rungbee, and the young stock is most thriving. This is well shown by the fact that the leaves of the Ipecacuanha in its native habitats are, as a rule, from *three* to *four* inches long by one to two broad; whereas the less severely cut plants in the Rungbee nurseries have leaves from *five* to *six* and occasionally *seven* inches long by *two* to *three-and-a-half* broad. There thus cannot be a doubt but the conditions of growth and increase are being successfully afforded these plants in the Rungbee nurseries."

Copy forwarded to the Government of Madras with reference to Mr. Acting Under Secretary Galton's letter No. 937, dated the 13th June last, and with the remark that the Government of India hopes to be able to supply Ipecacuanha plants during next year.

III. Read Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 19th October 1872, respecting the condition of the Cinchona Plantation at Peermede in the State of Travancore.

Resolved that these proceedings be recorded.

IV. The Honorary Secretary was authorized to overdraw from the Treasurers a further sum, not exceeding Rs. 400, to meet the extra expense incurred by enlarging the Bungalow, now in course of erection on the plot of ground to the east of the Cathedral.

JOHN SHAW, *Chairman.*
W. W. MUNSIE, *Hony. Secretary.*

Gantz Brothers—Adelphi Press.

Inclosure 2 in Despatch No. 27

W 182.

26 March 1873

To

The Chief C[illegible]missioner of Mysore

This Govt having been recently informed that the second edition of a pamphlet by Mr. Edgar Sandlan, Assist Conservator of Forests in Mysore on the subject of Cardamom cultivation is procurable at your office, desire me to request that you will be good enough to cause three dozen copies of the edition to be supplied to this Govt. on payment, to my address at this office.

I am

