No. 94. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 28th April 1873, No. 653 :—

Read the following letter from W. R. ROBERTSON, Esq., Superintendent, Government Farms, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 21st March 1873, No. 212 :—

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Board's Proceedings No. 290, dated 28th February 1873, and will submit a detailed scheme for the show on an early date; but, in the meanwhile, in order that the operations to be undertaken may be conducted in view to some definite end, I beg leave to make a few general suggestions.

2. The records of Government show that the results which attended the many Agricultural Exhibitions held in various parts of this Presidency during the past twenty years were not encouraging; in fact, were very disappointing, considering the amount of money and valuable time expended on them. However, I do not think that these shows were failures, or that the money expended on them was wasted. At the time these shows were held, the country was certainly not ready for them, and too high expectations were held as to the results that would be produced; besides, they were on too elaborate a scale, and were of too refined a nature for a people then so ignorant and prejudiced. But had the work then begun been perseveringly continued in, and had each year's experience in holding them been turned to account in making these shows more suited to the circumstances of the districts in which they were held, they would ere this have produced a beneficial effect on the agricultural practice of this part of India.

3. The shows then held seem to me to have been modelled too much after the Agricultural Show as held in England,—a serious mistake, seeing that the agricultural practice of England is fully one hundred years in advance of the agricultural practice of *this* country.

4. An Indian Agricultural Show should be something between an English Agricultural Show and an American Agricultural Bazaar, with some of the features of an ordinary Provincial Museum. Such a show should bring together the best specimens of live stock and field-produce of which the district can boast. It would afford an opportunity of bringing to public notice produce of peculiar excellence or of special value. It should be the medium through which the ryot should be kept informed of inventions or improvements in implements and machines, calculated to bring them more within his means and more fitted for the peculiarities of his agricultural practice. In the show, the ryot should meet with specimens of the different manures and manural substances procurable in his district, with information as to the uses to which they are specially suited. Here, also, he ought to find specimens in different stages of growth, or preparation of the different new products, of which it is desirable that he should become a producer; and the show should be an exchange mart in which he can sell or purchase improved live stock or field-produce of an unusual kind or of special excellence, and where he can always be sure to meet with the means of supplying [illegible] created by an improving agricultural practice. Such a show

should indicate very fairly the capabilities of the district or districts from which the produce is exhibited.

5. But to the Government these annual shows would be of special value: they would afford a sure test of the character of the season experienced and of the progress made from year to year towards a more rational system of agriculture, as, under a system of classifying and valuing by points, the results of each year's show could be properly estimated and compared.

6. These shows should be educational and commercial in their object. We should endeavour to interest rather than to surprise and astonish; we should, by them, aid the ryot in finding a market for the special produce he may be induced to raise; and afford him the means of obtaining seeds or improved mechanical appliances for the culture of his soil.

7. It seems to me that, in a country like this where there are so few persons who have had the necessary training, or who can devote a sufficient amount of time to organizing or conducting agricultural shows, the plan adopted by the Royal Agricultural Society of England has many advantages to commend it to our attention. I allude more especially to the migratory character of its shows and to the arrangement under which these shows are organized by trained officers of the Society, aided by local committees selected in the districts in which the shows are held. For the next two or three years, until arrangements have been organized, it might be well to confine the Madras Agricultural Show to the Presidency Town; but it would be well if the show could ultimately be worked on the plan of the Royal Agricultural of England, and its exhibitions be held in the different districts of the Presidency. Possibly, in time, the different Local Fund Boards might see the advantages resulting to a district from the show having been held in it, and might, as do the Corporations of English Towns, invite the show with offer of a grant of money towards its expenses or towards giving special prizes for the best productions of their districts.

8. At first, the difficulty of judging by points will be great, as we possess no standards. It would be necessary, at the first show held at the Presidency Town, to *adopt* standards both as regards breeds of animals and varieties of agricultural produce. There should be standards of *purity in breed* as well as of *quality*. In order that such standards may be prepared, the jurors, to act at the first show, should be selected from *all* parts of the Presidency, and they should be specially invited, in each class, to adopt certain standards. In order that standards may be registered, the assistance of the photographer, the engraver, and the modeller should be obtained; and, in cases where their arts did not avail, then the aid of analysis, of the microscope, or of the specific gravity test might be sought for. But standards for by far the most important portion of the produce can readily be fixed and as easily recorded by very simple means of measure and weight at known temperatures, with colour and general appearance will, in most instances, suffice. Of live stock, we must get drawings showing characteristic points of each *breed* of the Presidency. At present no information of this sort is procurable: the matter has not been studied, excepting perhaps in the Nellore breed. I doubt very much whether, of any other breed, it is possible to get from any two known judges a similar list of the characteristic points

the breed. It is easy to see what confusion the awards, at our different agricultural shows, will create in the minds of native breeders of live stock, unless the judges at the shows make their awards on the same standards of excellence. I have read voluminous reports on the results of our agricultural shows, and have failed altogether in satisfying myself as for what, in different breeds of animals competing together, the judges specially awarded their prizes, or what, in the opinion of the judges, constituted a pure bred animal of any breed. If I am anxious to cultivate any particular breed of sheep or cattle, I do not know where to inquire for information as to what constitutes a good specimen of the breed; points which one authority condemns, the other holds to be an indisputable evidence of purity of blood. In England, we know what points characterize a pure bred Leicester or Cotswold, Shorthorn or Alderney; we need, in this country, to learn as thoroughly what points characterze pure bred animals of our different races of sheep and cattle; we need to know what points we must specially cultivate, in order that the animals we rear approximate as near as possible, in appearance, to the pure type of the breed to which they belong. There are undoubtedly many well-defined breeds of sheep and cattle in this Presidency; but the names given to different specimens are so very loosely applied that there is no certainty whatever, when purchasing by name only, that what is wanted really will be supplied.

9. While nothing should be neglected in order to get the ryot himself to compete at the shows, it is, I think, of equal importance that districts should be induced to compete with each other: such annual-competition would produce a healthy stimulous on the interest felt by district officers in the agricultural practice of their districts, and, in this way, information could be obtained of a most reliable kind as to the progress made in the districts in introducing into general cultivation new varieties of produce,—Cardina paddy, improved varieties of cotton, of maize, of tobaccos, etc. There would be no difficulty in awarding a lump sum to a district to be divided amongst the individual producers; but, in addition to this, there should be some special trophy offered for district-competition, to be held by the winning district until the following show, and to become the property of the district which succeeds in winning it three times. The importance of offering trophies, in this way, has been fully recognized by our Agricultural Societies in England; and other causes, besides agricultural reform, have benefited thereby; as, for instance, National Rifle Shooting, etc., etc.

10. During such a show there should be opportunities given for reading papers or essays on agricultural subjects; indeed, prizes should be awarded for papers or essays having for their object the improvement of Indian agriculture in suggesting new sources of manure, drawing attention to manures now unutilized, suggesting new crops to cultivate, pointing out some way of improving our breeds of live stock, or describing some new mechanical arrangement for economizing labour in raising water for irrigation, etc., etc. And these essays or papers, with the debates on them might be published with the report on the results of the show.

SUBMITTED to Government, together with copy of Board's Proceedings dated 28th February 1873, No. 290.

2. The Board concur with Mr. Robertson's general views as to the scope and object of an Agricultural Exhibition and as to the best mode of realizing the purposes in view. They are a good summary of the accepted doctrine and practice in other countries. The Board attach special importance to the suggestion that these shows should be combined with fairs for the purchase and sale of cattle, produce, seeds, and implements as the fair is an institution which the natives understand and appreciate, and affords a ready means of impressing them with the immediate usefulness of the show.

3. The Board recommend that Mr. Robertson be authorized to submit detailed proposals, based on the views expressed in this letter, for an Agricultural Exhibition to be held at Madras in 1874. It is perhaps advisable, in order that the show may have the full benefit of organization and conduct by Mr. Robertson himself, that the first show should take place at Madras; but, in other respects, the adjoining district is probably the least favourable of all for such an experiment, the soil and agricultural system being much inferior to those found in some other districts.

No. 95.

ORDER THEREON, 14th May 1873, No. 485.

Miscellaneous.

THE Government resolve to request the Board of Revenue to submit a scheme, complete in all details, for an Agricultural Exhibition to be held in Madras in 1874, combining the various objects indicated by Mr. Robertson.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Ins 4B G.O. on No. 1257

4B

No 485.



The Govt resolve to appoint
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REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No. 1257

From Proceedings Board of R

Dated 28th

73 No. 653 187 .

FOR ORDE

I would respec[tfully] to submit a s[tatement] plete in all [details] for an Agricultural Exhibition, com[bining] various objects in [view] by the Revenue - to [be] held in Aberdeen in 1874.

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Govt. of {1873} Madras.

REVENUE.

To.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated May, 14th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G. O., 14th May 1873, No. 485.

MAY.
Nos. 94-95.

Agricultural Exhibition.—Board of Revenue to submit a complete scheme for the one to be held in Madras in 1874, combining the various objects indicated by Mr. Robertson.